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Passages from the Quran

Allah in Himself

1) Ayat-ul-Kursi (2: 255)

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نُوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ
 وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا
 خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُخِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مَنْ عَلِمَهُ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسَعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ
 وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْغَنِيُّ (2:255)

Allah! There is no god but He, the living, the self-subsisting, eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permits? He knows what is before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass any of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme.
Ayat-ul-Allah and Amm-ul-Musabbiheat

Explanation: This ayat of Surah Baqarah is known as Ayat-ul-Kursi – the verse of the Throne – the Throne being a symbol of power and authority. The ayat gives a perfect knowledge about Allah and deals with His attributes in a comprehensive manner. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} declared it to be a great verse of the Holy Quran (Muslim)

Ayat-ul-Aaboom.

Allah is the personal name of One, Supreme Being Who is free from all defects and short comings and Who alone is worthy of worship. The attributes of Allah are different from anything we know in our present world. He is Eternal and Ever-living, that is, He is from the beginning and shall remain forever and He is immune from death. His Existence is absolute existence. He does not depend upon any other person or thing. He is the exclusive Master and Owner of the earth and the heavens and no one else has any part or share in His Rule, His Authority, His Sovereignty, His Attributes or His Powers. The Quran says: "To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth....."

(3:109)

He is the Most High, the Supreme, His Majesty and Glory, Knowledge and

Will encompass everything physical and spiritual in the earth and the heavens. He is All – powerful and has full authority and control over and the right to use, anything or deal with it in any manner He likes and there is none equal to Him to question Him about anything He does or to challenge the commands He issues. But He in His wisdom may grade His creatures and give one superiority over another. Then by His will and permission, such a one may intercede or help according to the laws and duties laid on him.

His knowledge is complete, absolute, perfect and all-embracing. He is aware of the hidden and the manifest, the present as well as the past and that which is beyond our perception. He also knows what shall be in the future and none of His creatures including the angels and the prophets can be His equal in respect of His knowledge. The Quran, at other places, speaks of the Absolute knowledge of Allah, as well as the limited one of the people:

"He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable....." (21:28) and: "It is He who knows what is open in speech and what ye hide (in your hearts)"

(21: 110)

People encompass nothing of the knowledge of Allah except what He permits to be known to them. Any interference in His affairs would result in chaos.

All things require the support of each other for their existence. It is only Allah who creates by Himself and causes others to exist. He is the constant support and source of all other forms of life. He maintains the existence of heavens and earth and everything contained in them and in doing so, He does not require any rest, because He never tires.

An ordinary life needs rest for carrying out its own activities and also needs double rest to look after and guard or help others activities. In contrast the Absolute Life is free from any such need for Allah is Supreme and above anything we can conceive.

2) Surah An'aam (6:101-103)

بِدِينُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ
شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۝ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۝ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ۝ لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ
الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْحَبِيرُ (6.101-103)

101. To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: how can He have a son when He has no consort? He created all things, and He has full knowledge of all things. 102. That is Allah, your Lord! there is no god but He, the Creator of all things: then worship Him: and He has power to dispose of

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

Explanation: These verses of Surah An'aam speak of the absolute Unity and Authority of Allah over the entire universe, being the only Creator and Protector of everything. Therefore, He alone is to be worshipped.

Allah creates on His own, without the help and co-ordination from any external agency and of no pre-existing similitude; thus showing that not only the creation, but the plan and means of creation are all on account of His Will. The Quran says: "*To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth.....*" (2:117)

Lest anyone should think that the heavens and the earth are eternal and primeval, we are told that they themselves are creations of Allah's will and design.

Since everything is the creation of Allah, the question of His having a son does not arise. Even the nonbelievers of Arabia did not have the concept of Allah having a wife, though they believed that Allah had sons and daughters. Therefore, a question is put to them as to how Allah could have children when He does not have a wife. Moreover, it is a derogation from the glory of Allah to say that He begets children; it would mean an attribution to Him of a human nature.

It is further said that human vision does not comprehend Him; but He comprehends everything of the universe and nothing remains hidden from Him.

One of the objections raised by the unbelievers was that if Allah existed, why could not they see Him. Vision relates only to matter and Allah is not a material being therefore, the question of His being subject to vision does not arise. He is unique: "*there is nothing whatever like unto Him....*" (42:11) and "*And there is none like unto Him.*" (112: 4)

Allah's nature is so subtle and fine, far beyond our limited conception so as to be invisible to the physical eye and to be imperceptible to the senses and so pure as to be above the mental or spiritual vision of human beings. He is unfathomable and inaccessible to human perception, imagination or comprehension. His presence can only be felt and realised through the manifestation of His attributes, working in all the objects throughout the universe, the most important of which is that of His creation and His total control over it.

The fact that He is undefinable makes it clear that His attributes mentioned in the Quran can be seen through the effect of His activity on and within the universe created by Him.

As regards the Hereafter, the Holy Prophet^{pboh} said that the righteous servants of Allah, whom He will favour with high ranks, will see him each day, morning as well as evening. (Tirmizi, Ahmad)

3) Surah Fussilat (41: 37-39)

"وَمِنْ أَيْتِهِ الَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالقَمَرُ لَا تَسْجُدُوا لِلنَّسْمَسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ
وَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيمَانَكُمْ تَغْبُرُونَ" فَإِنْ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فَأَنَّا ذَلِكُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمُونَ وَمِنْ أَيْتِهِ أَنَّكُمْ تَرَى
الْأَرْضَ خَائِشَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَرَّتْ وَرَبَّثَ إِنَّ الَّذِي أَخْيَاهَا
لَمْ يُخْيِي الْمَوْتَى إِنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (41.37-39)

37. Among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Adore not the sun and the moon, but adore Allah, who created them, if it is Him you wish to serve. **38.** But if people are arrogant, in the presence of your Lord are those who celebrate His praises by night and by day: And they never grow tired. **39.** And among His signs is this: you see the earth barren and desolate, but when We send down rain to it, it is stirred to life and yields increase. Truly, He who gives life to the earth can surely give life to those who are dead, for He has power over all things.

Explanation: These verses of Surah Fussilat speak of the sun and moon and day and night as signs of Allah to signify His wisdom and power. People have repeatedly been told in the Quran that natural objects on earth and sky are creations of Allah with no power or authority of their own. Then how can we set any of His own creations as equal to Him? Again night and day are not conflicting powers but are both creations of Allah. Allah is the sole cause and the source of all that exists and whatever exists is a sign of His creative power.

The Quran says, "Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of Night and Day – there are indeed signs for men of understanding." (3: 190)

It is incorrect to ascribe powers or adore anything that is created by Him. Allah alone should be worshipped and not the things which He has created which are actually subservient to His commands.

Examples are given to convince the transgressors of the Power and Authority of Allah, showing at the same time, the willing obedience by all creation to the commands of Allah in contrast to the opposition and disobedience exhibited by human beings.

This, however, does not in any way affect Allah, if men rebel against Him. The Quran says: "... but if any deny faith, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures." (3: 97) It is, in fact, their own loss. There are men and angels who celebrate His praise and glory day and night and never get tired. On the contrary, they feel delighted and honoured to be in Allah's presence, in the

light of truth and happiness.

The verses further speak of another sign of Allah that of the revival of dead land after rainfall. Elsewhere, the Quran says: "And the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead....." (2:164)

This phenomenon is a sign of Allah's infinite power, especially of His power to resurrect the dead who will rise to life at Allah's call just as the dead earth comes back to life after one shower of rain. This process is repeated year after year, yet the unbelievers doubted it when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} told them that Allah will bring back to life all human being after their death. The Quran says: "..... Seeing that ye were without life, and He gave you life; Then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life; and again to Him will ye return." (2: 28)

Resurrection has been repeated at other places in the Quran as well, for example, it is said: "It is Allah Who sends forth the Winds, so that they raise up the Clouds and we drive them to a Land that is dead and revive the earth therewith after its death: even so (will be) the Resurrection." (35:9)

The revival of dead earth after rainfall can be taken as an illustration of Allah's power to bestow spiritual life upon hearts that have hitherto remained closed to the truth of His Existence and Omnipotence. Allah's revelation is His mercy and His rain. His word has the same wonderful effect as rain has on barren land; it gives life, beauty and fruitfulness. The revival of dead earth after rainfall implies a call to the believers never to abandon hope that the deniers may one day grasp the truth of the Quranic message.

4) Surah Shura (42: 4-5)

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَى الْعَظِيمِ ۝ تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ
يَتَفَطَّرُنَّ مِنْ فَوْقِهِنَّ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَنْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ ۝ إِلَّا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝ (42.4-5)

4. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth: and He is most high, most great. 5. The heavens are almost rent asunder from above them, and the angels celebrate the praises of their Lord, and pray for forgiveness for beings on earth: Behold! Verily Allah is He, the oft-forgiving, the most merciful.

Explanation: All that is in the heavens and on earth is the exclusive property of Allah and He has full authority and control to deal with it in any manner He wants. He is the Master and Owner of the earth and heavens and everything contained in them, in any form whatsoever, and no one else has any part or share in His ownership, His authority, His kingdom, His rule, His sovereignty,

His attributes and His powers. Elsewhere, it is said: "..... His are all things in the heavens and on earth....." (2:255) And: "To Whom belongeth all that is in the heavens and on earth? Say: To Allah....." (6: 12). Therefore, all greatness and glory befits Allah, the Almighty.

The Quran further reflects upon the majesty and grandeur of Allah as felt in deep fear and reverence by the dwellers of heavenly regions i.e., the angels. It is too much for the heavens to bear who tremble at the presence of the magnificence and splendour above them and are almost ready to burst asunder by His Glory.

The angels, who are noble and pure beings, celebrate the glory of Allah. They look after the safety of all beings on earth and pray to Allah for their forgiveness. They reflect on one side on Allah's glory and praise and on the other, to His forgiveness and mercy.

The implication is that, whereas, all human beings are weak and are liable to err and to sin, Allah has willed upon Himself the law of grace and mercy despite all their evil doings. This exceptional quality of Allah's Grace and Mercy is further stressed in Quran:

"..... But My Mercy extendeth to all things....." (7: 156)

And: "..... He hath inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy....." (6: 12)

In a hadis, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Allah says: Verily, My Grace and Mercy outstrips My Wrath." (Bukhari, Muslim)

That Allah is Forgiving and Merciful is clear from the fact that people persist in transgressing His commands and rejecting His message with vanity and arrogance, yet He mercifully goes on giving them respite so that they may reflect; realize their mistake and come to the right path before it is too late.

The Quran says: "If anyone does evil or wrongs his own soul, but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (4: 110)

5) Surah Ikhlas (112)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ
اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ
لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُوْلَدْ
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ (112)

1. Say: He is Allah, the one and only; 2. Allah, the eternal, absolute; 3. He does not beget, nor is He begotten; 4. And there is none like Him.

Explanation: The name of this Surah is Ikhlas meaning 'Purity of Faith' which is its core matter because faith in the absolute Unity of Allah is the foundation of Islam. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is said to have described this surah as one-third of the Holy Quran. (Agreed upon)

People on different occasions enquired from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} about the nature and essence of Allah to Whose worship he invited them. Every time, this surah was recited in answer to them.

Allah is One, without any hint of plurality. He has no one to share in His lordship, neither in His essence or His attributes. He is the only one to whom worship is due; all other beings or things are His creatures and in no way resemble Him or comparable to Him in rank, attribute, work or power in any degree. He has no partner, no father or son.

The Quran says: "And your God is one God...." (2: 163) "Allah: There is no god but He....." (2: 255)

And: "..... there is no god but I; therefore, worship and serve Me." (21: 25)

Allah is Eternal and Immortal without beginning or end, not limited by time or place or circumstances. He is Absolute, not sustained or dependent on any other person or thing whereas all other persons and things are dependent on Him for beginning as well as their continued existence.

The pagans frequently asked the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}: "What is the ancestry of Allah? From whom has He inherited the world and who will inherit after Him?" In every age, they have adopted the concept that gods like men also beget and are begotten. The Arabian concept was that the angels were Allah's daughters. Some people thought that those whom they considered to be Allah's children were descended from Him in the natural way while others thought that the one whom they called son of God had been adopted by Allah Himself as a son. All these assumptions are destroyed when it is said: "*He begetteth not nor is He begotten*" and there remains no room for confusion in this regard. The Quran says: "*No son did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him.....*"

(23: 91)

The fact that Allah is matchless and unique in every respect beyond the range of human comprehension or imagination explains why any attempt at depicting Him by means of figures or symbols must be qualified as blasphemous denial of truth.

All the messengers of Allah prescribed Divine Unity to their people. The Quran says: "..... He said: 'O my people! Worship Allah! ye have no other god but Him.... (7:59, 65,73,85)

Allah's relationship with the created world

6) Surah Fatihah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
رَحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
اَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝ فَغَيْرُ الْمَفْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝ (١)

1. In the name of Allah, most gracious, most merciful.
2. Praise be to Allah, the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds;
3. Most gracious, most merciful;
4. Master of the day of judgment.
5. You we worship, and your aid we seek.
6. Show us the straight way,
7. The way of those to whom You have given your grace, not those who earn your anger, nor those who go astray.

Explanation: Surah Fatihah is mentioned in the Quran as the seven oft repeated verses because it is repeated several times in the course of the five daily prayers. According to Bukhari, its designation Umm-ul-Kitab was given to it by the Prophet^{pbuh} himself in view of the fact that it contains in a condensed form all the fundamental principles laid down in the Quran. The principle of the Oneness and uniqueness of Allah, He being the Originator and Fosterer of the universe, the One to whom man is ultimately responsible, the only power that can really guide and help, the principle of life after death and the consequence of man's actions and behaviour and the need of self surrender to the will of the Supreme Being. It is, for this reason, that this surah has been formulated as a prayer to be constantly repeated and reflected upon by the believer.

The Surah sums up in precise yet comprehensive words man's relation to Allah in contemplation and prayer of which the first words should be that of praise which befit Allah alone.

The Quran next mentions Allah's attribute of **Rabb**, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds i.e., the one who, step by step, helps one to grow from lower to higher stages till he reaches the stage of finality and completeness; and the attributes of **Rahman** and **Rahim** which signify grace, mercy, compassion and loving tenderness which flow from Him to His creatures protecting, preserving and guiding them to a higher life.

After acknowledging the mercy and beneficence of Allah, the surah continues that He is the Master of the Day of Judgement, so that the qualities of mercy

and kindness do not mislead anyone into forgetting that on that Day, everyone will have to render an account of their deeds in this life.

After the praise and acknowledgement of the attributes of Allah, there follows a pledge of total submission and worship and seeking help and aid from Him alone. This pledge is not from man in his individual capacity but from all mankind in general.

The believer also prays to Allah to show him the right and straight way of life from among the many crooked and steep ways. The path of virtue is difficult, it has always been followed by those people who are in the light of Allah's grace. It not only protects them from wrong doings but also from straying onto paths of temptation and carelessness.

The Surah mentions two categories of people: Those who are in the darkness and those who stray because of negligence. Some scholars believe that the people described as having the wrath of Allah that is, having deprived themselves of His grace, are those who after having received Allah's message rejected it, while those who go astray are people who stray out of carelessness and negligence.

7) Surah Baqarah (2: 21-22)

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبِّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ۝
الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَاءً ۝ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ
مِنَ الْثُمُرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ ۝ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَغْلَمُونَ ۝ (2:21-22)

21. O people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, who created you and those who came before you, so that you may have the chance to learn righteousness;
22. Who has made the earth your couch, and the heavens your canopy; and sent down rain from the heavens; and by it brought forth fruits for your sustenance; then do not set up rivals to Allah, when you know.

Explanation: These verses of Surah Baqarah are about Allah, the Creator and Cherisher of all mankind, the earth and the heavens and hence exclusively worthy of worship and adoration.

Adoration is the act of the highest and humblest reverence and worship. When that kind of relationship is built with Allah it produces righteousness.

Exclusive worship of Allah is mandatory because He alone is the Creator and Cherisher of all and that is the reason why the Quran speaks particularly of His attribute of Rabb i.e., the Cherisher. The Being Who has created and arranged for the maintenance of His creatures is the only One who deserves complete and exclusive worship and obedience – and not the idols to whom are ascribed some of God's qualities, or the saints supposed to possess divine

powers or other material objects who are helpless and have no power of their own. These verses speak of four basic favours of Allah:

- 1) the creation of man himself
- 2) the creation of earth and heavens
- 3) the sending of rain
- 4) the growth of fruits

The word used for earth is *farsh* and this term used in the Quran implies that the earth is most suited to sustain life so that human beings can pass a comfortable physical, intellectual and spiritual life here.

The earth has been covered with the canopy of heavens known as the sky providing a roof for human beings to live beneath it on earth. Our whole life, both physical and spiritual depends upon Allah. The physical life is symbolised by the earth while the spiritual is symbolised by the canopy of heaven.

The idea underlying the mentioning of all these favours is that when human beings themselves admit and acknowledge that all this has been granted by Allah alone then they must realise that only He deserves our worship, obedience and servitude. To set up others equal in rank with Allah means to hold others besides Allah worthy of service and worship. The false gods may be idols, superstitions, pride of race, birth, wealth or position, power or learning.

It is also clear that the sole aim of the Holy Quran is to create **Taqwa** i.e., fear of Allah which is the foundation of all virtue in human life.

8) Surah Alaq (96: 1-5)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

إِقْرَا بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝

خَلَقَ الْأَنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلْقٍ ۝

إِقْرَا وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝

الَّذِي عَلَمَ بِالْقَلْمَنْ ۝

عَلَمَ الْأَنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝ (96:1-5)

Hd

1. Read! in the name of your Lord, who created, 2. Created man out of a clot of congealed blood: 3. Proclaim! And your Lord is most bountiful, 4. He who taught by the pen, 5. Taught man what he did not know.

Explanation: These verses of Surah Alaq represent the beginning of revelation through Hazrat Jibrail to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} while he was meditating in the cave of Hira during the last ten days of Ramazan. When the angel asked him to read in the name of the Creator and Cherisher, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}

understood that he was called upon to receive and understand Allah's message to mankind.

Although unlettered, the Prophet's^{pbuh} mind and soul were filled with spiritual knowledge and the time had come for him to declare or proclaim his mission. It may be noted that the primary duty of a Prophet^{pbuh} is not to produce ideas born in his own mind; but to transfer the Book of Divine Truth and reproduce its meaning to mankind without additions or subtractions. It is also a duty of all those who read and understand the Quran to spread the truth.

The Surah further mentions the creation of man, stating in particular, that man was created from an insignificant clot of blood and taught the use of pen by Allah.

The pen has always been a powerful means for the spread of knowledge of Divine Unity in particular and of knowledge in general. It is due to the pen that knowledge has been recorded in writing and transmitted from one person to another and from generation to generation.

Man was initially without knowledge. Whatever knowledge he obtained, was given to him as a gift from Allah. In this connection, the Quran says: "And He taught Adam the names of all things....." (2: 31)

Further, Allah from time to time, taught knowledge of the seen and unseen through revelations to His prophets. The Quran says: "..... Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth...." (2: 255)

This very first revelation refers to man's evolution out of a germ cell – contrasting the simplicity of his biological origins with his moral, intellectual and spiritual potential which clearly indicates the existence of a purpose underlying the creation of life.

9) Surah Zilzaal (99)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُلْزَالَهَا
وَآخِرَ جَثِ الْأَرْضِ أَنْقَالَهَا
وَقَالَ الْأَنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا
يَوْمَئِذٍ تَحَدَّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا
بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَى لَهَا
يَوْمَئِذٍ يُصْدِرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا هَلْ يَرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ هَلْ
فَمَنْ يَعْمَلُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ هَلْ
وَمَنْ يَعْمَلُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ هَلْ (99)

1. When the earth is shaken to her utmost convulsion. 2. And the earth throws up her burdens. 3. And man cries out: 'What is the matter with her?' 4. On that day will she declare her tidings: 5. For that your Lord will have given her inspiration. 6. On that day will men proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown their deeds. 7. Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good see it! 8. And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.

Explanation: Surah Zilzaal refers to the tremendous convulsion and uprooting which will take place on the Day of Judgement when the earth will be shaken to the extent of its possibility, the present order of the world will be dissolved and the new spiritual world of Truth and Justice will take its place.

The symbol used here is that of an earthquake which is a terrifying phenomenon in its suddenness and its power to destroy and uproot the strongest buildings. The inner levels of the earth are thrown up as if they were a burden to the earth.

A similar statement has also been made "And when the earth is flattened out, and casts forth what is within it and becomes (clean) empty."

(84:3,4)

The Surah goes on to mention the confusion and bewilderment of the dead when they will rise to life at the sight of these incidents taking place before them. Elsewhere, the Quran says: "Ah! Woe unto us! Who hath raised us up from our beds of repose?....." (36:52)

In that great and final convulsion, the dead will rise; matters, motives and deeds, even the most secret ones which had been hidden and buried will be brought to light and justice will be done with absolute Truth. This is because Allah will give the command or direction to the earth to tell the whole story of what it knows.

Human beings will proceed to receive judgement and they will receive their Book of Deeds which will be presented to each man and he will be astonished to see that every big and small matter is mentioned in it. This is also stated "(It will be said to him) Read thine (own) record; sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee." (17: 14)

The righteous will be rewarded more generously than what they will actually deserve and their minor sins forgiven if they had safeguarded against the major sins. The punishment for the evil deeds of the non-believers will be equal to the deed and no injustice will be done to anybody. The Quran says: "On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done....."

(3: 30)

10) Surah Nas (114)

Rabb: The Cherisher
 Ilah: Worthy of Worship
 Maali k: Only Authority
 the Creator

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ
 مَلِكِ النَّاسِ هُوَ إِلَهُ النَّاسِ
 مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ
 الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ
 مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ (114)

1. Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind,
2. The King of mankind,
3. The God of Mankind,
4. From the mischief of the whisperer who withdraws,
5. Who whispers into the hearts of mankind,
6. Among jinns and among mankind.

Explanation: Surah Nas concludes the Holy Quran with an appeal to us to trust in Allah as our protector. It mentions the three fold relationship of man with Allah:

- 1) Allah is his Lord, Maker and Cherisher. He sustains him and cares for him. He provides him with all the mean for his growth and development and his protection against evil.
- 2) Allah is his King and Ruler. He has the Authority to guide his conduct. He has given laws to lead to his welfare.
- 3) Allah is the Judge and the Goal of the Hereafter to Whom all mankind will return to give an account of their deeds in this life. He is the only Being entitled to man's worship at all times.

In each of these capacities, Allah safeguards His servants. There is no one besides Him with whom refuge may be sought and who can actually give refuge.

The Surah further asks us to seek refuge from the evil of the whisperer who repeatedly whispers evil suggestions into the hearts of mankind in such a way that man may not even realize that evil has been put into his heart. The whisperer tries time and again to repeat the act of whispering. When a person remembers Allah, the devil holds himself back, but when he becomes unmindful of the remembrance of Allah, the devil again comes forward. Therefore, refuge is to be sought from the very root of evil i.e., the secret suggestions of evil. It is for this reason that the Quran says: "And say: O my Lord! I seek refuge with Thee from the suggestions of the evil ones." (23: 97)

And: "If a suggestion from Satan assail thy (mind) seek refuge with Allah....."
 (7:200)

The act of evil whispering may be done by the devil and his helpers, or evil temptations within man himself. These may be from among jinn as well as from among men as confirmed by the Quran: "Likewise did We make for every messenger an enemy-evil ones among men and jinns...." (6: 112)

In a tradition the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} also confirmed that devils are among men also. (Ahmad, Nasai)

According to the Quran, the devil will not be able to deviate the righteous servants of Allah and, therefore, it is said: "When thou dost read the Quran, seek Allah's protection from Satan, the Rejected one." (16: 98)

Allah's Messengers

11) Surah Baqarah (2: 30-37)

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مِنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيُسْفِكُ الدَّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَغْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝ وَعَلِمَ آدَمُ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلُّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضْتُهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا بَنَوْنَا بِاسْمَاءٍ هَوَاءٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝
 قَالُوا سَبِّحْنَاكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝
 قَالَ يَا آدَمُ اتَّهِمْ بِاسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَاهُمْ بِاسْمَائِهِمْ ۝ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقْلِمْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي
 أَغْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۝ وَأَغْلَمُ مَا تَبَدُّؤُ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ۝
 وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْرَيْسَ إِبْرَيْسَ أَبِي وَاسْتَكَبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ
 الْكُفَّارِ ۝
 وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغْدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا ۝ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا
 هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونُوا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝
 فَأَرْلَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۝ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ
 لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقْرَرٌ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ ۝
 فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَتَ قَاتَبَ عَلَيْهِ ۝ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَابُ الرَّحِيمُ (2.30-37)

30. Behold, your Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Will You place there one who will make mischief there and shed blood? - whilst we celebrate your praises and glorify your holy (name)?' He said: 'I know what you do not know.' 31. And He taught Adam the names of all things; then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'Tell me the

names of these if you are right.' 32. They said: 'Glory to You, of knowledge we have none, save what You have taught us: In truth it is You who are perfect in knowledge and wisdom.' 33. He said: 'Adam! Tell them their names.' When he had told them, Allah said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?' 34. And behold, We said to the angels: 'Bow down to Adam'. And they bowed down. Not so Iblis: he refused and was haughty: he was of those who reject faith. 35. We said: 'Adam! You and your wife dwell in the Garden; and eat of the bountiful things in it as you wish. But do not approach this tree, or you will run into harm and transgression.' 36. Then Satan made them slip from there, and got them out of what they had been in. We said: 'Go down, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be -your dwelling-place and your means of livelihood, for a time.' 37. Then Adam learnt from his Lord words of inspiration, and his Lord turned towards him; for He is often-returning, most merciful.

Explanation: These verses of Surah Baqarah speak of the creation of man, the high station and destiny intended for him, particularly with reference to his being appointed the Khalifa or vicegerent of Allah on earth, his excellence in knowledge over other creation, including the angels; his endowment with special faculties and abilities, his fall and the hope held out to him.

When Allah informed the angels of the creation of Hazrat Adam, they put a question to Him as to why He wanted to create a being who would shed blood and create mischief in the land. This was not an objection raised by the angels for they could not dare to object to any scheme or plan of Allah. The Quran says: "Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: I will create a vicegerent on earth. They said: "Wilt thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood....." (2: 30)

Allah bestowed knowledge on Hazrat Adam. He told the angels to prostrate before Hazrat Adam. This shows that knowledge granted by Allah is one of the fundamental principles of superiority of man over all other creatures who is then considered capable of being the vicegerent of Allah on earth.

At Allah's command, all the angels prostrated except Iblis who refused to prostrate. Allah condemned Iblis forever for not obeying His orders indicating superiority of Hazrat Adam over Iblis.

The Quran says: "..... Then We bade the angels bow down to Adam and they bowed down; not so Iblis, he refused to be of those who bow down." (7: 11). This has also been mentioned in 15: 30-35, 7: 11-25 and 38: 71-78.

Hazrat Adam and his wife were given permission by Allah to live in the garden of Paradise and eat of its bountiful things. The only prohibition was with regard to eating from a particular tree. The Quran says: "O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden and enjoy (its good things) as ye wish: but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression." (7:19)

Allah had created Hazrat Adam as His vicegerent and he had to follow and enforce His command out of his own understanding and free will and to choose to obey and avoid disobedience to Allah.

The tree was chosen for the purpose of trial to see how far Hazrat Adam and his wife remained constant on obedience to Allah's command. The garden was a very suitable place for this trial because it was meant to show that Paradise alone was a fit place for Allah's vicegerent, but if he yielded to satanic temptations, he would deprive himself of it and would be a loser as a result of his own choice.

Iblis, out of malice and jealousy persuaded Hazrat Adam and his wife to eat the fruit from the forbidden tree which they did. Allah ordered them to go down from Heaven and live on earth where they would find provisions. Allah informed them that Satan is the enemy of man as he beguiles them from the path of Allah to the path of destruction. The Quran says: "(Allah) said: Get ye down, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be your dwelling place and your means of livelihood for a time." (7: 24)

Hazrat Adam realised his mistake and wanted to repent. Allah took pity on him and taught him the words of forgiveness for Allah forgives sins of His servants when they repent.

This shows that man, as created by Allah is innocent and knows no evil. But the faculty of choice which is given to him implies that he has the capacity of evil which he is to reject. He is given a chance in this life to make good and recover the lost state of innocence and bliss through repentance. The Quran says: "If any one does evil, or wrongs his own soul, but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (4: 110)

(Refer also to Surah 2 Section 4, Surah 7 Section 2)

12) Surah An'aam (6: 75-79)

وَكَذِلِكَ نُرِيَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوت السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْفَنِينَ^٥
فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ عَلَيْهِ الَّيْلُ رَأَكُوكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّيٌّ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْأَفْلَئِينَ^٥
فَلَمَّا رَأَ الْقَمَرَ بَازَ غَارًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّيٌّ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَثَنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّيٌّ لَا كُوئَنَ
مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ^٥
فَلَمَّا رَأَ الشَّمْسَ بَازَ غَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّيٌّ هَذَا أَكْبَرُ^٥ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَقُولُمْ إِنِّي
رَبِّيٌّ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ^٥
إِنِّي وَجَهْتُ وَجْهِي لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ^٥ (6: 75-79)

75. So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, so that he might have certainty. 76. When the night covered him over, he saw a star: He said: 'This is my Lord.' But when it set, he said: 'I do not love things that set.' 77. When he saw the moon rising in splendour, he said: 'This is my Lord.' But when the moon set, he said: 'Unless my Lord guides me, I will surely be among those who go astray.' 78. When he saw the sun rising in splendour, he said: 'This is my Lord; this is the greatest.' But when the sun set, he said: 'O my people! I am indeed free from your giving partners to Allah.' 79. 'For me, I have set my face firmly and truly towards Him who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah.'

[Handwritten note: طلاق اور]

Explanation: These verses of Surah An'aam speak of the dispute of Hazrat Ibrahim and his people regarding the absolute unity of Allah and His signs in the rising and setting of the star, the moon and the sun and his declaration of absolute faith in the unity of Allah and total submission to His command. It has been clearly mentioned that Hazrat Ibrahim differed from his people and declared that the heavenly bodies that they worshipped had no divine power at all.

Hazrat Ibrahim was born and bred among a people who had great knowledge of stars and heavenly bodies which they worshipped. It was, therefore, natural that the starting point of his search for truth should be the question. "Can any of these objects really be the Lord and Sustainer?" Therefore, when he saw the star he said: "This is my Lord," but when it set, he immediately declared: "I do not love things that set." He did the same with the moon and the sun.

This is evidently an allusion to Hazrat Ibrahim's gradual grasp of truth and spiritual enlightenment, symbolised by his progress from an adoration of celestial bodies – star, moon and sun to a full realization of Allah's All-Embracing Existence. He was, however, not guilty of *shirk* when seeing these heavenly objects, he said: "This my Lord", because in his search of reality, a seeker has to pass through several stages. It is only when he gets a negative answer at any of these stages that he proceeds further in his research. It should, also not be supposed that he literally worshipped the heavenly bodies which rise and set according to the laws of Allah. Their worship is futile because they are not supreme powers.

The argument of Hazrat Ibrahim was against polytheism and superstitious beliefs of his people to make them understand that these objects could never be things to be worshipped. When Hazrat Ibrahim saw these phenomena of nature, he reflected upon them and came to know the reality. His opponents, on the other hand, saw the signs of Allah everyday, yet did not realize anything – inspite of looking at them.

When the people threatened him on account of his declaration of absolute faith in the unity of Allah, and condemnation of their false deities, he said to

them: "How should I fear (the beings) ye associate with Allah, when ye fear not to give partners to Allah....." (6:81)

Hazrat Ibrahim left his home and never returned because he could not compromise with what was false in religion. He was devoted to Truth and his people cared more about ancestral custom and cults which Hazrat Ibrahim gave up and followed the true way, even at some sacrifice to himself. The Quran says: "Behold! His Lord said to him: "Bow (thy will to Me)". He said, 'I bow (my will) to the Lord and Cherisher of the universe.'" (2: 131)

The Quran says: "Behold Abraham said to his father and his people: "I do indeed clear myself of what ye worship. I worship only Him Who made me and He will certainly guide me. And he left it as a word....." (43: 26-28)

'A word' refers to the gospel of unity i.e., 'never shall I give partners to Allah'. This was Hazrat Ibrahim's teaching and this was his legacy to those who followed him. He hoped that they would keep it secure and uphold the standard of Divine Unity.

13) Surah Maidah (5: 110)

إذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى وَالدِّينِكَ اذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ
بِرُوحِ الْقُدْسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَالْقُرْآنَ وَالْأَنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطَّيْنِ كَهْيَنَةَ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفَخُ فِيهَا
فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُنْبِرِي الْأَكْمَةَ وَلَا يَرْصَدُ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمُؤْتَمِ
بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَّفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَاءِيلَ عَنْكَ اذْ جِئْتُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ (5.110)

Then will Allah say: 'Jesus son of Mary! Recount my favour to you and to your mother. Behold! I strengthened you with the holy spirit, so that you spoke to the people in childhood and in maturity. Behold! I taught you the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel. And behold! You make out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by my leave, and you breathe into it and it becomes a bird by my leave, and you heal those born blind, and the lepers, by my leave. And behold! You bring forth the dead by my leave. And behold! I restrained the Children of Israel from you when you showed them the clear signs, and the unbelievers among them said: 'This is nothing but evident magic.'

Explanation: A scene of the Day of Judgement is described in this verse showing the responsibility and limitations of the prophets of Allah who are sent to preach the message to men with special reference to the message of Hazrat

Isa. Allah will speak to Hazrat Isa recalling all His favours and mercies to him and to his mother, Hazrat Maryam, so that his followers should become ashamed of their ingratitude in corrupting that message when they could have profited by its purity and spiritual truth. This argument continues till the end of the Surah.

The favours specially pertain to the power of miracles granted to Hazrat Isa which established him as the prophet of Allah. The miracles have been described as: Hazrat Isa talked in infancy while still in the cradle with as much clarity as in maturity; he was taught the Book, the wisdom, the law and the gospel, he moulded a lump of clay into the shape of a bird and breathed life into it with Allah's leave; he cured the blind and the lepers and brought the dead to life by Allah's leave.

The word 'by My leave' are repeated with each miracle to emphasize the fact that they arose, not out of the power or will of Hazrat Isa but by the Will and Power of Allah.

Hazrat Maryam was the mother of Hazrat Isa. With a son of virgin birth, she and Hazrat Isa became a miracle to all nations. This does not, however, mean that she or her son were not humans. It is against reason or revelation to call Hazrat Isa the son of Allah. He is called the son of Mary to emphasize this. He had no human father as his birth was a miracle. But it was not this which raised him to high spiritual position as a prophet but because Allah raised him to this stature and gave him spiritual strength and power to perform miracles which were the 'clear signs' which he brought.

The favours mentioned in this verse have also been mentioned at other places in the Quran: "*We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear (Signs) and strengthened him with the Holy spirit.....*" (2: 87) The Holy Spirit with which he was strengthened was the angel who brought revelations to him.

"He shall speak to the people in childhood and maturity....." (3: 46)

This is probably an allusion to the prophetic wisdom which was to inspire Hazrat Isa from a very early age.

"And Allah will teach him the Book and the Wisdom and the law and the Gospel." (3: 48). The law and the gospel were included in the revelation given to Hazrat Isa. Although the Torah was an earlier revelation granted to prophet Moses, it was not abrogated by the gospel, because the prophetic mission of Hazrat Isa was based upon the law of Moses.

The Quran also says: "..... I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave....." (3: 49) This was to intimate to the children of Israel that, Hazrat Isa would fashion for them a higher vision brought to life by the inspiration granted to him by Allah which would become their real destiny.

It is possible that 'bringing forth of the dead' by Hazrat Isa is a metaphorical description of his giving life to people who were spiritually dead.

Similarly, the healing of the blind and the lepers can mean an inner regeneration of people who were spiritually diseased and blind to the truth.

Allah restrained the Jews who disbelieved the prophetic message of Hazrat Isa and his miracles which they called magic, from doing any harm to him. They were seeking to take his life long before their final attempt to crucify him which also failed, according to the Quran: "..... But they killed him not, nor crucified him..... Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself....." (4: 157, 158) (Refer also to Surah 3, sections 5).

14) Surah Duha (93)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالضَّحْكِ
وَاللَّلَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَى
مَا وَدَعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَى
وَلَلَّا خِرَّةُ خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنَ الْأُولَى
وَلَسُوفَ يُعْطِينَكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَى
إِلَمْ يَجِدُكَ يَتَّيِّماً فَأَوَى
وَوَجَدَكَ ضَائِلاً فَهَدَى
وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلاً فَأَغْنَى
فَامَّا الْيَتَيْمَ فَلَا تَقْهِرْهُ
وَامَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهِرْهُ
وَامَّا بِنْعَمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثُ⁽⁹³⁾

1. By the glorious morning light, 2. And by the night when it is still, 3. Your Lord has not forsaken you, nor is he displeased. 4. And truly the Hereafter will be better for you than the present. 5. And soon your Lord will give you so that you will be pleased. 6. Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter? 7. And He found you wandering, and He gave you guidance. 8. And He found you in need, and made you independent. 9. Therefore, do not treat the orphan with harshness, 10. Nor drive the beggar away; 11. But tell about the bounty of your Lord!

Explanation: Several traditions show that revelation to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had remained suspended for some time. The period was so long that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} became anxious and distressed and the unbelievers began to say that his Lord had forsaken him. This was a dark period in the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh}

life because the link with Allah through Hazrat Jibrail's visit was his only comfort and support in the face of rejection. The revelations were the sources from which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} derived strength to stand steadfast against the unbelievers who were bent upon directing a wicked and vile attack against the Prophet's^{pbuh} call to faith and guidance.

This Surah was sent down to remove his anxiety and distress and to tell him that his Lord had neither forsaken him nor was He displeased with him. If the Prophet^{pbuh} had been constantly exposed to the light of revelation, his nerves would not withstand it. Allah had provided a break so that the effects of revelation passed away and complete peace was restored to him. It had nothing to do with Allah being pleased with him when He sent down a revelation and displeased when he suspended it. In other words, rising of the sun of revelation is analogous to the bright day and the period of break to the stillness and peace of night.

It also gives good news to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} that the hardships that he was facing in the initial stages of his mission would not last long. He is told to hold the present of less account than the Hereafter which awaited him like the glorious morning after a night of stillness. The Hereafter was not only in the future life, but his later life on earth which would be full of victory and satisfaction when Allah will bless him so abundantly that he would be well pleased.

This Surah, although addressed to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, has a far wider purpose; it is meant to console every faithful believer suffering from sorrows and bitter hardships of this life.

Reference is also made here to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} being an orphan and Allah's favour to make arrangements to help him in that state, therefore, in gratitude, he should see that no poor or orphan is treated harshly.

Another favour of Allah, was the guidance bestowed upon the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} when he was wandering in search of truth.

Still, another favour of Allah was the true, pure and sincere love of Hazrat Khadija which not only raised him above want, but made him independent of worldly needs, enabling him to devote his time to the service of Allah.

Lastly, the Surah advises the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to proclaim the bounties of Allah by acknowledging that all bounties received are due to His grace and favour and share them with others.

15) Surah Kausar (108)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ
فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْهَرْ
إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ (108)

1. To you have We granted abundance.
2. So pray to your Lord and sacrifice.
3. For he who hates you, he will be cut off.

Explanation: Surah Kausar sums up the doctrine of spiritual riches through devotion and sacrifice. The opposite also follows: indulgence in hatred means the cutting off of all hopes in this life and the Hereafter. The Surah is addressed first to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and through him to every believer.

At the time of the revelation of this Surah, the enemies thought that Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} had been completely ruined. He was cut off from the community and had become utterly helpless as his male children, who would carry on his name, were dead and the message he had presented was accepted by only a few people. At this Allah said: "*To thee have we granted the Fount (of abundance).*"

The fountain is the abundant bounty granted to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} of all that is good in the spiritual sense like prophethood and revelation, grace and knowledge, truth and wisdom, mercy and goodness, spiritual power and insight. This also includes a river or fountain in heaven of this name which will be granted to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} on the Day of Judgement and out of which the righteous will drink water.

With reference to the believers, *Kausar* signifies the ability to acquire knowledge, to do good work, to be kind to all beings and thus, to attain inner peace and dignity.

He, who grants these blessings is Allah and therefore, we must turn to Him in adoration and thanksgiving and offer sacrifice for His sake alone and this command was given when worship of gods and goddesses was common. The Quran says: "*Say: Truly my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds.*" (6: 162)

The 'sacrifice' is symbolic. Behind it is a deep spiritual meaning: the slaughtered meat feeds the poor and slaughter is a symbol of self-sacrifice in our hearts as the Quran says: "*It is not their meat nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him.....*" (22: 37)

Lastly, there is a curse for non-fulfillment of hopes and evil designs for the opponents of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} for all times to come.

Hatred and spite are not constructive contributions to the work of this world, but its opposite. The enemies of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} vented their hatred and spite against him by taunting him with the loss of his two infant sons by Hazrat Khadija, calling him *abtar*, i.e. one who is cut off. A few years later however these enemies of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} were themselves cut off from hope in this world and the next. Millions of Muslims all over the world follow and obey the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Besides this, his generation also carried on through his daughter, Hazrat Fatima.

The History and Importance of the Quran

Introduction

The Quran is the sacred Book of the Muslims and the foundation of Islam. It is the last Divine scripture, revealed to Holy Prophet, Muhammad^{pbuh}, over a period of twenty-three years, through Hazrat Jibrail. It was revealed in portions, every portion being written and committed to memory as soon as it was revealed.

The Arabic word for revelation is **Wahi** derived from the word 'awha' which means to inform secretly. It is the vehicle of Divine Guidance and the message revealed to His Messengers to preach and guide the people. The angel entrusted with revelation to be conveyed to the Messengers is Hazrat Jibrail or the Holy Spirit.

The Quran talks about revelation being sent not only to Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}, but also to other prophets who came before him. Revelations mentioned in the Quran include Sahifas of Hazrat Ibrahim and Hazrat Noah, Taurat of Hazrat Musa, Zabur of Hazrat Daud, Injeel of Hazrat Isa and Quran of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}.

The word 'Quran' is derived from the root Qara'a which means he read or recited.

The word Quran is mentioned frequently in the Book itself. According to scholars, it has fifty-five other names derived from various Quranic verses. Some of them are:

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1) Al-Kitab | - | The Book |
| 2) Al-Furqan | - | The Distinction between Truth and Falsehood. |
| 3) Al-Nur | - | The Light |
| 4) Al-Shifa | - | The Healing |
| 5) Al-Huda | - | The Guidance |
| 6) Al-Hikmat | - | The Wisdom |
| 7) Al-Rahmat | - | The Mercy |
| 8) Al-Khair | - | The Goodness |
| 9) Al-Haq | - | The Truth |
| 10) Al-Majid | - | The Glorious |

The Quran was not revealed as a complete book nor did Allah hand over a written copy of it to Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} at the beginning of his mission and

commanded him to publish it and invite people to follow his teachings. Allah revealed the Quran from time to time to meet the changing situations and requirements of the young Muslim community.

Although the basic teachings of the earlier scriptures and the Holy Quran on the Oneness of Allah, negation of polytheism and man's moral and religious responsibilities have a noticeable similarity, yet these scriptures met the needs of a specific period of people in human history. They were not suited to respond to the requirements of all humanity and failed to meet the complex requirements of later times.

The Quran, in contrast, is a complete code of life and a comprehensive Book which provides guidance in all spheres of human activity and its teachings apply to all times, conditions and requirements of mankind.

The Quran is divided into 114 chapters, each of which is called a **Surah** which means a degree or step, by which we climb up. Sometimes, whole Surahs were revealed and sometimes portions, which were arranged under the Prophet's ^{pbuH} directions. The Surahs are of different lengths, the longest one is Surah Baqarah, while Surah Kausar, with only three ayats, is the shortest.

All the Surahs, with the exception of the last thirty-five are divided into sections – **Ruku**, each section generally dealing with one subject.

The Surahs are made up of **ayats** which means a sign or a communication from Allah.

Every chapter of the Quran begins with 'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful' with the exception of the ninth i.e., Surah Taubah.

For the purpose of recitation, the Quran is divided into thirty equal parts-**Juz-** each of these being again sub-divided into four equal parts. Another division is into seven portions -**Manzil**-which is designed for the completion of its recital in seven days.

Characteristics of the Holy Quran

The Holy Quran is the greatest gift of Allah to mankind. Its purpose is to guide humanity to the straight path, to awaken human conscience and to enlighten the human mind. Its instructions are aimed at the general welfare of human beings.

Allah speaks of the Quran as a spirit of life and as a light by which His servants are guided to the straight path. He says: "..... but We have made the (Quran) a light, wherewith we guide such of Our servants as We will"

(42: 52)

It is the actual word of Allah and it is beyond human imagination to produce anything like it. Some of the Holy Prophet's ^{pbuH} contemporaries were the greatest masters of Arabic language, but they could not produce anything like the Quran either in content or in style. The Quran says: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not

produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support." (17: 88)

Allah has perfected His religion for all mankind with the revelation of this Book. He says: "..... *This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.*" (5: 3)

The Holy Quran is a complete and comprehensive Book, clearly defining the permitted and forbidden, the lawful and the unlawful as the Quran itself confirms: "..... *Nothing have We omitted from the Book*" (6: 38)

And also: "..... *And We have sent down to thee a Book explaining all things.....*" (16: 89)

The Quran is spiritual guidance for man, his system of law, his code of ethics and above all, his way of life. It embraces all walks of life and covers the entire field of human affairs, whether spiritual, intellectual, political, social or economic. It is a code that has no boundaries and barriers of time, place or nation.

One of the major characteristic of the Quran is that in its wisdom there is a moving force that provokes the mind and stirs, as is evident from the fact that when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} first started to preach, his only power was the Quranic wisdom through which he attracted people to Islam.

The Quran characterizes moderation, harmony between the material and spiritual, the individual and collective. The Quran pays attention to all the needs of man and deals with them in such a way as to help him realize the noble objectives of his being. Because of this approach of moderation, the Quran calls the Muslims, a 'middle nation' and the best people, evolved for mankind, to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. (3: 110)

This unique Book enjoys the distinction of being authentic, pure and original both in its contents and order, a quality which no other book of any kind can claim. It stands today as it first came down, over 1400 years ago, and shall always remain to be so as Allah has promised to safeguard it from any violations in its purity: "*We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)*" (15: 9)

Makki and Madni Surahs

The revelation of the Quran to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} started during the month of Ramazan. The first revelation consisted of the first five ayats of the 96th Surah i.e., Surah Alaq or Iqra. Thereafter, there was a gap after which angel Jibrail appeared and recited the first few ayats of the 74th Surah (Surah Mudassir) to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. After this, revelations continued in Makkah and Madinah for twenty-three years.

The Surahs of the Holy Quran are either Makki or Madni according to the period of their revelation. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} lived for the first thirteen years of his mission at Makkah and during this period all surahs are known as Makki.

Thereafter, he migrated to Madinah and all surahs revealed during the ten years of his life at Madinah are known as Madni Surahs.

The Makki surahs are generally brief. They deal with belief in Allah, the Day of Judgement, reward and punishment, heaven and hell. They deal with moral character and contain invitation to virtue. On the other hand, the Madni surahs contain social duties and obligations, permission of Jihad and commands relating to it. These surahs are generally lengthy.

Since, the Islamic state was established in Madinah and from there invitation to Islam was extended to different nations, the style of address adopted in Madni surahs was also different from that of the Makki surahs. In Makkah, the people were enemies of Islam and their purpose was to torture the Holy Prophet and the believers. Therefore, in Makki surahs, the language used was stronger. For example, in ayat 33 of surah 6 it is said: "*We know indeed the grief which their words do cause thee.*" In ayat 34 of the same surah it is said: "*And messengers indeed were rejected before thee.*"

In Makkah, generally the ayats revealed were related to opposition of the unbelievers, for which the hearts of the Holy Prophet and the believers were strengthened and they were asked to forgive.

In Madinah, the situation was different. Here, three groups of people were living:

- 1) Muslims i.e. Muhajirin and Ansar
- 2) Hypocrites
- 3) Jews

As far as the Jews were concerned, the Quran gave them the invitation to accept the message of Allah. The hypocrites were condemned and their cunning schemes were exposed. The principles for governing the socio-political and financial lives of Muslims were laid down.

If the orders such as payment of Zakat were given at Makkah it would have made no sense because most of the Muslims there had no wealth or status and were few in number. Similarly, on account of fear of their lives at the hands of the unbelievers, they were not ordered to offer their prayers openly at Makkah. They were also not in a position to fight and that was why no orders for Jihad were given at Makkah.

Commands were therefore, given at Makkah and Madinah keeping in view the general conditions of the Muslims on one hand and that of the forces opposing them, on the other.

Revelation of the Quran between 610 and 632 A.D.

As he approached the age of forty, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} started retiring into a cave in a nearby mountain known as Hira where he would spend his time in worship and solitude. His favourite time of retreat was the month of Ramazan.

One day, Hazrat Jibrail appeared before him while he was meditating and asked him to read. The experience was narrated by Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} in the following words: "*He (Jibrail) seized me and squeezed me to such extent that I was exhausted.*" (Bukhari) This was repeated thrice after which the angel recited the following five verses of Surah Alaq also known as Surah Iqra:

*"Proclaim (or read) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created.
Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood.
Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,
He who taught (the use of) the pen.
Taught man that which he knew not."* (96: 1-5)

Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} recited these verses after the angel and the words were imprinted on his mind. This was the first revelation and the beginning of Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}.

The effect of exhaustion was still upon the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} after he reached home. He had to lie down covering himself before he could relate to Hazrat Khadija what had taken place. She comforted him and took him to her cousin, Warqa bin Naufil, who was a scholarly person and had embraced Christianity. He confirmed that it was the same angel who had brought revelations to previous messengers.

From this time onwards, that is about 610 A.D. the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} continued to receive revelations throughout the rest of his life, for a period of about twenty three years. The last revelation received by him was in the plain of Arafat after he performed Hajj and delivered the sermon: "..... *This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.....*" (5: 3)

When a revelation came, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} experienced different sensations. He heard ringing sounds, he perspired in the cold, he became so heavy that the animal he was riding on and his companions could feel the weight of his body.

When a companion once asked of the Prophet ^{pbuh} how a revelation came to him, he replied: "*It comes to me sometimes as the ringing of a bell and this is hardest on me, then he (the angel) leaves me and I remember from him what he says; and sometimes the angel comes in the shape of a man and he talks to me and I remember what he says.*" (Bukhari)

Hazrat Aisha, his wife says: "I saw revelation coming down upon him in the severest cold and when that condition was over, perspiration ran down his forehead." (Bukhari)

A companion relates that he was sitting with his leg under the leg of the Prophet^{pbuh}. A revelation came at that moment and he felt his leg would crush under the weight. (Bukhari)

The Quran was revealed in portions but it did not remain long in that condition. Though it could not be completed until the last verse was revealed, it was

never without some form of arrangement and every verse and chapter was given its place in the Book.

Whenever, a revelation was received by the Prophet pbuh, he would summon one of his literate companions and dictate the text to him. He would then ask him to read what he had written. This was to ensure perfect accuracy. He would also ask them to memorize the verses in order to recite them in their daily prayers.

The Quran was written on thin and flat tablets of stone, wood, branches of palm trees, bones of camels and goats and on pieces of leather.

The verses and chapters of the Holy Quran were not compiled in the order of revelation, for example, the first five verses of Surah Alaq are the first in order of revelation, but they are placed in the 96th chapter whereas, the chapters which appear at the beginning of the Quran were revealed at Madinah after the Prophet's pbuh migration. The arrangement of the different verses and chapters of the Quran was done under the guidance of Hazrat Jibrail. According to Hazrat Usman every portion of the Quran was written down and given its specified place at the bidding of the Prophet pbuh. It was customary with the Messenger of Allah that when verses of different chapters were revealed to him or when any chapter was revealed, he would call one of his scribes and say to him: "*Write this verse in the chapter where such and such verses occur.*" (Ahmad)

The Quran did exist in a written form but no complete copy of it existed at the time, nor could such a copy be made while the Prophet pbuh was alive and still receiving revelations. The whole Quran in one arrangement was safely preserved in the memories of the reciters. It was the practice of the Holy Prophet pbuh to recite loudly the text of the Quran, revealed so far every year, during the month of Ramazan. Those companions who had written it down would bring out their manuscripts and compare it with the version of the Holy Prophet pbuh so that they could check the text and order of the chapters.

In the last year of his life, a few months before his death, the Holy Prophet pbuh read out the complete text of the Quran twice. This is how the Divine Message was recorded in scriptural form and learnt by heart to be preserved for the coming generations.

COMPILATION OF THE QURAN UNDER THE RIGHTLY GUIDED KHALIFAS

Under the first Khalifa, Hazrat Abu Bakr

At the time of the Prophet's pbuh death no official copy of the Quran existed and perhaps no one possessed the complete written text. However, an incident occurred, after which the companions felt the necessity to collect and compile the text of the Quran.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr some people in the country declared themselves to be prophets. Among them was Musailma. Hazrat Abu Bakr waged a war against him and many companions who had committed the Holy Quran to memory were martyred in that battle, known as the battle of Yamamah.

Hazrat Umar realized that those who had memorized the Quran would gradually depart from the world either owing to natural death or martyrdom in future battles. It was therefore, necessary for the government to devise a system to preserve the Quran for future generations or else it would meet the same fate as the previous scriptures and the Muslims would be deprived of a great part of the Quran.

Hazrat Umar suggested to Hazrat Abu Bakr that the Quran should be compiled. Hazrat Abu Bakr, however, hesitated and said that he would not do the job left unfinished by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Hazrat Umar argued that under the circumstances, the compilation of the Quran had become an absolute necessity. According to Hazrat Abu Bakr, "Umar went on persuading me to accept his suggestion till I was convinced that he was right so I accepted his suggestion."

Hazrat Abu Bakr directed Zaid bin Sabit, one of the scribes of Divine Revelation to collect the Quranic verses from every part of the Islamic empire and compile them in book form. Zaid bin Sabit is reported to have said that when Hazrat Abu Bakr asked him to start the work, he felt it would be far easier to carry a mountain on his head than to shoulder such a great responsibility. Hazrat Abu Bakr persuaded him every now and then until his opinion also became identical with his opinion.

A commission was appointed headed by Zaid bin Sabit and its members comprised a number of companions. At least twenty or twenty five Companions who had committed the Quran to memory were alive at that time.

Zaid bin Sabit traced out and collected the chapters of the Quran from every person who had it in their possession. He collected it from palm leaves, stones, pieces of wood and people who had committed it to memory.

Zaid bin Sabit was not content just finding a written piece of the Quran. He also verified it from those people who had heard it from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Though he himself was a Hafiz of the Quran, he always tried to find a verse in writing before including it in his manuscript, so that the version of the Quran he recorded was the one heard from and written under the supervision of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

The script prepared by Zaid bin Sabit remained with the first Khalifa and after his death was transferred to the custody of Hazrat Umar, the second Khalifa. After his death, the script was transferred to Hazrat Hafsa, a widow of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. This copy of the Quran came to be known as **Mashaf al -Hafsa** i.e., Hafsa's copy of the Holy Book.



Under the third Khalifa, Hazrat Usman

The Khilafat of Hazrat Umar saw a phase of quick conquests. Imam Bukhari has narrated on the authority of Anas bin Malik that after the conquest of Syria and Iraq, new converts of these countries recited the Quran in different ways. This disturbed Hazrat Anas who went to Hazrat Usman, the successor of Hazrat Umar and requested him to take immediate action for the removal of these differences, otherwise it might create a rift among the Muslims.

Accordingly Hazrat Usman acquired the copy of the Quran prepared by Zaid bin Sabit from Hazrat Hafsa. He appointed Zaid bin Sabit alongwith three other knowledgeable Muslims who assisted to make copies of the Quran from the original text. They were told to follow the dialect of the Quraish in case of differences over the language, as the Quran had been revealed in that dialect.

The Quran was read out loudly from the beginning to the end in the Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque from these copies of the Quran, so that not a shadow of doubt remained in the mind of anyone that changes had been introduced in the Quran. These copies were then despatched to the capital city of every province of the Muslim States with instructions that in future copies should be made only from the official authentic text. Hazrat Usman also ordered that if anyone had a copy with a different text, it was to be destroyed by fire.

Hazrat Usman is known as **Jami-al-Quran**. This means that he brought the Muslims around to a uniform reading of the Quran. The Quran that is being read today is the same as in the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr. Nothing has been added or deleted from it. The arrangement of the chapters and verses are in the same order as proclaimed by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, in accordance with Divine instructions.

Use of Quran in Legal Thinking

Islam is built on the foundation of faith, but its edifice is held together by the cementing force of law which is based upon submission to the Divine Will.

In other words, it is Allah Whose Will is the primary source of law in a Muslim society and, when such a society comes into existence, the Quran and the Messenger prescribe for it a code of life called the Shāriah.

In essence, all of Sharīah is contained in the Quran. It is the primary, original and fundamental source from which all principles, ordinances and injunctions of Islam are drawn. It contains a set of juridical injunctions which are the basis of Islamic law and which concern the life of human beings in every detail.

From the Quranic point of view, Sovereignty belongs to Allah and therefore, the law formulated by Him in the form of the Quran is the fundamental law according to which He wants a Muslim to live both in his private and social life. It provides for him the knowledge of right and wrong, of the difference between the straight path and that which leads him astray.

The Quranic law deals with beliefs, morality, worship, civil transactions, punishment for intentional injury to the human body, property and honour; murder; breach of public peace such as robbery; offences against religion such as non-payment of Zakat; against indecency; adultery; use of intoxicants; gambling and offences against the established government such as rebellion.

The Quran lays down rules and regulations relating to social life, commerce, and economics, marriage and inheritance, penal laws and international conduct. It lays down injunctions to arbitrate with justice, not to offer bribes, to give true evidence and to give full weights and measure; "*Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight.....*" (17: 35)

Contracts are safeguarded by commands to put them in writing, to fulfill one's undertakings, to return a trust or deposit to its owner and not eat up the property of orphans: "*Come not nigh to the orphan's property except to improve it.....*" (17: 34)

And: "*Those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, eat up a fire into their own bodies.....*" (4: 10)

The law of war deals with the distribution of booty and the treatment of the conquered people in a fair and just manner.

On social matters, it deals with institutions like marriage and divorce. Family law is fairly exhaustive and here the main emphasis is laid on behaviour towards women, orphans, relatives, slaves and dependents.

In matters of inheritance, the Quran lays down regulations for a just distribution of wealth left behind by a deceased person. Theft is prohibited and its punishment is laid down. Drinking wine, games of chance and charging interest are prohibited without a penalty being fixed. There are laws concerning false accusations, blood money and retaliation: "*We ordained therein for them; Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth and wounds equal for equal.....*" (5: 45)

The reasons for Quranic legislation on these matters was to settle questions that actually arose for decision as also to repeal objectionable customs like infanticide, gambling, usury, unlimited polygamy and dissatisfaction with the prevailing Arabian standards of behaviour. Some Quranic Laws were brought in for effecting social reforms such as raising the legal status of women, settling the question of succession and inheritance, providing protection for the rights of orphans and minors and some to lay down the principles of punishment for the purpose of securing peace and order in society. Some verses were revealed in order to give details for rules that had already been revealed, for example it is said: "..... lawful unto you (for food) are all four footed animals with the exception named....." (5: 1) Further in 5: 3, it gives a list specifying exactly the exception to which the earlier verse refers.

The Quranic law is perpetual and everlasting. It does not change with the passage of time. It is complete and final because no aspect of human life has

been left without guidance and nothing more is needed to supplement all that is provided by it. The Quran says: "..... Nothing have We omitted from the Book" (6: 38)

And also: "... and We have sent down to thee a Book explaining all things....." (16: 89)

It is the only law that concerns human life till its ultimate end in the Hereafter. Moreover, its laws are in keeping with the exact nature of human life, obviously, because it is from the Creator Who knows the nature and needs of His creation.

Significance of the Quran as the basis of all Thought and Action in Islam

The Holy Quran is a sacred and pure scripture revealed by Allah, the Supreme Being, and is not an ordinary Book. It is a Book of warnings, directives and instructions revealed for the guidance and betterment of mankind for all times under all conditions and requirements. The Quran says:

"Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion to His servant, that it may be an admonition to all creatures." (25: 1)

The central theme and subject which runs through the Quran is the designation of man as Allah's vicegerent. It talks of the origin of man, the structure of the earth and heavens. It talks about civilizations and criticizes the conduct of different nations.

The Quran contains directives for the head of the state as well as a common man, for the rich as well as the poor, for peace as well as for war, for spiritual well being as well as for material prosperity. It gives commands to educate and convince people about the validity and usefulness of its injunctions. It appeals to the reason of man and invites him to exercise his own intellect in order to understand himself, his position and purpose in life, his conduct with his fellow beings and his relationship with his Creator.

The Holy Quran lays down rules and regulations relating to social life, commerce and economics; marriage and inheritance, penal laws and international conduct. It reveals the fundamental truth of religion, for example, the existence and Unity of Allah without any association, the inevitability of life after death, the existence of Heaven and Hell, the necessity of revelation etc.

In matters of religion, the Quran talks about the pillars of Islam for example, it says: "And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith), to establish regular prayer; and to practice regular charity; and that is the religion right and straight." (98: 5)

The Holy Quran also offers solutions to the most difficult problems of this life and provides answers to those questions upon which depends the happiness and advancement of mankind. It is not only a source of guidance for the spiritual

good of the Hereafter, but also for the physical and social good attainable in this world. At the individual level, it teaches good conduct, discusses Islamic ethics, treatment of neighbours, orphans, wayfarers, poor and needy members of the society. It provides us with details for the refinement of the individual and also for peaceful and congenial relations with other human beings.

We find in the Quran injunctions to arbitrate with justice, not to offer bribes, to give true evidence and to give full weight and measure. Contracts are safeguarded by commands to put them in writing, to fulfill one's undertakings and to return a trust or deposit to its owner. The Quran provides laws that govern war which deal with the distribution of the booty and the treatment of the conquered people.

On social matters, the Holy Quran deals with institutions like marriage and divorce. Family law is fairly exhaustive and here, the main emphasis is laid on behaviour towards women, orphans, relatives, slaves and dependents. In matters of inheritance, the Quran lays down regulations on how to proceed with regard to the estate of the deceased person. Theft is prohibited and punishment is prescribed. Drinking wine, games of chance and charging interest are prohibited without a penalty being fixed. There are laws concerning retaliation and blood money, false accusations and highway robbery. Injustice even to an enemy is prohibited; rights and properties of others are to be protected and human dignity is to be respected.

The Quran is basically a Book of guidance. The guidance is to make people understand and act, according to the principles it lays down and that is the reason why it also carries with it the promise of reward for obedience and warning of punishment for disobedience.

The only way to achieve overall success in this world as well as in the Hereafter is to follow completely and sincerely the guidance the Quran has provided and regulate our lives in accordance with its commands:

"Verily this Quran doth guide to that which is most right (or stable)"
(17: 9)

Interpretation of the Quran – Tafsir

The Arabic word Tafsir is derived from *Fasara* which means to explain, to open, to unveil or to discover something hidden. In the Islamic terminology, Tafsir means interpretation of the Holy Quran.

Tafsir consists of explaining the difficult words and phrases including grammatical construction of the sentences, purpose of revelations, unique features of the Holy Quran, examples, events and oaths quoted by the Holy Quran, commands relating to the obligatory, permitted and forbidden things and fundamental beliefs.

The best Tafsir of a verse of the Quran is usually given in the Quran itself for whatever is stated briefly or merely hinted at, in one place, will be found

expanded and fully explained elsewhere in it. For example verse 1 of Surah Maidah says: “..... *Lawful unto you (for food) are all four footed animals with the exceptions named.....*”. In verse 3 of the same surah the exceptions mentioned in the earlier verse are given in detail.

Similarly, there are some commands which have been superseded by subsequent commands, for example, the command: “*O ye who believe! Approach not prayers with a mind befogged.....*” (4: 43) is superseded by a subsequent command which bans the use of wine completely. (5: 90) In such cases, it is very important for the interpreter of the Quran to know the verses which had been overtaken and which had overtaken them to explain the teachings of the Quran on a particular issue.

In the Holy Quran, there are ayats whose meaning is manifest and decisive and which form the basis of the book for example, commands relating to the fundamental principles of religion i.e., Unity of Allah, Prayers, Prophethood, Revealed Books, Angels, Day of Judgement, permitted and forbidden things as well as those ayats whose meaning is not clear and which are beyond human understanding for example, the Personality of Allah, Life after Death etc.

Thus it can be said that there are two kinds of verses in the Quran, namely, the decisive and allegorical – the latter being those which can have different interpretations.

The important principle to be borne in mind in the interpretation of the Quran is that it should not be in conflict with another passage and more specially with the basic principles laid down in the decisive verses.

The Quran also takes oaths of many things for example olives, fig, heaven, stars, winds, time etc. Explanation of the purpose of these oaths also falls within the scope of Tafsir.

Tafsir is either based upon the traditions of the Holy Prophet, opinion of his companions and successors of the companions or on logical reasoning. The second kind of Tafsir is only approved if it is not in conflict with the Quran and Sunnah.

Ijma

In legal terminology **Ijma** means ‘consensus of opinion of the learned in Islamic jurisprudence.’ It may be defined as the rule governing the Shariah which is the outcome of the consensus of Muslim jurists on a particular question of law within the limits laid down by the Quran and the Sunnah.

The commandments which stand proved by revelation are not many but the incidents that occur in day to day life are innumerable. The answers are to be determined by the Quran and Sunnah, otherwise the perfection of religion could be questioned.

The Quranic text: “..... *This day have I perfected your religion for you.....*” (5: 3) lays down that Allah has completed the religion of Islam, that it will last

forever and that Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} is the last of the prophets. In the Quran, however, only a few rules of law have been enunciated and these are not sufficient to cover the questions and problems that arise from day to day. If we add to this the fact that the guidance of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is not there, it necessarily follows that any rule of law, which is not found to be clearly laid down in the Quran and by the precepts of the Prophet^{pbuh} must be capable of being deduced from them.

As Ijma draws its sanction from the Quran and the Sunnah, it is generally considered to be a decisive authority and establishes a rule of law with certainty. There remains no room for doubt, debate or disagreement when it is confirmed by Ijma. The authority of Ijma as a source of Islamic law is founded on certain Quranic and traditional texts. It owes its origin to the principle of mutual consultation – **Shura** – prescribed by the Quran which instructs the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}: “..... and consult them in affairs (of moment)” (3: 159)

One of the qualities of the believers as described by the Holy Quran is “..... who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation.....” (42: 38)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} supported the principle of Ijma when he said: “If anything comes to you for decision, decide according to the Book of Allah. If anything comes to you which is not in Book of Allah, then look to the Sunnah of the Prophet^{pbuh}. If anything comes to you which is not in the Sunnah of the Prophet^{pbuh}, then look to what people unanimously agree upon.” (Abu Daud)

In reply to Hazrat Ali as to how to proceed in cases when there was no definite direction in the Holy Quran or the Sunnah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: “Gather together the righteous from among my community and decide the matter by their counsel and do not decide it by any man's opinion.” (Abu Daud) This seems to be the reason why the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} consulted his companions, sometimes following their opinion, sometimes setting it aside.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} opinion was authoritative in respect of religio-legal affairs and not on questions covering worldly benefits, for example, the decision of the Prophet^{pbuh} in matters of war was considered right if he was inspired by Divine Revelation. In case, it was based on his personal opinion, he did not persist and changed his opinion. Madinah was attacked thrice by the Quraish and every time the Prophet^{pbuh} held consultations with his followers about the best way to repel the enemy. On one of these occasions, he acted upon the opinion of the majority and marched out of Madinah to meet the enemy, although his own opinion was that the Muslim army should not leave the town. During the battle of Trench, he had a trench dug around Madinah on the advice of Salman Farsi.

In the early centuries of Islam, Ijma was identified with the Ijma of the community at large. The first four Khalifas of Islam are reported to have conducted the affairs of the state by consulting the intelligent and responsible

people. Generally, they followed the majority opinion. This was easy because of the fact that the companions were few and it was easy for them to agree amongst themselves.

The four Sunni schools of law hold Ijma to be a valid source of law. It is an essential principle of Islamic jurisprudence. The Muslim community was called upon to solve the first and most important constitutional problem that arose soon after the Prophet's ^{pbuh} death, namely, the selection of the spiritual and executive head of the community. Hazrat Abu Bakr was elected the Khalifa of the Muslim community after the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} with consensus of the companions.

The Quran was compiled in a book form on the suggestion of Hazrat Umar and by Ijma of the companions. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Usman, Azan for Friday prayers could not be heard due to noise in the markets. It was, therefore, decided after Ijma by the companions that another call should be given.

Ijma is of three types:

1. Ijma or consensus of the Companions of the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} which is also universally accepted and binding and is therefore, unchangeable.
2. Ijma of the jurists.
3. Ijma of the people, i.e., general body of the Muslim community.

As regards the last two, the jurists, particularly Imam Abu Hanifa, are of the view that they cannot be confined or limited to any particular age or country, and therefore, Ijma of one age can be modified by Ijma of the same or subsequent age.

In the present political conditions the division of the Muslim community into a number of states has created problems for the formation of Ijma. There are problems that are of purely religious nature and require the consent of the universal community; others relate to a local situation in a Muslim country. The procedure of reaching Ijma in the first case may be discussed on an international level in a meeting of experts who represent different Muslim countries that will be regarded as permanent when confirmed by the universal community. As to the Ijma on questions of a local situation in a particular Muslim country, the experts may form a consensus by discussions that will be of a temporary nature. This may be confirmed or rejected in course of time by the will of the local community.

Qiyas (Analogy)

The knowledge which is deduced from the principles laid down in the Quran and Hadis by use of analogical deductions is known as Qiyas, which is the fourth source of Islamic law.

The root meaning of the word **Qiyas** is measuring or equality. It originates from a verb that means to measure one thing by comparing with another thing

Another example is that of Wuzu, which is not valid even if the smallest also distract Muslims from Friday prayers.

The Quran forbids sales transactions after the call for Friday prayers. By analogy all kinds of transactions have been forbidden, because like sales, they and give the money to him which would be of more use to him.

a goat to a poor man would be of no use to him so it is allowed to sell the goat he said that one goat must be given out as Zakat on every forty goats. Giving Prophet^{pbu} explained how it should be given. For example, for Zakat. The Holy they are also declared haram. The Quran asks us to give Zakat. "Every intoxicant is Khamr, so every intoxicant is Haram." Since these drugs are highly intoxicating, been made about them. However, the Prophet^{pbu} said: "Every intoxicant is opium were not known during the time of the Prophet^{pbu}, no mention has might be understood to include other intoxicants. As drugs like cocaine and Quran or Hadis. Thus, if the Quran prohibited the use of wine, the prohibition Qiyas or analogy was a principle of extension of Islamic law on the basis of a likeness in two situations, one of which was specially provided for in the legal deductions and no one doubted its legality.

The companions of the Prophet^{pbu} also employed analogy for purposes of should be performed by the heirs of a deceased person.

show that an undiscarded religious obligation of the nature of pilgrimage, Here the argument is that the Prophet^{pbu} used the analogy of debt to a debt?" The Prophet^{pbu} replied: "What do you think you would do if your father died owing means, had died without performing pilgrimage, it is necessary that it should be performed on behalf of the deceased, for the benefit of his soul. The For instance, he was once asked by a man, whose father though possessed of The Prophet^{pbu} himself relied on analogy in determining questions of law.

"then use your personal opinion." (Abu Daud, Tirmizi)

you need, upon the Sunnah of the Prophet and if you do not find in that also, Abu Musa Ashari: "Judge upon the Book of Allah, if you do not find in what according to another tradition, the Holy Prophet^{pbu} is reported to have told the delegate of His prophet as to be able to satisfy him." (Abu Daud, Tirmizi)

Prophet^{pbu} thereupon exclaimed: "Praise be to Allah, Who has so disposed them?" "I will do my best by exercising my judgment," Mu'az replied. The The Prophet^{pbu} enquired, "But if you do not find any precedent from me, what guides you?" "I will decide in the way the Prophet has been doing," he answered. The Prophet^{pbu} then asked: "And if you do not find anything therein to cases?" Mu'az answered: "By what is in the Book of Allah."

The Prophet^{pbu} is reported to have asked him, "How are you going to decide Prophet^{pbu} and Mu'az bin Jabaal, on his appointment as the Governor of Yemen. Such resort to reasoning has its origin in the conundrum between the Holy an existing situation for which legislation already exists.

that is similar to it. It is the legal method which uses human reasoning to compare

portion of the body which has to be washed remains dry. According to a tradition, reported by Hazrat Aisha, that if flour dries on the nails and water has not reached any portion of that nail, Wuzu would not have been considered to have taken place. Going by this tradition, with the application of nail polish, Wuzu would be incomplete, as the nails remain dry.

It is admitted by Sunni jurists that the law for the guidance of Muslims in every matter is found either in the Quran or in the Hadis and Sunnah. They point out that laws on some questions have been laid down in clear terms but for some the Quran gives indications from which inferences have to be drawn. However, all agree that in matters, the answers to which have not been provided by a Quranic or a traditional text, nor determined by consensus of opinion, the law may be deduced from what has been laid down by any of these three authorities by the use of Qiyas. Qiyas is thus a source of law which is subordinate and subsidiary to the Quran, Hadis and Ijma. It must be applied only when there is no solution to the matter in the Quran or in the Hadis. It must not go against the contents of the Quran or the principles of Islam, neither should it be in conflict with the traditions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Quran, Hadis, Ijma & Qiyas

The Holy Quran provides fundamental laws in respect of beliefs, prayer, morality, finances as well as political setup of society. As regards beliefs and morality, the laws provided by the Holy Quran are complete, final and exhaustive for all times to come. For the financial and political setup of human society, however, the position is different.

The Holy Quran has laid down some basic laws of universal application in connection with the affairs of human life, yet it has left room for further legislation by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, and after him, by his followers, according to the need of the time, fundamentally keeping in view the limits provided by the Holy Quran.

Human life is not rigid or beyond change. The basic principles of life remain the same in all ages and countries, but the ways and means of solving them have undergone various changes with the passage of time. Islam provides for both. It has bestowed upon mankind an ideology that satisfies the demands of both stability and change.

Islam has also given sanction for framing subsidiary laws to the Muslim community to meet particular situations and regulate the affairs of their daily life within the scope of the Quran and the Sunnah. When a verdict about a certain issue is not found in the Quran and the Sunnah, the scholars of Islam, keeping in mind, the interest of Muslim Ummah, try to come up with the best possible verdict to regulate the behaviour of Muslims.

Since that behaviour required revelatory criteria and directives, there had to be evolved other sources of law continuous with the first and second. The

structure of Islamic law is generally regarded as complete with the establishment of two other regulative sources namely Ijma and Qiyas - consensus and analogy.

For a Muslim all laws and legislation must be according to the Islamic Shariah. They must be used in the order they were given. A verdict on any issue is first searched in the Holy Quran, then the Sunnah of the Prophet^{pbuh}. If no verdict is found in these two sources, then the scholars of Islam must look at the issue, research and study it and come up with a suitable verdict.

Muslim scholars have seen permission for this in the following verse which says:

"O you who believe!

Obey Allah and obey the Messenger,

And those charged with authority

among you.

If you differ in anything among yourselves,

refer it to Allah and His Messenger,

If you do believe in Allah

and the Last Day:

That is best and most suitable for final determination." (4:59)

In this verse, the scholars found the mention of the bases of the Sunni Islamic law:

- 1) The Holy Quran
- 2) The Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}
- 3) The consensus of Muslims and
- 4) Analogy based upon the Quran and Sunnah

The basic guidance is eternal and permanent whose function is to provide a foothold to man to have a grip over a world which exhibits perpetual change while there is a mechanism to apply it to the needs of every successive age. Islamic law is eternal yet progressive and that is why Islam always remains fresh and modern.

Life in Makkah

(571-622 A.D.)

Ancestors

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was a direct descendant of Hazrat Ismail, the eldest son of Hazrat Ibrahim. Hazrat Ismail had twelve sons. One of them had settled permanently in Hejaz-Arabia. One of his descendants, Fihir, known by his title of **Quraish**, was a famous personality of his time. His descendant, Qussai, had the custody of the key of **Ka'abah**. He was responsible for entertaining pilgrims.

Qussai's grandson, Hashim, from whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} traces his descent, was the richest and the most important of Qussai's descendants. Hashim and his brothers organized and despatched trade caravans, and established trade links with foreign countries.

With the passage of time the Prophet's^{pbuh} grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, became very prominent among the Quraish. Three incidents of his life are very important. The restoration of the fountain of **Zamzam**; the dialogue with Abraha, the Christian Viceroy of Yemen who had come with a large army to destroy the Ka'abah in 571 A.D.; and the bringing up of his orphan grandson Muhammad^{pbuh}, the last Prophet of Allah.

His son, Abdullah, who was the father of Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} was married to Aminah, daughter of Wahab, who belonged to a noble and illustrious family. On his return journey from a business tour to Syria, he stopped at Yasrib, where he fell ill and died. By way of inheritance he left a few camels, goats and a slave girl named Umm-e-Aiman.

After the death of Abdullah, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was born to Aminah at Makkah on 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal 571 A.D. He was named Muhammad^{pbuh} by Abdul Muttalib. The name being uncommon and unknown among the Quraish, somebody questioned Abdul Muttalib about it. In reply he said:

"I have named him Muhammad so that his name may be praised on the earth and in the heavens."

Conditions of Arabia at the time of the birth of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

At the time of the Prophet's^{pbuh} birth, the world had completely forgotten the message of the Creator and was lost in the wilderness of polytheism. Arabia

was steeped in the worst form of idolatry. The Ka'abah was full of idols and every household had its own idol. Stones and trees were also worshipped. There was no belief in life after death and no feeling of responsibility for one's actions. There was no moral code. Drinking, gambling and other vices were common. Widows and orphans were quite helpless and slaves were treated most cruelly. Women were looked upon as property without having any right to inheritance. They were treated as articles of trade. They could be bought or sold at will. A man could marry and keep as many women as he could afford. When a man died, his son inherited his wives. Step-mothers could be made legal wives.

There was no settled government and no law in the land. The affairs of each tribe were governed by its own chief. There were rivalries among them and people would fight for generations on the slightest excuse.

Side by side, Arabs had the qualities of heroism, love for liberty, hospitality and eloquence.

This period is known as the Age of Ignorance in the Arab history.

Birth and Upbringing

Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} was born among these people. In those days there was a custom among the Arabs to give their suckling infants in charge of Bedouin women, who would take them into the desert, and return them to the parents after a few years. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was given in charge of Halima Saadia. She loved Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} very much and the Prophet^{pbuh} always had the highest regard for her. He used to call her 'my mother'.

At the age of six, Halima Saadia brought him back to his mother who took him to Yasrib to visit the grave of his father Abdullah and also to meet her relatives. During the return journey from Yasrib, Aminah died and was buried at Abwa. Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was brought back to Makkah by Umme-e-Aiman.

Abdul Muttalib then took over the charge of his grandson. He showered on him all his love and affection. Unfortunately, this also could not last for a long time as Abdul Muttalib died when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was only eight years old. Then Abu Talib, an uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, took over the responsibility of bringing him up as his son. He faithfully and kindly discharged his duties and loved his nephew more than his own sons.

In those days, reading and writing was not common, therefore, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} did not get any formal education. When he was nine years old, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} began to show signs of an intelligent and inquisitive mind. He loved solitude and would not indulge in playful activities with children of his own age. He was loved by the people because of his sweet and peaceful nature.

At the age of twelve, he accompanied Abu Talib on a trade journey to Syria and proceeded as far as Basra. There they met a Christian monk, Bahira, who recognized in Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} the signs of the Prophet as related in Christian books. He advised Abu Talib not to take his nephew too far into Syria for fear that the Jews may recognize him as the future prophet and harm him.

After his return from Syria, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} used to spend long hours in solitary meditation and speak less to the people. He, however, was very particular in helping the poor, the widows and the orphans. From his childhood, he disliked polytheism and never worshipped idols, nor ate any food that was offered as a sacrifice to them. During his youth, he worked as a shepherd which gave him an opportunity for thought and meditation.

Harb-ul-Fijar

Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was about fifteen years old when a sacrilegious war or Harb-ul-Fijar broke out between the Quraish and Hawazin tribes. The war was so called because it was fought during the sacred months when fighting was forbidden.

Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} accompanied his uncles, but he did not take an active part in the war. He only collected the arrows thrown by the enemy and handed them over to his uncles.

This was a major event in the life of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} and one which must have had a great impact on his character. His impression of the war was most probably concerned with the tragic results of the war, the bloodshed and the unnecessary human suffering. Being the first armed conflict that he witnessed, he could not have escaped its influence on his mild and peace loving temperament and he must have developed a very strong and lasting dislike for war.

At the same time his indirect participation in the war also gave him a military experience that is so vital for any person destined to be a leader of people through a major socio-religious revolution.

Half-al-Fazul

As a result of Fijar war thousands of lives were lost. When the leaders of Makkah saw the effects of the war, they formed a league called Half-al-Fazul with the object of maintaining peace in the region; also for suppressing any violence and injustice and for upholding the rights of the weak, the poor and the destitute.

This alliance was called al-Fuzul after three of the main participants each of whom was called al-Fazl. It is also suggested that this alliance was called al-Fazul because it was made for a noble cause: the name suggests maintaining honour.

The Hashimites under the leadership of Zubair bin Abdul Muttalib along with some other tribes assembled in the house of a noble Quraish, Abdullah bin Judan and pledged to stand on the side of the oppressed, whether stranger or citizen, against the oppressor and to remove injustice from the land.

Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was among those who attended the meeting and was so impressed by its noble objectives that he remained loyal to it. Later on, he said: "I was present in the house of Abdullah bin Judan at so excellent a pact that I would not exchange my part in it for a herd of red camels; and if now in Islam, I were summoned unto it, I would gladly respond" (Muhammad: Martin Lings)

Al-Sadiq and Al-Amin

In his early life, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} worked as a shepherd and took care of the family's and neighbour's herds. When he grew up, he started to trade. Unlike other businessmen of the time, he was extremely honest and fair in his dealings. Hazrat Sa'ad, his business partner said: "I was a partner of Muhammad^{pbuh} in business. I always found him very honest in his dealings; he never picked quarrels, nor made any false statement" (Allama Shibli Naumani: Sirat-un-Nabi)

His honesty and truthfulness impressed the people to such an extent that they gave him the titles of Al-Sadiq – The Truthful and Al-Amin – The Trustworthy. They would also entrust their valuables to him for safekeeping. Even after the declaration of prophethood, they had so much faith in his honesty and trustworthiness that they continued to leave their valuables with him for safe custody.

Marriage to Khadija

At that time there lived in Makkah, a wealthy and respectable widow, Khadija, daughter of Khuwalid, who was the great grandson of Qussai. She was very impressed by the honesty and goodness of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. She was forty years old and twice widowed. She had two sons and a daughter from her previous marriages. On account of her exceptional character, she was known as **Tahira**, the pious one.

She requested Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} to take her merchandise to Syria against a share in the profits. She also sent her slave Maisara with him. He returned from Syria with good profits. Maisara also spoke of his fair dealings to Hazrat Khadija. She was so pleased that she herself made an offer of marriage to him.

Abu Talib accepted the proposal on behalf of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and shortly, thereafter, he married Hazrat Khadija. At that time he was twenty-five and she was forty. The union proved successful. They had two sons and four daughters. Both the sons died in infancy. Of the daughters, only the youngest, Hazrat

Fatima survived the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Khadija was the Prophet's^{s pbuh} only wife till her death at the age of sixty-five in the 10th year of Prophethood. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} always retained his love for her. She was buried in Makkah.

Fixing of Black Stone (Hajr al-Aswad)

The Ka'abah is situated at the lowest part in the valley of Faran and was always flooded by rain water. The people of Makkah tried various methods to stop this flooding. But all their efforts failed and the building was damaged by floods. They therefore, decided to rebuild it. The task of rebuilding the Ka'abah was divided among the leading families of Makkah and the work was completed in harmony, without any dispute. But when the time came to place the Black Stone or **Hajr al-Aswad** in its proper place, a dispute arose among the chiefs of Makkah. Everyone wanted the honour of placing the Holy Stone in its proper place. There was fear of bloodshed. But then a proposal came from a wise, old man who said that the first person to enter the Ka'abah the following morning, should decide the issue. His suggestion was accepted by all.

Next morning, the first person to enter the Ka'abah was Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}, who at that time was thirty-five years old. The people of Makkah agreed to accept his decision.

He asked the leaders of the different families of Quraish to hold the four corners of a sheet of cloth which he spread on the ground. Then he placed the Black Stone in the middle of the sheet and asked them to lift it up together. When the sheet reached the proper height, he lifted the Black Stone and laid it in its place with his own hands. Thus, an explosive situation was resolved peacefully by the wisdom and foresight of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}.

Call to Prophethood

With age and growing understanding Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} became more aware of the corrupt society around him and it disturbed him greatly. He could not believe the polytheistic ideas of the pagans of Makkah and often thought of God of his forefathers, Ibrahim and Ismail. He did not follow any particular method of worship, because he was not aware of any; but he realized that there is a force of truth beyond this world which must have power and control over the whole universe.

A few years before the conferment of prophethood, he became more and more fond of solitude. He started retiring for days with a supply of dates, oatmeal and water into a cave in a nearby mountain, known as Hira. There he pondered and meditated over the condition of his people. These spells of loneliness and meditation became more frequent as he approached the age of forty.

One day towards the end of **Ramazan**, he was at the mount of Hira, when

angel Jibrael appeared before him and asked him to read. This was so sudden and unexpected that startled by the strange voice, he answered: "I cannot read". Then he felt that he was being hugged and squeezed so hard that he thought that he would die of suffocation. He was then released and the request to read was repeated. "*I cannot read*", said Muhammad^{pbuh} again. The angel again hugged him and asked him to read. Muhammad^{pbuh} was afraid of being squeezed a third time, so he asked: "*What shall I read?*" The angel then recited the following verses:

*Proclaim (or read) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher,
Who created.*

Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood.

*Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,
He who taught (the use of) the pen.*

Taught man that which he knew not (96: 1-5)

Muhammad^{pbuh} recited these verses after the angel and the words were imprinted on his mind. This was the first revelation and the beginning of prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. He was then forty years old.

Muhammad^{pbuh} was greatly shaken by this experience and he ran out of the cave. Suddenly, he heard a voice and raising his head in the sky, he saw the same angel in the form of a man filling the whole horizon and saying: "*O; Muhammad(pbu)*, you are the messenger of Allah and I am Jibrael." Whichever may he looked, he saw the same vision and heard the same voice. He stood there until the angel disappeared.

After that experience, he came home a bit shaken at his selection for this great and noble mission. He feared the thought of the huge and tremendous task of this mission. He narrated the incident to Hazrat Khadija. She comforted him and assured him that no harm could come to a man of his nature and that Allah would protect him from all evils. Then she took him to her cousin Warqa bin Naufal, who was a scholarly person and had embraced Christianity.

After hearing what had happened to her husband at the mount of Hira, he said that it was the Angel Jibrael who had always brought revelations to previous messengers of God. He also informed her that his enemies would turn the new Prophet out of his city.

Preaching by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

The revelations stopped for some time. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} passed this time in restlessness and anxiety, until one day, he saw angel Jibrael again, in the sky seated on a chair. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} became frightened and rushed home. He asked Khadija to cover him up. She covered him up, after which he received another revelation which said:

*"O thou wrapped up (in a mantle)!
Arise and deliver thy warning!"*

"And thy Lord do thou magnify." (74: 1-3)

In obedience to the command of Allah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} invited his friends and relatives to the religion of Islam. He preached to them the Oneness of Allah and warned them of the consequences of following their evil ways. But, he did not, at this stage, make any public announcement. He confined his message only to those of his close friends and relatives that he thought would give a favourable response.

The first person to believe in him was his wife, Khadija, who accepted his message without any hesitation. This was followed by the acceptance of Islam by ten year old, Ali, son of Abu Talib.

The first freed slave to accept Islam was Zaid bin Haris. The first person to become a Muslim outside the prophet's immediate family was his close friend, Hazrat Abu Bakr.

Within a period of three years, while the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was preaching his message in secret, about forty righteous and God-fearing people accepted Islam. Among them were Usman, Talha, Zubair, Abdur Rahman bin Auf, Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas and Abdullah bin Masud.

These early converts were the people who had witnessed the Prophet's^{pbuh} private and public life very closely and had arrived at the conclusion that such a gentle and honest person could not mislead the people.

Then came another revelation that said:

"And admonish thy nearest kinsmen." (26:214)

In order to carry out this command, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} invited his relatives to his house and said to them: "Allah has ordered me to call you to Him, so who amongst you will help me in this affair and be my friend, my adviser and my deputy?" No one responded to the message except Ali, who said: "O Prophet of Allah! I shall be your helper. I will fight him who fights you." The people laughed and dispersed making fun of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Soon afterwards he received another revelation through which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was given the order to: "*Expound openly what thou art commanded, and turn away from those who join false gods with Allah.*" (15:94)

Following this command, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} assembled the people of Makkah at the Safa hill and said to them: "*O Quraish, if I were to tell you that a large army has collected on the other side of this mountain and is ready to attack you, would you believe me?*" They all said that they would, since they had never heard him tell a lie. But when he asked them to believe in one Allah and his Prophethood, they became angry and some of them shouted: "You have gone mad". Abu Lahab, one of his uncles, said, "May Allah destroy you. Did you assemble us for this?" After this, all of them dispersed.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} now started to address the people in public and private gatherings and on approach routes to Makkah which were used by pilgrims to the Holy city. His efforts were successful and people started embracing Islam.

Opposition and Persecution by the Quraish

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} declared his message in public and called upon the people of Makkah to adopt it as a faith and way of life he moved into a new stage in the history of preaching Islam. Until now, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers had confined themselves to preaching Islam to a limited number of people. The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} declaration of his message, however, changed the picture as the whole society was now called upon to accept a total change where they were not only asked to pay homage to Allah instead of their idols, but they were also asked to bring about a complete change in their social conduct, economic and commercial practices as well as their political thought and influence.

The response of the influential people of Makkah was hostile. They felt that unless they met the new call with stiff opposition, it was bound to be accepted by a large section of the population, especially the poor and the slaves.

Among those who took the lead in the opposition were the most influential chiefs of the Quraish, namely Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, Abu Sufyan, Walid bin Mughaira and Atba bin Rabi. The poor and the weak converts to Islam, like Bilal, Ammar bin Yasir and others like them suffered torture and severe persecution at the hands of these chiefs. They were thrown into prison, starved and then beaten with sticks. They were exposed to the scorching heat of the desert sand where they were offered the alternative of worshipping idols or death. Some of them died of the effects of the torture, but none renounced his religion. Even rich and respected people like Talha, Zubair, Saeed bin Zaid, Usman, Abu Bakr and Abdullah bin Masud were not spared.

The opposition increased gradually. Rubbish and thorny bushes were thrown on the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and abuses were hurled at him. Once, when he was praying in the Ka'abah, a Quraish rolled his sheet round his neck and tried to strangle him. Another time when he was prostrating during prayers, Abu Jahl placed filth on his back. His daughter, Fatima, removed it from her father's back.

The Quraish also launched a campaign against the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} calling him a mad man, a poet and a magician. Poems were written to ridicule the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Abu Lahab forced his two sons to divorce their wives, Ruqayya and Umm-e-Kulsum, the Prophet's^{pbuh} daughters. When the Prophet's^{pbuh} second son died in infancy Abu Lahab rejoiced and called the Prophet^{pbuh} "abtar" a man cut off with no male offspring. His wife used to put thorns on the path which the Prophet^{pbuh} was expected to take, in order to cause physical injury. Inspite of all these disgusting measures, he continued his work with increasing vigour and determination.

When insults and persecution had no effect on the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the pagans tried other methods. They offered to collect a large fortune for him, or make him the king. They even promised to marry him to the fairest girl in the land if he gave up preaching Islam. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} turned down all such

offers. They then approached his uncle, Abu Talib and asked him to prevent his nephew from abusing their gods or be prepared for violence against Muhammad^{pbuh}.

These threats worried Abu Talib and he tried to stop Muhammad^{pbuh} from preaching because he did not have the strength to oppose his people. To this the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} responded by saying, "*If they place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left hand, and ask me to stop preaching the word of God to the people, I will never accept what they say. I shall persist in it until Allah enables me to discharge it fully or I perish in the attempt*".

When Abu Talib saw the determination of his nephew, he told him to continue with his mission. He also pledged to help and support him and asked the Banu Hashim to protect the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} against the Quraish. All of them pledged to do so, except, Abu Lahab, who openly declared his enmity.

Reasons for opposition

The Quraish were the leading tribe in the Arabian Peninsula. They were used to idol worship that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} openly condemned. They took the teachings of Islam as an insult to their religion and the ways of their forefathers.

The location of the Ka'abah in Makkah gave them an important position as the custodians of the House. It was a source of income for them, particularly the priests, as the pilgrims to the Ka'abah would bring rich gifts for their idols. In the rise of Islam, they saw the danger to their dignity and prestige and the loss of the important position which they had held for centuries. Apart from idol worship, adultery, drinking, gambling, murder and plunder were common among the Arabs. Islam condemned all these. Embracing Islam meant discarding these evil practices and adopting a new mode of life. The Quraish were not at all ready to do that.

The chiefs, particularly those belonging to the Banu Umayyah, could not bear that anybody from among the Banu Hashim, the tribe to which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} belonged, should have supremacy over them. They were also of the view that the Quran should have been sent down to some influential person. The Quran says: "*Also, they say: why is not this Quran sent down to some leading man in either of the two (chief) cities?*" (43: 31)

The Quraish were proud of their chiefs, against whom they were not ready to accept the supremacy of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who neither had wealth nor sons nor any other sign of worldly power. The Quraish used to say: "*Is this the one whom Allah has sent as a messenger?*" (25:41)

Reaction of early Muslims towards persecution

The Muslims of early days although limited in number, had very strong faith

and belief in Allah and His Prophet^{pbuh}. They maintained this faith, regardless of the consequences. For instance, the Muslim slaves who were tortured mercilessly by their masters never renounced their religion, and at times, lost their lives when given an alternative between idol worship and Islam.

The Muslims were always united under the leadership of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Even when persecutions were at their peak, instructions set out by him were followed. When he advised them to migrate to Abyssinia, they migrated with the confidence that the advice of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} can only have a good outcome.

The Muslims displayed the most amazing qualities of courage, discipline and patience in face of this persecution. It was borne patiently without complaints. The Muslims were forced to live in a valley for three years with women and children without any means of food and water for days at a time but they waited patiently for Allah's help. Although the believers were a very small group of people, they opposed the pagan ideas, defied the idol worshippers and followed a different religion.

Migration to Abyssinia

The hardships and suffering of the Muslims increased. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} therefore, gave permission to a group of Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia. Accordingly in the fifth year of prophethood, a group of eleven men and four women secretly left for Abyssinia. These included Hazrat Usman and his wife Ruqayya, daughter of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Then followed another group of seventy-nine men and seven women including Hazrat Jafar, son of Abu Talib.

Najashi, the Christian king of Abyssinia treated the Muslims with kindness and respect and the Muslims found a safe place to live.

When the Quraish came to know of this, they sent a deputation with some gifts to the king to request him to hand over the emigrants to them.

Najashi was a kind and just man. He said in reply that he could not hand over the Muslims to them until he found out the truth about their religion. He called the Muslims to his court and after hearing the speech of Hazrat Jafar who explained the principles of Islam and what the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had taught them, Najashi refused to send them back.

It is said that Najashi asked Jafar to recite some ayats from the Holy Quran and Jafar recited a portion of Surah Maryam. After hearing it, Najashi said:

"By God this and the Gospel are the lights of one candle."

Thereafter Najashi returned the gifts brought by the leaders of Makkah. Thus the mission failed and the Quraish returned totally disappointed.

Significance of Migration to Abyssinia

The migration of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} companions to Abyssinia was a

significant event which can be described as the first major political move taken by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. When the companions went on their long trip to Abyssinia, each one of them had in his mind only one tie of allegiance which required him to give all his loyalty to Islam. This tie of allegiance was also strengthened among those Muslims who remained in Makkah. They were now weaker than before and it was this weakness that brought them even closer. Thus, the migration to Abyssinia made the feelings of unity among Muslims stronger, whether they were among the emigrants or those who stayed behind.

The emigration to Abyssinia gave the Muslims a chance to carry the message of Islam further and out of Arabia. They were able to establish a close community that conducted its affairs on the basis of Islamic teachings that they had learnt from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. It also became clear to them that it was possible to establish a Muslim society that implemented Islam without the presence of Allah's messenger to supervise that society and conduct its affairs. The migration provided practical training during the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} lifetime for the establishment of a Muslim society in which the Prophet^{pbuh} did not live.

The migration of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} companions to Abyssinia took place in the fifth year of the prophethood. When the last of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} companions who went to Abyssinia came back, they joined the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his army at the conquest of Khyber when the battle was already over. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave the new arrivals equal share of the spoils of war as of those who took part in the battle of Khyber. This shows that he considered them to have been on a mission of **Jihad**.

These migrations also convinced the Quraish of the sincerity of the Muslims who were ready to undergo loss and hardship rather than give up the faith of Islam.

The most important result was that the Muslims came to know that there were places where they could seek shelter and protection from the persecution of the Quraish. It ultimately gave birth to the idea of a greater migration to Yasrab.

The immediate result of the migration was increased trouble for the Muslims in Makkah as the leaders of the Quraish were very angry at their failure in Abyssinia.

Boycott

The acceptance of Islam by Hamza, the Prophet's^{pbuh} uncle and Umar, son of Khattab, greatly upset and enraged the pagans. They could see the honour and prestige of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers growing. They also saw the respect with which Najashi had treated the Muslims and so they began to fear for themselves. They demanded that the Banu Hashim withdraw their protection from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and hand him over to them or face a complete boycott. This demand was turned down.

Thereafter, in the 7th year of Prophethood, all the tribes of Quraish drew up a joint agreement that enforced a total social and economic boycott of the Banu Hashim. This agreement was put into writing and hung in the Ka'aba.

With the exception of Abu Lahab the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} along with his tribe, whether believer or non-believer, was forced to live in a secluded valley, known as Shib Abi Talib, in the outskirts of Makkah, which was the property of Abu Talib. All the roads leading into the valley were blocked. The Muslims were excluded from all social and commercial activities. They were cut off from all trade dealings. No one could venture forth from the Shib except in the season of pilgrimage, when the besieged were allowed to come out.

Whatever little they had to eat, eventually finished and then came a time of extreme difficulty. Their condition became so bad that children cried with hunger, adults fed on boiled leather and leaves of trees and the valley echoed with the cries of helpless people.

These conditions continued for three years, until a few kind-hearted men among the unbelievers moved by pity, decided to break the agreement and lift the ban. The Banu Hashim were then able to come out of the gorge.

Although the period of boycott meant that the Muslims suffered great hardships, it was not without some benefit to Islam. Despite the boycott new converts continued to trickle through although on a very limited scale. The suffering of the Banu Hashim moved the kind hearted among the unbelievers to take action against the hardliners like Abu Jahl. This caused disunity among them.

Year of Grief

In the 10th year of Prophethood, Hazrat Khadija died. In the same year the Prophet's^{pbuh} uncle Abu Talib too, passed away. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was so deeply grieved by the deaths of his wife and his loving uncle that this year was called **Am-ul-Hazn**, "the Year of Grief."

The death of Abu Talib, provided an opportunity to the enemy, to harm and persecute the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The Muslims shared in his sorrow, but they were too weak to stand up against the Quraish or to provide the kind of protection that he had lost due to the death of Abu Talib.

Marriage with Sawdah and Aisha

In the 10th year of Prophethood, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} married Sawdah, widow of a companion who had emigrated to Abyssinia. She had returned to Makkah on the death of her husband. Later in the same year the Prophet^{pbuh} married Aisha, daughter of his close friend Abu Bakr. The marriage was solemnised in Madinah.

Visit to Taif

After the death of Abu Talib, the Quraish increased their attacks against the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. This new situation meant that he could no longer stay in Makkah with any hope of victory. Before things became too critical, he had to explore new avenues in his search for support. So, accompanied by his adopted son, Zaid bin Haris, he set out for Taif, to preach the Divine Message to its people.

Taif was populated by Saqeef, the second largest tribe in Arabia. As he began his journey he was full of hope that if they responded favourably it would signify a new phase in the history of Islam.

In Taif the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} approached the chiefs calling upon them to believe in Allah and to support him in his efforts to establish Islam; but none gave him a favourable response. Instead, they set upon him a crowd of teenagers to follow him and shout abuses at him. They even threw stones at him. He was so badly wounded that his shoes were filled with blood. Zaid tried hard to defend and protect him from the stones. In trying to shield the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, his head was badly wounded. The mob followed them until they were driven to the outskirts of the city.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} then sought refuge in an orchard that belonged to two brothers, who although opposed to Islam and to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, felt sorry for him. They sent their Christian slave with a bunch of grapes for him. Afterwards, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} set out on his journey back to Makkah.

While resting in the orchard, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} prayed to Allah to show the people of Taif the right path. He said: "*Why should I pray for the destruction of these people? I hope that their posterity will certainly be among the believers in one Allah.*" (Muslim)

In 9 A.H., the whole of Taif embraced Islam.

Pledges of Aqabah

On his return to Makkah from Taif, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} resumed his preaching concentrating more on strangers, who came to Makkah for the pilgrimage. In the eleventh year of Prophethood, six pilgrims from the tribe of Khazraj in Yasrib came to Makkah. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} invited them to Islam. After hearing the teachings of Islam, they embraced the faith. When they returned to Yasrib, they introduced Islam to their friends and relatives.

In this way, the message of Islam reached Yasrib. Next year, that is, the 12th year of the Prophethood, twelve persons from Yasrib met the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at Aqabah, accepted the faith and agreed to abstain from idol worship, cruelty and falsehood, to lead a righteous life and to believe in One God. This is called the **First Pledge of Aqabah**. These Muslims promised to spread Islam in Yasrib, and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent two persons with them to

preach Islam to the residents of that city.

In the 13th year of the Prophethood, a deputation consisting of seventy-five persons came from Yasrib to take the same pledge. This is called the **Second Pledge of Aqabah**. They also invited the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to Makkah and pledged full support for him and his followers. On the return of this deputation, Islam began to spread rapidly in Yasrib.

Migration to Yasrib

a) Causes

It was after the pledges of Aqabah that the idea of migrating to Yasrib was born in the heart of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, but there were also strong reasons, which compelled him to leave Makkah for Yasrib.

The people of Makkah were generally hard and ill tempered. On the other hand, the people of Yasrib were tender hearted and considerate, so Islam could find a more suitable ground in Yasrib than at Makkah in its early period of expansion.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was hated and despised by his own people in Makkah, but he was invited by the people of Yasrib to come to their city.

The priests of Makkah opposed Islam from the very beginning, because the success of Islam meant their own destruction, as Islam is opposed to idol worship. In Yasrib, however, there was no priest class, so it was easier to preach Islam there.

In Yasrib the two tribes of Aus and Khazraj, who had been at war with each other looked for a strong leader who could establish peace in their land, so they invited the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to come to their city.

The Jews, who were living at Yasrib, had been informed of the coming of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as a supporter of their scriptures, so they were eager to receive him.

The aggressive attitude of the Quraish and their persecution was an important factor in the migration to Yasrib, specially the death of Abu Talib who had been his protector from the very beginning.

After the pledges of Aqabah, the Muslims realized that the people of Yasrib were ready to welcome them and there was a place where they could seek refuge.

b) Event of Migration

When the unbelievers came to know of these developments, they redoubled their persecution of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers. The Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, advised them to emigrate to Yasrib secretly. Thereafter family after family left in this manner. By and by, all the companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} except Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Ali succeeded in migrating to Yasrib.

The Quraish held a meeting in the council hall, Dar-un-Nadwa, where it was

decided that one person from each tribe should be selected who would simultaneously attack the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and kill him. This way their object would be achieved and the Banu Hashim would not be able to take revenge.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was informed of this plan of his enemies by Allah and was told to leave Makkah that same night:

"Remember how the unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds, or slay thee, or get thee out (of thy home). They plot and plan, and Allah too plans, But the best of planners is Allah." (8:30)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asked Ali to sleep on his bed, and to return the valuables entrusted to the Prophet^{pbuh} by various people. Then quietly, he left the house unnoticed by anyone. Accompanied by Abu Bakr, he made his way to Yasrib. As his enemies were looking for him everywhere, he stayed in the cave of Saur for three days and nights.

Next morning, when the chiefs of Makkah found Ali in Hazrat Muhammad's^{pbuh} bed they were furious. Determined more than ever to find him, they offered a huge reward of one hundred camels for his capture, dead or alive.

Many young men of the Quraish went out in search of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and came close to the cave. Hazrat Abu Bakr trembled with fear and expected them to break into the cave. He said to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, "If anyone of them looks down, he will find us." To this, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} answered: "*O Abu Bakr, how can you fear for two men whose constant companion is Allah Himself?*"

This incident is mentioned in the Quran in the following words: ".....for Allah did indeed help him, when the unbelievers drove him out: he had no more than one companion: the two were in the cave, and he said to his companion, 'Have no fear, for Allah is with us.' (9: 40)

Some members of the Quraish party climbed upto the cave and the foremost of them turned around as he saw the cave entrance. His companion asked him why he did not go into the cave. He answered: "Its entrance is covered with cobwebs and there is a pair of wild pigeons on the threshold. Obviously, no one could have gone in without disturbing the pigeons and destroying the cobwebs."

The Quraish were further convinced that the cave was empty when they saw its entrance covered with branches growing from a nearby tree. They, agreed to leave and called one another to return to Makkah.

During their brief stay at the cave, Abdullah son of Hazrat Abu Bakr brought news of the Quraish and Asma daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr, brought them food. On the third day, when they were sure that the Quraish had given up their search, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Hazrat Abu Bakr continued their journey to Yasrib.

On the way, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} stopped at Quba, where he was joined by Hazrat Ali. Here he built a mosque, which is known as **Masjid-e-Quba**.

After a few days stay in Quba, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} left for Yasrib on Friday. On his way, in the quarters of Bani Salim, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} offered his

Migration also proved to be a turning point in the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The years of persecution and humiliation at Makkah were over and the years of success had begun. At Madinah, he was made the head of the state. He, who, had till now been a religious teacher, took on the role of a statesman and politician, at which he proved equally capable.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} experiences in caves

a) Cave of Hira

The event that took place in the cave of Hira was the beginning of revelation of the Holy Quran that not only changed the lives of people of Arabia but also the history of the world. It marked the beginning of Hazrat Muhammad's Prophethood^{pbuh} and the spread of Islam's universal message.

The very first verses revealed to him tell us about Allah, the Creator and Master of everything. The revelation came to the Prophet^{pbuh} through angel Jibrael, who brought the revelation to Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} as also to all other previous prophets.

The verses also mention reading and writing which shows the importance of knowledge in Islam. Allah enlightens man in all kinds of knowledge. That is why, the first revelation ends with the words: "Taught man that which he knew not". Allah Himself is man's teacher and the Quran is a Book that gives man information and directs him how to lead his life in this world and to prepare himself for the next.

This experience of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} reveals to us that Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was like any other human being who was scared and frightened after the revelation.

b) Cave of Saur

The stay in the cave of Saur holds great significance in the history of Islam. If it had not been for Allah's miracles i.e., the cobwebs, the pigeons, the tree and its branches, both the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Hazrat Abu Bakr would have been caught and brutally killed. The stay in the cave of Saur led to the safe emigration of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to Madinah and so preserved the opportunity for the spread of Islam. This shows that Allah protects His chosen people from the evils of this world and proves that Allah has power and control over everything.

The Muslims also learnt about the spirit of true friendship as shown by Hazrat Abu Bakr. It proved a turning point for the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} for after the refuge in the cave, he managed to reach Yasrib safely, where he was surrounded by his followers from Makkah, and also those who lived in Madinah. He did not have to fight alone anymore but had his supporters around him. This led to the consolidation of the Muslim rule in Madinah.

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This experience of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} reveals to us that Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was like any other human being who was scared and frightened after the revelation.

b) Cave of Saur

The stay in the cave of Saur holds great significance in the history of Islam. If it had not been for Allah's miracles i.e., the cobwebs, the pigeons, the tree and its branches, both the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Hazrat Abu Bakr would have been caught and brutally killed. The stay in the cave of Saur led to the safe emigration of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to Madinah and so preserved the opportunity for the spread of Islam. This shows that Allah protects His chosen people from the evils of this world and proves that Allah has power and control over everything.

The Muslims also learnt about the spirit of true friendship as shown by Hazrat Abu Bakr. It proved a turning point for the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} for after the refuge in the cave, he managed to reach Yasrib safely, where he was surrounded by his followers from Makkah, and also those who lived in Madinah. He did not have to fight alone anymore but had his supporters around him. This led to the consolidation of the Muslim rule in Madinah.

Life in Madinah

(622-632 A.D.)

1ST YEAR OF HIJRAT

Mosque of the Prophet^{pbuh}

The first important thing that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did on arriving in Madinah was to build a mosque that not only became a spiritual centre for worship, but also the political and military headquarters for the new state. All affairs of the state were conducted at the mosque. It soon developed into an institute of learning where discussions and seminars were held, and a social institution where Muslims learnt and practised discipline, unity and brotherhood.

The land for the mosque was bought from two orphans and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} himself worked hard with his companions to complete the building. This mosque was known as the "Mosque of the Prophet^{pbuh}" or Masjid-e-Nabawi. It is referred to in the Quran in the following words:

"—, there is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified, and Allah loveth those who make themselves pure."

(9:108)

The walls of the mosque were made of unbaked bricks, the roof was of mud and date palm leaves and the trunks of date palm trees were used for pillars. A large platform with a thatched roof, was built in one of the corners of the mosque. This was known as Suffah. It became the training centre for Islamic education and also a shelter for poor Muslims specially, the emigrants from Makkah.

After the Holy Ka'abah, the Masjid-e-Nabawi is the holiest mosque.

Azan (Call for Prayers)

In order to call the believers to the mosque for offering their prayers in congregation, the system of calling Azan was introduced, as suggested by Hazrat Umar.

Hazrat Bilal was appointed as the Muezzin.

Arrangements for the inhabitants of Madinah

a) Settlement of Muhajirin

The Muslims in **Madinah** belonged to two categories. Those who had migrated to Madinah from **Makkah** were known as **Muhajirin** or emigrants. Those who belonged to Madinah and had given shelter to the emigrants and helped them were known as **Ansar** or the Helpers. The emigrants were generally poor as even those who had been well off in Makkah had left all their belongings behind when they migrated.

The **Holy Prophet^{pbuh}** established brotherhood between these two groups of Muslims. He told the Ansars that the Muhajirin were in need of help, and so he wanted to create brotherhood between them. The Ansar willingly agreed to this. They took their Muhajirin brothers to their houses, treated them with hospitality and shared all their possessions with them. The Holy Quran mentions this in these words: "*Those who believed and adopted exile, and fought for the faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allah, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid, these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another.*" (8:72)

The emigrants and their hosts were united into a bond of brotherhood, which proved, in practice, to be stronger than real brotherhood. Even the enmity between the two tribes of Madinah, **Aus** and **Khazraj** was forgotten, as mentioned in the Holy Quran: "... And remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace, ye became brethren..... (3:103)

b) Treaty with the Jews: (Charter of Madinah)

There were three main tribes of Jews: **Banu Qainuqa**, **Banu Nazir** and **Banu Quraiza**, settled in the suburbs of **Madinah** in their own strong fortresses.

The **Holy Prophet^{pbuh}** realized that the foundation of the **Islamic Empire** would be very weak unless it was based upon the support of all the people living in Madinah. The situation called for a strong measure of co-ordination and adjustment, particularly as the Muslims were seriously threatened by the **Quraish**. Therefore, as soon as the **Holy Prophet^{pbuh}** was settled in Madinah, he called together the Muslims and the **Jewish tribes** for consultation. He invited them to consider the possibility of establishing some system of co-operation whereby the safety of Madinah might be secured. After an exchange of views, an agreement was reached which granted equal rights to the Jews with full liberty to follow their own faith without any interference by the **Holy Prophet^{pbuh}** or his followers. It stated that the Muslims and Jews were allies and would help each other, that neither party would commit aggression against the other, and that in case of an attack on Madinah, both Muslims and Jews would defend it.

This treaty is a landmark in the history of mankind. It guaranteed freedom of worship for the Jews. It also guaranteed protection of their life and property.

It was an attempt to establish friendly and cordial relations between the Muslims and the Jews of Madinah to live together as peaceful citizens and defend the town from all invaders.

By virtue of this agreement, the relations between the Muslims and the Jews were regulated and a basis for the governance of Madinah was provided. Each section would have complete freedom of religion and complete autonomy with regard to its internal affairs, but would be knit into an administrative system that would be presided over by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

The treaty also established the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as the leader and the head of the state of Madinah. He came to be recognized as the undisputed leader, ruler, judge and the commander of the people of Madinah.

Hypocrites

At the time of the Prophet's^{pbuh} migration, many people of Madinah accepted Islam. However, among them there were some who did not like the success of the Prophet's^{pbuh} mission. They are known as 'Hypocrites' or **Munafiqin** in the Holy Quran that says the following about them:

"When it is said to them, 'Come to what Allah has revealed, and to the Messenger', thou seest the hypocrites avert their faces from thee in disgust"

(4: 61)

To all appearances, they became Muslims and prayed and fasted as if they belonged to the Muslim community. Deep at heart, however, they did not believe. Their hearts were full of hatred for the Prophet^{pbuh} and his companions. They spared no effort in their attempts to cause harm to the Muslims. They proved to be more dangerous than the unbelievers, because they were able to know the secrets of the Muslims and pass them on to the enemies of Islam.

Their leader was Abdullah bin Ubbay. Before the Prophet's^{pbuh} migration, preparations were being made to crown him the king of Madinah, but after the Prophet's^{pbuh} migration, he was deprived of that position. He, however, continued to have great influence over all those who viewed Islam with hatred and suspicion. He continuously intrigued with the chiefs of Makkah to wage war against the Muslims. His behaviour at the time of Battle of Uhud, when he withdrew three hundred of his supporters and almost broke the strength of the Muslims was damaging to the cause of Islam. After the Battle of Trench, he was in secret contact with the Jews who had been exiled from Madinah, to inform them of the movement of the Muslims.

Abdullah bin Ubbay built a mosque outside Madinah, where, he along with his companions used to hold meetings against the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. When Allah revealed verses against this house of conspiracy, which the hypocrites called a mosque, it was demolished and burnt by the order of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Soon after the Tabuk Expedition, Abdullah fell ill and died. With his death, many of the hypocrites repented and turned to the genuine faith.

2ND YEAR OF HIJRAT

Fasting

Fasting in the month of Ramazan was made obligatory upon all adult Muslims in the second year of the Hijrat in these words of the Quran:

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you so that you may (learn) self-restraint." (2: 183)

Zakat

The payment of Zakat was also made obligatory upon all rich Muslims in the following words:

"And spend of your substance in the cause of Allah; do good: for Allah loveth those who do good." (2:195)

Change of Qiblah

An important event of the second year of Hijrat was the change of Qiblah, that is the direction to which a Muslim turns his face while saying his prayers.

In Makkah, the Muslims used to pray facing the direction of the Mosque of Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem. In Madinah, they continued to do so for over sixteen months. In 2 A.H. while the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was leading the Asr prayers at the mosque in Madinah, he was ordered to pray facing the direction of the Ka'abah, which henceforth, became the religious centre for Muslims. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the congregation immediately turned their faces towards Ka'abah. In this connection, the Holy Quran says: "We see the turning of your face (for guidance) to the heavens; now shall We turn you to a Qiblah that shall please you. Turn then your face in the direction of the sacred Mosque."

(2:144)

Battle of Badr

Causes and Events

During the first thirteen years of his mission, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had only one enemy to deal with in Makkah, the pagan Quraish, who eventually forced him to leave Makkah. But in Madinah, he had to face opposition from three quarters. First, were the Quraish of Makkah who were determined to crush the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers. The increasing strength of the Muslims was seen by them as a threat both to their prestige as custodians of the Ka'abah and to their social and economic leadership.

Secondly, there were the **Jews** who had entered into a treaty with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, yet they began to intrigue, and their various tribes began to break treaties with the Muslims.

Apart from these two enemies, there were the **hypocrites** or the **Munafiqin** who had accepted Islam, but were working against the interests of the Muslims.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had hardly settled down in Madinah when the Quraish of Makkah sent word to the people of Madinah to hand over the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the emigrants to them, or kill them. The **Ansar** who had themselves, invited the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to Madinah, refused to do so.

At that time **Abu Sufyan**, a rich and influential leader of the Quraish, was returning from **Syria** with a caravan carrying merchandise. He asked the Quraish to send an armed expedition to escort him home safely as he did not want to take the risk of interference from the Muslims on his way. The Quraish, despatched an army to join Abu Sufyan in Syria. When Abu Sufyan reached Makkah safely he asked the army to return but they refused to do so. Some of the leaders, like **Abu Jahl**, insisted on advancing towards Madinah.

In the month of **Safar 2 A.H.**, Allah had already given permission to fight against the unbelievers. "*Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you.*"

(2: 190)

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} learnt that the Quraish were advancing towards Madinah with the intention to attack, he immediately called the Muslims to take necessary steps. The **Muhajirin** and the **Ansar** got together to defend themselves. They were three hundred and thirteen men in all with only two horses and a few camels.

The Quraish stopped at **Badr**, which is a village at a distance of about eighty miles from Madinah. They had come with a huge quantity of food supply with them. Since they had arrived at Badr first, they occupied all important positions. They were about one thousand in number with all their best warriors and arms and a large number of horses and camels.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his **Companions** reached Badr, they were ill-equipped with arms and the place which they occupied had no water. Before the battle started, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} prayed to Allah to help them against the enemies of Islam. The prayer was accepted and heavenly assistance was promised in these words of the Quran:

"Remember ye implored the assistance of your Lord, and He answered you: "I will assist you with a thousand of the angels, ranks on ranks." (8:9)

Meanwhile, there was heavy rain and the Muslims collected sufficient water for their use. Ultimately, the two armies met and the battle started. While the battle was going on, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} prostrated, before Allah and prayed:

"O Allah! If this small band of men perish, there will be no one alive to worship You, and Your faith will be destroyed forever."

Regarding these two ill-matched armies, the Quran says:

"There has already been for you a sign in the two armies that met (in combat): one was fighting in the cause of Allah, the other resisting Allah; these saw with their own eyes twice their number. But Allah doth support with His aid whom He pleaseth—." (3:13)

Allah granted victory to Muslims. The Quraish fled in disorder, leaving a large number of dead and wounded on the battlefield. In all, seventy of the Quraish were killed, which included very famous chiefs and warriors like Shaiba, Utba and Abu Jahl. Seventy were taken prisoners. Among them were Abbas, uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbut}, Aqeel, the brother of Hazrat Ali, and Abul Aas, the son-in-law of the Holy Prophet^{pbut}. The Muslims lost only fourteen people, six Muhajirin and eight Ansar.

The Quran mentions this victory in these words:

"Allah had helped you at Badr, when you were a contemptible little force."
(3: 123)

When news of this defeat reached Makkah the whole town was struck with grief. There was also much anger and pledges were taken to avenge the blood of their kinsmen. For this purpose, preparations were started on an extensive level.

In Madinah, the captives were dealt with very mercifully. All those captives who could pay were freed after payment of ransom. The poor and the old were freed without ransom. Those who could read and write were charged with the duty of teaching ten Muslim children each and to get their freedom after a fixed period of teaching.

Importance of the Battle

The battle of Badr was the first decisive battle in Islam in the sense that truth, inspite of its numerical minority and limited resources, gained a clear victory over falsehood with all its material strength. If Muslims had not succeeded in this battle, Islam would have been wiped out from the earth forever. That is why, the Holy Quran describes the day of the battle as the 'Day of Testing' in 8:41, and a sign of Allah in 3:13.

The Battle of Badr had effects both on the unbelievers in Makkah and the Muslims at Madinah. For the Muslims, victory at Badr over a greatly superior force inspired and encouraged them for future success. It proved to be a turning point as their position became visibly stronger. Their faith was strengthened and they gained confidence.

On the other hand, the strength of the Quraish was broken at Badr, where practically all their leaders were either killed or wounded which dealt a deathblow to their power and prestige. As William Muir in his book 'Life of Muhammad' says: "Not only was it a decisive victory gained over a force three times his own in numbers, but the slain on the enemy side included many of his influential opponents".

After the battle, many unbelievers accepted Islam. Those who had kept their faith a secret now declared it openly. The influence of Islam and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} began to increase even outside Madinah.

Banu Qainuqa

Although the Jews had entered into an agreement with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, yet they were working against the interests of the Muslims. In the 2nd Hijri, the tribe of Banu Qainuqa broke their agreement. After the Battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} took action against them and according to his decision, they were exiled from Madinah.

3RD YEAR OF HIJRAT

Battle of Uhad

After the battle of Badr, Islam gained a firm footing at Madinah and the importance of the city began to increase. The Quraish considered the rise of Madinah as a threat to their political and commercial interests. Moreover, they could not forget their defeat in the battle of Badr. Several of their important leaders were killed in the battle, and they wanted to avenge their deaths.

Ka'ab bin Ashraf of the Jewish tribe of Banu Nazir went to Makkah to participate in the mourning for those killed at Badr. He and other Jewish poets wrote poems to instigate the Quraish to fight against the Muslims. Abu Sufyan, the commander of the Quraish army, which was defeated at Badr, went to meet the Jews of Banu Nazir, who promised help. Meetings were held where it was decided to collect funds and raise a strong army for attacking Madinah and wiping out the Muslims. Some other tribes were also invited to join in this war. Finally a fully armed force of three thousand men left Makkah for Madinah.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} consulted his companions about the best way to meet the enemy. The consensus of opinion was that the Muslims should go out of Madinah to meet the enemy. Although the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had a different opinion, yet when the majority insisted on meeting the enemy outside Madinah, he agreed.

Three miles to the north of Madinah, the Quraish camped at the foot of a hill known as Uhad. The Prophet^{pbuh} advanced towards Uhad with one thousand companions. On the way, Abdullah bin Ubbay, the leader of the hypocrites, deserted with three hundred of his men on the excuse that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had turned down his suggestion of fighting the enemy from inside the city. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, with the remaining seven hundred men, reached Uhad and also set up camp. He posted fifty archers to protect the pass in the Uhad mountain and defend the Muslims from any possible attack by the enemy from behind. They were given strict instructions not to leave their post under any circumstances.

Several Quraish women accompanied the army of the pagans including Hinda, the daughter of Utba, who was killed in the Battle of Badr; Umm-e-Hakeem, the grand daughter of Abu Jahl, also killed in the Battle of Badr and Fatima, the sister of Khalid bin Walid.

When the fighting started, the Quraish attacked first. The Muslims fought bravely under the command of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and killed and wounded many warriors of the Quraish, who began to flee in disorder leaving behind a great deal of booty. When the archers saw the enemy retreating, they left their posts to collect the booty. Khalid bin Walid, the head of the enemy cavalry, found the opening in the mountain undefended. He attacked from behind. The Muslim force was taken by surprise and there was utter confusion. The enemy tried to reach the spot where the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was. He was wounded in the head and face and lost one of his teeth. The enemy raised the cry that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was killed and the confusion increased.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, however, stood firmly and called out to his companions to come back. When the Muslims saw their leader, they rejoined the battle. Soon, more support came to the Prophet^{pbuh} and a group of his companions moved him to a well protected area at the foot of the mountain.

Now the fighting was less one-sided. The Muslims who had rallied put up a determined fight. Both parties were, however, extremely exhausted. Soon the fighting died down and each army prepared to leave.

In this encounter seventy Muslims were killed and forty injured; while the enemy lost only thirty of their men. Hamzah, an uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was killed by a slave of Hinda, wife of Abu Sufyan. Hinda mutilated the corpse and chewed his liver in order to avenge the death of her father, Utba, killed in the Battle of Badr at the hands of Hamza.

It was on this occasion, that for the first time, Muslim ladies went to the battlefield to give water to the soldiers and to nurse the wounded.

The Holy Quran mentions this battle in these words:

"Allah did indeed fulfil His promise to you, when ye, with His permission, were about to annihilate your enemy, until ye flinched and fell to disputing about the order and disobeyed it after He brought you in sight (of the booty) which ye covet. Among you are some that hanker after this world and some that desire the Hereafter—." (3:152)

"Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, — it was Satan who caused them to fail,—." (3:155)

"What ye suffered on the day the two armies met, was with the leave of Allah, in order that He might test the Believers." (3:166)

Impact and Conclusion

Defeat in the battle of Uhud came as a great shock to the Muslims. They could not understand how they could achieve victory at Badr, when they were

heavily outnumbered and shabbily equipped and then suffer defeat at the hands of an army which they had already forced to retreat. Their defeat, however, made it clear to the early Muslims that victory was not theirs by right and that they could not expect to win every battle they fought.

The Muslim army was weakened before the battle even began, by the desertion of Abdullah bin Ubbay with three hundred men. His reason was that his opinion about fighting inside the city was overlooked in favour of those Muslims who wanted to fight outside the city. He forgot the fact that the Prophet^{pbuh} himself was initially in agreement with him, but he accepted the other view when he realized that it was held by majority of the Muslims. The Prophet^{pbuh} did not see anything wrong in discarding his own view but Abdullah bin Ubbay considered it to be humiliating and deserted with his men.

This, however, did not cause much harm at the beginning of the battle when the Muslims were able to achieve a clear advantage. At that point, however, a mistake was made when the men placed on the pass in the mountain left their position against the orders of the Prophet^{pbuh}. It was a moment of weakness, which overcame those believers who wanted to get a share in the booty and diverted them from the noble goal for which they were fighting. This battle convinced the Muslims that Allah supported them only as long as they supported His cause. They saw with their own eyes the victory change into defeat when they forgot the real reason for battle and ran for the booty.

Another sign of weakness exposed at the Battle of Uhud was that when the Quraish army counter attacked, the Muslims did not fight a determined battle. They were scattered everywhere and some were too busy saving themselves. They did not respond to the Prophet^{pbuh} when he called them. In fact, most of them left him to face the enemy alone. In these difficult moments, he had only a handful of his companions to help him. When the rumour spread that the Prophet^{pbuh} had been killed, some of the believers dropped their weapons thinking that there was no more reason for them to continue fighting.

It was necessary for the Muslims to realize their mistake. They were not only defending and protecting the Prophet^{pbuh} but they were also fighting for their faith, defending it from forces which were trying to crush it. Hence it was not proper for a people who believed in Allah and submitted themselves to Him to stop fighting if the Prophet^{pbuh} was killed. The Quran says: "Muhammad is no more than a messenger: many were the messengers that passed away before him. If he died or were slain will ye then turn back on your heels?...." (3:144)

Despite the negative performance of the Muslim army at the Battle of Uhud, it is a fact that earlier in the battle, they had forced the Quraish army to retreat and victory had been within their grasp. To begin with they fought a determined and well planned battle sure to bring about a decisive result. Even though they were heavily outnumbered, many of the fighters displayed heroism at the

beginning of the battle as well as when they were a very small number who defended the Prophet^{pbuh}.

The greatest example of heroism was displayed by the Prophet^{pbuh} himself. He was against leaving Madinah to meet the enemy and would have preferred to defend the city from inside. But he accepted the other view when he realized that it was shared by the majority. When things did not go as the Muslims desired, he remained steadfast and did not care for his own safety as the enemy soldiers rushed towards him.

The battle of Uhud was of great significance for the Muslims. The setback that they suffered was not without its advantages. This battle distinguished the true believers from the hypocrites. Those who were sincere to Allah and His prophet^{pbuh} were able to pass this test.

About sixty verses of Surah Al-Imran comment on this battle. They contain only a mild reproach for the Muslims on their failure. This reproach is mixed with advice to set Muslims on the right path and get better results in future.

4TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Banu Nazir

In the 4th year of the Hijrat, the Banu Nazir tribe of the Jews plotted to murder the Prophet^{pbuh} and at the instigation of the Quraish planned to rise against the Muslims. The Prophet^{pbuh} sent them a message to leave Madinah within ten days. But they rejected it and shut themselves up in their fortresses. At this the Prophet^{pbuh} led an army against them and laid siege to their forts. After a siege of two weeks, the Jews surrendered. They were exiled from Madinah.

5TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Battle of Trench

After the battle of Uhud, the Muslims were able to regain their former position. The Quraish could not reconcile themselves with the growing power of the Muslims because they felt it was a threat to their social and religious position as well as their commercial prosperity.

The Jewish tribe of Banu Nazir who had settled at Khyber kept on plotting against the Muslims. Their chiefs went to Makkah and asked for help against the Muslims which the Quraish agreed to give. Then they went to Ghatafan tribe and obtained their support too. Some other tribes also agreed to give full support against the Muslims. With an army of ten thousand men under the command of Abu Sufyan, they marched to Madinah.

When the news came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, he consulted his companions.

Hazrat Salman Farsi advised to dig a trench. Madinah was safe on three sides on account of population and oasis. The fourth side that was on the Syrian route was unsafe. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, decided that a trench be dug on the side that was open to attack. Three thousand companions worked along with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in digging the trench.

At first, the Banu Quraiza had refused to support the unbelievers. But later they also came out against the Muslims and broke their treaty with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Thus there was a mighty attack on Muslims from all sides. For this reason, the battle is also called **Battle of Ahzab** or the "Battle of Allies". The Holy Quran says:

"Behold! they came on you from above you and from below you, and behold! the eyes became dim and the hearts gaped up to the throats, and ye imagined various (vain) thoughts about Allah! In that situation were the Believers tried: they were shaken as by a tremendous shaking." (33: 10-11)

The hypocrites among the Muslim army, finding the situation dangerous, asked permission from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to return to their homes on the excuse that their homes were not safe. In this connection, the Quran says:

"Behold! a party among them said: "Ye men of Yasrib! ye cannot stand (the attack)! Therefore go back! And a band of them asked for leave of the Prophet, saying, 'Truly our houses are bare and exposed,' though they were not exposed: they intended nothing but to run away." (33:13)

The siege lasted for a month, during which the Muslims had to face hunger, cold and constant attacks from the enemy. Allah, however, came to the help of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the Muslims. One night there was a piercing blast of cold wind, the enemy's tents were torn up, their fires were extinguished, the sand and the rain beat in their faces. The enemy, stricken by cold and terror from the severe storm, withdrew in utter confusion.

The Holy Quran mentions this in the following words:-

"O ye who believe! Remember the Grace of Allah (bestowed) on you, when there came down on you hosts (to overwhelm you): but We sent against them a hurricane and forces that ye saw not. But Allah sees (clearly) all that ye do. (33:9)

Islam emerged successful from the trial and was more firmly established than ever. This was the end of the aggressive power of the chiefs of Makkah. After the Battle of Trench the strength of the enemy was broken forever.

Banu Quraiza

The Jewish tribe of Banu Quraiza, in violation of the agreement signed with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, had helped the enemies of Islam in the battle of Ahzab. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, advanced against their fortresses and surrounded them. The siege continued for about a month after which the Banu Quraiza surrendered. They agreed to accept the decision of Sa'ad Bin Mu'az regarding

their fate. Sa'ad Bin Mu'az was the chief of the Aus tribe with whom the Jews had been in alliance. Sa'ad applied the Jewish law of the Old Testament. According to this law the men of Quraiza were killed, the women and children taken as captives of war and their lands and properties divided among the Muslims.

The Holy Quran refers to this incident in these words:

"And those of the people of the Book who aided them - Allah did take them down from their strongholds and cast terror into their hearts, (so that) some ye slew, and some ye made prisoners. And He made you heirs of their lands, their houses and their goods —." (33: 26-27)

6TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Treaty of Hudaibiya

In 6 A.H., the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had a dream that he had entered the Sacred Mosque at Makkah. Therefore, he decided to go to Makkah for performing Umrah, or the minor pilgrimage. The Quran says:

"Truly did Allah fulfill the vision for His Messenger: ye shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah wills, with minds secure, - and without fear —." (48:27)

Accordingly, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} with fourteen hundred unarmed companions, set out for Makkah for the pilgrimage. The Quraish however decided not to allow the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his companions to enter Makkah. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore stopped at Hudaibiya, a place at a distance of about three miles from Makkah. From there he sent a messenger to inform the Quraish that they had not come to wage war, but had come unarmed and wished to enter Makkah only for the purpose of performing the Umrah.

The messenger sent by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not return and, therefore, another was sent. When the second messenger also did not return, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent Hazrat Usman. He, too, was detained by the Quraish and a rumour spread that he was killed. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} collected all his followers near the oasis of Rizwan. He took from them the oath that they would lay down their lives in the name of Allah. This oath is known as **Bait-e-Rizwan**. Regarding this oath, the Quran says:

"Allah's Good Pleasure was on the Believers when they swore fealty to thee under the tree: He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquility to them: and He rewarded them with a speedy victory" (48:18)

The Quraish were very disturbed when they heard of this and decided to negotiate a treaty of peace with the Muslims. It was called the **Treaty of Hudaibiya**. It had the following terms:-

1. Muslims would return to Madinah that year.
2. They would be permitted to come for pilgrimage next year but would stay only for three days in Makkah.

3. If a Quraish from Makkah should join the Muslims without permission from his guardians, he would be sent back to Makkah. But if a Muslim from Madinah went to Makkah he would not be sent back.
4. There would be no fighting for ten years.

Many of the Muslims including Hazrat Umar were not happy over the terms of the treaty which were very harsh and against the interests of Muslims. Yet the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} accepted them with the command of Allah Who Himself, declared this treaty to be a manifest victory for the believers by saying:

"Verily We have granted thee a manifest victory." (48:1)

As the subsequent events show, this treaty proved to be beneficial for the cause of Islam. It ended the atmosphere of constant hostility and the non-believers of Makkah started coming to Madinah. Having free contacts with the believers, they got the chance to study closely the Islamic way of life and the success achieved by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers. After this treaty, a large number of unbelievers accepted Islam. Among them were Khalid bin Walid and Amr bin A'as. Khalid bin Walid later conquered Syria for the Muslims and Amr bin A'as was the conqueror of Egypt.

Numerous tribes entered into alliance with Muslims considering them to a power equal to the Quraish. This alliance opened up an opportunity for the propagation of Islam.

After the Treaty, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent messages of Islam to kings and emperors some of whom embraced Islam. He also despatched envoys to different states, governments and tribes for propagation of Islam.

According to the Treaty, the newly converted Muslims of Makkah were not allowed to visit Madinah so they established a camp and started looting the caravans of the Quraish. Ultimately, when the Quraish cancelled the Treaty, they migrated to Madinah.

The Treaty of Hudaibiya was a turning point in the great struggle of Islamic revolution which laid the foundation of later success. It ultimately paved the ground for the peaceful and bloodless conquest of Makkah.

7TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Message of Islam to Kings and Emperors

In the sixth year after Hijrat the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} decided to invite the rulers and kings of neighbouring countries to embrace Islam. Preparation for sending letters with special messengers were started in 6 A.H. The actual despatch of the messengers took place in 7 A.H.

Among those to whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent his letters were:

1. **Heraclius, the Roman Emperor:** He had the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} letter read out to him and later sent for Abu Sufyan, who at the time was one of the

Holy Prophet's ^s_{pbuh} bitterest enemies. He was in the neighbourhood as the leader of a trade caravan of the Quraish of Makkah. Heraclius put questions to Abu Sufyan about the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was greatly impressed by what Abu Sufyan told him. He remarked that from what Abu Sufyan had told him, the person who claimed to be a Prophet did possess the attributes of one. He sent a polite reply, but did not embrace Islam.

2. **Chosroes, Emperor of Persia:** He insulted the Holy Prophet's ^s_{pbuh} messenger and tore his letter to pieces. When the Prophet^{pbuh} was informed of this, he said that Chosroes' kingdom would soon be broken up and this is exactly what happened. His son killed him and ascended the throne, but after sometime drank poison and died.
3. **Negus, Emperor of Abyssinia:** He embraced Islam and sent some presents for the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.
4. **Cyrus, Ruler of Egypt:** He treated the Holy Prophet's ^s_{pbuh} messenger with great honour and sent a polite reply and some presents for the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. These included Hazrat Maria whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} later married and a horse named **Duldul**. He did not accept Islam.
5. **The Rulers of Bahrain and Oman:** Both of them embraced Islam.

Khyber Expedition

The Banu Nazir and other Jewish tribes after being exiled from Madinah had settled at Khyber where they were always plotting against the Muslims. They had the support of the Ghatafan tribe and the hypocrites of Madinah. When they came to know of the terms, which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had agreed to at Hudaibiya, they took it as a sign of weakness or almost a defeat for him and began to make preparations for attacking Madinah.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} came to know of these developments and marched with an army of sixteen hundred men against the Jews of Khyber. Seeing the Muslim army under the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the Jews shut themselves up in their seven well-guarded fortresses, of which the strongest and best fortified was Qamus. There was a force of about 20,000 Jews in these forts from where they hurled stones and showered arrows on the Muslim army.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not want a long siege, so he ordered an attack. The Muslims captured all fortress without much difficulty, but when they reached the fort of Qamus, the fight prolonged to twenty days. Each day, they had to return without success, until one day, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent Hazrat Ali as commander of the troops for the day's fight.

Seeing the Muslims under the command of Hazrat Ali, Marhab, the famous warrior of the Jews came out of the fort to fight against him. Hazrat Ali killed him in the first attack. Then a fierce battle started in which the Jews were forced to surrender and the Muslims captured the fort.

The Jews requested the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to grant them peace. The Holy

Prophet^{pbuh} allowed them to stay in Khyber on the condition that they would live in peace, and give half of the produce of their land to the Muslims.

Relations between the Prophet^{pbuh} and the Jews

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} came to Madinah, he made agreements with the Jewish tribes of Madinah to defend the city from foreign invaders and to maintain peace and order. But instead of defending it from its enemies, they organized a campaign of slander against Islam and its followers. They first tried to create disruption between the two main tribes of Madinah i.e., the Aus and the Khazraj. Then they incurred the displeasure of Muslims by their contacts with the Quraish of Makkah.

At the time of the Battle of Badr, they did not help the Muslims according to the treaty signed with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. After the Battle of Badr, Ka'ab, the leader of the Jews propagated against Muslims and maintained secret communication with Abu Sufyan. He even tried to murder the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Among the three tribes of the Jews – the Banu Qainuqa, Banu Nazir and Banu Quraiza – the Banu Qainuqa, were the first to break the treaty that was signed earlier and fought with the Muslims in the periods between the Battles of Badr and Uhud. Attempts made by the Prophet^{pbuh} to come to terms with the Jews were unsuccessful. Thereupon, a siege was enforced against the Banu Qainuqa, the result of which was their expulsion from Madinah. In the third year of the Hijrat, Ka'ab was executed for his activities against Madinah and the Muslims.

In the 4th year of the Hijrat, the Banu Nazir tribe of the Jews plotted to murder the Prophet^{pbuh} and at the instigation of the Quraish planned to rise against the Muslims. The Prophet^{pbuh} sent them a message to leave Madinah within ten days. But they rejected it and shut themselves up in their fortresses. At this the Prophet^{pbuh} led an army against them and laid siege to their forts. After a siege of two weeks, the Jews surrendered. They were exiled from Madinah.

The third tribe of the Jews – Banu Quraiza, openly joined the Quraish in the **Battle of Ditch**. After the battle, they were told to leave the city. But on their refusal, the Prophet^{pbuh} besieged their settlements. At last they also surrendered to him and agreed to abide by the decision of Sa'ad bin Mu'az who decided their fate according to the Jewish law of the Old Testament. Their men were slain, the women sold as captives and their lands and properties were divided among the Muslims.

Most of the Jews expelled from Madinah took shelter at Khyber, near the border of Syria. Here they began to plot against the Muslims in co-operation with the Bedouin tribes. In 5 A.H., the fortresses at Khyber were besieged and captured by the Muslims. The Jews were allowed to remain there by contributing a share of their produce to the Muslim government.

But the Jews did not refrain altogether from enmity towards the Muslims

and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Once again, they plotted to murder the Prophet^{pbuh} by poisoning him but fortunately, the Prophet^{pbuh} was saved. The Jews continued to cherish evil designs against the Muslims up to the reign of the second Khalifa Hazrat Umar when they were asked to leave Syria.

Reasons for change in the relationship between the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the Jews

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} migrated to Madinah, he sought to develop friendly relations with the Jews. For this purpose, he signed a treaty of peace and friendship with them.

The relations were cordial at the beginning, but as more and more people joined Islam, and the Holy Prophet's position grew stronger, the Jews became apprehensive of his growing power and considered it a threat to their own dominant position in the area. Some of their learned rabbis had embraced Islam. The Jews, therefore began to deny his prophethood and ridicule his teachings.

The Jews were mainly money lenders who would charge heavy interest on loans. The teachings of Islam forbid usury and the charging of interest. The Jews did not like this as it hurt their economy and affected their business.

The Jews used to exploit the rivalry between the two tribes of Madinah – Aus and Khazraj to their advantage. With the establishment of brotherhood by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, this rivalry ceased and Jews could no longer use it to their advantage.

After the Qiblah was changed from Jerusalem to Makkah, in the second year of Hijrat, the Jews began to organize constant intrigues with the hypocrites and the Quraish of Makkah. They sent deputations to the Quraish and the Arab tribes to attack Madinah and even offered them financial help. They also started a slander campaign against the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the Muslims. They even tried to murder him.

These actions were a violation of the terms of the agreement which they had made with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who was now forced to take practical steps against them. He decided that the Jews should not be allowed to remain in Madinah and they were expelled from the city.

Performance of Umrah

According to the Treaty of Hudaibiya, signed in 6 A.H., Muslims could perform Umrah the next year. They were also entitled to stay for three days in Makkah. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, undertook the journey to Makkah. Before leaving he asked his companions not to take any arms with them. They were allowed to enter Makkah where they performed Umrah. After three days the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} left Makkah with his followers.

8TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Battle of Mutah

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had sent a message with a letter to the Roman Emperor who was a Christian. The messenger was killed at Mutah, a place in Syria. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, sent an army of three thousand Muslims under the leadership of Zaid bin Haris. After the deaths of Hazrat Zaid, Hazrat Ja'afar and Hazrat Abdullah bin Rawahah, one after the other, the Muslim army under the command of Khalid bin Walid defeated the enemy.

Conquest of Makkah

After the Treaty of Hudaibiya, the Khuza tribe joined the Muslims, while the Banu Bakr tribe became an ally of the Quraish. One of the terms of the treaty was that neither party would fight an ally of the other party. In violation of this clause of the treaty, the Quraish, along with the Banu Bakr attacked and killed the men of Banu Khuza. A deputation of the Banu Khuza came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and asked for his aid and protection. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} promised to help them. He sent a messenger to the Quraish offering them three alternatives:

1. To pay compensation or blood money for the men of Banu Khuza,
2. To dissolve their alliance with the Banu Bakr.
3. To declare that the treaty of Hudaibiya stood dissolved.

The Quraish took the third option. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} decided that there was no other alternative but to fight against the Quraish. He, therefore, ordered preparation for Jihad.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} left Madinah on the 10th of Ramazan 8 A.H., with an army which by the time he reached Makkah, numbered ten thousand. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} divided his army into four groups and gave instructions to all that no blood was to be shed and they were not to fight unless they were attacked in which case they should defend themselves. The Quraish who had never seen such a huge, well-armed and disciplined army before, offered no resistance; but the unit under the command of Khalid bin Walid was attacked by the tribesmen of Banu Bakr and also by some of the most hostile Quraish. Khalid bin Walid had, therefore, no option but to fight back. In this encounter twenty-eight men were killed.

Before entering Makkah the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} announced a general pardon, except for sixteen or seventeen persons who were the bitterest enemies of Islam. A messenger preceded the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asking the people to have no fear as no one would be killed or injured. He also announced that anyone who laid down his arms would be safe, anyone who took refuge in the house of Abu Sufyan, till then one of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} bitterest enemies, would

be safe and that anyone who closed the door of his house would be safe. All these promises were fully kept and the entry of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} army into Makkah was absolutely peaceful.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} proceeded to the **Masjid-e-Haram** and performed **Tawaf** of the Ka'abah. After performing Tawaf, he entered the Ka'abah and ordered the destruction of the three hundred and sixty idols which had been placed by non-believers in the Ka'abah. While the idols were being removed, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} recited the following verse;

"And say: Truth has (now) arrived and falsehood perished: for falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish." (17:81)

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} came out of the Ka'abah there was a huge crowd of the Quraish waiting for him. All his deadliest foes and his bitterest enemies who had for nearly twenty-one years, injured, insulted and persecuted the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers, were now before him as his captives.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asked them what treatment they could expect at his hands. They cried out:

"You are a noble brother and a noble cousin."

On this, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said, "*There shall be no reproach against you this day, go, you are free!*"

Eventually the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} also pardoned twelve or thirteen of those who had been excluded from the general pardon. Only four persons out of the original list were actually executed.

History cannot cite another instance of such magnanimity and mercy on the part of a conqueror. Stanley Lane Poole in his book, *The Speeches and Table Talk of Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}*, writes:

"He freely forgave the Quraish all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn in which they had afflicted him and gave amnesty to the whole population of Makkah——. The army followed his example, and entered quietly and peacefully; no house was robbed, no woman insulted——. It was thus that Muhammad^{pbuh} entered again his native city. Through all the annals of history there is no triumphant entry comparable to this one."

Arthur Gilman in his book, *The Saracens*, says:

"It is greatly to Muhammad's^{pbuh} praise that on the occasion of the conquest of Makkah, when his resentment for ill usage in the past might naturally have incited him to revenge, he restrained his army from shedding of blood, and showed every sign of humanity and thanksgiving to Allah for His goodness."

The conquest of Makkah opened a new era in Islam. It practically settled the struggle for supremacy in Arabia and the Prophet^{pbuh} was elevated to a paramount position over the whole peninsula.

After the purification of the Ka'abah before the **Zuhr** prayer the Holy

Prophet^{pbuh} directed Bilal to ascend the roof of the Ka'abah and announce the Azan. After the prayers, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} proceeded to the Safa Hill and people came in crowds to embrace Islam. About this, the Quran says:

"When comes the Help of Allah, and victory, And thou dost see the people enter Allah's Religion in crowds, celebrate the praises of thy Lord, and pray for His forgiveness:" (110: 1-3)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} stayed in Makkah for fifteen days. He devoted his time to explaining the teachings of Islam. During this time the neighbouring Arab tribes also came to Makkah and embraced Islam. After appointing a governor for Makkah the Prophet^{pbuh} returned to Madinah.

Battle of Hunain

Before the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} could leave Makkah for Madinah, he received reports that the Hawazin and Saqef, the two very strong and warring tribes of Taif, had collected a large army for attacking the Muslims. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, postponed his departure for Madinah and made preparations for meeting this new challenge. He proceeded against them with an army of 12,000 Muslims, ten thousand of which had come from Madinah and two thousand were the new converts to Islam.

Probably the enemy had received reports of the route to be followed by the Muslim army. So they posted archers in secret places and made a surprise attack on the Muslims while they were passing through a narrow valley near Hunain. As a result, Muslims began to retreat in disorder. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his Companions called the retreating men to return. The Muslim army responded to the call and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} rallied his forces. Thus within no time, the defeat was changed into victory. The Quran says:

"Assuredly Allah did help you in many battlefields and on the day of Hunain: Behold! your great numbers elated you, but they availed you naught; and ye turned back in retreat. But Allah did pour His calm on the Messenger and on the Believers and sent down forces which ye saw not:—" (9: 25, 26)

In this battle, the Muslim army took six thousand prisoners of war, twenty-four thousand camels and forty thousand goats.

Siege of Taif

After their defeat at Hunain, some of the enemy took refuge in Taif. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} deputed a small army which defeated them and captured many of them. Thereafter, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} himself proceeded with his army and laid siege to the fortresses in which the enemy had taken refuge. The siege continued for twenty days after which it was lifted. In 9 A.H., the whole of Taif embraced Islam.

9TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Tabuk Expedition

In the 9th year of the Hijrat the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} received information that the Roman Emperor had organised a huge army and that this force which the Emperor himself was commanding, had arrived near the frontier. The Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, ordered that preparations be made to meet this challenge. At that time there was famine in Hejaz and scarcity of water in Madinah and the surrounding areas. There was intense heat. It was also the time for the ripening of fruits and plucking of dates. Moreover, arms and equipment for fighting the large army of the Romans were not available. It is for these reasons that the Tabuk expedition is called **Expedition of Straitness**.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} made an appeal for donations and subscriptions. On this occasion, Hazrat Usman gave one thousand gold dinars and three hundred camels laden with grains. Hazrat Umar contributed half of all his cash, household goods and cattle and Hazrat Abu Bakr donated everything that he had. The Muslim ladies, too gave their ornaments as donations. However many hypocrites and other Arabs made excuses for not accompanying the Muslim army.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} left Madinah with an army of thirty thousand men and encamped at Tabuk. It was a difficult journey because of the intense heat and the scarcity of food and water. But the Muslims remained steadfast. The strength of the army demoralised the Romans who dispersed without any fighting. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} stayed at Tabuk for twenty days, during which a number of tribes came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and embraced Islam.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} returned to Madinah, those who had not joined the expedition came to make their excuses. Three true believers, however admitted their mistake. They were pardoned by Allah while the others were condemned by the Holy Quran. The Tabuk expedition was the last military expedition in which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} personally took part.

Review of the Battles fought by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

Although the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} fought many battles against his enemies, yet the purpose and manner of the battles fought by him were totally different. He started his mission through peaceful invitation to the people to accept that Allah is One and that all should worship none but Him. But this peaceful propagation of Islam received serious opposition from pagans who did their best to suppress it by persecution. When they found that in spite of serious opposition, Islam was gaining strength in Madinah, they took up arms to destroy it as the Quran tells us:

“—Nor will they cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith if they can —.” (2:217)

Under these circumstances the first command of Allah permitting the Muslims to fight was given which said:

"To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged; —" (22:39)

And again the second command which said :

"Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits —" (2:190)

From these verses, it is clear that permission to fight was given against those who waged war. This type of war according to the Quran, is fighting in the way of Allah (3:167) and which is known as **Jihad-fi-Sabil Allah**. In other words, it also means striving for the cause of Allah. The Quran says:

"O Prophet! Strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them." (9: 73)

According to the Quran, fighting is to end persecution. War is to continue till the enemy goes on fighting. But if it stops, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.

From this it is clear that Jihad is to end persecution, to help the weak and the oppressed and it is only against those who fight. This is also clear from the addresses of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} which he delivered to his followers at the time of sending them out to fight. At Badr he said,

"You shall not be the first to attack. You shall not permit personal hate or revenge sway your hearts while fighting. You shall not raise your arms against anyone who is not a party to the fight. You will spare the old and the sick. You shall protect women and children from injury."

At Uhud he had said:

"You are fighting for neither land nor wealth nor bloodshed but merely to defend the word of Allah and to keep high the banner of truth."

At Khyber, when some of his followers forcibly took the animals and fruit trees of the Jews he became angry and said: *"Allah has not permitted you to enter into the houses of the people of the Book, except with their permission, or to torture their women, or to eat their fruits, when they have fulfilled their terms with you."*

At Muta, he laid down the following principles for the conduct of Muslim armies:-

1. They were not to attack those engaged in prayers.
2. No woman, child or old man was to be injured or killed.
3. No green trees were to be cut or destroyed.

Thus, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} purified the system of war from all sorts of cruelties and inhuman activities. His real aim in coming on the battlefield was neither to gain power nor to acquire lands. It was to end persecution and create a calm and peaceful atmosphere for everybody and also to help the poor, weak and the old. This was the reason that after the victories over his enemies, he never

took revenge from anybody. He revolutionised the system of war into a system of Jihad which is actually a form of *Ibadat* or worship in Islam.

Reasons why the Holy Prophet had to fight against the Quraish

The Muslims were given permission to fight, by Allah, in the second year of Hijrat in the following words: "*Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you.....*" (2:190)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} thought it necessary to fight the Quraish in the Battle of Badr and in subsequent battles because if the Muslims had not fought them in self-defence, the small number of Muslims would have been killed and Islam would have been wiped out from the earth forever.

Islam is a religion of peace, but if peace is threatened, fighting becomes necessary. The Quraish were the main oppressing force for the Muslims. They had to be put down, so that Islam could spread, and this was soon to be.

10TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Year of Deputations

The 10th year of Hijrat is called **Am-ul-Wafd**, the Year of Deputations because it was in this year that numerous tribes of Arabia came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to join Allah's faith.

Farewell Pilgrimage

The most important event of the 10th year of Hijrat was the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} farewell pilgrimage – **Hajjat-ul-Wida**. When he decided to go to Makkah for performing the pilgrimage, messengers were sent to all parts of Arabia to inform the believers of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} intentions and to invite them to join him in the great Pilgrimage.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} left Madinah on the 25th of Ziqad, 10 A.H., in the company of one hundred fourteen thousand of his followers; all his wives accompanied him. On the 4th day of the following month, they reached Makkah where they performed the pilgrimage.

Sermon of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} delivered his last sermon in the plain of **Arafat**, near the **Jabal-e-Rehmat**, the "Mount of Mercy". This sermon is not only remarkable for its eloquence but it is also very significant because it contains an imperishable message for mankind. He said:

"O people! Listen to my words; for I do not know whether I shall be in your midst after this year. Remember that you shall have to appear before your Lord."

Lord Who will demand from you an account of your actions."

"O people! You have rights over your wives and your wives have rights over you. Treat your wives with kindness. Verily, you have taken them on the security of Allah and made them lawful unto you by words of Allah. And feed your slaves as you feed yourselves and clothe your slaves as you clothe yourselves. If they commit a fault which you are unwilling to forgive, then sell them for they are the servants of Allah and not to be harshly treated."

"O People! Listen to my words and remember that all Muslims are brothers unto one another. As you are one brotherhood, you will not take your brother's belongings which he will not give you out of goodwill. Guard yourself from committing injustice."

"Behold, worship your Lord; offer prayers five times a day; observe fast in the month of Ramazan; pay the Zakat on your property; and perform pilgrimage to the House of Allah."

"Let him that is present tell it to him that is absent."

With these words, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} finished his address and the following revelation came to him:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (5:3)

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} Khutba Hajjat-ul-Wida shows that he knew he was nearing the end of his mission and of his earthly existence, and that this was going to be his last Hajj. It clearly showed that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had completed his mission and that Islam had been perfected.

This Khutba can be called the first Universal Charter of Human Rights. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} declared, at the beginning, that Sovereignty belongs to Allah, Who is One and has no partners. He then said that we are all children of Adam and, therefore, equal and brothers to one another. He declared the sacredness of life, property and honour of everyone.

In his last sermon, he pointed out in brief the duties and responsibilities of Muslims towards each other. He laid special emphasis on the rights of women and enjoined that they must be treated with kindness. For the first time, women were given rights and a status in the Arab society. He raised the status of slaves and made them equal in the matter of food and clothing with their masters. On the basis of these teachings the later history of Islam has been moulded.

11TH YEAR OF HIJRAT

Illness and Death

By the 11th Hijri faith prevailed all over Arabia and peace was established throughout the peninsula. In the month of Safar, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} became

ill and on the fifth day of his illness, he shifted to the apartment of Hazrat Aisha. After an illness of thirteen days, he breathed his last on the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal. His age at the time of death was 63 years. He was buried in the apartment of Hazrat Aisha.

Life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} As the Model of Excellence

Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} is the only messenger of Allah and man in history whose entire life is recorded. Not only the important events of his life, but the details of his daily life, from birth to death are written. All his sayings, the details of his conduct and character have been preserved, his whole life, at home, in the mosque and outside, was fully known to his companions and was recorded so that the following generations could learn and get inspiration from his example.

The life of Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} is perfect and serves as an example for men and women of all ages working in all professions and trades. He not only preached but also practised what he preached and acted upon each and every commandment and injunction revealed to him by Allah.

He taught people to be good, honest and just in their private as well as public dealings. His teachings were not confined to the mosque. At home, he advised his family, and in the market place, he explained the principles of buying and selling. When he received deputations from abroad, he talked about state matters which laid the foundations of international law. When at war, he devised the laws of war and peace. While deciding disputes between his companions, he gave them a civil and criminal code of judgement; and to protect the rights of individuals in the state, he gave them judgements which later became the law of the Islamic State.

In his childhood he was a herdsman and looked after the sheep and goats of his family and neighbours. Later he became a trader and went on trading journeys to neighbouring countries. He married, had children and lived a very happy life with his family. Later on, at Madinah, he became the head of the community and acted in various capacities – as a judge, administrator, a military commander, and finally, head of the State. He had vast experience in various positions and had gained a great deal of knowledge of human needs in all circumstances. His life is a perfect model and example for people to follow to attain goodness, piety and success in their personal as well as social life. He had set very high and noble ideals through practical examples for all mankind to follow in every field of life.

Sincerity and simplicity, truthfulness and honesty were part of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} character. From a poor orphan boy, he rose to the position of a

king, but he never led the life of a king. The ruler of a vast empire, he met the lowest of his subjects on terms of equality. He helped his wives in their household duties and mended his shoes and clothes. When a mosque was being built in Madinah, he worked as an ordinary labourer. He also took part in the digging of the trench during the battle of Trench. He stood firm and steadfast before the dangers and difficulties that he faced in his encounters with the Quraish.

The Quran describes the personality of the great Prophet^{pbuh} in these words: "And you (stand) on an exalted standard of character." (68: 4)

In the words of the Quran, his character and personality was far above that of other human beings. He possessed the best and noblest qualities and was a true example of a perfect human being. He lived the life of an ordinary man; helped the poor, orphans and the widows; was kind to the weak, and hospitable to strangers and travellers; was affectionate and loving towards his friends and forgiving and merciful towards his enemies, was fair and honest in his dealings and just in deciding affairs of friends as well as that of enemies. In short, all goodness and all excellence seems to have been combined in the person of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}.

The Quran and the Prophet^{pbuh} are inseparable. The Quran is Allah's Command, and the life of Prophet^{pbuh}, the fulfillment of that Command. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was charged with the responsibility to communicate the revealed message and to make his life a model for others. Allah's commands are contained in their original form in the Quran and the Prophet's^{pbuh} sayings and doings are preserved in the form of **Hadis**. These records cover matters of morality, spirituality, economics, politics and sociology. The advice is absolutely perfect, free from human weaknesses. It shows us the moderate way of life. These two sources, the Quran and the teachings and the example of Hazrat Muhammad's^{pbuh} life will always provide light and guidance to those who need it.

Once someone enquired about his character and manners from his wife Hazrat Aisha and she replied that the Quran was his character. This means that he practiced the teachings of the Quran and whatever the Quran commanded, he obeyed, and whatever it forbade, he abstained from it. According to Anas, his servant, Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} had the best character. Jabir reported the Prophet^{pbuh} as saying,

"Allah has sent me to perfect good qualities of character and to complete good deeds." (Mishkat)

The Holy Quran clearly mentions:

"Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah, a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day." (33:21)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is thus, an ideal and excellent example for mankind to follow in their daily life.

Some Outstanding Qualities of the Prophet

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was totally different from the people among whom he was born and with whom he lived as a child and adult. He never told a lie and was known as Sadiq and Amin – The Truthful and Trustworthy. He talked politely and never used abusive language. In his dealings with people, he always followed the principle of justice. He remained engaged in trade for many years, which he conducted with honesty and integrity. Those who dealt with him in business had the fullest confidence in his integrity. Even his enemies deposited their valuables with him for safe custody.

He caused harm to no one; rather he suffered hardships for the sake of others. He kept away from tribal feuds and rivalries and was foremost in bringing about reconciliation among enemies. Thus, the personality of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} may be compared to a beacon of light in the midst of dark and dismal surroundings.

Honesty and Truthfulness

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} proved by his example that he was the most honest and truthful person, and all the people in Makkah acknowledged this fact. He was a poor orphan who started trading and within a very short time due to his honest and fair dealings with people, he came to be known as Al-Sadiq – The Truthful and Al-Amin – The Trustworthy. Everyone in Makkah called him by these names.

His first wife, Khadija, married him because of his excellent character. She was a rich widow who would hire men to take her goods to other countries on a profit sharing basis. When she heard of Hazrat Muhammad's^{pbuh} honesty and trustworthiness, she asked him to take her goods to Syria for trade. His trading in Syria resulted in large profits for Khadija. She was so impressed by his honesty that she proposed marriage to him.

At the time of reconstruction of Ka'abah a dispute arose among the various tribes of Makkah about laying the Black Stone in its proper place, everyone wanted the honour. The elders agreed that the first person to enter the Ka'abah the next morning, would decide the issue. Next morning, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was the first person to enter the Ka'abah. The people were happy to accept his decision because they trusted his judgement to be fair and unbiased.

After the first revelation, when he came home and narrated to Khadija what had happened in the cave of Hira, she consoled him and said that Allah knew of his fine character and truthful nature and He would not let him come to any harm.

When he was told to preach Islam openly, he gathered the Quraish near the mount of Safa and asked them: "*O Quraish! If I say that an army is advancing on you from behind the mountain, would you believe me?*"

They all replied! "Yes, because, we have never heard you tell a lie".

The unbelievers of Makkah rejected him, abused him and said that he was mad, but they never called him a liar. Even Abu Jahl, his bitterest enemy often said: "Muhammad, I do not say that you are a liar, but what you say I do not think right" (Afzal-ul-Rehman: Muhammad: Encyclopedia of Seerah)

When the king of Rome received a letter from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} inviting him to Islam, he invited the Arab traders visiting his country. He questioned their leader, Abu Sufyan, who was till then a bitter enemy of Islam: "Did you ever find Muhammad^{pbuh} telling a lie before his claim to prophethood?" Abu Sufyan replied that he had not. Then the king said: "I asked you if he had ever told a lie and you replied that he had not. I am sure, if he had spoken unjustly against God, he would not have abstained from speaking falsely against human beings."

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} practised honesty and truthfulness in his life and preached it to others. He lived his life in purity and virtue among unbelievers and this was acknowledged even by his bitterest enemies who knew that he was the most honest person among them.

Humility

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was a very humble person. He lived humbly all his life and never boasted of his social or political status even after his success at Madinah. There are many incidents of his humility reported by his companions and recorded in history books.

Anas said that Allah's messenger used to visit the sick, accompany funerals and accept the invitation of slaves.

It is reported by Anas that when Allah's messenger performed pilgrimage, he kept on repeating:

"O Allah! Make this pilgrimage a pilgrimage without pretence and fame." (Tirmizi)

His companions had a great deal of love and respect for him; however they did not stand up when he entered a room, as he disliked it. He did not wish to be treated as a ruler. (Tirmizi)

Someone asked Hazrat Aisha about the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} life at home. She replied that he did household work. He mended clothes and shoes, milked the goats and swept the house. He shared and ate his meals with the slaves and the

poor. He sat with the needy and the destitute in such a way that no one could tell the difference between him and poor people. When he went to an assembly, he sat wherever he found place.

When he was entering Makkah as a conqueror, he was not proud or boastful like a worldly conqueror. An expression of humility and gentleness was on his face and he lowered his head in such a way that it touched the saddle of his camel.

It is reported by Hazrat Umar that he heard the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} say: "Do not praise me as the Christians praise the son of Mary. I am a servant of God, call me a servant and messenger of God." (Tirmizi)

Another one of his companions reported him as saying: "Allah has revealed to me that you must be humble, so that no one boasts that he is better than another."

Abu Hurairah reported that Allah's messenger said that whoever adopts humility for the sake of Allah would be raised in status by him.

One of the functions of Allah's messengers was to practice and preach humility. The Holy Quran says: "Before thee We sent (messengers) to many nations, and We afflicted the nations with suffering and adversity, that they might learn humility." (6:42)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} always lived in a humble way and taught his followers to do the same. He lived the life of an ordinary human being and showed by his own example, how to live humbly, even in greatness.

Forgiveness

A great quality of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was that he never took revenge from anyone and always forgave even his bitterest enemies. Hazrat Aisha said that Allah's Messenger never returned evil for evil, but would always forgive and pardon.

The Quraish rebuked him, taunted and mocked at him, beat him and abused him. They even tried to kill him. When the persecution and aggression of the Quraish became unbearable, his companions requested him to curse them, but the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "O Allah! Forgive my people for they know not." (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

After the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} migration to Madinah, the Quraish waged many wars against him. In the Battle of Uhud, when his head and face were injured, his companions asked him to curse them, but he said that he was not sent to curse people but to invite them to the path of Allah.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} entered Makkah victorious with an army of 10,000 men, he did not take revenge, but forgave everyone. Even his enemy Abu Sufyan who fought against him, was forgiven and anyone who took refuge in his house was also forgiven.

After the conquest of Makkah, the Abyssinian slave who had killed Hazrat

Hamza in the Battle of Uhud, and Hinda, who had torn out his liver, came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and accepted Islam. Both were forgiven.

The people of Taif, who threw stones at the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} when he visited that town in order to invite them to Islam, and the Jews of Madinah who were always engaged in hostile activities against the Muslims, were also forgiven by him.

Abdullah bin Ubbay, the leader of the hypocrites, worked all his life against the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Islam. He was continuously involved in intrigues with the chiefs of Makkah to wage war against the Muslims. In the Battle of Uhud, he deserted with three hundred of his supporters, thus weakening the Muslim army. Yet, after his death, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} prayed to Allah to forgive him.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was an example of forgiveness and kindness, as mentioned in the Holy Quran: "*Hold to forgiveness; command what is right,*" (7:199)

Fulfilment of Promises

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} always fulfilled his promises. He was always held in such trust that people left their valuables with him for safe keeping.

When the king of Rome received a letter from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} inviting him to Islam, he called the Arab traders who were then visiting his country. He asked some questions about the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} from their leader Abu Sufyan, who was at that time, one of the bitterest enemies of Islam. One of the questions was whether the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had ever broken his promise. Abu Sufyan replied that he had never broken his promise.

One of the conditions of the Treaty of Hudaibiya was that if any Muslim from Makkah went to Madinah, he would be returned. When the Treaty of Hudaibiya was being written, Abu Jandal, bound in chains, escaped from Makkah and came to the Prophet^{pbuh}, asking for refuge. The Muslims were shocked to see him in this condition, but the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said to him: "O Abu Jandal! Be patient, we cannot break the treaty. Allah will very soon find a way for you." He was returned to the people of Makkah.

Two companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, while coming from Makkah were caught by the unbelievers. They were released on the condition that they would not fight on the side of the Muslims in the battle of Badr. They came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and informed him about the incident. The Muslims were very few in number and needed more men to fight against the unbelievers; but the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Both of you must go back; we will keep the promise under all circumstances."

By always keeping his promises and contracts the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} set an example for all mankind.

Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} Behaviour Towards Others

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was very polite and gentle towards others. He always treated people with kindness and tenderness and never showed harshness even to his enemies. His kind and gentle character endeared him to all, young and old, rich and poor, men and women.

Allah mentions this quality of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the following words:
"It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh hearted, they would have broken away from about thee...."
 (3:159)

Behaviour Towards Companions

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} mercy, kindness and concern for his companions was widely known. He used to enquire about the welfare of each one of his companions. He would get worried if any one of them did not visit him for a couple of days. He took interest in their welfare as well as personal problems. He shared their joys and sorrows and was never indifferent to any one of them. It was due to his kindness that he was always surrounded by his devoted followers who would not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for him. They played a significant role in his successful political struggle.

Behaviour Towards Strangers

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} taught Muslims to protect the lives and belongings of strangers and wayfarers.

Since the death of Abdul Muttalib, authority in Makkah had become more or less divided and there was no institution to ensure peaceful enjoyment by individuals of their rights and property. Family ties afforded some degree of protection against injustice, but strangers were exposed to all sorts of oppression.

After the sacrilegious war, a league was formed with the object of suppressing any violence and injustice to the oppressed, whether citizen or stranger.

Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was one of those who joined the league and was so impressed by its noble objective that he remained loyal to it throughout. Later, he would say that if he was again summoned to it, he would gladly respond.

Behaviour Towards Children

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} loved children. A companion quoted Anas as sayings: "I have never seen anyone act more kindly towards children than Allah's Messenger." (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

Anas is reported to have said: "I never prayed behind an **Imam** who was more brief or more perfect in his prayer than Allah's Messenger. If he heard a baby crying, he would shorten the prayer for fear that the mother might be distressed." (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

Another companion reported him as saying: "*When I begin the prayer, I intend to make it long, but I hear a baby crying and shorten the prayer, being aware of the mother's emotion because of the crying.*" (Mishkat)

His love and kindness was not confined to Muslim children only. Once in a battle, a few children came into the battlefield and were killed. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was distressed about this. Someone told him that they were children of unbelievers to which he replied: "*Even children of unbelievers are better than you. Beware! do not kill children.*" (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

When anyone brought the first fruit of the season, he would give it to the youngest child in the assembly. Whenever he came back from journey, he would let the children who met him on the way ride with him.

Once, when he was kissing children, a Bedouin came to him and said: "You love children very much. I have ten children and I have never kissed one of them." The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} replied: "*What can I do if Allah has taken away love from you.*" (Mishkat)

After migration from Makkah, as he was entering Madinah, some young girls of the Ansar were singing with joy in front of their houses: He asked them if they loved him. They answered in the affirmative. To this, the Prophet^{pbuh} said: "*I love you too.*" (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

Behaviour Towards Women

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was very kind and affectionate towards women who were treated very badly in those days. He gave them honour and dignity as Hazrat Umar said: "We did not have much regard for women at Makkah; but they were better treated in Madinah. God's Messenger established women's rights through his sayings and commandments, which strengthened their position and status." (Mishkat)

As women did not get much time to listen to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} or enquire about their problems, he set aside a day for them. Women could talk to him and ask for advice about their problems very freely and without any fear.

Once some women were sitting around the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and talking very loudly to him. When Hazrat Umar came into the house, they all left and

hid themselves. Hazrat Umar, addressing them, said, "You fear me but you do not fear Allah's Messenger." They replied: "You are hot-tempered in comparison with Allah's Messenger." (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

Once the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was sleeping in the house of Hazrat Aisha. It was the day of Eid and the girls were singing. Abu Bakr came into the house and told them to stop singing. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "*Let them sing, it is the day of Eid.*"

As a result of the Prophet's^{pbuh} kind treatment, women would visit him and ask him questions. The companions were often surprised at their boldness. The Prophet^{pbuh} was always gentle and tolerant towards them.

Behaviour Towards the Poor and Orphans

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} always showed utmost kindness and sympathy to the poor, who were the foremost supporters of his religion. He used to go with them to the Ka'abah for prayers and the chiefs of Makkah used to laugh at them.

It is reported by a companion: "Once I was sitting in the Mosque of the Prophet^{pbuh} and the poor Muhajirin were sitting in one part of the Mosque. After some time, Allah's Messenger came and sat with them. On seeing this, I got up and sat with them. The Prophet^{pbuh} said: *"Give good news to the poor muhajirin that they will enter Paradise forty years before the rich."* I saw their faces light up with joy and hearing this and I wished to be along with them or to be one of them." (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol. I)

Abu Zarr another companion said that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} ordered him to love the poor and be near them. (Mishkat)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} often used to pray: "*O Allah! Keep me alive as a poor man; make me die as a poor man and resurrect me in the company of the poor.*"

His wife, Aisha, asked: "Why, O Messenger of God?" He replied: "*Because they will enter Paradise forty years before the rich.*" Then he said: "*O Aisha! Never turn away any needy man from your door empty handed. Give something, even if all you can give is half a date. Aisha! Love the poor, bring them near to you and Allah will bring you near to Him on the Day of Resurrection.*" (Tirmizi, Ibn Majah)

Once Hazrat Abu Bakr treated Salman and Bilal, who were among the poor muhajirin very harshly. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asked him: "*Did you not hurt them?*" On hearing this, Hazrat Abu Bakr went to them and asked forgiveness. (Mishkat)

A companion reported that once they were sitting with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, when some people arrived barefoot and in rags. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was shocked to see their condition. He asked Hazrat Bilal to call out the Azan.

After the prayers, he asked the people to help them. (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} advised people to treat the poor and the destitute with kindness. He issued instructions that Zakat should be collected from the rich of every tribe and town and spent on the poor of the same tribe and town.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was also kind to orphans and asked his companions to be gentle to them.

Abu Hurairah reported him as saying: "*The best Muslim house is that in which is an orphan who is well treated and the worst Muslim house is that in which is an orphan ill-treated* (Ibn Majah)

He is also reported to have said: "*Anyone who treats well an orphan girl or boy under his care, he and I shall be like these two in Paradise*", putting two of his fingers together. (Bukhari)

Abu Hurairah reported that when a man complained to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} of having a hard heart, he said: "*Pat an orphan's head and feed the poor.*" (Mishkat)

Treatment of slaves

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was particularly kind to slaves. He used to say: "*They are your brothers; give them to eat what you eat; give them to wear what you wear.*" (Bukhari, Muslim)

Whenever he received any slaves, he always freed them, but they would never leave him. Zaid bin Haris was a slave. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} freed him and gave him the choice to go with his father, who had come to take him, but he refused to go and preferred to stay with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Once a companion abused a slave, who complained to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He said to his companion, "*You are still ignorant; these slaves are your brothers. God has given you power over them. If they are not suited to your temperament, sell them. Don't harm God's creatures*" (Mishkat)

Abu Masud reported that once he was hitting his slave when he heard someone behind him saying: "*Abu Masud, God has more control over you than you have over this slave.*" When he turned around, he saw the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Abu Masud said that thereafter he never hit any of his slaves. (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

It is reported by Hazrat Abu Bakr that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "*One who treats his slaves badly and unkindly will not enter Paradise.*" (Afzal-ur-Rehman: Encyclopedia of Seerah Vol.I)

Behaviour Towards Enemies and Unbelievers

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} treated his enemies with compassion and taught his companions to do likewise. It is reported by Abu Hurairah that one night an

unbeliever was a guest of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. One by one, he drank the milk of all the goats, but the Prophet^{pbuh} did not show any sign of anger or dislike. Next morning, impressed by the Prophet's^{pbuh} behaviour, he embraced Islam.

Abu Hurairah's mother who lived with him in Madinah, was an unbeliever. She used to abuse the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, about which Abu Hurairah complained to him, but he prayed for her.

The leader of the hypocrites Abdullah bin Ubbay and his followers embraced Islam but were not true Muslims. This behaviour at the time of the Battle of Uhud and other occasions was damaging to Islam, but the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} always treated them with kindness.

The Jews were extremely hostile to the Muslim but the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was always kind to them. Once a Jew complained to the Prophet^{pbuh} that a Muslim had slapped him. He called that Muslim and scolded him. Once, the funeral of a Jew was passing by and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} stood up as a mark of respect.

Once when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was offering the morning prayers with his companions, some unbelievers came down from the mountain to kill the Muslims. They were caught and brought before the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who forgave them and set them free.

The unbelievers at Makkah had ill-treated the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and subjected him to the worst kinds of torture. They had brutally killed his uncle Hamza and wounded his daughter Zainab, which resulted in her death. They even planned to kill him. They made his life in Makkah miserable, compelling him to leave the town and migrate to Madinah. Then they launched a number of attacks on the Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers. But when Makkah was conquered, he forgave every injury inflicted upon him and proclaimed a general pardon for everyone. The believers entered Makkah peacefully, no house was looted and no woman dishonoured. He, who had been tortured, persecuted and harassed even in Madinah, forgave every injury suffered by him and his followers, thus proving that he was the Prophet of peace and blessing.

Treatment of animals

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was very kind to animals. The Arabs were very cruel to them. It was common practice in Arabia to put a ring round the neck of a camel. People used to cut pieces of flesh from living animals for eating. These practices were stopped on his orders. He also forbade people to keep animals in their working equipment for a long time. Animal fights were also made unlawful. Another custom was to tie up animals and practice arrow shooting on them. This was also prohibited.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} told the people to brand animals on those parts which were not tender. Anas reported that he saw the Prophet^{pbuh} branding sheep on their ears. (Mishkat)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was so kind and gentle to animals that he advised his companions to be considerate even at the time of slaughtering them for food. He asked them to slaughter them with the sharpest weapon, causing minimum pain and suffering to the animal. He forbade them to sharpen the weapon in front of the animal or when it was ready for slaughter. (Mishkat)

Regarding animals, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} used to say: "Fear Allah in your treatment of these animals who cannot speak." (Mishkat)

Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as the last Messenger of Allah

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} was the last of Allah's apostles. He is termed as **Khatam-an-Nabiyyin**. The primary meaning of **Khatam** is a "seal" and the secondary meaning is the end or the last part or portion of a thing. Dr. Fazl-ul-Rehman Ansari in his book, The Quranic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society, has pointed out that the "Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} is the last and final Divine messenger and the Muslims are the last divinely raised religious group."

According to some scholars, there are verses in the Holy Quran which furnish evidence in one way or the other, of the absolute finality of the Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. The most emphatic and clearest declaration on this point is contained in verse 40 of Sura Ahzab where it is said:

"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets."
(33: 40)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali, in his commentary on this verse remarked:

"The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} closed the long line of Apostles— there has been and will be no Prophet after Muhammad."

The Quran says that the appearance of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was foretold by each one of the foregoing Prophets. Jesus Christ had said:

"When he, the spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you to all truths."
(John: 16:13)

The Quran tells us what Jesus said to Bani Israel:

"I am the messenger of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad." (61:6)

The process of revelation started with Adam and revelation was also received by other apostles who preceded Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. It is clear that everything which has a beginning must have an end and that when there is no further need for a thing it should cease to exist. Prophets were needed in each age to purge the evils brought about by human beings in the Divine teachings and to bring the religion of Allah by gradual evolution to complete development. As the human mind became more and more developed, more light was cast by revelations through Prophets on matters relating to Allah and other mysteries of religion.

Though the institution of Prophethood was universal, yet the difference between Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} and other prophets was that while the latter were more or less national prophets sent to a chosen people, to a particular tribe or race, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was sent as a messenger for all mankind. All castes, races and creeds were unified under the common banner of Islam by the universal Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. He not only conveyed the message revealed to him, but instructed and explained it further with wisdom, acted upon it himself and urged mankind to follow it.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} personality and mission form a landmark in the history of mankind. He came as the last messenger of Allah with the final revelation in the form of the last Book of Allah, the Holy Quran. He gave to humanity a Book which is a complete and comprehensive guide for human beings, a perfect code of life for all its various problems without any limitations of time and territory.

The Holy Quran compares the personality of the Prophet^{pbuh} to the radiant sun while the previous prophets were like Divine lamps. The light of the sun cannot be replaced by any other light. It is universal and no other light is needed thereafter. So after the advent of Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} no necessity is felt of any other prophet following him.

Religion being made perfect and Prophethood made complete, there remains no need for another religion and another law and consequently, for another prophet. Hence the revelation:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (5: 3)

And as the Prophet^{pbuh} himself said about the finality of Prophethood:

"Whenever a Prophet perished another Prophet followed him and surely there will be no Prophet after me." (Bukhari)

In another tradition, he said: *"My relation to the long line of prophets can be understood by the parable of a building. The building was most beautifully built. Everything was complete therein except the place for one brick. I have filled the place and now the building has been completed."* (Bukhari, Muslim)

To sum up, Khatam-an-Nabiyyin is the exclusive and distinctive title of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Allah did not confer this title on any other prophet or apostle. Belief in Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} as the last of the prophets and apostles is necessary for a true Muslim.

Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} Relations with other States

Islam is a religion of peace and no Muslim state can follow a policy of territorial expansion and unprovoked aggression. The foreign policy of a Muslim state should be such as to advance the cause of Islam and to preserve and protect its territorial integrity. The Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} provide sufficient guidance to enable a Muslim state to frame its foreign policy.

The international relations of a Muslim state are based upon respect for other people's interests and rights of life, honour and property as long as they do not encroach upon the rights of Muslims and maintaining peaceful relations with the exchange of goodwill missions.

The first Islamic state in Madinah was established and governed by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. It was founded in a part of the city but it spread very fast and became the capital of a vast Muslim empire. The system of administration established by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} lasted for centuries and remained a source of inspiration for later generations.

Relations between two sovereign states are governed by an agreement if one exists between them. The Islamic state has been enjoined to follow the terms of the agreement. The best example was provided by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at the time of the Treaty of Hudaibiya. According to the treaty, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had agreed to return any Muslim who came to them and one such Muslim did arrive as the agreement was being written. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} told him to go back to Makkah as he had already agreed to the treaty. This shows that all obligations undertaken by the Muslim state should be fulfilled and treaties concluded between the Islamic state and other states should be honoured. This is binding as long as the other party remains faithful to its obligations and honours its treaties.

The following saying of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} shows how honestly he kept his word with individuals and nations. He said: "If anyone wrongs a man with whom a covenant has been made, or curtails any right of his, or imposes on him more than he can bear, or takes anything from him not in the agreement, then I shall be his adversary on the Day of Resurrection." (Mishkat)

The foreign relations of Muslim states with other states are based upon justice both in peace and war. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave detailed instructions about

being humane during a war. Muslims were instructed not to mutilate dead bodies, not to destroy crops and fruit trees, houses and places of worship, not to kill women, children and old people and not to torture war prisoners.

During a period of ten years in Madinah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had to fight several wars with the unbelievers of Makkah. The number of unbelievers killed in these wars were over two hundred. This was an example for contemporary rulers to avoid unnecessary bloodshed.

After the Treaty of Hudaibiya, during the period of peace, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent letters to various emperors and kings inviting them to Islam. Special mention in this connection maybe made of Najashi of Abyssinia, who had given protection to Muslims of Makkah. The Christians of Najran also concluded a peace treaty with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} received envoys from Egypt, Abyssinia, Byzantine and other neighbouring states and treated them as official representatives of their government. He was very strict in maintaining cordial political relations with neighbouring tribes and states and always received their envoys and deputations with great respect. He himself looked after them and served them during their stay in Madinah.

Very few Arab tribes had embraced Islam by the time Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} migrated to Madinah. After the battle of Badr, more tribes accepted Islam. All these tribes, though outside the influence of Madinah, were treated as members of the Muslim community in all matters.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} entered Makkah after its conquest, he asked its inhabitants what treatment they expected of him. He did not order them to be killed, confiscate their property or take them as slaves. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "*Today, there is no blame on you, there will be no retribution; go, all of you are free.*" The effect of this pardon was so great that the entire population of Makkah embraced Islam. The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} words converted them from deadly foes into devoted and sincere followers.

The example of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} throws light on his desire to have good and friendly relationships based on equity and justice with other states and to live in peace as good neighbours.

Wives of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

The domestic life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} can be divided into four periods. His early life till the age of 25, after which he married Hazrat Khadija. This marriage lasted till the death of Hazrat Khadija, when the Prophet^{pbuh} was about fifty years old. From then till the age of sixty he married several times. From sixty till his death he did not contract any marriage.

If the Prophet^{pbuh} had not been a complete master of himself, he could not have led an exceptionally chaste and pure life till the age of twenty-five. His worst enemies could not point out a single blot on his character.

At the age of twenty-five Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} married a widow, Khadija. Thereafter, he led with her a life of devotion till her death. After the death of Hazrat Khadija, he married an elderly lady, Sawdah, who was the widow of a convert to Islam. Both husband and wife had migrated to Abyssinia in order to escape from the persecution of the Quraish.

In the third period, he married Aisha, the daughter of his closest friend, Hazrat Abu Bakr. In the second year of the Hijrat, began the series of battles with the Quraish and other Arab tribes which reduced the number of males among Muslims. These battles continued upto 8 A.H. It was during this time that the Prophet^{pbuh} contracted several marriages. However, after the Quranic injunction limiting the number of wives to four was revealed in 8 A.H., the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not marry. Out of respect for the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, his wives were called 'Mothers of the Faithful' – **Ummhat-ul-Muminin**. They did not re-marry after the death of the Prophet^{pbuh}.

"His wives are their mothers"; has been stated in the Holy Quran. The responsibilities and duties of the wives of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} differ from those of other women. The Prophet's wives are unique in honour, respect and dignity. They are as follows:-

Hazrat Khadija

Hazrat Khadija, also known as Tahira, or the pure was the daughter of Khuwailid bin Asad and Fatima bint Za'idah. She came of a noble and prosperous Quraish family. Her father who was a successful businessman and a chief of his family had left her a large fortune. She had been married to Abu

Hala bin Zurarah and was the mother of two sons i.e., Hala and Hind. As such Khadija was also known as **Umm-e-Hind**. After the death of her first husband, she was married to Ateeq bin Aidh Makhzumi, who died leaving her a widow again. She had a daughter from him who was named Hindah.

After the death of her father in the battle of Fijar, Khadija needed the services of an honest person to manage her trade. Several notable people of Makkah recommended the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as a suitable choice. His very first expedition to Syria, in which he was accompanied by Khadija's slave, Maisra was very successful. His subsequent undertakings were of an equally fruitful nature. As a result, Khadija prospered in her business.

With the passage of time, her admiration for Muhammad^{pbuh} developed into a deeper affection and she sent him a proposal of marriage that was accepted after consultation with the elders of the family. At the time of their marriage, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was twenty-five years old, while Hazrat Khadija was forty years of age.

The marriage proved to be a very happy one. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not marry again as long as Hazrat Khadija lived. She bore him two sons and four daughters. Both the sons died in infancy. Of the daughters, only the youngest, Fatima, survived to see the great events of her father's life.

Hazrat Khadija died in the 10th year of Prophethood on 11th Ramazan, three years before Hijrat. She was then sixty-five. She was buried at Makkah.

Hazrat Khadija had the honour of being the first convert to Islam and the first to abandon the idolatrous creed of her forefathers. She suffered with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} the persecution and hardships inflicted by the Quraish from the time of his prophethood till her death. Her death was a terrible loss to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. From the beginning, she had stood faithfully by him. Her death meant that he could no longer find the compassion with which she comforted him after the disappointments he faced with the Quraish. Whenever, he came home depressed, rejected by his own people, he always found her full of sympathy. She consoled him and inspired him with renewed hope and courage.

Besides her moral support, Hazrat Khadija placed all her wealth at his disposal, so that he did not have to worry about financial matters.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} love and gratitude for Hazrat Khadija was so great that Hazrat Aisha, the young wife of the Prophet^{pbuh} whom he married after the death of Khadija became jealous.

One day, Hazrat Khadija's sister Hala whose voice sounded exactly like Hazrat Khadija's, came to visit the Prophet^{pbuh}. As soon as he heard the familiar voice, he said:

"It must be Hala; her voice is just like that of Khadija."

Hazrat Aisha who was with the Prophet^{pbuh} burst forth,

"How is it that you always think of the old woman who is no more living"

when Allah has given you much better wives."

"Never better," replied the Holy Prophet^{pbuh},

"She hailed my mission at a time when everyone was against it and supported me when there was hardly a believer. How can I forget her?"

On another occasion, he said: "Aisha! Khadija's love was given to me by Allah; never did Allah give me a better wife than Khadija."

It is a historical fact that Hazrat Khadija was of immense help and strength to the cause of Islam. It is said by Ibn-e-Hashim that she was a true counsellor of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} of Islam. There are a number of traditions praising Hazrat Khadija. According to Bukhari and Muslim:

"The noblest women of the world are Hazrat Mariam and Hazrat Khadija."

Hazrat Sawdah

The death of Hazrat Khadija left the Prophet^{pbuh} gloomy and inconsolable. He had to look after the children and attend to the household chores that caused a hindrance in his Prophetic mission. His companions felt his sorrow and worry and desired that he should re-marry. Someone proposed the name of Sawdah bint Zama'ah, one of the earliest converts to Islam. She had been married to Sakran bin Amr, also a convert to Islam. She had migrated to Abyssinia along with her husband, but had returned to Makkah about the time of Khadija's death. Her husband had died, leaving her a widow with one son. As she was the only Muslim in her family which had turned against her, she needed help and protection.

When the matter was brought to the notice of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, he decided to marry her and bring her under his protection. In marrying this lady, the Prophet^{pbuh} had the consideration that an early convert to Islam may be helped and honoured. Hazrat Sawdah was extremely devoted to the Prophet^{pbuh}. She led a very simple and pious life. Later on, when the Prophet^{pbuh} married Aisha, the young daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Sawdah loved her and attended to all her needs. Afterwards, when the Prophet^{pbuh} divided his time equally among all his wives according to the command of justice enjoined by the Holy Quran, Hazrat Sawdah gave up her turn in favour of Hazrat Aisha. She migrated to Madinah in the first year of the Hijrat. Her dwelling and Hazrat Aisha's were the first to be built in the mosque.

The Prophet^{pbuh} loved her for her piety as well as simplicity. She was of a meek and humble nature as well as kind and affectionate. Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} referred to her as the most charitable and generous of his wives. She is distinguished for her sense of duty and obedience. On the eve of the last pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} enjoined his wives to remain in retirement after his death. Hazrat Sawdah followed this directive so much so that she never left her house even for Hajj and Umrah.

She was a devout person and was very punctual about her hours of prayers.

She would get up for her prayers with the Prophet^{pbuh} before dawn and remain absorbed in her devotion till after sunrise.

She died in the 22nd year of the Hijrat towards the end of the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar. She was buried in **Jannat-ul-Baqi**, the graveyard where those close to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} were buried. Five traditions are said to be narrated by her.

Hazrat Aisha

Shortly before his migration to Madinah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} married Hazrat Aisha. At the time of marriage, she was ten years old. On attaining maturity, her marriage was solemnised in Madinah. It was her first marriage. She was the daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr, the most intimate companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the first Khalifa of Islam. She was also known by the titles of Humaira and Umm-e-Abdullah.

Hazrat Aisha was married to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} ten years after he received the first revelation. At the time of the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, she was twenty-five years old. She spent the remaining forty-eight years of her life as a widow, preaching and propagating the message of the Holy Quran and Hadis.

Hazrat Umar succeeded Hazrat Abu Bakr as the Khalifa. He respected Hazrat Aisha very much. She herself acknowledges this in these words:

"Ibn-e-Khattab has done me great favours after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}."

Hazrat Umar had fixed an annual allowance of ten thousand dirhams for each wife of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}; but in the case of Hazrat Aisha, the amount was fixed at twelve thousand dirhams. This was so, because she was very close to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

On 17th Ramazan 58 A.H., towards the end of the Khilafat of Muawiya, Hazrat Aisha died at the age of seventy-three. According to her will, she was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi in Madinah.

Her place as interpreter of religious issues and as a jurist of Sunnah and Shariat is very high. Imam Zuhri, a leading jurist says:

"Hazrat Aisha was the most learned person among the people. Senior and learned companions used to consult her."

Abu Musa Ashari said:

"We never faced any difficulty on which, when we enquired from Aisha we did not get information relating to it."

Umar bin Zubair Says:

"Aisha was the most scholarly person of her time in Quran, fundamentals of religion, fiqh, poetry, medicine, Arabian history and genealogy and discrimination between lawful and unlawful things."

Hazrat Aisha was far ahead in knowledge of Islam, not just ahead of the other wives of the Prophet^{pbuh} or other women, but except for a few eminent men, even ahead of the companions of the Prophet^{pbuh} as testified by Imam Zuhri:

"If the knowledge of all men and the wives of the Prophet^{pbuh} were put together, the knowledge of Aisha would exceed it all."

Hazrat Aisha is ranked among the prominent companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She used to convey decisions on religious matters even during the days of the first three Khalifas. About her intelligence and good judgement, Nabia Abbot, an American writer and a teacher at the University of Chicago says that she stands shoulder to shoulder with eminent jurists of her time like Abu Huraira, Ibn-e-Umar and Ibn-e-Abbas. Her memory was excellent and she had memorized several thousand traditions.

As a wife of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, she had a privileged position and she enjoyed constant companionship with her husband. As such, her knowledge of the meaning of the Holy Quran and the traditions and practices of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was better than many others. She is the pioneer of devising a system of coordination of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah.

In Islamic jurisprudence or **Fiqh**, the interpretation of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, eminent jurists and theologians of Islam, like Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Bukhari followed the principles laid down by Hazrat Aisha. This privilege gave her first place among the traditionists of Islam. She never accepted a **Hadis** that was in conflict with the Holy Quran. She is one of the most authentic sources of traditions. As many as two thousand, two hundred and ten traditions are reported by her. Her apartment was chosen for the distinction of being made the everlasting resting place of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Aisha was a very pious and God-fearing lady. Apart from the five obligatory prayers, she would offer extra prayers as well. She fasted very often and was particular about the pilgrimage. She would often purchase slaves in order to free them.

Hazrat Hafsa

Hazrat Hafsa was the daughter of the second Khalifa, Hazrat Umar bin Khattab. She was born five years before prophethood. She was first married to Khunais, son of Huzaifa. Hafsa became a Muslim along with her parents and her husband. He was among those who had migrated to Abyssinia. Later, both Hafsa and her husband migrated to Madinah. Khunais took part in the Battle of Badr in which he was martyred, leaving no issue.

After the prescribed period of **iddat** was over, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} expressed his desire to marry Hazrat Hafsa with a view to strengthening his ties with Hazrat Umar and his tribe.

Hazrat Hafsa died in the month of Shaban 45 A.H., during the Khilafat of Muawiya. Before her death, she asked her brother Abdullah bin Umar to distribute her property to the poor and needy. She had no issues. She was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

Her knowledge of religious matters was very sound. Her thirst for knowledge ranks second to Hazrat Aisha. She spent much of her time in reading and writing. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had instructed her in religion and other related topics. As a result she became a teacher, guide and an authority on complicated matters. At least, sixty traditions have been quoted by her, which she heard from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and her father, Hazrat Umar. She was an extremely religious lady, known for her devotion to prayer and fasting.

She was also the custodian of the original copy of the Holy Quran compiled by Zaid bin Sabit under orders from Khalifa, Abu Bakr. This script first remained in the custody of Khalifa Abu Bakr. After his death, it passed into the possession of Hazrat Umar who finally bequeathed it to Hazrat Hafsa for safe custody. This copy subsequently became the authentic version of the Holy Quran.

Hazrat Zainab bint Khuzaimah

She was the daughter of Khuza'ima bin Abdulla. She was first married to Abdulla bin Jahsh who was martyred in the Battle of Uhud. As a widow she led a life of poverty. Some persons offered to marry her, but for some reason or the other, she rejected these offers.

Considering the services rendered by her late husband, Holy Prophet^{pbuh} proposed to her. Hazrat Zainab accepted this offer and they were married in the month of Ramazan, 3 A.H. But her companionship with the Prophet^{pbuh} proved very short. She died within three months of her marriage and was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

The Prophet^{pbuh} offered her funeral prayers himself in accordance with the Quranic order. It may be of interest to add that when Hazrat Khadija died, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had not received any revelation on this point. At the time of her death, Hazrat Zainab was thirty years old.

Hazrat Zainab was a very kind lady, ever ready to help the poor and the needy, even at the cost of her own needs. No poor person ever returned empty handed from her house. For this reason, she was called **Umm-ul-Masakin**, "the mother of the poor". She was courteous and well mannered and in benevolence and generosity, she had no parallel.

Hazrat Umm-e-Salamah

Her real name was Hind bint Ali Umayya ibn Mughira. She was from the house of Makhzoom, a tribe of the Quraish. Her father was the leader of his tribe who had taken part in the Battles of Badr and Uhud. He was a rich and generous personality of Makkah. She was born and brought up in great luxury and comfort.

She was popularly known by the name of Umm-e-Salamah because of her son Salamah from her first husband Abdullah bin Asad. She embraced Islam

with her husband and is considered to have been one of the earliest Muslims. She first migrated to Abyssinia with her husband. From there she came to Makkah. From Makkah, she migrated to Madinah. She had the distinction of being the first Muslim woman to migrate to Madinah. In Madinah, her stay with her husband was short-lived. In the Battle of Uhud, her husband received injuries that proved fatal.

After the completion of Iddat, the waiting period, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} proposed to marry her. She accepted the offer and they were married in the year 4 A.H.

She outlived all the wives of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She died in 63 A.H. at the age of eighty-four. Hazrat Abu Hurairah led the funeral prayers and she was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

Among the wives of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Hazrat Umm-e-Salamah was second only to Hazrat Aisha in learning. She was very keen to learn traditions. She has quoted a numbers of traditions on the authority of her first husband Abu Salamah, Hazrat Fatima and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} himself. Besides, several authors have quoted traditions on her authority. As a historian says,

"The wives of the Prophet^{pbuh} were treasures of Hadis, but Aisha and Umm-e-Salamah had no equal."

She is the narrator of three hundred and seventy-eight Ahadis.

Hazrat Umm-e-Salamah was very modest and generous. She used to lead a simple and pious life. She had intense love for the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was extremely devoted to him.

Hazrat Umm-e-Salamah was an impressive reader of the Holy Quran and her style of recitation was identical with that of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Zainab bint Jahsh

She was the daughter of Umaiya bint Abdul Muttalib and was therefore one of the first cousins of the Prophet^{pbuh}. She was one of the early converts to Islam. Her original name was Barra that the Prophet^{pbuh} changed when she embraced Islam.

In 3 A.H., she was married to Zaid bin Haris, the freed slave of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}, and also his adopted son. The people of her family were against this match and were not willing to give her in marriage to a freed slave. But since Islam laid down piety as the only criterion for honour and Hazrat Zaid was an extremely pious man, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not hesitate to offer his cousin in marriage to him.

When the Prophet^{pbuh} first sent her a proposal on behalf of Zaid, she refused. She said that she did not like Zaid for he was a freed slave. Her brother Abdullah bin Jahsh supported her in her refusal to marry Zaid. But as the Prophet^{pbuh} loved Zaid and regarded him as his son, he insisted that the offer must be accepted. Thereupon, Zainab and her brother agreed and she was married to

Zaid. But within a year or so, he found it difficult to maintain his relationship with her and he divorced her.

After the period of waiting was over, the Prophet^{pbuh} sent her a proposal of marriage. Zainab replied that she could not give any reply without consulting Allah. Meanwhile, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} received the following revelation:

"Then when Zaid had dissolved (his marriage) with her——, We joined her in marriage to thee——." (33: 37)

This Divine order completed the marriage formalities.

She died at the age of fifty-three in the year 20 A.H., during the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar. At the time of her death, she left only her residential house as legacy, because whatever was received by her was distributed among the poor. This house was later on purchased for 50,000 dirhams by the Umayyad Khalifa, Walid bin Abdul Malik, for the extension of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque. Hazrat Umar led her funeral prayers. She was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

There are many reports about her piety. According to Hazrat Aisha:

"In the eyes of Allah's messenger, only Zainab competes with me in honour and dignity – I have not seen any woman more religious, pious, truthful, generous, charitable or engaged in the pleasure of Allah than Zainab."

Hazrat Zainab was very particular about her prayers and fasts. She was extremely generous. She used to earn her living herself and would spend her money on the poor. When she died, the poor people of Madinah were shocked and disturbed because they had lost a patron and a benefactor.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had foretold that among his wives the one with a long hand would meet him in heaven first. By "long hand" he meant benevolence. This prophecy came true after the death of Hazrat Zainab who was the most generous of the Prophet's^{pbuh} wives and who was the first one from amongst his wives to die after his death.

Hazrat Jawairiyah bint Haris

In the 5th Hijri, the tribe of Banu Mustaliq, headed by its chief Haris, attacked the Muslims. They were defeated. Some of their men were killed and their women and children made captives. Among them was Jawairiyah bint Haris, then known as Barra bint Haris. When the Prophet^{pbuh} distributed the captives amongst Muslim soldiers, she fell to the lot of Sabit bin Qais. She requested him to release her on the payment of ransom. In order to raise the money, she approached the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who told her that he was ready to pay her ransom and marry her if she liked. She agreed to this proposal. So, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} paid the amount of ransom and married her. As a result of this marriage, all the prisoners of war numbering about six hundred were freed by the Muslims. The reason was they did not like that any member of the family in which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was married, be made a slave. Thus, Hazrat Jawairiyah is that fortunate lady who, not only secured an honourable

place for herself, but helped to free six hundred of her kinsmen. After her marriage, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} changed her name to Jawairiyah.

She died at the age of sixty-five during the reign of Muawiya. She was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

She was very religious-minded and spent much of her time in prayers. According to traditions, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} almost always found her busy in prayers. She also fasted very often. Hazrat Jawairiyah was a woman of great learning. A number of traditions have been quoted by eminent traditionists on her authority.

Hazrat Umm-e-Habibah

Her name was Ramlah. She was the daughter of Abu Sufyan. She was first married to Ubaidullah bin Jahsh. She embraced Islam along with her husband. Both of them migrated to Abyssinia where she gave birth to a daughter named Habibah, and so she came to be known as Umm-e-Habibah.

In Abyssinia, when her husband converted to Christianity, Umm-e-Habibah, left him. At the end of Iddat, the prescribed period of waiting, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent her a proposal of marriage. According to **Sahih Muslim**, the people of Madinah, requested the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to marry her in order to resettle her. This was also to save her from falling into the hands of her father, Abu Sufyan, who was at that time an enemy of Islam.

Hazrat Umm-e-Habibah was very pleased to receive this proposal of marriage. She was married to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the sixth or seventh year of the Hijrat.

She died at the age of seventy-three in 44 A.H., during the reign of her brother Muawiya. She was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

Hazrat Umm-e-Habibah was a staunch believer in the tenets of Islam. She strictly followed the injunctions laid down by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and urged others to follow them. She looked after the widows and the orphans. She was a devoted and loving wife of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She is the narrator of sixty-five traditions.

When Hazrat Usman, the third Khalifa of Islam, was besieged in his house by the rebels and his family members had no food or water for several days, she tried to take water for the besieged persons. But the rebels stopped her from entering the house.

Hazrat Umm-e-Habibah suffered a lot for the cause of Islam. She was born in the house of a tribal chief. Yet she gladly underwent all the sufferings for the sake of her faith. She left her country and went to a foreign land for the cause of Islam, and when her husband deserted her and left her alone in an alien land, she stood firm and bore all the problems patiently. In the end, Allah rewarded her for her piety and steadfastness when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} married her.

Hazrat Safiyah

Her real name was Zainab. She was born in Madinah and belonged to the Jewish tribe of Banu Nazir. When this tribe was expelled from Madinah, her father settled in Khyber along with Kinana bin Rabi, to whom Safiyah was married a little before the Muslims attacked Khyber. She had formerly been the wife of Salam bin Mishkam who had divorced her.

On the third day of the war, Khyber fell and the captives were brought before the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Among them was Safiyah. The Prophet^{pbuh} gave orders that she should be seated behind him and threw his mantle over her as a sign that he had decided to marry her. On the way back to Madinah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} married her. After the marriage, she was given the name of Safiyah.

She died at the age of sixty and was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

She was sober and patient by nature, very generous and open handed. She was kind and sympathetic. In 35 A.H., when Hazrat Usman was besieged in his house by the rebels, who had stopped supplies of food and water to him, she went to his house with food and water. However, the rebels did not allow her to go inside the house. She returned and deputed Imam Hassan, the grandson of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to take food and water to Hazrat Usman.

All historians are unanimous in acclaiming her as a storehouse of knowledge. All those in search of knowledge and wisdom would go to her. Allama Abdul Birr says:

"Hazrat Safiyah was full of wisdom and learning."

Ibne-e-Aseer remarks:

"She was a wise and intelligent woman."

A number of traditions have been quoted from her.

Hazrat Maimunah bint Haris

Her original name was Barra, she belonged to the tribe of Quraish. She was the sister-in-law of Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib, an uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She was first married to Masud bin Amr. After her divorce from her husband she re-married. Her second husband died, after which she lived as a widow in Makkah. On the initiative of Hazrat Abbas, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent her a proposal of marriage that was accepted. The marriage took place in 7 A.H. After her marriage, she was given the name Maimunah, which means *the blessed one*. She was named Maimunah because she was married to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, at a time when he and his followers were able to enter Makkah after years of exile.

Hazrat Aisha is said to have remarked:

"Maimunah was very God-fearing and had great regard for the rights of her kith and kin."

She was fond of freeing slaves. She was very pious and humble. The Holy

Prophet^{pbuh} called her a 'Symbol of Goodness'. Forty-six traditions are quoted from her, which show her knowledge and understanding of complicated problems of religion.

She died in 51 A.H. at the same place where she had been married to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

Hazrat Rehana bint Sham'oon

Hazrat Rehana bint Sham'oon belonged to the well-known Jewish tribe of Banu Quraiza. In 6 A.H., when Muslims captured this place, Hazrat Rehana was brought as a prisoner of war. According to some reports, she was freed by the Prophet^{pbuh} who offered to marry her if she accepted Islam. She agreed and thereafter the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} married her.

She died ten years after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Maria Qibtia

After the treaty of Hudaibiya, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent letters to a number of kings and chiefs inviting them to accept Islam. He sent one such letter to the chief of Egypt. Although, that chief did not accept Islam, he received the messenger warmly and sent a number of presents to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. In accordance with the prevailing custom, he sent Hazrat Maria as a present to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She embraced Islam before reaching Madinah. Later the Prophet^{pbuh} married her. After giving birth to the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} son, Ibrahim, she rose in esteem and position among the wives of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Maria was pious and religious minded. She came from a respectable family. She was the second lady, after Hazrat Khadija, to have the honour of becoming the mother of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} son, Ibrahim. Towards the end of his life, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had to suffer the shock of the death of his son, Ibrahim, which caused him immense pain and sorrow.

Hazrat Maria was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi. She was greatly respected by the first two Khalifas of Islam, Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar and a pension was paid to her after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Descendants of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

The only wives of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who bore his children were Hazrat Khadija and Maria Qibbia. He had two sons and four daughters from his first wife Hazrat Khadija.

The eldest son of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was Qasim who was born in Makkah, eleven years before the conferment of Prophethood. The Prophet^{pbuh} loved him very much and liked to be called Abul Qasim. He lived for two years. The second son was named Tahir also known as Abdullah. He was born in Makkah after the conferment of Prophethood. He lived for less than two years. After the death of his second son, the pagans taunted the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and said that he was 'abtar' i.e., one without a male issue to carry on his name. At this Allah revealed Surah Kausar to console the Prophet^{pbuh} that not he, but his enemies were abtar.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} third son, Ibrahim, was born in Madinah in the 8th year of Hijrat to Maria Qibbia. The child was given to foster parents who lived in the neighbourhood of Madinah. The Prophet^{pbuh} often visited their house to see his son. Ibrahim died while still an infant. According to Anas, when Ibrahim was dying, tears began to fall from Allah's Messenger eyes, he said, "*The eyes weep and the heart grieves, but we say only what our Lord is pleased with and we are grieved over being separated from you, Ibrahim.*" (Bukhari, Muslim)

It so happened that there was a solar eclipse on the day on which Ibrahim died and some people thought that it was due to the death of Ibrahim. On hearing this, the Prophet^{pbuh} addressed the people and said that the eclipses of the sun and the moon do not occur due to the deaths or births of human beings.

The daughters of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} were all born in Makkah. His eldest daughter and second child after Qasim was Zainab. She was married to her mother's nephew Abul Aas. She embraced Islam, but was left in Makkah when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} migrated to Madinah. Her husband was not a Muslim and fought against the Muslims in the Battle of Badr. He was brought as a captive before the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. For his ransom, Zainab sent a necklace that had been given to her by her mother. The Prophet^{pbuh} returned the necklace and released Abul Aas on the condition that he would send Zainab to Madinah, which he did. About three years later, he came to Madinah and embraced

Islam. Zainab died in 8 A.H. as a result of a wound inflicted upon her, by an enemy of Islam, while she was migrating to Madinah. The Prophet^{pbuh} performed her funeral prayer.

She had two children, a son named Ali and a daughter Umama, who in later years, became the second wife of Hazrat Ali, after the death of Hazrat Fatima.

The Prophet's^{pbuh} second daughter Ruqayya was born three years after the birth of Zainab. She was married to Utba, son of Abu Lahab. When the Prophet^{pbuh} declared his mission, Abu Lahab became his enemy and asked his son to divorce Ruqayya, which he did.

Ruqayya was then married to Hazrat Usman. Both of them migrated to Abyssinia where she gave birth to a son, Abdullah, who died when he was six years old. They came back to Makkah in the tenth year of Prophethood. A few years later, she migrated to Madinah with her husband. She fell ill and died in 2 A.H. at the time of Battle of Badr.

Umm-e-Kulsum was the third daughter of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. She was first married to Utaiba son of Abu Lahab. When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} declared his mission, Abu Lahab became his enemy and asked his son to divorce Umm-e-Kulsum, which he did.

She migrated to Madinah with her stepmother Hazrat Sawdah. After the death of her sister Ruqayya, she was married to Hazrat Usman. She died in 9 A.H. while her father and husband were away on the Tabuk expedition. She did not leave behind any children.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} youngest daughter was Fatima, who was born five years before Prophethood. She migrated to Madinah with her stepmother Hazrat Sawdah. In 2 A.H., she was married to the Prophet's^{pbuh} cousin, Hazrat Ali who did not marry another woman during her lifetime. Like other Muhajirin, they too, faced extreme poverty.

She had three sons, Hasan, who was born in 3 A.H. Hussain born in 4 A.H. and Mohsin, who died in childhood, and two daughters, Umm-e-Kulsum and Zainab.

During the last days of his illness Hazrat Fatima visited the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He whispered something into her ear that made her cry. He again whispered something to her after which she smiled. Later, when someone asked her the reason of her weeping and smiling, she said that she had wept because the Prophet^{pbuh} told her about his impending death, but when he told her that she would be the first one from his family to join him in Paradise, she smiled. (Tirmizi)

She died in 11 A.H. just six months after her father's death, Hazrat Fatima is also known as 'Zahra' or the shining one. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had special affection for Hazrat Fatima. He always stood up when she came to him. Whenever, he went on a journey, he parted from her last of all, and when he returned, he would visit her first.

It is reported that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Fatima is a part of me; whoever hurts her, hurts me and whoever holds malice against her, holds malice against me." (Agreed upon)

Once, when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was sitting with Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatima, Hazrat Ali asked him: "O Allah's Messenger! Is Fatima dearer to you than I or am I dearer to you than her? The Prophet^{pbuh} replied: "She is dearer to me than you and you are dearer to me than her." (Allama Shibli Naumani: Seerat-un-Nabi; Vol II)

Once a person went to Hazrat Aisha and asked her:

"Who among the people is dearest to the Messenger of Allah?"

She replied: "Fatima." and when he asked: "Who among men?"

She said: "Her husband" (Tirmizi)

Hazrat Fatima would often be near her father during his stressful moments. When the people of Makkah threw dirt at him, she would wash his head. She washed his clothes when his uncle Abu Lahab threw sheep's entrails on him while he was praying in the Ka'abah. After the battle of Uhud she tended to his wounds.

Some sects among the Muslims specially Shias hold her in very high respect. They regard her as the model of womanhood and believe that after judgement, she will secure entry into Paradise for her supporters. Her status as the mother of Imam Hassan and Hussain and through them as the ancestor of the line of Imams is very high.

Grandsons

Hasan and Hussain

The grandsons of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Hazrat Hassan and Hussain were born to his daughter, Hazrat Fatima. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} loved his grandsons very much and often used to play with them. There are reports of the Prophet^{pbuh} allowing Hassan and Hussain to climb on his back while he was prostrating in prayer and interrupting his sermon to come down from the pulpit to pick them up as they tripped over their long shirts.

Anas said that when Allah's messenger was asked which member of his family was dearest to him, he replied: "Hassan and Hussain." (Tirmizi)

He used to say to Hazrat Fatima, "Call my two sons to me," and then he would cuddle them. (Tirmizi)

Imamat

The tragic death of Imam Hussain and his family at Karbala caused a strong reaction in favour of the house of Hazrat Ali and gave rise to a party called ‘the party of Ali’ and then simply the Shia – party.

The Shias advocated the divine right of succession in Hazrat Ali and his descendants who came to be known as Imams or spiritual leaders.

According to Shia belief, Imamat is a prerogative bestowed by Allah upon a person chosen from the Holy Prophet’s^{pbuh} family who before his death, transfers the office of Imamat to another descendant, not necessarily the eldest, but a descendant who is considered to be spiritually pure. Imam Hassan, the second Imam passed this office to his brother.

For Shia Muslims, the spiritual heritage bequeathed by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} devolved on Hazrat Ali and his descendants through Hazrat Fatima, the Holy Prophet’s^{pbuh} daughter. They believe that Hazrat Ali who was indicated by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as his successor was the first rightful Khalifa and Imam of the believers and that, after his assassination, the spiritual headship descended in succession to his and Hazrat Fatima’s male descendants.

Isna Ashariyah or the Twelvers is in an important sect of the Shias who believe in the succession of the twelve Imams, the spiritual leaders of the Muslims after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Together with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Hazrat Fatima, these twelve Imams are known as the Fourteen Pure Souls.

1) Hazrat Ali (Refer to Section four Chapter four)

2) Hazrat Imam Hassan

Imam Hassan was the son of Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatima and the elder of the two grandsons of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was born in Madinah on the 1st of Ramazan. Soon after his birth, the Prophet^{pbuh} named him Hassan. He is also known as “Shabbar” which in the Hebrew language means “handsome”.

Hassan was brought up in an ideal atmosphere. His only teachers were his grandfather and his parents. Imam Hassan would sit and listen to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as he recited the latest revelations that he would immediately learn by heart. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} loved him very much. Once, when he was

carrying Hassan on his shoulders, he said: "O Allah, I love him, so I beseech you to love him." (Bukhari, Muslim)

He was only eight years old when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} passed away. His mother also died a few months later. The remaining years of his boyhood and youth were spent under the guidance of his father, Hazrat Ali. After the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Hazrat Ali devoted most of his time to the compilation of the Quran and the Hadis. Therefore, from his childhood, Imam Hassan also learnt to follow his father's example.

When Hazrat Usman was besieged in his house, Hazrat Ali sent Imam Hassan several times with food and water. In his attempt to save Hazrat Usman, Imam Hassan sustained several injuries at the hands of the rebels.

During Hazrat Ali's Khilafat he took part in all the battles that were fought. He also held charge of the Bait-ul-Maal.

On the 21st of Ramazan, after the death of Hazrat Ali, Imam Hassan was declared Khalifa with the consent of forty thousand people. But Ameer Muawiya, who did not want Hassan to be the Khalifa, consolidated his forces for an encounter with Imam Hassan. At the first sign of troop movements on the Iraqi-Syria border, Imam Hassan collected his followers and asked them to prepare for war against Ameer Muawiya. This order was received very coldly by the gathering and no one showed any eagerness to respond to the Imam except a handful of sincere followers. It was obvious that the influence of Ameer Muawiya had turned the Iraqis away from their leader. So while they supported him outwardly, they were ready to betray him at the slightest excuse.

At last, a force of twenty thousand men was mobilized. Imam Hassan sent a chief of the Kindi tribe with four thousand men to Anba, where Ameer Muawiya's troops were encamped. But Ameer Muawiya bribed him with the promise of governorship and won him over. When Imam Hassan heard the news, he sent another man from the Bani Murad tribe at the head of four thousand men. But, he too, was won over by Ameer Muawiya.

Ameer Muawiya then sent a messenger to inform Imam Hassan that he should give up the idea of fighting and save his own life and the lives of his followers by coming to terms with him. This action completely demoralised the rest of the Iraqis in Imam Hassan's camp and resulted in more desertions.

Therefore, a peace treaty was signed between the two. After the treaty was signed by both parties, Imam Hassan came to the mosque and announced that in order to restore peace and prevent bloodshed, he was abdicating the Khilafat. Having done so, he retired to Madinah. He was Khalifa for only fourteen months.

Imam Hassan was poisoned to death by one of his wives who was promised a great reward.

He was buried in the graveyard of Jannat-ul-Baqi in Madinah. According to Shia belief, he is the second Imam following his father Hazrat Ali. Therefore, they regard him as sinless and perfect in his actions.

3) Hazrat Imam Hussain

Hazrat Imam Hussain was born to Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatima on Thursday, the 3rd Sha'aban in the fourth year of the Hijrat. At the time of his birth, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was out of Madinah on an expedition. Immediately after his birth, Hazrat Fatima became ill and the baby was given to Umm-e-Fazal for nursing.

It is said that the physical features of Hussain were those of his grandfather, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

According to Anas:

"There was no one resembling the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} more than Hussain." (Bukhari)

He was a source of great joy to his grandfather, who is reported to have said: "*Hussain belongs to me and I to him. May Allah love him who loves Hussain.*" (Tirmizi)

After the death of Hazrat Ali, the fourth Khalifa, his eldest son Imam Hassan became the Khalifa. But Ameer Muawiya, wanted his own son Yazid to be the Khalifa. This led to a rift in the Muslim Ummah.

On his death-bed Imam Hassan handed over the charge of Imamat to his brother, Hussain who became the third Imam. Following the footsteps of his brother Hassan, he too retired into seclusion in Madinah.

In 60 A.H., after the death of Ameer Muawiya, his son Yazid succeeded him as the Khalifa at Damascus, since Muawiya had nominated him as his successor during his lifetime. Tradition demanded that all Muslims should swear allegiance to the new Khalifa. This nomination to Khilafat was against the Islamic tradition, therefore Imam Hussain refused to take the oath of allegiance. Imam Hussain decided to leave Madinah and go to Makkah. Learning about the decision of the Imam, people approached him asking the reason for the decision. Imam Hussain replied that his refusal to take the oath of allegiance to Yazid would certainly annoy him and he would not spare shedding blood for it. He did not like the city of his grandfather, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to become a battlefield. Imam Hussain arrived in Makkah on 3rd Sha'aban 60 A.H. Later a deputation from the people of Kufa approached Imam Hussain and requested him to come to their rescue as Yazid's governor was persecuting them. The friends of Imam Hussain knew the deceitful nature of the people of Kufa, so they tried to persuade him not to trust them. Thereafter, the Imam sent his cousin Muslim to Kufa to review the situation. The people of Kufa gave Muslim a very warm welcome and thousands of them paid homage to Imam Hussain through Muslim. Impressed with the enthusiasm of the deceitful people of Kufa, Muslim wrote a letter to Imam Hussain to come over to Kufa. As soon as the letter was despatched Muslim learnt of their treachery. It seemed that almost all the leaders of the town had been bribed. Added to it, strong threats from Yazid's deputy, the Governor of Kufa made the people desert Muslim. Ultimately, Muslim was killed.

Meanwhile, Imam Hussain had already left Makkah for Kufa. On the way he heard the news of Muslim's assassination. With it, a large number of companions of Imam Hussain began to desert him, but Imam Hussain proceeded as before.

Soldiers were despatched in all directions in the desert to stop the Imam and bring him either to Kufa or to Damascus.

Unaware of the plot of his enemies, Imam Hussain stopped and camped at Karbala, near the Euphrates River. Soon after, Yazid's army too began to gather on the plain of Karbala and surrounded the Imam's camp.

On the 7th of Muharram, 61 A.H., Yazid's forces cut off all sources of supply of water to the Imam's camp and did not allow even a drop of water to reach them.

All efforts of the enemy through temptations and tortures to persuade the Imam to yield to Yazid were in vain. Imam Hussain then decided to fight the forces of Yazid. But, on his announcement that the end was near, people from his camp began deserting him until he was left with only seventy-two of his faithful followers.

The battle of truth against falsehood began. One after another, the Imam's followers laid down their lives. Finally, on the 10th of Muharram when all his devotees were slain, Imam Hussain was left all alone on the battlefield. He went to his sick son, Zain-ul-Abedin and handed over the charge of the office of Imamat to him and went back to the battlefield. Swords and axes began falling on him and he lay wounded from head to feet. Later when he died, his head was cut off from his body and taken to Yazid's court.

The tragedy of the death of Imam Hussain carries a lesson for the Muslim world. He could have saved himself, his friends and relatives by giving allegiance to Yazid, but he stood firm to his principles and ultimately sacrificed himself.

Imam Hussain had the support of only a small band of people, yet he won an everlasting victory over the forces of evil. The martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions at Karbala was viewed by the Banu Umayya as a great victory. Though the Imam was martyred with his family and companions and apparently his murderers seemed to emerge winners from the conflict, it is the martyr of Karbala who is considered to be the real victor.

Imam Hussain initiated war against the rule of the Umayyads and refused to take the oath of allegiance to that authority. It is a legacy left by him that Muslims should never submit to any authority which goes against the Divine Law and thrusts itself upon the people by force. If the authority is aggressive and evil, sacrifice on the part of the followers of truth becomes more essential. Numerical minority or the lack of resources should not stop them from continuing their struggle against evil.

Inspite of being helplessly besieged by the enemy along with members of

his family, relatives and friends crying with thirst and hunger and later lifting their blood stained bodies with his own hands, Imam Hussain did not give up his principles of truth and did not surrender to unjust rule. He laid down his own life but he never thought of taking the oath of allegiance to Yazid. Thus he lived, fought and sacrificed his life for truth and righteousness.

4) Imam Zain-ul-Abideen

The only son of Imam Hussain who survived the battle of Karbala was Ali. He could not participate in the battle due to severe illness. He was put into chains and taken as captive, with the ladies of his family, to the court of Yazid, in Damascus. Later, he was returned to Madinah. It was from this son, who was given the title of Zain-ul-Abideen that Imam Hussain's descendants arose.

Imam Zain-ul-Abideen was born in Madinah in 36 A.H. His mother was the daughter of the Persian king Yazdgard. After the tragedy of Karbala, he spent his remaining life in imparting the knowledge he had learned from his father, Imam Hussain and grandfather, Hazrat Ali. He died in 83 A.H. after thirty five years of Imamat. He was buried at Jannat-ul-Baqi in Madinah.

Imam Zain-ul-Abideen was extremely pious and spent all his time in worship. At the time of prayer, his face would turn pale and his body would tremble in fear of Allah. Whenever he would remember Allah and His bounties, he would fall in prostration, therefore, he was known as Sajjad i.e. one who performs excessive prostrations. He would go out at night to distribute everything that he had to help the poor and the needy. Many people would come to him to acquire knowledge. His sayings, his prayers and historical narrations are preserved in a compilation called **Sahifah-Sajjadiyah**.

5) Imam Muhammad Baqir

Imam Muhammad Baqir was the son of the fourth Imam. He was born in Madinah in 57 A.H. His mother was Fatima, daughter of Imam Hassan. He was four years old at the time of battle of Karbala. He was a contemporary of four Umayyad Khalifas. He was a very knowledgeable and pious person. Many people would come to Madinah to learn matters of religion from him.

Many traditions have been quoted from him.

Imam Muhammad Baqir had great knowledge of religion, traditions, Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbutuh}. The surviving companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbutuh}, the leading members of the succeeding generations and the leaders of the Muslim jurists reported the principal features of religion on his authority. He died in 114 A.H.

6) Imam Jafar Sadiq

Imam Jafar Sadiq was the son of Imam Baqir. He was born in 83 A.H. His period of Imamat was thirty four years. The period of his Imamat coincided with the end of the Umayyad Khilafat and beginning of the Abbasid Khilafat.

Imam Jafar Sadiq was harassed by the Umayyad Khalifa and later, during the rule of the Abbasids taken to Iraq. After some time, he was allowed to go to Madinah, where he spent the rest of his life in hiding. He was subjected to severe restrictions placed upon him by the Abbasid Khalifa. He died in 148 A.H. and was buried at Jannat-ul-Baqi in Madinah.

Imam Jafar Sadiq possessed vast knowledge of the Shariah. It is said that his classes and sessions of instructions produced four thousand scholars of Hadis and other sciences. Some well known scholars, such as Imam Abu Hanifa, founder of one of the Sunni sects, and the scientist Jabir bin Hayyan were among his disciples. He was a pious, generous, truthful and charitable person. It is known that he would often lose consciousness in remembrance of Allah.

7) Imam Musa Kazim

Imam Musa Kazim was the son of Imam Jafar Sadiq. He was born in 128 A.H. and was a contemporary of three Abbasid Khalifas.

Imam Musa Kazim had to live in hiding for a long time from the Abbasid Khalifa until he was arrested while praying in Masjid-e-Nabawi. He was taken from Madinah to Basra and later to Baghdad and transferred from one prison to another. He died inside a prison where he remained for fourteen years suffering hardships and oppression. He died in 183 A.H. His period of Imamat lasted for thirty five years.

Imam Musa Kazim was very pious, knowledgeable, generous, brave and a very gentle person. He exercised a great control over his temper and hence he is known as **Al-Kazim** the controller of anger. For his righteousness, he was given the title of **Abd-us-Salih** i.e., the righteous slave of Allah.

He would recite the Quran and pray for long hours. He died while in a state of prostration.

8) Imam Ali Raza

Imam Ali Raza was the son of Imam Musa Kazim. He was born in Madinah in 148 A.H. He died in 203 A.H.

The period of his Imamat coincided with three Abbasid Khalifas whose attitude towards the household of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was very harsh.

Mamun, the Abbasid Khalifa, offered Imam Ali Raza first the post of Khilafat and on his refusal, to be his successor. This was done to prevent the descendants of the Prophet^{pbuh} from rebelling against the government and secondly to involve

the Imam in politics of the Khilafat. At first, the Imam declined, but later accepted the offer on the condition that he would not partake in any way in the administration of the government.

The Imam was a very knowledgeable person and would partake in all discussions and debates arranged by Khalifa Mamun. The record of his debates are preserved in Shia literature. Travellers returning to their homes would relate facts about his knowledge.

Imam Ali Raza would worship and prostrate himself before Allah for long hours. He would finish reciting the whole Quran within three days. His knowledge, generosity, humility and worship were acknowledged by everyone.

9) Imam Muhammad Taqi

Imam Muhammad Taqi was the son of the eighth Imam. He was born in 195 A.H. at Madinah. Imam Muhammad Taqi was in Madinah at the time of his father's death.

The Abbasid Khalifa, Mamun, called him to Baghdad and married his daughter to him. Later, he returned to Madinah but was recalled to Baghdad.

Imam Muhammad Taqi's knowledge was well-known. Once, some disciples gathered at his place after returning from Hajj and asked him several questions to which he gave satisfying answers.

He was very generous and benevolent. He would ride his horse carrying money and food with him and give it to the poor and needy.

He died in 220 A.H. The period of his Imamat was seventeen years.

10) Imam Ali Naqi

Imam Ali Naqi was the son of the ninth Imam. He was born at Madinah in 214 A.H.

He was a contemporary of seven Abbasid Khalifas.

At the time of his father's death, he was at Madinah, where he resided, teaching religious studies to the people.

The Abbasid Khalifa called Imam Ali Naqi to Iraq where he tried to create trouble for him and dishonour him; but the Imam bore all persecutions patiently.

The Imam was soft spoken, pious, gentle and generous. Once the Khalifa sent him thirty thousand dirhams which the Imam gave away to an Arab to pay his debts and spend it on his children and dependents.

Imam Ali Naqi died in Iraq in 254 A.H. His Imamat lasted for thirty three years.

11) Imam Hasan Askari

Imam Hasan Askari was the son of the tenth Imam. He was born in Madinah in 232 A.H. He lived in hiding during the seven years of his Imamat. The

Abbasid Khalifa had placed restrictions on his movements and kept a close watch upon him, as according to traditions, he was supposed to have a son who was to be the promised Imam Mehdi.

Imam Askari was a gentle and humble person. He would offer prayers for most part of the night.

He died in 260 A.H. and was buried by his father's side.

12) Imam Muhammad Mehdi

Imam Muhammad Mehdi was born in 255 A.H. in Iraq. He was named Muhammad and his surname was Mehdi. He was the son of Imam Askari, the eleventh Imam. His mother was the grand daughter of the Roman king.

Among the Shias Imam Mehdi bears the title, the *Muntazar* – the expected, the *Hujja* – the proof (of the truth), the *Qaim* – the living and the *Mehdi* – the guided one. He lived under the care of his father till his death. His birth was kept secret. He was hidden from public view and only a few companions of his father could see him. At the time of the death of his father he was five years old.

After the death of his father, Muhammad Mehdi became the Imam and went into hiding or occultation (ghaybat). For the period known as lesser occultation, he continued to communicate with his followers through his deputies to whom he appeared only in exceptional circumstances. From the year 329 A.H. he no longer communicated and the period of greater occultation began. It is believed that he is hidden from people and will remain hidden as long as Allah wishes. He will appear when the world will be full of injustice and sin. He will preach Islam. He will fight with Dajjal and after killing him will establish Allah's Order on earth. He will rule over the world, will establish justice and wipe off the oppressors.

Companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

Merits of the Companions

Ashab, the plural of Sahabi, means the companions or associates of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The general opinion in connection with the use of this word is, all those people who embraced Islam, saw the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, had the privilege of being in his company, even for a short time and died, as believers are his companions. It is said that when the Prophet^{pbuh} marched to Makkah, he had ten thousand companions with him, twelve thousand when he marched to Hunain and one hundred and fourteen thousand accompanied him on his last pilgrimage. The number of companions at the time of his death is said to be one hundred and forty four thousand.

One of the qualities of the companions described in the Quran is their attachment to the Faith (49:7). Despite their small numerical strength, they were neither dismayed nor scared. Faith in Allah had made them fearless and strong in their belief that with His Help, they could successfully meet any danger.

The companions, particularly, those who were in the company of the Prophet^{pbuh}, from the very beginning, benefitted from him so much that from a crude and ignorant desert people, they were raised to the rank of being the most religious, spiritual and moral guides for mankind. They lived pure and disciplined lives, strictly in accordance with the example of the Prophet^{pbuh}. They accepted and defended the religion of Allah under the most severe circumstances. They were insulted and abused, beaten and tortured many times, especially the slaves, who were tortured almost to death, but none of them ever thought of renouncing his religion. (Tirmizi)

An understanding of their lives is essential because they constitute the first pure channel through which the Quran and the Sunnah were memorized, recorded and transmitted to the following generations.

After the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the companions were the most powerful means whereby Islam was propagated in the world. It was due to their selfless and untiring efforts, combined with their sacrifices and spiritual and moral strength that Islam became a dominant force in the world.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} frequently praised his companions and spoke highly of their virtues. He is reported to have said: "*My companions are like stars, those who follow them get guidance.*"

And: "The best of my people is my generation; next those who succeed them, next those who will succeed them." (Muslim)

And also: "No companion of mine will die in a land without being raised as a guide and a light for them on the Resurrection Day." (Tirmizi)

The Ten Blessed Companions – Ashrah Mubasharah

There are ten most blessed and distinguished companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to whom he gave the glad tidings of entrance into Paradise during their lifetime. They are known as Ashrah Mubasharah.

They all belonged to the Quraish tribe and were among the earliest converts to Islam. They fell into two distinct age groups: six older men and four young men. They were all bound to each other and to the Prophet^{pbuh} by a network of marriage ties.

The oldest among them was Abu Bakr. He was the first, free male adult to accept Islam and was the chosen companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the migration to Madinah. He was also chosen to lead the pilgrimage in 9 A.H. and to lead the prayers during the Prophet's^{pbuh} last illness. He was the first Khalifa of Islam and scribe of Divine Revelation. He was the father-in-law of Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Umar was another father-in-law of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} among the ten companions. He was the second Khalifa of Islam and scribe of the Divine Revelation. Another of the older ones of the ten companions was Said son of Zaid bin Amr who had been one of the believers in monotheism in pre-Islamic Makkah. He was the husband of Hazrat Umar's sister.

Abu Ubaidah, was one of the first converts and an emigrant to Abyssinia. He was a good commander.

The other two older man who had also migrated to Abyssinia were Hazrat Usman and Abdur Rahman. Usman belonged to the Umayyad branch of the Quraish and was a cousin of Abu Sufyan, the leader of Makkah. He had been married successively to two of the Prophet's^{pbuh} daughters. Abdur Rahman belonged to Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} mother's tribe. He was a good friend of Usman.

Of the four, younger men, Zubair and Talha were very close and often acted together; Zubair had migrated to Abyssinia. Talha was related to Abu Bakr.

Third of the four young companions was Saad. He belonged to the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} mother's tribe.

The youngest of them all was Hazrat Ali. He was the Prophet's^{pbuh} first cousin, brought up in his household and later married to his daughter, Fatima.

1) Hazrat Abu Bakr

Hazrat Abu Bakr was the first, free male adult to become a Muslim. He accepted Islam without any hesitation, argument or reluctance. Years later, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} recalling the conversion of Hazrat Abu Bakr said: "Whenever

I offered Islam to anyone, he always showed some reluctance and hesitation and tried to enter into an argument. Abu Bakr was the only person who accepted Islam without any reluctance or hesitation, and without any argument."

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} narrated the experience of his Ascension to heaven, Hazrat Abu Bakr accepted it without any hesitation for which the Prophet^{pbuh} gave him the title of '**Siddiq**' i.e., 'Testifier to the Truth'.

After the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Hazrat Abu Bakr was the greatest missionary of Islam. Several people embraced Islam because of his efforts. After his conversion, Hazrat Abu Bakr dedicated his whole life to the service of Islam. Many slaves including Bilal, who were persecuted and tortured by their masters for their acceptance of Islam, were purchased and set free by him.

Hazrat Abu Bakr gave his daughter Hazrat Aisha in marriage to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} which further strengthened their friendship.

He always stood by the side of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} during the most critical period of his mission and shared all hardships. Whenever the Quraish ill-treated the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Hazrat Abu Bakr always intervened to protect him. His daughter narrated an incident, when he stopped the people of Makkah from attacking the Prophet^{pbuh}, he came home with his hair pulled out.

Hazrat Abu Bakr accompanied the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} during his migration to Madinah and is referred to in the Quran as "the second of the two" in the cave of Saur. (9: 40) In Madinah, when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} purchased a plot of land for the construction of a mosque, Hazrat Abu Bakr paid its cost.

In the Battle of Badr, Hazrat Abu Bakr acted as a bodyguard of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was the first to join the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} when there was confusion in the Muslim army in the Battle of Uhud. In the Battle of Hunain, when most of the companions dispersed, Hazrat Abu Bakr was one of those who continued to attend to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. When the Treaty of Hudaibiya was signed and some of the companions were critical of the terms of the treaty, Hazrat Abu Bakr supported the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asked for contributions for Tabuk Expedition, Hazrat Abu Bakr donated all that he had, saying, that for him and his family, Allah and His Prophet^{pbuh} were enough. He was appointed by the Prophet^{pbuh} as Ameer-e-Hajj and also to lead the congregational prayers during the Prophet's^{pbuh} last illness.

2) Hazrat Umar

After his conversion to Islam, Hazrat Umar, from being one of the bitterest enemies and persecutors of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, became one of his most devoted followers. His conversion to Islam in Makkah was of immense value to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers. The small number of people who had embraced Islam started to pray openly at Makkah.

After his conversion, Hazrat Umar became the target of enmity and persecution at the hands of the pagans. He migrated to Madinah shortly before

the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} own Hijrat. His ties with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} were strengthened when the Prophet^{pbuh} married his daughter, Hafsa.

Hazrat Umar took part in all the battles. In the battle of Uhud, he was among those who formed a defensive ring round the Prophet^{pbuh}. In the Battle of Trench, he participated in the digging of the Trench. He was also present at the Treaty of Hudaibiya. He took part in the march on Makkah and the Khyber Expedition. He placed half of his wealth at the disposal of the Prophet^{pbuh} for the Tabuk Expedition.

Hazrat Umar was constantly in attendance on the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was one of his most trusted companions and advisers.

3) Hazrat Usman

Hazrat Usman was the first Umayyad to become a Muslim. When his family learnt of his conversion to Islam, his uncle tied him with ropes and beat him. He was among those early Muslims who suffered torture and persecution at the hands of the pagans of Makkah. Hazrat Usman was a wealthy trader. He liberated many Muslim slaves from their pagan masters.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his tribe took shelter in the Shi'ib of Abi Talib because of the social and economic boycott by the Quraish, Hazrat Usman used his influence among the Quraish to ensure supply of provisions to the besieged people.

Hazrat Usman, along with his wife, migrated first to Abyssinia and then to Madinah. He was one of those persons who performed Hijrat in the way of Allah twice.

After the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} own Hijrat to Madinah, Hazrat Usman was in constant attendance on him. He took part in all the important battles fought during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} with the exception of the Battle of Badr. On that occasion, his wife, Hazrat Ruqayya who was the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} daughter, was in a critical condition. After her death, the Prophet^{pbuh} married his other daughter Umm-e-Kulsum to him, for which he came to be known as **Zun Nurain**, 'the Possessor of two lights'.

At the time of the treaty of Hudaibiya, when Muslims approached Makkah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent Hazrat Usman to negotiate with the unbelievers. This shows the confidence and trust with which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} regarded him.

Hazrat Usman earned the title of **Ghani** by spending his wealth freely in the service of Islam and the Muslims. In Madinah, Muslims faced scarcity of water. Hazrat Usman bought a well from a Jew for twenty thousand dirhams and offered it to the Muslims for their use.

After the treaty of Hudaibiya, when many tribes accepted Islam, Masjid-e-Nabawi became too small to accommodate all Muslims and had to be extended. On the appeal of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} for funds for the extension work, Hazrat Usman financed the entire project. He also donated generously at the time of the Tabuk Expedition.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said about him, "For every apostle of Allah, there was a constant companion and my companion in Paradise will be Usman." (Tirmizi)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was so pleased with him that after the death of his two daughters who were married to Hazrat Usman, he would say, that had he any other daughter, he would have given her in marriage to him. (Tirmizi)

4) Hazrat Ali

Hazrat Ali was the first among children to convert to Islam. He was the second person to become a Muslim, the first being Hazrat Khadija, the wife of the Prophet^{pbuh}.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asked the Hashimites to help him in his mission, Hazrat Ali was the only person to respond to his call. He risked his life for the sake of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, and slept on his bed when the Prophet^{pbuh} migrated to Madinah. At that time, he had entrusted to Hazrat Ali the task of returning the belongings of the people that had been placed in the custody of the Prophet^{pbuh}.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} announced **Mawakhat**, declaring the emigrants and helpers as brothers, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} declared that Ali would be his brother.

It is reported that before this was announced, Hazrat Ali came to the Prophet^{pbuh} and said to him: "You have arranged brotherhood among your companions, but you have not arranged brotherhood between me and anyone else." The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said to him "*You are my brother in this world and the Hereafter.*" (Tirmizi)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave his youngest daughter, Hazrat Fatima in marriage to him.

Hazrat Ali was an exceptionally brave and fierce warrior and showed great valour in all the battles. Before the Battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had sent him to discover the enemy's movements. He was also chosen to carry the Muslim banner. During the Battle of Uhud, he was one of the few Muslims who defended the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. After the battle, he along with his wife, Hazrat Fatima, washed the Prophet's^{pbuh} wounds. He was one of the leaders in the siege of the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraizah. He showed great bravery in the battle of Khyber, using a door as a shield. At Hunain, he defended the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. At the time of the conquest of Makkah, he again carried the Muslim banner.

Hazrat Ali did not take part in the Tabuk Expedition as he remained in Madinah as the Prophet's^{pbuh} deputy. On his complaint that he was not going with the army, the Prophet^{pbuh} said to him: "*You are to me as Harun was to Musa, except that there will be no prophet after me.*" (Agreed Upon)

Hazrat Ali was one of the scribes of the Divine Revelation. He also wrote

letters sent out by the Prophet^{pbuh}. He was the scribe for the treaty of Hudaibiya and was one of the witnesses to it.

Hazrat Ali was present at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He washed his dead body and was one of those who lowered it into the grave.

5) Hazrat Talha

Hazrat Talha was a grand nephew of Hazrat Abu Bakr. He was born twenty five years before Hijrat. He belonged to the family of Quraish. He accepted Islam at the invitation of Hazrat Abu Bakr and was amongst the earliest converts. The unbelievers persecuted him upon his acceptance of Islam, but he bore patiently the pain and suffering of being tested in the path of Allah and His Prophet^{pbuh}.

Talha was a brave soldier. He took part in all the battles, except Badr, as he had been sent by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} on a mission outside Madinah. He saved the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the Battle of Uhud, making his own body a shield, to protect him from the swords and spears of his attackers. He continued to do so until the Quraish attack was beaten off. While saving the Prophet^{pbuh}, Talha was so badly injured that he became unconscious. As he regained consciousness, the first question he asked was about the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. For his bravery, he earned the title of 'Living Martyr'. The Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "*Whosoever is pleased to see a martyr on the surface of the earth, let him look at Talha bin Ubaydullah.*" (Tirmizi)

Talha was present at the time of the Treaty of Hudaibiya. His bravery resulted in victory for the Muslims in the Battle of Hunain. He also helped the Muslims by providing financial aid during different battles. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave him the title of '*Fayyaz*' i.e. generous at the time of the Tabuk Expedition. During the Khilafat of both Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar he was a member of the Islamic Council and advised them on problems of the state.

Talha was one of the six companions who were chosen by Hazrat Umar to be appointed as Khalifa after his death. He was not present at the time of Hazrat Usman's election, but swore allegiance to him, after returning to Madinah. He was killed during the Khilafat of Hazrat Ali.

Although, he was a wealthy and successful tradesman, he led a simple life. He would be so anxious and worried on account of his vast wealth, that he would distribute it among the poor Muslims. He was also known for helping people who were in debt, the needy, travellers and widows.

About Talha and Zubair the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "*Talha and Zubair are my neighbours in Paradise.*" (Tirmizi)

6) Hazrat Zubair

Hazrat Zubair belonged to a family that had accepted Islam in its early stages. His mother was Hazrat Safiyah, an aunt of the Prophet^{pbuh}. Hazrat Khadija, who was the Prophet's^{pbuh} wife and the first woman to accept Islam was Zubair's aunt. When he accepted Islam his uncle became his enemy. He would wrap him in a mattress and light a fire around him. In this condition, when he would choke of smoke, his uncle would ask him to give up the faith. "No never", Zubair would reply firmly. "It is impossible for me now to give up the religion of Allah. I must die as a Muslim and not as an unbeliever."

Hazrat Zubair was among those who migrated to Abyssinia, but soon returned to Makkah. He was a true follower of Islam that is why, he attained a prominent position among the earliest companions of the Prophet^{pbuh}. He was always ready to face danger and endure any pain or trouble for the sake of Islam. He remained faithful to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} even under great hardships. He took part in almost all battles fought during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was known for his bravery.

Hazrat Zubair was very rich and generous and was respected by his tribe. He was one of the six men recommended by Hazrat Umar as his successor to the Khilafat. He was killed during the Khilafat of Hazrat Ali.

About Talha and Zubair, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "*Talha and Zubair are my neighbours in Paradise.*" (Tirmizi)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had given him the title of 'Disciple of the Messenger of Allah'. Hazrat Umar would often call him 'one of the Pillars of Faith'.

According to tradition, he was the fifth person who recognized Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} as the Prophet. He remained faithful to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} even under great hardships and took part in the two migrations, first to Abyssinia and then to Madinah. He took part in all the great battles fought during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was known for his faith, courage, bravery and generosity.

7) Hazrat Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah

He was one of the most distinguished of the Prophet's^{pbuh} companions, known for his services to Islam and his loyalty to the Prophet^{pbuh}. He was born in Makkah. He accepted Islam at an early age at the invitation of Hazrat Abu Bakr. After his conversion, he had to face many hardships at the hands of the Quraish. He took part in the migration to Abyssinia and later to Madinah.

In Madinah, he remained a sincere companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was always ready to help. He was a brave soldier and commander and took part in most of the battles. In the battle of Badr, he came face to face with his father. He was greatly upset, but he had to kill him for the sake of his faith. During the battle of Uhud, he was one of those Muslims who encircled the

Prophet^{pbuh} when the Quraish attacked him. When he was hit on the cheek, Abu Ubaidah pulled out the metal links of his helmet straps out of the wound with his teeth and in the process broke two of his teeth. At the time of the conquest of Makkah, he was given command of one of the four squadrons into which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had divided the army. He also took part in the expedition, which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent to Syria just before his death.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had so much faith in him that when a Christian delegation visited the Prophet^{pbuh} and asked him to send with them a trustworthy person to act as a judge in disputes amongst them, he sent Abu Ubaidah.

He was one of the witnesses of the treaty of Hudaibiya.

After the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} the main issue was the succession to the Khilafat. Abu Ubaidah was one person besides Hazrat Umar whose name was suggested by Hazrat Abu Bakr to be the most suitable person for this post. But, both of them declined the offer and then Hazrat Umar followed by Abu Ubaidah came forward and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr as the first Khalifa of Islam. Other Muslims followed and thus the solidarity of Islam was maintained.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, he commanded successful expeditions to Syria and Iran. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, he conquered Damascus where he is said to be buried.

Abu Ubaidah distinguished himself by his bravery and un-selfishness. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave him the title of **Amin-ul-Ummat** that means 'the honest of the nation.' He is reported to have said: "*For every people, there is a man of trust and the man of trust for this people is Abu Ubaidah.*" (Agreed upon)

8) Hazrat Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas

Sa'ad was a maternal uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was born in Makkah. He accepted Islam at the invitation of Hazrat Abu Bakr at the age of seventeen. He was one of the earliest companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

In the early years of Islam, the Muslims used to offer their prayers outside Makkah, due to the persecution of the Quraish. One day, during prayers, the unbelievers interrupted them, which led to a fight. Sa'ad struck and wounded one of them, so he was the first Muslim to have shed blood for the cause of Islam.

Sa'ad was a great warrior and took part in all the battles fought during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. At the battle of Uhud, he was one of the defenders of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, trying to repel the attackers with his arrows. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, himself, handed him the arrows and declared him to be the best archer alongwith some other companions. He was present at the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah and took part in the conquest of Makkah.

Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas was the commander-in-chief of the Muslim army during the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar in the Battle of Qadisiya that was fought

against the Persians, though illness prevented him from taking part in the battle personally. Hazrat Umar recognized his great military and administrative services. On his death-bed, Hazrat Umar empowered six of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} most trusted Companions to choose a new Khalifa within three days, Hazrat Sa'ad was selected as one of this group. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Usman he was made the Governor of Kufa. After the assassination of Hazrat Usman, Sa'ad was requested to become Khalifa but he refused. When Hazrat Ali was chosen as the Khalifa, Sa'ad refused to pay homage to him. He remained away from politics till his death. He was buried in Madinah. He is said to have left large property behind him.

9) Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf

Abdur Rahman was born in the 10th year of the Elephants. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Abdur Rehman had a common ancestor in Kalab. He accepted Islam at the invitation of Hazrat Abu Bakr. According to tradition, he was the thirteenth person to become a Muslim.

Abdur Rahman was among the first batch of fifteen Muslims that migrated to Abyssinia. He returned to Makkah and later migrated to Madinah. There, he started his own business and soon became a well-to-do merchant.

He took part in all the important battles fought during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. In the Battle of Uhud, he received twenty-one wounds and yet stood by the side of the Prophet^{pbuh} when most of the Muslims had run away from the battlefield.

He was one of the respected Companions of the Prophet^{pbuh} and a very generous man. He spent most of his wealth to help the needy and poor Muslims. He was made Ameer-e-Haj during the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat Umar and Hazrat Usman.

He was among the committee of six persons appointed by Hazrat Umar on his death-bed to choose a Khalifa from amongst themselves. As he was not willing to shoulder the great responsibility, the choice of selecting the new Khalifa was left in his hands. He died in 32 A.H.

10) Saeed bin Zaid

He was a devoted companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. It is reported in **Sahih Bukhari** that his father, Zaid bin Amr, who died five years before the first revelation, believed in the faith of Hazrat Ibrahim and had given up idol worship.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} invited people to Islam, Saeed bin Zaid was in the forefront of those who believed in the Oneness of Allah and who affirmed their faith in the Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. He is said to be the twenty-eighth person to have become a Muslim.

He was not yet twenty when he embraced Islam. His wife, Fatima, sister of

Hazrat Umar, also accepted Islam early. Both of them managed to conceal their acceptance of Islam from the Quraish and especially from Hazrat Umar, who till then had not become a Muslim.

Saeed was one of those people who could read and write. He was a great warrior. He took part in all the major campaigns during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} except the Battle of Badr. In the battlefield, he always kept himself ahead of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to protect him from the enemy.

After the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Saeed continued to play a major role in the Muslim community. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, when the Muslim army invaded Syria, he was made the commander of the infantry. In 14 A.H., he took part in the conquest of Damascus. He was made the Governor of Damascus; but he resigned due to his love for taking part in Jihad.

He died in or about 50 A.H.

Scribes of Divine Revelation

The Quran is a record of the Divine Revelations received by Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} through the angel, Jibriel, as a direct message from Allah. These Revelations started in the 40th year of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} life when he was appointed the Apostle of Allah. They continued for about twenty-three years till his death in 632 A.D. These messages, received from time to time, were recited by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to his companions who were present and were written by them upon pieces of leather, tablets of stone, palm leaves, and bones of camels. They were also learnt by heart. The Quran was preserved not only through learning by heart but also by reducing it into writing. It is said that in the days of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, there were at least fifteen copies of the Quran completely written down (Bukhari, Muslim)

The scribes of Divine Revelation have great importance in the history of Islam. Allah blessed them as being the guardians of the Holy Quran and made it safe through them. The Quran describes them in the following words: "*(Written) by the hands of scribes – Honourable, Pious and Just.*" (80: 15-16)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali has commented on these verses in the following words:

"The Revelation was held in the highest honour; its place in the hearts of Muslims was more exalted than that of anything else: as Allah's word, it was pure and sacred; and those who transcribed it were men who were honourable, just and pious."

The scribes of the Quran from amongst the companions of the Prophet^{pbuh} are said to be forty in number, the following being the most prominent people:-

- 1) **Hazrat Abu Bakr** (Refer to Section four Chapter four)
- 2) **Hazrat Umar** (Refer to Section four Chapter four)
- 3) **Hazrat Usman** (Refer to Section four Chapter four)
- 4) **Hazrat Ali** (Refer to Section four Chapter four)

5) Abdullah bin Masood

Abdullah bin Masud was one of the most favourite companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was well-known for his love for and adherence to the Messenger of Allah. He is known as **Sahabi bin Sahabiya** because his brother and mother belonged to the earlier companions of the Prophet^{pbuh}. He is regarded as one of the first converts to Islam who faced tortures of the Quraish with patience.

After embracing Islam, he gave up all other business and would always remain present in the service of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Abu Musa Ashari said: "My brother and I visited the Prophet^{pbuh} from Yemen. We observed Abdullah bin Masud and his mother at the Prophet's^{pbuh} house frequently so that we were under the impression that they too were members of his household." (Bukhari)

He learnt the Quran with great fondness and attention and is said to be the first one to recite the Quran openly in Makkah. He migrated twice to Abyssinia and later to Madinah. He took part in the battle of Badr where he killed the Prophet's^{pbuh} greatest enemy, Abu Jahl. He also took part in the battle of Uhud. He knew the Quran very well, because of his close association with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was one of the companions named by the Prophet^{pbuh} as one from whom the others should learn the Quran. (Bukhari, Muslim)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} also said: "*If anyone likes to recite the Quran as fresh as it had descended then he must recite it on the reading of Abdullah bin Masud.*" (Ahmad)

After the Prophet's^{pbuh} death, he was regarded as an expert on interpretation of the Quran.

Hazrat Umar sent him to Kufa as an administrator of the public treasury and as a teacher of religion. Hazrat Umar greatly appreciated his deep knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah and often consulted him on these matters. He is said to be the authority on some eight hundred traditions.

6) Zaid bin Sabit

Zaid bin Sabit was the principal scribe of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He belonged to the Khazraj tribe. He had accepted Islam before the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} migration to Madinah. He was eleven years old when he accepted Islam. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not allow Zaid bin Sabit to take part in the Battle of Badr as he was only thirteen years old at that time. He took part in the Battle of Trench and the Tabuk Expedition.

Zaid bin Sabit was a very learned person who could speak many languages. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} chose him to learn Hebrew so that he could correspond with the Jews. He was placed among those knowledgeable companions who were scholars and jurists. He was very intelligent and had a good memory.

After the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} migration to Madinah, he appointed Zaid bin Sabit to write down the revelations received by him. He had memorized the Holy Quran during the Prophet's^{pbuh} life.

When most of the people who had committed the Quran to memory were martyred in the battle of Yamama, Hazrat Abu Bakr entrusted Zaid bin Sabit with the task of collecting the verses of the Quran and compiling them in book form. After hard work and consultation with various companions of the Holy

Prophet^{pbuh}, he produced a compilation.

Zaid bin Sabit was the first Ansar to swear allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr as the Khalifa. He took part in the battle of Yamama and fought against Musailma, the false prophet, during the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, Zaid bin Sabit was appointed as the Qazi of Madinah. Hazrat Umar would often appoint him his deputy at Madinah when he went to perform Hajj or Umrah. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Usman, he was made responsible for the public treasury. He was also a member of the committee which was formed to prepare copies from the original copy of the Quran.

Zaid bin Sabit was very knowledgeable about the commands of distribution of inheritance. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said that he was the most aware of these issues. (Tirmizi).

7) Ameer Muawiyah

He was the son of Abu Sufyan who was the leader of the Quraish and for a long time, one of the bitterest enemies of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. After the conquest of Makkah, he along with his father and other members of the Banu Umayyah accepted Islam and devoted himself to its cause. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} appointed him as his secretary.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, he was made the governor of Syria and Hazrat Usman let him continue in that office. As governor of Syria he had built for the first time a fleet of nearly five hundred ships to fight with the Greeks on the Mediterranean sea.

During his Khilafat Hazrat Ali wanted to remove Muawiya from the governorship of Syria. But Muawiyah became his opponent and fought against him in the battles of Camel and Siffin. After the death of Hazrat Ali, upon the abdication of Imam Hasan, he became the Khalifa. North Africa was conquered during his rule.

He was the founder of the Umayyad dynasty. He died at the age of seventy-five. Before his death, he nominated his son Yazid to succeed him.

8) Ubbay bin Ka'ab

Ubbay bin Ka'ab was one of the main scribes in Madinah who wrote down the revelations of the Holy Quran. He was one of the distinguished companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and a person of high esteem in the early Muslim community. He belonged to the Khazraj tribe and had pledged allegiance to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at Aqabah, as such, he was one of the first persons from Yasrib to accept Islam.

He served as a scribe to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and wrote letters for him. The last verse of the Holy Quran revealed in 10 A.H. is said to be written down by him.

At the time of the Holy Prophet's^{pmbuh} death, he was one of those who knew the Holy Quran by heart and is said to have possessed his own copy of the sacred text. His recitation of the Quran was so beautiful and his understanding so profound that the Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} encouraged his companions to learn the Quran from him.

He was constant in his worship and would often be found in the mosque, busy in prayers or teaching. He was a member of the consultative body to which, Hazrat Abu Bakr as Khalifa, referred many problems.

He died in 29 A.H. during the Khilafat of Hazrat Usman.

9) Khalid bin Walid

Khalid bin Walid belonged to the Quraish tribe. He accepted Islam after the Treaty of Hudaibiya. He was a brave and courageous warrior. For this the Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} gave him the title of **Saif Allah** – The Sword of Allah.

During the battle of Uhud he changed the tide of the battle when he attacked the Muslim force from behind them, thus changing their victory into almost a defeat.

When Hazrat Abu Bakr sent him as commander of an army to crush the apostates, he said that he had heard the Prophet^{pmbuh} say about him: "*He is the best slave of Allah, a sword of Allah that he has unsheathed for the disbelievers, the hypocrites and polytheists.*" (Ahmad)

During the battle of Muta after the martyrdom of three commanders, Khalid bin Walid took over and Allah gave victory to the Muslims at his hands. He fought so bravely that nine swords were broken at his hands.

During the conquest of Makkah he was appointed as leader of one of the four squadrons into which the Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} divided his army.

Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar placed similar reliance on him and made him commander of their armies in the wars against the Romans and the Persians.

He died in 21 A.H.

Important Personalities during the Holy Prophet's^{pBUH} Lifetime

1) Anas bin Malik

Anas bin Malik belonged to the Madinite tribe of Khazraj. He was born ten years before the migration of the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} to Madinah. His mother was one of the earlier converts to Islam. He was brought up in a family which stood eminent in its devotion to Islam.

When the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} settled in Madinah, Anas bin Malik's father came to the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} and requested him to take Anas under his care. The Prophet^{pBUH} readily accepted the offer.

Anas bin Malik was always eager to be in the company of the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} and being with him all the time, listening to his words, watching his deeds and doing different jobs for him. He took part in all the battles except the Battle of Badr, because of his young age.

Anas bin Malik was a trusted friend of the first four Khalifas. Hazrat Abu Bakr sent him to Bahrain to oversee government work there. Hazrat Umar sent him to Basra for educating the people. He is the narrator of many ahadis. He died in 93 A.H. He was the last of the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} companions to die.

2) Abu Ayub Ansari

Abu Ayub Ansari belonged to the tribe of Khazraj. He was one of those Ansars who embraced Islam at the second pledge of Aqabah. He had the privilege of accommodating the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} in his house after his migration to Madinah. He took part in all the battles of early Islam and served under the command of Amr bin Aas during the conquest of Egypt. Later, he was appointed by Hazrat Ali to the governorship of Madinah. During the rule of Ameer Muawiya, he took part in the invasion of Cyprus. During the siege of the Byzantine capital, an epidemic broke out. Abu Ayub fell victim to it and died in 50 A.H.

3) Usamah bin Zaid

Usamah bin Zaid was the son of Zaid bin Haris. He was born in Makkah in the third year of Prophethood. He was loved very much by the Holy Prophet^{pBUH} who is reported to have said about him: "*I bequeath to you good in treating Usamah because he is one of your righteous men.*" (*Muslim*)

Once while holding his grandson Hassan, and also Usamah he made this supplication for them: "*O Allah, love them both for I love them.*" (Bukhari)

Usamah took part in the battles of Ditch, Khyber and Hunain. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had put him in command of an expedition to Syria. The army had not gone far from Madinah when the news of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} illness was reported to them. The army immediately returned to Madinah. Usamah met the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who placed his hands on him and raised them in the manner of prayer. Usamah said he thought that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} prayed for him. (Tirmizi).

Usamah was again sent to Syria as the commander of the Muslim forces by the first Khalifa, Hazrat Abu Bakr. He came back victorious to Madinah.

Usamah is regarded as one of the authentic transmitters of Ahadis. He died at the age of fifty four and was buried at Madinah.

4) Abu Musa Ashari

Abu Musa Ashari embraced Islam with other members of his tribe and migrated to Madinah from Yemen. He took part in the Battle of Hunain. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent him as governor to Yemen and he retained that post till Hazrat Abu Bakr's time. Hazrat Umar appointed him as governor of Kufa. He was one of the arbitrators appointed at Siffin in 37 A.H. to settle the dispute between Hazrat Ali and Ameer Muawiya.

Abu Musa Ashari was one of the devoted companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was highly esteemed for his recitation and understanding of the Quran and his deep insight into Ahadis. He died in 44 A.H. at Makkah.

Imam Bukhari regards him among the jurists capable of passing judgements and issuing rulings.

5) Amr bin Aas

Amr bin Aas was one of the chiefs of the Quraish before he accepted Islam. He embraced Islam after the Treaty of Hudaibiya. Amr bin Aas was very brave and courageous. Even in the presence of older companions the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} appointed him as commander. He participated in almost all the expeditions. His real fame is due to the conquest of Egypt. In the rift between Hazrat Ali and Ameer Muawiya, he associated himself with the latter. He died in Egypt in 51 A.H.

Amr bin Aas was a sincere believer. In Sahih Muslim, he is reported to have said: "After I became a believer, no one was dearer and more respectable to me than the Prophet^{pbuh}."

In a hadis in Tirmizi, the Prophet^{pbuh} is quoted to have said: "*Amr is among the best people of the Quraish.*"

6) Abu Hurairah

Abu Hurairah accepted Islam in 7 A.H. He had an outstanding position among the **Ahl-e-Suffah**. These were the students who came from outside to seek knowledge and for whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had erected a shed near Masjid-e-Nabawi.

It is agreed that no other companion has reported more hadis than Abu Hurairah. When some companions pointed out that though he became a Muslim in 7 A.H., he has related the highest number of ahadis, he said: "The Muhajirin were engaged in trading and Ansars in farming so I had a greater opportunity to preserve the Prophet's^{pbuh} ahadis and sayings." (Muslim)

Abu Hurairah never forgot what he heard from the Prophet^{pbuh}. He explained his strong memory in his petition to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} that he heard much from him but did not remember it. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} told him to spread his garment, then he recited something on it. On the Prophet's^{pbuh} instructions, he collected the garment on his chest. From that day, he did not forget anything that the Prophet^{pbuh} said. (Muslim, Tirmizi)

He was constantly in the Prophet's^{pbuh} company. The reason being he had no wealth and was the Prophet's^{pbuh} guest and spent the whole day with him. Whereas the other companions had their families and occupations to attend to and they met the Prophet^{pbuh} only in the morning and evening and so were deprived of many ahadis.

After the Prophet's^{pbuh} death, Abu Hurairah gave lessons from Masjid-e-Nabawi. Hazrat Umar appointed him as governor of Bahrain but he resigned. He died in 57 A.H.

7) Abdullah bin Umar

Abdullah bin Umar was the son of Hazrat Umar. He was born in the third year of Prophethood. He took part in the migration to Madinah. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did not allow him to take part in the battles of Badr and Uhud because of his young age. He took part in the battle of Ditch and, thereafter, in all the other battles.

Abdullah bin Umar was a God-fearing man. He wept while reciting the Quran. He was very careful to observe the Prophet's^{pbuh} Sunnah. He spent generously in Allah's path.

The well-known narrator of Ahadis, Nafi, was his slave. Abdullah bin Umar released him, along with other slaves, some of whom attained great scholarly heights.

Abdullah bin Umar is regarded as second to Abu Hurairah in the narration of ahadis having 1630 transmissions to his name. People visited him in large numbers to learn the ahadis from him.

8) Hazrat Salman Farsi

Hazrat Salman Farsi was from Persia. In his quest for true religion, he gave up the comfort of his home and wandered from one country to another till he reached the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at Madinah. He took part in the Battle of Trench and, thereafter, in every battle. At his suggestion trenches were dug at the borders of Madinah during the Battle of Trench.

Hazrat Salman Farsi was very knowledgeable and God-fearing. Hazrat Umar made him the governor of Madain. Many companions have narrated hadis from him. He died during the Khilafat of Hazrat Usman.

9) Mu'az bin Jabal

Mu'az bin Jabal offered allegiance to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at the second pledge of Aqabah. After the Prophet's^{pbuh} migration to Madinah, Mu'az kept him constant company. He participated in all the battles. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent him as governor and judge in Yemen.

It is narrated that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} made him (Mu'az bin Jabal) ride a horse and himself walked along. On the way, he gave him many instructions about preaching and Islamic government. He also asked him: "*If you have to pass judgement, how will you do that?*"

"According to the Book of Allah."

"*And if you find nothing therein?*" the Prophet^{pbuh} asked him.

"According to the Sunnah of the Prophet^{pbuh}," he answered.

"*And if you find nothing therein?*"

"Then I will exert myself to form my own judgement", Mu'az replied.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} response was: "*Praise be to Allah who has guided the messenger of His Prophet^{pbuh} to that which pleases His Prophet.*" (Abu Daud, Tirmizi)

Mu'az learnt the Quran and matters of religion directly from the Prophet^{pbuh}. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} considered Mu'az to be a scholar of Quran, Sunnah and jurisprudence.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said about him. "*The most learned of my Ummah about the lawful and the unlawful is Mu'az bin Jabal.*" (Tirmizi)

Mu'az bin Jabal returned from Yemen during the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr and accompanied Usamah bin Zaid on the expedition to Syria.

He died of plague in 18 A.H. while he was in Syria.

10) Hazrat Jafar bin Abu Talib

Hazrat Jafar was the son of Abu Talib and elder brother of Hazrat Ali. He, along with his wife, embraced Islam in its early stages.

Hazrat Jafar was among the second batch of emigrants to Abyssinia. They were pursued by the unbelievers of Makkah who requested Najashi, King of

Abyssinia to hand over the emigrants to them. The king summoned the Muslims to his court and asked them about their religion.

The Muslims had selected Hazrat Jafar as their spokesman. Hazrat Jafar delivered a speech in which he explained the principles of Islam and what the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had taught them. He also recited a portion of Surah Maryam. After hearing it, Najashi said: "By God, this and the Gospel are the lights of one candle." Thereafter, Najashi dismissed the unbelievers from his court and assured the Muslims that they may reside peacefully in his country.

Hazrat Jafar had migrated to Abyssinia in the fifth year of prophethood. He went back to Madinah in 7 A.H. when Khyber was conquered. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave him a piece of land near Masjid-e-Nabawi and kept him close to himself.

Hazrat Jafar had been there for only a few months when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent an army to Muta in Syria in 8 A.H. Hazrat Jafar was included in the army. Hazrat Zaid bin Haris was the commander of the army. In case of his death, he was to be succeeded by Hazrat Jafar.

Hazrat Jafar was martyred in the battle. He received ninety wounds on his body and lost both his hands. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "*Allah has granted him two wings in place of his two hands so that he flies about in Paradise wherever he likes.*" (Bukhari) He is called 'Jafar Tayyar' i.e., 'Jafar the flier'.

Hazrat Jafar took great care of the poor and needy. Hence, he was known as **Abul Masakeen**. He resembled the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in features and habits. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} himself said: "*You resemble me in features and manners.*" (Bukhari)

11) Hazrat Abu Zarr Ghaffari

Hazrat Abu Zarr Ghaffari was one of the earliest converts to Islam. He always expressed the truth, without regard for friendship.

When the Prophet^{pbuh} started to preach Islam, he accepted the faith without any hesitation, thus becoming one of the earliest convert to Islam.

After accepting Islam, he went to the Ka'abah, where many idolators were present. He recited the Kalimah loudly. The unbelievers attacked him and gave him such a beating that he was covered with blood.

Abu Zarr Ghaffari decided to go to his tribe and preach Islam among his own people. His efforts met with success and nearly half of his tribe accepted Islam within a short period. The rest became Muslim after the migration of the Prophet^{pbuh} from Makkah to Madinah.

Abu Zarr Ghaffari migrated to Madinah after the Battle of Trench. After migrating to Madinah, he dedicated himself to the service of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, and was therefore among those companions who were very close to him.

After the death of the Prophet^{pbuh}, Abu Zarr Ghaffari left Madinah and settled in Syria. He was a devoted and God-fearing person. Whatever would come in his hand, he would spend it in the way of Allah. He is regarded as one of the most respectable and close companions of the Prophet^{pbuh}. The Prophet^{pbuh} had once said that Allah had granted him fourteen excellent friends. He then named them and Abu Zarr was one of them (Tirmizi)

12) Hazrat Hamza

He was related to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in many ways. He was the Prophet's^{pbuh} uncle and also the son of his maternal aunt as well as his foster brother. He was two years older than the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Hamza was very fond of wrestling and hunting and excellent in the arts of swordsmanship and archery. He was so involved in and attached to his pastimes that he hardly took any notice of the spread of Islam.

One day as he was returning from a hunt he was informed that if he had come earlier he would have seen the condition of his nephew Muhammad^{pbuh} who was preaching his religion in the Ka'abah, when Abu Jahl abused him. Hazrat Hamza was enraged on hearing this. He rushed to the Ka'abah where Abu Jahl was sitting with his companions. He pounced upon Abu Jahl and struck him with his bow on the head with great force. Then he declared his acceptance of Islam.

Those were the days when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} would preach Islam secretly. With the acceptance of Islam by Hazrat Hamza the situation changed and the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was able to preach Islam openly.

After his acceptance of Islam he gave up hunting and wrestling and devoted his time and energy to the cause of Islam. Hazrat Hamza migrated to Madinah.

In the second year of Hijrat the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent thirty men to check the caravan of the non-believers of Makkah under the command of Hazrat Hamza. He had thus, the honour of being entrusted with the banner of Islam for the first time in Islamic history. He was also sent by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} on various military expeditions.

During the Battle of Badr he killed many unbelievers including their great warriors. In the Battle of Uhud, the unbelievers deputed Wahshi, a slave of Hinda, Abu Sufyan's wife to kill Hazrat Hamza in return for his freedom and a handsome reward.

Wahshi hid himself behind a rock and as soon as Hazrat Hamza came within range threw his weapon at him. It was such a deadly weapon that as it struck Hazrat Hamza succumbed to his injury. Hinda whose father was killed in the Battle of Badr by Hazrat Hamza, cut out the liver from his dead body and tried to chew it. Then she cut off the nose and ears of the dead body and made a necklace of them.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} led the funeral prayers for all the martyrs of Uhud, including Hazrat Hamza and gave him the title of '**Chief of the Martyrs.**'

13) Hazrat Bilal

Hazrat Bilal, the first muezzin of Islam, was one of the most trusted and loyal companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He was a slave of Abyssinian origin. He was among the earliest group of people, who attracted by the teachings of Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, converted to Islam. He suffered many cruelties at the hands of the pagans upon his conversion, but displayed remarkable self-control and patience. His master was his greatest tormentor. He would make him lie on the scorching sand of the desert with a huge stone on his chest so that he could not move. He would then ask him to renounce Islam. But even under such torment, he would say: 'Ahad, Ahad' – 'Allah is One, Allah is One'.

Once, when Hazrat Abu Bakr saw Hazrat Bilal being tortured, he purchased him from his master and set him free.

After migration to Madinah, when the system of call to prayer by azan was introduced, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} chose Hazrat Bilal to deliver the azan from Masjid-e-Nabawi. Thereafter, he came to be known as the Prophet's muezzin. He continued to do so till the Prophet's^{pbuh} death after which he requested Hazrat Abu Bakr to relieve him of the duty and permit him to go with the army that was leaving to fight in Syria. It is said that while calling out the azan after the death of the Prophet^{pbuh}, he could not bear the absence of his master and would burst into tears.

Hazrat Bilal was a very courageous warrior. He took part in almost all the battles fought during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. In the battle of Badr, he fought bravely and killed his former master who used to torture him mercilessly in Makkah. After the conquest of Makkah, he had the honour of calling out the azan from the roof of the Ka'abah.

He was entrusted with the public treasury by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} because of his honesty and integrity. He was one of those people who performed the funeral rites of the Prophet^{pbuh}.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, he accompanied Abu Ubaydah on the campaign to Syria. When Hazrat Umar visited the conquered land, he asked Bilal to call out the azan. He agreed and this was the last azan he called out.

During the last phase of his life, he disassociated himself from public life and passed his days in isolation. He died in Damascus where he is said to have been buried.

14) Abu Sufyan

Abu Sufyan was a leader of the Banu Umayyah. He was a rich and respected merchant who often led caravans for trade. He was an enemy of the Holy

Prophet^{pbuh} from the 40th to the 60th year of the Prophets^{pbuh} life. He had a very hostile attitude to the religion proclaimed by Muhammad who belonged to the family of Banu Hashim that had replaced his father and grandfather from the leadership of Makkah. It also touched him personally because his daughter had married a Muslim and emigrated with him to Abyssinia. After her husband converted to Christianity, she left him. Later, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} married her.

Abu Sufyan indirectly brought about the Battle of Badr. An army that had collected to help the trade caravans on his request did not want to return without fighting, although he ordered it to do so, when his caravan was safe. His eldest son died fighting in the battle; another one was taken prisoner.

After the battle of Badr, he took over the command of the people of Makkah. He fought against the Muslims in the battles of Uhud and the Trench. He accepted Islam after the conquest of Makkah at which time the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} announced that whoever took refuge in the house of Abu Sufyan would be safe. He took part in the siege of Taif.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, he was made the governor of Najran and Hijaz. He died at the age of 88 in 31 A.H.

15) Abu Talib

Abu Talib was a paternal uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He died in the tenth year of Prophethood. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was very sad to lose his uncle. Abu Talib had brought him up, the orphan who had lost both his parents and his grandfather by the time he was eight years old. He took him into his family and treated him like his own son, giving him extra kindness, out of sympathy for the grieving child.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} started to preach Islam, his relatives turned against him. But Abu Talib, who had taken care of him since he was a child, said to him: "Go ahead with what you have been bidden and I pledge to continue to give you my support and protection."

Abu Talib continued to maintain his positive attitude as his nephew Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} did not mean any harm and did not call for anything wrong.

The chiefs of Makkah did not take any action against the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the early stages. When he started to criticize their idols they decided that the matter was too serious to ignore. Yet they could not do much about it because Abu Talib protected his nephew against all threats and let everyone know of his readiness to fight for him.

As the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} continued to preach his mission, opposition increased. Therefore, a delegation composed of the most influential people of Makkah went to Abu Talib asking him to stop his nephew from speaking ill of their religion or to hand him over to them.

Abu Talib who continued to follow the religion of his people, did not let his nephew down. He called the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and told him what had taken place. He explained to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} the difficulty of the situation and said: "Save me as well as yourself and do not cause me to carry a burden I cannot bear."

But the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was firm as ever and said: "*O my uncle! If they place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left to renounce my work, I would not stop until Allah fulfills it for me, or destroys me in the process.*"

Abu Talib was deeply moved and said: "You may go and do whatever you like. I will never withdraw my protection from you and will never let you down."

Abu Talib communicated his resolution to the people of his tribe and asked them to protect the Prophet^{pbuh} against the Quraish. He was the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} protector as long as he lived. His death was such a great loss to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} that he called the year of his death the 'Year of Grief'. After Abu Talib's death, the Quraish started abusing the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} verbally and physically.

Emigrants And Helpers

Brotherhood

Among the numerous blessings of the Holy Prophet's ^p_b_u_h Hijrat, one of the most important and unique blessings was that of **Mawakhat**, the creation of brotherhood between Muhajirin the emigrants, and Ansar the helpers. The Holy Prophet ^p_b_u_h assembled them at the house of Anas and told them that the Muhajirin had left all their belongings in Makkah and were now penniless and shelterless. He, therefore, wanted to create the relationship of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar. The Ansar willingly agreed to this, whereupon, the Holy Prophet ^p_b_u_h joined the hand of one Muhajir with that of an Ansar and declared the two to have become brothers. In this way, bonds of brotherhood were established between the Muhajirin and the Ansar. Each Ansar took his Muhajir brother to his house and gave one-half of his entire property to him. About this the Quran says: "*Those who believed and adopted exile, and fought for the faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allah, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid, these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another.*" (8:72)

This was a unique device that proved to be beneficial for the small number of Muhajirin in Madinah. They were provided with economic aid and consoled and comforted upon their arrival in Madinah. They began to feel at home and a strong bond was forged between them and their brothers in Madinah that welded them into a united community.

Under the guidance of the Holy Prophet ^p_b_u_h, these two groups became like blood brothers, and they were so treated in matters of inheritance, during the period when they were cut off from their relatives in Makkah. While the Ansar considered it a privilege and honour to assist their Muhajir brothers, the latter did not wish to be a burden on them for long. Very soon, the Muhajirin through trade, industry and hardwork, were able to stand on their own feet.

Helpers

The Muslims of Madinah, who received and helped the Prophet ^p_b_u_h after his migration from Makkah, were called **Ansar** or the Helpers. They were also called '**Ansar-un-Nabi**' or 'Helpers of the Prophet'. They were given this title to distinguish them from the Muhajirin, who were mainly dependent upon

their help and support after migration to Madinah.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, from the very beginning, tried to knit together the emigrants and the natives of Madinah by establishing a bond of brotherhood between them. They were mainly members of the Madinite tribe of Khazraj, who had invited the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to their city, and gave the Muslims all kinds of help and assistance.

They were good natured, soft spoken and pious people who were devoted to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and were well versed in the science of traditions. Their distinction was that they had shown love, generosity and goodwill to the persecuted believers from Makkah. This is confirmed by the Holy Quran in the following words:

"But those who before them had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot)" (59:9)

After the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, they wanted a person from amongst themselves to be the Khalifa, but later they gave up their demand and agreed to elect Hazrat Abu Bakr as Khalifa.

Emigrants

Muhajirin or the emigrants is the name often applied in the Quran to those followers of Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} who had migrated from Makkah to Madinah with him. They were tortured and persecuted by the unbelievers but they remained steadfast. They sacrificed their lives as well as their wealth for the sake of Islam. Some of them even left their families behind when they migrated to Madinah. They did not even claim their belongings after the conquest of Makkah, in accordance with the orders of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

The term *Muhajir* is not applied to the Prophet^{pbuh} himself, but only to those who migrated with, before or after him and later made up a large portion of the population of Madinah. The Prophet^{pbuh} describes them as favourites of Allah who will receive a splendid reward as the Quran says:

"Those who believed and those who suffered exile and fought in the path of Allah, they have the hope of the mercy of Allah —" (2:218)

It further says:

"—those who have left their homes, and were driven out therefrom, and suffered harm in My cause, and fought, and were slain — verily, I will blot out from them their iniquities, —." (3:195)

The high esteem in which the emigrants were held finds expression in Surah Tawbah also where it is said:

"Those who believe and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in Allah's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah —." (9:20)

The number of the Muhajirin gradually grew with the increasing influence of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. From time to time the people of Makkah left their heathen city and went to Madinah. It is to them that Surah Anfal refers, where those who adopted Islam later than the first emigrants, who migrated and afterwards fought alongside with the Muhajirs, are acknowledged as belonging to the community:

"They are of you." (8:75)

Major Teachings in the Hadis of the Prophet ^{pbuh}

Hadis 1

الَّذِينَ النِّصِيْحَةُ، قُلْنَا: لِمَنْ؟ قَالَ: 'لِلَّهِ وَلِكِتَابِهِ، وَلِرَسُولِهِ، وَلِأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
 وَعَامِّتَهُمْ'.

'Religion is sincerity.' We said: 'To whom?' The Prophet said: 'To Allah, his book, his messenger, the leaders of the Muslims and to their common people.'

Explanation: This hadis embraces all aspects of faith and to act upon it sincerely is to fulfill all the obligations of Islam.

Sincerity to Allah means that man's heart is cleansed from all impurities with regard to belief in Allah i.e., one should believe in Him as the Sole Creator and Master with all His attributes and with an earnest desire to worship Him and obey all commands given by Him. The affirmation of this truth covers all responsibilities, duties and obligations that fall upon the shoulders of a man after submitting his will to the will of Allah. The Quran says: "Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to Allah,?"

(4: 125)

After acknowledging Allah as our Master and Sovereign, it is necessary to know His commands that are conveyed to us through His Book, the Holy Quran. Being sincere to Allah's Book means that it should be sincerely believed as a revelation from Allah. Its knowledge should be acquired and spread. It should be read and understood and all its commands should be carried out faithfully.

Sincerity for the Messenger signifies that his Prophethood must be affirmed with perfect sincerity of heart. The Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} should be respected and loved. He should be obeyed and followed in all affairs of life with an absolute reliance upon his truthfulness.

For leaders and rulers, it implies that they should be respected and obeyed and given full support and co-operation in all those affairs which they conduct according to the teachings of Islam. As the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} said: "Whoso obeys my Commander, obeys me and whoso disobeys the Commander disobeys me." (Muslim). But when the rulers deviate from the path of

righteousness, they should be advised and admonished and efforts made to bring them to the right path. Hazrat Abu Bakr, the successor to the Prophet^{pbuh}, in his first address to the people as Khalifa said: "Help me if I am in the right, set me right if I am in the wrong."

Sincerity towards fellow beings means to behave in an open and straightforward manner with them. Their life, honour and dignity should be protected, genuine interest should be taken in their welfare and every possible help and service should be extended to them.

Hadis 2

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

None of you believes until he wants for his brother what he wants for himself.

Explanation: This hadis emphasises fraternity and brotherhood. It is said in the Holy Quran that Muslims are brothers to one another (49: 10) In this sense, Muslim brotherhood has been established by Allah Himself and therefore, it is binding upon all Muslims to be co-operative and kind to each other.

The life of a Muslim revolves round the pillars of faith and cannot acquire perfection unless there is mutual love and co-operation among the believers. If their hearts are devoid of good feelings and affection for each other, it would mean that the reality of faith has not dawned upon them; the words 'none of you believes' do not imply a negation of faith. Rather, they suggest an imperfection of faith.

For attaining the true state of faith, it is essential that man should be free from selfishness. He should be genuinely interested in the welfare of his brothers and desire for them all the good things, advantages and benefits he desires for himself and dislike for them all the conditions and circumstances he does not like for himself.

It is related by Mu'az bin Jabal that when he enquired from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} about superior faith, he answered: "*That you desire for others what you desire for yourself and do not desire for others what you do not desire for yourself.*" (Ahmad)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} advised the believers not to break mutual relations and not to have ill will or jealousy towards each other. They have been specifically prohibited from making fun or looking down upon other Muslims with contempt, seeking faults or being suspicious of one another (Muslim, Tirmizi)

Hadis 3

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَيَقُولْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصُمُّ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَيَكْرِمْ جَارَهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
فَلَيَكْرِمْ ضَيْفَهُ.

Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day either speak good or keep silent, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his neighbour, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his guest.

Explanation: The gift of speech is undoubtedly a great blessing of Allah which if properly used can do a lot of good, but irresponsible use of the tongue proves very harmful. Therefore, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} has exhorted Muslims to keep a careful watch over it. They must use it only for the propagation of good and refrain from indulging in idle or vulgar talk.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} advised one of his companions: “Cultivate the habit of keeping silent much and talk less for it is the domain of faith.” (Baihaqi)

He also said: “To keep quiet is better than telling a bad thing.” (Baihaqi)

Once the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} held his tongue between his fingers and told his companions to keep it under control and not let it function without restraint.

(Ahmad, Tirmizi)

It is evident that major evils and transgressions that are committed in society and in respect of which we are negligent, are mostly related to the tongue.

The Holy Quran instructs us to do good to neighbours who are near and neighbours who are strangers (4: 36) Our conduct towards our neighbours should be good and honourable making them feel safe and secure.

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: “By Allah! He is not a true believer.” He repeated this thrice. Someone asked him: “O Messenger of Allah! Who is not a true believer?” The Prophet^{pbuh} replied: “Whose neighbour is not secure from his mischief.” (Bukhari)

He is also reported to have said: “Treat your neighbour kindly; then you are of those who believe.” (Tirmizi)

The same rule is applied to guests i.e., generous and hospitable behaviour. The life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is a guide to us. When guests were in his house, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} would get up many times in the night to make sure that they were comfortable. He also taught his companions to be hospitable.

A Muslim should share all good things and not keep them only for himself. Generosity and hospitality should be the qualities of Muslims in every part of the world.

Hadis 4

أَنْ رَجُلًا سَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) فَقَالَ: أَرَأَيْتَ إِذَا
صَلَّيْتُ الْمُكْتُوبَاتِ، وَصُمِّثَ رَمَضَانُ، وَأَخْلَقَ الْحَلَالَ، وَخَرْمَثَ
الْحَرَامَ، وَلَمْ أَزِدْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا، أَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ.

A man asked the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and give him peace): Do you think that if I perform the obligatory prayers, fast in Ramadan, treat as lawful that which is lawful and treat as forbidden that which is forbidden, and do nothing further, I shall enter paradise? He said: Yes.

Explanation: This Hadis clearly tells us that whoever performs his obligatory religious duties like prayer and fasting and differentiates between the lawful and the unlawful will be rewarded with Paradise.

Prayer is the foremost duty of a Muslim and a chief pillar of Islam. It is the distinguishing feature between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "He who gives up prayer has indeed disbelieved."

(Tirmizi)

In the Quran, prayer is referred to as sustenance for the human soul. A man who does not pray must be regarded as spiritually dead.

Fasting is another pillar of Islam. By prescribing a month long fasting, Allah wishes to teach us self-restraint and to make us righteous and God – fearing. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "If a person does not abstain from telling lies or doing wrong when he is observing fast, let it be known to him that Allah does not want that he should stop taking his food." (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said that if a Muslim offers the five daily prayers regularly and observes fasting, he shall be forgiven.

(Ahmad)

Islam has clearly defined the things which are lawful and those which are unlawful. If we avoid the unlawful ones, we shall be rewarded by Allah. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "What I have forbidden to you, avoid, what I have ordered you, do as much of it as you can." (Bukhari, Muslim)

About the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the Quran says: "..... he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure)"

(7: 157)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} has clearly shown us by his conduct in his life how to apply the laws of Allah to practical life.

Hadis 5

كُلُّ سُلَامٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ عَلَيْهِ صَدَقَةٌ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ تَطْلُعُ فِيهِ الشَّمْسُ: تَغْدِلُ بَيْنَ اثْتَيْنِ صَدَقَةٍ؛ وَتَعِينُ الرَّجُلَ فِي دَائِرَتِهِ فَتَحْمِلُهُ عَلَيْهَا أَوْ تَرْفَعُ لَهُ عَلَيْهَا مَتَاعَهُ صَدَقَةٌ؛ وَالْكَلِمَةُ الطَّيِّبَةُ صَدَقَةٌ؛ وَبِكُلِّ خَطْوَةٍ تَمْشِيهَا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ صَدَقَةٌ؛ وَتُمْيِطُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الْطَّرِيقِ صَدَقَةً.

Every person's every joint must perform a charity every day the sun comes up: to act justly between two people is a charity; to help a man with his mount, lifting him onto it or hoisting up his belongings onto it is a charity; every step you take to prayers is a charity; and removing a harmful thing from the road is a charity.

Explanation: The criterion of faith and the sign of a true believer is that he should try to do as much good as he can for his fellow-beings. We are ordered by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to do good deeds and actions that are a source of benefit to other people.

This Hadis mentions some of the good deeds that people can perform according to the strength and ability that Allah has given to them. These are settling disputes and quarrels with justice, helping people to mount their means of conveyance or carrying their belongings, to speak a kind word, going to the mosque to pray or to remove any obstacle or hindrance from the road that may cause harm to people. All these are considered to be acts of charity.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Every good act is a Sadaqah (charity)." (Bukhari, Muslim) This means that just as a man is rewarded by Allah for giving alms, so is he rewarded for doing good to other people.

Great stress has been laid in the Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} on charity to human beings. The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} concept of charity was the broadest. "Charity is incumbent on every Muslim." were his clear orders. "But what about him who has not got anything?" asked his companions. He replied: "He should work with his hands and profit himself and give in charity." They again asked that if he has nothing inspite of this. The reply was: "He should help the distressed one who is in need." "And if he is unable to do that?" they again asked. He said, "He should do good deeds and refrain from doing evil – this is charity on his part." (Bukhari)

Even to meet a fellow being with a cheerful countenance is charity. "Every good deed is charity and it is a good deed that you meet your brother with a cheerful countenance and that you pour water from your bucket into the vessel of your brother." (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} wanted fellow human beings to realize the importance of charity. Prayer and charity for the service of humanity are two distinctive characteristics of the religious system that he established.

Hadis 6

مَنْ رَأَىٰ مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيَغْيِرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ.

Whosoever of you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand, and if he is not able to do so then with his tongue, and if he is not able to do so then with his heart, and that is the weakest of faith.

Explanation: For the growth and stability of a model Islamic system, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} not only formed a just, moderate and balanced society, but also made arrangements for checking wickedness and ill manners.

This hadis throws light on how society is to be kept safe and secure from evil and corruption. It has been made an obligatory act for every Muslim to see that the moral health of the community does not deteriorate and whenever there is any sign of decadence in any quarter, it should be checked.

Islam has made the Muslims duty bound to eradicate evil, since it corrodes values and destroys social structure. Believers are enjoined to take effective measures to fight evil. Those who can check it with force, that is the power of the government, must do so; while others by preaching and persuasion should try to sweep it out. If circumstances become adverse that even this becomes impossible, then we should remain alive to the fact that evil should be abhorred.

The principle is that the action of a believer for the promotion of good and his opposition to evil must be to the extent of his power and capability. Hazrat Abu Bakr said that he heard the Prophet^{pbuh} say: "When the people see a wrong doer committing a wrong and do not seize his hand, it is most likely that Allah will inflict them with His punishment. (Abu Daud, Tirmizi)

The Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Help your brother when he does wrong or wrong is done to him." The companions said: "O Messenger of Allah! We can help a man to whom wrong is done, but how can we help him when he himself does wrong?" The Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Take hold of his hand from doing wrong." (Bukhari)

A Muslim is not only required to give assistance to one who is the victim of tyranny, injustice and wrong doing, but also to try to stop the one who is committing it and to strive with all his energy to bring about the rule of justice and righteousness for all people.

Hadis 7

قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَئِ النَّاسُ أَفْضَلُ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):
مُؤْمِنٌ يُجَاهِدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِنَفْسِهِ وَمَالِهِ.

It was said: O Messenger of Allah, who is the most excellent of men? The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and give him peace) said: 'The believer who strives hard in the way of Allah with his person and his property.'

Explanation: Fighting in the way of Allah and His religion, according to the principles laid down for such a war with the object of bringing an end to oppression and aggression against Islam, is known as **Jihad**.

Jihad is one of the worships of Islam and to fight and sacrifice one's life and property or the lives of those nearest and dearest to us, in the path of Allah is considered to be a great honour. The Quran has laid emphasis on Jihad's merits in the following words: "*Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in Allah's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah.....*" (9: 20)

The Quran tells Muslims not to call those who die in the cause of Allah as dead: "..... Nay they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord." (3:169). And also: "And say not of those who are slain in the way of Allah: "They are dead. Nay, they are living, though ye perceive. (it) not."

(2: 154)

A tradition says: "Paradise is under the shadow of swords" (Bukhari)

The Quran also says: ".....To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah – whether he is slain or gets victory – soon shall We give him a reward of great (value)." (4: 74)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had to wage many wars to defend his people from aggressors who opposed him and his companions from obeying the law of Allah and inviting others to it. He was left with no option but to defend his faith with all the power he could gather.

In view of the excellence and great merits of Jihad, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} stressed its importance to his companions in the following words: "*The warrior in the path of Allah is equal to the man who observes fasting regularly, stands before Allah in worship and recites the verses of Allah, not resting from tiredness through fasting and worship.*" (Bukhari, Muslim). This means that a man who leaves home to participate in Jihad is constantly in worship like the one who fasts continuously and stands in worship and recites the Quran.

Hadis 8

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): 'مَا تَعْدُهُنَّ الشَّهِيدُ فِينَكُمْ؟'
قَالُوا: يَارَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ. قَالَ: 'إِنَّ شَهَادَةَ
أَمْتَى إِذَا لَقِيلَ! مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي الطَّاغُونَ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي
الْبَطْنِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ.'

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and give him peace) said: 'Whom do you count to be a martyr among you?' They said: O Messenger of Allah, whoever is killed in the way of Allah is a martyr. He said: 'In that case the martyrs of my community will be very few! He who is killed in the way of Allah is a martyr, he who dies a natural death in the way of Allah is a martyr, he who dies in the plague in the way of Allah is a martyr, he who dies of cholera in the way of Allah is a martyr.'

Explanation: Common belief was that martyrs are those who are killed fighting on the battlefield in the way of Allah. In that case, according to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} the number of martyrs would be very few. Therefore, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} included in this definition some of those who die from a serious disease or die a sudden death or a painful death.

It is narrated that Anas bin Malik asked a companion about the cause of death of certain person. She answered that he had died of plague. To this, Anas bin Malik said that the Messenger of Allah said that death by plague is a martyrdom for a Muslim.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "Whoever sincerely desires the rank of martyrdom gets the rank of martyrdom even if he is not killed." (Muslim)

It should however be remembered that these types of deaths, no doubt, merit the reward of a martyr, but they stand no comparison to that reward to which one is entitled when one is slain on the battlefield fighting for the sake of Allah.

Hadis 9

مَا أَكَلَ أَحَدٌ طَغَامًا قَطْ خَيْرًا مِنْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ مِنْ عَمَلِ يَدِهِ.

No one eats better food than that which he eats out of the work of his hand.

Explanation: The economic life in Islam is based upon Divine instructions. Earning of one's livelihood through labour is not only a duty but a great virtue as well. Dependence of any able person on someone for a livelihood is a sin and a disgraceful humiliation.

All kinds of work and hard labour are respected in an Islamic society. The status of honest, hard working men is not lowered because of the work they do for a living. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} made it clear that any work was honourable in comparison with asking for charity or begging. He is reported to have said: "To earn a clean living, is also a duty next to the obligatory duties of faith." (Baihaqi) This shows that after the performance of the obligatory duties of faith, earning of one's livelihood through honest means and by engaging oneself in a clean trade or profession comes first. The seeking of lawful sustenance by Muslims has been designated as a form of worship by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Once, a companion asked the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} about income that was better and more clean. He answered: "The one who works with his hands and every trade that was done with honesty." (Ahmad)

Islam has strongly prohibited illegal means of earning such as bribery, charging interest on loans, theft, gambling etc. and warns those who adopt such practices of the fire of Hell in the following words: "The flesh that has been sustained by unlawful earnings will not enter Paradise. It is more suited to Hell." (Ahmad)

An evil doer is a blot on society. On the other hand, those who earn their livelihood by hard labour are respected and honoured.

Hadis 10

الساعي على الأرملة والمسكين كالمجاهد في سبيل الله، أو القائم
الليل الصائم النهار

One who manages the affairs of the widow and the poor man is like the one who exerts himself in the way of Allah, or the one who stands for prayer in the night or fasts in the day.

Explanation: To attend to the needs of poor and helpless persons and to make efforts to bring relief to them is a meritorious act, so much so that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} has placed it at par with one who fights in the way of Allah, or stands up for prayer at night and fasts during the day.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "He who fulfills the need of any of my people to please him, has pleased me and he who has pleased me,

please Allah and he who pleases Allah, will be brought by Him into Paradise."

(Baihaqi)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet's ^{pbuh} instructions to Hazrat Aisha about helping the poor were: "O Aisha! Love the poor and let them come to you for help. Allah will then surely take you near Him on the Day of Judgement."

(Tirmizi)

The Holy Quran also commands us to do good and show kindness to the poor and needy and often this command is linked with those regarding parents and relatives. It says; "..... Treat with kindness your parents and kindred and orphans and those in need." (2: 83)

The Prophet ^{pbuh} was a staunch supporter of the weak and the oppressed. On receiving the first revelation, the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} trembled with fear, but his wife consoled him in these words: "Allah will never bring you to disgrace, for you unite the ties of relationship and bear the burden of the weak and earn for the destitute and honour the guest and help people in distress."

(Bukhari)

According to the Quran, prayer would have little value if it did not lead to the service of humanity. It would then be a mere show, to be condemned.

Hadis 11

أَنَا وَكَافِلُ الْيَتَمِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ هَكَذَا، وَقَالَ بِأَصْبَعَيْهِ السَّبَابَةِ وَالْوَسْطَىِ .

'I and the man who brings up an orphan will be in paradise like this.' And he pointed with his two fingers, the index finger and the middle finger.

Explanation: In this hadis, the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} has encouraged people to look after and support the orphans. The Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} said that the person who does so will be granted such bounties and rewards that he will be as close to him in Paradise as the first and second fingers of a hand. While saying this, he raised these two fingers in such a way that there was little space left between the two. This means that he would be graced with nearness to the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh}.

The Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} was himself an orphan and Allah raised him with His Mercy to the highest status in this world and the next and thus gave the weak and the helpless hope and courage.

From his earliest life, the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh} was a supporter of the weak and the oppressed. When the Quraish of Makkah asked Abu Talib to deliver the Prophet ^{pbuh} to them so that they could put him to death, Abu Talib said to them: "Shall I make over to you one who is the refuge of the orphans and protector of the widows?"

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} placed the person who faithfully manages the affairs of the widows and the needy at par with one who stands up for prayer at night and fasts during the day. (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} asked his companions to be gentle to the orphans. He is reported to have said: "The best Muslim house is that in which an orphan is well treated and the worst Muslim house is that in which an orphan is ill-treated." (Ibn Majah)

Abdullah bin Umar reports the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as saying: "The person who took care of an orphan and shared his food and drink with him, Allah will allow him to enter Paradise, provided he is not guilty of an unpardonable sin." (Sharh-al-Sunnah)

The Holy Quran also commands us to do good and show kindness to the orphans: "Treat with kindness your parents and kindred and orphans and those in need." (2: 83)

In one of the earliest revelations, it is said in the Quran: "And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan and the captive" (76: 8)

And in a later revelation: "..... But it is righteousness..... to spend of your substance out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy....."

(2: 177)

Allah commands Muslims to help the orphans and the needy and those related to us have a special claim.

Hadis 12

بَعْثَكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) أَبَا مُوسَى وَمُعاذَ بْنَ جَبَلَ الْأَيْمَنِ، وَبَعْثَكَ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا عَلَىٰ مِخْلَافٍ . ثُمَّ قَالَ: 'يَسِّرْا وَلَا تُعَسِّرَا وَبَشِّرَا وَلَا تُنَقِّرَا .'

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and give him peace) sent Abu Musa and Mu'adh ibn Jabal to Yaman, and he sent each of them to govern a part. Then he said; 'Be gentle and do not be hard, and cause rejoicing and do not alienate.'

Explanation: During the times of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the four rightly guided Khalifas, those entrusted with the work of the government were required to work for the good of the people. They were required to be gentle to people and were forbidden to do anything which might cause aversion (Bukhari)

A companion reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Your best rulers are those whom you love and they love you." (Muslim)

Hazrat Aisha reported that the Messenger of Allah used to pray: "O Allah!

He who is entrusted with authority to rule over my Ummah is hard for them, be Thou hard with him and he who is entrusted in any way with the affairs of my Ummah and treats them kindly, show kindness to him.” (Muslim)

Anas bin Malik related that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: “*Make things easy and do not make them hard and cheer up people and do not repel them.*”

(Bukhari, Muslim)

Mildness, gentleness and to put others at ease are virtues of the moral system of Islam. Many good and commendable qualities have their roots in kind heartedness and a person who is not blessed with it has very little of goodness in him.

A harsh person will be rude to people around him. As a result, he will make his own life miserable as well as those of others. On the other hand, a kind hearted and gentle person will find his life peaceful and make other people feel comfortable.

Anas bin Malik related the Prophet^{pbuh} said: “*Shall I not tell you who is distanced from Hell and from whom Hell is distanced? Everyone who is gentle and kind, approachable and of an easy disposition.*” (Ahmad, Tirmizi)

In order to discourage people from behaving harshly towards others, it has been said that such a person shall not enter Paradise. Such an act is unworthy of a believer and is likely to prove a hindrance in his progress towards Paradise.

Hadis 13

انما مَثُلْ صَاحِبِ الْقُرْآنِ كَمَثُلْ صَاحِبِ الْأَبْلِ الْمُعَقَّلَةِ: إِنْ عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهَا أَمْسَكَهَا، وَإِنْ أَطْلَقَهَا ذَهَبَتْ.

He who studies the Qur'an is like the owner of tethered camels. If he attends to them he will keep hold of them, but if he lets them loose they will go away.

Explanation: **Sahib-ul-Quran** may mean one who has committed the Quran to memory, or one who has developed proficiency in it by constantly reciting it.

When a camel is constantly supervised and is kept tethered, it remains under control, otherwise it flees. Similarly if a person constantly recites the Quran and is vigilant not to let it slip from his mind, it is a source of spiritual benefit to him. When a person becomes indifferent to it, it slips out of his mind.

It is reported that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: “*Keep refreshing your knowledge of the Quran, for I swear by Him in whose hand my soul is that is the more liable to escape than camels which are tethered.*” (Bukhari, Muslim)

When the recitation of the Quran is neglected, it is not abruptly that the Quran slips out of one's mind. The process is slow like the movement of a tethered camel which walks haltingly.

Recitation of the Quran carries great rewards. We are not only required to

recite the Quran but also to meditate and ponder over its meaning. We must resolve to receive guidance from the Quran and to abstain from whatever is against its teachings.

The Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Whoso reads the Quran and commits it to memory and knows its lawful things as lawful and unlawful things as unlawful, Allah will admit him into Paradise." (Tirmizi)

The Holy Quran is the foundation of our religion and the main source of all Islamic teachings. It is a complete Book for the guidance of mankind to the right path. It seeks to guide man in all spheres of life-material and spiritual. It is the most sacred treasure for a Muslim and he should, therefore, not let it slip out of his mind and if he does, it shows his indifference to the Book of Allah, which is undesirable.

Hadis 14

رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ رَجُلًا سَمْحًا إِذَا بَاعَ، وَإِذَا اشْتَرَى، وَإِذَا أَقْتَضَىٰ

May God show mercy to a man who is kindly when he sells, when he buys, and when he demands his money back.

Explanation: According to teaching of Islam, business should be conducted with honesty and justice, tempered with human kindness. The conduct of the seller in a transaction should be characterized not only by justice but also by magnanimity.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} disapproved all transactions which were unjust or caused hardship to the buyer or the seller. He wanted both to be sympathetic and considerate towards each other. The seller must not think he has unrestricted liberty to extort as much as possible from the buyer. He should take his own due and give to the buyer what is his.

About payment of debts, it is narrated by a companion that the Messenger of Allah said "*When the angel of Death came to take possession of the soul of a man, he was asked if he had performed any good in his worldly life. The man answered that in his business dealings with people, his attitude was that of mildness and forbearance. He would allow respite to the rich. As for the poor, he would often write off their debts. Allah therefore, decreed for him to be admitted to Paradise.*" (Bukhari, Muslim)

He also said: "Whoever has a claim (like a debt) on a brother which is payable and he allows respite to the debtor in his payments, he will be given the reward of charity." (Muslim)

The general principle is that the debtor should try to give back that which has been lent to him. The creditor has, however, been instructed not to be strict in taking the loan back. He should show leniency and kindness taking into consideration the condition of the debtor.

Hadis 15

لَا يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ النَّاسَ.

God will not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to others.

Explanation: Mercy is a special attribute of Allah. The Holy Quran mentions this attribute very frequently. It says: “.....For Thou art the Best of those who show mercy.” (23: 118)

Most deserving of the special mercy of Allah are those kind hearted people who have love and sympathy for His creatures. The command to show kindness to those who are on earth includes people of all religions and nationalities.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is a symbol of mercy for all creatures. The Quran addresses him in these words: “We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures.” (21: 107)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} taught others through his personal example to be kind and merciful. He said: “You should be kind to those who are on earth and He, who is in the Heavens will be kind to you.” (Tirmizi, Abu Daud)

Abu Hurairah relates that he heard the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} say: “The attribute of kindness is not taken away from the heart of anyone except the ill-fated.” (Tirmizi) This means that the person who is lacking in mercy and kindness is doomed to Hell.

During the battle of Uhud, when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was wounded, one of his companions asked him to curse his enemies. His reply was: “I have not been sent to curse. I was sent only as a mercy.” (Muslim)

The Prophet^{pbuh} and his followers had been persecuted in Makkah for thirteen years and the persecutors had ultimately compelled them to migrate to Madinah. But when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} conquered Makkah, he forgave every injury inflicted upon him and announced a general pardon. Such an example of compassion and mercy is rare in the history of the world.

Mercy is one of the outstanding qualities of the true believers. All acts of compassion which are performed without the object of any recompense are prompted by this virtue.

Hadis 16

الْمُؤْمِنُونَ كَرَجْلٍ وَاحِدٍ، إِنِ اشْتَكَى عَيْنُهُ اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ، وَإِنِ اشْتَكَى رَأْسُهُ اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ.

The believers are like a single man; if his eye is affected he is affected, and if his head is affected he is all affected.

Explanation: This hadis compares the Muslims to a human body; when one part of it is in pain, the entire body feels uncomfortable. So should be the condition of the Muslims. They should feel for each other so strongly that if anyone of them is afflicted with grief, the rest should consider it as their own and show readiness to share his misfortune. If it is not so, then their faith is imperfect.

A fundamental element in the moral system of Islam is the value of Muslim brotherhood. The Quran frequently describes the believers as brothers: "*The believers are but a single brotherhood.....*" (49: 10)

In his last sermon the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} spoke about brotherhood in the following words: "*A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim and they form one brotherhood.*"

Since this brotherhood has been established by Allah and His Prophet^{pbuh}, it is binding upon all Muslims to be co-operative, merciful and kind to each other.

The message of brotherhood was also emphasized by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in his teachings, for example: "*One believer is to another like the (bricks of) a building, each one is holding and supporting the other.*" (Bukhari, Muslim)

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "*You cannot enter Paradise unless you are believers and you cannot be true believers unless there is reciprocal love among you.*" (Muslim)

He is also reported to have said: "*Whosoever removes a worldly grief from a believer, Allah will remove from him one of the grieves on the Day of Judgement.*" (Agreed upon)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} put the concept of brotherhood in practice as is evident from the unique brotherhood that he established between the Muhajirin and Ansar after migrating to Madinah. His aim was to build a society in which people lived in harmony and peace.

Hadis 17

Modesty produces nothing but good.

الحياء لا يأتي إلا بخير.

Explanation: Modesty is a force which prevents a believer from falling prey to urges of indecency and obscenity. It protects him from all evils prohibited by Islam. The moral teachings of Islam are meant to awaken and encourage this feeling of modesty in human nature, to develop and strengthen it until it becomes a part of one's mental attitude. It serves as a strong moral deterrent against all evil and wicked desires. It restrains man from behaving in

an undesirable manner and also acts as a shield against immoralities. Modesty plays a vital role in character building.

Modesty is of fundamental significance in Islam. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "Every religion has a distinctive quality and the distinctive quality of Islam is modesty." (Ibn Majah)

And also: "Modesty is part of faith and faith is in Paradise and indecency is from evil and evil is in Hell." (Ahmad, Tirmizi)

Faith and modesty are so closely related to each other that either both will be present in an individual or community or none of the two would be present. It is related by Abdullah bin Umar that the Prophet^{pbuh} of Allah said: "Modesty and faith are companions when one is taken away, the other follows it." (Baihaqi)

A companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} reported him as saying: "Modesty is a part of the teachings of the previous prophets and anyone who lacks it may do whatever he likes." (Bukhari)

Modesty has been particularly stressed upon as part of faith because it reflects a state of mental piety. If the sense of modesty is alive and active in a person, his life will not only be clean in the sight of his fellow beings, but also in the eyes of Allah.

Hadis 18

لَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ أَحَدٌ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالٌ حَبَّةٌ مِنْ خَرْذَلٍ مِنْ إِيمَانٍ، وَلَا يَدْخُلُ
الجَنَّةَ أَحَدٌ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالٌ حَبَّةٌ مِنْ خَرْذَلٍ مِنْ كِبْرٍ.

He who has in his heart as much faith as a grain of mustard seed will not enter hell, and he who has in his heart as much pride as a grain of mustard seed will not enter paradise.

Explanation: This hadis confirms the view that the believers, in whose hearts there was even the least amount of faith, will eventually be taken out of Hell after being punished for their evil deeds. This means that a believer cannot live permanently in Hell along with the polytheists, no matter how sinful his earthly conduct might have been.

The believers who have attained salvation will pray for the forgiveness of sinful Muslims who will have been thrown into Hell and Allah will allow those to be taken out in whom there was even a small amount of faith.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have told one of his companions that the professing of faith removes all previous sins.

A Muslim is required to develop the quality of humility. He should not be proud of his own greatness and importance, he should be humble about his attainments and aware of his own limitations.

Pride is the offspring of conceit and this is the very negation of faith. Pride and faith cannot go together. Faith inculcates in man the spirit of humility and submission to Truth; whereas, pride is the expression of vanity which is one of the greatest hurdles in the path of truth, virtue and righteousness shown by Islam.

The Holy Quran informs us that Iblis refused to obey the command of Allah because of pride and was thrown out of Heaven (7: 13).

It also says: ".....For Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious." (4: 36)

And "..... Is there not in Hell an abode for the Haughty." (39: 60)

The Holy Prophet's^{pmbuh} own example is a beacon of light in this respect. He was humble and never placed himself on a high pedestal.

Hadis 19

الْأَنْيَا سِجْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَجَنَّةُ الْكَافِرِ

The world is the believer's prison and the unbeliever's paradise.

Explanation: The main feature of a prisoner's life is that he is not free to do whatever he likes. He has to carry out other people's commands in whatever he does. Another characteristic is that the prisoner does not feel attached to the prison and never considers it his home. He is always eager to get out of it.

The moral that the above hadis carries for the believers is that they should lead a life of checks and balances in this world. To regard this world as their permanent home and to get attached to it and to make its joys and comforts the ultimate end is the way of the unbelievers.

If a person's attitude towards the world is like that of a prisoner towards a prison, then he is a truthful believer, but if he is so deeply involved so as to make it the ultimate end of his existence then he is not a true believer, according to the principle laid down in this hadis.

It is related that the Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} said: "Whoever loves the world shall damage his Hereafter and whoever love his Hereafter, shall damage his world. Thus, you should prefer what is lasting to what is transitory." (Ahmad, Baihaqi)

Abdullah bin Masud relates that once the Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} took hold of his shoulder and said: "Live in this world as if you were a stranger or a wayfarer." (Bukhari).

When a person makes this world the exclusive aim of his life, he will live for it and all his endeavours will be directed towards the realisation of material aims and interests. His lack of interest for the Hereafter will eventually lead to a loss of the world to come. A true believer should make the Hereafter, which is eternal, the object of his desire.

Hadis 20

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْتَهُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَلَا أَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْتَهُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ

God does not regard your appearances and your possessions, but he regards your hearts and your actions.

Explanation: Divine favour is not granted because of one's form, figure or wealth but on the state of his heart, mind, and actions.

Allah judges and rewards or punishes only on the basis of our motives and intentions. The Quran says: "Whether ye hide what is in your hearts or reveal it, Allah know's it all....." (3: 29)

This makes it clear that however good and noble an act may apparently be, it is worthless in the sight of Allah if the heart is lacking in earnestness and the aim is not solely for the pleasure of Allah as He sees the intention along with the deeds and the hidden along with the manifest. Allah judges the worth and value of deed by the intention with which it is performed.

Faith has two aspects. It is an affirmation of truth from the depth of one's heart and a surrender to the truth affirmed. It signifies conviction of the heart while Islam signifies submission and hence primarily, action.

The main object and aspiration of the life of a Muslim is to seek the pleasure of Allah. All his energies should be directed towards the achievement of the end. A deed or task however noble and useful it may seem to the people has no value in Islam if it is not done purely for the love of Allah. Similarly, an act which to an observer may seem ordinary may be very valuable for it being rooted in sincerity and motivated by love of Allah.

We have been clearly told by the Messenger of Allah that for the achievement of good, it is essential that the means should also be good and above all, the intentions for which those means are to be employed should also be good.

History and Importance of Hadis

Hadis and Sunnah

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as the founder of Islam and the messenger of Allah's revelation to mankind is the best interpreter of the book of Allah. His Hadis and Sunnah i.e., his sayings and actions are, after the Quran the most important sources of Islamic law. Hadis is generally translated into English as tradition.

The word Sunnah means literally a manner of acting, a rule of conduct, a mode of life. For Muslims specifically, it means a rule deduced from the sayings or conduct of the Prophet^{pbuh}. Such sayings and conduct could take the form of:

- 1) Verbal teaching by the Prophet^{pbuh} about important things which he used to repeat three times to the companions. Then he listened to them to make sure that they had learnt them correctly.
- 2) Teaching through practical demonstration like the way to perform ablution, to pray, perform pilgrimage and observe fast. For example, for prayers, the Prophet^{pbuh} said, "*Pray as you see me offering prayers.*" (Agreed) For pilgrimage, he said: "*Learn the rules of pilgrimage from me.*" (Muslim) This is called Sunnah.
- 3) Teaching by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} through letters that he sent to various kings and rulers. These contained instructions about Zakat, taxes, form of worship etc.
- 4) Silent approval by the Prophet^{pbuh} of the action or practice of someone else.

Hadis Qudsi and Hadis Nabawi

A hadis that contains words that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} himself spoke is called Hadis Nabawi or a Prophetic hadis.

A hadis that contains words from Allah is called Hadis Qudsi for example: "Allah says, '*Fasting is for Me and I shall certainly compensate it.*'" is called Hadis Qudsi.

Such Ahadis do not form a part of the Quran, yet they are recognized as sayings that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} related from Allah Himself. So a hadis of this kind is called Hadis Qudsi or Divine Hadis.

Relationship between Quran and Sunnah

The Hadis and Sunnah either:

- 1) Explain a verse of the Quran or add something to its commandment. In this case, it will have a secondary position to the Quran as it will be based on the Quran itself.
- 2) Lay down new rules in matters about which the Quran is silent. In this case, it will stand on its own force and form the basis for legislation. The scholars are of the view that the Sunnah can be the sole source of Islamic law in those matters that have not been dealt with in the Quran.

The Quran, being the word of Allah, contains the principles of religion and treats major issues, and often deals with subjects in brief terms. The Hadis and Sunnah of the Prophet^{pbuh} contain its details and particulars. The Quran says: "..... And we have sent down unto thee (also) the Message: that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them...." (16:44)

While the Quran gives the Muslims a primary rule of life, there are many matters where guidance for practical living is necessary, but about which the Quran says nothing. In such cases the obvious thing was to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet^{pbuh}. For who else could a better guide than the Prophet himself who provided an oral and practical interpretation and commentary as an aid to the correct understanding of the meaning of the Quran. The structure of the Shariah is thus, based on the Quran and the words and actions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

In the Quran, we are commanded to pray and pay Zakat, but there is no explanation of prayers or the number of raka'ats in each prayer. Neither is there an explanation given as to the amount on which the duty of Zakat applies or the percentage which has to be paid. All these details were learnt either from the Prophet's^{pbuh} deeds or words or from both. The Holy Quran commands that we should be good to our neighbour; a number of hadis further stress this duty. The same applies to many other situations; hence the vital connection between the Quran and the practice and sayings of the Prophet^{pbuh}.

Many verses of the Holy Quran deal with questions of law but not all the injunctions of the Shariah are clearly stated in it. There are many statements which needed further explanations before they could become guides for human actions. This explanation and clarification was provided by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

When the Islamic commonwealth was founded in Madinah in 622 A.D., the Prophet^{pbuh} was not only the spiritual leader but also the supreme judge of the Islamic community. Cases would be referred by his followers to the Prophet^{pbuh} for his judgement. The underlying principle applied was the word of Allah from the Quran; but if the Quran was silent, or needed interpretation, the Prophet^{pbuh}, as the messenger of Allah would be the authority for reaching a decision.

The Holy Quran itself commands that the Prophet's^{pbuh} teachings should be obeyed. Whenever the Quran commands its followers to obey Allah, it also

commands them to obey the Prophet^{pbuh}. It declares that obedience to the Prophet^{pbuh} is obedience to Allah Himself. The Quran says: "*He who obeys the Messenger obeys Allah.*" (4: 80)

The Quran frequently commands:

"Obey Allah and obey the Messenger." (5:92, 64:12)

The Prophet's^{pbuh} Sunnah and Hadis along with the Quran, are the fountain-head of all Islamic law and thought.

Types of Hadis

Hadis can be classified into:

1) Authentic or Sahih Hadis

A hadis is said to be Sahih if it is not contrary to the other ahadis that have already been accepted by the authorities on the subject as authentic or reliable; nor should it contradict the text of the Quran, the consensus of the community – **Ijma**, or the basic principles of Islam. It should not be against the dictates of reason or common sense, or the laws of nature. It should not level accusation against the family of the Prophet^{pbuh} or his companions, or praise a particular person or tribe, should not be opposed to recognized historical facts. It should not mention any incident which, if it had happened would have been known and reported by other people while that incident was not reported by anyone except the particular reporter. It should not lay down punishments for minor offences or promise high rewards for insignificant good deeds or if the narrator himself confessed that he had fabricated the report.

The **Sanad** must be full and unbroken and each narrator mentioned in it must be known for his knowledge, piety, memory and trustworthiness. The narrators must have met each other and the chain of information must go back to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The best Sanad consists of those narrators who met the persons relating a Hadis and the person to whom they related it. The chain of transmission should be unbroken. The narrators should be at an age at which they could understand the importance of what they had heard. The report of a child or an insane person could not be accepted. The narrator must be a Muslim. The higher the qualification of a narrator, the greater the authority of a tradition reported by him.

2) Approved or Hasan Hadis

This hadis is similar to an authentic hadis except that its narrators or some of its narrators have been found defective in memory in comparison with the narrators of authentic ahadis.

3) Weak or Zae'ef Hadis

A Hadis is considered to be weak if anyone of its narrators was known to be a liar or known to have bad memory. If he had not met the person he was supposed to be narrating from or there was a weakness in the text or the Sanad then the hadis was said to be a weak or Zae'ef Hadis.

4) Fabricated Hadis

When a saying or action was attributed to the Prophet^{pbuh} which he had not said or done, then the hadis was said to be fabricated.

Structure of Hadis

- 1) Each hadis consists of two parts:

Isnad – chain of its transmitters and the **matn**, its text. Each of these parts is of equal importance to the traditionists, who treat and consider traditions with one and the same isnad and different texts as well as traditions with identical texts and different isnads as entirely independent traditions.

- 2) The first part of the Hadis consists of a chain of names. These are the series of authorities who are called narrators or transmitters of hadis or **Muhaddisin**. This is called Sanad (plural Isnad) which means support because it is the authority for the genuineness of hadis. These authorities can be as few as one, two, three or even four, five and six depending on how far the compiler's time was from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Imam Malik, for example, in some ahadis related from his teacher Nafi, who related from his teacher Abdullah bin Umar, who heard it from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.
- 3) The traditionists attached great importance to isnad and considered it an indispensable part of every tradition. In order to ascertain the value of the various isnad, they even produced a vast literature on the biographies of the transmitters.
- 4) To check the isnad, it is essential to know the life and career as well as the character and scholarship of all the individuals named.
- 5) In order to reduce the risk of forgery, every teacher on every book of hadis, gave his students the names of the teachers through whom he had received it from the original author, each of them stating that he had read the whole or a part of it which had to be specified with his own teacher.
- 6) The second part of the hadis consists of the words of the Prophet^{pbuh} himself. This is called matn or the text of the hadis, for example: "*Pray as you see me offering prayers*" is called the matn of the hadis.

The matn, as the report of an act or statement of the Prophet^{pbuh}, helps to build up a picture of his teachings and thus a basis for Muslim beliefs and rites.

COMPILATION OF AHADIS

Transmission and Preservation during the Prophet's ^{pbuh} Lifetime

The Holy Quran elaborates upon major issues but often deals with subjects briefly also, leaving the details to be explained by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. It says:

"..... And We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them....." (16: 44)

The Quran frequently commands the believers to pray and pay Zakat, but no details are supplied. "Keep up prayer" is the Quranic injunction. The Prophet^{pbuh}, provided the details of the prayer. "Pay Zakat" is also mentioned in the Quran. The Prophet^{pbuh} gave the rules and regulation for its collection and payment.

Similarly, many verses of the Quran deal with questions of law but not all the injunctions are clearly stated in it. Also, there are many statements in the Quran which needed explanation and clarification. This was provided by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

These are just a few examples and since Islam covers the whole of human activity, many issues had to be explained by the Prophet^{pbuh} either by action or by word. Therefore, the need for Ahadis and its transmission from one person to another became necessary even during the lifetime of the Prophet^{pbuh}. In fact, the Prophet^{pbuh} himself would give instructions about the transmission of what he taught: *"Preach what you hear me say. Also let those who see and hear me, take upon themselves to communicate my words to others and preach to their children, relatives*and friends."*

There is another report according to which, on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet^{pbuh} said: *"He who is present here should carry this message to him who is absent." (Bukhari).*

The companions, therefore, considered it their duty to preach the ahadis to those who had not seen or listened to him. A party of students called **Ashab-e-Suffah** lived in the mosque itself and were especially entrusted with the teaching of religion to tribes outside Madinah. From this group the most famous was Abu Hurairah, who would remain in the Prophet's^{pbuh} company at all times and store up in his memory everything that the Prophet^{pbuh} said or did. His efforts were, from the very beginning, directed towards the preservation of Ahadis.

It is related from Abu Hurairah that once one of the companions told the Prophet^{pbuh} of his inability to remember what he heard from him. His reply was that he should seek help of his right hand i.e., write it down. (Tirmizi) When Abdullah bin Amr, who was keenly devoted to learning, heard this, he began to write down whatever he heard from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Some accounts suggest that his collections contained around 10,000 ahadis. (The Emergence

of Islam, Muhammad Hamidullah)

Abdullah bin Amr, himself said: "I used to write everything that I heard from the Prophet^{pbuh} intending to commit it to memory. I spoke about it to the Prophet^{pbuh} who said: "*Write down, for I only speak the truth.*" (Abu Daud)

Yet, another report is from Abu Hurairah: "None of the companions preserved more traditions than myself, but Abdullah bin Amr is an exception, for he used to write and I did not." (Bukhari)

Hazrat Ali used to write down ahadis mainly concerned with the orders and instructions issued from time to time by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Hazrat Aisha, the Prophet's^{pbuh} wife had an excellent memory, by virtue of which she sought to preserve the sayings of the Prophet^{pbuh}. She refused to accept anything until she was fully satisfied as to its meaning.

Abdullah bin Umar and Abdullah bin Abbas are two other companions who were especially engaged in preserving and transmitting the Ahadis. The compilation of Abdullah bin Umar was known as **Sadiqa**.

Hazrat Umar who resided about three miles from Madinah, had made arrangements with a neighbour from Madinah so that each remained in the company of the Prophet^{pbuh} on alternate days, in order to report to the other what had happened in his absence.

In addition to this, every companion did his utmost to preserve the words and deeds of the Prophet^{pbuh} as came to his knowledge. The process of collection of ahadis had started during the life of the Prophet^{pbuh} and special importance was attached from the very beginning to his sayings and deeds which were looked upon as a source of guidance by his followers.

Collection and Compilation after the Prophet's^{pbuh} Death

Soon after the death of the Prophet^{pbuh}, the need for some authoritative guidance in Quranic interpretation was felt. The need was felt all the more because of religious and political divisions; also because the expansion of Islam from a small community in central Arabia to a mighty empire created all kinds of political, economic, legal and social problems quite unknown during the days of the Prophet^{pbuh}.

When Islam had spread widely, new converts wanted to hear about the Prophet^{pbuh} from his close companions and associates. These people were the best authority for a knowledge of Ahadis and Sunnah as they had listened to the Prophet^{pbuh} and witnessed his actions. They became a source of knowledge for later converts and since the incidents were fresh in their memory, they could be conveyed with fair accuracy to the new generation. Everyone of them who had the slightest knowledge of any incident relating to the Prophet's^{pbuh} life deemed it his duty to deliver it to another. Individuals like Abu Hurairah, Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar, Anas bin Malik and many others became the centres to whom people resorted from different parts

of the Islamic empire to gain knowledge about the Prophet^{pbuh}.

The Prophet's^{pbuh} wives were also looked upon as vital custodians of Ahadis and were approached for instruction by other companions. The names of Hazrat Aisha, Hazrat Hafsa, Hazrat Umm-e-Habibah, Hazrat Maimunah and Hazrat Umm-e-Salamah are among the earliest and most distinguished transmitters. In particular, Hazrat Aisha is one of the most important figures in the history of hadis literature, not only as one of the earliest reporters of the largest number of Ahadis, but also as one of the most careful interpreters of hadis.

Some of the companions settled in different towns in the various provinces where they were surrounded by a large number of Muslims who were eager to hear reports of the Prophet's^{pbuh} words and deeds. It is reported that such a large crowd of them collected round a companion when he related a hadis that he would climb the roof of a nearby house so that he could be heard.

With the passing away of the companions, there were no more reports to be investigated from different persons and the Ahadis became the property of teachers who taught at various centres. They were known as the 'successors of the companions'.

At this stage, the writing of Ahadis became more common. The Umayyad Khalifa, Umar II, who ruled towards the close of the first century of Hijra, was the first person to issue instructions to the effect that written collections should be made.

After the death of the successors, the Muslims had to rely on the communication of the next generation, known as the 'successors of the successors'.

In those days, to recite and memorize the hadis was considered to be a great privilege. Since they were preserved in writing as well, in due course of time, a great amount of Ahadis literature was collected.

The most authoritative and the first collection of Ahadis was **Al-Muwatta** compiled by **Imam Malik bin Anas** (94 A.H.)

Another important and exhaustive work is that of **Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal** (164 A.H) founder of the **Hanbali** school of law.

Upto the beginning of the third century of Islam, compilations of Ahadis did not discriminate between authentic Ahadis and other less than authentic, so the Ahadis were mixed up.

Imam Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari (194 - 256 A.H.) was the first to conceive the idea of compiling the authentic ahadis. On account of the strict conditions he laid down for accepting a hadis, he called his compilation **Sahih** that is, the authentic compilation. It is said that he used to seek aid in prayer before recording any hadis. He devoted about sixteen years of his life to the compilation of his Sahih, which is generally considered by the Muslims as an authority second only to the Quran.

From a very young age, Imam Bukhari immersed himself in the study of

hadis and within six years, he had mastered all the traditions of Bukhara as well as everything contained in the books which were available to him.

He then travelled to Makkah from where he started a series of journeys in search of Muslims who could recite ahadis to him in all the important centres of Islamic learning. He is said to have questioned more than thousand masters of ahadis who lived in far off places. He was recognized as the greatest traditionist of his time by all the major authorities with whom he came into contact.

Imam Bukhari sifted through all the traditions known to him, selected about 7397 out of some 6,00,000 ahadis and arranged them according to their subject matter under separate headings, most of which are taken from the Quran and, in some cases, from the traditions themselves. The Ahadis in the Sahih are compiled into 97 books according to the teachings they contain. The first book is called 'The Start of Revelation to the Messenger of Allah.'

The last Book is called 'Tauhid' Divine Unity. There are books devoted to ablution, the various kinds of prayer, Zakat, pilgrimage, books on agriculture, business transactions, types of dress, medicine and many more matters. There are teachings about the practices that the Prophet^{pbuh} had witnessed in the markets of Makkah and Madinah, the practice of selling goods at an inflated price and the curse of usury. Each book provides a clear and easy source of guidance.

Imam Bukhari's main object was to collect together the sound traditions only. By these, he meant such traditions as were handed down to him from the Prophet^{pbuh} through a continuous chain of reliable narrators who had actually met each other, known for their integrity, possessed of a good memory and firm faith, on the condition that their narrations were not contrary to what was related by other reliable authorities and were free from defects.

Sahih of Imam Muslim

Almost simultaneously with the Sahih Bukhari, another Sahih was being compiled. This was the Sahih of Imam Muslim (202 – 261 A.H.) In his Sahih, he examined a third of a million ahadis of which he selected only about 12000 which the expert scholars unanimously regard as sound.

Like Bukhari, Muslim regarded a hadis as Sahih only when it had been handed down to him through a continuous *isnad* of known and reliable authorities, was compatible with other sound ahadis and was free from defects.

The Sahih of Imam Muslim has been acclaimed as the most authentic collection of Ahadis after that of Imam Bukhari which taken together are known as the 'Two Sahihs' encompassing all topics of significance. They are spoken of as second only to the Holy Quran, in terms of authority.

Sunan of Abu Daud

Abu Daud is said to have compiled his Sunan after examining 500,000 ahadis, out of which he selected 4800, a labour which occupied him for twenty years. He made a series of journeys to meet most of the foremost traditionists of his time and acquired from them the most reliable ahadis quoting the sources through which it had reached him. Since the author collected ahadis which no one had ever assembled together, his Sunan has been accepted as standard work by scholars from many parts of the Islamic world.

Jami of Tirmizi

The principles with regard to the criticism of ahadis which had been adopted by Abu Daud were further improved upon and followed by his pupil Tirmizi in his collection known as Jami. He travelled a great deal in search of ahadis, visiting the great centres of Islamic learning, where he was able to associate with eminent traditionists such as Bukhari, Muslim and others. His work contains the bulk of traditions, which have been accepted by the jurists as the basis of Islamic law. The Jami not only arranges reports according to their subject matter but is also of a more critical nature.

Perhaps the most important feature of the Jami is the category, that Tirmizi terms as Hasan Hadis which he defines as one that has been related by narrators who are not accused of falsehood, has been handed down by more than one chain of authorities and is not contrary to what has been related by other reliable narrators.

Sunan of Nasai

Another important work in this category is the Sunan compiled by al-Nasai. He travelled widely in search of ahadis and was recognized as the leading traditionist of his day. He produced his Sunan, which he claimed, contained only reliable ahadis.

Sunan of Ibn Majah

Another compilation was Sunan of Ibn Majah. He visited important centres of learning and studied under great traditionists of his day. His Sunan contains 4000 traditions.

The four Sunan works, together with the two Sahihs are known as **Sihah-e-Sitta** or the **six correct and reliable collections**.

At a later period, many scholars compiled new collections. In these works, contents were taken from the Six Books and arranged in different ways. One expert brought together Ahadis from Bukhari and Muslim on the same topic in '**Masabih al-Sunnah – the Lamps of the Sunnah**'. This was revised about two hundred years later into the '**Mishkat al-Masabih**' – '**The Niche of the Lamps**',

a popular source of reliable ahadis.

About the end of the fourth century of Islam, all ahadis circulating orally had been put to writing. Ahadis literature became exceedingly rich and we are very fortunate to have for our benefit such great religious wealth from which guidance can be derived.

Hadis Collections: Musnad and Musannaf

The collection of ahadis became an important part of theological activities in the early centuries of Islam. Two techniques were mainly adopted resulting in two types of collections. One was by means of sound links, traced back without interruption to one of the companions; in that case, it is called **Musnad** derived from Sanad meaning authority. The contents and the matter of the ahadis are not taken into consideration in establishing the order, the decisive point being merely the name of the companion, the first transmitter from Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}. So the book begins with the companions who were closest to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the four Khalifas and other blessed companions, wives of the Prophet^{pbuh}, other leading Muslim men, people of Madinah and other towns. Under each individual or group there are different number of ahadis.

Such collections are called 'Musnad' because every single hadis can be traced back to a companion who, in turn, can refer back to the Prophet^{pbuh}. Therefore the titles of the chapters are Musnad of Abu Bakr, Musnad of Abu Hurairah, Musnad of Aisha etc.

The most important and exhaustive of all the available musnad works is that of **Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal**, founder of the Hanbali school of law. His profound and vast knowledge of ahadis, his pious and selfless life and his strong character established his reputation as an Imam and one of the greatest authorities on hadis in the Islamic world.

To assemble his musnad he collected over 30,000 ahadis out of some 750,000 narrated by around nine hundred companions relating to widely varied subjects. It occupies an important place in Hadis literature and preserves a great many traditions which are not to be found elsewhere.

A Musnad is valuable for those interested in the views or pronouncements attributed to a specific person, but is of little value when the object is to discover ready answers to specific questions on a single topic. This need explains the rearrangement of the contents of the musnad, in a later generation, according to topic. The ahadis have been grouped into chapters and sub chapters according to their theme. For instance, we find chapters on purity, prayers, fasting, zakat, pilgrimage, marriage and so on. Such a collection is called a **Musannaf** which means 'divided up', because it divides the ahadis according to their theme.

The best known work of this type is **al-Muwatta** which contains 1720 ahadis, compiled by **Imam Malik bin Anas**, founder of the Maliki school of law.

Another compilation in this category is **al-Musannaf** of **Imam Abdul Razzaq**

al-Sanani which contains 11,033 ahadis.

To this category, also belongs the most important of all ahadis collections i.e., the **Sahih of Bukhari** and **Muslim**, the **Sunan** works of **al-Nasai**, **Abu Daud**, **Ibn Majah** and **Jami of Tirmizi**.

Many other authors also compiled musnad or musannaf works as extensive as those mentioned above but they did not achieve the general recognition.

Shia compilation of Ahadis

Shia Muslims also accept hadis as a source of teaching that helps to explain the Quran and gives guidance for every day living. They, however, consider only those ahadis as reliable which are based on the authority of Hazrat Ali and his twelve male descendants through Hazrat Fatima, the daughter of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. They are considered as inspired teachers and as transmitters of teachings from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

They have, therefore, their own works on this subject and hold the following four works in high esteem:

- 1) Al – Kafi fi ilm al-din- ‘The Sufficient in the Science of Religion’ by Muhammad bin Yaqub al-Kulini. (died 328 A.H.)
- 2) Man la Yahduruhu al- faqih – ‘He has no Legal Expert Present’ by Muhammad Babuya (died 381 A.H.)
- 3) Tahzib al-ahkam – ‘The Revision of Judgements’ and al-Istibsar – ‘The Perspective’ by Muhammad al – Tusi (died 460 A.H.)

Significance of Hadis in Thought and Action in Islam

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was not merely a Messenger of Allah in that he had no further function after delivering the Message. He was also a guide and teacher. It was his duty and function to explain the law of Allah by his words and deeds and to make people understand its true purpose and object. The Quranic verse lends support to this fact:

“..... And We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought.”
(16: 44)

If the Quran had elaborated the whole of the religious rites or the acts of worship down to their smallest details, the Book would have been many times its present size. Allah established general principles in the Quran and left their explanation and application in different circumstances to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The Messenger of Allah’s revelation to mankind is the best interpreter of the Book of Allah. Both sources are indispensable; one cannot practice Islam without consulting both of them.

During the twenty-three years of the Prophet’s^{pbuh} mission, there had arisen in the day to day affairs of the community, problems on which the Muslims

had consulted their Prophet^{pbuh}. Some of these difficulties had been resolved by revelations of a Divine ruling on the matter. Other difficulties had been settled by the Prophet^{pbuh} acting either upon the basis of his inspired judgement, or even his own initiative. After the Prophet^{pbuh} passed away, solutions were sought from those who had been close to the Prophet^{pbuh} – one of his widows or one of his most faithful and close companion best acquainted with his daily behaviour and most suitable to describe how he had acted in similar circumstances.

From the records of all these questions and answers there had grown, alongside the Book of Allah, a parallel documentation of practice of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. These included his observance and performance of religious rites, the conduct of daily secular affairs and relations with fellow members of the community or in the privacy of his home with his immediate household.

Verses 4:59 and 8: 46 emphasize the importance of obeying the Prophet^{pbuh}:

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger....." (4: 59)

"And obey Allah and His Messenger....." (8: 46)

Muslims can live according to the teachings of the Quran by putting the Quran into practice, and following the Prophets' ^{pbuh} Sunnah. Allah's Messenger established the way which Muslims must follow. From this point of view, the Sunnah is more comprehensive than the Quran.

Again, at numerous places, the Quran commands the Muslims to obey the Prophet^{pbuh}. It says: "Say: 'If you do love Allah, follow me.....'" (3: 31)

"And obey Allah and the Messenger....." (3: 132)

"He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allah....." (4: 80)

"..... So take what the Messenger assigns to you and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you....." (59: 7)

Abu Hurairah reported the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} as saying: "When I command you to do anything, obey it as far as possible for you and when I forbid you to do anything, abstain from it." (Bukhari and Muslim)

It was not only in matters relating to important institutions of communal life and social conduct that the standard of Sunnah was applied. Even in regard to the most trivial circumstances and usages of private life, Muslims sought the Sunnah. For it was an indication of the way of the Prophet^{pbuh}. For example, in deciding whether it was permissible to wear a gold signet ring, the sole criterion was to find out whether the Prophet^{pbuh} wore such jewellery. Even questions of good behaviour and social behaviour were settled by reference to the Sunnah. It regulated the forms of greeting and good wishes; if someone wanted to know what to say to a person who sneezes, he would find rules in the Sunnah. The chapters 'Adab' (good) manners and 'Libas' (dress) in the various collections of traditions afford a good number of examples on this point.

The transmission of the practice and sayings of the Prophet^{pbuh} from one person to another became necessary even during the Prophet's^{pbuh} lifetime. In

fact, the Prophet^{pbuh} himself emphasized the status of hadis and used to give instructions about the transmission of what he taught. Once, when a deputation from a tribe came to him, in the early days of Madinah, his parting words to them were: "Remember this and report it to those whom you have left behind."

(Mishkat)

Similar instructions were given to other people: "Go back to your people and teach them these things." (Bukhari) During the Farewell Pilgrimage, he told the Muslims: "He who is present here should carry this message to him who is absent." (Bukhari) Whenever a people embraced Islam, they would request for teachers who could teach them the Quran and the Sunnah.

The Quran, contains the principles of religion. It is complete and detailed in certain matters, but in others, it is either silent or brief. It generally deals with major issues and broad principles or essentials of religion, going into details in rare cases.

The details were supplied by the Prophet^{pbuh} himself, either by showing in his practice how an injunction was to be carried out, or by giving an explanation in words. For instance, the two most important religious institutions of Islam are Salat and Zakat. Yet, the Quran provides no details. "Keep up prayer" is the Quranic injunction but no method or the number of Raka'ats in each prayer is given. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} fixed the time and the conditions of prayer and the obligatory and commendable acts of prayer either through words or actions. "Pay the Zakat" is again an injunction frequently mentioned in the Quran, but there is no explanation given as to the amount on which the duty of Zakat applies or the percentage which is to be paid. The Prophet^{pbuh} gave the rules and regulations for its collection and payment. The Quran mentions the obligation of Hajj, but does not explain the method of its performance nor does it clarify how often it is to be performed. Through the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} we have come to know that it is to be performed once in a lifetime and the method of its performance.

The Quran mentions that Allah loves purity. It commands the Muslims to purify themselves before Salat, but no detailed method of purification is given. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} explained the ceremonial impurities and the methods of purification.

The Quran tells us that the life of the Prophet^{pbuh} is a perfect example, every aspect of which gives us guidance. It says: "You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct)....." (33: 21)

After the Quran the Prophet's^{pbuh} Ahadis and Sunnah are the most precious sources of guidance which Muslims possess and alongwith the Quran, they are the fountainhead of all action and thought.

Use of Hadis in Legal Thinking

The Ahadis and Sunnah – the sayings and practice of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}

are the second source of Islamic jurisprudence from which the teachings of Islam are drawn. The legal importance of Hadis and Sunnah as the second source of Islamic law, after the Holy Quran, is recognized by all leading Sunni jurists.

Like the Quran, the Sunnah is also a form of legislation. It enjoins and prohibits, it sets the principles to establish religious obligations and determines the lawful and the unlawful. In addition, the Sunnah interprets the Quran and expands what is brief in it.

A hadis or Sunnah, therefore, either describes a verse of the Quran or adds something to its commandment. In the first category, it has a secondary position to the Quran as it will be based on the Quran itself; whereas in the second situation, if there is no mention of the commandment in the Holy Quran, it will stand on its own force and is the sole basis for legislation.

In the original Islamic community, the Quran was the only source of law. But this source proved inadequate to the rapidly expanding Muslim empire. In the countries of South-West Asia, Central Asia and North Africa which the Arabs conquered, they encountered a society which was complex economically, socially and culturally. As a result, they were faced with questions posed by the new environment for which the Quran had no answer and answers to all these questions had to be found based on some religious authority.

In order to solve the new problems faced by the expansion of the Muslim community, enquiries were made into the practices of the Prophet^{pbuh}. The followers were questioned regarding his actions and sayings. This explains the rise of the Traditions – Ahadis – giving to the biography of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} a legislative quality to serve as a basis of juridical science. In cases where no fixed law existed people looked to the evidence of the way in which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} judged such circumstances. If any such evidence could be produced, it became possible to establish the Sunnah in respect to the case in doubt.

This policy of using knowledge of Ahadis was followed by the Prophet's^{pbuh} immediate successors. For example, whenever any legal case came before Hazrat Abu Bakr, he looked into the Quran and decided the case on its basis. If he found no applicable judgement in the Quran, he referred to the usage of the Prophet^{pbuh}. If he failed to find it there, he asked the other companions and if they informed him of any decision of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the matter, he decided the case accordingly. Similarly, in the time of the Umayyad Khalifa, Umar II, the age at which a person attained majority had not been decided. A hadis was found from which it was evident that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had refused the right of majority to a youth of fourteen, but accorded it to him a year later when he had attained the age of fifteen. Khalifa Umar II, thereupon said: "This, then, is the age limit between majority and minority". Only by such a documentation could a legal opinion acquire the force of law in the eyes of the Muslims.

The companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuhs} knew that his actions and practices were to be followed should no clear instructions be found in the Quran. It is related that Mu'az bin Jabal, on being appointed as governor of Yemen, was asked how he would judge. His reply was: "By the Book of Allah." Asked what he would do if he did not find a direction in the Book of Allah, he replied: "By the Sunnah of the Prophet." (Abu Daud, Tirmizi)

The need for Ahadis and Sunnah was recognized even in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet^{pbuhs} for providing guidance.

As the Muslim community spread to new lands and discovered new cultures, need was felt to supplement the Quran by the Sunnah, the main area being juridical. Public law, criminal law, property law and family law had to be given their norms. Legal injunctions, rules of ritual purity, decrees as to food, standard of morality and behaviour in every day affairs – all these were derived from Ahadis.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuhs} was the first legislator of Islam. He interpreted the law of the Quran, and commented on it and its manner of application to the practical problems and various situations of life.

Rightly Guided Khalifas

The Arabic word 'Khalifa' is short for 'Khalifat-ur-Rasul Allah' which means successor to the 'Messenger of Allah.' Hazrat Abu Bakr, who was elected head of the Muslim community after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, first used this title.

As successor to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the Khalifa was the head of the Muslim community and his main responsibility was to continue in the path of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

The Khalifas who truly followed the path of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} are called the 'Rightly Guided Khalifas. They are the first four Khalifas of Islam:

Hazrat Abu Bakr

Hazrat Umar

Hazrat Usman

Hazrat Ali

Hazrat Abu Bakr

(632 – 634 A.D.)

Life Before Khilafat

Hazrat Abu Bakr was born in a noble and respectable Quraish family of Makkah. He was two years and three months younger than the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. His father was Usman, surnamed Abu Qahafa and his mother was Salma, surnamed Umm-ul-Khair. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Hazrat Abu Bakr had a common ancestor – Murra. He was a very close friend of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. In fact, they were friends from their childhood and remained friends throughout their lives.

As a very young child, Hazrat Abu Bakr was taken to the Ka'abah, dedicated to the gods and named Abdul Ka'abah. In his early years, he played with the young ones of the camels which earned him the name of Abu Bakr i.e., 'the father of the foal of the camel.'

He did not receive any formal education. Even before accepting Islam, he led a pious and chaste life and never drank wine nor gambled. At the age

of eighteen, he adopted the profession of a cloth merchant, which was his family business. Eventually he became one of the richest merchants of Makkah.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} invited people to accept Islam, Hazrat Abu Bakr was the first, free adult male to become a Muslim. After conversion to Islam, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} changed his name to **Abdullah**. He accompanied the Prophet^{pbuh} in his migration to Madinah. He always stood by the side of the Prophet^{pbuh} and was his chief counsellor.

Hazrat Abu Bakr was present at the battles of Badr, Uhud, Ditch and Hunain as well as the Treaty of Hudaibiya. He was appointed as **Ameer-e-Hajj** to lead a delegation of three hundred Muslims to perform Hajj according to the Islamic way. He was appointed as **Imam** to lead the congregational prayers during the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} last illness.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} died, the entire Muslim community was thrown into confusion, but Hazrat Abu Bakr exercised remarkable self control and resolved the crisis. He declared: "He who worshipped Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad being a mortal is dead; he who worships the Allah of Muhammad, let him know that He lives for ever."

Hazrat Abu Bakr helped avert a political crisis regarding the successor to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, by persuading the Ansar to relinquish Khilafat in favour of the Quraish.

Hazrat Abu Bakr settled the question as to where the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} should be buried. He is one of the ten fortunate companions to whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave the tidings of Paradise in their lifetime. In his last address at Masjid-e-Nabawi, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} ordered that all doors opening into the mosque should be closed except the door leading to the house of Hazrat Abu Bakr.

Election as Khalifa

Immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the question as to who was to be the leader of the Muslims after the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} came as a big threat to the solidarity of the Muslim community. The Ansar insisted that in view of their services to Islam, the office should go to them. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was a Quraish, and according to Arab custom, the Quraish insisted that the office should go to them. The Ansar then proposed that they might have two leaders, one from the Ansar and another from Quraish. But, Hazrat Umar emphasized that in the interest of the solidarity of Islam, there could not be more than one **Ameer**. He then took hold of Abu Bakr's hand and swore allegiance to him. Thereafter, the Ansars came forward in batches to pay homage to Abu Bakr. Thus, the Muhajirin and the Ansar unanimously elected Abu Bakr as the first Khalifa of Islam.

There are many ahadis, which show that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} held Hazrat Abu Bakr in the highest esteem among his companions. He was fully aware of

his eminent qualities and considered him to be the most suitable person to be elected Khalifa after him. For example, Abdullah bin Masud reported him as saying: "If I were to take anyone as my best friend, I would take Abu Bakr, but he is my brother and successor." (Bukhari)

After the election was over, Abu Bakr rose and said:

"I have been elected your Ameer, although I am not better than you. Help me, if I am in the right; set me right if I am in the wrong; obey me as long as I obey Allah and His Prophet; when I disobey Him and His Prophet, then obey me not."

This inaugural speech of Hazrat Abu Bakr contains the principles of a democratic government. It points out that the Khalifa must govern the country according to the laws of the **Shariat** and be responsible to the people for all his actions.

Expedition to Syria

After assuming the Khilafat the first issue that Hazrat Abu Bakr had to decide was whether or not the expedition to Syria, should be sent. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had directed to send this expedition under the command of Usamah. The circumstances had changed following the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

At that critical stage in history most of the tribes had apostatized from Islam, that is, they had abandoned their belief in Islam. Madinah was surrounded by hostile tribes. It was suggested to Hazrat Abu Bakr that it was not advisable to send the army outside the country. Hazrat Abu Bakr said that according to the wish of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the army should be sent to Syria. He said:

"Who am I to withhold the army that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had ordered to proceed? Come what may, let Madinah stand or fall; the Khilafat live or perish, the command of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} shall be carried out."

Abu Bakr then directed the army to depart on its mission. He bade farewell to the army and addressed them in the following terms:

"Do not kill children, women or old men. Do not cut down any trees wherein there is food for men and beasts. Do not molest the monks in the churches."

Towards the close of June 632 A.D., the army of Usamah left. After ten days march, the Muslim army attacked the border tribes. The Byzantine forces avoided this confrontation, as they were no match for the Muslims. They were defeated and offered allegiance to the authorities at Madinah. The expedition proved to be a great success. It secured the safety of the frontier with the Byzantines and averted the threat of any attack from them. It made the hostile tribes realise that the Muslims were strong enough to meet any emergencies. Victorious, Usamah's army returned to Madinah.

Problems faced by Abu Bakr after becoming the Khalifa

Hazrat Abu Bakr was confronted with many problems when he assumed the office of the Khalifa. The newly established Muslim state faced many serious challenges. For instance, people refused to pay Zakat and the apostasy movement, i.e. the curse of the abandonment of Islam followed by the appearance of false prophets.

Sir William Muir says: "But for him (Abu Bakr) Islam would have melted away in compromises or might have perished in the throes of its birth. Not in propagation, but in permanence lies the monumental service of Abu Bakr to the cause of Islam." (The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall)

Hazrat Abu Bakr showed extraordinary firmness, determination and courage in fighting and defeating them all. Islam owes a great debt to Abu Bakr for these achievements.

Refusal to pay Zakat

At that time, many tribes such as Banu Asad, Banu Ghatafan, Banu Abbas, Banu Murrah and others surrounded Madinah. After the conquest of Makkah when other tribes in Arabia accepted Islam, these tribes also offered allegiance to Islam. This allegiance was based on diplomacy rather than on faith and conviction of heart. They regarded Islam as a matter of personal allegiance to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} which ended with his death.

These tribes sent a deputation to Hazrat Abu Bakr with the proposal that with the passing away of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, their agreement with Islam had ended and it was necessary that the authorities at Madinah should make a fresh agreement with them. They said that they would remain on friendly terms with the authorities at Madinah provided they were relieved of the obligation to pay Zakat.

Abu Bakr was very strict on this point. He argued that Zakat being a fundamental injunction of Islam, had to be paid. Addressing the delegates, he said:

"If with reference to Zakat, you withhold even as much as a string to tie a camel, as the khalifa of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, it will be my duty to fight for it, whatever the consequences."

When Hazrat Abu Bakr rejected the demand of the tribes to exempt them from the payment of Zakat they decided to forego Islam rather than yield to the authority at Madinah. They decided to launch an attack on Madinah when the main Muslim army was away in Syria.

One night in 632 A.D., as the tribal force advanced to attack the Muslims, the army led by Hazrat Abu Bakr took them by surprise. Many tribesmen died; the rest fled in confusion.

This victory was the first significant event of the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu

Bakr. After this battle many tribes sent their delegates to Madinah, offered allegiance and paid Zakat.

Apostasy Movement

The short Khilafat of Abu Bakr was mostly occupied with the so-called **Ridda (Apostasy) Wars**. After the death of the Prophet^{pbuh} some people rebelled against the authorities at Madina and renounced or apostasised Islam.

Abu Bakr faced the situation calmly. Without any delay, he launched a campaign against this movement. He collected the troops at Madinah and divided them into eleven battalions. He placed each of the battalion under the command of an experienced commander and sent each into eleven different parts of Arabia to fight against the false prophets and the tribes that were helping them in these wars against the Muslims.

He instructed the commanders, first to invite the revolting tribes to Islam. But if they failed to comply, they were to be attacked. Some of the tribes submitted to Islam without fighting, while others remained adamant. So wars were waged against them. Within a year, the control of Islam was re-established throughout the peninsula. *Najad o Yemen*

False prophets

Towards the end of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} life several false prophets arose in different parts of the country. The news of the Prophet's^{pbuh} death re-kindled the revolt started by these false prophets. They were:

Aswad Ansi

Of these false prophets, Aswad Ansi was the first to rise in Yemen. He was an ugly man who kept his face veiled to hide his ugliness. That is why he was nicknamed the veiled-prophet. He was the leader of the Ansi tribe. He collected a large army in co-operation with the neighbouring chiefs and stood in open revolt against Islam. He was defeated and killed by the Muslims.

Tulayha

The second false prophet, Tulayha, belonged to the Banu Asad tribe in Northern Arabia. He was a wealthy chief and a great warrior. He had claimed prophethood and Divine Revelation during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. But the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} died before he could send out an army against Tulayha. Many tribes acknowledged Tulayha as the prophet which made him sufficiently strong and powerful to lead a confederacy of numerous tribes against the Muslims.

Khalid bin Walid was sent to punish him. Both the armies met at Buzaka. The army of Tulayha was defeated and the Muslims won a significant victory. Many of the rebellious tribes surrendered and accepted Islam.

Tulayha escaped from Buzaka and sought refuge in Syria. When Syria was captured by the Muslims, Tulayha accepted Islam. Later, he joined the Muslim army and took part in the battles of Qadisiya and Nehawand. These battles were fought during the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar.

Musailma

Of all the imitators and false prophets, who rose in Arabia after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the most dangerous one was Musailma who belonged to the Banu Hanifa tribe of Central Arabia. He had visited Madinah during the life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and enjoyed the privilege of his company for sometime. On return from Madinah, Musailma, however, laid claim to divine mission and founded a new creed. He reduced the number of daily prayers and relieved his followers from the obligations of fasting and Zakat. He legalised drinking and adultery. He composed sentences and gave them out as having been revealed by Allah. He succeeded in winning a considerable number of followers. He sent a letter to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} demanding the division of the Arabian peninsula into two halves, one part to be reserved for the Muslims and the other for Musailma and his followers. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} addressed him as Musailma, the liar, and said that all land belonged to Allah and He gave its control to such person as He willed.

With the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Musailma gained more strength. The people argued that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was dead while Musailma was alive and a living prophet was to be preferred to a dead one. Many tribes who were hostile to Islam joined him.

Hazrat Abu Bakr originally entrusted the operations against Musailma to Ikramah, son of Abu Jahl. Shurabhil bin Hasnah was to advance with another column to assist him. Hazrat Abu Bakr issued orders that action against Musailma was to be taken only when the two armies met.

Ikramah was the first to reach the Yamama valley where Musailma was lodged. Without waiting for Shurabhil, Ikramah attacked Musailma, with the result that the Muslims were defeated with considerable losses. When Shurabhil reached the valley of Yamama, he attacked the army of Musailma. He, too, was defeated and suffered heavy losses.

It was at this critical stage that Hazrat Abu Bakr sent Khalid bin Walid to fight against Musailma. A hot contest followed in which the Muslims were victorious. Musailma retreated to a fortified garden. The Muslim army followed him. Many men of Banu Hanifa, including Musailma were killed. So bloody was this battle that it came to be known as the Battle of the Garden of Death.

Sajjah

Among the false prophets who rose in Arabia as a result of the apostasy movement was a Christian woman called Sajjah who, claimed to be a

prophetess. She belonged to the Bani Tamim tribe.

After the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, she declared herself a prophetess. Soon she succeeded in mustering a large following from among the tribe of her mother.

Musailma another false prophet, invited Sajjah to visit Yamama as his guest. Sajjah accepted the invitation and proceeded to Yamama. They decided to join forces and overpower Muslims by their united action. Musailma, ultimately won her over through matrimonial alliance. After a stay of three days, Sajjah returned to her people in Iraq with which ended her adventure of prophethood. She lived in obscurity for the rest of her life. When Muslims conquered Iraq, she became a Muslim along with other members of her tribe.

Campaign in Bahrain

Hazrat Abu Bakr decided to undertake a campaign against the people of Bahrain who had supported Musailma in the war against the Muslims. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had sent a mission to Bahrain and invited its ruler to Islam. He had responded to the call and become a Muslim. Under his influence, most of the people of Bahrain accepted Islam. The ruler of Bahrain died soon after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. His death led to anarchy and chaos, and like the people of other regions in Arabia, most of the people of Bahrain also apostatized. They received help from the Persians and were fully prepared for a confrontation with the Muslims. In the battle that took place, Muslims were victorious and thus the rebellion in Bahrain was completely crushed.

Campaign in Oman and Mahrah

During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Oman which was on the border of the Persian Gulf was under the Persian rule. When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} invited various contemporary rulers to embrace Islam, a letter was also sent to the ruler of Oman. He responded favourably to the invitation of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He said that he was inclined to accept Islam, but the difficulty was that his people were not likely to agree to the payment of Zakat to Madinah. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} assured him that if he and his people became Muslims, the amount collected from Zakat could be distributed amongst the poor and needy of Oman. Thereupon the ruler of Oman became a Muslim. Under his influence most of the people also embraced Islam. After the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, like other parts of Arabia, Oman also fell a prey to chaos and anarchy and most of the people apostatized from Islam.

Hazrat Abu Bakr despatched forces to undertake operations in Oman. The Muslim army was successful and the rebellious forces of Oman laid down their arms.

Like other parts of Arabia, the people of Mahrah also apostatized after the

death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Hazrat Abu Bakr sent Ikramah to fight them. After a tough fight, Muslims were able to subdue the rebels. The defeated people embraced Islam and they were granted amnesty.

Campaign in Yemen

During the time of Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Yemen was under the sovereignty of the Persian Empire. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had sent an invitation to Khusro Parvez, the King of Iran to accept Islam. When Khusro Parvez got the letter, he was infuriated. He tore the letter to pieces and instructed the Governor of Yemen, a Persian noble, to summon the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to his court.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was informed of this, he prophesied that the kingdom of Khusro would soon be broken up. This is exactly what happened. Khusro Parvez was murdered and his son became the king. The new ruler sent instructions to the Governor of Yemen that his father's order summoning the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} to his court was not to be enforced. Subsequently, the Governor and a large number of people of Yemen accepted Islam.

Sometime later, Aswad Ansi, the false prophet, rose in Yemen. He succeeded in winning a considerable number of followers. Within a short time, he became powerful enough to challenge the new Governor of Yemen.

Hazrat Abu Bakr ordered an army to proceed to Yemen. The Muslims charged with great fury. In the battle that followed, the enemy was completely destroyed. They laid down their arms. Those who accepted Islam were granted amnesty. In this way, the province of Yemen was brought under Muslim rule.

Campaign in Hadramaut

In 633 A.D., the Kindi tribe in Hadramaut broke into revolt. They apostatised from Islam and refused to pay taxes. Hazrat Abu Bakr directed the Muslim army to march to Hadramaut. A battle took place in which the apostates were killed. The few who survived laid down their arms.

Campaign in Eastern Iraq

In the apostasy campaign in Bahrain, the Persians had helped the rebels. So, action had to be taken against the Persians from whom trouble for the Muslim states could be expected at any time. There was considerable disarray in the affairs of Persia and the Arab tribes in the Persian territory were dissatisfied with the Persian rule. Muslims felt that this position could be exploited to their advantage and the Arab tribes could be liberated from the Persian yoke.

In 633 A.D., Hazrat Abu Bakr ordered Khalid bin Walid to proceed to the border of the Persian empire. Four other columns, each under different commanders, were also directed to proceed to reinforce the main Muslim army under the command of Khalid bin Walid.

Khalid bin Walid sent a letter to Hurmuz, the commander of the Persian army inviting him either to accept Islam or to pay **Jizya**, after which he and his people would be under Muslim protection. If he did not agree, he should be ready for a war. Hurmuz accepted the third alternative. He gathered his forces and set out from Uballa, the main port of Iraq, to meet the Muslim forces at Kazima.

As the Muslim army was ready for battle, the Persians were forced to go into action immediately. The Persian forces were linked in chains and it was because of this that the **Battle of Kazima** is also known as **Battle of Chains**.

Due to the heavy attack of the Muslims, Persians were forced to fall back. They found their chains to be a death trap and as they retreated bound together in chains, they were killed in large numbers. Before sunset, the Muslims had won the battle and the Persians suffered a humiliating defeat. Thousands of them, including Hurmuz were killed and thousands were taken captives.

Battle of Mazar

After winning the Battle of Kazima, Khalid and his army advanced further into Iraq. The Persian army crossed the river Tigris at Mazar and here they learnt of the defeat of the Persians at Kazima. They halted at Mazar and the remaining army of Hurmuz that had escaped from Kazima joined them.

As soon as Khalid reached Mazar, he came to know of the Persian concentration. Both the armies met in battle. The Persian army could not withstand the attack of the Muslims and headed for the river. The Muslim soldiers overtook and killed them in large numbers. The Muslims won a second victory against the Persians. Subsequently, the inhabitants offered submission and agreed to pay Jizya.

Battle of Walaja

After the defeat of the Persians at Mazar, the Persian Emperor sent two more armies to fight the Muslims. After crossing river Euphrates, they established their camp at Walaja.

The battle began when Khalid reached Walaja. Soon the battlefield turned into a slaughterhouse for the Persians and the bulk of the Persian army was annihilated. This was the third consecutive victory of the Muslims over Persians which established the superiority of the Muslim army.

Battle of Ulleis

After the defeat at Walaja, the Persians joined forces with the Christian Arabs. In an attempt to drive the Muslims from Iraq, they gathered at Ulleis, ten miles from Walaja.

In the battle that followed against the Muslims, the Persian resistance broke down. A great part of the Persian and Christian Arab army was killed. The

Muslims, thus, secured a victory against the Persians for the fourth time.

Conquest of Hira

After the Battle of Ulleis, Khalid and his army marched to Hira. The Persian Governor of Hira abandoned the city and fled with his forces to Madain. Under the circumstances, Muslims occupied the city of Hira without any resistance. After the conquest of Hira, the whole of Central Iraq came under the rule of the Muslims.

Campaign in Western Iraq

Towards the end of June 633 A.D., Khalid bin Walid marched with his army from Hira to Anbar, an important town and a commercial centre to which caravans came from Persia and Syria. The town was protected by walls and a large, deep moat.

Khalid selected a point where the moat was the narrowest. The old and weak camels of the army were slaughtered and their carcasses dumped into the moat. As the pile of carcasses rose, it formed a bridge over which the Muslim army crossed the moat and attacked the fort at Anbar.

Finding his position insecure, the governor made an offer to surrender, provided the Persian army was allowed to withdraw in safety. Khalid agreed to this offer. The Persian soldiers and their families evacuated the fort. Thereafter, Muslims occupied the town of Anbar.

Battle of En-at-Tamr

Khalid next marched to En-at-Tamr, a large fortified town surrounded by date palms, and laid siege to the fort at En-at-Tamr. After a few days, the resistance of the enemy broke down and they surrendered. With the completion of these operations, the entire region, from Uballa to Anbar came under the complete domination of the Muslims.

Campaign in Syria

In February 634 A.D., Hazrat Abu Bakr issued a call for Jihad on the Syrian front. By March, a large force had assembled at Madinah ready to march to Syria. Hazrat Abu Bakr organized it into four corps, each comprising 7,000 men. The corps were given under the command of Amr bin Aas, Yazeed bin Abu Sufyan, Shurabhl bin Hassan and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. In order to strengthen the front at Syria, Hazrat Abu Bakr directed Khalid bin Walid to march to Syria and lead the operations there.

In 634 A.D., Khalid marched from Hira with nine thousand men. On the way to Damascus, some skirmishes took place in which the Muslims were successful.

Battle of Basra

Instead of advancing towards Damascus, Khalid set out for Basra, when he came to know that a Muslim detachment of four thousand warriors under the command of Shurabhil was fighting at Basra. He also sent a message to Abu Ubaidah to meet him in Basra.

The two armies of the Muslims and the Byzantines faced each other. Before fighting, Khalid offered Islam to Romanus, the commander of the Byzantine army. He, after asking a few questions about Islam, became a Muslim and joined the Muslim army.

The conversion of their commander to Islam unnerved the Byzantine forces. Instead of fighting, they withdrew to the city and shut the gates against the Muslims. That night, a Muslim detachment, guided by Romanus, entered the city through an underground passage. The Byzantines were killed in large numbers and the survivors laid down their arms.

The conquest of Basra was the first important victory gained by the Muslims in Syria.

Battle of Ajnadein

After the defeat at Basra, the Byzantine Emperor, Heraclius vowed vengeance and ordered a large concentration of forces at Ajnadein, west of Jerusalem.

Khalid bin Walid accordingly decided to deal with the Byzantine forces at Ajnadein. Upto this time, various Muslim forces in Syria were operating in different sectors. Khalid directed the integration of all the Muslim forces and ordered the entire Muslim army to assemble at Ajnadein. The Muslim army which numbered forty thousand camped at some distance from the gigantic camp of the Byzantines. When the battle began, the Muslims struck violently and drove deep wedges into the Byzantine army. After the death of their commander, the Byzantine army lost heart and fled from the battlefield. They were pursued and killed in large numbers.

Siege of Damascus

After the Battle of Ajnadein, the Muslims set out for Damascus. When they were at a distance of a few miles from the city, their route was barred by a Byzantine force. In the battle that followed, many Byzantine soldiers were killed. The survivors withdrew to Damascus.

The Muslim army laid siege to Damascus on the 21st of August. On the 23rd of August, 634 A.D., they were informed of the death of Hazrat Abu Bakr. Thus, this campaign was left incomplete. It was during the khilafat of Hazrat Umar that Damascus was conquered by the Muslims.

Death of the First Khalifa

Hazrat Abu Bakr died in Madinah in 13 A.H./634 A.D., and was buried by the side of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. At the time of his death, he was sixty-three. His Khilafat lasted for two years and four months. Before his death, he nominated Hazrat Umar as the successor to the Khilafat. His appointment was accepted by all the people.

Character

Hazrat Abu Bakr was extremely simple in his habits. Tender hearted, he was easily moved. But at the same time he was firm, determined and courageous. He had a very sympathetic heart for the poor and the needy. He would go out at night to help the distressed and the destitute. For sometime after his election, he continued to maintain himself from his private income. But finding that in looking after his property and business, he was not able to pay sufficient attention to affairs of the state, he agreed to receive six thousand dirhams annually from the **Bait-ul-Maal**. On his death-bed, however, he was so disturbed at having taken public money that he directed one of his properties to be sold in order to refund to the State the sum he had received.

He was generous and humble, truthful and faithful. He was very intelligent and blessed with an extraordinary memory. About his judgement, Shah Waliullah has observed:

"He was just like other scholars among the companions in his knowledge of the Quran and the Sunnah. In what he excelled over others was that whenever he was faced with a difficult problem, he would exercise his judgement and deeply ponder over it."

According to Imam Ahmed, Hazrat Ali had said that Abu Bakr was the best person after the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} himself said that if all the virtues were catalogued, they would be sixty-three in number and Abu Bakr possessed all the sixty-three virtues. He is also reported to have said:

"Verily, Abu Bakr is the best of human beings except the prophets."

About the greatness of Hazrat Abu Bakr the Prophet^{pbuh} said:

"Never has the sun risen or set on a person, except a prophet, greater than Abu Bakr."

Some of the Western writers have also paid glowing tributes to Hazrat Abu Bakr. In the Encyclopaedia of Islam, it is said:

"His was a gentle character. During recitation of the Quran he shed tears, a thing that made great impression on many, but especially on the women, and as his daughter related, he wept with joy at the news that he would accompany Muhammad^{pbuh} as companion on emigration, no sacrifice was too great in his eyes for the sake of the new faith. Thus, it came about that of his considerable fortune estimated at 40,000 dirhams, he brought to Madinah the small sum of

5,000 dirhams."

About the qualities of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Andre Servier has observed this in his book, 'Islam and the Psychology of the Musalmans':

"He was a man of simple manners and in spite of his unexpected elevation lived in poverty. When he died, he left behind a worn out garment, a slave and a camel. A true patriarch, after Madinah's own heart, he had one great quality—energy, and he possessed what had given victory to Muhammad^{pbuh}, and what was lacking in his enemies - an unshakable conviction. He was the right man in the right place."

Administration

Hazrat Abu Bakr laid the foundations of a truly democratic state. He used to consult eminent companions in all important matters. For the purpose of administration, Arabia was divided into provinces each under a governor who was required to lead the prayers, superintend the army, collect taxes, administer justice, and maintain law and order. He was aided by an **Amil** who collected revenues and a **Qazi** who administered justice.

He established military cantonments and maintained a reserve force. He also gave proper shape to the public treasury, the Bait-ul-Maal. He despatched expeditionary forces to Iran, Syria and Palestine. As a result, vast territories were added to the Muslim Empire. He safeguarded and protected the rights of the non-Muslim subjects who were granted religious and cultural freedom. They were allowed to manage their affairs themselves.

Services to Islam

Hazrat Abu Bakr took the office of Khilafat at the most critical and the crucial moment of Islamic history. Disunity among the Muslims, rise of the false prophets and rebellions in the peninsula threatened the existence of the young Islamic state. Hazrat Abu Bakr brought unity among the Muslims, crushed the power of the false prophets and put an end to rebellions at home and abroad. He laid the foundation of Islam on firm grounds. In consideration of the difficulties arising out of the death of the Prophet^{pbuh} and the services rendered by him to the cause of Islam at that critical moment, Hazrat Abu Bakr may rightly be called the Saviour of Islam. He did not merely save Islam in Arabia, he made Islam a world force which successfully confronted the might of the Persian and Byzantine Empires. Abu Huraira, an eminent companion of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, had declared that but for Hazrat Abu Bakr, Islam would have disintegrated. His calm judgement and sagacity with a gentle and compassionate heart were of immense service to the faith of Islam.

His contribution towards preserving the Holy Quran is also very great. When a large number of reciters of the Holy Quran were killed in the Battle of Yamama,

Hazrat Abu Bakr took steps to protect and preserve the Holy Quran by instructing Zaid bin Sabit, one of the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} scribes, to collect the written copies of the various surahs from the companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and arrange them in the form of a book. In this way, the word of Allah was preserved for the guidance of mankind till eternity.

Hazrat Umar

(634 – 644 A.D.)

Life Before Khilafat

Hazrat Umar, son of Khattab, was born in Makkah twelve or thirteen years after the birth of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Umar had a common ancestor in Ka'ab.

Umar was taught reading and writing by his father who was an educated and well-to-do merchant of Makkah. Umar was very learned, intelligent and studious. He was a poet and a very good orator. He was strong and powerful and was fond of archery, horse-riding and wrestling. He was also a successful trader and had visited many countries in connection with his business. He was an idol-worshipper. When Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} declared that he was the Prophet of Allah, Hazrat Umar and his father became enemies of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Among the Quraish of Makkah, Umar was a very powerful and influential person. In the 6th year of Prophethood, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} prayed to Allah to strengthen Islam by giving him Umar. One day Umar set out from his house with the intention of killing the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. On the way, he was informed that his sister and her husband had embraced Islam. Infuriated, Umar changed his course and went to the house of his sister, who was reading the Holy Quran loudly. This enraged Umar so much that he attacked his sister and her husband. On Umar's insistence, his sister recited some verses from Surah Taha. The words of the Holy Quran softened his heart and tears began to fall from his eyes. He then proceeded to the house where the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was engaged in religious discourse with his followers. He recited the Kalima and became a Muslim. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} embraced Umar, who was now an entirely changed person. From being an enemy and persecutor of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, Umar became one of his most devoted followers. After his conversion, he was given the title of Farooq by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. His conversion was of immense value to Islam. From that day, the small number of the people who had embraced Islam became bold enough to pray openly at Makkah.

After his conversion, Hazrat Umar too, became the target of enmity and persecution of the pagans. He emigrated to Madinah shortly before the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} own Hijrat. He took part in the Battles of Badr, Uhud, Ditch, Khyber and Hunain. He was present at the Treaty of Hudaibiya. He was not

willing to accept this treaty as it seemed a humiliating one for the Muslims, but submitted to the will of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. In the 8th year of Hijrat he took part in the march on Makkah. He placed half of his wealth at the disposal of the Prophet^{pbuh} for the Tabuk Expedition. He was constantly in attendance on the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and was one of his most trusted companions and advisers. He is one of those ten persons to whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave the tidings of Paradise in their lifetime.

After the demise of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, he accompanied Hazrat Abu Bakr to the council hall where the people of Madinah had assembled to elect their leader. He was the first to swear allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr and throughout his Khilafat remained his friend and adviser.

Nomination as Khalifa

Hazrat Umar became the second Khalifa of Islam after the death of Hazrat Abu Bakr in accordance with his will. All the eminent companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} pledged allegiance to him. On assuming the Khilafat, he came to be known as Ameer-ul-Momineen.

Wars with the Persians

There were several causes that brought the Muslims into conflict with the Persians and ultimately led them to the conquest of Persia.

When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent an envoy to the court of Persia, the King, Khusro Parvez, insulted the envoy and thus brought about the displeasure of the Muslims. The enmity of the Persians was further revealed in the rebellion of Bahrain when they helped the enemy of the Muslims. Thus, the Persians proved dangerous to the State and the Muslims had to remain cautious about their intentions.

Geographically, Iraq, a province of the then Persian Empire, formed a natural part of Arabia. Hence, it was essential to the Arabs. Besides, the Arab tribes who lived on the border of Iraq, helped their relatives in Arabia to rise against Islam. So, for the safety and defence of Islam, Muslims were compelled to fight against the border tribes.

Iraq is a land of immense wealth due to the flow of Euphrates and Tigris through it. Being a barren land, Arabia depended on the province of Iraq for her trade. But the Persians did not allow Islamic Arabia to carry on trade with them. So, the economic necessity drove the Muslims to come into conflict with the Persians.

Battle of Namaraq

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Muslims under Musana and Khalid bin Walid conquered the kingdom of Hira which was a part of Persia. At the

loss of Hira, the Persians became furious and tried to recover it from the Muslims. The Persian King sent Rustam, a famous general, with a large army to fight the Muslims. Khalid bin Walid had already left for Syria and so Musana was left alone on the Persian front. Hazrat Umar sent an army under Abu Ubaid to reinforce the army of Musana. A battle was fought at Namarraq in which the Persians were defeated.

Battle of Jasr

After the defeat of the Persians in the Battle of Namarraq, they again met the Muslims under the command of Bahman. The Euphrates lay between the two armies. Leaders of the Muslim army wanted to stay on the bank of the river where they were encamped. But, against the advice of the Muslim leaders, their commander Abu Ubaid, decided to fight across the river.

A bridge of boats was built across the river and the Muslims crossed it. But then, they found themselves at a disadvantage. The ground was uneven and the army could not move freely. A thick wall of war elephants shielded the Persians. Each elephant carried a *howdah* in which sat soldiers armed with bows and arrows. The Arab horses, who had never seen elephants before, got frightened and went out of control. This led to confusion and the Muslim cavalry got disorganised.

At that stage, Abu Ubaid ordered the cavalry to dismount and attack on foot. Abu Ubaid, himself led the attack. The Muslim soldiers cut the ropes of the *howdahs*, brought down the riders and killed them. The elephants started trampling the soldiers to death. In the scuffle that followed, a white elephant, who was the leader of the herd, knocked down Abu Ubaid and trampled him. His brother picked up the standard and led the fight. After sometime, he too fell fighting and the command was taken over by the son of Abu Ubaid.

The battle went on, and one after another, the Muslim commanders were martyred. This made the Muslim army lose heart and they rushed for the bridge. But a man of Banu Saqif had broken it so that the Muslim army might not be able to run away.

Musana, who was now the commander of the Muslim army, ordered the re-building of the bridge. In the meantime, he held back the enemy with a small force asking others to cross the river. He himself was the last to cross.

The Muslims suffered heavy losses. Out of a total strength of nine thousand, only three thousand could be saved. Some two thousand men fell fighting, two thousand were drowned in the river and two thousand fled away to Madinah and elsewhere.

This Battle is also known the **Battle of Bridge**.

Battle of Buwaib

After the disaster at Jasr, Hazrat Umar sent messengers to all parts of Arabia inviting the Arabs to participate in the war against the Persians. In response to this call, many Muslims and Christians gathered round the standard of Islam.

The Persians sent a strong force against the Muslims under the command of Mehran, who was regarded as an expert in the Arabian way of war. The Persian army marched to Euphrates and camped on the east bank of the Euphrates River.

Mehran sent a messenger to Musana to inquire if the Muslims would like the Persians to cross over to their side. The Muslims had a bitter experience of crossing the river in the Battle of Bridge. So they asked the Persian army to cross over.

The following day, the Persian army crossed over and the two armies met at Buwaib. The Persians were several times more in number, but the Muslims fought desperately. A young warrior of the Taglib tribe killed Mehran. With his death, the tide of the battle was turned and the Persians began to flee in disorder. Musana, at once, captured the bridge; this prevented the Persians from crossing the river. Finding no other way to flee, thousands of them were drowned while others died in large numbers on the battlefield. In this battle, the majority of the Persian army was destroyed.

Battle of Qadisiya

The Persians could not forget the crushing defeat inflicted on them in the Battle of Buwaib. So they again began to prepare themselves against the Muslims. Hazrat Umar declared Jihad all over the land. Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas was chosen to lead the Muslim army. He was sent with instructions to camp at Qadisiya on the west bank of the Ateeq, a branch of the Euphrates and to send envoys to the court of Persia with the message of Islam. The Persian King, Yazdgard, insulted the envoys and turned them out of the court. This ill-treatment from the Persian king hastened the war. Persian soldiers were sent against the Muslims under the command of their greatest hero, Rustam who was asked at the beginning to accept Islam and conclude a treaty with the Muslims. Rustam refused to comply with this request and boasted that he would crush the whole of Arabia.

The following day, the Persian army advanced. Sa'ad being unwell, directed the operations from his sick bed. The battle that followed was fiercely fought. It lasted for three days. Though the Persians fought gallantly, eventually they were defeated. Their famous general, Rustam was killed while he was running away from the battlefield. The Persian troops retreated after his death.

This battle was a decisive one in the history of Islam as it completely broke down the strength of the Persians.

Capture of Madain

After a few months, Sa'ad with the permission of the Khalifa marched against Madain and occupied it. All the territory, from the Euphrates to the Tigris, then came under the possession of the Muslims.

Battle of Jalula

The Persian King took refuge in Hulwan, about a hundred miles to the north of Madain. He once more ordered Persian forces to advance. As a result a part of his army occupied Jalula, which was situated in the neighbourhood of Madain.

The Persian forces at Jalula made great preparations for a battle against the Muslims. The entire town was converted into a fortress and a deep ditch was dug round the city; provisions were stored in large quantities in the town. It seemed as if the Persians had prepared themselves for a long siege.

Sa'ad with the Khalifa's permission, sent a strong army under Qaka to meet the Persians. He established his camp and laid siege to Jalula. The siege dragged on for seven months. There were occasional skirmishes but these led nowhere. Then the Persians decided to launch an offensive and drive away the Muslims. This suited the Muslims. The Muslim commander pulled back his army so that the entire Persian army might be brought into the field.

The action began with a heavy attack by the Persians all along the front and the fight continued fiercely. Late in the afternoon, a severe storm began to blow in the faces of the Persians and helped the Muslims rush forward. In these hostile circumstances, Persian resistance broke down and they dispersed in all directions. Muslims pursued and killed them in large numbers. They occupied Jalula and the residents surrendered on the usual terms of jizya.

Battle of Nahawand

After the Battle of Jalula, peace was concluded with the Persians and there was no fighting for a few months. But the Persians soon broke the treaty and Muslims were compelled to fight them again.

The Persian Emperor led an army of sixty thousand while the Muslims were 30,000 in number. The two armies met at Nahawand. For two days, they fought without a clear gain to either side. On the third day, Persians took refuge in their forts. The Muslims did not want to prolong the fighting; so by a clever strategy, the enemy was forced to come out into the open. Hand to hand fighting took place. Persians were defeated and their power was completely shattered. Yazdgard, the Persian King, fled to Isfahan, then to Kirman and from there to Balkh where he was killed during the Khilafat of Hazrat Usman.

This battle was one of the decisive wars of history that sealed the fate of the Persian Empire and paved the way for the Muslims to rise as a world power. It

proved to be a gateway to Persia. This was the last great battle fought between the Persians and the Muslims.

Wars with the Byzantines

The Eastern Roman Empire consisting of Syria, Jerusalem and Egypt was called the Byzantine Empire. Relations between the Muslims and the Byzantines were very cordial at the beginning of Islam. When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} sent his envoy to the court of the Roman Emperor Heraclius, he was received with great honour. But afterwards the relations began to deteriorate. The Christian Prince of Syria murdered the envoy of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at Muta while he was going to the Prince of Basra. The Syrian expedition was undertaken in order to avenge the murder of the Muslim envoy. The hostility between the Muslims and the Byzantines began to increase.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, the Emperor incurred the displeasure of the Khalifa by instigating Bedouin tribes against the Muslims. The result was the Battle of Ajnadein.

After the demise of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the tribes who lived on the border of Syria and Palestine would help their kinsmen in Arabia to raid the Muslim territory. These incursions brought misery to the people of Arabia. As a result, relations between the Muslims and Byzantines became further strained.

There were also other causes that adversely affected their relations. The position of Byzantine Empire was such that the Muslims had to turn their attention to the Empire to ensure their safety and to defend Islam. All these measures brought the Muslims into conflict with the Byzantine Empire.

Battle of Yarmuk

When Hazrat Abu Bakr was on his deathbed the Muslims had defeated the Romans on the Syrian frontier. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, Khalid bin Walid added Damascus, Jordan and Emessa, one after another to the Muslim Empire.

After the loss of these three important cities, the Roman Emperor sent a vast army consisting of two hundred and sixty thousand men against the Muslims. The Byzantine army reached the valley of Yarmuk and encamped there. The Muslim army comprising forty thousand men rallied at Yarmuk under the leadership of Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah.

For some time, there were negotiations between the two armies. The Byzantines offered to pay the Muslims a large amount of money if they left Syria and returned to Arabia. Muslims turned down the offer. In return Muslims offered the Byzantines the usual three alternatives - Islam, jizya or to be ready to fight. The Byzantines chose the third alternative.

The battle which followed lasted for six days. By the afternoon of the sixth

day, only one third of the Byzantine army remained in the battlefield; the rest had either been killed or had fled away.

To make matters worse for the Byzantines a storm broke out. In the confusion that followed, the Byzantines began to flee and the pursuing Muslims completely routed the enemy.

The Battle of Yarmuk ended in a great victory for the Muslims. This was the greatest battle that the Muslims had fought so far. With this battle, Byzantine lost Syria and the Muslim rule was ushered in.

Fall of Jerusalem

After the Battle of Yarmuk, Muslim forces spread in all directions in Jordan and Palestine. They captured many towns, one after another that cleared the way to Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem, sacred to the Jews and the Christians was strongly fortified. It was protected on every side by deep valleys.

The Muslim army advanced and laid siege to Jerusalem. It was the winter season and the severity of the winter added to the difficulties of the besieging Muslim force. The siege dragged on and the Byzantines offered very stiff resistance.

Amr bin Aas, the Muslim commander wrote to Abu Ubaidah for reinforcements. When the citizens of Jerusalem came to know that the besieging Muslim forces had been reinforced, they lost heart. They offered to surrender on the condition that the Khalifa should himself come to sign the treaty. Hazrat Umar, after consultation with some prominent companions responded to their request. Leaving Hazrat Ali as his deputy in Madinah, he proceeded to Jerusalem. He was accompanied by one slave only. Between these two persons, they had one camel which they rode by turns. A deputation from Jerusalem waited on Hazrat Umar and a treaty was drawn up. According to the treaty, security of life and property were guaranteed to all citizens of Jerusalem. The safety of churches and other religious buildings was provided for. The citizens were required to pay Jizya. Those who refused to comply were asked to leave the city.

When the Patriarch of Jerusalem saw the simplicity of the Khalifa of Islam, he said:

"Verily, Islam has excelled all other religions."

The Patriarch of Jerusalem handed over the keys of the city of Jerusalem to Hazrat Umar. Then the Khalifa expressed his desire to be led to some place where he could offer thanksgiving prayer. He was led to a church. He refused to pray there on the ground that he would set an example for the Muslims of the following generations to forcibly convert churches into mosques. He was then led to a place where Prophet David used to pray.

Hazrat Umar stayed in Jerusalem for a few days. He reorganised the administration and founded a mosque which came to be known as Umar's mosque.

Conquest of Egypt

Towards the close of 18 A.H./639 A.D., Amr bin Aas with permission of the Khalifa set out from Jerusalem for Egypt. He entered Egypt with four thousand men by the route of Wadi al-Arish. After attacking some small towns, he laid siege to Fustat. The siege lasted for seven months after which the Muslims conquered the fort.

At the fall of Fustat, the King of Egypt became furious and sent a vast army to Alexandria, the capital of Egypt. The Muslims army upon arriving in Alexandria found that it was heavily fortified. The Byzantine force within the city numbered fifty thousand while the strength of the Muslim army was only twelve thousand. Moreover the city had direct access to the sea, through which help from Constantinople in the form of men and material could come at any time.

The Muslims accordingly decided to lay siege to the city. The Byzantines had mounted contraptions on the walls of the city with which they hit the Muslims with boulders whenever they tried to get close to the city. Later, when the Byzantines came out of the fort, they were beaten back by the Muslims.

In the meantime Heraclius, the Byzantine Emperor died. The Muslims realized that no reinforcements were likely to come to Alexandria, and intensified their attacks. After a fierce battle, Alexandria was conquered by the Muslims. With the fall of Alexandria, Muslims became the masters of Egypt.

Martyrdom

After the Battle of Nahawand, many Persian men, women and children were taken as captives by Muslims. The captives were sold as slaves. One of these slaves was Abu Lulu, also known as Firoz. He was purchased by the Governor of Basra.

In Zil Hajj 23 A.H., while Hazrat Umar was leading the morning prayers, Firoz attacked him with a dagger and inflicted several wounds. The Khalifa fell on the prayer mat. However he survived for some days. During this period he nominated a panel of six people, Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Usman, Zubair bin Awwam, Abdur Rahman bin Auf, Talha and Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas to hold mutual consultations and select his successor from amongst themselves.

Hazrat Umar asked his son Abdullah to seek the permission of Hazrat Aisha, for being buried by the side of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. This permission was granted. Three days later, he succumbed to his wounds and was buried by the side of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Administration

Hazrat Umar not only conquered a vast empire during the ten years of his Khilafat but also consolidated it by an effective system of administration. As

an administrator, he remained a model for all great rulers who followed him. Justice Syed Ameer Ali says in his famous book 'History of Saracens', "During the thirty years that the Republic lasted, the policy derived its character chiefly from Umar both during his lifetime and after his death."

Before becoming the Khalifa, Hazrat Umar had spent ten years in Madinah with the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} had started the practice of consulting his companions on all matters. The first Khalifa, Hazrat Abu Bakr continued this practice of mutual consultation. Following their example, Hazrat Umar framed the constitution of the State on the basis of democracy. He established a **Majlis-e-Shura** consisting of prominent companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} from both Muhajirin and Ansars. Hazrat Umar consulted this body on all matters. He also constituted a larger body called the **Majlis-e-Aam**, consisting of Muhajirin and Ansar and representatives of various tribes. This was called into session on special occasions.

Hazrat Umar made new laws, rules and regulations in accordance with the Holy Quran and the Sunnah. He took steps to give the Islamic state a clean and efficient administration. The state was divided into provinces and each province was placed under an efficient governor called the **Wali** or Ameer. The Wali was not only the ruler of the province but also the military and religious head. The provinces were further divided into districts and placed under Amils. All the governors and Amils were called to Makkah on the occasion of Hajj where the Khalifa would hear and decide complaints received against any of his officer irrespective of his status. All appointments were made in consultation with the Majlis-e-Shura. The appointee was given a regular order of appointment setting out his duties and emoluments. The person appointed to a high post was required to give a written undertaking to lead a simple Islamic life. He had to submit particulars of his property and assets, so that on his retirement, it may be seen whether he had amassed wealth by illegal means. Hazrat Umar kept a very strict watch on the activities of his officers. He used to receive secret reports from officers specially appointed for this purpose.

Hazrat Umar entrusted the Qazis with judicial functions. They ensured that the judiciary was just and impartial. The Qazi was completely independent of the provincial governor.

Hazrat Umar established new departments and institutions such as the military department, department of education, jails, police, etc. He also established a department of finance under the name of **Dewan**, which was incharge of the revenue of the centre as well as the provinces. The function of this department was to regulate the receipt and disbursement of the revenue of the empire. The main sources of revenue were the **Jizya** (poll-tax), **Zakat** (poor tax), **Kharaj** (spoils of war), and **Fay** (income from crown lands). Besides these, Hazrat Umar instituted new taxes namely **Ushr** (one-tenth of the produce taken from landowners), a commercial tax imposed on non-Muslim merchants and **Zakat**

on the ownership of horses.

After meeting the expenditure of the State, the surplus money used to be distributed among the Muslims on the basis of three principles: relationship with the Prophet^{pmbuh}, priority of conversion to Islam and military service to Islam. In this way, all Muslim men, women, slaves and children had shares in the Bait-ul-Maal or the Public Treasury.

Hazrat Umar maintained a well-disciplined army which was divided into cavalry and infantry. He was particularly concerned about the welfare of his soldiers. But in case of neglect of duty, he would inflict severe punishment on them. He did not allow them to buy land in the conquered territories because of the fact that it would harm the military strength of the Arab soldiers. He also forbade them to live with the settled people in cities and ordered them to live in cantonments.

Hazrat Umar took special care of the welfare of the farmers. After the conquest of Iraq, Iran and Syria, he made it a law that no Arab should acquire land in the conquered territories and that the actual tillers of the soil should be allowed to retain possession of their land.

He also devoted attention to town planning and had several cities for example, Kufa and Basra built according to properly drawn up plans.

He paid particular attention to the wellbeing of non-Muslim subjects. He himself patrolled the streets at night to keep himself informed of the conditions of his people. He introduced the Muslim era of **Hijra**, the system of old age pension and census of the population of the Muslim State. He took steps to check hoarding, profiteering and appointed officers to check weights and measures.

Hazrat Umar also devoted a great deal of his time to religious matters. Teachers were sent to the villages to teach the Holy Qur'an to the villagers. Army officers, too, had to learn the Holy Quran.

Hazrat Umar stands unparalleled in every aspect of administration in the history of Islam.

Services to Islam

During the ten years of his Khilafat, from 634 to 644 A.D., he had to fight against the Persians and the Romans who wanted to destroy the State of Islam. It was due to his ability and wisdom that Muslims overpowered the Byzantine Empire in the West and the mighty Persian Empire in the East.

He not only consolidated the conquered territories but also gave the Empire an efficient system of administration. His enforcement of the Shariat Law, organisation of census and the Muslim era of Hijra, construction of forts on the frontier, establishment of the department of finance, improvements introduced in the fields of agriculture and in the life of the farmers, patronage of female education etc., testify to the services that Hazrat Umar rendered to the cause of

Islam. He selflessly devoted all his time and energy to the interest of Islam. For all these services, he rightly occupies an outstanding place in the history of Islam.

Character

Hazrat Umar is one of the greatest men of all times and an excellent example of an ideal character. He is immortal in world history as a great conqueror, a benevolent ruler and the founder of the Muslim State.

He lived like an ordinary Muslim and led a truly Islamic life. Simplicity was the main feature of his character. His coarse clothes often had patches on them. He was often seen lying on the bare ground with a brick for a pillow. Once he was late for Friday prayers. The explanation he offered was that he had his clothes washed, and they took some time to dry which delayed his departure for the mosque. When the envoy of the Byzantine Emperor came to Madinah, he found the Khalifa sitting in the mosque in the company of ordinary people.

Hazrat Umar was kind and sympathetic to the poor and the needy. He would roam the streets at night to see the condition of his people, and often helped them with food and money. During the days of famine, he carried sacks of corn on his back to distribute among the poor. He would also run errands for widows and poor women; he would often draw water for them and milk their goats.

He was a man of great knowledge and learning. He was a good judge of men and could discern truth from falsehood. He was the ruler of a vast empire but denied himself all the privileges of rulership. The allowance that he drew from the State Treasury was just enough for a person of average means. When some people insisted that his allowance should be raised, he refused to accept any increase. When he died, he willed that after the sale of his property, the entire amount of the allowance that he had drawn should be refunded to the treasury.

There is no other ruler in world history that led so simple a life and yet inspired awe and terror among his people and his enemies alike. The awe and fear that Hazrat Umar commanded was because of his high moral character. In fact, Hazrat Umar was an embodiment of the virtues of Islam. His greatness has been acknowledged by the Holy Prophet^{pbutuh} of Islam who had once said that if there were to be any Prophet after him it would have been Hazrat Umar. (Tirmizi)

In his book 'History of the Arabs', Professor P. K. Hitti has said:

"In fact, Umar, whose name according to Muslim tradition is the greatest in early Islam after that of Muhammad has been idolised by Muslim writers for his piety, justice and patriarchal simplicity and treated as the personification of all the virtues a Caliph ought to possess."

To sum up, Hazrat Umar is one of those extraordinary personalities who made history. His brilliant conquests, his benevolent administration, his far-reaching reforms and the integrity of his character mark him as one of the greatest men of all times.

Hazrat Usman

(644 – 656 A.D)

Life before Khilafat

The third Khalifa, Hazrat Usman, son of Affan, was born in Makkah. He was five years younger than the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He belonged to the Umayyad tribe. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and Hazrat Usman had a common ancestor in Abd Munaf.

Hazrat Usman's father was a merchant and one of the richest men among the Quraish. Hazrat Usman was one of the few young men in Makkah who could read and write. As he advanced in years, he became a very learned person. Even before accepting Islam, he led a very chaste life; he did not drink wine, did not gamble nor worship idols. Before he embraced Islam, he was known by the name Abu Amr.

He was first among the Umayyads to become a Muslim. He spent most of his time in the company of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He is one of the ten companions to whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave the tidings of Paradise in their life time.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave his second daughter, Ruqayya, in marriage to Hazrat Usman. After her death the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave his third daughter, Kulsum, in marriage to Hazrat Usman. Thus, he came to be known as Zun Nurain, the possessor of two lights. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was so pleased with him that after the death of Kulsum, he would say that had he any other daughter, he would have given her in marriage to Hazrat Usman. (Tirmizi)

Hazrat Usman migrated first to Abyssinia and then to Madinah. After migrating to Madinah he worked as a trader. His business flourished and he soon became a rich merchant. He earned the title of Ghani for spending his wealth in the service of Islam. Hazrat Usman took part in all the important battles except the battle of Badr.

When Hazrat Abu Bakr was elected as the Khalifa, Hazrat Usman was the first person after Hazrat Umar to offer allegiance to him. He served in the army that was sent by Hazrat Abu Bakr to Syria under the command of Usamah. During the apostasy wars, he remained at Madinah to act as Hazrat Abu Bakr's adviser. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, a severe famine broke out in the country and there was a shortage of food. At that time, a caravan belonging to Hazrat Usman carrying large supplies of food arrived in Madinah for sale. Hazrat Usman distributed the entire stock of food grains

among the poor.

The first two Khalifas had very high regard for Hazrat Usman and used to seek his advice in all matters. He was regarded as an authority on the Muslim law of inheritance. He was included in the panel of six men nominated by Hazrat Umar before his death for successor as Khalifa.

Election as Khalifa

On his death-bed, Hazrat Umar nominated a committee of six persons to hold consultation and select his successor from amongst themselves within three days:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Hazrat Ali | 2. Hazrat Usman |
| 3. Zubair bin Awwam | 4. Abdur Rahman bin Auf |
| 5. Talha | 6. Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas |

All these persons were among the most eminent companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, whom he had given tidings of paradise in their lifetime.

During his life Hazrat Umar's choice was fixed on Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah for his distinctive qualities but he had passed away. The next choice was Abdur Rahman bin Auf who was not willing to shoulder the great responsibility. Of the remaining five nominees, Talha was not present at Madinah; therefore, the choice was now restricted to the remaining four members. It was decided that as Abdur Rahman bin Auf had retired from the contest, he might choose the Khalifa out of the remaining four members. He consulted each one individually as to his opinion. Sa'ad supported Hazrat Usman, while Zubair mentioned both Hazrat Usman and Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Usman voted for Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Ali voted for Hazrat Usman. Abdur Rahman asked the opinion of other prominent men as well and arrived at the conclusion that the majority of the people favoured the succession of Hazrat Usman and, thus, he was declared as the elected Khalifa. Abdur Rahman bin Auf was the first to take the Bayyat or pledge and he was followed by Hazrat Ali and other companions and then there was a general Bayyat. Hazrat Usman became the third Khalifa of Islam on the 4th of Muharram 24 A.H.

Conquests in the East and the West

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, Muslim dominions had expanded considerably in the east and the west. Hazrat Umar was a strong man. But Hazrat Usman who succeeded him, was known for his kind-heartedness. Foreign powers felt that with Hazrat Usman as the Khalifa it would be easier for them to wrest those territories from the Muslims that had been conquered during the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar. In pursuance of this programme to drive away Muslims, there were uprisings in several territories, notably in Persia in the East and the Byzantines in the West. Hazrat Usman proved to be a

great army commander. He tackled the situation with sagacity and firmness. He organised military campaigns with great skill. Within the first year of his Khilafat, he was able to crush these revolts. Not only did Hazrat Usman make his grip over these territories firmer, it was in his time that Muslims conquered the whole of North Africa. It included countries now known as Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. The island of Cyprus was conquered during his Khilafat.

The first seven or eight years of Hazrat Usman's Khilafat were a reminder of the glorious rule of Hazrat Umar. During this time Hazrat Usman ruled with a good reputation and "he was more beloved by the Quraish than Umar," says Zuhri. Several victories were won and the Islamic Empire expanded from Morocco to Kabul.

Causes of the Revolt against Hazrat Usman

The last four years of Hazrat Usman's Khilafat were full of intrigues, conspiracies and revolts. The Muslim State under his rule was inhabited by many tribes and nationalities. They had either been subjugated by Islam or been absorbed in Islam. But most of them had not yet imbibed the true spirit of Islam. Moreover, the Jews who had lost their religious and social importance and had been expelled, first from Madinah and then from Khyber for their conspiracies, were nursing grievances against Muslims. They were waiting for an opportunity to destroy Islam.

Hazrat Usman expelled some of these conspirators from Kufa and Basra. This did not improve matters. It only worsened the situation because these conspirators spread the sphere of their activities to other areas, specially Egypt, where a number of Jews had become Muslims but were in reality the worst enemies of Islam. Their plan was to divide the Muslim nation into sects so that they may fight amongst themselves. The leader of this conspiracy was Abdullah bin Saba, a Jew of Yemen. He posed as a Muslim, but his object was to destroy Islam. He used the name of Hazrat Ali to instigate people against Hazrat Usman and create two parties of the followers of Hazrat Usman and Hazrat Ali. After Madinah, he went to Basra, Kufa, Damascus and Egypt. It was because of his propaganda that Muslims began to differ in religious matters.

The rivalry and jealousy among the Quraish themselves i.e., between the Hashimites and the Umayyads weakened the power of Khalifa Usman. It constituted one of the main causes of his failure. Under the peaceful reign of Hazrat Usman, the tribal jealousies began to raise their head. The simple and kind character of Hazrat Usman was also responsible for the many problems which the then world of Islam faced. His leniency encouraged his enemies and the conspirators to carry out their evil intentions.

Charges against Hazrat Usman

The people who had once spoken highly of Hazrat Usman, brought several allegations against him afterwards. One of the main allegations against Hazrat Usman was that he had appointed his inefficient relatives as governors. This allegation was incorrect. There were twelve provinces in the country. Hazrat Usman appointed his relatives in four provinces, namely Egypt, Syria, Kufa and Basra. He appointed them not because he wanted to bestow high offices on his family members, but because of the importance these provinces had. They demanded that there should be governors who were loyal to him and enjoyed his confidence as the Khalifa. Hazrat Usman had absolute right to appoint governors and there was no legal bar to the appointment of relatives to high posts.

All the governors appointed by Hazrat Usman were people of great calibre. Muawiya, a relative of Hazrat Usman was appointed by Hazrat Umar as the Governor of Syria and Hazrat Usman let him continue in office. Muawiya was an able ruler and administrator of outstanding capabilities. Abdullah bin Sa'ad, a foster brother of Hazrat Usman, was also appointed as the Governor of Egypt by Hazrat Umar. He continued to hold the office under Hazrat Usman. He was successful as governor. Under his rule, the whole of North Africa was conquered. In Kufa, Khalifa Usman appointed Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas as the Governor. When he was not able to control the situation, he was deposed and his step-brother, Walid bin Uqba was appointed in his place. Walid justified this selection and during the first five years of his rule, he served the people of Kufa to the best of his ability. He conducted successful campaigns in Azerbaijan and Armenia. Later, there was agitation in Kufa and Hazrat Usman deposed him in public interest. In Basra, Abu Musa Ashari was deposed at the demand of the people of Basra and Abdullah bin Amir, a cousin of Hazrat Usman was appointed according to the wishes of the people of Basra. He proved very successful. He reconquered the whole of Fars, Seestan and Khurasan. Thus none of the governors appointed by Hazrat Usman proved a failure.

It is also alleged that Hazrat Usman was weak and that he did not exercise control on his governors who acted according to their own wishes and did not carry out the orders of their Khalifa. The true position is that these governors enjoyed the confidence of Hazrat Usman, who allowed them a great deal of independence and did not interfere in their day to day affairs. Hazrat Umar had imposed some restrictions on his governors. Hazrat Usman did not consider such restrictions necessary. So he allowed them greater liberty and freedom.

The greatest allegation against the Khalifa was the burning of the Holy Quran. There were no standardized copies of the Quran. Hazrat Usman thought it desirable to standardize the text of Holy Quran. In order to carry out this plan, a committee was appointed. Under its supervision, some fresh copies were made and all the unauthentic copies were burnt. At first, this action of the

Khalifa received great admiration, but afterwards, the rebels raised a hue and cry that the Khalifa had caused the sacred volumes to be burnt.

Hazrat Usman gave a convincing reply to each of the charges in the presence of the Holy Prophet's ^p_{buh} Companions. In this connection Hazrat Ali and some companions were satisfied and accepted Hazrat Usman's explanation. The rebels however, stuck to one point – their demand to depose the Khalifa. To achieve this end, a large number of the rebels from Egypt, Kufa and Basra marched on Madinah and encamped outside the capital. Hazrat Ali tried to argue with them and succeeded in persuading them to go back after Hazrat Usman had agreed to two of their conditions i.e., the removal of the governor of Egypt, Abdullah bin Sa'ad and the appointment of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr in his place.

Martyrdom of Hazrat Usman

The rebels returned to Madinah after four days shouting for revenge. The reason was that they had intercepted an order of the Khalifa to the Governor of Egypt to kill Muhammad bin Abu Bakr and his companions on their arrival. Hazrat Usman swore that he had not passed any such order. But the rebels insisted that Hazrat Usman should abdicate or he should be deposed. Hazrat Usman refused to abdicate after which the rebels besieged the Khalifa in his house. They did not allow food and water to reach him. Hazrat Ali deputed his sons, Hassan and Hussain, and Zubair sent his son Abdullah to protect Hazrat Usman. Some companions who were successful in reaching Hazrat Usman during the siege, wanted to help him and fight the rebels or send for troops to fight them. But Hazrat Usman refused and said that he did not want to shed Muslim blood. The siege lasted for fifty days when some of the rebels jumped into Hazrat Usman's house. They mercilessly killed him while he was reading the Holy Quran. As prophesied by the Holy Prophet ^p_{buh}, the first drops of his blood fell on verse 137 of Surah Baqarah which reads:

"But Allah will suffice thee as against them; and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing." The Khalifa's wife, Naila, tried to save her husband, but was pushed away and her fingers were cut off. This tragic event took place on Friday, the 18th of Zil Hajj, 35 A.H. He was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi in Madinah.

The assassination of Hazrat Usman had far reaching consequences for the Muslim Empire. The unity of the Islamic world which was maintained by the first two Khalifas was lost. Serious differences arose among the Muslims who were divided into two parties – the Hashimites and the Umayyads. The Umayyads under the leadership of Muawiya fought for a long time with Hazrat Ali for the blood of Hazrat Usman and ultimately established the Umayyad dynasty. The authority of Madinah ceased to exist and that of Damascus began to increase.

Administration

As the Khalifa, Hazrat Usman followed the sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the practice followed by the first and the second Khalifas. He continued the administrative arrangements made by Hazrat Umar, though he regrouped some of the provinces and created new provinces for the newly conquered territories. The Majlis-e-Shoora or council of consultation was maintained and all affairs of the State were settled by this Council. He started the practice of holding periodic conferences of the district authorities in order to keep himself informed of the conditions in the country. Hazrat Usman also used to hear public complaints after Friday prayers.

Hazrat Usman relaxed most of the restrictions that had been imposed on the people by Hazrat Umar. He allowed the Arabs to acquire agricultural lands in the conquered territories. The Arabs purchased these lands and exchanged them with lands in Arabia. Hazrat Usman made extensions to the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque in Madinah and had new mosques constructed at various places. He also ordered the construction of inns, border outposts and guest houses. He made arrangements for the supply of drinking water to travellers by getting wells sunk by the sides of highways and roads. A dam was also built to protect Madinah from floods. During his Khilafat for the first time a fleet of nearly five hundred ships was built to fight with the Greeks on the Mediterranean Sea. More land was set apart as grazing ground for horses. Hazrat Usman raised the salaries of the officers and the armed forces. He also increased the allowances paid to the people by 25%. He took steps for the propagation of Islam and is said to have sent religious teachers to India to spread Islam.

Services

Hazrat Usman's greatest service to Islam is the transcription and the circulation of official copies of the Holy Quran. One of his commanders reported to him that in the newly conquered territories, those Muslims whose mother tongue was not Arabic were reading the Quran in different ways. He feared that if this was not checked, differences might arise. Hazrat Usman, therefore sent for the copy of the Holy Quran that had been prepared in the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr and which was in the custody of Hafsa. He then ordered Zaid bin Sabit, Abdullah bin Zubair, Sa'ad bin Aas and Abdul Rahman bin Haris to make a number of copies from the original. These originals were sent to all parts of the Muslim Empire and the incorrect copies were collected and burnt.

Hazrat Usman's love for Muslims and the solidarity of Islam was so great that he sacrificed his life rather than take up the sword against his Muslim brothers.

Character

Hazrat Usman was well-known for his strong moral character. He was an embodiment of modesty, humility, chastity and dignity. K. Ali has observed in his book, 'A Study of Islamic History':

"Usman was upright, dutiful and generous. In chastity and integrity, he was as firm as a mountain. Modesty was the salient feature of his character."

S. A. Salik in his book, 'The Early Heroes of Islam', calls him:

"One of the most generous, pious, pure and heroic souls of early Islam. As a private individual, his character was simply adorable."

He was very particular not to offend anyone by his behaviour. On account of his endearing qualities, he enjoyed a great deal of popularity among the people of Makkah. The Prophet^{pbuh} himself was so pleased with him that after the death of his two daughters, who had been married to Hazrat Usman one after the other he said that had there been any other daughter, he would have given her in marriage to Usman.

Even before embracing Islam, he led a chaste life, never drank wine nor gambled, nor did he worship idols. In spite of his wealth, he was a man of simple habits, and did not indulge in a luxurious way of life. He was very generous and for his generosity, he was rightly known as Ghani. He spent the greater part of his wealth in helping the distressed. He supported many poor families, widows and orphans. S. A. Salik in his book 'Early Heroes of Islam' observes:

"In spite of his opulence, he led a simple life; but with a magnificent liberality, he spent his money in charity."

Hazrat Usman was soft spoken and kind-hearted and a man of great wisdom and foresight. He was known for the firmness and steadfastness of his faith. In short, he was an embodiment of all the qualities and virtues that a good Muslim should have.

Hazrat Ali

(656 – 661 A.D.)

Life before Khilafat

The fourth Khalifa, Hazrat Ali was a first cousin of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, and the son of Abu Talib, who was an uncle of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Hazrat Ali was born in Makkah. His name was suggested by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} who took him under his own care and protection at a very early age.

Hazrat Ali often accompanied the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} on trade journeys to Syria. He was ten years old when prophethood was conferred upon Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}. He was the second person to become a Muslim. Hazrat Ali learnt reading and writing while still a boy and in course of time, he became a very learned person. He would memorize the revelations received by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He would also keep a written record of what he heard from the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He is one of the ten companions to whom the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave the tidings of Paradise in their lifetime.

In 622 AD when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} migrated from Makkah to Madinah, he handed over to Ali all the valuables that the people of Makkah had entrusted to him for safe custody. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} directed him to return them to their owners before leaving Makkah for Madinah. At night, when the enemies had surrounded his house, he asked Ali to lie down on his bed while he escaped unnoticed and unhurt. After successfully accomplishing his mission, Hazrat Ali joined the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} at Quba. He was with him when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} entered Madinah. At the time of **Muwakhat** i.e., declaring the emigrants and helpers as brothers, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} declared Hazrat Ali to be his brother. Then he married his youngest daughter, Fatima, to him.

Ali was present at the time of the passing away of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He washed the dead body and was one of those who lowered it into the grave.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} gave Hazrat Ali the title of ‘Abu Turab’ i.e., ‘father of dust’. For his bravery he was known as Asadullah i.e., Lion of God.

Hazrat Ali was a commentator of the Holy Quran and in the preservation of ahadis, he had a unique position. He was called the Gate of Knowledge.

The first three Khalifas held Hazrat Ali in high esteem and consulted him on all important religious and administrative matters. They made him their deputy on various occasions. Hazrat Ali, on his part, co-operated with them and gave them the best advice.

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, when some false prophets arose in Arabia, he took part in the defence of the capital. He held the office of chief justice and was a member of Majlis-e-Shura during the Khilafat of the first three Khalifas. He was among the panel of six persons who were nominated by Hazrat Umar for selection as Khalifa after his death.

Hazrat Ali had voted in favour of Hazrat Usman as the Khalifa and he ordered his sons to protect Hazrat Usman when the rebels surrounded the house of the Khalifa.

Election as Khalifa

After the assassination of Hazrat Usman, in the absence of any government, a state of confusion and anarchy prevailed in Madinah. After four days, when the rebels decided to return to their homes, they felt that it was necessary that the new Khalifa should be chosen before they left Madinah. In this connection, there were differences among the rebels. One group favoured the election of Hazrat Ali, another favoured the election of Talha, while the third wanted Zubair.

The Egyptians and some prominent companions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} requested Hazrat Ali to accept the office of the Khalifa. But he declined the offer. The rebels then offered the Khilafat to Talha and Zubair but they too refused. The rebels next requested the Ansars to choose a Khalifa from amongst themselves. They also declined the offer, saying that in the presence of Hazrat Ali, no one else deserved to be elected as the Khalifa. There was now a complete deadlock in the matter of election. The rebels, thereupon, gave the ultimatum that unless the Khalifa was chosen within the next twenty-four hours, they would be forced to take some drastic action.

In order to resolve the issue, all the Muslims assembled in the Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque. The leader of the Egyptians said that the person who was to be elected as Khalifa should be learned, brave, pious and should have been close to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He observed that Hazrat Ali was the only person who fulfilled all these qualities. Thereafter, the people of Madinah persuaded Hazrat Ali to accept the Khilafat. Talha, Zubair and some others performed the Bayyat at Hazrat Ali's hand. On the 25th of Zil Hajj, there was a general Bayyat at the Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque and Hazrat Ali became the fourth Khalifa of Islam.

Change of Governors

On becoming the Khalifa, Hazrat Ali felt that in the interest of the state, it was necessary that there should be a change in the provincial governors. He, therefore, decided to remove the governors appointed by Hazrat Usman and appoint new governors in their place. Many of his friends advised him not to take such a step before establishing himself as the Khalifa. With regard to

Muawiya, the Governor of Syria, they particularly asked him not to interfere because the appointment of Muawiya was not made by Hazrat Usman but by Hazrat Umar. Against the advice of his friends, Hazrat Ali decided to replace Muawiya also along with others.

He appointed Suhail bin Hanif as the Governor of Syria, Sa'ad bin Ubaidah as the Governor of Egypt, Ummara bin Shahab as the Governor of Kufa, Usman bin Hanif as the Governor of Basra and Abdullah bin Abbas as the Governor of Yemen. Then he sent them to take charge of their respective provinces. The governors appointed in provinces of Basra, Egypt and Yemen were able to take charge of their provinces without any resistance. But Ummara bin Shahab had to return to Madinah after having failed to assume the charge of his office. Similarly, when Suhail bin Hanif reached Tabuk on the border of Syria, he was met by a Syrian army who told him to go back as they did not acknowledge Hazrat Ali as the Khalifa. Thus at the very beginning of his Khilafat, Hazrat Ali had to face administrative crisis in the country. The failure of his nominees to assume office as the governors of Syria and Kufa thus emerged as a great challenge to him.

Battle of Camel (Jamal)

After Hazrat Ali had assumed office, the rebels left for their home towns. But even then there was no peace in the city of Madinah. The Umayyads who had become quite powerful in Syria raised the cry of revenge for the blood of Hazrat Usman. The blood-stained clothes of Hazrat Usman and the fingers of his wife which had been cut while she defended her husband were exhibited in the mosque at Damascus. Many people in Makkah and Madinah also joined in this cry for revenge. They requested the new Khalifa to punish the assassins of Hazrat Usman. Hazrat Ali, realizing that the assassination of Hazrat Usman was not the work of a few individuals who could be easily punished and also keeping in view the political situation in the country, refused to comply with their request. He told them that he would take necessary steps against these assassins after restoring peace in the Islamic world. This provided an opportunity to the mischief-mongers and the hypocrites to create trouble and instigate people against Hazrat Ali.

In the meantime, when Talha and Zubair, who were the first to acknowledge Hazrat Ali as the Khalifa, saw that he was taking no positive steps to apprehend Hazrat Usman's assassins and punish them, became enraged. They approached Hazrat Aisha who was herself deeply grieved at Hazrat Usman's murder. They prevailed upon her to join them in demanding revenge for the late Khalifa's murder. They raised an army and persuaded Hazrat Aisha to accompany them. Hazrat Ali sent his son Hassan to Kufa, from where he was successful in raising an army of ten thousand men. The two armies met near Basra. Hazrat Ali, who had a very high regard for Hazrat Aisha did not wish to fight and sent one of

the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} companions to assure her that he really wanted to punish the murderers of Hazrat Usman; the delay was due to non-availability of evidence. Hazrat Aisha also wanted to prevent bloodshed and agreed to negotiate and thus the hostilities were suspended. However the mischief-makers from both the armies got alarmed at negotiations because peace meant their own doom. So, during the night there were attacks on the forces of both sides and the battle started. Hazrat Aisha mounted a camel to lead the army. In the fierce fighting that took place, thousands of Muslims were killed on both sides. Later, Talha and Zubair left the battlefield. Both were caught and killed by the mischief-makers. Their next target was Hazrat Aisha who fought gallantly. The battle came to an end in favour of Hazrat Ali after the camel on which Hazrat Aisha was riding was wounded and brought down. Thereafter there was reconciliation between Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Aisha. He treated her with respect and honour and sent her to Madinah escorted by her brother, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr. Back in Madinah, she led a retired life and never took part in politics again.

As a result of the victory at Basra, Hazrat Ali's Khilafat came to be acknowledged by the entire Muslim world except Syria. This battle was the first civil war between Muslims. Unfortunately, it set an example for the Muslims to fight among themselves over secular matters.

Battle of Siffin

After his election as Khalifa, Hazrat Ali deposed Muawiya from the governorship of Syria. Muawiya, however, refused to vacate the office. Under his influence, no one in Syria took the oath of allegiance to the new Khalifa. In order to undermine the authority of Hazrat Ali, Muawiya started a campaign to instigate the people against him. He raised a cry for revenge for the blood of Hazrat Usman and displayed the blood-stained clothes of Hazrat Usman and the fingers of Hazrat Usman's wife in the mosque at Damascus. He went so far as to accuse Hazrat Ali of being an accomplice in the murder of Hazrat Usman. He said that the election of Hazrat Ali was illegal as it was held under the pressure of rebels who had assassinated Hazrat Usman. When Talha and Zubair were killed at Basra, Muawiya presented them as martyrs who had laid down their lives in seeking revenge for the blood of Hazrat Usman. He also criticised Hazrat Ali for the ill-treatment of Hazrat Aisha. As a result, not only Syria, but Iraq and Iran also were won over by this propaganda. After the election of Hazrat Ali, within a year, Muawiya gained enough strength to take up offensive against the Khalifa. Hazrat Ali did not wish that Muslims should fight among themselves. So he wrote to Muawiya that since the people who had elected Hazrat Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman had accepted him as Khalifa, Muawiya and his followers must also accept him as such. Otherwise they should be ready to face the consequences, meaning a war. Muawiya's reply was that

Hazrat Ali must first hand over Hazrat Usman's assassins to him before further negotiations.

When war between Hazrat Ali and Ameer Muawiya became inevitable, preparations for a battle were made by both the sides. The Khalifa managed to raise an army of eighty to ninety thousand. Muawiya also with a large army proceeded against him. Both the armies met at Siffin.

The two armies that camped at Siffin were the largest armies so far assembled in the history of Islam. For several months, the rival soldiers remained facing each other. Except occasional skirmishes, no decisive battle took place.

Hazrat Ali did not want to shed Muslim blood in vain. So he sent messengers to Muawiya asking him to submit in the interest of the unity of Islam. Muawiya in reply demanded that the assassins of Hazrat Usman should be punished first. Thereafter, all negotiations for peace broke down and both the sides got ready for war.

The main battle began on the 8th of Safar 37 A.H. On the fourth day, the position of Muawiya's army began worsening. In order to avoid a crushing defeat, Muawiya on the advice of Amr bin Aas, ordered the soldiers in the front ranks to fasten the Quran to their lances as a sign that war should cease now. Hazrat Ali warned his men not to fall into this trap, but to fight till the end. But his exhortations had no effect and many officers of his army refused to fight. Some even said that if war was not stopped immediately, they would fight against Hazrat Ali's army. The Khalifa was compelled to recall his forces. Thereafter fighting stopped.

After the cessation of hostilities, it was decided that the matter be referred to arbitration. Abu Musa Ashari was appointed arbitrator on behalf of Hazrat Ali and Amr bin Aas on behalf of Muawiya. They were to settle the dispute in accordance with the Holy Quran and Sunnah and announce their decision by the month of Ramazan. In the meantime, all hostilities were to cease. After the signing of this agreement Hazrat Ali left Siffin for Kufa.

Hazrat Ali left the battlefield of Siffin with a heavy heart. There were heavy casualties on both the sides and he mourned the death of so many Muslims. He had lost some of his best supporters. He felt distressed that only one generation after the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the Muslim nation had lost its unity and its Islamic character.

The Battle of Siffin led to the birth of the first sect among the Muslims that came to be known as the **Kharijites**.

Kharijites

The term, Kharijites literally means *separatists* or *outgoers*. These people had taken part in the revolt against Hazrat Usman and were involved in his murder. When Muawiya raised the cry for revenge for the blood of Hazrat Usman, they allied themselves with Hazrat Ali and fought on his side in the

Battles of Camel and Siffin. When the troops of Muawiya asked for cease-fire, they responded to the call and forced Hazrat Ali to suspend hostilities, although victory for his forces was near.

In order to support their stand, they maintained that they stood for the establishment of the Kingdom of Allah on earth. They held that they alone were true believers and they had the right to kill unbelievers. They considered Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar as the only lawful Khalifas and declared others as usurpers.

On the way to Kufa, they insisted that Hazrat Ali should attack the Syrians. The Khalifa, however, replied that he could not break the agreement signed by him. When they arrived near Kufa, twelve thousand men separated and marched towards Harwara, where they formed a party and started their activities against Hazrat Ali. In this way, these people separated from the main body of the Muslims. That is why they are known as Kharijites.

Arbitration

In accordance with the arbitration agreement signed between Hazrat Ali and Muawiya, Abu Musa Ashari and Amr bin Aas met at Dumat-ul-Jandal, a place between Kufa and Damascus. When the time for making the announcement came, Abu Musa announced that after consulting Amr, they had decided that both Hazrat Ali and Muawiya should be deposed and the people be given the right to elect anyone they liked as their Khalifa. Amr announced that he agreed with Abu Musa in the joint decision to depose Hazrat Ali, but he, himself, had decided to retain Muawiya on his post. This decision was in favour of Muawiya and against Hazrat Ali who was shocked by it. According to the terms of the agreement, Hazrat Ali had to accept the decision and resign from the Khilafat. But as the decision was one-sided, it was not accepted and the only option left with Hazrat Ali was to fight against Muawiya once again.

Battle of Nahrawan

While Hazrat Ali made preparations to attack Muawiya, the Kharijites from all over the country collected at Nahrawan and began to create problems. Hazrat Ali, therefore, marched with his forces to Nahrawan. The Kharijites fought desperately but were outnumbered by the forces of Khalifa. Hazrat Ali inflicted a crushing defeat on them. Out of four thousand Kharijites only a few dozen managed to escape; the rest were killed. Those who escaped vowed to take revenge.

Hazrat Ali won a decisive battle at Nahrawan. But it proved to be a hollow victory because it diverted the attention of Hazrat Ali from his main struggle against Muawiya. It also paved the way to the assassination of Hazrat Ali. Two years later, he was assassinated by a *Kharijite*.

Fall of Egypt

From Nahrawan, Hazrat Ali wanted to move against Muawiya. But his troops disobeyed his orders and deserted him. Muawiya took full advantage of this disobedience and cowardice. He ordered Amr bin Aas to invade Egypt. The Governor of Egypt was defeated by Amr and Egypt came under the sway of Muawiya. The loss of Egypt was a severe blow to the Khilafat of Hazrat Ali.

After this, rebellions broke out all over the land and the Khalifa, considering the situation serious, agreed to conclude a treaty with Muawiya. It was decided that Muawiya should rule over Syria and Egypt and the rest of the Islamic Empire should remain under Hazrat Ali. Thus, the conflict between Hazrat Ali and Muawiya came to an end. The compromise between the two dealt a death blow to mischief-makers and they now tried to get rid of the Khalifa.

Martyrdom

After the Battle of Nahrawan, the Kharijites had become bitter enemies of Hazrat Ali. Those who survived the disaster at Nahrawan wanted to take revenge for their friends who were killed in the battle.

In 40 A.H. some of the Kharijites assembled in Makkah and decided to kill Hazrat Ali, Muawiya and Amr bin Aas simultaneously. Abdur Rehman bin Muljim, was selected to assassinate Hazrat Ali. On the 18th of Ramazan, 40 A.H., while Hazrat Ali was leading the morning prayers in the mosque at Kufa, Ibn Muljim attacked him with a poisonous sword. The wounds proved fatal and the fourth Khalifa of Islam died on the 21st of Ramazan. His son, Hassan, killed Ibn Muljim the next day in accordance with Hazrat Ali's will. There are different versions as to the place of Hazrat Ali's burial. The majority of the people hold that he was buried in Najaf. Hazrat Ali did not name anyone as his successor.

Administration

The whole period of Hazrat Ali's Khilafat passed in civil wars, so he had no time or chance to pay proper attention to administration or conquests. He however deserves credit for whatever he was able to achieve during his short Khilafat.

Hazrat Ali administered the state on the lines laid down by the previous khalifas without making any amendments to the rules and regulations. For example, when the Jews who had been banished from Hijaz to Najran by Hazrat Umar wanted to come back, he did not allow them and said: "Whose decision can be better than that of Umar?"

The division of the provinces remained the same as during the time of Hazrat Umar, with few exceptions. First, the capital was changed from Madinah to Kufah. Secondly, the officers and governors were changed.

Hazrat Ali paid special attention to army requirements. Many cantonments and fortresses were built during his Khilafat. He was very strict in safeguarding the state treasury.

Hazrat Ali kept a strict watch on his officers who administered justice. He would check the goods to be sold and their prices in the market. He was very particular in taking care of non-Muslims.

Character

Hazrat Ali was an embodiment of Islamic values. He was well known for his piety and religious devotion. He had memorized the Holy Quran and he could quote verses to suit every occasion. He was truthful and honest, humble and simple in habits, generous and liberal in giving charity. Even as Khalifa, he lived in an ordinary house. He was a brave warrior and an able general. He fought many battles in his lifetime and in all encounters his rivals were killed. For his unusual bravery, he won the titles of **Asadullah**, the lion of God and **Haider-e-Karrar**, the warrior whom nobody could match.

Hazrat Ali was chivalrous and forgiving. Justice Syed Ameer Ali in his book, '*The History of Saracens*', says about Hazrat Ali:

"With his dying breath he inculcated lessons of charity, love, humility and self abnegation to his sons. He expressly ordered them that no harshness should be shown towards his murderer who should be executed with one blow."

Hazrat Ali was a great scholar and philosopher with great depth in his thoughts. He was known for his wisdom and learning. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had once said:

"If I am the city of knowledge, verily, Ali is its gate."

Hazrat Ali's knowledge extended to many disciplines such as mathematics, physics, astronomy. He was an orator and poet and a skilful administrator.

The greatness of Hazrat Ali's character has been testified by many Muslim and non-Muslim writers. Professor Hitti in his book '*History of the Arabs*', says:

"Valiant in battle, wise in counsel, eloquent in speech, true to his friends, magnanimous to his foes, Ali became both the paragon of Muslim nobility and chivalry."

In his book, '*A Literary History of the Arabs*', Nicholson says:

"Ali was a gallant warrior, a true friend and a generous foe."

Shah Waliullah has observed:

"Chivalry and strength of character, humanity and sincerity which are attributes of great men were represented in abundance by Hazrat Ali".

And Syed Ameer Ali says in his book '*History of the Saracens*':

"His bravery won him the title of **Lion of God** and his learning that of **Gate of Knowledge**."

To sum up, undoubtedly Hazrat Ali is one of the greatest Muslims Islam has produced after the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. He richly deserves the titles "Lion of Allah" for his bravery and "Gate of Knowledge" for his learning.

Relations with Other Nations during the Khilafat of Rightly Guided Khalifas

Political relations with other nations began in the period of the Prophet^{pbuh} and continued during the Khilafat of the first four Khalifas.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had entered into a treaty with the Christians of Najran, according to which no church was to be demolished and their priests would not be exiled. The last words of this treaty are: "This treaty includes the safety of their property, life, land, religion, present or absent people, in short, everything which is in their possession."

Hazrat Abu Bakr renewed this treaty during his Khilafat. Another treaty, was signed with the Christians of Hira by Khalid bin Walid. These and many other treaties were maintained by Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Usman and Hazrat Ali.

Many treaties were signed during the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar, the most comprehensive among them was executed by Abu Ubaidah with the Christians of Syria.

All treaties entered into with Zimmis were fulfilled by the Khalifas. The charter which Hazrat Umar sent to Abu Ubaidah contained these words: "Stop the Muslims from doing injustice and harm, from eating their properties unlawfully and fulfil the rights which you have given to them."

At the time of his death, Hazrat Umar made, a will regarding the Zimmis in these words: "I bequeath my successor with the liability of Allah and His Prophet^{pbuh} regarding the treaties made with Zimmis, support them and do not unduly burden them."

The rights of life, honour and property of the Muslims and the Zimmis were considered to be the same. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Ali, a Muslim killed a Zimmi. Hazrat Ali ordered the Muslim to be killed, but the brothers of the murdered person pardoned him. Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar fixed the blood money of a Zimmi equal to that of a Muslim.

The religious freedom which these people enjoyed can be judged from an event that took place during the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar who invited his slave to accept Islam and quoted the Quranic verse: "*Let there be no compulsion in religion.*" (2: 256)

The poor and disabled Zimmis were not only exempt from paying Jizya (a tax taken from non-Muslims living in a Muslim state) but a stipend was fixed for them from the state treasury. During the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Khalid bin Walid had entered into a treaty with the Christians of Hira which

included this clause and Hazrat Umar maintained it during his Khilafat. On seeing some Christian lepers, he fixed a stipend for them from the state treasury.

Once Hazrat Umar saw some people who were made to stand in the sun for non-payment of Jizya. He ordered them to be released.

Many foreign nationals were given responsible state posts and services. Once, many Christian prisoners were brought to Hazrat Umar. He got some of them admitted to schools, while to some he gave jobs in the government. He also appointed a Christian as the governor of a province. Hazrat Usman appointed a Christian as his Chief Accountant.

At the time of settling the revenue system of Iraq, Hazrat Umar called their chiefs and sought their advice.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuuh}, and the Khalifas treated the non-Muslims with leniency and justice. The Treaty which the Holy Prophet^{pbuuh} had made with the Christians of Najran contained a clause that they will not take interest. But this condition was violated by them. They started making secret preparations for attacking the Muslims. Hazrat Umar exiled them as soon as he came to know about it. At that time, he ordered: "The land of the people who are exiled should be measured and compensated accordingly; thereafter, give them the option to go anywhere they like." When they were leaving, the charter given to them contained these clauses:

- 1) The chiefs of Syria or Iraq, to whom these people will go, will be under obligation to give them land for cultivation.
- 2) Every Muslim must help them against injustice committed to them.
- 3) They should be exempted from payment of Jizya for twenty – four months.

When the Jews of Fidak were exiled, Hazrat Umar ordered an estimate of their lands and properties and the payment to be made from the state treasury.

Even in case of mutiny and conspiracy, the Khalifas dealt leniently with the Zimmis.

Section Eight

Articles of Faith

Introduction

The fundamental beliefs, which serve as the foundation of a religion, are called its doctrines or articles of faith. All the prophets of Allah, in their attempts to reform mankind, concentrated mainly on transferring their beliefs to their followers. The Holy Prophet^{pbuH}, too, began propagating his message by focusing attention on these beliefs.

These beliefs are stated in Iman-e-Mufassal which says:

"I believe in Allah, in His angels, in His books, in His messengers, in the Last Day and in the fact that everything, good or bad, is decided by Allah, the Almighty, and in life after Death."

The Holy Quran says:

"O you who believe! Believe in Allah and His messenger and the scripture which He hath sent to His messenger and the scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denieth Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers and the Day of Judgement hath gone far, far astray." (4:136)

And also: "... It is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the book and the messengers" (2:177)

The fundamental beliefs or articles of faith are:

1. Unity or Oneness of Allah
2. Angels
3. Revealed books
4. Prophets
5. Life after death
6. Pre-destination and decree

Unity or Oneness of Allah

Belief in the Unity and Oneness of Allah – Tauhid is the first and main principle of the Islamic faith. It means that Allah is the Supreme Being, the Creator, Sustainer and Master of the universe, the Highest Authority and exclusively worthy of worship. The first Surah of the Holy Quran begins with the words:

"Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds." (1:2)

Tauhid is the belief in Allah with all His powers. Allah is All-knowing, All-wise, and All-powerful. He is and will always be. He has no beginning and no end. He is the First and the Last. He has no parents or son. He has no partners of any sort in His attributes, power, work and dominion. The Quran says:

"..... No son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion..." (25:2)

The Quran has laid the greatest emphasis on Allah's absolute Unity and Oneness. The concept has been summed up in Surah Ikhlas of the Holy Quran, which says:

"Say He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, the Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him." (112:1-4)

At another place, we are told:

"Allah! There is no god but He the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal"

(2:255)

And again: *"There is nothing whatever like unto Him and He is the One that hears and sees (all things)." (42:11)*

Islam emphatically proclaims that Allah, the Creator is not bound by any of the limitations of human beings or of anything else He has created. He has no body, nor form, no physical attributes, nor characteristics. He is the Originator and Fashioner of the universe with its vast and perfect system, the One Who sustains it and keeps it functioning according to His laws and plans.

Allah is beyond anything which the mind or senses of man can grasp or comprehend or imagine. He is above having any similarity to any of His creations for He alone is the Creator and everything else is created by Him. He alone is Divine and no other human being or any other creature can share His Divinity or His unique attributes. Allah is always concerned and involved with every single part of His creation. All His creations exist and fulfill their functions

by His command and will. For His concern is not only in creating, but also in sustaining and providing for His creatures, in guiding, regulating and maintaining them.

The vast universe with its flawless system clearly indicates that there is one Creator and one Controller. The sun, the moon, the galaxy and the whole universe obey the laws of the Supreme Authority. There is complete harmony and everything is set perfectly in the system. There is no flaw and no need for improvement in it. Had there been more than one creator and controller, there would have been chaos and confusion, the Quran says:

"If there were in the heavens and the earth other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both" (21:22)

But there is no conflict and disorder in the universe. This perfect order and combination is the proof of the presence of one powerful Creator and Regulator.

Allah has created everything in the earth and heavens for the service of mankind. When a person surrenders himself to Allah's commands, he gains superiority over all other creatures in the universe.

Tauhid shapes and regulates the entire course of a Muslim's life. A believer in Tauhid is sure that Allah knows and sees everything, so he is restrained from committing a sin even secretly in the darkness of the night, because of his firm conviction that Allah sees everything all the time.

A person who truly and whole heartedly believes that Allah alone is the Master of the universe, the sole Authority and Law-giver and he himself is a humble servant before Him, will not obey or give his devotion or allegiance to other deities besides Allah. He would reject them all and submit himself to Allah alone and strive with all his might and energies against serving any deities other than Allah.

Shirk

Associating partners with Allah is called Shirk. Shirk is the worship of idols, and offering prayers and supplications to anyone, dead or living, believing that they hold the same attributes in a lesser degree than Him. Thus, the belief that Allah is not Sovereign or Independent and Sole Dispenser of affairs of the world and that other deities can intercede with Him is Shirk. To implore any other being besides Allah to grant any wishes or answer prayers is also Shirk. The Quran considers Shirk to be an unpardonable sin. It says:

"Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgives anything else to whom He pleases; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed." (4: 48)

Man has been created as lord of creation and everything in nature has been placed under his control. By worshipping other beings besides Allah man debases himself. The Quran says:

"Shall I seek for you a god other than the (true) God, when it is Allah Who hath endowed you with gifts above the nations." (7:140)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said:

"Shirk is the greatest of all sins".

Angels

Belief in the existence of angels is an article of Islamic faith. The non-believers considered angels to be deities, and Allah's daughters. This article of faith purifies the belief in the unity of Allah.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said that angels have no share in Allah's Divinity. To worship them and to ask for their help is degrading and debasing for man. On the very first day of Adam's creation, Allah told the angels to prostrate before Adam and granted him greater knowledge than they possessed.

Allah conveyed His revelations to prophets including Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} through an angel, Hazrat Jibrael. In the Holy Quran, angels are spoken of as 'messengers'. The Quran says:

"He doth send down His angels with inspiration of His command to such of His servants as He pleaseth" (16:2)

Because of the importance of angels as messengers of Divine revelation to prophets, belief in them is a fundamental article of faith in Islam.

Angels act as Allah's agents and serve Him in many ways. They are created of light and unlike jinn and men have not been endowed with a free will. They are absolutely obedient to Allah's commands and are engaged in worship and service to Him. They are sent to protect men, to administer Allah's punishments, to carry His messages and to perform various other functions.

Angels are heavenly beings not visible to ordinary mortals and belong to the category of the unseen, unless they appear in human form. Angels brought messages from Allah to Hazrat Zakaria and to Hazrat Maryam before whom they appeared in human form. Angels also appeared in human form before Hazrat Ibrahim to give him the glad tidings of the birth of a son. Hazrat Lut was also warned by angels in human form of the impending doom of his wicked people and told to leave the town that was going to be destroyed.

Angels have been given the necessary qualities and powers to carry out their duties by Allah. They are not His daughters nor are they objects of worship. They have no knowledge except what Allah has taught them; they obey Allah and act on His commands. They prostrated before Adam when Allah commanded them to do so. Angels glorify and praise Allah. They never get tired. They do not need sleep, nor do they require the things needed by human beings.

Angels have various functions and duties. They act as Allah's messengers

but do not descend except by Allah's command. They strengthen the hearts of the righteous believers and are their protectors. At the Battle of Badr, they helped and strengthened the hearts of the believers and put terror into the hearts of the unbelievers. They implore forgiveness for the believers but they can offer no intercession for them. They send blessings on the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and the believers.

Angels are the guardians of Hell-fire. They will welcome in Heaven all those who obey Allah's commands and will throw the wrong doers into Hell. The name of the angel incharge of Paradise is Rizwan while Malik rules over Hell.

Angels record man's words and deeds. Two angels who record all his deeds upto the moment of his death attend each human. This record will be presented to him on the Day of Judgment. They are called the 'respected recorders.' The Quran says:

"But verily, over you (are appointed angels) to protect you - kind and honourable, writing down (your deeds)." (82:10-11)

The two angels, called Munkar and Nakir question the dead in their graves. There are many angels, the prominent among them are:

- 1) Hazrat Jibreel: He is the chief among the angels. He is said to have revealed the Quran to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and also brought revelations to other prophets before him. He is also the messenger through whom Allah speaks to His prophets.
- 2) Hazrat Izrael, also called the angel of death is responsible for taking our souls upon death.
- 3) Hazrat Israfil who will blow the trumpet at the time of the end of the world, that is, on the Day of Judgement.
- 4) Hazrat Mikail: He is charged to look after the universe, movement of the stars, planets and galaxies and the forces of nature. He is responsible for rain and providing provision to people at Allah's command.

Revealed Books

Human beings are the servants of Allah and His agents on earth who need guidance to carry out their various duties and responsibilities. This guidance is contained in the books of revelation sent to mankind through prophets and messengers. Belief in the reality of Allah's guidance to mankind in the form of revealed books is an article of faith in Islam.

Allah, who has created for man all things that are on the earth and has made subservient to him all that is in the heavens and on the earth, has provided everything for man's physical needs, has also provided him with spiritual guidance.

Revelation is the name given to the means of communication employed by Allah for conveying His command and messages to prophets and apostles. Revelation is not due to the prophet's own thoughts, intelligence or knowledge. It is not acquired through study or learning nor is it earned through labour but it is a special gift from Allah.

About the various methods employed by Allah for communicating His commandments to His apostles, the Quran says:

"It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil or by the sending of a messenger to reveal with Allah's permission what Allah wills:" (42:51)

The guidance sent by Allah from time to time to His messengers was basically the same. The principles of religion relating to the Unity of Allah, His Attributes, prayer, belief in prophethood, the Day of Judgement and the concept of reward and punishment for one's deeds in the life Hereafter are common to all the revealed books. However, as the needs of the people differed in different periods, the details of the laws given in these books also varied.

Each of the previous apostles and prophets was sent to some particular nation, people or tribe and therefore, the revelation sent to each was intended for the guidance of his people. It was not intended to be universal because humanity had not yet reached the stage of readiness for such a comprehensive and final guidance from Allah. This is clear from what the Quran states concerning the messages given to various prophets.

Moreover, by the time of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, the books revealed upto that time had either been totally lost, or their original message distorted. Allah

therefore sent a final and complete revelation in the form of the Holy Quran.

The Holy Quran is the only revealed scripture, which has been preserved to the present time in its exact, original form and language. Although parts of the earlier revealed books still survive, they are so intermixed with additions and alterations that it is very difficult to determine what part of them actually forms the original message sent by Allah. The Holy Quran does not mention all the prophets nor all the revealed books. It only mentions revelations sent to Hazrat Nuh, Hazrat Ibrahim, Hazrat Ismail, Hazrat Ishaq, Hazrat Daud, Hazrat Musa, Hazrat Isa and the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}.

The revealed books mentioned by name in the Holy Quran are:

- 1) Sahifas revealed to Hazrat Adam, Hazrat Ibrahim and other prophets.
- 2) Zabur granted to Hazrat Daud.
- 3) Taurat revealed to Hazrat Musa. About it, the Quran says:

"And before this was the book of Moses as a guide and a mercy"

(46:12)

According to the Holy Quran, the book revealed to Hazrat Musa contained guidance, Allah's commands and warnings for the Bani Israel who failed to act according to its teachings. They distorted and perverted Allah's word. No copy of the original Taurat is now available.

4) Injeel, granted to Hazrat Isa. About this book, the Quran says:

"And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the law that had come before him: We sent him the gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah." (5:46)

The Injeel confirmed the Taurat and contained guidance and light for the Bani Israel. According to the Holy Quran, Allah took a covenant from those who call themselves Christians, but they forgot the message that was sent to them and failed to act according to its teachings.

5) The Holy Quran is the last and the most comprehensive book revealed by Allah to His last messenger, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}, through Hazrat Jibreel. It was not sent down by Allah all at once. Its revelation to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was spread over a period of twenty-three years. The Holy Quran confirms the previous revelations, and points out and corrects some of the errors that had crept into the earlier revealed books. Thus, the Holy Quran perfects and completes Divine Revelation.

The Quran speaks of the attributes of Allah and His power, of man's relationship and responsibility to Him, of the certainty of the coming of the Last Day and the life hereafter. It contains instructions about the principles of Islam and the method of worship and guides mankind to the right path. It lays down moral and ethical principles to govern all aspects of human life, both individual and collective. It narrates the stories of some of the earlier prophets and nations as an example and encouragement to the Prophet^{pbuh} and his

community and as a warning to those who deny Allah. Its main theme, repeated again and again is the reality of Allah's Supreme Power and man's position as His slave and vicegerent who is accountable to Him in everything.

About the Holy Quran Allah says:

"This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah; who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer and spend out of what we have provided for them; and who believe in the revelation sent to thee and sent before thy time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter; They are on (true guidance) from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper." (2:2-5)

Quran is undoubtedly the only revealed book that remains in the same form today as it was fourteen hundred years ago. This is because Allah Himself promised to safeguard it from corruption and change. Allah says:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the message and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)" (15:9)

The Holy Quran is a book for reading, reciting and learning. In fact, prayers cannot be complete without the recitation of some parts of the Quran.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} laid great emphasis on memorizing the Holy Quran. There is authentic proof to show that as soon as the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} received a revelation, he would ask his scribes to write it down. The Quran was committed to memory as well as written down during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. The Quran was complete with the same arrangement of chapters and verses that we have now, at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

The Quran is not only a blessed book, but also a complete code of life. We must, therefore, study it with the object of acting in all matters according to its teachings. We must mould our lives according to the guidance contained in the Holy Quran and abstain from whatever is against its teachings. The success of human beings on this earth and in the life after death depends on obedience to the Quranic teachings and principles. These are as valid and binding today as when they were first revealed. Though the style and mode of human life have changed, the ultimate realities, the nature of good and evil and man's own nature are unalterable and are not affected by the passing of time or changes in the world.

Prophets

Belief in Allah's messengers and prophets is an article of faith in Islam.

The word prophet – **Nabi** – denotes one who is very near to Allah through the total surrender of his entire being to Him and who receives revelations from Him which serve as a source of guidance for men. If the revelation is in the form of a scripture, the prophet is, in addition, a messenger – **Rasul** – as well.

Islam holds that a prophet possesses the following characteristics: he is absolutely truthful, he is free of all sins, he delivers the messages from Allah without any omission or concealment and he has the highest order of intelligence and mental ability.

According to the Quran, all the apostles and prophets sent by Allah were men, had wives and children and were mortal. All of them taught in the language of the people to whom they were sent. At the same time, the Quran tells us that they were good and truthful, Allah favoured them above all others, chose them and guided them and conferred His grace upon them. He gave them the Book and prophethood and sent them for the guidance of their people. The Holy Quran insists that the prophets were raised to be obeyed and followed; they called their followers to profess and follow the Divine code of rules to regulate their life. There are numerous verses in the Quran in which emphasis is laid on obedience to the prophets and following their example.

It says:

"We sent not a messenger, but to be obeyed, in accordance with the will of Allah." (4:64)

The unbelievers scoffed at them and persecuted them but they bore it patiently. Some of them were endowed with more gifts than the others, but Muslims are asked to believe in all of them, to respect them and to make no distinction amongst them. The Quran says:

".....We make no distinction..... between one and another of His messengers." (2:285)

The Quran tells us that Allah always helped His apostles and prophets and punished and destroyed the wicked non-believers. The apostles and prophets will be questioned on the Day of Judgement about the response of their people to their mission.

Allah sent prophets to mankind from amongst themselves for their guidance

and reformation because a man can best serve as an example and a guide for his own race. The message could have been conveyed by the angels, but they belong to a different class of beings and cannot serve as models for men. The Quran says:

“..... If there were settled on earth, angels walking about in peace and quiet, we should certainly have sent them down from the heavens an angel for a messenger.” (17:95)

All the prophets who preceded Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} were sent with a message of warning and guidance to a particular people. None of their messages was intended to be universal, until the last messenger, Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was entrusted with the final and complete guidance for the whole of humanity for all times to come.

The Quran says that Allah sent a warner and guide to every nation and it mentions the names of many of them. According to a tradition of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, their number is said to be 1,24,000. (Islam Beliefs and Teachings by Ghulam Sarwar)

At the beginning of the line was Hazrat Adam, who was also the first human being. Allah bestowed prophethood on him and gave him guidance for himself and his descendants. The first human beings on earth were true believers in one Allah, and submitted to His guidance. But, gradually over a period of time, they became idolators, until Allah raised a new messenger from amongst them to recall them to the truth. The Quran mentions Hazrat Nuh, who brought a message of warning to his people. They refused to listen and were destroyed by the flood. The next major prophet whose history is narrated in the Quran is Hazrat Ibrahim. Although he grew up among idolators, he surrendered himself to Allah with such total submission that Allah made him an example for people of all times. From Hazrat Ibrahim came a long line of prophets through his two sons – Hazrat Ismail and Hazrat Ishaq. From Hazrat Ishaq a number of prophets came which include Hazrat Yaqoob, Hazrat Yusuf, Hazrat Musa, Hazrat Daud, Hazrat Sulaiman, Hazrat Yahya and Hazrat Isa. Hazrat Ismail was the ancestor of the Arabs and Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} was among his descendants.

Many prophets came to this world. The last in the line of prophets is the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} who is termed as “the seal of the prophets.”

The Quran says that the appearance of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was foretold by previous prophets. His distinguishing feature was that he confirmed the truth of all the prophets that preceded him. He not only conveyed the message revealed to him, but also explained and acted upon it himself and after demonstration, urged the people to follow it for their own benefit.

The Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} is distinguished in many ways:

1. It is universal, that means that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was not sent for any particular country or community but for the whole world and the entire mankind. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

"We have not sent thee but as a universal (Messenger) to men, giving them glad tidings and warning them (against sin). . . . " (34:28)

And the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} also confirmed this:

"Every prophet who preceded me was sent especially to his own people but I have been sent as a Prophet for all mankind."

2. The Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is eternal. With him, the chain of revelation and Prophethood has come to an end. The Quran says:

"....But he is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets." (33:40)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said:

"Whenever a prophet perished, another prophet followed him and surely there will be no prophet after me." (Bukhari)

3. The religion and the Divine law which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} brought is perfect in all respects. This distinction was not enjoyed by any other religion. The Quran says:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (5:3)

Through the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} a perfect law was given to suit the requirements of all ages and for all countries and this law that is, the Holy Quran was guarded against all corruptions. The life of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is an explanation of the Holy Quran as confirmed by his wife Hazrat Aisha:

"His morals are the Quran."

It means that while the Holy Quran was the command, the Prophet's^{pbuh} life was an example of the teachings of the Quran.

The Quran compares his personality to the sun, while the previous prophets were like lamps. Just as the light of the sun cannot be substituted by any other light and is universal, similarly, after the advent of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, no necessity is felt of any other prophet to follow him.

Life After Death

Belief in life after death, which pertains to the Day of Judgement, bodily resurrection, Heaven and Hell, is one of the articles of faith in Islam. The word, generally, used in the Quran to indicate the life after death is Al-Akhira.

The Holy Quran gives great importance to this belief, placing it next in importance to faith in Allah at many places in the Holy Quran. It says “..... Any who believe in Allah and the last Day and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord.....” (2:62).

A man’s life on this earth ends with his death, after which another life begins in the state of Barzakh, which is an intermediate state in which the soul is placed after death till the resurrection. The state of grave is therefore, the same state as that of Barzakh.

Immediately after death the lesser Judgement or Qiyamat-e-Sughra takes place, after which the righteous are spoken of as tasting the fruit of their good deeds while the evil doers have to taste the evil consequences of their wrong deeds. In this connection, a companion reported that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said; “When a man dies, his abode (in next life) is brought before him morning and evening, in Paradise if he is one of the inmates of Paradise, and in fire if he is one of the inmates of Hell.” (Muslim)

The Quran describes the events of the last day in a very clear and awe-inspiring language. It says that at a time known only to Allah this world will be brought to an end with a deafening noise. The earth will split apart and become a level stretch, the mountains will crumble to dust and will fly here and there like wool. The sun will be folded up, the moon will be in darkness, the stars will become dim and fall, the oceans will boil over and burst forth. All landmarks on this earth will be lost, the world will cease to be in the form we see now. There will be a new heaven and a new earth. The Quran Says: “One day, the earth will be changed to a different earth and so will be the Heavens” (14:48)

All those who are alive on earth at that time will die. Then the bodies of the dead will be raised from their graves and rejoined with their souls. All men will then stand before Allah to give an account of their actions in this world. They will be given their book of deeds which they will be asked to read. The good will be given their record in their right hand, while the sinners in their left hand or from behind their backs. The Quran says: “Then he who is given his record

in his right hand, soon will his account be taken by an easy reckoning, and he will turn to his people, rejoicing! But he who is given his record behind his back soon will he cry for perdition, and he will enter a blazing fire."

(84: 7-12)

No injustice will be done on the Day of Judgement. People's hands feet and tongues will bear witness against them. There will be no bargaining, no friendship or intercession. Parents, children, spouses and relatives will be of no avail. The Quran says: '*At length, when there comes the deafening noise that Day shall a man flee from his own brother, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children. Each one of them, that Day, will have enough concern (of his own) to make him indifferent to the others:* (80: 33-37)

Those who rejected Allah and ignored His guidance and the warning conveyed through His Messengers and Prophets will be thrown into Hell, a terrible and fearsome abode which the Quran describes as: "*The fire of (the wrath of) Allah kindled (to a blaze) which doth mount (right) to the hearts.*"

(104: 6,7)

These people, along with their companions, will be in a state of agony and torment. For them, the Quran says: "..... *They are the companions of the fire, they will abide therein*" (10 : 27).

As for those people who believed in Allah, who obeyed and submitted to Him and did righteous deeds, the Quran says: ".....*They are the best of creatures. Their reward is with Allah: Gardens of eternity, beneath which rivers flow, they will dwell therein forever: Allah well pleased with them and they with Him.....*" (98:7-8)

And also: "..... *they are the companions of the Garden, they will abide therein.*" (10: 26)

The two states of Heaven and Hell are not spiritual. They will be experienced in physical forms by the new bodies with which Allah will raise men up.

Islam lays the greatest stress on the individual's accountability to Allah. The human being's life in this world is a trial, an examination period, during which he prepares himself, either for reward or punishment, for the next life which is ever lasting.

It is obvious that a person who has lived his life in submission to Allah is in an entirely different state from the one who has lived all his life in rebellion and ingratitude to Allah. Those who do not believe in a future life become immoral and irresponsible because, for them the short life on this earth is everything. On the other hand, those who have a firm belief in life after death fear Allah, follow the straight path, do good deeds and abstain from all evil deeds.

Allah's Predestination and Decree

Another article of Islamic belief is faith in destiny; its good and evil. The Arabic word for destiny, Qadr, implies the measuring out of something or fixing a limit to it.

The word 'Qadr' has the same root as 'Qadir', one of Allah's names, meaning 'All Powerful'. Everything in the universe is subject to the law of Allah. This universal law is explained in the following verse of the Holy Quran: "*Glorify the name of thy Guardian-Lord Most High, Who hath created, and further, given order and proportion, Who hath ordained laws. And granted guidance.*" (87: 1-3)

Here four things are mentioned regarding every object of creation including man, its growth, its completion, its measure and its guidance to its goal which is brought about according to a law or measure within which everything works by Divine Guidance. It is only in this sense that a Muslim can be said to have faith in Qadr.

The basic concept which the word Taqdir furnishes and which is substantiated by the Quran and the Sunnah is that this universe and everything contained therein is the outcome of the planning and will of the Creator. He has created and fashioned it with infinite wisdom and with a definite purpose; He is not only supervising the universe but also directing it to its destined end. What Islam really stresses is that the Lord is the Supreme Power of the universe and He creates and directs it with a rational will.

Allah's knowledge encompasses all things, possible and impossible. He is eternally and absolutely knowing of everything; the Quran says: "..... the decree continues to descend among them, that you may know that Allah has power over all things and that Allah indeed encompasses all things in Knowledge." (65:12)

Allah created man with certain powers, which he could exercise under certain limitations and it is the exercise of these powers that produce good or evil. For instance, Allah has gifted man with the power of speech which he can use either to do good or evil to humanity, either to tell a truth or to utter a falsehood. Similarly, Allah has endowed man with numerous other powers that may be used either for good or for evil. He has given human beings freedom of choice for their actions, but He has also made them responsible for what they do as

He has shown them the difference between right and wrong. The Quran says: "The truth is from your Lord; let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it) (18:29)

Allah's Knowledge, Will and Power are Absolute and Unbounded, therefore, He knows the results of all events before their occurrence. A human being, however, does not have access to this knowledge and he acts in accordance with a desire from within which makes him responsible for his deeds and he is then happy or unhappy with the consequences.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} explained this belief in the following words: "If something befalls you, don't say if now I would have done such and such, rather say: Allah foreordained this, and whatever He wishes, He does; for, verily, the phrase "If only I would have", makes way for the work of Satan" (Muslim)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} once asked one of his companions: "Shall I not guide you to words that are a treasure from the treasures of Paradise?" He said: "Of course! O Messenger of Allah." The Prophet^{pbuh} said: "There is no ability or power except through Allah" (Bukhari and Muslim). The reality of these words is the crux of a full and proper understanding of Qadr.

Section Nine

Five Pillars of Islam

Meaning and Importance

The basis of the Islamic teaching and way of life are various obligatory acts of worship, **Ibadaat** that are often referred to as the **Five Pillars of Islam**. These consist of:

1. **Shahadat:** Declaration that none deserves to be worshipped except Allah and Muhammad^{pbuh} is His slave and apostle.
2. **Salat:** The prescribed prayers, five times a day.
3. **Saum:** Fasting during the month of Ramazan.
4. **Zakat:** Obligatory charity, helping the needy by giving alms.
5. **Hajj:** Pilgrimage to Makkah, if and when circumstances permit.

Just as the pillars bear the burden of a building, these principles, according to the teachings of the Prophet^{pbuh} are the basis of piety and of a virtuous worldly life. The Prophet^{pbuh} has taught that the only difference between individuals is the extent of their piety and not their colour or the social status that they enjoy in this world.

The purpose of the Islamic worship is to strengthen the Muslim faith and sense of submission to Allah, to discipline a Muslim for his role as Allah's faithful servant and vicegerent on earth, and to reinforce the ties of brotherhood and affection among Muslims. These acts of worship require the participation of all aspects of man's nature — his soul, his mind, his feelings, his body, his time, his energy and his possessions. They demand the worship of Allah with all the faculties of an individual. For example, the declaration of faith is to be always present in the mind and heart of the Muslim and is to be uttered again and again with the tongue during his daily prayers. Prayers are to be performed five times daily, everyday of a man's life. Fasting is for a full month every year, while Zakat or poor-due is to be paid once yearly and the pilgrimage is to be performed once in a lifetime, if possible.

These aspects of Islamic worship and the total involvement of human beings make them extremely unique. They are a complete expression of man's dependence and submission to Allah's Will, his humility before His Creator and his desire to serve and obey Him alone.

In these religious institutions, there is punctuality, regularity, orderliness, uniformity and an exhibition* of complete equality.

Shahadat

Declaration of Faith

أَشْهُدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهُدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّداً عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Translation

"I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, who is One, Who has no partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and apostle."

This declaration is the foundation and essence of Islam. It is the expression of this belief which differentiates a believer from a non-believer or an atheist. By bearing witness to the truth of these two sentences a person enters the fold of Islam.

The first part of the declaration is faith in the unity of Allah and a constant theme of the Holy Quran. It is repeatedly mentioned as the basic principle of Islam and of all revealed religions.

This declaration attests not only to the Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah, but it also signifies the Oneness of Lordship, the Sovereignty and the Authority in the universe and in this world. As there is no other Creator and Sustainer of the universe, there can likewise be no other Ruler, Law-giver and Supreme Authority for mankind. Allah is the Lord of all creation; He creates what He pleases, giving each of His creatures the nature, role and function which He desires for it; in this He is accountable to no one and all things are under His absolute control.

The primary emphasis of the Quran is upon the doctrine of **Tauhid**. There are numerous verses in the Quran which highlight the concept of Tauhid which is the cardinal principle of Islam. In the very opening chapter of the Holy Quran, Surah Fatihah, it is said:

"Thee do we worship and thine aid we seek." (1:5)

Similarly, in chapter 4, verse 36, it is said:

"Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him." (4:36)

The most concise expression of this principle is to be found in Surah Ikhlas.

"Say: He is Allah,

The One and Only;

Allah the Eternal, Absolute,

*He begetteth not,
Nor is He begotten;
And there is none
Like unto Him.” (112:1-4)*

True unity of Allah means that Allah is:

- a) Unique in Person: This signifies that Allah is only One and there is no plurality of gods. The Quran says:

Allah has said:

“Take not (for worship) two gods: for He is just one God.” (16:51)

- b) Unique in Attributes: This signifies that no other being can be equal to Allah in attributes. For example, man may attain a degree of perfection in the attribute of kindness, but only Allah possesses the perfection of the attribute of kindness.

- c) Unique in action: No one can do the works which Allah has done or may do.

All the messengers of Allah have conveyed the message of His unity:

“..... He said: O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other god but Him.....” (7: 59, 73, 85)

The role of the Prophet of Islam was to bring about the acceptance of this principle of religion by entire mankind. The Quran says:

“Not a messenger did We send before thee without this inspiration sent by Us to him: that there is no god but I; therefore, worship and serve Me.” (21: 25)

The second part of the declaration “Muhammad is His slave and apostle” shows its inseparable relation to the first. The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} name is the name most closely associated with that of Allah. This sentence is also a constant theme of the Holy Quran. After acknowledging Allah as our Master and Sovereign, it is necessary to know what are His commandments, what will please Him and what will incur His displeasure. For this purpose, Allah appointed Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh} as His messenger and sent the Quran through him.

He is the model for every Muslim without whom we would have no idea of how to conform to the truth laid down by the first part of the declaration. To believe in him as a Messenger of Allah means to accept His authority as the representative of the Supreme Ruler and to follow his example.

He is the link between the Creator and the creatures, therefore, to deny the second part of the declaration would be to cut off all connections with the first. The declaration that Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh} is Allah's messenger is a proclamation of belief in the complete and final guidance that he brought for all humanity. It is also a statement of intention to follow that guidance faithfully.

This declaration prepares human beings to reflect upon Hazrat Muhammad's^{pbuh} teachings and encourages them to follow his path. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} summed up all the previous revelations, therefore, to follow him is to follow the teachings

of all the Prophets. He is a symbol of the Message of Allah, of that Religion which was preached by all the prophets.

The religion he was given to preach was Islam in the form of a complete system covering all aspects of material and spiritual life of mankind. He led his life according to the commandments of Allah, and showed the Muslims, the way to lead their lives. So, when we recite the second part of the declaration i.e., Muhammad^{pbuh} is His slave and apostle, we undertake to follow the law and system shown by him.

Salat-Prayer

Importance of Prayer

The importance of prayer in Islam is great as it is the foremost duty of the Muslims; and the chief of the pillars on which the structure of Islam stands. It is the distinguishing feature between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said:

"What stands between a man and disbelief is the abandonment of salat."

(Muslim)

And again:

"The first thing which a person shall be called to account for on the Day of Judgement is Salat." (Tirmizi)

A unique service that the Prophet^{pbuh} rendered to humanity was that he made prayer to Allah not only the foundation stone of the individual development of a man but also the basis of a vast brotherhood of humanity.

The first revelations were in the following order:

To read and write; to warn the people and declare the Greatness of Allah; and to pray to Allah not only during the daytime but also during night.

The Quran says:

"Establish regular prayers - at the Sun's decline till the darkness of the night — And pray in the small watches of the morning ---" (17: 78-79)

The object of prayer is to remember Allah. It is, therefore, the chief reason why prayer was dearest to the Prophet^{pbuh}. He said:

"Prayer has been made a coolness for my eyes."

He declared prayers to be the pillar of Islam and said:

"He who gives up prayer has indeed disbelieved." (Tirmizi)

The Quran mentions prayer many times and has laid the greatest emphasis on it; therefore, the sin of giving up prayer is great as also praying carelessly or with an absent mind. The Quran says:

"So woe to the worshippers who are neglectful of their prayers." (107: 4-5)

Observance of prayer five times a day is compulsory. Basically, it consists of recitations from the Holy Quran and glorification of Allah accompanied by various bodily postures, such as standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting. Through these postures, Muslims express submission, adoration and humility to Allah. The self-discipline which is needed to perform Salat regularly and at

proper times, to perform the ablution which precedes prayer and to carry on these prayers in the early morning when sleep is so attractive, during the busy daylight hours when one is preoccupied with work and other activities, and at night when one is tired and wants to sleep reaffirms the human being's total dependence on his Creator and his position as His slave.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} exhorted his followers to offer their prayers as if they were standing in front of Allah, looking at Him. In prayer, the Divine presence is to be felt as a reality:

"You should worship Allah, as if you see Him; if you do not see Him, He surely sees you." (Muslim)

Prayer is further meant to seek help as well as guidance from Allah. This seeking of help and guidance is linked in the daily prayer of the Muslims:

"Thee do we worship and thine aid we seek. Show us the straight way."

(I: 5-6)

In the Holy Quran, prayer is referred to as a sustenance for the human soul so that the man who does not pray to Allah must be regarded as spiritually dead. Prayer protects one from sins and shameful deeds. Prayer purifies him and brings him closer to Allah. The Quran says:

"Establish regular prayer, for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds." (29:45)

This continuous reminder keeps the conscience alive, functioning in a proper manner. Without the regular performance of prayer, it is likely to become inactive and easily corrupted. Prayer once a week or even once or twice a day, does not fulfil this purpose and is only a partial and insufficient expression of the human being's relationship with his Sustainer.

The three conditions of the believers as given in the Holy Book are:

"Those who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer and spend out of what We have provided for them." (2:3)

It will be seen that belief in Allah, the Great Unseen, is immediately followed by the keeping up of prayer, thus showing that by means of prayer, belief is turned into a certainty of the Divine existence. This is followed by spending out of what Allah has given to man, for the benefit of others, in charity. Thus, faith in Allah is translated into practice by prayer, which in turn, leads to the service of humanity.

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} further explained what the Holy Quran taught. On one occasion, he said to his companions:

"Tell me, if there is a stream at the door of one of you in which he washes himself five times a day, what do you say, will it leave any dirt on him?"

And on receiving the reply that it would not, he added,

"This is the likeness of the five prayers with which Allah washes away all faults." (Bukhari, Muslim)

A Muslim is required to pray at the prescribed times wherever he may be.

But it is preferable and meritorious to pray in congregation with his fellow Muslims if possible. This gathering of all Muslims living in the same locality five times daily, is a step towards the establishment of healthy social relations. In the daily service, these relations are limited to a narrow circle i.e., to members of the same neighbourhood. The circle becomes wider in the weekly Friday service which gathers together all Muslim members of a particular locality, and still more extensive in the two annual gatherings of Muslim festivals of Eid. Thus, prayer promotes social relations between different sections of the Muslim community.

Salat is the central point of the life of a Muslim, without which he would not be able to maintain a strong and vital link with his Lord or continue his inner struggle against wrong doing or temptation. Because of all these aspects, Salat is the principal means whereby the Muslim keeps in mind the limited and temporary nature of worldly life and the certainty of death and life to come. Thus, he is able to maintain a sense of balance and proportion between the needs and claims of this world and the Hereafter.

Cleanliness - Method and Conditions

A true Muslim must be pure and clean in mind, body and heart. Islam enjoins strict cleanliness and purity on its followers. We are told in the Quran:

“— He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.” (2:222)

“Allah loveth those who make themselves pure.” (9:108)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said:

“Purification is the key to prayer,” (Ahmad)

Also *“Purification is one half of faith.” (Muslim)*

In the light of the Quranic verses and traditions, it becomes clear that a person should be clean inwardly as well as outwardly at all times, especially at the time of saying prayers. Inward purification is to rid the mind of all corrupt ideas and evil thoughts. Outward purification is attained by taking a bath or performing ablution. If a man cleans himself five times a day, he would undoubtedly be in a constant state of physical purity.

There are certain conditions regarding cleanliness of body, clothes, place of worship, etc. that have to be fulfilled before a person can say his prayers. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said:

“Surely Allah does not accept prayers without purification.” (Muslim)

Filth

Apart from waste products discharged from the body which are regarded as filth, other impurities recognized by Islam are semen, flowing blood, pus, swine and everything associated with it and alcohol. All these are included in the definition of **Najasat Ghaleezah**. If even the smallest quantity of Najasat

Ghaleezah falls in any article of food or drink, the whole of it is polluted and becomes unclean and unfit for use by a Muslim. If some Najasat Ghaleezah falls on the clothes, they must be removed and washed thrice, squeezing the cloth each time.

Wuzu or Ablution - Method and Conditions

Ablution or **Wuzu** in the prescribed manner is necessary for a person who intends to say his prayers as the Quran says:

"O you who believe! When you prepare for prayer, wash your faces and your hands (and arms) to the elbows, rub your heads (with water) and (wash) your feet to the ankles." (5:6)

Ablution consists of some practices that are obligatory or **Farz** i.e., those specifically mentioned in the Quranic verses; others that are traditional i.e., the Holy Prophet's ^{s_bbh} practice or **Sunnat**, and others that are termed desirable or **Mustahab** entitling a person to spiritual recompense. The approved method of performing Wuzu is as under:

Making the intention or **niyat**, of Wuzu, i.e. to say: 'I intend to perform the Wuzu for securing Allah's good pleasure and in compliance with His command.' Then recite the following:-

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful."

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي

"O Allah! Forgive my sins."

If possible, one should sit facing the Qiblah. The water to be used for Wuzu should be absolutely clean.

First the right and then the left hand should be washed upto the wrists thrice. The wet fingers should be passed in between each other. If there are any bangles on the wrists or rings on the fingers, as in the case of females, they should be moved around so that the skin under them does not remain dry.

After this rinse the mouth thrice. Next, some water should be taken in the right hand and sniffed into the nostrils thrice and then blown out. The left hand should be used for cleaning the nose. Then the whole face should be washed with both hands, thrice from the forehead down to the lower portion of the chin and from the lobe of one ear to the other. No portion of the face should remain dry. For males, the wet fingers of the right hand should be passed through the hair of the beard. Thereafter, first the right arm and then the left arm upto the elbows should be washed thrice. After washing the arms wipe the head with wet hands from front to back, and pass the back

of wet hands over the nape of the neck. Clear the inner side of ears with forefingers and outer with thumbs. Finally wash the feet, right and then left upto the ankles.

The Wuzu should be a continuous process, each part being washed and cleaned in the prescribed order, without any break or interval. No part should be allowed to dry up before the other is washed. After the Wuzū, the Kalima-e-Shahadat should be recited:

أَشْهُدُ أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَةٌ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهُدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

"I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, who is One, Who has no partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and apostle."

And then the following prayer may be recited:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَابِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنْ عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ

"O Allah! Make me one of those who repent for their sins; and make me one of those who keep themselves pure; and make me one of Your righteous servants."

Wuzu may be performed before every prayer. But the necessity for it arises only when a person has passed urine, stool or wind or if he has been fast asleep.

The items that are specifically mentioned in the Holy Quran i.e., Faraiz-e-Wuzu are four in number. These are:-

1. To wash the face from the top of the forehead to the chin and as far as each ear.
2. To wash the hands and the arms upto the elbow.
3. To wipe the head with wet hands.
4. To wash the feet upto the ankles.

The items established on the example of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} i.e., Sunan-e-Wuzu are fourteen in number. They are:

1. To make the intention of Wuzu.
2. To wash the hands upto the wrist.
3. To say one of the names of God at the commencement of the Wuzu.
4. To brush the teeth.
5. To rinse the mouth three times.
6. To put water into the nostrils thrice.
7. To do all the above items in proper order.
8. To do all the above items without any delay between the various acts.
9. Each part is to be washed thrice.
10. The space between the fingers of one hand must be rubbed with the wet finger of the other.

11. The beard must be combed with the fingers.
12. The head must be wiped once.
13. The ears must be washed with the water remaining on the fingers after wiping the head.
14. To rub between the toes with the little finger of the left hand starting from the little toe of the right foot.

There are five **Mustahab** or desirable acts in Wuzu. They are:

1. To begin from the right to the left.
2. To rub the neck.
3. To perform Wuzu without the help of another person.
4. To face the Qiblah while performing Wuzu.
5. To sit on a high and clean place while performing Wuzu.

There are four **Makruhat** or undesirable acts in Wuzu. They are:-

1. To perform Wuzu in an impure place.
2. To clean the nose with the right hand.
3. To talk about worldly affairs, while performing Wuzu.
4. To perform against the rules and regulations laid down by the Holy Prophet ^{pbuh}.

A person's Wuzu becomes ineffectual on becoming subject to the state of **Hads-e-Asghar** i.e., the state of impurity or uncleanliness which is brought about by answering the call of nature, by passing wind or by vomiting or **Hads-e-Akbar** i.e., the state of impurity or uncleanliness which is caused by marital relations, menstruation or the period of childbirth. In addition to these, the following acts and circumstances also render the Wuzu void:

1. Discharge of intestinal worms or stone.
2. Flowing of any impurity from any part of the body.
3. Taking a nap, or going to sleep by resting the body against any object.
4. Laughing loudly during prayers.
5. Losing consciousness or fainting due to some illness.
6. Becoming insane or mad.

Tayammum or Dry Ablution

Regarding Tayammum the Holy Quran says:

"..... If ye are ill or on a journey And ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. Allah doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean...." (5: 6)

It will be seen from the above mentioned verse of the Holy Quran that permission for resorting to Tayammum is granted on the grounds of illness, travelling and the non-availability of water. It can be performed instead of Wuzu (ablution) or **Ghusl** (bath). If one is suffering from a disease in which the use of water would be injurious and there are chances that the use of water would aggravate the illness; or if one cannot find water for Wuzu or Ghusl; or

if one is travelling in a place where there is no one to indicate where water could be found; or if there is a danger that the enemy might attack while one is performing ablution or taking a bath, then one can perform Tayammum instead of Wuzu or Ghusl.

The approved, traditional method of Tayammum is as under:

First to recite سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ and then to make the following niyat:

"I intend to make tayammum with the object of removing impurity and acquiring purity."

After this, both hands should be struck on some clean and pure earth or sand, the excessive dust blown off and both the hands rubbed on the face in such a way that no part of the face which has to be washed with water in Wuzu is left out. In the case of males, it is desirable to pass the fingers through the beard. Again, both hands should be struck on the clean earth or sand, the excess dust blown off and first the right arm and then the left arm be rubbed upto the elbows. This completes the Tayammum. A dry stone free of dust, brick or an earthen pot may also be used for the purpose.

As in the case of Wuzu, several prayers can be said with one Tayammum. The acts and circumstances which nullify Wuzu also nullify Tayammum. If Tayammum is done because of the non-availability of water, then it would become ineffectual as soon as water is available. Similarly, if Tayammum was done on account of illness, then as soon as the disability to use water ceases, Tayammum will become void.

Bath – Method and Conditions

The Holy Quran says:

"O you who believe! Do not approach prayers.....in a state of ceremonial impurity (except when travelling on the road) until after washing your whole body." (4: 43)

The Arabic word for bath is **Ghusl** derived from **Ghasl** that means to wash. In religious terminology, it is the act of washing the whole body after Hads-e-Akbar or greater impurity which is caused by marital relations, menstruation or the period of childbirth. Other occasions for taking a bath founded on the practice of the Holy Prophet^{buh} are upon the admission of a convert to Islam; before Friday prayers and on festivals and after washing the dead.

The approved, traditional method of Ghusl is as follows:

1. Make the niyat i.e., to say: "I intend to take a bath for seeking purification;"
2. Both hands including the wrists should be washed;
3. Any impurity that there may be on any part of the body should be removed.
4. Wuzu should be performed in the prescribed manner taking special care about gargling and ensuring that water reaches the throat; but if one is fasting, care must be taken to see that water does not enter the throat while gargling.

5. Water should be poured thrice on the entire body from the head to the feet, first on the right-hand side and then on the left, taking care to rub the body well.

No portion of the body should remain dry and water should reach even the roots of the hair. In case of females, care should be taken about bangles and rings.

There are three **faraiz** in a bath. They are:

1. Gargling.
2. Putting the water into the nostrils.
3. Pouring of water over the entire body, at last once in such a way that not even a hair's breadth of the body remains dry.

The acts in a bath established on the example of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} are:

1. To wash both hands upto the wrists.
2. To wash those parts of the body where impurity is found.
3. To make the intention of removing the impurity.
4. To perform Wuzu.
5. To wash the whole body thrice with water.

The Wuzu performed while taking a bath is sufficient for saying prayers.

Azan - Call to Prayers

Every prayer with the exception of the two Eid prayers and funeral prayers is preceded by an **Azaan**. The **Muezzin** i.e., the person who calls out the *Azaan* should be an adult Muslim male. It is preferred that he should perform the Wuzu before calling the *Azaan* and stand on a raised platform with his face towards the Qiblah. Inserting the tips of his forefingers in his ears, he should give the *Azaan* in a loud and clear voice pronouncing the words correctly and distinctly. The words of the *Azaan* are as under:

1. أَللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ "Allah is Great." (4 times)
2. أَشْهُدُ أَنَّ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ "I do bear witness that there is no god except Allah." (Twice)
3. أَشْهُدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّداً رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ "I do bear witness that Muhammad is the apostle of Allah." (Twice)
4. حَمْدٌ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ "Come to prayer." (Twice; turning the face to the right)
5. حَمْدٌ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ "Come to success." (Twice; turning face to the left)

6. "الله أكْبَرُ" *Allah is Great.*" (Twice)

7. لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
"There is no god except Allah." (Once)

In the Azaan for the Fajr prayers, after saying حَيٌّ عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ the following words are included:

8. الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِّن النَّوْمِ

"Prayer is better than sleep." (Twice)

Except when

1. A person is saying his prayers;
2. The Imam is delivering the Khutba;
3. A person is answering the call of nature;

All those who hear the Azaan should repeat in a low voice, the words of the Muezzin. When he hears

and حَيٌّ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ
حَيٌّ عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ

the listener should say:

لَا حُوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

"The strength to shun evil and to do good deeds is only from Allah."
When he hears

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِّن النَّوْمِ

he should say

صَدَقْتَ وَبَرَرْتَ

"You have spoken the truth and said a good thing."

When the Azaan is over, the listener should pray in the following words:-

اللَّهُمَّ رَبِّ هَذِهِ الدُّعَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْقَائِمَةِ اتْمِمْ مُحَمَّداً وَالْوَسِيلَةَ
وَالْفَضِيلَةَ وَالدُّرْجَةَ الرَّفِيقَةَ وَابْعَثْهُ مَقَامًا مُحْمُودًا الَّذِي وَعَدْتَهُ وَارْزُقْنَا
شَفَاعَةَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

"O Allah! Lord of this perfect call and the prayer to be offered presently, grant Muhammad the way of approach unto Thee and also eminence and raise him unto the glorious station Thou hast promised him and bestow his intercession on us on the Day of Judgement. Verily Thou never go back on Thy word."

The words of the *Azaan* in the order in which they are pronounced have come down to us unchanged from A.H. I., when the *Azaan* was said for the first time in the presence of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}.

Importance of Azan

The Azan is not only an announcement of the time of prayer, but also of the great principles of the Islamic faith and of the significance underlying them. It is an announcement, made five times daily, of the unity of Allah and of the Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad^{pbuh}, which are the two fundamental principles of Islam.

The announcement also carries the real significance of the unity of Allah which is contained in the words 'Allahu Akbar' or 'Allah is the Greatest', so that man must bow only before Him.

The words 'Come to Prayer' followed by 'Come to Success' signify that by coming to prayer real success and self-development is attained.

Iqamat - Announcement for Congregational Service

When the congregational prayers are about to start, people stand up and form rows and the Muezzin recites the **Iqamat**. The words of the Iqamat are the same as those of Azan but with the difference that they are recited only once and not repeated. The person reciting the Iqamat does not insert the tips of his fore fingers in his ears nor does he turn his face to the right or the left while reciting:

حَمْدُ اللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ
حَمْدُ اللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ

After which he says

قَدْ قَامَتِ الصَّلَاةُ

"Prayer has indeed begun." (Twice)

Names and Times of Prayers

The names of the five obligatory prayers are:

1. Fajr
2. Zuhra
3. Asr
4. Maghrib
5. Isha

1. Fajr: This is an early morning prayer.

The time of this prayer commences after the break of dawn and ends just before sunrise. It is **makruh** or undesirable to say prayers when the sun is rising. No **nafl** prayer is to be said till the sun has risen well.

2. Zuhr: (Early afternoon)

The time of this prayer commences when the sun begins to decline and the shadows of things cease to decrease. It ends when the shadow of everything becomes equal to twice the size of its shadow at noon or mid-day.

No prayer is to be said or the Quran recited at the time of the decline of the sun.

3. Asr: (Late afternoon)

The time of this prayer commences after the end of the time for Zuhr prayers and ends before sunset.

4. Maghrib: (Evening)

The time of this prayer commences immediately after sunset and ends on the fading of twilight.

No prayer is to be said at the time of the setting of the sun.

5. Isha: (Early night)

The time of this prayer commences after the fading of twilight and ends before dawn but it is desirable to say this prayer before midnight.

Number of **Raka'at** in the five daily prayers

The five daily prayers consist of:

- (a) **Farz** or obligatory
- (b) **Sunnat** (traditional) i.e., the Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} practice.
- (c) **Wajib**
- (d) **Nafl**

The Sunnat is divided into **Sunnat Muakkadah** and **Sunnat Ghair Muakkadah**.

By Sunnat Muakkadah is meant an act which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} always did except for some valid reason. The Raka'at which are Sunnat Muakkadah must be offered.

By Sunnat Ghair Muakkadah is meant an act which the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} did but which he sometimes did not do without any valid reason. The offering of Raka'at which are Sunnat Ghair Muakkadah entitles a person to spiritual reward.

1. Fajr:	2	Pre-Farz Sunnat (Muakkadah)
	2	Farz
Total =	<u>4</u>	Raka'at
2. Zuhra:	4	Pre-Farz Sunnat (Muakkadah)
	4	Farz
	2	Post-Farz Sunnat (Muakkadah)
	2	Nafl
Total =	<u>12</u>	Raka'at
3. Asr:	4	Pre-Farz Sunnat (Ghair Muakkadah)
	4	Farz
Total =	<u>8</u>	Raka'at
4. Maghrib:	3	Farz
	2	Post-Farz Sunnat (Muakkadah)
	2	Nafl
Total =	<u>7</u>	Raka'at
5. Isha:	4	Pre-Farz Sunnat (Ghair Muakkadah)
	4	Farz
	2	Post-Farz Sunnat (Muakkadah)
	2	Nafl
	3	Witr -Wajib
	2	Nafl
Total =	<u>17</u>	Raka'at

Components of Prayer

Each **Rakat** consists of:

a. Six items which are Farz:

- (1) **Takbir Tahrima**,
- (2) **Qiyam**,
- (3) **Qirat**,
- (4) **Ruku**,
- (5) **Sajdah**,
- (6) **Qa'adah Akhira**.

If any item is left out, the Salat shall have to be repeated.

b. Thirteen items which are Wajib.

If any item is left out then **Sajdah Sahav** (Prostration due to forgetfulness) becomes necessary and this shall remove the defect.

c. Twenty items which are Sunnat.

If any item classified as Sunnat is left out due to mistake, no Sajdah Sahav is necessary and the Salat does not become void.

d. Mustahab.

Conditions of Prayer

Before a person can say his regular prayers, the following conditions must be fulfilled; otherwise the prayers would be void:

- a. The body of the person must be clean.
- b. The clothes worn must be clean and free from all impurities.
- c. The place where the prayers are to be said must be clean and free from all impurities.
- d. The 'Satar' (those parts of the body which should be kept covered) must be properly covered. For a male, the Satar consists of the portion of the body from the navel to the knees. For a female, her entire body with the exception of her face, hands and feet is Satar.
- e. It must be the time for the particular prayer to be offered.
- f. The Qiblah must be faced while saying the prayers.
- g. Intention or niyat must be declared for saying the kind of prayer i.e., Farz, Sunnat etc., of the particular prayer time i.e., Fajr, Zuhr etc. that one is offering.

Method of Prayer

The approved, traditional method of prayer is as follows:

Standing straight with the face towards the Ka'abah and hands hanging down the sides of the body, the worshipper makes the niyat for the Faraz/Sunnat/Nafl prayer that is to be offered. He then raises his hands to his ears and recites Takbir-e-Tahrima i.e., Allahu-Akbar- 'Allah is Greatest'. The hands are thereafter brought down and folded on the navel. In this standing position, which is known as Qiyam, the Sana is to be recited:

سُبْحَنَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ

"Glory to Thee O Allah; and Thine is the Praise and Blessed is Thy name and Exalted is Thy Majesty; and there is no one worthy of worship except (Thee)."

Then the worshipper recites first the Ta'awwuz

أَغُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَنِ الرَّجِيمِ

"I betake myself to Allah for refuge from the accursed Shaitan", is to be recited and then the Tasmiyah i.e.,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful" is to be recited.

After Tasmiyah, Surah Fatihah is to be recited.

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمٰنُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝ مَلِكُ يَوْمٍ ۝ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ
وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ هُدًىٰ نَهٰدُنَا الصِّرٰاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرٰاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

"Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee do we worship and Thine aid we seek. Show us the straight way. The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray."

Immediately after Surah Fatihah, some other Surah is recited. This is called Qirat.

The Qiyam is followed by Ruku, which means bowing down. In this posture, the worshipper, while standing, bows forward and places both hands on his knees. In this position, he recites Tasbih Ruku i.e.,

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ

"Glory to my Lord, the Great "

at least three times.

Aftr saying Tasbih Ruku and standing straight, the worshipper recites first the Tasmi.

سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ لِمَنْ حَمَدَهُ

"Allah listens to him who gives praise."

and then the Tahmid:

رَبُّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ

"O our Lord! All praise is due to Thee alone" is recited, after which he stands erect for a short while. This is called Qaumah. After thus standing up, the worshipper bends down for Sajdah-prostration, while reciting Takbir.

In the position of Sajdah, the toes of both feet, both knees, both hands and the forehead touch the ground. In this posture, the Tasbih Sajdah i.e.,

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى

"Glory to my Lord, the Most High" is recited at least three times.

After the Tasbih Sajdah, the worshipper raises first the forehead, then the nose and finally the hands and recites Takbir. He then sits for a short while and recites the Takbir. This sitting is known as **Jalsa**, after which the second Sajdah is performed in the same way as the first. He recites the Takbir while rising from the Sajdah.

The worshipper then stands to perform the second Raka'at in the same way as the first except that the Sana in the position of Qiyam is not to be recited.

After the second Raka'at, the worshipper assumes the sitting position known as **Qa'adah**.

If the niyat was for two Raka'ats, this will be called **Qa'adah Akhira**, but if the niyat was for three or four Raka'ats, this sitting will be called **Qa'adah Ula**.

In the **Qa'adah Ula**, the worshipper recites first the **Tahiyya**:

التحيات لِللهِ وَالصَّلواتُ وَالطَّيباتُ السَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ
وَبَرَكَاتُهُ السَّلامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَىٰ عِبَادِ اللهِ الصَّالِحِينَ

"All prayers and worship rendered through words, actions and wealth are due to Allah alone. Peace be on you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Peace be on us and the righteous servants of Allah."

Then the **Tashhaud**:

أَشْهُدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَأَشْهُدُ أَنْ مُحَمَّداً عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

"I bear witness that none deserves to be worshipped except Allah; and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and apostle."

After this, the worshipper rises for the third Raka'at.

The third and the fourth Raka'ats are to be completed in the same way as the second Raka'at.

After the second Sajdah of the third or fourth Raka'at as the case may be, the worshipper performs **Qa'adah Akhira**, in which after reciting **Tahiyya** and **Tashhaud**, he recites **Durud**:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَىٰ أَلِّ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَىٰ أَلِّ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ اللَّهُمَّ بارِكْ عَلَىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَىٰ أَلِّ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَىٰ أَلِّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

"O Allah! Exalt Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as Thou exalted Ibrahim and the true followers of Ibrahim, for surely Thou art praised and magnified. O Allah! Bless Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as Thou blessed Ibrahim and the true followers of Ibrahim, for surely Thou art praised and magnified".

After Durud, he recites the following prayer:

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرَيْتِنِ رَبِّنَا وَتَقْبَلْ دُعَاءَ طَرَبَنَا اغْفِرْنِي
وَلِوَالدَّائِي وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابِ

"O my Lord! Make me one who establishes regular prayers and also among my progeny. O Our Lord! Accept my prayer. O One Lord! Cover (me) with your forgiveness – me, my parents and believers on the Day of Judgement."

After this, the worshipper ends the prayer with **Taslim**. For this, he turns his face to the right. Looking over the right shoulder, he says:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ ط

"Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah"

Then, turning his face to the left and looking over the left shoulder, he repeats the same words.

Postures of Prayer

The different postures of prayer are indicative of the humility of the body and the soul.

Each Raka'at consists of three parts. The first of these is the standing position called Qiyam with which the prayer is started. The worshippers stand in rows with their arms folded in an attitude of humility. In this position, the Divine Being is praised, prayers are addressed to Him and certain portions of the Quran are recited.

This is followed by Ruku in which the worshippers bow down in even greater humility before their Lord. This is followed by two prostrations, which are an indication of the utmost humility of the worshippers before their Lord.

At the end of two Raka'ats, the worshippers continue the glorification of Allah and their supplication in a sitting position which is called Qa'adah and is an indication of peace.

The prescribed prayer, glorification and supplication is appropriate to each posture. For example, during prostration the worshipper glorifies Allah in these terms: 'Glory to my Lord, the Most High' whereby both the body and the soul feel and acknowledge their own extreme humility and submission before Allah. It is a state of surrender whereby a man by his act of devotion throws himself upon the Mercy of Allah and states that He alone is great and he himself is an insignificant humble servant before Him.

Delayed Prayer - Qaza

The believers are enjoined to offer their prayers at the appointed times. Failing to do so is a sin unless there is a reasonable excuse for delay. With the exception of prayers missed by women in childbirth or menstruation and any Muslim who is insane or is unconscious for some time, every Muslim must offer the delayed obligatory prayer. These prayers have to be offered as soon as possible except at times when prostration is forbidden. In the Niyat, the word **Qaza** should be added.

If several prayers have been missed in a day, then the Qaza should be offered in proper order. For example if prayers have been missed beginning from Fajr then Fajr Qaza should be offered first, then Zuhr and Asr and so on. If the missed prayers are too numerous to remember or if the time available is not enough for both missed and present prayers, then the present prayer should be offered first. The missed prayer should be offered later.

Qaza can be offered for only the Farz and Witr prayers. Except for the pre-Farz Sunnats of Fajr for which Qaza may be offered before sunset the same day, no Qaza of other Sunnats is to be offered.

If Zuhr, Asr or Isha prayers become Qaza while travelling, one should, when he returns home, offer the Qaza of these as if he was still a traveller that is, two Raka'at each. If however, the prayers become Qaza before a journey and one offers the Qaza during the journey, he should offer the full four Raka'at of the three prayers.

If a person is unable to offer his missed prayers before death, he should make a will to pay compensation which is $1\frac{3}{4}$ kilo of wheat per prayer out of the property he leaves behind. The compensation for the missed Farz of the five daily prayer and the Witr of Isha comes to $10\frac{1}{2}$ kilos per day.

Combining Prayer – Jama'ah

The two afternoon prayers, Zuhr and Asr may be combined when one is on a journey and so may the two night prayers, Maghrib and Isha (Bukhari). Such a combination is also allowed in bad weather. According to a hadis, this combination is allowed even when there is neither journey nor rain. A companion reported that the Prophet combined the Zuhr and Asr prayers and the Maghrib and Isha prayers when there was neither journey nor fear and, when asked why he did it, he answered, "*so that my followers may not be in difficulty*" (Muslim). According to another report, this combination was effected in Madina when there was neither fear nor rain (Muslim).

This combination is called **Jama'ah bain as-Salatain** or the combination of two prayers. Both prayers may be said at the time of the earlier prayer which is called **Jama'ah Taqdim** or an earlier combination or at the time of the late prayer, which is called **Jama'ah Takhir**, or a late combination.

Shortened Prayer – Qasr

If one is on journey, the prayers are shortened. The Quran says: "When ye travel through the earth, there is no blame on you if ye shorten your prayers." (4: 101)

The Sunnahs are dropped with the exception of Fajr prayer and the number of four Farz Raka'ats in the Zuhr, Asr and Isha prayers are reduced to two. The Witr of Isha prayers are retained.

In addition, the traveller is allowed to combine the Zuhr and Asr prayers and the Maghrib and Isha prayers. If he acts as the Imam, he shortens the prayer, while his followers who are not travellers complete the number of Raka'ats; but if the Imam is not on a journey, while his followers are, the latter do not shorten the prayer.

If a traveller stays in some place, then he may shorten his prayer as long as he is there. If he intends to stay in a place for a certain period of time, but keeps delaying it for some reason, he may shorten his prayers, even for years.

According to some jurists, prayers may be shortened if the journey is for fifteen days and according to others, for nineteen days. A companion said: "*The Prophet stayed, during some of his journeys for nineteen days and he prayed only two raka'at. If we stayed in a place for nineteen days, we would not pray the complete Salat. However, if we stayed longer than that, we would perform the whole Salat.*" (Bukhari)

There is a difference of opinion to the distance after which a traveller can shorten the prayer. According to some scholars, it is 48 miles.

Friday Prayer

Friday is a day of special importance for Muslims. The following verses of the Holy Quran relate to congregational prayers on Friday:-

"O ye who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday (The day of assembly) hasten earnestly to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business (and traffic) that is best for you if ye but knew! And when the prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land and seek of the bounty of Allah,....." (62: 9,10)

Friday prayers take the place of the Zuhr prayers on that day, and may not be offered qaza, therefore whoever misses it, cannot make up for it. Instead, he has to offer the Zuhr prayer. Friday prayer must be offered in congregation.

Friday prayer are obligatory on all adult males of sound mind, who are healthy and are residents. Those exempted from attending the mosque for Friday prayer are minors, slaves, the sick, travellers and women. These people are to offer Zuhr prayers in their homes. All normal work is allowed on Friday. The Muslims can carry on with their usual duties and activities provided they

come to the congregational service on time. After the service is over, they may return to their business and other worldly activities. It is traditional to take a bath on Friday and to wear clean clothes.

Muslims are required to leave their business and go to the mosque as soon as they hear the Azaan for Friday prayers. On reaching the mosque, one should first offer the **Tahayyut-ul-Masjid** prayers and then the four pre-farz Sunnats. The second Azaan is called before the Khutba. After the Azaan the Imam stands up and facing the audience, delivers the Khutba or the sermon, which is an essential part of the Friday service. The Khutba is Farz and listening to it is Wajib. While the Khutba is being delivered, no conversation is allowed. Even praying, reading the Quran or reciting durud is forbidden. Everyone should be seated and listen to the Khutba quietly till the end. The Khutba consists of two parts, each of which begins with praising Allah and asking blessings for the Holy Prophet^{pbuH}. In the first part, some Quranic passages are recited and explained. After this, the Imam sits down for a short rest and then stands up to deliver the second part of the sermon. In this part especially, the imam prays for the general welfare of the Muslims.

After the Khutba, Iqamat is called and people arrange themselves in rows. Two obligatory raka'at are offered under the leadership of the Imam who recites the Sana, Ta'awwuz and Tasmiya in the first raka'at in a low voice. Then the Imam recites *Surah Fatihah* and some other passages from the Quran in a loud voice in both raka'at. The **Muqtadis** should listen to the Imam's recitation and say **Ameen** in a low voice. When this is done, the prayer is complete.

The Muqtadis may now offer individually four Sunnat, followed by two more Sunnat and two Nafl.

Eid Prayer

The two main festivals in Islam are **Eid-ul-Fitr** and **Eid-ul-Azha**. Eid means recurring happiness or festival. Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated on the 1st of Shawwal which follows Ramazan or the month of Fasting. Eid-ul-Azha falls on the tenth day of Zil Hajj and follows the completion of Hajj.

Eid is a day of thanksgiving during which Muslims assemble in a brotherly and joyful atmosphere to offer their thanks to Allah for helping them to fulfil their spiritual obligations. The Eid day starts with congregational prayer in the morning. During the prayer, the Muslims remember and glorify Allah's name, and ask for His forgiveness and for strength of faith.

The method of prayer for Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha is the same. Eid prayers are Wajib on all those persons on whom Friday prayers are obligatory. These are congregational prayers and cannot be said individually. Eid prayers are not a substitute for the obligatory Fajr prayer and there is no Qaza for Eid prayer. The time for Eid prayer is anytime after sunrise but before noon. Usually,

Eid-ul-Azha prayers are held a little earlier than the Eid-ul-Fitr prayers. No Azaan or Iqamat is required. The prayer consists of two Raka'at with the Imam reciting in each, Surah Fatihah and another passage from the Quran in an audible voice.

The intention for prayer is in these words:

"I intend to offer two Raka'at Wajib of Eid-ul-Fitr / Eid-ul-Azha (as the case may be) with six additional Takbirs, behind this Imam and I am facing the Holy Ka'abah."

When the Imam recites Takbir-e-Tahrima, Allahu-Akbar in a loud voice, the Muqtadis should also say the Takbir in a low voice, and fold their hands below their navel as in other prayers. Both the Imam and the Muqtadis now recite the Sana in a low voice. After reciting Sana, the Imam raises both hands upto the ears and says, the Takbir i.e., Allahu Akbar in a loud voice. The Muqtadis also raise their hands upto the ears and say the Takbir in a low voice. The Imam and the Muqtadis should then lower their hands and keep them hanging by their sides. They should repeat this, that is, saying of Takbir and raising and lowering of hands twice. After the third Takbir, the hands are to be folded in the usual manner. The Imam shall now recite Tasmiyah, Surah Fatihah and some other Surah. The Muqtadis should listen attentively and not recite anything. They should only say 'Ameen' in a low voice after Surah Fatihah. After this, the first Rakat should be completed in the usual manner.

In the second Rakat, the Imam recites Tasmiyah, Surah Fatihah and some other Surah. The Muqtadis should only listen attentively and just say Ameen after Surah Fatihah. After this, the Imam raises his hands and recites the Takbir in a loud voice. The Muqtadis also raise their hands and say the Takbir in a low voice. They should now bring their hands down and keep them hanging by their sides. The hands should be raised and lowered and the Takbir said two more times. Both the Imam and the Muqtadis now say one more Takbir without raising their hands and bow down for Ruku. The second Rakat should be completed in the usual manner.

After the two Raka'at of prayer are over, the Imam delivers the Khutba in two parts, with a short break in between. The Khutba is Sunnat and should be heard attentively.

In the sermon of Eid-ul-Fitr, the Imam must draw the attention of the audience to **Sadaqah-ul-Fitr**. This is a charity, which is obligatory on every Muslim who can afford it. This charity is more rewarding and preferable if it is distributed before the prayers, so that the poor may also be able to celebrate the day in a festive and cheerful spirit.

In the sermon of Eid-ul-Azha, the Imam should draw attention to the duty of sacrifice, which is to be observed by every Muslim with means. It is preferable to slaughter the animal of sacrifice on Eid day after prayers. The sacrifice of an animal on second or third day of Eid is also acceptable.

Private Prayer – Du'a

Allah created man to be His vicegerent on earth and bestowed upon him the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. He can achieve nothing but what he strives for. It is stated in the Holy Quran that with every difficulty, there is relief. According to Abdullah Yusuf Ali:

"Whatever difficulties or troubles are encountered by men, God always provides a solution, a way out, a relief, a way to lead to ease and happiness, if we follow His path and show our faith by patience and well-doing."

Along with honest endeavour and effort man needs the help of his Creator in order to achieve his worldly goals. As such man turns to Allah, Who is the solver of all difficulties and asks for His help. Such supplication and invocation is called **Du'a**. The Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} is reported to have called Dua the kernel of worship and the weapon of a believer. According to Tirmizi, the Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} said that only Du'a can change Allah's decree.

According to the Holy Quran, "And He (Allah) giveth you of all that ye ask for ..." (14:34)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali says:

"Sincere and true prayer in faith is answered by God. Thus He gives us everything which a wise and Benevolent Providence can give."

The Holy Prophet^{pmbuh} is reported to have said:

"Verily your Lord is ashamed (i.e., shy) of His servants when they raise up their hand to Him in supplication to return them empty."

The Holy Quran, the final and complete revelation from Allah for the guidance of the whole of mankind and for all time, contains guidance for every stage of man's life. It teaches man how to pray and the way to ask for Allah's help, guidance, forgiveness and protection. The Holy Quran says:

"When My servants ask thee (the Holy Prophet) concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me: Let them also, with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me, that they may walk in the right way." (2: 186)

A commentator of the Holy Quran says:

"The God of Islam, never distant or remote, is the constant companion of His servants, their unfailing support, and infallible prop to those in need and distress Prayer is the strongest and most visible acknowledgement of God's sovereignty and man's utter dependence on Him."

And also:

"Prayer is the highest medium in Islam, whereby man can enter into communion with God."

In verse 60 of Surah Mu'min Allah says:

"And your Lord says: Call on Me: I will answer (your prayer)..." (40: 60)

The two verses of the Holy Quran quoted above teach us that Allah is close to us and listens to our prayers and answers them. Our prayers should, therefore,

be made to Allah with the fullest faith. They should be addressed only to Allah Who alone is able to respond to all prayer and invocations.

The Quran says: "For Him (alone) is prayer." (13: 14)

Invoking the assistance of angels, prophets or saints is strictly forbidden. We must call upon Allah with sincerity and humility. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have urged his followers to pray to Allah with full confidence in the acceptance of their supplications. Allah undoubtedly accepts one's prayer and grants it in his own time in the manner or form that He considers best.

The Holy Quran says:

"When We bestow favours on man, he turns away and gets himself remote on his side (instead of coming to Us); and when evil seizes him (he comes) full of prolonged prayer." (41: 51)

In explanation of this verse Abdullah Yusuf Ali has pointed out:

"If they receive good they go further away from God, instead of coming nearer to Him. If they suffer ill, they call on God and offer prolonged prayers, but it is not sincere devotion and therefore worthless."

Allah is Samad that is, Independent and Absolute and as such does not need our prayers. It is we who stand in need of Allah's help, protection and guidance. The Holy Quran says:

"My Lord is not uneasy because of you if ye call not on Him ..." (25: 77)
According to Abdullah Yusuf Ali:

"God needs no praise, for He is above all praise; He needs no petition for He knows our needs better than we do ourselves; and His bounties are open without asking, to the righteous and the sinner alike. Prayer is for our own spiritual education, consolation and confirmation."

Mosque

The objective of the Muslims, according to several verses of the Holy Quran is to establish prayer and to enjoin good upon the people and to refrain from committing wrong. These verses also sum up the duties and responsibilities of the believers. In order to fulfil these obligations, the Muslims are required to establish a state based on equality, liberty, brotherhood and justice. The institution of mosque played an important role in the practical realization of this state.

It is a characteristic of the Islamic state that religion and politics go together. In the early days of Islam the head of the state was the ruler and chief administrator as well as the religious head. The mosque, was the central place of worship and state administration.

The mosque may not be a consecrated institution as in other religions, yet the Quranic injunction is to establish prayers in a particular place called *Masjid* or Mosque. As such, prayers are offered in congregation, under the leadership of the head of the state or his representative in the various mosques

of the state.

The mosque is the religious as well as a cultural centre for the Muslim community. The Friday sermon addresses religious, moral and welfare issues of the community. In the time of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his successors all matters relating to war and peace, administration and community welfare were addressed and discussed in the mosques. All important announcements were also made from the mosques. In fact during the early years of Islam, mosque was the centre of Muslim activities.

The Holy Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque and later many other mosques became centres of education. The Prophet's^{pbuh} mosque had arrangements to house people who came there to acquire knowledge. These people were lodged in rooms call Suffah, attached to the mosque. People who were trained as missionaries for the spread of Islam, were also given lodgings at the mosque. In later times, libraries were established in mosques, some containing more than 100,000 books.

The mosque also served as the council hall of the Muslims. In the time of Hazrat Umar two councils were appointed to advise the Khalifa, these councils met in the mosques. The meetings of the Shura used to take place in the mosque and all the administrative affairs of the Khilafat used to be carried on from the mosque during the rule of the first four Khalifas. Deputations from Muslim as well as non- Muslim tribes were received in the mosque, and some of the more important deputations were also lodged there. Judicial affairs were also settled in the mosque. Thus, from the earliest times till today, the mosque has been serving not only as a religious and cultural centre for the Muslims but also as an educational, social and political centre.

The mosque is regarded as the house of Allah and therefore one should enter a mosque with respect. Clothes should be clean and footwear must be removed. Talking loudly, indulging in idle talk or gossip or reading worldly books in a mosque is forbidden. Buying or selling is also not allowed inside a mosque.

Congregational Prayer

The Quranic injunction is to establish prayers in a particular place called Masjid-Mosque. Prayers should be said in congregation under the leadership of the Imam. This was the practice of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his immediate successors who always led the congregational prayers of the believers five times a day in the mosque at Madinah.

Islam lays special stress on prayer in congregation. The Quran says: "And bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship). (2:43)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said: "A prayer performed in congregation is twenty seven degrees more excellent than the prayer said by a single person" (Agreed upon)

He is also reported to have said; “*If there are three persons in a village or even in a desert and they do not pray together, the devil would surely overtake them. So always pray Salat in congregation, for a wolf only injures a solitary sheep.*” (Abu Daud)

Congregational prayer serves as a strong force in uniting the believers. The gathering of all people living in a locality five times daily in the Mosque helps in the establishment of healthy social relations between different sections of the Muslim community. This gathering becomes larger in the weekly Friday service and still larger in the two Eid gatherings. This reaches its climax on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage when Muslims from all parts of the world assemble in Makkah.

Congregational prayer levels social differences and promotes an atmosphere of equality and brotherhood. In the mosque, a king may stand shoulder to shoulder with his poorest subjects and the white man with the black. Congregational prayer lead to the realization among the worshipers that all men are equal before Allah.

These lessons of equality, fraternity and brotherhood, when put into practice, serve as a foundation for the unification of the human race. However much Islam may have preached the equality of mankind and the brotherhood of Muslims, it would have been purposeless without being put into practice through the institution of congregational prayer.

Saum - Fasting

Importance of Fasting

Fasting is one of the five pillars on which the structure of Islam rests. Fasting was made obligatory for Muslims in 2 A.H. It is prescribed for the Muslims in the form of a month long abstinence from food and drink from dawn to sunset accompanied by intense devotional activity.

The month of fasting is the month of Ramazan, the ninth month of the lunar calendar, in which the first revelation of the Quran came to the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. In this connection Allah says:

"Ramazan is the (month) in which was sent down the Quran as a guide to mankind So everyone of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later." (2: 185)

Ramazan is the month of purity in which virtue flourishes and evil is suppressed. The Prophet^{pbuh} is reported to have said:

"When the month of Ramazan comes, the doors of Heavens are opened and the doors of Hell are closed and the devils are chained." (Agreed upon)

And

"If a person does not abstain from telling lies or doing wrong when he is observing fast, let it be known to him that Allah does not want that he should stop taking his food." (Bukhari)

At another place, he said:

"Allah says, fasting is for Me and I shall certainly compensate it. Fasting is a shield; so when the fasting of anyone of you come up, he shall not utter foul words. If then anyone rebukes him or fights with him, let him say, I am a man observing fast." (Muslim)

Fasting, like prayer, is a universal religious institution and has been a part of the law brought by previous prophets. According to the Holy Quran:

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you so that you may (learn) self-restraint." (2: 183)

But the Muslim fast is different in all respects from the fasts observed by the followers of other religions. It is not meant as a punishment or self-torture. The verse quoted above informs us that by prescribing a month's fasts, Allah wishes to teach us self-restraint and to make us righteous and God-fearing.

The instincts of hunger and sex are strong in both animals and human beings. Temporary restraint from these directs attention to higher and spiritual things.

Islam developed a higher significance of fasting, 'that you may guard against evil'. The keynote of fasting is self-discipline and self-control. Fasting is for the improvement of the moral and spiritual condition of man. It makes a Muslim disciplined and steadfast in his habits. It also makes him capable of enduring hardships. It develops compassion and humanism and removes barriers between the rich and the poor. By fasting, the rich undergo an experience which makes them aware of the condition of the poor and hungry and instills in them a desire to help the poor. It enables the rich to thank Allah for the bounties bestowed on them.

Thus, on the material side, fasting involves total abstinence from food, drink and marital relations and on the spiritual side abstinence from falsehood, speaking ill of others, quarrelling or wrong behaviour.

Method and Conditions

According to the **Shariah**, **Saum** or fasting means abstinence from food, drink and marital relations with the niyat or intention of worship from dawn till sunset. If a person does not eat or drink during the prescribed time, but he has not made the niyat for a fast, then in the terminology of Shariah or Islamic law, it will not be a fast.

Fasting during the month of Ramazan is obligatory on all Muslim adults, male and female. However, females who are in a state of menstruation or period of childbirth are not to fast as long as such condition lasts; but they have to fast for an equal number of days after the purification bath has been taken.

A person who is ill may postpone the fast of Ramazan, if his physician fears that the illness would increase or be prolonged. Likewise, a woman who is pregnant or suckling her baby may also postpone it. Postponement of fast during a journey is also allowed. These fasts should be observed as soon as possible, after the end of Ramazan and in any case, before the next Ramazan. A person who is so old and weak that he is unable to fast is not obliged to fast. But such a person must feed a needy person twice a day for each missed fast, or give grain or cash equal to **Sadaqah-e-Fitr**.

Before fasting, it is desirable to take **Sehri** that can be eaten till dawn. The intention for the fast should then be made for which the following words may be used:

وَبِصَوْمٍ غِدِّ نُوئِثُ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

"I intend to keep tomorrow's fast of Ramazan."

Now the person is subject to all restrictions and prohibitions associated with a fast till the setting of the sun. Eating, drinking, smoking, taking of medicine

by mouth and marital relations are forbidden during fast. Swallowing something which is not used as food or drink, or as a medicine, injecting liquid medicine, voluntary vomiting, smoking, the entering of water in the throat while gargling are things for which only a Qaza fast is necessary. A fast shall have to be kept after Ramazan instead of the one that was broken. But if the breaking of the fast through eating, drinking and marital act was intentional, then in addition to the Qaza fast, the person shall have to pay the **Kaffara** that is, for every fast thus broken, he shall have to fast for sixty days continuously. Even if a single day's fast is missed, he shall have to start all over again to complete the number of sixty days at a stretch. If it is a female, then the period of her menstruation shall not be treated as a break. If the person cannot fast for continuous sixty days, he may, for each broken fast, feed sixty poor people twice a day; or he may give grain or cash equal to **Sadaqah-e-Fitr** to sixty persons.

While fasting, the use of toothbrush, hair oil and perfume is allowed. If paste or tooth-powder is used, care must be taken that it does not enter the throat. Injecting medicine directly into the stomach or the brain shall make the fast void. Eating or drinking by mistake does not break the fast and the fast should be completed in the prescribed manner. No Qaza or Kaffara is due in such a case.

If there is a fear that the person may die of thirst, or he has become so weak that there is a danger to his life, then the fast may be broken. In such cases, only Qaza is necessary.

Immediately, after the setting of the sun, the fast is to be broken, after reciting the following prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صَمَدَتْ وَبِكَ أَمْنَثْ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتْ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتْ

“O Allah! I fasted for Thee and I believe in Thee and I put my trust in Thee and with the sustenance Thou hast given me, I now break the fast.”

Fasting is forbidden on the days of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha and on the 11th, 12th and 13th of Zil Hajj.

Tarawih

Tarawih are those prayers that are performed in the nights of the month of Ramazan. These prayers are Sunnat Muakkadah for both men and women. Men should preferably offer them in congregation in a mosque.

The Tarawih prayers start after the four Farz and the two Sunnat Muakkadah of Isha prayers. Twenty Raka'at are to be performed each evening; intention is to be made for two Raka'at at a time. The Muqtadis recite only the Sana in the first Rakat of each two Raka'at after which they have to listen to the Imam's recitation of Tawwuz, Tasmiyah and Surah Fatihah. The Muqtadis says the Takbir, Tasbih Ruku, Tahmid, Tasbih Sajdah, Tahiyya, Tashhaud, Durud and

the Salam. After every four Raka'ats there is a short pause in which the following Tasbih Tarawih is recited:-

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوتِ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ وَالْعَظَمَةِ وَالْهَمَيْةِ وَالْقُدْرَةِ
وَالْكَبِيرَيْهِ وَالْجَبَرُوتِ سُبْحَانَ الْمَلَكِ الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَنَامُ وَلَا يَمُوتُ سُبْحَانَ
قُدُّوسَ رَبِّنَا وَرَبِّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ سُتَّغْفِرُكَ وَسُتَّثَلِكَ الْجَنَّةَ
وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

"Glory to Him to Whom belongs all honour and all greatness; to Whom is due all respect and all awe; to Whom belongs all power and dignity; and Who is Irresistible? Glory to the Ever living Eternal Sovereign; Who never sleeps and Who will never die. He is full of the Greatest Glory and is Most Holy; Who is our Lord and the Lord of the angels and the spirit. There is no other god except Allah. We pray for His forgiveness and for entry in the garden of paradise and for protection from the fire of hell."

Those who are unable to go to the mosque for the Tarawih prayers may offer them in their homes.

Zakat – Obligatory Charity

Importance of Zakat

A major pillar on which the structure of Islam stands is Zakat which can be defined as that portion of a man's wealth which is designated for the poor. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, himself described Zakat as wealth which is taken from the rich and given to the poor. He is reported to have said: "It (Zakat) should be collected from the well-to-do and distributed to the poor."

The word Zakat is derived from 'Zaka' which means to increase or to bless. Another meaning of the word as used in the Quran carries the sense of purification. It finds its origin in the Quranic command to take alms from their goods to purify and sanctify them (9: 103)

It is related by a companion that the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said: "Allah has enjoined Zakat upon you so that the rest of your wealth is cleansed through it."

Thus, Zakat which is wealth taken from the rich and given to the poor, is so called, because it makes wealth grow, or because the giving away of wealth is a source of purification. It purifies the giver's heart of the love of wealth and from greed and selfishness and the receiver's heart from hatred and envy of those who are better off than him.

While the three pillars of Islam i.e., prayer, fasting and pilgrimage benefit no one but the person who performs them, Zakat benefits humanity. Thus, by regularly paying Zakat, a Muslim performs his duty and discharges his obligation towards poor Muslims.

The two commandments to keep up prayer and to give Zakat are often mentioned together in the Quran, for example, it is said, "And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity..." (2:110)

And again: "... And establish regular prayer and give regular charity...."

(73: 20)

The Holy Quran states the distinguishing qualities of the believers in the following words: "Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer and spend of what We have provided for them." (2: 3)

Therefore, just as the keeping up of regular prayer is a sign of faith, the regular payment of Zakat, too, is one of the attributes of a true believer. On the other hand, one of the signs of the unbelievers, according to the Quran is that they deny the Hereafter and do not pay Zakat. Hazrat Abu Bakr, the first Khalifa

said that there was no difference between Salat and Zakat. In fact, he sent an armed force against a group of people who refused to pay Zakat while observing Salat and professing to be Muslims.

Zakat has invariably been mentioned in the Quran and Hadis either with its virtues and benefits in this world and the next, like increase in wealth and Divine Reward or with the warning of a dreadful punishment to those who fail to pay it. The Quran says: "*The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it groweth seven ears, and each ear hath a hundred grains: Allah giveth manifold increase to whom He pleaseth.....*" (2: 261)

And: And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous penalty." (9: 34)

The Holy Prophet^{pbuhs} declared Zakat to be a source of success and felicity in both the worlds. On the other hand, he admonished those who do not pay Zakat and warned them of a dreadful punishment. He is reported to have said: "*There is never a day wherein the servants of Allah get up in the morning and two angels descend (on them).*" One of them says: "*O Allah! Give him more than he spends (for Allah's sake)*" and the other says: "*O Allah! Bring destruction to the one who withholds.*" (Bukhari)

Besides being a pillar of Islam, Zakat has its economic and social benefits. It is, in fact, a welfare tax. It is the backbone of the economic system of Islam. Its purpose is to improve the condition of the poor, to give them economic security, to prevent the accumulation of wealth in a few hands and to increase the wealth of the nation as a whole.

The aim of Zakat is thus, to establish a self-supporting society in which everyone gets a chance to fulfill their basic needs and to lead a respectable life.

Rate of Zakat

The amount of payment and distribution of Zakat was defined at Madinah in the second year of the Hijrat.

The payment of Zakat is compulsory on every adult, free Muslim who owns property to the extent of the prescribed rate called **Nisab**, provided such property has remained in his ownership and possession uninterruptedly for full one year. Zakat is payable on cash, gold and silver, jewellery, crops, animals, minerals, agricultural lands and all kinds of commercial goods.

- On cash, gold and silver:** Zakat is paid at a rate of $2 \frac{1}{2}\%$. A person who possesses $52 \frac{1}{2}$ tolas of silver or $7 \frac{1}{2}$ tolas of gold is liable to pay Zakat.
- Produce from Mines:** Owners of mines have to pay one-fifth of the produce of mines. This is called **Khums**.
- Land Tax:** The basis of this compulsory tax on the produce of agricultural

lands called **Ushr** is to be found in the Quran. It is levied at the rate of one-tenth of the agricultural produce of land benefiting by rain or some natural spring; and one-twentieth of the produce of artificially irrigated lands.

4. On all articles of trade exceeding 200 dirhams.
5. **On Sheep and Goats:** For every forty sheep or goats— one goat; from 121 to 200 sheep or goats—two sheep or two goats; and over, that for every hundred sheep or goats, one sheep or goat is to be received by the state.
6. **Bulls, Cows and Buffaloes:** On thirty to forty cattle, one calf of one year; on every forty cattle, a two year old calf.
7. **On Camels:** On every five camels, one goat or sheep; from ten to fourteen camels, three goats; and from twenty-five to thirty-five camels, a female camel and so on.

Sadaqah-ul-Fitr: This obligatory charity is an act of worship on the completion of the month of Ramazan. It is obligatory on all Muslims on whom Zakat is compulsory.

Distribution of Zakat

The Holy Quran tell us how the Zakat money is to be distributed. It says:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَمَلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤْلَفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي
الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرِيمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ

"Alms are for the poor and the needy and those employed to administer the funds; for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to the Truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer..."
(9:60)

1. فُقَرَاءٌ People who are poor and do not possess wealth equal to Nisab.
2. مَسَاكِينٌ Extremely poor people who are forced to beg for food.
3. وَالْعَمَلِينَ Those people who are appointed by an Islamic Head of State or government to collect Zakat. It is not necessary that they be needy persons.
4. مُولَفَةُ الْقُلُوبِ Those people who have recently accepted Islam and are in need of basic necessities of life.
5. الرِّقَابُ Slaves who work for remuneration and who have an agreement with their masters to purchase their freedom on payment of fixed amount.

الْغَرَمِينَ

6. **الْغَرَمِينَ** Poor people in debt that are unable to repay loans. It is conditional that the debt is not due to any un-Islamic purpose.
7. **فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ** Those people, who have to fulfil an obligation, but are unable to do so due to poverty.
8. **ابنِ السَّبِيلِ** Those travellers who maybe well to do at home, but during their journey do not possess basic necessities, can be given Zakat in order to fulfil their travel needs and to return home.
- It is unlawful to give Zakat to the descendants of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, to one's parents or to one's children. It cannot be given to non-Muslims neither can it be given to a person as remuneration for services.

Hajj – Pilgrimage

Importance of Pilgrimage

Hajj or the pilgrimage to Makkah in Saudi Arabia constitutes the fifth act of worship prescribed by Islam. The Quran says:

"Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah – those who can afford the journey." (3: 97)

To make the meaning of this verse clear, it is necessary to read the previous verse also:

"The first house (of worship) appointed for men was that at Bakka; full of blessing and of guidance, For all kinds of beings: In it are signs manifestwhoever enters it attains security; pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah – those who can afford the journey....." (3: 96-97)

The literal meaning of the word **Hajj** is the will and desire to visit, but in the terminology of the Shariah, it means the will to visit the Holy Ka'abah which was the first structure built by Hazrat Adam for the worship of Allah. Then, about 4,500 years ago, Hazrat Ibrahim and Hazrat Ismail rebuilt it at the command of Allah. The story of the rebuilding of the Ka'abah is thus related in the Holy Quran:

"And remember, Abraham and Ismail raised the foundations of the House (with this prayer): "Our Lord, Accept (this service) from us: Our Lord! make of us Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will) and of our progeny a people Muslim, bowing to Thy (Will); And show us our places for the celebration of (due) rites;" (2: 127-128)

From the words of this prayer, the purpose for which the Ka'abah was built, becomes clear and we come to know that its completion was ordained at the hands of the children of Hazrat Ismail who settled at this spot and from them, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was raised for the perfection of this purpose.

Pilgrimage to the Sacred House is not an obligation. It is compulsory only on those who are sound of mind, adults and have the provisions of travel. People who fulfil these obligations and yet abstain from performing Hajj once in their lifetime give a lie to their being Muslims. A Hadis of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} states:

"If a person is not hampered by any disease, real necessities or a tyrannical ruler and yet does not perform Hajj, his death and the death of a Jew or a

Christian are the same." (Tirmizi)

Hajj constitutes a form of worship with the entire being of a Muslim, with his mind, body and soul, with his time, money and the sacrifice of all comforts of life to assume for a few days, the condition of a pilgrim totally at Allah's disposal.

Hajj is the only pillar among the fundamental pillars of Islam which requires both physical and financial sacrifices. Prayer and fasting are only physical worships and nothing is spent in their performance. Zakat is only financial worship, it does not require any physical labour. But in performing Hajj both physical and financial sacrifices are required.

The rites of Hajj centre on complete submission and devotion to Allah. At the same time, they serve as an example of total submission and obedience of Prophet Ibrahim, especially his willingness to sacrifice what he loved most in the world, his son Ismail, at Allah's Command.

Hajj is one of the fundamental religious institutions of Islam. It is the greatest of all acts of worship; it is in fact, the culmination of worship. It is an exhibition of brotherhood, equality, punctuality and discipline. It affords an opportunity to Muslims from various countries of the world to become acquainted with one another and of discussing common problems facing the Muslim community.

According to Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said "Anyone who visits the House of Allah, does not indulge in foul language and avoids the disobedience of Allah, will become as pure and free from sins as a child."

(Muslim)

At another place, the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said:

"Hajj which is free from sins and defects is rewarded with Paradise."

(Agreed upon)

The importance of Hajj has been well described by Imam Abu Hanifa who said that Hajj is the greatest of all worship, **Ibaadat**, enjoined in Islam. Its chief importance lies in the fact that it strengthens one's faith in Islam.

Faraiz or Obligatory Acts of Hajj

1. Putting on the **Ihram** and making the niyat of Hajj and reciting the **Talbiyah**.
2. **Wuquf-e-Arafat** i.e. staying in the plain of Arafat on the 9th of Zil Hajj.
3. **Tawaf-e-Ziyarat** on the 10th, 11th or 12th of Zil-Hajj after the shaving of the head or the shortening of the hair.

These three obligatory duties are to be performed in the prescribed order and in the prescribed manner. If any of these three faraiz is left out, Hajj becomes void and the mistake cannot be set right by sacrifice.

Secondary Imperatives or Wajibat of Hajj

1. Stay at Muzdalifah.
2. **Sayi** between Safa and Marwah.
3. Stoning the devil.
4. Sacrifice.
5. Shaving the head (males) or shortening the hair (females).
6. **Tawaf-e-Wida**.

If any of these items is left out, the Hajj shall not become void; but the pilgrim shall have to pay the penalty either in the form of sacrifice or **sadaqah**.

Sunnats of Hajj

1. **Tawaf-e-Qudum**;
2. Leaving Mina after sunrise on the 9th for Arafat;
3. Leaving Arafat after the departure of Imam;
4. Staying the night at Muzdalifah on the return from Arafat;
5. Taking a bath in Arafat.

If any of these Sunnats cannot be performed, there is no penalty.

Prohibition and restrictions of Ihram

1. Wearing sewn clothes (by males).
2. Wearing of shoes which cover the raised bone of the feet.
3. Putting on a bandage on the head or face.
4. Covering the head or face. Women are required to cover their heads only.
5. Shaving, cutting or trimming of hair.
6. Cutting of nails.
7. Using perfumed hair oil, or any kind of perfume.
8. Using abusive or foul language, or quarrelling.
9. To indulge in marital relationship.

Undesirable acts of Ihram

1. Rubbing the body for removing dirt or dust.
2. Using perfumed soap for washing the body or face. Bathing with water is permitted.
3. Combing the hair, or passing the fingers through the hair or scratching the head, as these acts may cause the hair to fall, or may kill the lice in the hair.
4. Smelling perfume or some sweet-smelling grass.
5. Using a pin or needle for holding the sheets of the Ihram.
6. Using spices in food such as cardamom, clove or cinnamon or using perfumed tobacco.

Permitted acts of Ihram

1. Use of toothbrush or miswak.
2. Harmful insects may be killed.
3. Halal animals, but not hunted, may be eaten.
4. The use of blanket for covering the body, but not the head or face is allowed.

Terms associated with Hajj

1) Ka'abah

Ka'abah, the holiest and most sacred place for Muslims, is the first house on earth built for the worship of One Allah. According to tradition, it was constructed by angels; nearly two thousand years before the creation of Adam. When Adam was sent to earth the angels indicated to him the exact location where this House had to be reconstructed. The Ka'abah was destroyed by flood during Hazrat Noah's time. It was then constructed again by Hazrat Ibrahim and his son Hazrat Ismail.

At one place, in the Quran, Allah has called it "My House" and, at another place, He has called Himself 'Rabb of this House'. There are twenty-four gates through which this House may be entered, but it is better for the pilgrim to enter through Bab-as-Salam.

Since the days of Hazrat Ibrahim, people have been coming to the Ka'abah for Umrah or Hajj.

2) There are strict rules for the preservation of the sanctity of Ka'abah. For this purpose, several circles have been drawn around the Ka'abah.

a) Masjid-e-Haram

The first and innermost circle is called Masjid-e-Haram or the Sacred Mosque. The area of the Sacred Mosque contains, besides the Ka'abah, the Maqam-e-Ibrahim and the building over the well of **Zam Zam**. The offering of one Farz prayer in the sacred Mosque is equal to one hundred thousand prayers as reward. (Islam: A Comprehensive Guide Book. Altaf Ahmad Kherie)

b) City of Makkah

The second circle is called Makkah Mukaramma, the city of Makkah. It is a place of peace and security within which all living things are protected from violence. If anyone seeks asylum in Makkah, he cannot be captured or killed. The hunting or killing of any bird or animal is prohibited, even the cutting of its trees and grass is forbidden.

c) Haram

The third circle is called Haram. Its boundaries were fixed at Allah's

command first by Hazrat Adam and than by Hazrat Ibrahim. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} had pillars erected to indicate the boundaries of Haram.

d) **Mawaqit**

The fourth circle is called Mawaqit. These are the places beyond which no one proceeding to Makkah for Hajj and Umrah can proceed without putting on the Ihram, otherwise, he shall have to offer a sacrifice as penalty.

Hajr-e-Aswad – Black Stone

Mounted in silver and set in the southeastern corner of the Ka'abah is the sacred Black Stone, Hajr-e-Aswad received by Hazrat Ismail from the angel Jibrael during the re-building of the Ancient House. According to tradition, this stone was milky white; it has become black because of the sins of people. This holy stone was touched or kissed by Hazrat Ibrahim and by the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. Its kissing is symbolic of pure love of Allah and our resolve to obey Him in all matters.

Well of Zam Zam

This well is in the southeastern side of Masjid-e-Haram. The spring that feeds this well sprang up from under the feet of Ismail, when his mother Hajra, was searching for water for her infant son between the Safa and Marwa hills. From that time till the present day, millions of people have drunk the water of this well.

Maqam-e-Ibrahim or the station of Ibrahim

This is a stone on which Hazrat Ibrahim stood while constructing the Ka'abah. The Wajib-ut-Tawaf prayers are offered near Maqam-e-Ibrahim.

Hatim

This is a small area between Rukn-e-Shami, the corner facing Syria and Rukn-e-Yemeni, the southwestern corner of the Ka'abah. It was originally a part of the Ka'abah but was not included in the covered enclosure. The offering of prayers in the Hatim is held to be like offering prayers inside the Ka'abah.

Ihram

The Ihram for men consists of two white sheets of unsewn cloth. One sheet is used for covering the lower portion of the body, from the navel downwards and the other is used for covering the upper portion of the body. The head remains uncovered.

The Ihram for women is their everyday clothes. It is compulsory for women to cover their heads, but no cloth should touch their faces.

Ihram is the first and foremost Farz of Hajj and Umrah. It is a declaration of one's intention or niyat to perform Hajj or Umrah. Ihram is the visible indication or symbol of the pilgrim's renouncing all the vanities of the world to devote himself to the worship of Allah. Ihram is a time of forbearance and patience. It symbolises purity, renunciation and the equality and brotherhood of all believers.

Talbiyah

Talbiyah is the proclamation of the following words: "Here I am at Thy service, O Allah! Here I am at Thy service. There is no partner with Thee. Here I am at Thy service. All praise and all blessing and favours belong to Thee, and all Sovereignty is Thine. Thou hast no partner"

From his entry into the state of Ihram till the stoning of the first Jamarat at Mina, on the 10th of Zil Hajj, the pilgrim constantly recites the Talbiyah. It is to be recited by men in a fairly loud voice. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said; "*Jibrail came to me to convey Allah's message that I should command my followers to recite Talbiyah in a loud voice*" (Tirmizi).

The Talbiyah is to be recited morning and evening while sitting, standing, walking, riding, after the regular prayers and on every change of posture. On each occasion, it is to be recited twice. The pilgrim is not to talk to anyone while reciting it, nor should any person greet him and he is not excepted to return the greetings.

The recitation of Talbiyah means that the pilgrim presents himself wholeheartedly before Allah with no other thought than the Divine encounter. His cry of recognition of Allah and what He has revealed pledges him to a sustained and ever-renewed devotion.

Tawaf

Tawaf means going round the Ka'abah. The Quran says: "*Then let them complete the rites prescribed for them.....and circumambulate the Ancient House*" (22:29)

The Prophet^{pbuh} moved round the Ka'abah seven times, running three circuits and walking the remaining four.

The Tawaf starts and ends at the Black Stone. The pilgrims kiss it, unless prevented by the crowd. In that case, they raise their hands towards the Ka'abah and say "Allahu Akbar" loudly. Certain supplications are recited during Tawaf.

There are several kinds of Tawaf:

- a. **Tawaf-e-Ziyarat** also called **Tawaf-e-Ifadah** or **Tawaf-e-Rukn**: It is a Rukn or obligatory component of Hajj and must be performed between the dawn of 10th and 12th of Zil-Hajj.

- b. **Tawaf-e-Qudum:** It is Sunnat and is performed on entering Masjid-e-Haram.
- c. **Tawaf-e-Sadr or Tawaf-e-Wida:** This is performed at the time of departure and is Wajib for all those living outside the Mawaqit.
- d. **Tawaf-e-Umra:** It is obligatory or Farz for those performing Umra.
- e. **Tawaf-e-Nafl:** Any Tawaf, other than the preceding four categories is called Tawaf-e-Nafl. There is no restriction as to the time or number of such Tawaf, but they must be performed after Wuzu and niyat and in the prescribed manner.

Mutaf

It is the place inside Masjid-e-Haram, and around the Ka'abah on which Tawaf is performed.

Al Multazim

It is the place of Holding. This is a portion of the wall of the Ka'abah between its door and Hajar-e-Aswad. Here the pilgrim prays to Allah for forgiveness.

Mina

It is a plain, which lies between Arafat and Makkah. The pathway into this plain passes through a hill called Aqabah which is famous in the history of Islam as the place where the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} took the two pledges from the Ansars of Madinah.

Muzdalifah

It is plain between Mina and Arafat, about six miles from Makkah and three miles from Mina. In the Holy Quran, this place is called the **Sacred Monument** and Muslims are especially asked to remember Allah at this place:

“..... When ye pour down from Arafat, celebrate the praises of Allah at the Sacred Monument” (2 : 198)

Arafat

This plain is situated at a distance of nine miles from Makkah and about six miles from Mina. According to tradition, Adam and his wife were re-united in this plain after years of wandering. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} also delivered his last sermon here and received the final revelation.

Wuquf-e-Arafat

The stay in the plain of Arafat is called Wuquf-e-Arafat. The best form of **Wuquf**, deserving the highest spiritual reward is to remain standing, facing the

Qiblah, while reciting **Talbiah, Istighfar, Kalimah-e-Tauhid** and praying to Allah. The assembly at Arafat is the most important part of the Hajj, without which Hajj would be incomplete.

Safa and Marwa

These two hills are close to the well of Zam Zam. Safa is to the southeast, from which the Sayi is commenced and Marwa is to the north-east where the Sayi ends. Hazrat Hajra, wife of Hazrat Ibrahim, ran several times between these two hills in search of water for her infant son, Ismail. Sayi is performed in memory of this act. This ritual shows respect for maternal love and gratitude to Allah, who made the sacred spring of Zam Zam appear for Hazrat Hajra's relief.

The commandment about Sayi is contained in the Quran:

"Behold! Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of Allah. So if those who visit the House in the season or at other times, should compass them round." (2: 158)

Sayi

Sayi is walking briskly seven times between Safa and Marwa hills. Sayi is commenced from Safa and ends at Marwa. The pilgrim should first climb on the Safa hill. It is not necessary to climb to the top of the hill. He should climb to such a height only as would afford a view of the Ka'abah. After descending from Safa, the pilgrim should move towards Marwa and, thereafter, walk briskly between the two hills. Only men are required to walk briskly. Women may walk at their normal pace.

Idtiba

It is the act of passing the upper sheet of the Ihram through the right armpit and placing it on the left shoulder, leaving the right shoulder uncovered. There is no Idtiba for females.

Ramal

This is in memory of an incident that took place when the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his companions came to Makkah from Madinah for performing Umrah. The unbelievers of Makkah taunted them and said that the climate of Madinah had made them so weak that they could not perform Tawaf properly. When the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} heard this, he ordered his companions to expand their chests and walk briskly, moving their shoulders. Walking in this fashion, is called Ramal. This is done in the first three circuits, the normal gait being resumed in the remaining four circuits. There is no Ramal for women.

Jamarat

The three stone pillars situated in Mina are called Jamarat. One nearest to Makkah is called **Jamarat-al-Uqba**, the second which is near the mosque of Mina is called **Jamarat-al-Wusta**. At a little distance from this place is the **Jamarat-al-Sughra**.

It is reported that Satan tried to deceive and mislead Hazrat Ibrahim at these three places and Hazrat Ibrahim stoned the devil. In memory of this the devil is symbolically stoned at Mina during Hajj. It is to show that we reject the devil and obey no one but Allah.

Rami

The act of stoning the devil is called Rami. The approved method of doing Rami is to stand about five or six feet from the stone pillar, hold the pebble with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand and throw each pebble, one after other and while doing so, the following is to be recited:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Allah is Great."

The pebbles should fall as close to the pillar as possible.

Istilam

The act of kissing the Hajar-e-Aswad is called Istilam. The palms of both hands are placed on it, with the face between the two palms, and the stone is kissed in such a way that no sound is produced. If it is not possible to kiss the stone in this manner, it may merely be touched with the right hand and the hand kissed or if that is not possible, one may raise the palms of the hand towards the Hajar-e-Aswad and kiss the palms.

Sacrifice

The sacrifice is offered in memory of Hazrat Ibrahim who was ready to sacrifice his son Hazrat Ismail, at the command of Allah. This sacrifice is a part of the worldwide celebration which unites Muslims every Eid-ul-Azha. The sacrifice is only an outward act. The real thing is the spirit of piety and submission to Allah which this act expresses.

Halq Ras and Qasr

Halq Ras means getting the head shaved. Qasr mean getting the hair of the head cut or shortened.

Ayyam-al-Nahr

The 10th, 11th and 12th Zil Hajj during which sacrifice of sheep, goats, cows and camels is offered are known as Ayyam-al-Nahr or the Days of Sacrifices.

Ayyam-e-Tashriq

The 11th, 12th and 13th of Zil Hajj are known as Ayyam-al-Tashriq. The pilgrims are required to stay in the plain of Mina after the sacrifice. This stay is required by an injunction of the Quran where the ending of the devotional acts of Hajj is thus spoken of: "*Celebrate the praises of Allah during the appointed days. But if anyone hastens to leave in two days, there is no blame on him, and if anyone stays on, there is no blame on him.*" (2: 203)

Method of Hajj

The pilgrim puts on the Ihram on the morning of 8th Zil Hajj, and goes to Mina where he spends the night in prayers. The Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha prayers of the 8th Zil Hajj and Fajr prayers of the 9th Zil Hajj are to be performed in Mina.

On the 9th of Zil Hajj, after Fajr prayers, the pilgrim moves on to the plain of Arafat. The stay in this plain is called Wuquf-e-Arafat. The assembly at Arafat is the most important part of Hajj without which Hajj would be incomplete. At Arafat pilgrims pray and ask Allah for forgiveness. The Zuhr and Asr prayers on the 9th of Zil Hajj are to be offered together in this plain.

Before sunset, the pilgrims leave for the plain of Muzdalifah, where they spend the night in prayers. The Maghrib and Isha prayers are performed together in the plain of Muzdalifah. Forty-nine pebbles to be thrown at the three stone pillars are collected from here.

In the morning, on the 10th of Zil Hajj, the pilgrims leave for Mina, to throw seven pebbles at the largest stone pillar Jamarat-al-Uqba, after which a sacrifice is offered.

The male pilgrim may now shave his head or cut his hair short. Female pilgrims may cut a lock of hair only. The pilgrims can take off the Ihram and wear ordinary clothes.

The pilgrim now performs Tawaf-e-Ziyarat, which is the second most important item of Hajj. After Tawaf, The pilgrim offers two raka'ats at the station of Ibrahim and performs Sayi, He then returns to Mina to throw pebbles at the three stone pillars on the 11th and 12th of Zil Hajj. The pilgrims then leave for Makkah to perform Tawaf-e-Wida. This marks the completion of Hajj.

Umrah

The word Umrah means a minor pilgrimage and is commonly translated as Haj-e-Asghar. The Umrah, like Hajj, begins with Ihram, which should be donned at Miqat. Pilgrims recite the Talbiah and perform the Tawaf of the Ka'abah. After that, two raka'at prayers are offered at the station of Ibrahim. Next is Sayi, performed between Safa and Marwa, at the end of which men shave their head or cut their hair short while women cut a lock of their hair.

Although some acts of worship performed in Umrah are the same as those performed during Hajj, there are fundamental differences between the two. Hajj is obligatory while Umrah is not. Hajj can only be performed during prescribed month and dates, while Umrah can be performed at any time of the year. There is no Wuqf-e-Arafat, no Wuqf-e-Muzdalifah, no stoning of the devil, no Tawaf-e-Qadum, Tawaf-e-Wida, and no sacrifice of animals in Umrah.

During the Umrah, the Talbiah is stopped at the beginning of Tawaf while in Hajj, the Talbiah is stopped on the 10th of Zil Hajj after the stoning of the devil.

It is undesirable to perform Umrah between the 9th and 13th of Zil Hajj.

Struggle in the Way of Allah (Jihad)

The Arabic word **Jihad** means to strive, to exert oneself. In religious terminology it expresses struggle against one's evil inclinations or exertion for the sake of Islam and the Muslim Ummah. For example, an armed struggle against the nonbelievers if Islam is under threat, the spread of belief in Allah or to work for the moral betterment of the Islamic society.

Jurists have distinguished four different ways in which the believer may fulfil his Jihad obligation: by his heart, his tongue, his hands and by the sword. The first is concerned with defeating evil. This type of Jihad was so significant in the eyes of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} that he regarded it as the greater Jihad. The second and third are mainly fulfilled by supporting the right and correcting the wrong. The fourth is equivalent to the meaning of war and is concerned with fighting the non-believers and the enemies of the faith. The believers are required to sacrifice their wealth and lives in the service of Allah.

Jihad is thus, the use of all our energies and resources to establish the Islamic system of life. In the first phase, a person learns to control his own bad desires and inclinations. This is Jihad or struggle within ourselves which is responsible for establishing **Maruf**-right, and removing **Munkar**-evil from our lives and from society. It demands the use of all our material and mental resources. Finally, we may be required to give up our life for the cause of Islam.

Jihad does not necessarily mean war or fighting since exertion in Allah's path may be achieved by peaceful means as well. In the early Surahs revealed in Makkah, the emphasis was on persuasion. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} in the discharge of his prophetic mission warned his people against idol – worship and invited them to worship Allah; as is evident from the following verse:

*"..... if any strive (with might and main), they do so for their own souls:
....." (29:6)*

This expresses Jihad in terms of the salvation of soul rather than a struggle for conversion to Islam. In the later revelations, Jihad is often expressed in terms of strife and there is no doubt that in certain verses, the concept of Jihad is synonymous with the words war and fighting.

In Makkah, the Muslims suffered for several years under the worst kind of punishments, were denied religious freedom, persecuted for the sake of their religion and terrorized with regard to property and personal safety. For all

these reasons, they were compelled to leave their homes and migrate to Madinah, patiently submitting to Allah's orders. Whenever they felt the urge to resist the oppression or to take revenge from the oppressors, the Prophet^{pbuh} held them back, telling them to be patient.

"I have not been ordered to fight," he would say.

Then Allah revealed the first verses permitting war:

"To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged – and verily Allah is Most Powerful for their aid.

(They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right – (for no cause) except that they say, "Our lord is Allah." Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (Cause)" (22:39-40)

This permission was motivated by the fact that the Muslims suffered injustice, and were forced to leave their homes and migrate without justification. These verses point out that God helps only those who fear Him and therefore do not use war as an instrument for destruction, for subjugating the weak and satisfying their own desires. On the contrary they obey Allah's orders and summon people to do what is right and abstain from wrong.

These verses are very clear and do not contain even the slightest evidence of religious compulsion. They are not only concerned with Muslims, but deal with non-Muslims as well when it is said: "there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques"

Fighting between Muslims and non-Muslims has been dealt with comprehensively in many verses of the Holy Quran. These verses describe the causes which may lead to it, its aim, upon the attainment of which fighting must stop, the preparations for it by the Muslims and the necessary caution against its unexpected outbreak.

The following verses caution Muslims against being the transgressors:

"Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits. For Allah loveth not transgressors." (2:190)

"And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; But if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression." (2:193)

These verses order the Muslims to fight in the way of Allah. They prohibit the provocation of hostility and this prohibition is reinforced by Allah's dislike of those who provoke hostility. They also define the aim upon the attainment of which war must end. This aim is achieved when there is no more persecution in matters of religion.

The principles explained in these verses can be found in the same or similar words, in many other Surahs for example, Surah Al-Nisa, Surah Al-Anfal and

Surah Al-Taubah.

"..... and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together. But know that Allah is with those who restrain themselves." (9:36)

From these verses of the Holy Quran, it becomes clear that there is not a single verse in the Quran which could support the opinion that the aim of fighting in Islam is conversion. It also becomes clear that the reasons for fighting are: to stop aggression, to protect the mission of Islam and to defend religious freedom.

Poll-tax or **Jizya** is not a financial compensation for the granting of one's life or preservation of religion, but a symbol of submission and resistance from harmful acts and a contribution in carrying out the burdens of the state.

Although Jihad is considered to be very important, it is not included in the five pillars of Islam. The reason is that the five pillars are not necessarily to be enforced by the state; they must be observed by individuals. In other words, the basic articles are regarded as individual duties like prayer or fasting which each believer must perform and each is liable to punishment if he fails to perform the duty. Jihad, on the other hand, unless the Muslim community is subjected to a sudden attack and therefore all believers including women and children are under the obligation to fight, is regarded by all jurists as a collective obligation of the whole Muslim community. It is regarded as **Farz-e-Kifaya** which is binding upon the Muslims as a group not individually. If the duty is fulfilled by a part of the community, it ceases to be obligatory on others. The whole community, however, falls into error if the duty is not performed at all.

Jihad must be preceded by an invitation to Islam. The Prophet^{pbuh} followed the rule, which he had himself laid down and his early successors seem to have followed their master's example. In the campaigns against the Byzantines and Persians, the Arab commanders addressed invitations to their enemies, inviting them first to accept Islam or pay the tribute, before they launched their offensive. In the early Muslim conquests, the commander often waited for three days after the invitation had been sent before actual fighting took place. During this period, the Muslims were ready to negotiate when the enemy demanded it. This often led to a peaceful settlement as in such cases as the surrender of a number of towns in Iraq and Syria.

In Islam, the objective of war is neither the achievement of victory nor the acquisition of the enemy's property; it is rather the fulfillment of a duty-Jihad in Allah's way. The Muslims were advised to refrain from shedding blood or destroying property for the achievement of their objective. This general rule is based on Hazrat Abu Bakr's address to the expedition sent to Syria as well as to other similar utterances by succeeding Khalifas.

It is repeatedly stressed in the Holy Quran that the object of any fighting forced upon Muslims should be to put down aggression and persecution, for persecution is worse than killing. When the enemy stops fighting the Muslims

should do likewise; when freedom from persecution is secured, fighting should be brought to an end.

If war becomes unavoidable, every effort must be made to limit its destruction and horror. It must be waged in such a way so as to cause the least possible amount of damage to life and property. All hostilities must be brought to an end as early as possible. Savage practices like disfiguring the dead enemy or torturing prisoners of war are prohibited in Islam.

Rights of Non-Muslims

Islam is a religion of love, mercy and tolerance and it preaches freedom of belief and faith. It recognizes the rights of non-Muslims living in an Islamic State. They were called protected people or **zimmies** because they lived in peace and tranquility under the protection of the Islamic State.

The messenger of Allah practiced religious tolerance towards non-Muslims and did not use force to compel people of other religions to embrace Islam as it would have been against the commands of the Quran:

"Let there be no compulsion in religion." (2: 256)

Muslims are commanded here not to force Islam on people of other religions, because belief in any religion depends on faith, and faith cannot be induced by force. In Islam, religious tolerance is so highly recommended that there is no room for any compulsion to accept Islam; only argument and logic can be used to show others the guidance of Islam. The Quran advocates a just and kind treatment for non-Muslims. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} was commanded by Allah to grant asylum to any unbeliever who asked for it.

Muslims believe in all previous messengers and all of them are held in equal esteem. For a Muslim, Allah is none other than the God of Hazrat Musa and Hazrat Isa. The followers of these messengers are called the '*People of the Book*' in the Quran. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh}, therefore, gave them special consideration and status in the Islamic State of Madinah and freedom to practice their religions. He showed immense goodwill and understanding towards them. Their scriptures and places of worship were respected. They enjoyed complete security and protection of their lives, property and religion. No synagogue or church was destroyed. They were allowed to maintain and repair their places of worship and also to construct new ones. They were granted judicial autonomy. Their civil cases were decided according to their own laws and by their own courts. In addition, they were allowed to seek justice in a Muslim court, if they so desired. The Muslim authorities were not allowed to interfere with their personal laws.

In fact, in safeguarding the rights of non-Muslims, an Islamic state has gone to such extremes as to give them the liberty of maintaining even those practices which are entirely opposed to the teachings of Islam. For example, the consumption of alcohol is forbidden to Muslims, yet the non-Muslim inhabitants

of the country have the liberty to consume, manufacture, import and sell alcohol. The same is true of games of chance and contracts involving usury.

Islam insists on kind treatment of non-Muslims. The Holy Prophet^{pbuh} said:

"If anyone wrongs a man to whom a treaty has been granted, or burdens him above his strength, I will advocate against him on the Day of Judgement."

(Abu Daud)

Hazrat Abu Bakr said:

"If a province or people receive you, make an agreement with them and keep your promise. Let them be governed by their laws and established customs; and take tribute from them as is agreed between you. Leave them in their religion and their land."

Hazrat Umar treated non-Muslims very kindly and justly. While imposing taxes upon them, he was very careful that enough was left for their maintenance. Even on his deathbed, he left instructions that non-Muslims should be treated justly and not overburdened with taxes. Such were the injunctions of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh} and his immediate successors about the rights of non-Muslims.

Muslim States and their Relations with other States

Muslim political thinkers divide the world into three types of countries or lands, Muslim lands, lands having peace with Muslim lands and countries at war with Muslim countries.

- 1) Dar-ul-Islam comprises Muslim countries where friendly relations exist between them.
- 2) Dar-ul-Sulh are those non-Muslim countries with whom an Islamic state has treaty relations and their relations are governed by the terms of the treaty.
- 3) Dar-ul-Harb are those countries that have no treaty relations with Islamic State. Relations with such countries depend upon their attitude towards the Islamic country.

Islam is a religion of peace and no Muslim state can follow a policy of territorial expansion and unprovoked aggression. The foreign policy of a Muslim state should be such as to advance the cause of Islam and the moral, cultural and political objectives of its society and to preserve and protect its territorial integrity. The Quran and the Holy Prophet's ^p_{buh} Sunnah provide sufficient guidance to enable a Muslim state to frame its foreign policy.

In pre-Islamic days, international law had no independent existence; it was dependent on the will and pleasure of the head of the state. The first Muslim State in Madinah was established and governed by the Holy Prophet ^p_{buh}. It was a confederacy of villages inhabited by Muslims, Jews, Christians and pagan Arabs. The Holy Prophet sent delegations to the surrounding people, neighbouring towns in the Arabian Peninsula and rulers inviting them to join the fold of Islam. As Islam expanded, Muslims came into contact with many different people and nations. As more and more people accepted Islam, their languages and customs became integrated into Islam. The Jews and Christians in these territories were allowed to maintain their religion.

The rules of international conduct comprise not only internal legislation, but also treaties, relations and agreements with other states. The terms and conditions of international treaties should be fulfilled. Muslims should not be the first to break the treaties.

Like other aspects of life in Islam, international relations of a Muslim state are based on Divine guidance given in the Quran. They are based on the following principles:

- 1) Belief in the unity of mankind, in origin, in human status and in aims.
- 2) Respect for other people's interests and rights to life, honour and property, as long as they do not encroach upon the rights of Muslims.
- 3) Maintaining peaceful relations with the exchange of goodwill missions.
- 4) Intolerance of encroachment in international relations. The Islamic state must defend itself and suppress all attempts to violate or disturb its peace, or endanger its security or exploit its peaceful policies.

The basis of foreign relations of the Muslim states is justice and equality, both in peace and war. The law of war and peace in Islam does not allow an aggressive war nor makes the killing of people and animals or the destruction of crops, homes and places of worship, its objective. It does not allow the killing of women, children and aged people nor the torture of war prisoners or the imposition of its teachings on the conquered people. It is only a defensive measure justified as long as injustice and aggression exist in the world.

5) Fulfilling the obligations undertaken by the Muslim state and honouring the treaties concluded between the Islamic State and other states. This is binding as long as the other parties remain faithful to their obligations and honour their treaties.

This state does not exist only for itself and its own subjects. It has a wide scope and an important mission in the international field. It has not only to strive for the prosperity and advancement of its own citizens but also make valuable contributions to humanity on an international level in education, economics, industry, politics and other fields.

Islam seeks to establish a world community, with complete equality among people without distinction of race, class or country. It seeks to convert by persuasion, allowing no compulsion in religious beliefs. According to Islam, it is the duty of every individual to make constant efforts for spreading good and preventing evil.

Relations in the Contemporary World

There are very few Muslim countries today that keep entirely to the ideals of the Muslim state set up by the Holy Prophet. However, for those countries that have a large Muslim population and leaders, the following guidelines can be set which should affect their behaviour with other states, both Muslim and non-Muslim.

Relations with Muslim countries

All Muslims, wherever they live, are one community and form one brotherhood although separated from each other by geographical boundaries. Muslims are bound by the ties of Islam, which has established fraternity and solidarity among the Muslims and has abolished distinctions of colour, race, language, status or nationality. This concept makes all Muslims, equal in rights and obligations.

A Muslim country should extend help in all fields of life and should live in peace and resolve its differences with other Muslim states through negotiations or through arbitration. If there is a war or dispute between two Muslim countries, it is the duty of other Muslim countries to arrange reconciliation and peace between the two. But if the aggressor is not ready to reconcile, the other Muslim countries should help the wronged party, till the oppressor is forced to make peace. The Quran says: "*If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them, but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice.....*" (49:9)

And also: "*The believers are but a single brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers.....* (49: 10)

Relations with non-Muslim countries

Relations between an Islamic state and a non-Muslim allied state would be governed strictly in accordance with the terms of the treaty or alliance or pact concluded between them. The terms of the agreement would be fulfilled by the Islamic state under all circumstances.

In cases of a pledge or protection of security from foreign interference or

invasion, the Muslim state will fully stand by it and protect them from their enemies to the best of its ability. If at any time it can not guarantee its protection it will return its defence tax, Jizyah, as Khalid bin Walid did when he could not protect the Christians of Emmessa from the attack of the Roman Emperor. When returning their jizyah, Khalid said: "We accepted the Jizyah as a token of your goodwill and in return for defending you, but in this we have failed you." (Abdul Rehman Azzam: The Eternal Message of Muhammad)

Islam enjoins justice and fairness in human dealings. The Islamic state would base its relations with non-Muslim countries on the values of justice and equity, friendship and co-operation. It would co-operate with those countries which are promoting the cause of peace, justice and human welfare. The Holy Quran enjoins upon its followers: "..... *Help ye one another in righteousness and piety but help ye not one another in sin and rancour....*" (5:2)

Acting upon this principle, the Islamic state should extend its co-operation to all the states that are working to achieve human betterment in the fields of economic development, education, science, technology and social sectors.

One of the fundamental principles of the foreign policy of an Islamic state is to abide by its international commitments. The Holy Quran enjoins the Islamic state to honour its pledges even with the enemy states and not to be the first one to break a pledge made with them.

Islam also instructs its followers to help and liberate the oppressed and persecuted Muslims living in non-Muslim countries. However, help can only be given to those persecuted Muslims who are living in such countries with whom the Islamic state has no alliance or treaty of peace and friendship. But, if a treaty exists between the Islamic state and a non-Muslim country which is oppressing its Muslim minority, then the Islamic state is not permitted to help the oppressed people. In this case, the Islamic countries should pressurize the non-Muslim country to treat its Muslim citizens kindly. But if the non Muslim country does not give up its oppression the Islamic state can break the treaty and intervene in favour of the oppressed Muslims. Whenever decisions have to be taken, the principles of Islam should be more important than pressures exerted by other states.