

A Mercy to Mankind

Issue 4 | Free magazine

FEATURING:

11 facts about Muhammad?

Views of Western Writers
on Prophet Muhammad

Why did Prophet Muhammad
marry several women?

Smiling - A prophetic trait

How did Prophet Muhammad
treat non-Muslims?



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Modern perspectives on life, culture and society

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EXHIBITION
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Editorial

Exhibition Islam

Exhibition Islam is an independent, UK registered charity that specialises in promoting a greater understanding of Islam in the international arena.

Exhibition Islam utilises alternative educational resources and rare Islamic artefacts to deliver highly professional "museum style" exhibitions that allow visitors to discover the richness and intensity of the Islamic faith in a friendly environment.

Exhibition Islam has exhibited at over 1300 venues, including major exhibition centres in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, UAE, Qatar and South Africa. Having attracted in excess of 1 million visitors over the past 15 years, Exhibition Islam has established its name as one of the leading Islamic exhibition providers in the World.

The Global Commission for Introducing the Messenger

The Global Commission for Introducing the Messenger specialises in introducing the Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the non-Muslim population. The aim of this organisation is to clear misconceptions about the character and message of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This magazine has been commissioned by HE Dr. Abdullah Bin AbdelMohsen Al Turki Chairman (General Secretary of Muslim World League) and HE Pro. Adel Bin Ali Al Shlddy (Secretary General of the Muslim World League).

We would like to bid you a warm welcome to the fourth edition of ***A Mercy to Mankind***, a new quarterly magazine which aims to cover a broad spectrum of contemporary issues as well as highlighting the life and true message of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who is revered by Muslims as the final Messenger sent to mankind. It is strange that despite being voted the most influential person in history (The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History by Michael H. Hart), and with Islam being the fastest growing religion in the world, many misconceptions still continue to circulate about the Islamic faith and it's most prestigious and most famous personality.

A Mercy to Mankind aims to provide an insight into various aspects of the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). In this fourth edition, we touch upon various aspects of Prophet Muhammad's life and teachings including his mercy, justice and tolerance towards others.

Yours Sincerely,

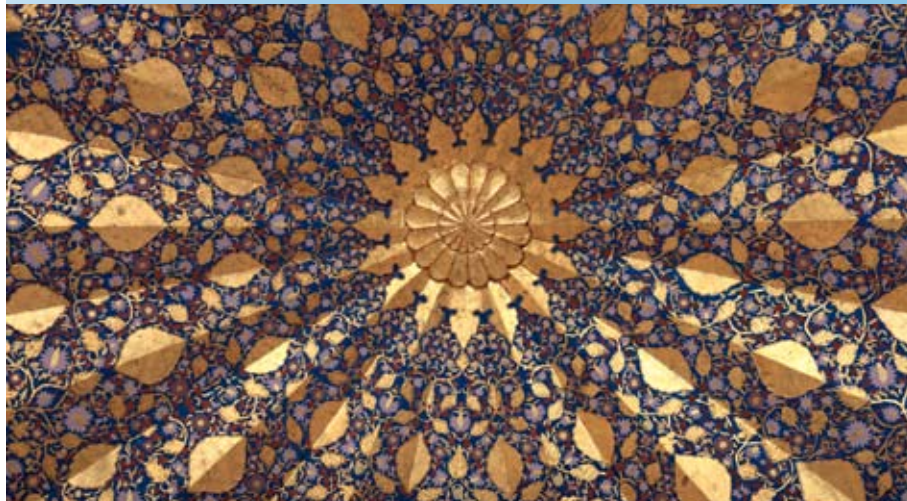
Umar Ansari & Mumtaz Alam
Editorial Team

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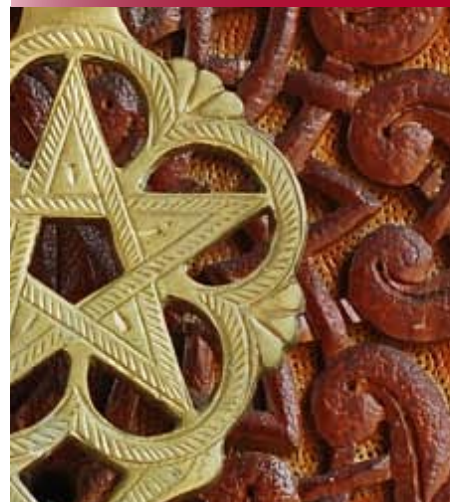
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Why did Prophet Muhammad (peace
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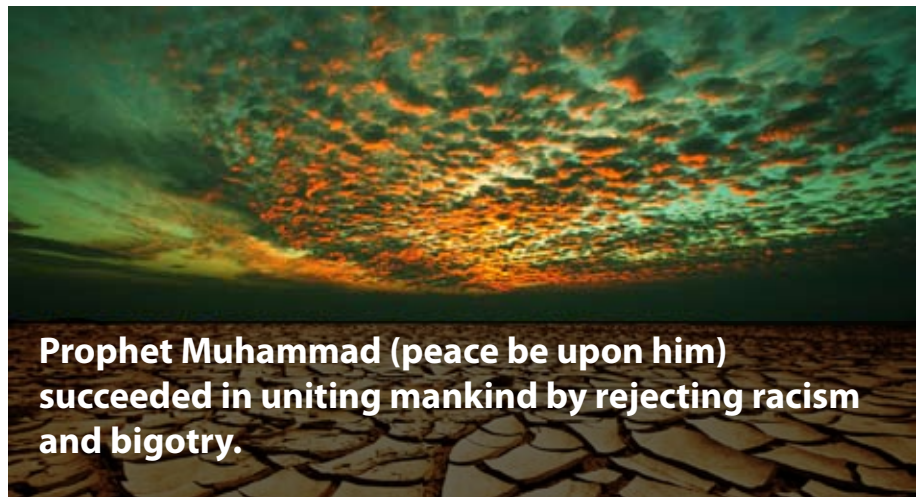
11 Facts about Muhammad? (peace be upon him)

1. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was raised illiterate, unable to read or write, and remained so until he left this world. Among all his people, he was known as being truthful and trustworthy. Before receiving revelation, he had no prior knowledge of religion or any previously sent message from Allah. He remained like that for his first forty years. Revelation then came to Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the form of the Noble Quran. This Quran reaffirmed most of the accounts found in the previous scriptures, the Torah sent down to Moses and in the Bible sent down to Jesus.

4. The life of Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a perfect example of being upright, merciful, compassionate, truthful, courageous, generous and ascetic in all worldly matters, while striving solely for the reward of the Hereafter. Moreover, in all his actions and dealings, he was ever mindful and fearful of Allah.

5. Allah instilled great love for Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the hearts of all who believed in and met him. Today, those who believe in Muhammad as the Final Prophet and Messenger of Allah, honour and love him.

2. During his Prophethood, Muhammad (peace be upon him) foretold of major incidents that would occur to him and his community after him, such as the removal of the tyrannical kingdoms of Chosroes [the royal title for the Zoroastrian kings of Persia] and Caesar, and the establishment of the religion of Islam.



3. Muhammad (peace be upon him) conveyed to humanity the Noble Quran, which is the peak of eloquence and clarity. The Quran challenged those eloquent and fluent Arabs of his time, who initially belied him, to bring forth a single chapter like the Quran. The eloquent Arabs of his day were unable to contest this Quran. Until today, no one has been able to match the eloquence and intensity of the Quran.

6. History has not preserved the biography of any person in as such detailed manner as it has preserved the life of Muhammad (peace be upon him), who is the most influential human in history.


7. Those who believe in Muhammad (peace be upon him) try to emulate his speech and mannerism. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is an example for all people, and Muslims try and follow his example in all of spiritual, ritual, moral, social and all spheres of life.

8. There has never been, nor will there ever be a man anywhere upon this earth who has received such love, respect, honour, and obedience in all matters-small and large alike - as has Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

9. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) succeeded in uniting mankind, by rejecting all forms of tribalism, nationalism, bigotry and racism.

11. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) epitomised great moral standing. His instructions were comprehensive; his teachings regarding character and manners towards one's parents, relatives, friends, family, humanity, animals, plants and inanimate objects were definitive.


All of that unequivocally indicates that this Messenger did not concoct this religion from his own accord, but that it was rather a teaching and inspiration that he received from the One Who created the earth and the high heavens above and created this universe in its miraculous architecture and perfection.



The courtyard at the Prophets Mosque in the City of Madina, The Mosque has 2 large courtyards with expanding umbrellas to provide shade to worshippers during the day time prayers.

10. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) delivered a Divine message that contains a perfect creedal and legal make-up. The laws he introduced were perfect, and based upon justice, equality, mercy and objectivity for all human activity on earth. The laws regulated buying and selling, marriage and divorce, renting, testimony, custody, and all other contracts that are necessary to uphold life and civilization on earth.



A low-angle photograph looking up at the massive, white, umbrella-like structures of the Al-Masjid al-Nabawi. The umbrellas are supported by ornate, dark-colored pillars with gold accents. The underside of the umbrellas features a repeating geometric pattern of dark blue diamonds. In the background, the mosque's architecture is visible, including arched doorways and a balcony with a green railing. The floor is highly reflective, showing the silhouettes of the pillars and the sky. A few people can be seen walking on the floor in the distance.

Main image: Al-Masjid al-Nabawī, or the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The mosque is the second holiest site in Islam and is situated in the city of Madinah, The umbrellas stand more than 20 meters tall and shade worshippers from temperatures exceeding 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The umbrellas maintain the mosques micro-climate without harming the mosques grand architecture.

Selected Teachings of Prophet Muhammad

Montheism

The very first message that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) invited towards was the concept that God is One without any partners and no one shares his attributes. The word Allah is the Arabic term for "God". It is the personal name of "The One and Only True God", who created the Universe and all that it contains. Moreover, the word Allah expresses the uniqueness of "Allah" more accurately than the word "god", which can take a plural "gods", whereas the word "Allah" has no plural form.

Prophets and Messengers

Islam teaches that all religions originally had the same essential message, which was to submit wholeheartedly to the will of Allah and to worship Him and Him alone. For this reason, Islam is not a new religion but is the same ultimate truth that Allah revealed to all the Prophets. It is in this context that Muslims say that Islam started with the very first human being on Earth, namely Prophet Adam (peace be upon him). The final prophet that Allah sent to humanity was the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Accordingly, Muslims have immense love for the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and regard him as the best example for all people. In line with all the previous prophets sent by Allah from Prophet Adam, through to Prophets Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them all), the most important message that Prophet Muhammad (peace

be upon him) brought was the fact that there is only One God, and people should abandon the worship of created things and return to the worship of Allah, the Supreme Creator.

When the Prophet sent his companion Muadh to Yemen, he said to him *"You are going to a nation from the people of the Scripture, so let the first thing to which you will invite them, be the Tawheed of Allah (Monotheism). If they learn that, tell them that Allah has enjoined on them, five prayers to be offered in one day and one night. And if they pray, tell them that Allah has enjoined on them Zakat (charity) of their properties and it is to be taken from the rich among them and given to the poor. And if they agree to that, then take from them Zakat but avoid the best property of the people."* (Recorded in Bukhari)

Social Justice

The Blessed Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) gave lessons on morality and manners through his practice. He taught charity by distributing everything that he received among the poor and the needy. He taught love and forgiveness to his enemies as conqueror of the cities of Makkah and Hunain. He

fought against oppression and injustice and exemplified justice and equity as ruler and judge. He stood for the rights of the poor and needy, women and orphans. He demonstrated his desire of peace and security to his enemies as commander of the victorious army. He taught fairness in dealing with other people by his practice as a trader. And he gave lessons on love, affection and kindness as a husband and father. It seems realistic that only a man like Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who lived like ordinary human beings, but rose far above them in the conduct of his affairs (a) with his family members and (b) other people in different areas of life, can truly serve as a good and practical example for mankind.

It is the privilege of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) alone of all reformers, philosophers and founders of religions, to bequeath to his successors a complete and perfect life-example capable of solving all their problems, and purifying their words and deeds, hearts and souls, morals and manners, civilisation and culture.

His lifestyle is not only perfect but fully comprehensive. It covers

every aspect and every field of human activity. It offers guidance to all men and women in every area of their lives to solve their problems fairly and justly. Its principles and concepts are simple and easily understandable to all people of all abilities.

Messenger Muhammad was human, made of flesh and blood, like any other human being, but Muslims regard him as a perfect human in every sense who set a code of conduct by his words and actions. He is unique and unparalleled in human history and will remain a guide for other men and women in every aspect of life for ever.

Allah's Messenger mentioned that the greatest sins were "To join partners in worship with Allah; to kill a soul which Allah has forbidden to kill; and to be undutiful or unkind to one's parents." The Prophet added, "Shall I inform you of the biggest of the great sins? That is the forged statement or the false witness." (Recorded in Bukhari)

General Rights

Islamic Laws have regulated the mutual rights and duties of the members of society in order to ensure social stability. Such rights and

duties are either specific or general. Islam requires a Muslim to take care of fellow humans by extending help to them and trying to improve their conditions wherever they are. This is stressed by the following saying (Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Muslims, in their mutual love, kindness and compassion, are like the human body: If one of its parts is in agony, the entire body feels the pain both in sleeplessness and fever." (Bukhari& Muslim).

In another statement the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "None of you is a perfect believer until he loves for his brother Muslim that which he loves for himself." (Bukhari).

The rights of children are made clear in the noble saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Everyone of you is a protector and guardian (of his immediate charge) and is responsible for (the action of) those persons who are committed to his charge." (Bukhari& Muslim)

In an age when people would kill their first born daughters by burying them alive, a practice that is still prevalent in parts of the

world today, the Blessed Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) outlawed such vile practices and taught people to love and cherish their children.

Children have the right of parents caring for them, providing their needs (such as food, drink, clothing and dwelling), giving them a proper education and good manners (such as modesty, respect for elders, truthfulness, honesty, obedience to parents, etc.), and keeping them away from bad words or acts (such as telling lies, fraud and deceit, dishonesty, robbery, disobedience to parents, etc.).

Guests have a right to entertainment. This is based on the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him), following tradition "One who believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment should honour his guest according to his right. He was asked: O Messenger of Allah! What is his right? He said: A day and night (of good feasting) and hospitality for three days. Thereafter it is an act of charity." (Bukhari & Muslim).

Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "The best friend in the sight of Allah

is he who is the well-wisher of his companions, and the best neighbour is he who behaves best towards his neighbours." (Tirmidhi).

Islam has urged well to do people to help their relatives by complying with their needs, inquiring about their conditions, treating them with kindness. Islam has urged good treatment of one's close relatives even though they do not treat him kindly, forgiving them even though they wrong him, seeking their friendship even though they are unfriendly with him.

Tolerance

One of the commonest charges brought against Islam historically, and as a religion, by Western writers is that it is intolerant. This is a highly inaccurate charge when one takes an objective look at world history.

In the eyes of history, religious tolerance is the highest evidence of good culture in a people. It was not until the Western nations broke away from their religious laws that they became more tolerant, however it was only when the Muslims swayed away from their religious law that they declined in tolerance

and other evidences of the highest culture. Before the advent of Islam, tolerance had never been preached as an essential part of religion.

If Europe had known as much of Islam, as Muslims knew of Christendom, in those days, those adventurous, occasionally chivalrous, but utterly fanatical escapades renowned as the Crusades could not have taken place, for they were based on a complete misapprehension.

Innumerable monasteries, with treasures calculated at not less than a hundred million pound sterling, enjoyed the benefit of the Prophet Muhammad's Charter to the monks of Sinai, who were religiously respected by the Muslims.

The various sects of Christians were represented in the Council of the Empire by their patriarchs, on the provincial and district council by their bishops, in the village council by their priests, whose word was always taken without question on things which were the sole concern of their community. The tolerance within the body of Islam was something without parallel in history.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated that "One who believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment should honour his guest according to his right". He was asked: "O Messenger of Allah! What is his right?" He said: "A day and night (of good feasting) and hospitality for three days. Thereafter it is an act of charity." (Bukhari& Muslim).



The Torah, the People of the Book and Prophet Muhammad

The great scholar of Islam, Imam Ahmad recorded that Ata bin (the son of) Yasar said that he met Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-As (may Allah be pleased with him) and asked him: "Tell me about the description of the Messenger of Allah in the Torah." He said, "Yes, by Allah, he was described in the Torah with some of the qualities with which he was described in the Quran:

‘O Prophet! Verily, We have sent you as witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner, a saviour to the illiterate. You are My servant and My Messenger and I have called you Al-Mutawakkil (reliant).

You are not harsh or severe, or noisy in the marketplaces. You do not repay evil with evil, but you overlook and forgive. Allah will not take your soul until you make straight those who have deviated and they say La ilaha illallah (There is no god but Allah) - words with which blind eyes, deaf ears and sealed hearts will be opened."

It was also recorded by Al-Bukhari in the Books of Business, that Wahb bin Munabbih said: "Allah revealed to one of the Prophets of the Children of Israel whose name was Sha'ya' (Isaiah); 'Stand up among your people, the Children of Israel and I shall cause your tongue to utter (words of) revelation. I shall send an unlettered (Prophet) from among the illiterate (people). He will not be harsh or severe, or noisy



in the marketplaces. If he were to pass by a lamp, it would not be extinguished, because of his tranquillity.

If he were to walk on reeds, no sound would be heard from under his feet. I will send him as a bearer of glad tidings and as a warner, who will never utter immoral speech. Through him I will open blind eyes, deaf ears and sealed hearts. I will guide him to do every good deed and I will bestow upon him every noble characteristic. I will make tranquillity his garment, righteousness his banner, piety his conscience, wisdom his speech, truthfulness and loyalty his nature, tolerance and goodness his character, truth his way, justice his conduct, guidance his leader, Islam his nation. Ahmad is his name and through him I will guide people after they have gone astray, teach them after they have been ignorant, raise their status after they were nothing, make them known after they were unknown, increase the number (of followers of the truth) after they have been few, make them rich after they have been poor, and bring them together after they have been divided.

Through him I will bring together different nations and hearts, and reconcile opposing desires. Through him I will save great numbers of people from their doom. I will make his nation the best of people ever raised up for mankind; they will enjoin good and forbid evil, sincerely believing in Me Alone and accepting as truth all that My Messengers have brought. I shall inspire them to glorify, praise and magnify Me Alone in their places of worship and in their gatherings, when they lie down and when they return home. They will pray to Me standing and sitting. They will fight for the sake of Allah in ranks and armies. They will go forth from their homes by the thousand, seeking My pleasure, washing their faces and limbs, girding their loins. Their sacrifice will be their blood and their Holy Book will be in their hearts.

They will be like monks by night and like lions by day. Among the members of his family and his offspring I will make those who are foremost (in faith) and believers in the truth and martyrs and righteous people.

His nation, after him will lead people with truth and establish justice therein. I will give strength to those who support them and help those who pray for them, and I will inflict defeat upon those who oppose them or transgress against them or seek to take something from their hands. I will make them the heirs of their Prophet, calling people to their Lord, enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, establishing regular prayer, paying the Zakah and fulfilling their promises. Through them I will complete the goodness which I started with the first of them. This is My bounty which I bestow upon whomsoever I will, and I am the Possessor of great bounty."

When we examine the relations of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace) with the People of the Book during the first years of Islam, we see that he cooperated with Christians. When Muslims were subjected to cruelty by the pagans in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace) told them to migrate to Ethiopia, a place where Christians lived at that time. King Negus, the Christian ruler of that country, accepted the migrant Muslims and protected them against oppression. The Quran also gives the example of the disciples of Jesus to other believers for their loyalty to God and His messenger.

There are also striking similarities between the first Muslims and the first Christians. The communities who first believed in God always remained faithful to God's messengers, despite being subjected to difficulty and torture. In the Quran, Allah relates that the first Christians in the time of Jesus were sincere Muslims who surrendered themselves to their Lord:

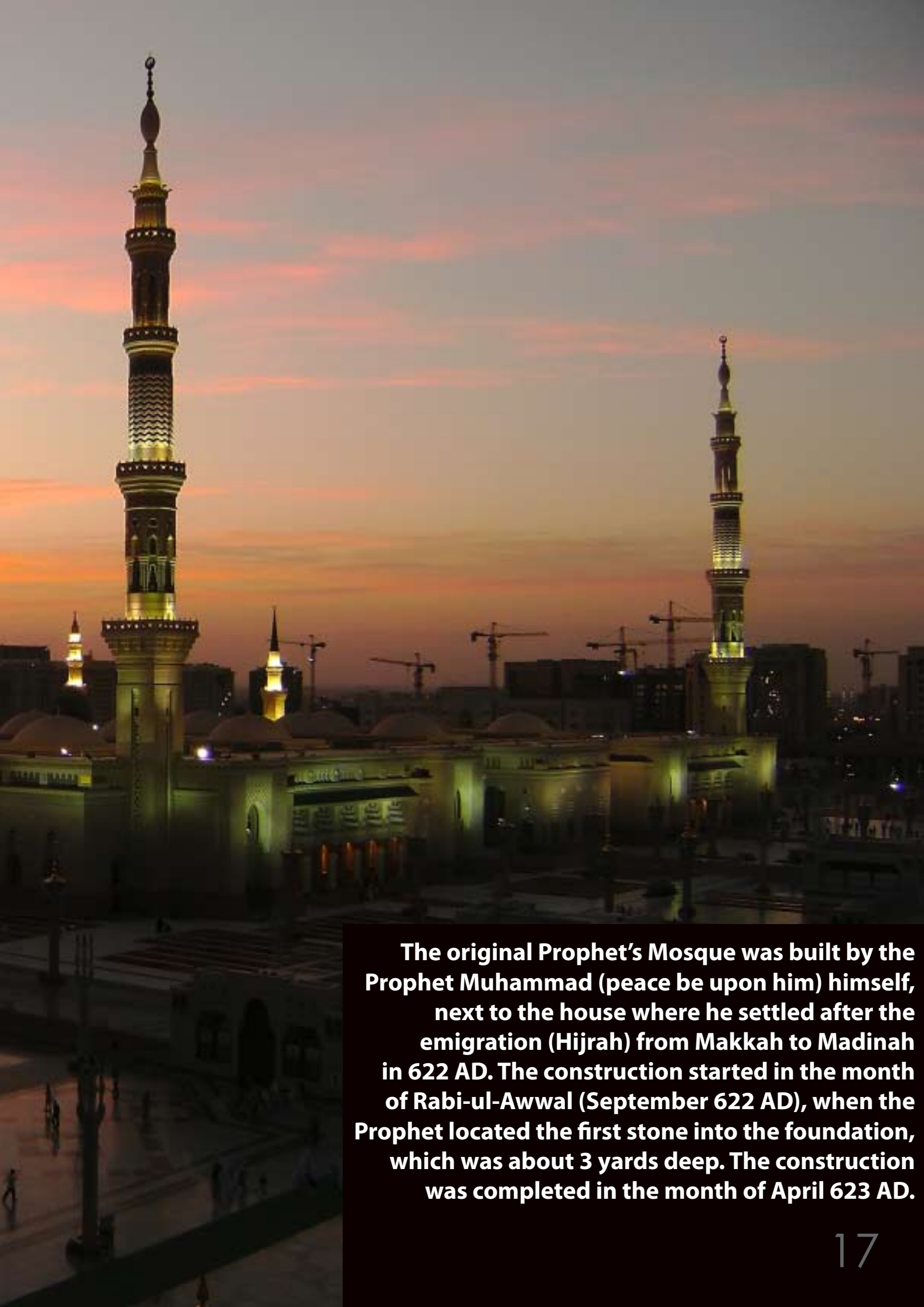
'When Jesus sensed disbelief on their part, he said: "Who will be my helpers to Allah?" The disciples said, "We are Allah's helpers. We believe in Allah. Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'an, 3:52)

The tolerant attitude adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace) towards Jewish communities also sets a good example for all believers. During the period of the Constitution of Medina, the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace) treated Jews kindly and tolerantly. He encouraged that there be co-operation, counselling and goodness between Muslims and Jews.

Indeed, this was put into practice in daily life.

'And when I inspired the Disciples to believe in Me and in My Messenger, they said: "We believe and bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'an, 5:111)





The original Prophet's Mosque was built by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself, next to the house where he settled after the emigration (Hijrah) from Makkah to Madinah in 622 AD. The construction started in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal (September 622 AD), when the Prophet located the first stone into the foundation, which was about 3 yards deep. The construction was completed in the month of April 623 AD.





The Ka'aba (literally "the cube" in Arabic) is an ancient stone structure that was built and re-built by prophets as a house of monotheistic worship. It is located inside the Grand Mosque in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The Ka'aba is considered the centre of the Muslim world, and is a unifying focal point for Islamic worship.

According to the Quran, the Ka'aba was built by the prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael as a house of monotheistic worship. However, by the time of Muhammad, the Ka'aba had been taken over by pagan Arabs to house their numerous tribal gods. In 630 A.D. Muhammad and his followers took over leadership of Mecca after years of persecution. Muhammad destroyed the idols inside the Ka'aba and re-dedicated it as a house of monotheistic worship.

Views of Western Writers about Prophet Muhammad

Prophet Muhammad's mission was to propagate the worship of the One and Only God (in Arabic **Allah**), the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. His mission was essentially the same as that of earlier Prophets of God. In the historical context, many terminologies about Prophet Muhammad, Islam, and Muslims were borrowed from earlier European writings of the 11th to the 19th century, a time when ignorance and prejudice prevailed. The following quotations attest to the facts.

Thomas Carlyle in 'Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History' (1840)

"The lies (Western slander) which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammad) are disgraceful to ourselves only...A silent great soul, one of that who cannot but be earnest. He has to kindle the world, the world's Maker had ordered so."

A. S. Tritton in 'Islam' (1951)

"History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated."

Gibbon in 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' (1823)

"The picture of the Muslim soldier advancing with a sword in one hand and the Qur'an in the other is quite false."

De Lacy O'Leary in 'Islam at the Crossroads' London (1923)

"The good sense of Muhammad despised the pomp of royalty. The Apostle of God submitted to the menial offices of the family; he kindled the fire; swept the floor; milked the ewes; and mended with his own hands his shoes and garments. Disdaining the penance and merit of a hermit, he observed without effort of vanity the abstemious diet of an Arab."

Edward Gibbon and Simon Oakley in 'History of the Saracen Empire' London, (1870)

"Never has a man set for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a more sublime aim, since this aim was superhuman; to subvert superstitions which had been imposed between man and his Creator, to render God unto man and man unto God; to restore the rational and sacred idea of divinity amidst the chaos of the material and disfigured gods of idolatry, then existing.

Never has a man undertaken a work so far beyond human power with so feeble means, for he (Muhammad) had in the conception as well as in the execution of such a great design, no other instrument than himself and no other aid except a handful of men living in a corner of the desert. Finally, never has a man accomplished such a huge and lasting revolution in the world, because in less than two centuries after its appearance, Islam, in faith and in arms, reigned over the whole of Arabia, and conquered, in God's name, Persia Khorasan, Transoxania, Western India, Syria, Egypt, Abyssinia, all the known continent of Northern Africa, numerous islands of the Mediterranean Sea, Spain, and part of Gaul.

If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astonishing results are the three criteria of a human genius, who could dare compare any great man in history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws, and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples, dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. "On the basis of a Book, every letter which

has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blend together peoples of every tongue and race. He has left the indelible characteristic of this Muslim nationality the hatred of false gods and the passion for the One and Immaterial God.

"The idea of the unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of the fabulous theologies, was in itself such a miracle that upon it's utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient temples of idols and set on fire one-third of the world. His life, his meditations, his heroic revealing against the superstitions of his country, and his boldness in defying the furies of idolatry, his firmness in enduring them for fifteen years in Mecca, his acceptance of the role of public scorn and almost of being a victim of his fellow countrymen... This dogma was twofold the unity of God and the immateriality of God: the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with words.

"Philosopher, Orator, Apostle, Legislator, Conqueror of Ideas, Restorer of Rational beliefs.... The founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, **is there any man greater than he?**"

**Mahatma Gandhi,
statement published
in 'Young India'(1924)**

"I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today an undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind.... I became more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter

self-effacement of the Prophet the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. When I closed the second volume (of the Prophet's biography), I was sorry there was not more for me to read of that great life.

**Sir George Bernard
Shaw in 'The Genuine
Islam' Vol. 1, No. 8.
(1936)**

"If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam."

I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to

possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity."

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

Michael Hart in 'The 100, A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons In History' New York (1978)

My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the secular and religious level... It is probable that the relative influence of Muhammad on Islam has been larger than the combined influence of Jesus Christ and St. Paul on Christianity. ...It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.

Dr. William Draper in 'History of Intellectual Development of Europe'

Four years after the death of Justinian, A.D. 569, was born in Mecca, in Arabia, the man who, of all men, has exercised the greatest influence upon the human race...**To be the religious head of many empires, to guide the daily life of one-third of the human race, may perhaps justify the title of a Messenger of God.**

Life of Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him)

Prophet Muhammad was born of noble lineage, in Makkah in the year 570 into the most powerful Arabian tribe, the Quraysh. He was a direct descendent of Prophet Abraham through his son Prophet Ishmael. Prophet Muhammad's father, Abdullah, passed away before his birth and he was brought up by his mother Aaminah bint Wahab until she passed away in 576 CE. He was then cared for by his grandfather until he too passed away two years later. His kind uncle, Abu Talib, then took over his care.

As a young man Prophet Muhammad displayed outstanding wisdom, intelligence and exceptional virtues as a very trustworthy individual. Members of various tribes would invite him to act as an arbitrator in their disputes. His reputation for being truthful, honest, trustworthy, generous and sincere became so well known that people named him Al-Amin (The Trustworthy).

Prophet Muhammad never partook in the customs of the Quraysh at that time. He would withdraw to the mountains for days at a time to remove himself from the drunken rampages of the people. He never worshiped the idols placed in the Kabah and never engaged in the immoral practices of the people. At the age of 25, he married Lady Khadijah a noble widow 15 years his senior. They remained married for the next 25 years until her death.

During one of the spiritual retreats which he made habitually to a cave on top of a mountain outside Makkah, Prophet Muhammad had an amazing encounter with Angel Gabriel. The angel started to reveal Allah's Word to him, the Quran in an extraordinary account of events. The angel also announced that "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah".

It was the year 610 CE and Prophet Muhammad was forty years old when he received his first revelation. He was appointed as the Messenger of Allah to convey God's Words to humanity.

A mission that required strong belief, dedication, and honesty. For the next thirteen years he conveyed the Word of Allah to the Makkans, inviting them to abandon idolatry and accept the religion of the One God. A few accepted his call but most opposed him violently, seeing the message of equality, social justice and women's rights taught by the new religion as a danger to their domination of Makkah and the Ka'ba.

612CE

First Muslims formed

Prophet Muhammad invited his immediate family, inner circle of friends and a few selected quality people to accept Islam. In the first three years, the 130 people who accepted Islam became a strong nucleus that was able to spread Islam publicly. These core Muslims were a mix of rich and poor individuals.

613 CE - 615 CE

Initial resistance

Prophet Muhammad continued to call the people to Islam and gradually a number of men and women began to accept the faith and submit themselves to its teachings of the Oneness of Allah, justice and equality. Prophet Muhammad and his followers now started to talk to people openly about Islam. Although Prophet Muhammad was known as a trustworthy and an honest man, Makkkan leaders did not accept his invitation to embrace Islam and resisted him. They described him as a poet, a magician and a crazy man. The Makkans also started a campaign of persecution of the Muslims.

Temptation & threats

The leaders of Makkah tried to dissuade Prophet Muhammad from his call to Islam by first tempting him with all worldly desires, when this did not work he was threatened with death to which he replied *"if you were to put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand to stop conveying the message I will not stop conveying the messages until it has been conveyed or I die doing it"*. At the same time they tried to prevent people from listening to him. They showed increased hostility by persecuting and torturing the weaker Muslims, especially the ones that lacked any support. Prophet Muhammad had things thrown at him and was constantly harassed and insulted.

Migration to Abyssinia

Prophet Muhammad used to meet his followers at Al-Arqam House which was like a small college. He taught them values and morals and instilled feelings of responsibility and commitment to the community at large.

Prophet Muhammad also saw the suffering and tribulation some of his followers endured even death and advised them to seek refuge in Abyssinia (Ethiopia), describing it as a land of virtue ruled by a fair Christian King, Negus, under whom no one was treated unjustly.

Hamza & Omar accept Islam

Two strong and well respected Makkkan men accepted Islam, Omar Bin Al-Khattab and Hamza Bin Abdul-Muttalib (Prophet Muhammad's uncle). This was an important turning point as they both became strong supporters and protectors for Prophet Muhammad. Hamza was martyred in the battle of Uhud in 625 CE. Three years after the passing away of Prophet Muhammad, Omar became the second caliph and ruled the Islamic state for 11 years.

616 CE - 618 CE

The pagan Makkan leaders boycotted Prophet Muhammad and his followers and imposed a social and economic blockade on them which lasted for 3 years. During this time, Prophet Muhammad and his followers suffered great tribulation. This period was a tough test of their patience, belief and commitment to their Islamic beliefs.

619 CE - 620 CE

The Makkans cancelled the boycott as it was proving to be counter-productive for them. In the same year, Prophet Muhammad's wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu-Talib passed away. Prophet Muhammad decided to convey the Message of Allah outside of the city. He went to the city of Ta'if but was met with hostility. In addition, he spoke to more than 20 Arab tribes about Islam without any positive response.

A new hope

Prophet Muhammad met six people from Yathrib (a city located 450 km north of Makkah) during the pilgrimage season and talked to them about Islam. They accepted Islam and returned to their city with the intention of inviting more people from their own tribe and other tribes in Yathrib. They agreed to return to Makkah the next year at the time of pilgrimage to meet again with Prophet Muhammad.

621 CE

The same group returned the following year with six more people. They pledged their allegiance to Prophet Muhammad and accepted him as the Messenger of Allah. They promised: (1) not to worship anyone except (Allah) The One God, (2) not to steal, (3) not to commit adultery, (4) not to kill, (5) not to slander neighbours and (6) not to disobey the Messenger of Allah. The group went back to Yathrib and invited their tribal leaders and other people to Islam.

They returned again in the following year at the time of pilgrimage with more than 70 men and two women. A similar pledge of allegiance was given again to Prophet Muhammad. The leaders of the two main tribes in Yathrib (Aws & Khazraj) embraced Islam and subsequently their people became Muslims. Prophet Muhammad was then invited to come to Yathrib and become its ruler and leader.

622 CE

Things were becoming much worse in Makkah so Prophet Muhammad asked the Makkan Muslims to migrate to Yathrib. Following their migration, Prophet Muhammad also migrated to Yathrib in September 622 CE. His migration represents the most important turning point in the Islamic history. From Yathrib, Islam grew, an Islamic state was established and a just social order was born.

623 CE - 624 CE

The people of Yathrib were a mix of Arabs and Jews. Although there were two main Arab tribes and three smaller Jewish tribes, the Arab community was larger than the Jewish one and had the ruling power. Prophet Muhammad was chosen as the ruler of Yathrib willingly and peacefully with the agreement of the majority of people. Prophet Muhammad changed the name of the multi-cultural society "Madinah" was the new name Prophet Muhammad gave to the city of Yathrib. After the migration of the Makkan Muslims, Yathrib no longer belonged to a certain group of Arabs, instead, it became the homeland of Islam. Since there were Jewish tribes in Yathrib and other Arab people who didn't embrace Islam, Prophet Muhammad did not call it the city of Islam. Instead, it was named "Al-Madinah" which means "The City"; in which all inhabitants had similar citizenship rights.

Prophet Muhammad called for peace and unity in Madinah. In his first public address to the people of Madinah, Prophet Muhammad delivered a very concise speech which promoted harmony and social cohesion. He said: "O People, seek and spread peace and offer food to each other, look after your kinship and pray to Allah at night while others are sleeping so you gain Allah's pleasure and enter His paradise."

Prophet Muhammad linked these acts to Allah's pleasure in order to motivate people to love each other and live in peace and harmony. Prophet Muhammad formed the first constitution and charter of human rights and liberties. Most of the Jews in the city hoped

that the last Prophet would come from a Jewish background. Although the majority of Jews did not accept Prophet Muhammad as a Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (as the ruler of the state) formed the first "Constitution and Charter of Human Rights and Liberties" to which all Arab and Jewish tribes agreed upon and signed. The constitution guaranteed the freedom of conscience and worship for Muslims and Jews as well as Arabs who did not accept Islam. In addition, the constitution protected the safety and security of all citizens in Madinah and required all parties who signed the covenant for the constitution to be part of the national defence should Madinah be attacked by enemies. The constitution stated justice, human rights, liberties and prohibition of crime and immoral practices.

628 CE - 629 CE

Prophet Muhammad conveys Allah's Message inside & outside of Arabia

The truce presented an ideal opportunity for Prophet Muhammad to convey the Message of Allah and freely tell people about Islam without being hindered. So he sent delegations to other Arab tribes in Arabia and also wrote letters to the rulers and kings of neighbouring countries and superpowers such as Persia, Byzantine and Egypt inviting them and preaching to them about Islam as "the Message of Allah". Many people now started to accept Islam as the truth.

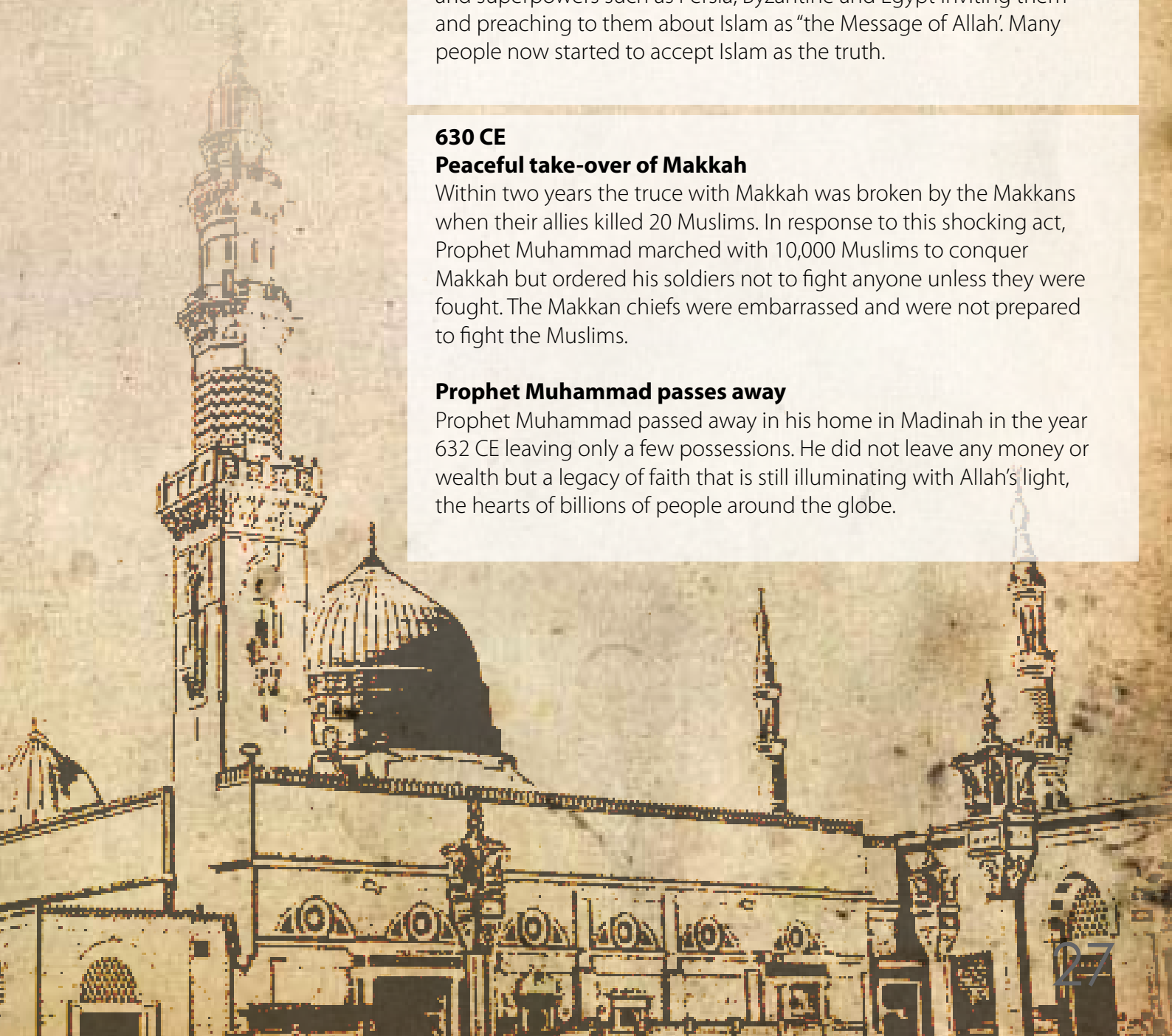
630 CE

Peaceful take-over of Makkah

Within two years the truce with Makkah was broken by the Makkans when their allies killed 20 Muslims. In response to this shocking act, Prophet Muhammad marched with 10,000 Muslims to conquer Makkah but ordered his soldiers not to fight anyone unless they were fought. The Makkan chiefs were embarrassed and were not prepared to fight the Muslims.

Prophet Muhammad passes away

Prophet Muhammad passed away in his home in Madinah in the year 632 CE leaving only a few possessions. He did not leave any money or wealth but a legacy of faith that is still illuminating with Allah's light, the hearts of billions of people around the globe.



Smiling - a trait of Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him)

Islam is more than a religion; it is an entire way of life. It teaches us how to behave from morning until night and it even tells us the best position to sleep in. To some that might sound like 24 hours a day of rules and regulations but the truth is that Islam is such a natural way of life, the rules become as easy as breathing. One thing that is as easy as breathing is smiling. That little curve of the mouth and wrinkling of the eyes that makes not only you but those around you feel good. A smile lightens the load and frees the spirit. Try it! See don't you feel lighter and happier?

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) smiled often and with real joy. In fact he smiled so regularly that his smile and kind demeanour are mentioned time and time again in anecdotes. The companion Abdullah ibn Harith said: *"I never came across a person who smiled as much as Prophet Muhammad. Prophet Muhammad regarded smiling to a brother as an act of charity."* (At-Tirmidhi, 3641)

Jarir ibn Abdullah said: *"The Messenger of God never refused me permission to see him since I embraced Islam and never*

looked at me except with a smile (on his face)." (Muslim, 6050)

When one of Prophet Muhammad's companions was asked if he sat with the Prophet (peace be upon him) he replied: *"Yes, very often. He (the Prophet) used to sit at the place where he observed the morning or dawn prayer till the sun rose or when it had risen; he would stand, and they (his Companions) would talk about matters (pertaining to the days) of ignorance, and they would laugh (on these matters) while (the Prophet) only smiled."* (Muslim, 1413)

One of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) described an incident that took place when he was a young boy. Anas said: *"The Messenger of God was one of the best men in character. One day he sent me to do something, and I said: I swear by God that I will not go. But in my heart I felt that I should go to do what the Messenger of God had commanded me; so I went out and came upon boys playing in the street. All of a sudden the Messenger of God, who had come from behind, caught me by the back of the neck, and when I looked at him he was laughing."* (Abu Dawud, 4755)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had a kind and gentle nature. His beloved wife Aisha described his character as the Quran, meaning that Prophet Muhammad lived by the teachings of the Quran. Thus the behaviour and personality of Prophet Muhammad are the best examples for us to follow in our own lives. A companion who spent more than 10 years with Prophet Muhammad said: *"Throughout my stay with him I never heard an indecent word from his lips and never found him rude to anyone. He spoke very politely. He was kind to everyone."* The Prophet's natural disposition led him to smile and laugh along with the people around him.



The Positive Effects of Smiling

Islam was designed by the Creator to be the perfect way of life for humankind thus sometimes the smallest of things can have a big impact. A smile is one of those things. Therefore not surprisingly smiling has many positive effects.

Smiling is viewed across cultures as a sign of friendliness and it is a natural response that shares our happiness with others. Smiling lowers the heart rate and temporarily reduces blood pressure. It reduces stress by releasing endorphins that naturally diminish stress hormones simultaneously putting you in a better mood. Endorphins also lessen pain. Smiling and laughter therefore are useful aids in health care. Still in the area of health, smiling boosts the immune system by relaxing the body and allowing the immune system to react more quickly and effectively to invaders.

Smiling has also been shown to increase productivity. It also makes us look younger and according to at least one study smiling aids longevity. All this and smiling is contagious, therefore as you are gaining all these benefits you are spreading them around to all those who see you smiling and smile back.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was often described as kind and generous and his generosity included smiling at those around him. We know from scientific evidence just how powerful a smile can be.

The companions emulated their dear friend and Prophet knowing that his way of acting on every matter was the way approved of by God. Did they realize just how beneficial smiling was, almost certainly not, but for certainty happiness touched them and refreshed their demeanour every time Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) smiled at them.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) helped the needy and the poor and went to the houses of the sick to enquire after their health and whenever he met or passed by anyone he greeted them with a smile upon his face.

Although Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) laughed and joked with his family and companions even giving them friendly nicknames he always behaved sensibly with fine moral principles. He never joked in a way that hurt someone's feelings or joked about things that were not true.

In fact he was heard to say: "Woe to the one who speaks and lies in order to make people laugh; woe to him, woe to him." (At-Tirmidhi, 2315)

Smile –
it is worth more than you know.


Why did Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) marry several women during his life?

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) married a number of women during his lifetime. For Muslims, his multiple marriages had meaning and immense implications for Islam, and by extension, the history of the world. Needless to say, the issue remains controversial, and as such, any study of the matter requires an objective approach. Therefore we will endeavour to tackle this topic by being as objective as possible.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was driven by the goal to ensure that his mission as the Messenger of God was fulfilled and to establish a society based on God's commands, and not his own. In order to achieve this goal, he did everything that was humanly possible: he forged relations with the various tribes of Arabia, concluded peace treaties with his sworn enemies and kept relations with the heads of various tribes, nations and religions. Taken together his marriages were one way by which he fostered relationships with various influential tribes. If one were to view the marriages of the Prophet from this context, the motivating factors behind his marriages become clear. It would be very simplistic and incorrect to view his marriages as being merely for personal ends.

Let us now briefly examine the context of each one of his marriages to see whether this was the case. From the outset, it is of ultimate importance to note that, except for one of his wives, all of his eleven wives were widowed or divorced. Most were in fact widowed.

His first marriage was to a widow named Khadijah, who had been married twice and whom he married when she was forty years old and he was twenty five. She was the first woman to embrace Islam. She provided great consolation to him throughout his life and he continued to remember her in his later years



O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you...If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

as his most beloved wife. He stayed with her faithfully for 25 years until her death, at which time he was 50 years old, and she was 65 years old.

If he was driven by lustful desires as accused by some critics, he could have married several, beautiful young women in a society where having numerous wives was a norm – there would be no reason to faithfully remain with an older woman until the age of 50. This single fact would be sufficient to totally refute the charges against him in this regard. However, an examination of all of his marriages, as we shall see, should put this question to rest.

After Khadija's death, he married another widow, Sawda, who was 65 years old. She and her previous husband, Sakran, were among those who had immigrated to Ethiopia, fleeing from the oppression and persecution of the Meccans. It was during their return to Mecca that her husband had died. Seeing her difficult condition, the Prophet (peace be upon him) married her.

Then he married Aisha, daughter of his lifelong friend and companion Abu Bakr. Aisha had first been betrothed to Jabir bin Mut'im at the age of 5. Child marriages were evidently the norm at that time. She was the only virgin among the Prophet's wives and the only one who was born into a Muslim family.

One of the Prophet's goals in this marriage was to strengthen the bond of his brotherhood with Abu Bakr, who was his main defender against the Makkans. Second, Aisha was of a lineage known for honour and intelligence. The Prophet (peace be upon him) knew that she would tremendously benefit his nation (ummah) by transmitting crucial knowledge from his life, especially family and personal matters that others were not privy to. Indeed, the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised his community to learn half of the knowledge of the reli-

gion from Aisha. The foresight of the Prophet (peace be upon him) proved itself, for she would live for 45 years after his death, and thus became one of the main sources of Prophetic wisdom and knowledge. He also married another widow, Hafsa, who was the daughter of Umar Bin Khat-tab, his next closest companion. Her husband, Khunays, had been martyred in the Battle of Badr. He felt a duty towards Umar, whose acceptance of Islam provided a major boost for the Muslims in Mecca against their foes.

Zaynab, daughter of Khuzaima, was another widow that the Prophet married. She was married to Ubayda bin al-Haris, who was martyred in the Battle of Badr. She was sixty when the Prophet married her. She was known as the "Mother of the Downtrodden". She, however, passed away after two or three months of marriage. He married another widow, Umm Salama. Her previous husband, Abu Salama, was martyred in the Battle of Uhud, leaving behind four orphans. Umm Salama was pregnant at that time and was extremely distressed and very sad. Needless to say, she needed much support. After her delivery, Umar proposed that the Prophet (peace be upon him) marry her. The Prophet accepted the proposal and married her. What purpose can there be for a person of 54 to marry a widow with four orphans except love, mercy and compassion?

He married a divorced woman, Zaynab, the daughter of Jahsh. She was married to Zayd bin Haritha, the freed slave of the Prophet. She was the cousin of the Prophet, being the daughter of his paternal aunt. Zayd di-

vorced her and the Prophet married her when she was 38 years old. His marriage to Zaynab was aimed at emphasizing the invalidity of the age-old Arab practice of taking adopted sons as real sons.

Umm Habiba was another widow whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) married. She was a daughter of Abu Sufyan who was a bitter enemy of Islam until his conversion later. She was initially married to Ubaydallah, who was a companion of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Both immigrated to Ethiopia, fleeing the persecution of the Meccans. Ubaydallah became a Christian and later died there. Considering her very difficult situation, her father being an enemy of Islam and her husband a deserter, the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent an envoy to Negus, king of Ethiopia requesting to arrange a marriage with her.

He married another widow, Juwayria. Both her father and husband were bitter enemies of Islam; the former had planned to attack Medina at the instigation of the Meccans. This led the Muslim army to march against the clan of her father. The result was their defeat at the hands of the Prophet and the death of Juwayria's husband. After the conflict, the Muslims captured many prisoners, one of whom was Juwayria. Juwayria's father offered a ransom for her freedom. She requested to stay in the service of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and he married her at her request. Her marriage resulted in the freeing of all the prisoners of war of her tribe.

He also married a woman named Safiyya, a widow as well. Her second husband was killed in the Battle of Khaybar. Her father was the chief of the famous Jewish tribe, Banu Nazir. He was killed in

the Battle of Khaybar, and so Safiyya was taken prisoner. She was eventually freed and the Prophet married her. Some complained that she was sympathetic to the Jewish people. Her answer was that they were her relatives, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) defended her position.

His final marriage was to another divorced woman, Maymuna. She was married twice and was very old. She married the Prophet when he was 57.

From the above, we see that it was not the Prophet's whims and desires that initiated his marriages.

Indeed, his marriages had a social motive and a higher goal than mere personal gratification. It would be relevant here to quote a female, Western scholar, Karen Armstrong, the author of *Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time*, in relation to the issue of Prophets marriages and polygamy in Islam: "The Quranic institution of polygamy was a piece of social legislation. It was designed not to gratify the male sexual appetite, but to correct the injustices done to widows, orphans, and other female dependents, who were especially vulnerable. All too often, unscrupulous people seized everything and left the weaker members of the family with nothing. Polygamy was designed to ensure that unprotected women would be decently married, and to abolish the old loose, irresponsible liaisons; men could have only four wives and must treat them equitably; it was an unjustifiably wicked act to devour their property. The Qur'an was giving women a legal status that most Western women would not enjoy until the nineteenth century."

How did Prophet Muhammad treat non-Muslims?

Anyone who learns about the prophetic message finds that it maintained human dignity and raised his status, as all human beings, whether Muslims or not, are the offspring of Adam. Allah the Almighty honoured all humanity by saying, "We have honoured the sons of Adam, provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our creation". (Al-Israa, 17: 70)

Hence, all people have rights as human beings before Allah the Almighty. Yet, they, before Allah, are distinguished by having piety, having faith, and adopting good morals. Moreover, Muhammad (peace be upon him) was consistent in showing this clearly in his behaviour and dealing with non-Muslims.

In an authentic tradition, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: "Whenever you see a funeral procession, stand up till the procession goes ahead of you" [Bukhari]. One day a funeral procession passed in front of him and he stood up. When he was told that it was the coffin of a Jew, he said, "Is it not a living being (soul)?" Also, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) used to visit non-Muslims

who were sick. Hence, the Prophet (peace be upon him) visited Abu Talib in his sickness, and he also visited a sick Jewish boy. [Bukhari]

He (peace be upon him) observed people's rights in terms of good neighbourliness, as he said: "The best of companions with Allah is the one who is best to his companion, and the best of neighbours with Him is the one who is best to his neighbour" [Tirmidhi]. The tradition included every neighbour, even if he was a non-Muslim.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not come to deprive those who did not follow him of freedom. Instead, he treated them with a rare form of tolerance. The following are some of the most important principles of Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) treatment of non-Muslims:

There is no compulsion in religion

Although Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions believed that it is correct to adopt Islam - as

it is the seal of the previous messages - they never tried to force any one to adopt Islam. The Noble Quran highlighted this meaning clearly by saying: **“There is no compulsion in religion as truth stands out clear from error...”**
(Al-Baqarah, 2: 256)

Therefore, no one is forced to adopt Islam. This is so, even if the one who uses force was a father who wants goodness for his children, and even if the one who was compelled was a child who has no doubt about his father's pity for him. Even the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) himself did not force people to adopt this religion, and Allah the Almighty says, “If it had been your Lord's will, they would all have believed- all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe?”
(Yunus, 10: 99)

Islam not only gave non-Muslims freedom to retain their religion, but it also allowed them to practice their ceremonies and preserved their places of worship. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prevented

his companions from disturbing Christian clergymen in their hermitages, and he never assaulted a non-Muslim place of worship. His companions, and the Caliphs after him, understood this meaning very well; so, they recommended their military leaders not to seize or demolish their places of worship. Also, Islam gave them the freedom to follow their laws related to marriage, divorce, and the like.

The values of justice with the other: Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) ordered us to deal fairly with all people whether Muslims or non-Muslims. This is mentioned in the Noble Qur'an, “Allah does command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between man and man, that you judge with justice”.
(An-Nisaa', 4:58)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) received the revelation and applied it in the greatest manner, as he was ordered to be just with all people without looking to their status, race, religion or

ancestry. They were all equal, even if the person who had a certain right was unfair to the Muslims; he would still be given his right. The Noble Quran ordered the Messenger (peace be upon him) to rule fairly if Ahl al-Kitab (i.e. the Jews and the Christians) choose him as an arbitrator, “If you judge, judge in equity between them.”
(Al-Maida, 5: 42).

In more than thirty traditions, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the right of al-Mu'ahad (the one who has a covenant with the Muslims), among which is the following: “Whoever killed a person having a treaty with the Muslims, shall not smell the smell of Paradise though its smell is perceived from a distance of forty years” [Bukhari].

He also said, “Beware, if anyone wrongs a contracting man, or diminishes his right, or forces him to work beyond his capacity, or takes from him anything without his consent, I shall plead for him (the victimized) on the Day of Judgment [Abu Dawud].

Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited torturing anyone, even if he did not

adopt Islam. Therefore, he (peace be upon him) forbade torturing any human being whether Muslim or non-Muslim. He stated, "Allah the Almighty tortures those who torture people in this life" [Muslim].

Good treatment for Non-Muslims: The teachings of Muhammad (peace be upon him) left an important principle, i.e. a Muslim treats all people well, as he (peace be upon him) said: "I have only been sent to perfect good characteristics" [Ahmad].

Noble manners are equal with every one; the Muslim and the non-Muslim. Co-existence, understanding, and co-operation among nations and people are greatly needed by humanity. So, Muhammad (peace be upon him) ordered mercy in his message, and included every aspect of it as well as all forms of good treatment. The Noble Quran says: "Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loves those who are just." (Al-

Mumtahanah: 60: 8)

The scholars of Islam explained kindness in the verse by saying: 'It is mercy on the weak of them, giving money to the poor, feeding the hungry, dressing the poor, and talking kindly with them. This should be done in a merciful and gentle way and not in a fearful and humiliating way, tolerate bad neighbours - with the ability of removing it kindly but not fearfully or greedily. In addition, we should ask Allah to guide them and grant them happiness. Also, we should offer them advice in all aspects of their life and religious matters and guard them if anyone wants to harm them'. [Qarafi]

This good treatment is confirmed in the case of family relations, and it becomes obligatory in the case of parental relationship. Hence, Asmaa' the daughter of Abu Bakr mentions the following and says, "My mother came to visit me at the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and she was a disbeliever. So I consulted the Messenger of Allah, (Peace be upon him) and asked

him, 'My mother wants to visit me and expects me to treat her kindly; should I uphold the ties of kinship with my mother?' He said, 'Yes, uphold the ties of kinship with your mother'. [Bukhari]

Also, when the delegation of Najran, who were Christians, came to Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Medina, they entered his mosque in the afternoon, and it was the time for their prayer. So, they started to pray in his mosque and the Muslims wanted to stop them but the Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: 'Let them pray'. So, they faced the east and prayed.

All of these examples indicate that Prophet Muhammad was benevolent towards all people, including those who had not embraced the message of Islam.

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