

**The advent of Muhammad – peace be upon him – and his Message to the world**

**By**

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## Introduction

The clergy of various religions introduced doctrines that were never in their Books. The Christian Trinity Creed was introduced only after the council of Nicea in 325 AD and the Council of Constantinople in 386 AD. Such doubts had to be set at rest, and they were set at rest by the revelation of the Koran.

The Koranic inspiration came directly from Allah, the Lord of the Worlds and did not consist of human conjecture or a reconstructed philosophy, in which there is always room for doubts and dispute.

Allah sent Prophet Muhammad as the last and final Prophet and guidance to mankind with a Scripture that He promised would be preserved forever.

Faith in One Allah is the most important and fundamental principle in the teachings of the Koran and Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet of Islam firmly established the Message of Tawhid, meaning, Divine Unity or Oneness of Allah. It is the bedrock of Islam and the mainstream of its power.

Islam is a universal religion. Muhammad was not only sent to the Arabs of Makkah, but also to the whole world including the Jews and the Christians. Beside establishing the concept of monotheism, Muhammad's mission was also to make clear to the Christians and the Jews things they have been concealing of the Book, so that they cannot claim innocence before Allah on the Day of Resurrection that they were heedless of the Message of Muhammad, or lest they say that their fathers were polytheists and they were only descendants after them, will Allah then punish them for the deeds of their fathers?

This book explains in detail the advent of Muhammad and his Message to the world, what Islam truly is, universality of Islam and how Muhammad – peace be upon him - approached the Christians with the Message of Islam.

## Chapter 1

### **The Advent of Muhammad and his Message to the World**

Before the advent of Muhammad – peace be upon him – the earlier Books of revelations had been corrupted by human ignorance or selfishness or fraud or misinterpretation or lost altogether. There were sects violently disputing with each other as to their true meaning. The clergy of various religions introduced doctrines that were never there; the Christian Trinity Creed was introduced only after the council of Nicea in 325 AD and the Council of Constantinople in 386 AD. Such doubts had to be set at rest, and they were set at rest by the revelation of the Koran. Allah sent Prophet Muhammad as the last and final Prophet and guidance to mankind with a Scripture that He promised would be preserved forever.

The Koranic inspiration came directly from Allah, the Lord of the Worlds and did not consist of human conjecture or a reconstructed philosophy, in which there is always room for doubts and dispute.

Allah says in the Koran:

**The sending down of the Book, wherein no doubt is, from the Lord of all Being** (Al-Sajdah, 2).

Prophet Muhammad was born in 570 CE in Makkah. His tribe Quraysh remembered the year of his birth as the "Era of the Elephant", because just two month before the birth of Muhammad, Abraha al-Ashram, the Abyssinian viceroy of Yemen, riding a huge elephant attacked the Ka'ba with his troops. The Arabs of Makkah were too weak to fight him, so they fled away leaving the Ka'ba without protection. It was a terrifying sight never to be erased from their memory, and a still more shocking end to the invasion when Allah completely destroyed Abraha and his army. The miraculous destruction of Abraha and his army is recorded in the Holy Koran:

**Hast thou not seen how thy Lord did with the men of the elephant?**

**Did He not make their guile go astray?**

**And He loosed upon them birds in flocks.**

**Hurling against them stones of baked clay.**

**And He made them like green blades devoured** (Al-Feel 1-5).

Fifty days later in the same year, on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Rabi-al- Awwal, in the house of Abdul-Muttalib a child was born. It was the child of Amena, the wife of Abdullah, the son of Abdul-Muttalib. This was the child who would change the way of life of all those around him. This was the child who would unite all people under one way. This was the child who would bring the great empires of the world to a standstill.

This child was Muhammad, the last and final Messenger and Prophet of Allah to mankind.

The name Muhammad was given to the child by his grandfather Abdul-Muttalib. The name was one which was known amongst the Arabs at that time but was not common. The literal meaning of Muhammad is 'the praised one', and it is reported that upon being asked why Abdul-Muttalib had named his grandson so, he replied, "I did so with the desire that my grandson would be praised by Allah in Heaven and by men on earth". It seems as if the desire of Abdul-Muttalib came true, for it was the name of Muhammad which was to be uttered and praised more times than that of any person in history. In fact it is not only men who praise this remarkable man, but also the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Allah, and the inhabitants of the heavens, the angels.

Allah says in the Koran:

**Allah and His angels bless the Prophet, O ye that believe, send ye blessings on him, and salute him with all respect (Al-Ahzab, 56).**

Muhammad was an Arab of the Hashimite clan from the tribe of Quraysh, a high-ranking tribe which was custodian of the shrine called Ka'ba, a pantheon of multitudinous deities, and a center of pilgrimage at Makkah. Many years before Muhammad's birth his grand father Abd al Muttalib had established himself as an influential leader of the Arab tribe 'Quraish' in Makkah and took care of the Holy sanctuary 'Ka'ba'. Muhammad's father Abdullah, died several weeks before Muhammad's birth during a visit to his father's maternal relatives. His mother Amena bint Wahb died while on the return journey from Medina at a place called 'Abwa' when Muhammad was six years old. Muhammad was a descendant of Prophet Ishmael through the lineage of his second son Kedar (about the fortieth descent).

The Ka'ba in Makkah was built by Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael centuries before as a Holy place to worship Allah, the One and the only God. The Arabs in Makkah however, had abandoned the religion of Abraham and Ishmael and used idols as intermediaries between them and Allah. They had the notion of the One God, but they believed also that idols had the power to intercede with Him. Before the coming of Muhammad the Ka'ba was a place of idol worship, housing 360 idols.

The Arabs worshipped stones, trees, idols, stars, angels and spirits, and knew nothing of the teachings of the Prophets of old. They did not believe in the resurrection and afterlife either. They had the idea that Abraham and Ishmael were their forefathers, but they knew next to nothing about their religious preaching and about Allah whom Abraham and Ishmael worshipped. They had preserved the rite of the pilgrimage to the House of the One God, the Ka'ba, an institution set up under divine inspiration by their ancestor Abraham and his son Ishmael, yet the two thousand years that separated them from Abraham had caused to generate the pilgrimage into the spectacle of a commercial fair and an occasion of senseless idolatry, which far from producing any good, only served to ruin their individual behavior, both social and spiritual. The original pristine Message of Prophet Abraham was lost, and it was mixed with superstitions and traditions of pilgrims and visitors from distant places who were used to idol worship and myths.

Before the advent of Muhammad, the Arab peninsula was a region without a government. Every tribe claimed sovereignty and considered itself to be an independent unit. There was no law except the law of jungle. Loot, arson, and murder of innocent and weak people were the order of the day. Life, property and honor were

constantly at risk and different tribes were always at daggers drawn with one another. Any trivial incidence was enough to cause a war to blaze up with ferocious fury, which sometimes even developed into a country-wide conflagration continuing for several decades. These struggles destroyed the sense of national unity and developed an incurable particularism; each tribe deeming itself self-sufficient and regarding the rest as its legitimate victims of murder, robbery and plunder.

Whatever notions the Arab tribes had of morals, culture, and civilization, were primitive and uncouth; they could hardly discriminate between pure and impure, lawful and unlawful. Their life was wild; their methods were barbaric. They reveled in adultery, gambling and drinking. They would stand stark naked before each other without any shame. Even their women-folk would parade nude at the ceremony of circumambulating the Ka'ba. Out of notions of prestige, they would bury their newly born daughters alive rather than that someone should become their son-in-law and consequently their heir.

The Koran says in this regard:

**And when any of them is given the glad tidings of a daughter his face is blackened and he chokes inwardly- He hides himself from the people because of the bad tidings that he has received; whether he shall preserve her in humiliation, or bury her into the dust, surely evil is that they judge** (An Nahl, 58, 59).

They would marry their stepmothers after the death of their fathers. They were ignorant of even the rudiments of everyday routine in eating, dressing, and cleanliness. They were steeped in vices, idols and polytheism.

Gibbon described the conditions of Arabs before the Prophet in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire). He wrote that before Muhammad the savage Arab was "The human brute, almost without sense poorly distinguished from the rest of the animal creation."

At that time however, Makkah was governed by a council of ten hereditary chiefs who enjoyed a clear division of power. There was a minister of foreign relations, a minister of guardian of the temple, a minister of oracles, a minister guardian of offerings to the temple, one to determine the torts and the damages payable, another in charge of the municipal council of parliament to enforce the decisions of the ministries. There were also ministers in charge of military affairs like custodianship of the flag, and leadership of the cavalry.

Prophet Muhammad - upon him be peace and blessings – was born in this benighted country.

Muhammad's grand father Abd al Muttaleb raised him for eight years, and after he died, Muhammad's uncle Abu Taleb bin Abd al Muttaleb took over, and raised Muhammad as his own son. Under the guardianship of Abu Taleb, Muhammad earned a living as a trader. At the age of twelve he accompanied his uncle with a merchant caravan as far as Bostra in Syria.

Khadija bint Khowayled was a Qurayshite, and as a merchant's widow was conducting business independently and had taken young Muhammad into her employ. Muhammad increased her wealth several folds and made her trade prospered. Because of his noble birth, honesty, and his skill in trade, Khadija was fascinated by the honest young man and asked his uncle Abu Taleb to open the subject of marriage with him. Muhammad accepted to marry Khadija although she was fifteen years his senior. As long as Khadija with her strong personality and noble character lived, Muhammad would have none other for a wife. By Khadija he had a number of children, none of whom survived except Fatima, later to be the famous spouse of his cousin Ali bin Abutaleb, the fourth caliph of Muslims.

Before receiving the Message of Islam, Muhammad was so honest and truthful that his people gave him the title "Al-Ameen" meaning the truthful and the trustworthy. His people saw in him no ego, no deception; no scars or blemishes in his character. He never told a lie during his entire life. He talked politely and never used obscene or abusive language. He had a charming personality and excellent manners with which he captivated the hearts of those who came into contact with him. In his dealings with people he always followed the principles of justice and altruism. He never deceived anyone and never broke his promise. He remained engaged in trade and commerce for years, but he never entered into any dishonest transaction. Those who dealt with him in business had full confidence in his integrity. Even his enemies would deposit their precious belongings with him for safe custody and he scrupulously fulfilled their trust. He was the very embodiment of modesty in the midst of a society which was immodest to the core. Born and bred among a people who regarded drunkenness and gambling as virtues, he never touched alcohol and never indulged in gambling. Surrounded on all sides by heartless people, he himself had a heart overflowing with human kindness. He would help the orphans, widows and the poor; he was hospitable to travelers. He harmed no one; rather, he exposed himself to suffer hardships for the sake of others. He kept aloof from the feuds in his tribe, and was foremost in bringing about reconciliation. He did not bow before any other created thing and did not partake in the offerings made to idols, even in his childhood. He hated all kinds of worship devoted to creatures and other beings rather than to Allah. In the midst of such a benighted and dark environment, his radiant personality was like a diamond shining amongst a heap of stones (1).

Muhammad's impeccable character was confirmed by Allah the Almighty when He revealed in the Koran:

**"You (O Muhammad) are indeed the paragon of highest virtue in the creation"**  
(Al-Qalam, 4).

The commencement of the divine inspiration to Allah's Apostle was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright daylight, and then the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him. He used to go in seclusion in the cave of Hira'a located on a hill outside of Makkah. He engaged himself in meditation and worshipping Allah alone for many days before his desire to see his family. He used to take with him the journey food for the stay and then come back to his wife Khadija to take his food likewise again till suddenly the Truth descended upon him while he was meditating in the cave of Hira'a during the month of Ramadan. The angel Gabriel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet replied, "I do not read," as he had not received any

formal education and did not know how to read or write. The angel Gabriel caught him forcefully and pressed him so hard that he could not bear it anymore. He then released him and again asked him to read, the Prophet replied, "I do not know how to read." The angel Gabriel caught him and pressed him a second time and then released him again and asked him to read. The Prophet replied, "I do not know how to read." Thereupon the angel caught him for the third time and pressed him hard and then released him and said,

**"Read: In the Name of your Lord Who created-  
Created man from that which clings;  
Read! And your Lord is the Most Noble;  
He Who has taught by the pen;  
Taught man what he knew not." (Al Alaq 1-5).**

Muhammad rushed home in alarm and asked Khadija to cover him till his fear is over. He then told his wife about everything that had happened to him and said, "I fear that something may happen to me." Khadija replied, "Never! By Allah, Allah will not let you down. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones."

Khadija then accompanied Muhammad to her cousin Waraqa Ibn Naufal, who, during the pre-Islamic period became a Christian. He was a distinguished biblical scholar and used to write from the Gospel with Hebrew letters. Khadija asked Waraqa to listen to the story of Muhammad. Allah's Apostle described what he had seen. Waraqa said, "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (angel Gabriel) whom Allah had sent to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people will turn you out. Allah's Apostle asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqa replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly." But after a few days Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration also paused for a while.

During this period while the Prophet was walking, all of a sudden he heard a voice from the sky. He looked up and saw the same angel who had visited him in the cave of Hira'a. He got afraid of him and came back home while his heart was beating rapidly and said to his wife, "Wrap me (in blankets)." And then Allah revealed the following Holy Verses of the Koran:

**O you (Muhammad)! Wrapped up in garments  
Arise and warn!  
Thy Lord magnify  
Thy robes purify  
And defilement flee  
Give not, thinking to gain greater  
And be patient unto thy Lord (Al Mudaththir 1-7).**

After this the revelation started coming strongly, frequently and regularly. The voices varied and sometimes came like the reverberating of bells, but later became one voice, identified as that of the angel Gabriel. Gabriel visited the Prophet as commanded by



Allah revealing verses of the Koran over a period of 23 years. The revealed verses were recorded on a variety of available materials like leather, palm leaves, bark, and shoulder bones of animals. The verses were memorized as soon as they were revealed, and were recited in daily prayers by Muslims. Angel Gabriel taught the order and arrangement of verses, and the Prophet instructed his several scribes to record verses in that order. Once a year, the Prophet used to recite all the versions revealed to him up to that time to Gabriel to authenticate the accuracy of recitation and the order of verses. All the revealed verses were compiled in the Book known as the Koran. The Koran does not contain even a word from the Prophet. The Koran speaks in the first person i.e. Allah's commandments to His creation. Gabriel also visited the Prophet throughout his mission informing and teaching him of events and strategy as needed to help in the completion of the prophetic mission. The prophet's sayings, actions, and approvals are recorded separately in collections known as Hadith.

The Prophet had received his call. His mission was to restore the worship of the One True God – Allah - the Creator and sustainer of the universe, as taught by Prophet Abraham and all prophets of Allah, and to demonstrate and complete the laws of moral, ethical, legal and social conduct and all other matters of significance for the humanity at large.

Allah says in His Holy Koran:

**Say, "Surely my Lord has guided me to a Righteous way, the ever true Faith, the Religion of Abraham, a man of pure faith, he was never of the polytheists (Al-Ana'm 161).**

The Message of Islam was also similar to that of Moses and the old commandments. It emphasized the majesty of Allah; Allah is One; He is All-Powerful; He is the Creator of the universe; the futility of idol worship; the threat of judgment; the necessity of faith; compassion and morality in human affairs; splendid rewards in Paradise await those who carry out Allah's commands, and terrible punishment in hell for those who disregard them. The Prophet preached that all believers are brothers and equals without any distinction of class or race or tongue. The only superiority which it recognizes is a personal one, based on the greater fear of Allah and greater piety. All these themes represented an attack on the crass materialism and idolatry prevalent in Makkah at the time.

Allah said in his Koran:

**And We gave Moses and Aaron the criterion and a Light, and a Remembrance for the pious.**

**And this is a blessed Koran which We have revealed, do you then deny it? (Al-Anbiya 48, 51).**

Muhammad began his mission by proclaiming the Message of Islam to his own tribe, Quraish. Consecrated and fired by the new task, Muhammad went among his own people teaching, preaching, and delivering the new Message. But Muhammad's call to Islam was met with stiff resistance from most of the people in Makkah. The Makkans laughed him to scorn. They were afraid that if the Arabs abandon the idols and embrace Islam, Makkah might lose its advantage as a trading and religious center for

Arabia. They wanted to preserve the licentious status quo "business as usual" with idolatry, adultery, infanticides, lying, cheating, stealing and prostitution. They thought the Prophet was a monotheistic freak.

Muhammad recited to his people the Koranic verses:

**O my people, I ask of you no reward for this, my reward rests on He who created me, will you not understand?** (Hood 51).

**...And say, "I ask no reward of you for it, it is but an Admonition to the Worlds** (Al An'am 90).

**Say, " If Allah had pleased I would not have recited the Koran to you, nor would you have had any knowledge of it, indeed, I have already lived among you for a lifetime before it, do you not understand?"** (Yunus, 16).

But the leaders of Makkah and a large part of its citizens remained stubbornly hostile.

Muhammad's first convert was his wife Khadijah whose support and companionship provided necessary reassurance and strength. Muhammad also won the support of only few of his relatives and friends, but the aristocratic and influential branch of Quraish stood adamant and made life intolerable for those who had submitted to the new faith. Slowly, however, new recruits, mainly from among the slaves and lower classes, began to swell the ranks of the believers.

The tribe of Quraish - Muhammad's tribe - moved to make bargains with him. They wanted to reverse him by offering him all the wealth of the world, the women, the throne, if only he would stop his divine drive to clean them up. They said: "If you want to possess wealth, we will amass for you as much as you wish; if you aspire to win honor and power, we are prepared to swear allegiance to you as our overlord and king; if you have a fancy for beauty, you shall have the hand of the most beautiful maiden of your own choice."

The terms were extremely tempting for any ordinary mortal, but they had no significance in the eyes of the great Prophet. His reply fell like a thunderbolt upon the deputation of the leaders of Arabia. They thought they had played their trump card but they were utterly disappointed. The Holy Prophet said:

**" I want neither pelf nor power. I have been commissioned by Allah as a Warner to mankind. I deliver His Message to you. Should you accept it, you shall have felicity and joy in this life and eternal bliss in the life hereafter; should you reject the Word of Allah, surely Allah will decide between you and me."**

On another occasion he said to his uncle, who, because of pressure from the leaders of Arabia, was trying to persuade him to abandon his mission:

**"O uncle! Should they place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, so as to make me renounce this mission, I shall not do so. I will never give it up; either it will please Allah to make it triumph or I perish in carrying it out."**

This faith, this perseverance, and this resolution, with which he conducted his mission to ultimate success is an eloquent proof of the supreme truth of his cause. Had there been the slightest doubt or uncertainty in his heart, he would never have been able to brave the storm which continued in all its fury for twenty-one long years (1).

With the peaceful negotiations failing, the Quraish resorted to physical persecution. They prevented the Prophet from offering his prayers in the Ka'ba. They hurled stones at his house. They threw the carcass of a newly slaughtered ewe at him. They placed the womb of slaughtered lamb on his head while he was prostrating himself in prayer. They threw filth in front of his house. They scattered thorns in his way. They poured dust on his head. They urged the children to stone him. Some men even pressed his neck so hard that he was at the point of death. Without complaining the Prophet received this agony patiently and imperturbably.

Sumayya, an innocent Muslim woman, was cruelly torn into pieces with spears. Yasser, a Makkan Muslim, his legs were tied to two camels, and the beasts were driven in opposite directions. Khabbab ibn Al Arth, another Muslim who was made to lie down on a bed of burning coal with the brutal legs of his merciless master on his breast so that the fat beneath his skin melt. Khabbab ibn Adi was put to death in a cruel manner by mutilation and cutting off his flesh piece-meal.

Undaunted through these dark days of persecution by the loss of so many followers, Muhammad fearlessly continued to preach and by persuasion was able to convert more men from the worship of the many and false gods to that of the one and true God, Allah. Converts to Islam included idol-worshipping Arabs as well as Jews and Christians. Some of the Makkans who also followed him were the noblest of Makkah, its flower and cream - men of position, rank, wealth and culture, and from his own kith and kin, those who knew all about his life. All the first four Caliphs, with their towering personalities, were converts of this period.

As a result of the severe persecution from the unbelievers, the Prophet sent an envoy to Negus, the kind and pious king of Ethiopia asking him to allow Muslims to migrate to his country. King Negus, the Christian, welcomed the Muslims emigrants in his territory and refused to hand them over to the unbelievers after he enquired about Muhammad and his church patriarchs heard the chapter of the Koran about the Virgin Mary.

The Quraish made life even more difficult to the Prophet when the leaders of paganism sent an ultimatum to the tribe of the Prophet demanding that he should be excommunicated and outlawed and delivered to the pagans for being put to death. Every member of the Prophet's tribe, Muslim and non-Muslim rejected the demand. Thereupon, Quraish decided on a complete boycott of the tribe. No body was to talk to them or have commercial or matrimonial relations with them. This caused stark misery among the innocent victims consisting of children, men and women, the old and the sick and the feeble. Some of them succumbed yet nobody would hand over the Prophet to his persecutors.

After three dire years, during which the victims were obliged to devour even crushed hides, four or five non-Muslims, more humane than the rest and belonging to different clans proclaimed publicly their denunciation of the unjust boycott. At the same time

the document promulgating the pact of boycott which had been hung in the Ka'ba was found as Muhammad has predicted, eaten by white ants, that spared nothing but the words Allah and Muhammad.

The boycott was lifted, yet owing to the privations that were undergone, the Prophet lost two people who were dear to him, his uncle Abu Talib, the chief of the tribe, who raised him and protected him throughout all his life, and his faithful and loving wife, Khadija. After their deaths the Makkans felt free to expose the Prophet to more aggressive persecution.

Although the Prophet and his small group of followers suffered boycott and bitter persecution, they drew comfort from the knowledge revealed to Muhammad about other prophets, such as Abraham, Joseph, and Moses, each of whom had also been persecuted. The Koran says:

**If they cry lies to you, so too before them the people of Noah cried lies, and Ad and Thamood, and the people of Abraham, the people of Lot, and the men of Median; to Moses also they cried lies. But I granted them respite, then I seized them; and how was My horror! (Al Hajj, 42-44).**

In order to gain more followers, Muhammad traveled to the city of Ta'if, but the wicked people of that town chased him out of their city by pelting stones on him and wounding him. Muhammad took shelter under a tree looking at the blood pouring immensely from his feet. He complained to Allah about the oppression he suffered from his people but also assuring Him that he will strive to seek His consent by conveying the Message of Islam as Allah commanded him to. At that instant Allah sent an angel to Muhammad to tell him that if he wished he would bring down the two mountains encompassing Makkah upon its inhabitants. But the Prophet refused and said to the angel, **“No, I hope Allah will make some of their descendants worship Him alone.”**

Within this period falls the miraculous nocturnal journey known as Israa (carried by night) and Mi'raj (ascend) in which Muhammad had been instantly transported from the Ka'ba to Jerusalem preliminary to his ascent to the seventh heaven. While Muhammad was asleep in Makkah, Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) came to awaken him and set him on the marvelous winged steed Al-Buraq. They flew together to Jerusalem where Allah resurrected to Muhammad all the previous Prophets and Messengers from Adam until Jesus. Among the prophets and messengers was Abraham, the first who called the believers Muslims. He said to Muhammad, “Convey my greetings to your people, O' Muhammad, and tell them that paradise consists of vast plain of pure soil and sweet water. It is a desolate and treeless land. The plants grow there by uttering: Glory be to Allah; praise be to Allah; there is no God but Allah; and Allah is the Greatest.”

Gabriel presented Muhammad with two cups; one contained wine and the other contained milk. Muhammad chose the cup which contained milk in it. Gabriel said, “All praise belongs to Allah who has guided you in accordance with the human nature, that if you have chosen wine your people would have gone astray.” Muhammad then led all the prophets in prayer and was their Imam (religious leader). They all stood behind him performing the prayer of Islam. In this miraculous

gathering of these holy prophets, they all turned their attention to their Lord seeking his consent. After that came the miraculous flight of Muhammad to heavens. The whole wonder and glory of that flight was that a human could be lifted up to another realm of existence and return unharmed. As a reward for his suffering in spreading Islam Muhammad with all his physical limits and composition of matter was made to travel to the unseen and see and talk to his Lord. At the highest point of his ascension, Muhammad reached the vicinity of the Throne of Allah where he was charged by his Lord with the five prayers of Islam.

The Koran said about this miraculous event:

**Glory be to Allah the One, Who carried His servant (Muhammad) by night from the Sacred Mosque to Al Aqsa Mosque, the precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our Signs. Indeed! Allah is the All-hearing the All-Seeing (Al-Isra, 1).**

When Muhammad narrated the miraculous events which happened to him to his followers, the pagans of Makkah disbelieved him, here Allah descended in his Koran:

**The heart (of Muhammad) lies not what he saw;  
What, will you dispute with him what he sees?  
Indeed, he saw him (Gabriel) another time;  
At the tree of the extreme limit (a lote- tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass);  
Nearby is the Garden of Abode;  
And the tree was covered by that which cannot be described;  
His eye swerved not, nor swept astray;  
Indeed, he saw one of the greatest signs of his Lord (An-Nagm 11-18).**

Since Israa and Mi'raj served as the terrestrial station on this memorable journey, Jerusalem, already sacred to the Jews and Christians, became the third holiest city after Makkah and Medina in the Moslem world. The wailing wall of the Jews in Jerusalem is considered by Muslims the halting place of the winged horse on which Muhammad journeyed heavenward.

The Makkan pagans attempted to kill Muhammad at his home, and the persecution by the Arab tribes of Makkah grew so fierce that Allah commanded the Muslims to immigrate to the city of Medina, some 260 miles to the north of Makkah.

A year before the immigration to Medina, the prophet made the "Pledge of Aqaba." The pledge was made between Muhammad and seventy three men and two women belonging to the tribes of Khazraj and Aws of Medina. They recognized Muhammad as a prophet and accepted Islam as a religion. They invited the Prophet and the Muslims from Makkah to migrate to Medina and promised to treat them as true brothers and sisters. As part of the pledge, they were to protect the Prophet as they would protect their women and children if the Prophet were attacked by the Makkans.

Because Muhammad was known among the Arabs with truthfulness and faithfulness, and the best in conduct in Makkah, the people of Medina wanted him to bring peace and security between their warring tribes, Khazrag and Aws. The two tribes were

often at war with each other for several generations, and the Battle of Bu'ath had shattered their strength completely. The people of Medina desperately needed a political leader who could be trusted by both tribes and bring peace to their city. Leaving the city of his birth as a refugee, Muhammad entered the city of his adoption as an honored chief. The seer in him now recedes into the background and the practical man of politics comes to the fore. The Prophet is overshadowed by the statesman.

Among the people in Medina there were three tribes of Jews; the Bani Qainuqa, Bani An-Nadeer and Bani Quraitha. The Jews lived in their own quarters and constituted almost half of the city's population. Because of wars going on for several decades between the two Arab tribes, Aws and Khasraj, the resources of the Arabs were depleted and their influence in Medina was dwindling. The Jews governed their relations with the two Arab tribes based on their own interests. The Jews of Bani Nadir and Bani Quraiza supported the Aws, and Bani Qainuqa supported the Khasraj. The continuing wars boosted the economy and personal wealth of the Jews. The Jews dominated the political, economic and intellectual life of Medina. It was easy for them to operate their usurious system. In their pawn shops, the Jews did not only accept valuable articles as pledges, but would also take women and children as security against the payment of loans. This system secured a strong financial position for the Jews, which enabled them to manipulate the market and exploit it to their own advantage. They would do anything which ensured any material gain. It was the Jews who caused all the civil wars which considerably weakened both the Aws and Khasraj tribes. They caused the war to flare up between the two tribes, wherever they judged that such a war would be to their own advantage. Hence the whole Arab population hated them for their selfishness, usury and for the means they adopted to get rich.

The people of Moses often rebelled against him, vexed his spirit, and insulted him. They rebelled against Moses not through ignorance, but from a selfish perverse, a rebellious spirit, for which they received punishment (Num xii 1-13). The Koran says about this:

**And when Moses said to his people, 'O my people, why do you hurt me, though you know I am the Messenger of Allah to you?' When they swerved, Allah caused their hearts to swerve; and Allah guides never the people of the ungodly (Al-Saff, 5).**

The Koran mentioned the shortcomings and misgivings of the Children of Israel before the time of Muhammad.

Allah divided the Children of Israel into twelve tribes. When the thirsty tribes asked Moses for water Allah inspired Moses to strike the rock with his staff; out of it there gushed forth twelve springs, thus each group knew its own place of water. Allah overshadowed them with the clouds to protect them from the heat of the sun, and sent down to them manna and quails, and He said to them, "Eat of the good things We have provided for you", but they rebelled against Allah. Actually, they did not wrong Allah, but they harmed their own souls.

**And We cut them up into twelve tribes, nations. And We revealed to Moses when his people asked for water: "Strike with thy staff the rock"; and there gushed**

**forth from it twelve fountains; all the people knew now their drinking place. And We outspread the cloud to overshadow them, and We sent down manna and quails upon them: "Eat of the good things wherewith We have supplied you." And they worked no wrong upon us, but themselves they wronged (Al-A'raf, 160).**

Following their release from the environs of the wilderness, Allah said to them: "Dwell in this town, and eat therein as you wish, and enjoy all that is wholesome and affords pleasure, but say the word of humility, "O Allah forgive our sins", and enter the gate prostrate bowing with humility. Only then will Allah forgive their iniquities and reward the good doers.

**And when it was said to them, "Dwell in this township and eat of it wherever you will; and say, 'Repentance' and enter the gate prostrate; We will forgive you your sins; We shall increase (reward) for the right-doers" (Al-A'raf, 161).**

But the transgressors among them changed the word from that which had been given them, so Allah sent down on them a plague from heaven, for that they repeatedly transgressed.

**Then the evildoers of them substituted a saying other than which had been said to them; so We sent down upon them wrath out of heaven for their evildoing (Al-A'raf, 162).**

Allah instructed Muhammad in the Koran to ask the Jews about the town (Aila, Elaih) at the Red Sea where their souls actuated them to transgress Allah's fourth commandment and break the Sabbath which was ordained by Allah to be set apart for rest and worship. The fish were made to come to the surface on the Sabbath day openly holding up their heads, and to dive deep on other days. This was a great temptation to the law-breakers, which they could not resist. Some of their men of piety protested, but it had no effect. When their transgressions extended to other commandment passed beyond bonds, the punishment came. Allah made a trial of them, for they were given to transgression.

**And question them concerning the town standing close by the sea, when they transgressed the Sabbath, when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, swimming shoreward, but on the day they had no Sabbath, they came not unto them. Even so We were trying them for their ungodliness (Al-A'raf, 163).**

When in their insolence they persisted in breaking the Sabbath and transgressed all prohibitions Allah laid their transgression to their charge and decreed that they be turned into apes and that their monkey-like character be viewed with contempt, and that they be despised and rejected of men.

**And when they turned in disdain from that forbidding We said to them, "Be you apes, miserably slinking!" (Al-A'raf, 166).**

One of the divisions of the people of Moses said, "Why do you waste your breath to admonish people (the wicked among them) who are destined to suffer annihilation or

condemnation!" Men of piety answered, "Everyman who sees evil must speak out against it; it is his duty and responsibility to Allah; there is always a chance that the warning may have effect and save a precious soul." But when those wicked counseled deaf to exhortation, Allah rescued those who forbade evil, and visited the wrong-doers with grievous punishment in requital of their playful malice.

**And when a certain nation of them said, "Why do you admonish a people Allah is about to destroy or to chastise with a terrible chastisement?" The preachers said, "To discharge our duty to your Lord, and perchance they may fear Him." So when they forgot that they were reminded of, We delivered those who were forbidding wickedness, and We seized the evildoers with evil chastisement for their ungodliness (Al-A'raf 164, 165).**

For their repeated transgression Allah proclaimed that He would raise against them till the Day of Resurrection those who would afflict them with a humiliating torment.

**And when thy Lord proclaimed He would send forth against them, unto the Day of Resurrection, those who should visit them with evil chastisement. Surely thy Lord is swift in retribution; surely He is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate (Al-A'raf, 167).**

It is indicated in Deut.xi. 28: **"A curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day."**

Also in Deut.xxviii. 49: **"The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shall not understand."**

Allah has broken the Jews up into separate aggregates forming Jewish communities among the populations of the various countries of the world. Some of them are righteous, and some far from that. Allah tried them with good things and evil things in order that they might return to the right path.

**And We cut them up into nations in the earth, some of them righteous, and some of them otherwise; and We tried them with good things and evil, that haply they should return (Al-A'raf, 168).**

Then after them succeeded an evil generation, which inherited the Book, but they chose for themselves the vanities of this low life saying for excuse: "Everything will be forgiven us." And if similar vanities came their way, they would accept it and would sin again. Was not the Covenant of the Book taken from them that they would not say about Allah anything but the truth! And they have studied what is in the Torah!

**And there succeeded after them a succession who inherited the Book yet they chose to go by the world and its vanities saying, "We will be forgiven our iniquities", and if similar vanities came to them as well they would take them. Has not the covenant of the Book been taken from them that they should say concerning Allah nothing but the truth? And they have studied well what is in**



**the Book; and the last abode is better for those who are Allah-fearing. Do you not understand?-**

**As for those who strictly observe the Book, and establish prayer, surely We will not let go to waste the reward of the righteous (Al-A'raf 169,170).**

Merely inheriting a Book, or doing lip service to it, does not make a nation righteous. If they succumb to the temptations of the world, their hypocrisy becomes all the more glaring. High finance is one of these temptations.

The Jews, in their arrogance said, "Whatever the terror of Hell may be for other people, our sins will be forgiven, because we are the children of Abraham; at worse we shall suffer a short definite punishment and then be restored to the bosom of Abraham.

**And they say, "The Fire shall not touch us save a number of days." Say: "Have you taken with Allah a Covenant? Allah will not fail in His Covenant; or say you things against Allah of which you know nothing (Al-Baqarahh, 80).**

Moses came to his people with clear proofs, yet they worshipped the calf after he left them to meet his Lord.

**Moses came to you with clear Signs, yet you worshipped the calf in his absence, and you are evildoers (Al-Baqarahh, 92).**

Allah entered into a covenant with the Children of Israel, and He raised above them the Mount saying, "Hold firmly to what We have given you and hear Our Word." They said, "We have heard." But their actions to their words did not accord. Their hearts absorbed the worship of the calf because of their disbelief. They said in words, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do." But they said in their hearts, "We shall disobey." What they should have said was, "We hear and obey." This is the attitude of the true men of faith.

**And when We took your covenant and We caused Mount Tur to be raised above you. "Adhere constantly to what We have given you and take heed." They said, "We hear but we disobey." And they were made to imbibe love of the calf into their hearts because of their unbelief. Say: "Evil is the thing your faith bids you to, if you ever had belief (Al Baqara, 93).**

They have been stamped with humiliation wherever they are found, except after a covenant of protection from Allah, and when at peace with men. They have drawn on themselves the wrath of Allah. This is because they disbelieved in Allah's signs and killed the prophets without right.

**Humiliation cleaves to them wherever they are found, except when they are in a covenant of Allah and of the people; they have incurred the wrath of Allah and destitution cleaved to them. This is because they disbelieved in Allah's revelations and killed the Prophets in defiance of right; this is for their disobedience and aggression (Al Imran 112).**

The Jews in order to believe in the Message of Islam insolently asked Muhammad for a Book that he would cause to descend upon them from heaven! But greater was their irreverence to Moses whom they asked to show Allah personally so that they perceive Him by sight. There and then did heaven thunder against them and the fearful echoes thundered in their ears in consequence of their blasphemy against Allah. Yet they worshipped the calf even after clear signs had come to them; even so Allah forgave them and gave Moses a clear proof of authority.

**The people of earlier Scripture (Jews) ask you to bring down to them a Book from Heaven, but they asked Moses for greater than that, for they said, "Let us see Allah with our own eyes," then the thunderbolt took them for their evildoing, then they worshipped the calf even after clear signs had come to them, even so We pardoned them for that, and We gave Moses evident strength (An-Nisa, 153).**

For their covenant Allah raised over them the Mount, and on other occasion He said, "Enter the gate of Jerusalem bowing with humility"; and He commanded them, "Transgress not by doing worldly works in the Sabbath." Allah took from them a firm covenant – yet, they broke the divine covenant, and rejected Allah's signs, and killed the prophets unjustly, and they said, "Our hearts are wrapped", meaning that their hearts treasured every branch of divine knowledge and wisdom, and that they could absorb no more, but in fact Allah has set a seal upon their hearts, for how greatly shaken was their faith in Him.

**And for their covenant We caused Mount Tur to be raised over them, and We said to them, "Enter the gate prostrating." And We said to them, "Do not transgress the Sabbath." And We took from them a solemn covenant. Therefore for their breaking the covenant, and their disbelief in Allah's Revelations, and their killing the Prophets unjustly, and for their saying, "Our hearts are impermeable." Allah set a seal on their hearts for their disbelief, so they shall not believe except a few (An Nisa 154-155).**

Allah poured His wrath upon them for their disbelief and their uttering against Mary a grave false charge that she has committed illegal sexual intercourse.

**And for their unbelief, and their uttering against Mary a mighty calumny (An-Nisa, 156).**

And because of their saying in boast, "We killed Messiah (Jesus) son of Mary (when betrayed him by delivering him to the Roman governor to kill him), the Messenger of Allah, when in fact they never killed him but they thought they did; their belief was based on grounds admittedly insufficient, for indeed they did not slay Jesus but the guilt nevertheless resided in the intention.

**And for their saying, "We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah" – yet they did not kill him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them. Those who are at variance concerning him surely are in doubt regarding him; they have no knowledge of him, except the following of surmise.**

**And they slew him not of a certainty – no indeed; Allah raised him up to Him; Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise (An-Nisa 157, 158).**

Also their ill-gotten gain from usury which they have been utterly forbidden to practice; and their unlawful organized scheme to eat people out of their property.

**And for their taking usury, that they were prohibited, and consuming the wealth of the people in vanity; and We have prepared for the unbelievers among them a painful chastisement (An Nisa 161).**

As stated above Allah entered into a covenant with the children of Israel, and He set among them twelve head men of Jacob's posterity to set good watch over the fulfillment of the divine agreement in which Allah had declared thus: "I will be with you, uphold you and overshadow you with My gracious wing, with the proviso that you faithfully engage in the act of worship, and give alms, for alms are but the vehicles of prayer; and acknowledge all My prophets and give credence to their missions, and give them all the help to accomplish Allah's purpose, and lend a good loan to Allah by spending in His cause (Allah in His infinite grace looks upon this as a loan, for which He gives a recompense manifold). If they abide by the divine agreement Allah will expiate their sins and admit them to gardens under which rivers flow in Paradise. But if any of them after this, disbelieved, he has rebelled against Allah.

Because they breached their covenant, Allah withdrew His overflowing grace from them. The withdrawal of grace made their hearts grow hard in two ways: (1) they were no longer protected from the assaults of evil, and (2) they became impervious even to the message of forgiveness and mercy which is open to all Allah's creatures.

Israel, when it lost Allah's grace, began to sin against truth and religion in three ways: (1) they began to misuse Scripture itself by either taking words out of their right meaning, or applying them to things for which they were never meant; (2) in doing so, they forgot a part of the message and purpose of Allah; and (3) they invented new deceits to support the old ones.

**Allah did take a covenant with the children of Israel, and We made from among them twelve chieftains. And Allah said, "I am with you only if you establish prayer, pay the alms, believe in my messengers and stand with them, and lend to Allah a good loan (expend in the way of Allah from the bounties he gives them), then I will acquit you of your sins, and I will admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, so whoever of you disbelieves after that, surely he has gone astray from the Right Way-**

**But for their breaking their covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts hard. They are perverting words from their meaning, and they have forgotten a portion of what they were given the Scriptures, and you will always find them treacherous in every way, except a few of them. So ignore them, and disregard their treason. Surely Allah loves the charitable (Al Maida 12, 13).**

Israel had the revelation given through Moses, the power of judgment and command through the kingdom of David and Solomon, and numerous prophetic warnings through such men as Isaiah and Jeremiah. The Jews however were the more to blame that they fell from grace after all the divine favors which they had enjoyed. Their

schisms and differences arose from mutual envy, which was rebellious insolence against Allah.

**And We gave the Children of Israel the Torah and the authority, and the prophet-hood, and We bestowed on them good things, and We favored them above the Worlds in that time-**

**And We gave them the Commandments most clearly, yet they differed after knowledge had come to them, out of insolence between themselves; surely your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection on that in which they differed (Al Jathiyah 16, 17).**

Allah saved them of their slavery to Pharaoh; he saved them from sea and drowned Pharaoh and his army. Allah selected them to receive food from the heavens. Allah sent them Prophet after Prophet from among themselves, and sent the Holy Scriptures; the Torah and the Injeel (Gospel). Allah preferred them over all others at their time.

**O Children of Israel, remember My favors which I granted you, and that I favored you then above the worlds (Al-Baqarah 47).**

How did they respond to these blessings of Allah?

They did not command the good or forbid the evil, they did not accept the ruling of what Allah revealed upon them, they disbelieved their Book, they received food from the heavens but they rejected it. They challenged their Prophet to show them Allah in this life; they took Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) as their sworn enemy, they took the graves of their Prophets as symbols of worship.

If the teachings of their Prophets did not appeal to them, they either rejected them or slit their throats and followed what was to them appealing.

Not only did they try to kill their Prophets, but they also attempted to kill the Prophet of Islam himself (2).

**We took covenant with the Children of Israel, and We sent to them Messengers, whenever there came to them a Messenger with that which their souls did not desire, some they disbelieved in and others they killed (Al-Maida 70).**

They changed the words of Allah adding something here, deleting there, to pound the truth and keep the flock in servitude to what they desired.

**And there is among (the people of earlier Scripture) a party who distort the Scripture with their tongues, so that you would think it is from the Scripture, while it is not from the Scripture, and they say that it is from Allah, while it is not from Allah, and they speak untruth about Allah while they know (Al-Imran 78).**

They claimed that they are the beloved children of Allah, and that the fire will not touch them. Three Jews namely, Nu'maan ibn Aasaa, Bahr ibn Amr and Shaas ibn Ade'e came to Muhammad. He sat with them and invited them to Islam and warned them of Allah's anger. They replied, "Why are you trying to scare us O Muhammad?"

By Allah, we are the Children of Allah and his beloved ones!” At that the Koranic verses were revealed:

**And the Jews and the Christians say, “We are the Children of Allah and His beloved.” Say: ‘Then why does He punish you for your sins?’ Rather you are humans from among (all the others) that He created (Al-Maida 18).**

**Say, “If the last abode with Allah is yours exclusively, and not for other people, then long for death, if you speak truly-  
But they will never long for it, because of that their hands have forwarded’ Allah knows the evildoers-  
And you will find them and the polytheists the eagerest of men for life, each one of them wishes if he might be spared a thousand years, yet his being spared alive shall not remove him from the chastisement. Allah sees the things they do (Al-Baqarah 94-96).**

There came upon the Jews a time of poverty, so they went to Shaas ibn Qays and questioned him. He said, “Your Lord is stingy, he never provides.” Allah revealed in the Koran:

**Allah has heard the saying of those who said, Surely Allah is poor, and we are rich”  
We shall write down what they have said, and their slaying the Prophets without right, and We shall say, “Taste the chastisement of the burning.”  
That, for what your hands have forwarded, and for that Allah is never unjust unto His servants (Al Imran 181-182).**

**And the Jews have said, “The hands of Allah are fettered.” Fettered are their hands, and they are cursed for what they have said. But His hands are outspread, He expends how he pleases. And what has been revealed to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in insolence and disbelief, and We have cast between them enmity and hatred until the Day of Resurrection, as often as they light a fire of war, Allah will extinguish it, they hasten about the earth to do corruption in it, and Allah does not love those who do mischief (Al Maida 64).**

One of the most horrific sins that they performed was the slaughtering of their Prophets. This was one of the major reasons they were struck with humiliation:

**And when you said, “O Moses, we can not bear one kind of food, so pray to your Lord for us to produce of that which the earth grows its edible plants, cucumbers, garlic, lentils and onions.” He said, “Do you prefer the worst to what is best? Go down to any land and you will find what you are asking for.” And they became so degraded that disgrace and humiliation, misery and wretchedness were stamped upon them and they were laden with Allah’s wrath. This is because they rejected the Signs of Allah, and they unjustly killed the Prophets. This is because they rebelled and continued transgressing (Al-Baqarahh 61).**

The heretics among the Israelites were cursed by David and by Jesus the son of Mary because they rebelled and acted violently. They did not counsel each other from committing evil, but indeed did it and therefore their deeds are sinful:

**The unbelievers of the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David, and by Jesus the son of Mary, because of their rebellion and their transgression- They did not forbid each other the wrong things they committed, evil were their doings (Al-Maida 78, 79).**

Allah did not curse all the Jews, since there is a group amongst them that has known Allah and believed in Him. Some of the Jews have decency and conscious:

**Of the people of Moses there is a nation who guide by the truth, and by it act with justice (Al-A'raf 159).**

The Jews claim that they have no obligations towards the gentiles. Anyone who is not Jewish has no right and his money is fair game. Accordingly a Jew will not be condemned or punished if he attacks the gentile. And if a gentile entrusts a Jew with money, and the Jew appropriates it, it is considered his right. The Jews know that the Torah instructed them to deal honestly with deposits but their deplorable nature and their selfishness make them twist the words of the Torah according to their wishes. The Koran said in this regard:

**And from the people of earlier Scripture are some who if entrusted with qantar (a heavy weight) will pay it back, and some who if entrusted with a single dinar (coin) will not repay it unless you constantly demand it, this is because they say, "There is no obligation on us towards the gentiles." But they invent a lie and attribute it to Allah knowingly (Al-Imran 75).**

In ancient times the Jews with their decadent souls took bribes and delighted in earthly pleasures, and did not honor a pledge or a covenant that they gave to Muslims.

Ibn Katheer in his commentaries on the Koran said, "...When one of the Israelites asked to sit in judgment, he took bribes. He was asked, "How you accept a bribe in judgment?" And he answered, "I shall be forgiven." Other Israelites condemned his deeds, but if he died or removed from his position and was replaced by one of those who condemned him, that one also took bribes.

Al-Qurtubi in his commentaries on the Koran said, "When a person with rightful claims paid the Israelite judges a bribe, they brought out Allah's Book and came up with a verdict in his favor, and when a liar, who had no rightful claim came to them they accepted his bribe, and brought out the book that they wrote themselves and rendered a verdict in his favor. They took bribes and coveted earthly pleasures. The Koran rebuked them clearly (see Al-A'raf above 168, 169).

Jews of Arabia in the days of the Holy Prophet had lost their original beliefs. They had taken much to sorcery, magic and divination. They strongly believed in falsehood, idols, priests and necromancers. They regarded the infidels of Makkah with admiration and considered them better in faith than the Muslims. They wished that Muhammad should go astray from the right path and sought the aid of Makkan pagans

with whom they intrigued against the holy Prophet. The Koran narrated their disbelief and bad intention towards the Muslims.

**Hast thou not regarded those who were given a share of the Book purchasing error, and desiring that you should also err from the way? Allah knows well your enemies; Allah suffices as a protector, Allah suffices as a helper (Al-Nisa 44, 45).**

For their arrogance, treason and disbelief Allah has cursed them and afflicted them with malignant fate. And he whom Allah has cursed shall find no one to afford him help.

**Hast thou not regarded those who were given a share of the Book believing in demons and idols, and saying to the unbelievers, that they are better guided on the way than the believers?**

**Those are they whom Allah has cursed; he whom Allah has cursed, thou wilt not find for him any helper (Al-Nisa 51, 52).**

Being in touch with idol worshippers and Christians, they also had started the dogma of Allah having a son. As Uzayr had rewritten the Torah, after it had been lost for centuries, the Jews revered him very much and started to claim that Uzayr was the son of Allah.

The Koran says:

**And the Jews said, “Uzair is the son of Allah”. And the Christians say, “The Messiah is the son of Allah”. Such are the unfounded things they utter with their mouths, following in the footsteps of the unbelievers before them. Allah strikes them dead! How they are perverted –**

**They have taken the Messiah, son of Mary, and their Rabbis and their priests as lords other than Allah, but they were commanded to worship only One Allah, there is no Allah but He, Glory be to Him, He is above and free from all that they associate with Him-**

**They desire to extinguish Allah’s Light with (the Koran) their mouths, but Allah ordains that His Light will be perfected, even though the unbelievers may detest it (At-Tawba 30-32).**

The Jews in the days of Muhammad often attempted to assassinate him, discredit him, curse him, and defame him, all the while Prophet Muhammad showed them love and mercy.

The Jews of Medina were endowed with knowledge derived from their old scriptures. While they were polytheists and idolaters, whenever there was a dispute among them and the Arabs of Aws or Khasraj, they say, “Now a Prophet will be sent, his time is almost come. We shall follow him, and with his help we shall obliterate you as the people of Ad and Iram were obliterated.” However, when Muhammad came, and invited them to Islam, the Jews rejected him. The Jews evoked Allah’s anger when they knew that Muhammad was the Prophet their scriptures spoke of and didn’t follow him. They wanted the Prophet to be from their offspring - the Children of Israel.

The Koran says in this regard:

**And when there came to them (the Jews) a Book (Koran) from Allah, confirming the revealed Scriptures they already possessed (Torah), and they were announcing beforehand their expectation of it to lead them to victory over the unbelievers, but when there came to them that which they recognized and were expecting, they disbelieved in it, so the curse of Allah is on the disbelievers- For what a wretched price they have sold their souls, that they disbelieve in what Allah has revealed (Koran), grudging that Allah should reveal out of His bounty to whom He pleases of His servants. So they have drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath and for the unbelievers there is a humiliating chastisement- And when it is said to them, "believe in the Koran which Allah has revealed." They say, "We believe only in what was revealed to us before." And they disbelieve in that which comes after it, while the Koran is the Truth confirming the revealed Scriptures with them, say, "Why then were you killing the Prophets of Allah before, if you were truly believers?" (Al Baqara 89-91).**

**Neither the unbelievers of the people of earlier Scripture, nor the polytheists wish any blessing to be sent to you from your Lord, but Allah favors for His Mercy whom He pleases, and the Mercy of Allah is sublime (Al Baqara 105).**

In the Koran, Allah invites the Children of Israel to remember the favors and blessings He bestowed upon them, and to fulfill the promise that they would follow the Prophet Muhammad when he was sent to them;

**O Children of Israel, remember My favors which I granted you, and fulfill your obligations to Me so that I shall fulfill My Covenant with you, and fear Me alone! And believe in what I have now revealed (the Koran), confirming the revealed scriptures you already possess, and do not be the first to reject it. And do not barter My Revelations for a small worldly price, and fear Me alone! (Al Baqara 40, 41).**

**And beware of a day when no soul for another shall give satisfaction, and no intercession shall be accepted from it, nor any counterpoise be taken, neither shall they be helped (Al Baqarah, 48).**

When Prophet Muhammad invited the Jews to Islam they refused to follow him saying that Allah has made a covenant with them not to believe in any Messenger until he brings to them a sacrifice which the fire from heaven shall devour.

**Those same men said, "Allah has made covenant with us that we believe not any messenger until he brings to us a sacrifice devoured by Fire." Say, "Messengers have come to you before me bearing clear signs, and that you spoke of ; why therefore did you slay them, if you speak truly?" (Al Imran, 183-184).**

Allah gave Moses the Torah but it was not in accordance with some of his people's taste and liking; it excited their displeasure, had it not been for a Word that went forth before from Allah, the torment would have overtaken them, and their differences



would have been settled between them. As for the Koran, when it was introduced to them, they were in perplexity about it – with suspicion among their thoughts.

**And We gave Moses the Book; and there was difference concerning it, and but for a Word that preceded from thy Lord, it had been decided between them; and they are in doubt of it (the Koran) disquieting** (Fussilat, 45).

Racial arrogance made the Jews adverse to the reception of truth when it came through Muhammad, a Messenger of Allah not of their own race.

**When there came to them a Book (the Koran) from Allah, confirming what was with them, and they aforetimes prayed for victory over the unbelievers – when there came to them what they recognized, they disbelieved in it; and the curse of Allah is on the disbelievers** (Al-Baqarah, 89).

The immediate result of the prophet's migration to Medina was peace and unity between the communities of Aws and Khazraj. The Prophet also established a nation of equals based on the brotherhood between the Muslims of Medina known as al-Ansar (the helpers) and those migrating from Makkah known as al-Muhagireen (the immigrants) regardless of wealth or social status. The Muslims of Medina shared their wealth and homes with the immigrants from Makkah, who left their homes and possessions behind to escape from religious persecution.

Muhammad invited the Jews to join the new society as independent tribes governed by rabbinical court within the Muslim nation, the Jews accepted and an agreement known as the Covenant of Medina was signed in 622 AD.

The treaty between Muslims, non-Muslim Arabs and Jews of Medina was put in writing and ratified by all parties. The document referred Muhammad as the Prophet and Messenger of Allah but it was understood that the Jews did not have to recognize him as such for their own religious reasons.

The covenant guaranteed all the parties equality and freedom of religion; emphasized the sanctity of Medina, life, and individual possessions; and prohibited crime. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. None of the Jews shall go out on a military expedition except with the permission of Muhammad, but he shall not be prevented from taking revenge for a wound. No separate peace will be made between the Jews and the Makkans when the believers were fighting in the way of Allah... The Jews shall contribute to the cost of war with the believers so long as they are at war with a common enemy. The Jews shall be responsible for their expenses and the believers for theirs. Each, if attacked, shall come to the assistance of the other...

The party of the Ansars, or helpers included some lukewarm converts who retained an ill-concealed predilection for idolatry. This group of people was known as the hypocrites. The hypocrites were headed by Abdallah Ibn Ubay, a man with some claims to distinction. They ostensibly joined Islam, but in secret were disaffected. The hypocrites, while living among the Muslims, wanted to keep good relations with the idolaters so that if the conflict ended in the defeat of the Muslims, they might safely take refuge with them. Because the Jews and the idolaters were economically the most powerful people in Arabia, this led the hypocrites to preserve their old

relations with them. They feared that breaking relations with these people might ruin them economically and politically. The hypocrites were often a source of a considerable danger to the newborn commonwealth and requiring increasing watchfulness on the part of the Prophet.

Muhammad journeyed several times with a view to win the neighboring tribes and to conclude with them treaties of alliance and mutual help. With their help he decided to exert economic pressure on the Makkan pagans, who had confiscated the property of the emigrants and caused innumerable damage.

Anxious to offer sustenance to the emigrants, the Medinese Moslems (helpers) under the leadership of Muhammad intercepted a summer caravan of the Makkan pagans on its return from Syria to Makkah, thus striking at the most vital point in the life of that commercial metropolis. The caravan leader had learned of the scheme and sent to Makkah for aid. The encounter between the reinforced Makkan caravan and the Muslims, thanks to the leadership of the Prophet, resulted in the complete victory of three hundred Muslims over a thousand Makkans. This battle is known as the 'Battle of Badr' at which Islam had won its first and decisive military victory.

In the following year, the Makkans avenged their defeat and even wounded the Prophet, but their triumph was not to endure, Islam recovered and passed on gradually from the defensive to the offensive, its propagation now assured. It became a religion within a state; in Medina it passed into something more than a state religion; it became the state.

The Prophet was a perfect model of tolerance and love which he taught through his practical example to the rugged, rough and illiterate people of the desert who as a result became the leaders and teachers of the world. His behavior towards men and women, rich or poor, adult or child, was the same. He spoke to all with civility and politeness and taught others the same through his personal example. The Koran mentions this quality of Muhammad in these words:

**It is by the Mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them, for if you were severe or fierce of heart, they would have dispersed from you (Al-Imran 159).**

Once a Jew came to the Prophet out of mischief, greeted him by saying, "As-sam Alaikum" (death to you) instead of As-salamu Alaikum (peace be upon you). A'isha, the Prophet's wife, with anger gave a harsh reply. But Muhammad stopped her and said, **"A'isha! Don't use harsh words; be polite; Allah likes mildness in everything."**

The Prophet did his best to invite the Jews and the hypocrites of Medina to Islam. They pretended that they believed in the new Message but their hearts did not believe. The Prophet was utterly sad to see these people going astray. Allah Almighty revealed to him:

**O Messenger! Let those who vie with one another in disbelief not grieve you, such men as utter with their mouths, "We believe." But their hearts do not believe. And from among the Jews there are those who eagerly listen to lies, they listen to other people who have not come to you, perverting the words from their meaning saying, "If you are given this, then take it, and if you are not given it,**

**leave it, beware!’ And whosoever Allah desires to test, you cannot avail him anything from Allah. Those are they whose hearts Allah does not wish to purify, for them degradation in this life and in the Hereafter they shall have a grievous chastisement-**

**They listen to falsehood and they devour the unlawful. If they come to you, judge between them or disregard them, and if you disregard them, they will not be able to harm you in the least, and if you judge, judge justly between them, for Allah loves those who are just (Al Maida 41, 42).**

**Have you seen those (Jews) who have been given a portion of the Book being called to the Book (Koran) of Allah that it may judge between them, some of them turn away and decline-**

**That, because they claim, “The Fire shall not touch us except for a number of days.” Such self-invented beliefs have deluded them-**

**So how will it be for them when We gather them on a Day about which there is no doubt, and every soul shall be fully paid for what it has earned without injustice (Al Imran, 23-25).**

In this Medinese period the new Prophet broke with both Judaism and Christianity; Friday was substituted for Sabbath; the call from the minaret was decreed in place of trumpets and bells; Ramadan was fixed as a month of fasting, the direction to be observed during the ritual prayer was changed from Jerusalem to Makkah. The pilgrimage to the Ka’ba was authorized.

The Jews of Medina were fierce enemies of Islam, waiting for every chance to deal a devastating blow to Muslims. Despite the fact that the Prophet made a treaty with the Jews when he first arrived in Medina, which stipulated that the Jews would support the Muslims in any fight against any enemy who threatened the Muslims in Medina, it was soon become clear that the Jews had no intention of putting that provision into effect. Their hatred of Islam was because the Prophet himself was not Jewish. When they realized that the Muslims had achieved a great victory over the unbelievers at the battle of Badr, they felt sorry for the unbelievers and felt insecure in Medina. Hence the Jews gave every indication that they considered their peace treaty with the Prophet broken. They started unashamedly a barrage of ridicule against the Prophet. No kindness or generous treatment on the part of the prophet would seem to satisfy them. They caused their poets to use their influence to sow sedition among the Muslims and ridicule their victory at the battle of Badr. One of their distinguished poets, called Ka’b ibn al Ashraf, of the Bani An-Nadir tribe, spared no efforts in publicly deploring the ill success of the idolaters after their defeat at Badr. By his satires against the Prophet and his disciples, and his elegies on the Makkans who had fallen at Badr, Ka’b succeeded in exciting the tribe of Quraish to that frenzy of vengeance which resulted into the battle of Uhud at which Muslims were defeated. He then returned to Medina, where he continued to attack the Prophet and the Muslims, men and women, in terms of the most obscene character. He composed poetic verses against Muhammad linked to curses. Given the fact that everyone believed in the supernatural power of curses, the Prophet was not inclined to ignore this attack.

Another Jew, Sallam by name, of the same tribe, behaved equally fiercely and bitterly against the Prophet. He made every effort to excite the neighboring Arab tribes against the Muslims.

The Jews soon broke off and ranged themselves with the enemies of Islam. They did not hesitate to declare openly that they preferred idolatry, with its attendant evils, to the faith of Islam.

The Koran reports their treachery:

**You see many of them making alliance with the idolaters. Evil is that which their souls have forwarded for themselves, for they have incurred the wrath of Allah, and in chastisement they shall dwell forever- Had they believed in Allah and the Prophet and what had been revealed to him, they would never had taken the idolaters for allies, but most of them are rebellious (Al -Maida 80, 81).**

The Jews created disaffection among the Muslims and slandered the Prophet and his adherents. They mispronounced the words of the Koran so as to give them an offensive meaning. The Koran says in this connection:

**Of the Jews some pervert words from their meanings, saying, “We have heard and we disobey, and hear, may you not be heard, and ra’aina (an ambiguous word they used in its insulting sense).” Distorting with their tongues and taunting at religion, and if they had said, we have heard and we obey, and hearken and regard us, it would have been better for them and more correct, but Allah has cursed them for their blasphemy, so a few only will believe among them (An-Nisa 46).**

The Prophet had therefore to keep an eye on his enemies outside Medina, on the one hand, and those within the city on the other. The Makkans who had sworn Muhammad’s death were well acquainted- thanks to the party of hypocrites and of the Jews at Medina- with the real forces of the Muslims. They also knew that the Jews had accepted Muhammad’s alliance only from motives of temporary expedience and that they would break away from him to join the idolaters as soon as the latter showed themselves in the vicinity of Medina. The safety of the state required the proscription of the hypocrites who were giving secret information to the common enemy. About six men were executed for high treason of this nature. The Muslim common wealth with the object of securing safety among the community also passed a sentence of outlawry upon Ka’b and Sallam.

The Jews of the tribe Bani Qainuqa lived in a locality inside the city of Medina. After the battle of Badr, they openly infringed the terms of the compact. As they practiced the crafts of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel maker, the people of Medina had to visit their shops fairly frequently. They were proud of their bravery and valor. Being blacksmiths by profession even their children were well armed and they could instantly muster 700 fighting men from among themselves. They were also arrogantly aware that they enjoyed relations of confederacy with the Khazraj and Abdullah bin Ubbay, the chief of the Khazraj was their chief supporter. After the victory of Badr, they became so provoked that they began to trouble and harass the Muslims and their

women in particular, who visited their shops. Things came to such a pass that one day a Muslim woman visited their bazaar, in the course of which she sat down by a goldsmith's stall. Some Jewish youths teased her by attempting to lift her veil, and the goldsmith somehow fastened her skirts to the floor, with the result that her lower body was exposed upon her rising. A Muslim sprang forward and killed the goldsmith. The Jews fell on the Muslim and killed him. In an oriental context, this would be perceived as an outrage against both personal and tribal honor warranting bloodshed. It was necessary to put an end to their hostile actions for the sake of maintaining peace and security. The Prophet had to go to their headquarters where he got them together and counseled them on decent conduct. He called their notables and spoke to them, warning them against breach of their treaty, **“You had better guard against a calamity, like that which befell the Quraish, you will be well advised to adopt Islam.”**

To this they replied in the most offensive term, “O Muhammad, you perhaps think we are like Quraish, ignorant in the art of war. You confronted a people who have no knowledge of war and you took the chance to rout them. Do you think that we are an easy prey? If you were to fight against us, you would certainly know that we are the true fighters.”

They thus spurned their agreement with the Prophet and issued an open challenge to fight. There was certainly no chance that the Muslims would feel easy about probable treachery by the Qainuqa Jews when the state of war still existed between the Muslims and the Quraish. The Jews were depending on their allies, the Khazraj, to help them in their declared war. The Khazraj refused.

Armed with divine instructions: **And if you suspect treachery from any people, first inform them openly that the treaty no longer stands, indeed Allah does not like the treacherous people** (Al-Anfal 58), the Prophet declared to the Jews that the treaty between the two parties no longer had any value, and that he considered himself at war with them.

The Prophet laid siege to their quarters. The siege had hardly lasted a fortnight when they surrendered and all their fighting men were tied and taken prisoners. The leader of the Khazraj tribe Abdullah bin Ubay came up in support of them and insisted that they should be pardoned. The Prophet conceded his request and decided that the Bani Qainuqa would be exiled from Medina leaving their properties, armor and tools of trade behind.

The Jewish tribe Bani An Nadir behaved the same way as Bani Qainuqa. They had played a double game. Originally they were sworn allies of the Medina Muslims under the holy Prophet, but they secretly intrigued with the Makkah pagans and the Medina hypocrites. They thought the pagan Quraish of Makkah and the hypocrites of Medina would help them so they openly and publicly disregarded the terms of the charter. They even tried treacherously to take the life of the Prophet while he was on a visit to them, breaking both the laws of hospitality and their own sworn alliance. The Prophet had to pay blood money to the relatives of the men killed by one of his companions. Since the Muslim state was still poor, Muhammad approached the council of the Jewish tribe of Bani An Nadir to request financial assistance. At first they were reluctant, but eventually they agreed, and requested that he and his

companions wait while they prepared the money. The Prophet and his companions sat down close to a house belonging to a Jew waiting for the money. The chiefs of An Nadir tribe left them pretending that they were about to raise some money. When they were alone, some of the Jews said, "You will never find the man as easy as prey as he is now. Let a strong person go onto the roof of the house and drop a millstone over his head and rid us of him." One of them, Amir ibn Jihash ibn Ka'ab, volunteered to commit the treacherous crime. Muhammad purportedly received a divine revelation that the Jews were about to kill him by dropping a rock from the roof on his head. The Prophet stood up without saying anything and left for Medina. Muhammad responded to the attempted assassination by sending Muhammad ibn Maslama, a Muslim member of a tribe allied to the An Nadir, with an ultimatum, "Betake yourselves out of my city. You are no longer allowed to share it with me after the treason which you have plotted against me. I give you ten days notice to carry out this ultimatum. Any one of you seen after this period in Medina shall be executed."

Abdullah ibn Ubayy, the chief of the hypocrites of Medina, encouraged the Jews to defy the order and refuse to leave Medina. He even promised to help them with 2000 men, and assured them that the pagan tribe Bani Ghatafan from Najd also would come to their aid. Accordingly, the Bani an Nadir took refuge in their fortresses, and sent word that they would not leave no matter what the holy Prophet might do. The Prophet laid siege to their fortresses, and the promises of ibn Ubay proved empty, none of their supporters had the courage to come to their rescue. The fifteen days siege showed them their own helplessness. Their supplies were cut off; the exigencies of the siege necessitated the destruction of their outlying palm trees; and the unexpected turn in their fortunes disheartened them. Their hearts were stricken with terror and they capitulated. Their lives were spared, and they were allowed ten days in which to remove themselves, their families, and such goods as they carry. In order to leave no habitations for the Muslims they demolished their own houses, and laid waste their property.

The punishment of Bani an Nadir was because of breaking their plighted word with the Messenger and in actively resisting Allah's Message and supporting the enemies of that Message. They rebelled against the Prophet. For such treason and rebellion the punishment is severe, and yet in this case too it was seasoned with mercy (3).

The expulsion of Bani an Nadir was mentioned in the Koran:

**Allah is the One who drove out the unbelievers among the people of earlier Scriptures from their homes at the beginning of the gathering. You did not think they would go out, and they thought their fortresses would defend them from Allah, but Allah's wrath came upon them from where they had not expected and cast terror into their hearts, as they destroyed their houses with their own hands, and the hands of the believers, therefore take warning, you who have eyes to see! And had it not been that Allah decreed for them exile, He would certainly have punished them in this world, and in the Hereafter they shall have the chastisement of fire.**

**This is because they were opposed to Allah and His Messenger, and whoever is opposed to Allah, then surely Allah is severe in retribution (Al Hashr 2-4).**

In the same year the enemy of Islam made every possible attempt to stir up the pagan Arab tribes against the Muslims. The Jews of Bani Quraiyza also took an active part in those intrigues. They counted among the citizens of Medina and were bound by solemn engagements to help in the defense of the city. But they intrigued with the enemy and treacherously aided them.

The Makkan tribe of Quraish prepared an army of ten thousand well-equipped men, under the command of Abu Sufian bin Harb, and marched towards Medina. The army encamped near Mount Uhud, a few miles from the city, and put Medina under siege. The Muslims could gather only an army of three thousand men. Seeing their inferiority in numbers on the one hand, and the turbulence of the hypocrites within the town on the other, the Muslims preferred to remain on the defensive. They dug a deep moat round the unprotected quarters of Medina and encamped outside the city with a trench in front of them. They relied for safety of the southern part of the city upon their allies, the Jewish tribe, Bani Quraiza, who possessed fortresses at a short distance towards the south and were bound by the compact to assist the Muslims against any raiders. These Jews however, were induced by the idolaters to violate their pledge and to join the Quraish. As these Jews were acquainted with the hypocrites of Medina, they were waiting for an opportunity to play their part; the situation of Muslims inside the city of Medina was therefore most dangerous. During the siege, Quraish sent Huyay bin Akhtab, the Jewish leader of the Bani an Nadir, to the Bani Quraiza so as to induce them to break the treaty and join the war against Muhammad. In the beginning they refused saying that they had a treaty with Muhammad who had faithfully abided by it, thus giving them no cause for complaint. But when Ibn Akhtab said to them, "Look, I have summoned the united force of entire Arabia against Muhammad; this is a perfect opportunity to get rid of him, if you lose it, you will never have another chance." The anti-Islamic Jewish mind prevailed over every moral consideration and the Bany Quraiza Jews were persuaded to break the treaty. The plan was that the Jews of Bani Quraiza assault Medina from the rear, massacring Muslim's women and children. Some Jews even joined the siege (3).

The siege had lasted for twenty days. The pagans of Makkah made great efforts to cross the trench, but every attempt was fiercely repulsed by the small Muslim force. By the aid of Allah, disunion became rife in the midst of the besieging army. Their horses were perishing fast, and provisions were becoming less every day. During the night, a storm of wind and rain caused their tents to be overthrown and their lights extinguished.

The support of Allah to the Muslim army defending the trench was narrated in the Koran:

**O believers, remember Allah's blessing upon you when hosts came upon you, and we loosed against them a wind, and hosts (troops of angels) you saw not; and Allah sees the things you do.**

**When they (the pagans of Makkah) came against you from above you and from below you, and when your eyes swerved, and your hearts reached your throats, and you were harboring doubts about Allah.**

**There the believers were tried, and shaken most mightily (Al-Ahzâb 9-11).**

Abu Sufian, the leader of the pagans and the majority of his army fled, and the rest took refuge with the tribe of Bani Quraisa.

Allah said about the defeat and fled of the army of the idolaters:

**And Allah drove back those that were unbelievers in their rage, and they attained no good; Allah spared the believers of fighting. Surely Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty (Al-Ahzâb, 25).**

The Muslims though they were satisfied with the failure of their enemies, could not help thinking that the victory was unsatisfactory so long as the Jewish tribe of Quraisa, who had violated their sworn pledge, remained so near. The Jews might at any time surprise Medina from their side.

The Muslims demanded an explanation for the violation of the pledge, but the Jews utterly refused. This was the final straw for Muhammad, whose mind was now set on conquering Makkah, and the last thing he would be willing to tolerate was a fifth column undermining his strategy. The Jews were filled with terror and dismay when Medina was free from Quraish danger, and shut themselves up in their castles.

On the very day the siege ended, Muhammad returned his troops on the tribe of Bani Quraisa who had betrayed his city in the hour of danger. This was not a mere human strategic decision on the part of the Prophet; rather, it had been commanded by Allah through the angel Gabriel.

According to the narration of Aisha, the Prophet's wife, "The Prophet returned from the battle and laid down his arms and took a bath. The Angel Gabriel came to Muhammad while he (Gabriel) was shaking the dust off his head, and said, "You have laid down your arms? By Allah, I have not laid them down. Go out to them (to attack them). The Prophet said, "Where?" Gabriel pointed towards Bani Quraisa..."

The Koran says in this regard:

**Surely the worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the unbelievers, who will not believe. They are those with whom you made a covenant, but they break their covenant every time and they do not fear Allah.  
So if you gain the mastery over them in war, reduce them into a useless form to disperse the ones behind them; haply they will remember.  
And should you suspect treachery on the part of a people with whom you have concluded a peace treaty, then let them know that you have cancelled your covenant just the same; Allah detests indeed the treacherous (Al-anfal 55-58).**

Consequently the Jews were besieged and compelled to surrender at discretion. They asked that their punishment should be left to the judgment of Sa'd ibn Mu'az, an old friend of the Jews, and chief of the Aus tribe with which they had been in alliance. The Prophet accepted their demand and allowed Sa'd to pronounce judgment. Sa'd ibn Mu'az was a fierce Muslim soldier, and had been wounded in the attack, and, indeed, died of his wounds the following day. Infuriated by the treacherous conduct of the Bani Quraisa, Sa'd gave judgment that the fighting men should be put to death,



and that the women and children should become the slaves of the Muslims. The sentence was carried into execution (4).

Allah says in this respect:

**And He brought down those of the People of the Book who supported them from their fortresses and cast terror in their hearts; some you slew, some you make captive.**

**And He bequeathed upon you their lands, their habitations, and their possessions, and a land you never trod. Allah is powerful over everything (Al-Ahzâb 26, 27).**

In the same year the Jews of Khaibar, a strongly fortified territory at a distance of four day's journey from Medina, showed implacable hatred towards the Muslims. United by alliance with the tribe of Ghatafan, as well as with other cognate tribes, the Jews of Khaibar made serious attempts to form a coalition against the Muslims. The Prophet and his adherents were apprised of this movement and immediate measures were taken in order to repress any new attack upon Medina. An expedition of fourteen hundred men was soon prepared to march against Khaibar. The allies of the Jews left them to face the war with the Muslims alone. The Jews firmly resisted the attacks of the Muslims, but eventually all their fortresses had to be surrendered, one after the other to the Muslims.

The Koranic verses related to this occasion are:

**They will not fight against you all together except in fortified cities, or from behind walls, their valor is great among themselves, you think of them as united, but their hearts are divided, that is because they are people devoid of sense. Like those who shortly before them tested the evil of their action, and there awaits them a painful chastisement (Al Hashr 14, 15).**

The Jews prayed for forgiveness, which was accorded to them on certain conditions. Their lands and immovable property were secured to them, together with the free practice of their religion.

The numbers of Muslims who were martyred was about 18, while the number of the Jews killed came about 93.

After the conquest of Khaibar, a Jewish woman called Zainab bint Al-Harith offered the Prophet a roasted sheep she had poisoned. He took a mouthful, but it was not to his liking so he spat it out. After investigation, the woman confessed that she had stuffed the food with poison alleging that if the eater were a king, she would then rid herself of him, but should he be a prophet, then he would be bound to learn about it. The Prophet however, connived at her treacherous attempt, but ordered that she be killed when his companion Bishr bin Al-Bara' who ate from the same meat died of the poison.

No sooner had the Prophet discharged the affair of Khaibar than he started a fresh move towards Wadi Al-Qura, another Jewish colony in Arabia. He mobilized his forces and divided them into three regiments. Prior to fighting, he invited the Jews to

embrace Islam but all his words and exhortations fell on deaf ears. Fighting went on ceaselessly for two days and resulted in full surrender of the Jews.

The Prophet stayed in Wadi Al-Qura for four days, distributed the booty among the Muslim fighters and reached an agreement with the Jews similar to that of Khaibar.

The Jews of Taima, hearing beforehand about the successive victories of the Muslim army and the defeats that their brethren had sustained, showed no resistance when the Prophet reached their habitation. They took the initiative and offered to sign a reconciliation treaty to the effect that they receive protection but pay tribute in return. Having achieved his objective and subdued the Jews completely, the Prophet made his way back home to Medina.

The shift from the Hebrew world to Islam world after over 1500 years of working through the Jewish community was decisive. They have failed as a nation. Now heaven's orientation toward them completely changed.

A year after the Battle of the Trench, the Prophet led a body of 1,400 believers to the city of his birth Makkah to perform the annual pilgrimage (628 CE). The Makkans however prevented them from approaching the city at a place called Hudaibia. After some negotiations a treaty was signed between the Prophet and the pagans of Makkah allowing Makkans and Muslims to be treated on equal terms and that the Muslims perform pilgrimage next year. In this year many delegations from all regions of Arabia came to the Prophet to investigate the teachings of Islam, and a large number of people accepted Islam within a couple of years. The Prophet sent many of his companions who memorized the Koran by heart to new communities to instruct them about the practice of Islam. More than fifty of them were murdered by non-believers.

At the end of 628 CE, the Quraish violated the terms of the treaty of Hudaibya by helping Banu Bakr tribe to mount a bloody aggression against bani Khuza'ah tribe, an ally of the Prophet and the state of Medina. Some of Bani Khuzah'ah's men escaped and took shelter in Makkah seeking redress. The leaders of Quraish however did nothing to help them. They then sent a Message to the Prophet for help.

The Prophet could not overlook this breach and marched to Makkah with an army consisting of three thousand Muslims from Medina and Muslims from other Arab communities that joined him in the way totaling ten thousand Muslims.

The army entered Makkah without fighting and the Prophet went directly to the Ka'aba. Muhammad magnified Allah for the triumphant entry in the Holy city, and entered Makkah with great humility and gratitude, prostrating himself repeatedly on the back of the camel he was riding, before the One Allah, thankful to Him for all He had provided, declaring an all-embracing amnesty and peace, in place of any thought of avenging past material or mental afflictions, and in fact demonstrating what Allah wills of godly men:

**”...enter the gate prostrating and say ‘Amnesty.’ (Al-Baqarah 58).**

The Quraysh realized that there was no hope of resisting the Muslim forces. What was to be their fate-they who had harried and persecuted the believers, tortured and boycotted them, driven them out of their hearths and homes, stirred up others against them, made war on them, and killed many?

They were now completely at the mercy of the Prophet. The Makkans however were treated with mercy and special magnanimity. Hardly a triumphal entry in ancient annals is comparable to this.

Muhammad could have destroyed the city and wipe out its inhabitants. But revenge was not his object. His object was to spread the Message of Islam and complete the task of his prophet hood.

Entering the Ka'aba, Muhammad like his father Abraham, smashed the many idols- said to have numbered 360 idols- exclaiming:

**“Truth hath come, and falsehood hath vanished.”**

The Ka'aba was therefore cleansed by the removal of all idols, and it was restored to its pristine status for the worship of the One true God, Allah, as built by prophets Abraham and Ishmael.

The Prophet then ordered Bilal, the Ethiopian companion, to go to the rooftop of the Ka'aba to call for prayer. The Prophet led the congregational prayer and then addressed the assembled citizens gathered around the Ka'aba. He reminded them of what they had done to him and his companions, and said:

**”The arrogance and racial pride of the heathen days has been wiped out by Allah today. All human beings are descended from Adam, and Adam was made of clay.”**

He recited the following verse of the Koran:

**”O human beings! We have indeed created you of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you who is most deeply conscious of Him. Surely, Allah is Kknowing, Aware (Al-Hujurat 13).**

He then asked them in a voice full of compassion and tenderness:

**”O people of Quraysh! What do you think I will do with you?”**

One of them, Suhayl ibn Amr, who had fought against the Prophet, replied on behalf of the Makkans, “You are a noble brother, son of a noble brother.”

The Prophet smiled and said:

**”I shall speak to you as Yusuf (Joseph) spoke unto his brothers: ‘There is nothing against you today; Allah will forgive. He is the most Merciful and the most compassionate.’”**

And then he added,

**“No more responsibility burdens you today. Go, for you are all free.”**

The Prophet also declared:

**“Allah made Makkah holy the day He created heaven and earth and it is the holy of holies until the Resurrection Day. It is not lawful for anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day to shed blood therein, nor to cut down trees therein. It was not lawful to anyone before me and it will not be lawful to anyone after me.”**

The pagans of Makkah came to understand after much bloodshed that they were fighting not against the Prophet but a hidden power which they would not be able to defeat by any means. They realized ultimately that they were fighting against Allah who gave them life, power and energy in their bodies. They had to give up the opposition and compromise with the Truth. Now their souls could no longer resist the attraction of Muhammad's words and his noble call.

The people of Makkah accepted Islam including the staunch enemies of the Prophet. A few of the staunchest enemies and military commanders had fled Makkah after his entry. However, when they received the prophet's assurance of no retaliation and no compulsion in religion, they came back and gradually the Message of Islam won their hearts.

The year A.H. 9 is known as “the year of delegations.” In this year Muhammad concluded treaties of peace with the Christian Chief of al-Aqabah and the Jewish tribes in the oases of Maqna, Adhruh and Jarba to the south. The native Jews and Christians were taken under the protection of the newly arising Islamic community in consideration of a payment called jzyah, which included land and head tax. Groups came from distant Oman, Hadramawt and Yemen. The leading tribes sent deputies. Arabia, which had hitherto never bowed to the will of one man, seemed now inclined to be dominated by Muhammad and to be incorporated into his new scheme. Its heathenism was yielding to a nobler faith and a higher morality. Out of these principles the state of Islam arose. This new community of Emigrants and Helpers was established on the basis of the religion of Islam. The nation of Islam was known as the Ummah, or the congregation of Allah. This was the first attempt in the history of Arabia to establish a nation based on religion rather than blood, as its basis. Allah was the personification of state supremacy. His Prophet, as long as he lived, was his legitimate viceregent and supreme ruler on earth. As such, Muhammad exercised, in addition to his spiritual function, the same temporal authority that any chief of a state might exercise. All persons within this community, regardless of tribal affiliation and older loyalties, were now brethren at least in principle.

In the year A.H. 10 Muhammad headed triumphantly the annual pilgrimage into his new religious capital, Makkah. This proved his last visit and was styled “the Farwell Pilgrimage.” These are some words of the Prophet in his noble sermon at the Farwell Pilgrimage:

**”O ye men! Listen unto my words and take ye them to heart! Know ye that every Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim, and that ye are now one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for any one of you, therefore, to appreciate onto him anything that belongs to his brother unless it is willingly given to him by that brother.”**

Thus by one stroke the most vital bond of Arab relationship, that of tribal kinship, was replaced by a new bond, that of faith. Herein lays one of the chief claims of the

Prophet of Islam to originality. A sort of Pax Islamica was instituted for Arabia. The new community was to have no priesthood, no hierarchy, and no central see. Its mosque was its public forum and military drill ground as well as its place of common worship. The leader in prayer, the Imam, was also to be commander in chief of the army of the faithful, who were enjoined to protect one another against the entire world. All Arabians who remained heathen were outside the pale, almost outlaws. Islam cancelled the past. Wine and gambling- next to women the two indulgences dearest to the Arabian heart- were abolished in one verse. Singing, almost equally attractive, was frowned upon.

The Prophet of Islam smashed all idols, shattered polytheism, and false monotheism such as pantheism, dualism, and Trinitarian doctrines of Christianity. He taught that God (Allah) is One sovereign, over the entire universe - galaxies, stars, heavens and earth - eternally Omnipotent, without partners and associates. Neither plurality of persons nor of essence, nor divisible, nor multipliable, nor one in three, nor three in one, neither begetting nor begotten out of creatures' bodies; these are all variant legacies of old paganism and must go.

Out of the ruins of such lost humanity with paganisms, heathenisms, trinitarianisms, the Prophet constructed a Godly Monotheistic Empire with divine laws and legislation based on the principles of the Koran, under the sole sovereignty of One Almighty, and submission of all to Him alone.

The Prophet guided the hopelessly lost mankind into pristine monotheism (Tauheed) in its hour of darkness, like no one else before did. He built and guided the fledged Islamic community according to the light of the Koran which was soon to govern the biggest Monotheistic Islamic Empire the world have ever seen – almost half of the known world.

As the French historian Lamartine wrote in 1854 in his "Histoire de la Turquie" "This man (Muhammad) moved not only armies, legislation, empires, peoples and dynasties but millions of men...and more than that he moved altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls...The conquest to his dogma was a miracle."

When already in power, the Prophet lived in a miserable hut, mended his own clothes and freed all slaves. He gave his share of food to the poor, he went hungry for days. Aisha his wife, may Allah be pleased with her, related that the family of the Holy Prophet never ate bread made of wheat flour for more than three days continuously right up to the day of his death, because he used to go around and give away his share to the orphans, to the widows, to the helpless frail aged, and to the other needy.

The great change in Arabia alarmed the two super powers, Byzantines and Persians. Their Governors, particularly the Byzantines, reacted with threats to attack Medina. Instead of waiting, the prophet sent an army to defend the north border of Arabia. In the remaining life of the Prophet, all of the major battles were fought on the northern front. The Prophet did not have a standing army. Whenever he received a threat, he called the Muslims and discussed with them the situation and gathered volunteers to fight any aggression.

From Medina the Islamic theocracy spread all over Arabia and later encompassed the larger part of Western Asia and North Africa. The community of Medina was in miniature the subsequent community of Islam. Within a brief span of mortal life Muhammad called forth out of unpromising material a nation never united before, in a country that was hitherto but a geographical expression; established a religion which in vast areas superseded Christianity and Judaism and still claims the adherence of a goodly portion of the human race; and laid the basis of an empire that was soon to embrace within its far-flung boundaries the fairest provinces of the then civilized world.

At the end of his mission, the Prophet was blessed with several hundred thousand followers of Islam. Thousands prayed with him at the mosque and listened to his sermon. Hundreds of sincere Muslims would find every opportunity to be with him following five daily prayers. They used to seek his advice for their everyday problems and listened attentively to the interpretation and application of revealed verses to their situation. They followed the Message of the Koran and the Messenger of Allah with utmost sincerity, and supported him with everything they had. They faithfully carried the Message of Islam, and within ninety years after the prophet, the light of Islam reached Spain, North Africa, the Caucasus, northwest China and India.

The light and guidance the Prophet of Islam brought for all mankind superseded the earlier Law for the Jews and that of the Christians. The good and the upright among them followed the new light, but the rest were scattered across the earth.

Himself an unschooled man, Muhammad was nevertheless responsible for a book still considered by one-seventh of mankind as the embodiment of all science, wisdom and theology (5).

## Chapter 2

### Muhammad and the Christians

Muhammad was sent after about six hundred years from Jesus. He was not only sent to the Arabs of Makkah, but also to the whole world including the Jews and the Christians. Beside establishing the concept of monotheism, Muhammad's mission was also to make clear to the Christians and the Jews things they have been concealing of the Book, so that they cannot claim innocence before Allah on the Day of Resurrection that they were heedless of the Message of Muhammad, or lest they say that their fathers were polytheists and they were only descendants after them, will Allah then punish them for the deeds of their fathers?

The Koran says:

**People of the Book, there has come to you our Messenger, making clear to you many things you have been concealing of the Book, and pardoning much. There has come to you from Allah a Light and a manifest Book (Al Mâ'idah, 15).**

**People of the Book, now there has come to you Our Messenger, making things clear to you, upon an interval between the Messengers lest you should say, "There has not come to us any bearer of glad tidings, neither any Warner." So now there has come to you a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner; Allah is powerful over everything (Al Mâ'idah, 19).**

**Say, "O people, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, to whom belongs the Dominion of the heavens and the earth, there is no Allah but He, he bestows life and ordains death, so believe in Allah and His messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His Commandments, follow him that you may be guided." (Al A'râf, 158).**

After Islam came to light, many of the people of earlier Scripture desired to turn Muhammad back to their religion, out of the envy of their hearts after the truth has become clear to them. But Allah established Muhammad on the right path of Islam:

**Many of the people of earlier Scripture desire to turn you back into unbelievers after you have believed, out of the envy of their hearts, after the Truth has become clear to them. So disregard and tolerate them, till Allah brings His Command; truly Allah is powerful over everything (Al Baqara, 109).**

**And never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with you until you follow their religion. Say: "Allah's guidance is the true guidance. And if you follow their desires, after the knowledge that has come to you, you will have none to help or protect you from Allah (Al Baqara, 120).**

But Allah singles out for his mercy whom He wills:

**Neither the unbelievers of the people of earlier Scripture, nor the polytheists wish that there should be sent down upon you any good from your Lord but**

**Allah chooses for His Mercy whom He wills; Allah is of bounty abounding** (Al Baqara, 105).

As emphasized before, the religion of Islam is the same religion of all the Prophets that came before Muhammad – pure monotheism. This has been wonderfully summarized in the following Koranic verses:

**Say, “We believe in Allah and in what is revealed to us, and in what which was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and in what which was given to Moses, and Jesus, and in what which was given to the prophets from their Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them and to His will we submit** (Al Baqara, 136).

**This is the Religion of Allah, and who is better than Allah to ordain religion, and Him alone we worship** (Al Baqara, 138).

The Koran brought a severe warning to the Jews and the Christians that they must believe in Muhammad and his Message of Islamic monotheism:

**You who have been given the Book, believe in what We have sent down, confirming what is with you, before we obliterate faces, and turn them upon their backs, or curse them as We cursed the violators of the Sabbath, and Allah’s command is surely carried into effect** (An Nisâ’, 47).

**So if they believe in what you believe, then they would be guided, but if they turn away they are averse to the truth, and Allah is sufficient to deal with them, He is the All-Hearing, the All-knowing** (Al Baqara, 137).

On the Day of Resurrection none of the false worshippers who took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah, and they also took as their Lord Jesus, son of Mary, while they were commanded in the Torah and the Gospel to worship none but one God, Allah, shall have any power over each other, for profit or harm, and Allah will say to them: 'Taste the torment of the Fire which you used to believe.'

**Therefore, today none of you shall have power to profit or hurt another. And We shall say to the evildoers, 'Taste the chastisement of the Fire which you cried lies to** (Saba', 42).

While Allah's Messenger was reciting the above verse, Adi bin Hatim said, 'O Allah's Prophet! They do not worship them (rabbis and monks).' The Prophet said, '**They certainly do. They (rabbis and monks) made legal things illegal, and illegal things legal and they (Jews and Christians) followed them and by doing so they really worshipped them.**' (Narrated by Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Jarir – Tafsir At-Tabari).

The false gods have no power whatever either in heaven or on earth, and are therefore unable to influence man's spiritual life or his ordinary worldly life. To suppose that they have some share, or that they can give some help to Allah, even though Allah is Supreme, is both false and blasphemous. Allah is One and Supreme, without sharer, helper or equal.



**Say: 'Call on those you have asserted apart from Allah; they possess not so much as the weight of an atom in the heavens nor in the earth; no share have they therein (nor have they any share in either), nor is any of them a helper to Allah (Saba', 22).**

After the holy Prophet established the religion of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, and towards the close of the ninth year of Hijra, embassies from all parts from Arabia came to the holy Prophet at Medina to profess Islam and to declare the adherence of their tribes to Prophet Muhammad. This was mentioned in the Koran as revealed in the next verse:

**When comes the help of Allah and victory, and you see men entering the religion of Allah in throngs, then proclaim the praise of your Lord, and seek his forgiveness; for He turns again unto men (An-Nasr, 1-3).**

Until now however, the Christians of Najran – a city in the province of Yemen – had kept themselves aloof. The Prophet wrote a letter to Abdul Haris Ibn Alqama, the Grand Bishop of Najran who was the official representative of the Roman church in Hijaz. The Prophet invited the people of that area to embrace Islam. The text of the letter was as follows:

**In the name of the Lord of Ibrahîm (Abraham), Ishâq (Isaac), and Ya'qub (Jacob):**

**This is a letter from Muhammad, the Prophet and Messenger of Allah to the Bishop of Najran:**

**I praise and glorify the Lord of Ibrahîm, Ishâq and Ya'qub, and invite you all to worship Allah instead of worshipping His creatures, so that you may come out of the guardianship of the creatures of Allah and take place under the guardianship of Allah Himself. And in case you do not accept my invitation you must at least pay Jizyah (tribute to the Islamic State (so that your lives and properties may be protected), otherwise you are warned of a danger.**

By using the names of the ancient prophets, the holy Prophet wanted to let the Christians of Najran know that the belief in One God he was teaching was the same as that preached by the previous prophets in whom they also believed.

The Prophet also included the following Koranic verse in the letter:

**Say, (O Muhammad), "O people of the Book (Bible), come to an agreement between us and you; that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall claim no partner to Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords besides Allah." And if they turn away, then say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims (those who have surrendered to Allah)." (Al-Imran, 64).**

In response to that letter the Christians counseled among themselves the course of their action and did ultimately send a representative deputation of fourteen members to Medina to discuss Muhammad's prophet hood and the new religion he was

bringing. Three Christian scholars, viz. Abdul Maseeh Aaquib, Saiyed and Abdul Haris, headed the deputation. When these deputies reached Medina, they changed their clothes, which they had worn on the journey, dressed themselves in silken garments, put rings of gold on their fingers, and went to the mosque to greet the Prophet. All of them greeted the Prophet, but the Apostle of Allah did not respond and turned his face away from them. They left the mosque and approached Osman and Abdul Rahman Ibn Auf, complaining: "Your Apostle wrote to us and invited us, but when we went to see him, he neither reciprocated our salutations nor replied to us. Now what do you advise us to do? Should we go back or wait for another opportunity?" Osman and Abdul Rahman could not comprehend the situation. At last they took the deputies to Ali, who advised them to remove the clothes of silk and the rings of gold that they were wearing and to put on their priestly robes. The Prophet would then willingly see them. Thereupon the Christian delegates changed into humble garments and presented themselves to the Apostle who then responded to their salutations and said, **"by the Lord who has appointed me His Messenger, when they first came to me they were accompanied by Satan."**

Before they entered into a discussion with the Prophet, they requested for permission to say their prayer and this was granted. They were put in one part of the mosque where they could pray with ease and comfort. Then the following conversation took place:

The Holy Prophet: **"I invite you towards the belief of Tawhîd (Islamic monotheism) and the worship of One God and submission to His will."**

The Prophet then recited the above mentioned verse. Then the following conversation took place:

The Prophet: **I invite you towards the belief of Tawhîd (Islamic Monotheism) and the worship of One God and submission to His will.**

Christian fathers: If Islam means faith in the One God of the universe, we already believe in Him and follow his commands.

The Prophet: **Islam has a few signs and some of your actions show that you have not accepted true Islam. How do you claim worship of One God when you worship the cross and do not abstain from eating pork and believe that God has a son?**

A Christian father: Certainly he (Jesus) was the son of God because his mother Mary had given birth to him without a father. Therefore his father is the God of this universe. We also believe in Jesus as God because he used to bring the dead back to life, cure the sick, and create birds from clay and make them fly. All this, points to the fact that he is God.

The Prophet: **No, he was the servant and creature of God, and placed in the womb of his mother Maryam. All his power and strength was granted to him by God.**

At this time, angel Gabriel brought the following verse of the Holy Koran from Allah:

**Surely the example of Îsa (Jesus) to Allah is like that of Adam; He created him from dust, and then said to him, "Be" and he was. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of the disputers (Al-Imran, 59-60).**

This meant that if Îsa could be called the son of God because of the fact he was born without a father, then Adam deserved this title more, because he was born without a father or mother.

The Christian fathers could not reply to this argument but they continued to argue out of obstinacy. They could not any shred of evidence in their own scriptures upon which they could claim with firm conviction that their beliefs were true.

Then the following verse of the Koran was revealed to the Prophet:

**And whoever argues with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say, "Come let us call our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, then let us be earnest in prayer, and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars (Al-Imran, 61).**

The verse clearly challenges the Christians to pray and invoke Allah that a curse may overtake the party that insists of falsehood. Those who had a pure and sincere faith would certainly not hesitate to accept the challenge.

In compliance with the order of Allah, the holy Prophet, firm in his faith, proposed a 'Mubahala'. The Mubahala is an ancient way of ascertaining the truth. In a religious contest, each of the disputing parties was required to take a solemn oath that they were right and true, and called on God to wreak His vengeance on them if they lied. It was believed that in such cases, the liar was visited by the wrath of Allah and was destroyed.

Thee Christians consulted each other and announced their acceptance of the challenge, and then they turned to their camp. That night, the Christians held a discourse among themselves in which their leader, Abdul Maseeh stated his views: "O Christians, know that Muhammad is a God-sent Prophet who has brought you the final message from your lord. By God, no nation ever dared to challenge a prophet with malediction but that woe befell them. Not only would they perish, but their children would also be afflicted with the curse. It is better to reach a compromise with the Prophet rather than challenge his truth and perish. If you persist for a confrontation we will all perish. But if you, to keep your faith refuse to have a showdown and remain as you are, then make peace with the man and return to your land."

Early the next morning the Prophet sent his companion Salman al Farsi to the open place, fixed outside the city for the historical event, to erect a small shelter for himself and those he intended to take along with him for the contest. On the opposite side appeared the Christian priests. At the appointed hour the Christians witnessed the prophet entering the field carrying his grand son Al-Hussein, and holding the finger of his second grand son Al-Hassan who was walking beside him, followed by his daughter Fatima with Ali her husband and the cousin of the Prophet in her heels. The Prophet on reaching the appointed spot stationed himself with his daughter, her two

sons, and her husband, raising his hands towards the heaven and said: "Lord these are the people of my house." The Prophet then directed them: "When I supplicate, you should say, Amen".

Seeing that the Prophet was accompanied only by his immediate family, the Christians were convinced that he was truthful; otherwise, he would never have dared to bring his dearest kin along.

The Christian fathers, on seeing the beautiful and shining faces in front of them became spellbound. Their hearts trembled and they began to shake on seeing the power radiating from the Prophet's dearest kin.

The leader of the Christians could hold his patience no longer and he cried out, "By God, I am seeing such faces that if they were to pray to God to move the mountain, God Almighty would move the mountain for them. O you people of Najran if you contest with Muhammad in this prayer of invoking curses on the liars, then I warn you that all of you will be destroyed and not a single soul will remain on this earth. I feel that it would be better to surrender to them and obey them."

When the holy Prophet heard these words he remarked, **"By God, had the Christians of Najran contested with us, they would have been transformed into monkeys and swines. Fire would have rained over them."**

When the Christian fathers backed away from Mubahila, the Prophet gave them two choices; either to accept Islam or agree to come to terms.

The Christians would not agree to accept Islam and therefore a treaty was signed on the following terms:

- 1- Every year the Christians of Najran would give the Islamic State two thousand pieces of clothing, the cost of which would be forty dirham each.
- 2- They would also provide 30 horses, 30 camels, 30 battle armors and 30 spears, to the Muslim army if the Prophet needed these in any war.

In addition to the above, the treaty also had the following words:

"...The people of Najran will remain under the protection of Allah and His Prophet Muhammad. Their lives, their religion, their lands and property, will all remain safe and it will be the responsibility of Allah and His prophet to protect them. This treaty holds good for all people of Najran, whether they are present here or not, whether they are members of the tribe or dependent upon them, whether they are slaves or servants. No change will be made in their rights or privileges..."

One of the important conditions agreed in this treaty was that the people of Najran would not deal in usury of any sort; otherwise the Prophet would not remain bound by the treaty with them.

The treaty was dictated by the holy Prophet, written by Ali, his cousin and son in law, and had the signature of four companions as witnesses (11).

After the Christians returned home, a few respectable persons from Najran came to Medina and willingly accepted Islam and became Muslims.

Because Islam is a universal Message, and the last warning to all mankind, the Prophet sent ambassadors with letters to the two super powers – Byzantines and Persia inviting them to Islam. Heraclius was the Emperor of Byzantines (Eastern Roman Empire) and Khusrau II was the Emperor of the Persian Empire. The letters were also sent to Negus, King of Abyssinia; Muqawqis, Ruler of Egypt; Harith Gassani, Governor of Syria; Al Munzir bin Sawa, Ruler of Bahrain.

Negus, the king of Abyssinia, and the ruler of Bahrain accepted Islam. Emperor Heraclius acknowledged Muhammad's prophet hood. Among rulers who accepted Islam without any initiative from the prophet was Chakrawati Farmas, a Hindu King of Malabar located on the southeast coast of India.

The dominion, prestige, splendor and might of the above kings and rulers who divided the world among themselves during the seventh century would indicate the courageous step the Prophet has taken to spread Islam outside the borders of the Arabian Peninsula.

The wording of the Prophet's letters to the kings and rulers was similar:

**"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This letter is from Muhammad the Messenger of Allah and His Apostle to Heraclius, the ruler of the Byzantines. Peace be upon him who follows the right path. Furthermore, I invite you to Islam and if you become a Muslim you will be safe, and Allah will double your reward, and if you reject this invitation of Islam you will be committing a sin by misguiding your subjects. And I recite to you Allah's statement:**

**"O People of the scriptures! Come to a word common to you and us that we worship none but Allah and that we associate nothing in worship with Him, and that none of us shall take others as Lords beside Allah. Then if they turn away, say: Bear witness that we are Muslims (those who have surrendered to Allah). (Al Imran 64).**

All the Prophet's letters were stamped with the words: "Muhammad the Messenger of Allah."

Khusrau II was indignant; he tore the letter into pieces saying, "My slave dares to write me thus!" Khusrau II wrote to Badhan who was his governor in Yemen to get the Prophet sent to him in his capital, Ctesiphon. Badhan deputed Babwayh to tell the Prophet what Khusrau II had written to him and that he had come to take him to the king. But when Babwayh came to Medina and conveyed the Message of Khusrau II to the Prophet, the Prophet said to him, "Allah will shatter his kingdom to pieces."

The prophecy of the Prophet was the reason that the ruler of Yemen became a Muslim, when the news came to him afterwards identical to what the Prophet stated.

About 224 CE, the Parthian governor of the province of Fars which still exists as a province in present day Iran, brought down the central government in Ctesiphon and established the Sassanid Empire, taking the throne as Ardashir I. The Sassanid Empire was almost constantly in war with the neighboring Roman Empire to the west; Ardashir's son, Shapur I, even captured the Roman Emperor, Valerian, for a time in 260. The animosity between the two empires was exacerbated in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the Roman Emperor, Constantine I, converted to Christianity, and made Christianity the official state religion. After that, relations between the two empires took on an increased religious aspect, as the Roman Empire sought to protect all Christians outside its borders, including those under Sassanid rule. The Christians in the Sassanid Empire had not faced persecution for their religion because the Sassanids viewed their Christians not as following the religion of the enemy, but rather another Persian religion.

The most influential Sassanid ruler was Khusrau I. He reformed the army, decreased the power of nobles with private armies, and improved efficiency in the tax system by changing the method of collection and assessment.

After 50 years of peace, Khusrau II resumed hostilities with the neighboring Byzantine Empire, the successor to the Roman. He rapidly expanded into Byzantine lands, capturing Jerusalem in 612 and Alexandria in 619, while placing Constantinople, the Byzantine Capital under siege. The Byzantines responded by staging a surprise attack through the Caucasus into the northern Sassanid Empire. They sacked Ctesiphon in 627, and Khusrau II was killed while fleeing the city. There were 11 more rulers in the following 10 last years of the Empire, but after Khusrau II the Sassanids grew weaker.

The Arabs were able to take advantage of Persian weakness. By remaining highly mobile, and not relying on long supply lines, the Arabs rode in on horses and camels and defeated the Persians first at the battle of Qadisiyah in 636. By 638 they had occupied the Sassanid palace in Ctesiphon, forcing the young king, Yazdegard III, to flee. Continuing through the Zagros Mountains, the Arabs won two more decisive battles, at Jalula and Nihavand in 642, to take over the entire Iranian plateau. Many Persians submitted to the conquerors when the Arabs demanded less taxes than the Sassanids had, and did not force conversion to Islam. Later Islam did spread to Persians who began to convert in large numbers as Islamic rule over Persia strengthened after the initial conquest.

Heraclius, the ruler of Byzantines was the head of the Christians of Sham (Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan). Once while Heraclius was visiting Jerusalem, he got up in the morning with a sad mood. Some of his priests asked him why he was in that mood. Heraclius was a foreteller and an astrologer. He replied, 'At night when I looked at the stars, I saw that the leader of those who practice circumcision had appeared. Who are they who practice circumcision?' The people replied, 'Except the Jews nobody practices circumcision had appeared so you should not be afraid of them (Jews). Just issue orders to kill every Jew present in the country.'(5).

While they were discussing it, a messenger sent by the king of the tribe, Ghassan to convey the news of the appearance of Allah's Apostle to Heraclius was brought in. Having heard the news, Heraclius ordered the people to go and see whether the

messenger of Ghassan was circumcised. The people after seeing him told Heraclius that he was circumcised. Heraclius then asked about the Arabs. The messenger replied, 'Arabs also practice circumcision.'

Here Heraclius remarked that sovereignty of the Arabs had appeared.

Abdullah Ibn Abbas narrated that Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb, the chief of Quraish infidels who fought against the Prophet in several battles but embraced Islam afterwards, informed him that Heraclius has sent a messenger to him while he had been accompanying a caravan from Quraish. They were merchants doing business in Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan, at the time when Allah's Apostle sent a Message to Heraclius inviting him and his people to Islam. Abu Sufyan and his companions went to Heraclius at Jerusalem.

Heraclius called them in court and he had all the senior Roman dignitaries around him. He called for his translator who, translating Heraclius's question said to them, "who amongst you is closely related to that man who claims to be a Prophet?" Abu Sufyan replied, "I am the nearest relative to him (amongst the group)."

Heraclius said, "Bring him (Abu Sufyan) close to me and make his companions stand behind him." Abu Sufyan added, "Heraclius told his translator to tell my companions that he wanted to put some questions to me regarding that man (the prophet) and that if I told a lie they (my companions) should contradict me." Abu Sufyan added, "By Allah! Had I not been afraid of my companions labeling me a liar, I would not have spoken the truth about the Prophet. The first question he asked me about him was: 'What is his family status amongst you?'

I replied, 'He belongs to a good (noble) family amongst us.'

Heraclius further asked, 'Has anybody amongst you ever claimed the same (i.e. to be a Prophet) before him?'

I replied, 'No.'

He said, 'Was anybody amongst his ancestors a king?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius asked, 'Do the nobles or the poor follow him?'

I replied, 'It is the poor who follow him.'

He said, 'Are his followers increasing or decreasing (day by day)?'

I replied, 'They are increasing.'

He then asked, 'Does anybody amongst those who embrace his religion become displeased and renounce the religion afterwards?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius said, 'Does he break his promises?'

I replied, 'No. We are at truce with him but we do not know what he will do in it.' I could not find opportunity to say anything against him except that.

Heraclius asked, 'Have you ever had a war with him?'

I replied, 'Yes.'

Then he said, 'What was the outcome of the battles?'

I replied, 'Sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we.'

Heraclius said, 'What does he order you to do?'

I said, 'He tells us to worship Allah and Allah alone and not to worship anything along with Him, and to renounce all that our ancestors had said. He orders us to pray, to speak the truth, to be chaste and to keep good relations with our kith and kin.'

Heraclius asked the translator to convey to me the following, 'I asked you about his family and your reply was that he belonged to a very noble family. In fact all the Apostles come from noble families amongst their respective peoples. I questioned you whether anybody else amongst you claimed such a thing, your reply was in the negative. If the answer had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man was following the previous man's statement. Then I asked you whether anyone of his ancestors was a king. Your reply was in the negative, and if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom.

I further asked whether he was ever accused of telling lies before he said what he said, and your reply was in the negative. So I wondered how a person who does not tell a lie about others could ever tell a lie about Allah. I then asked you whether the rich people followed him or the poor. You replied that it was the poor who followed him. And in fact all the apostles have been followed by this very class of people. Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing, and in fact this is the way of true faith till it is complete in all respects. I further asked you whether there was anybody who after embracing his religion, became displeased and discarded his religion. Your reply was in the negative, and in fact this is the sign of the true faith, when its delight enters the hearts and mixes with them completely. I asked you whether he had ever betrayed. You replied in the negative and likewise the apostles never betray. Then I asked you what he ordered you to do. You replied that he ordered you to worship Allah and Allah alone and not to worship anything along with Him and forbade you to worship idols and ordered you to pray, to speak the truth and to be chaste. If what you have said is true, he will very soon occupy this place underneath my feet and I knew it (from the scriptures) that he was going to appear but I did not know that he would be from you, and if I could reach him, definitely I would go immediately to meet him and if I were with him, I would certainly wash his feet.'

Heraclius then wrote a letter to his friend in Rome who was as good as Heraclius in knowledge. Heraclius then left to Homs (a town in Syria) and stayed there till he received the reply of his letter from his friend who agreed with him in his opinion about the emergence of Muhammad and the fact that he was a prophet. On that Heraclius invited all the heads of the Byzantines to assemble in his palace at Homs. When they assembled, he ordered that all the doors of his palace be closed. Then he came out and said, 'O Byzantines! If success is your desire and if you seek right guidance and want your empire to remain then give a pledge of allegiance to this Prophet (i.e. embrace Islam).'

On hearing the views of Heraclius the people ran towards the gates of the palace but found the doors closed. Heraclius realized their hatred towards Islam and when he lost the hope of their embracing Islam, he ordered that they should be brought back in audience.

When they returned he said, 'What I already said was just to test the strength of your belief in Jesus, and I have seen it.' The people prostrated before him and became pleased with him.



Heraclius called the messenger of the prophet and honored him. He wrote a reply to the Prophet's letter and also sent him some presents. In his letter to the Prophet he showed faith and devotion.

The Prophet of Islam also sent a similar letter to Juraij bin Matta, called Muqawqas, vicegerent of Egypt, and Alexandria.

Hatib bin Abi balta'a, who was chosen to communicate the Message, requested a meeting with Muqawqas before imparting the contents of the letter.

Hatib addressed Egypt's vicegerent saying, "There used to be someone before you who had arrogated the status of the Supreme Lord, so Allah punished him and made an example of him in the Hereafter, and in this life; therefore take warning and never set a bad example to others."

Muqawqas answered, "We are in no position to relinquish our religion except for a better one."

Hatib resumed, "We invite you to embrace Islam, which will suffice you all what you may lose. Our prophet has called people to profess this faith, Quraish and the Jews stood against him as bitter enemies, whereas Christians stood closest to his call. Upon my life, Moses' news about Christ is identical to the latter's good tidings about the advent of Muhammad; likewise, this invitation of ours to you to embrace Islam is similar to your invitation to the people of Torah to accept the New Testament. Once a Prophet rises in a nation, he is eligible for positive response; hence you are subject to the same Divine Law. Bear in mind that we have not come to dissuade you from the religion of Christ but rather bidding you to adhere to its tenets."

Muqawqas meditated over the contents of the letter deeply and said, "I have come to the conviction that this Prophet bids nothing abominable; he is neither a straying magician nor a lying soothsayer. He bears the true manifest seeds of prophet hood, and so I will consider the affair deeply."

He took the parchment and ordered that it be kept in an ivory casket. He called a scribe to write the following reply in Arabic:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. From Muqawqas to Muhammad bin Abdullah. Peace be upon you. I have read your letter and understood its contents, and what you are calling for. I already know that the coming of a Prophet is still due, but I used to believe he would be born in Syria. I am sending you as presents two maids, who come from noble Coptic families; clothing and a steed for riding on. Peace be upon you."

It is noteworthy that Muqawqas did not avail himself of this priceless opportunity and he did not embrace Islam. The presents were accepted; Maria, the first maid, stayed with the Prophet and gave birth to his son Ibrahim; the other Sirin, was given to his companion Hassan bin Thabit Al-Ansari (5).

After the death of Prophet Muhammad, the first Caliph, Abu-Bakr moved northward overtaking Byzantine and Persian forces. Abu-Bakr died two years following his

succession of the Prophet. Omar succeeded him as the second Caliph and by 637 his forces occupied the Persian capital Ctesiphon.

By 638 the Roman Empire was defeated at the battle of Yarmouk and the Muslims entered the Byzantine regions, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. With the further conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain, Islam included all the Persian Empire and most of the old Roman world under Islamic rule. In 711 CE, Muslims opened the Sind region in Afghanistan and from there Islam spread to India and the rest of Asia.

Prophet Muhammad undertook himself and enjoined his followers to protect the Christians, to defend their churches and the residences of their priests and to guard them from all injuries. They were not to be unfairly taxed; no bishop was to be driven out of his diocese; nor Christian was to be forced to reject his religion; no monk was to be expelled from his monastery; no pilgrim was to be stopped from his pilgrimage; nor were the Christian churches to be pulled down for the sake of building mosques and houses for the Muslims. Christian women married to Muslims were to enjoy their own religion and not to be subjected to compulsion or annoyance of any kind. If the Christians should stand in need of assistance for the repair of their churches or monasteries, or any other matter pertaining to their religion, the Muslims were to assist them. This was not to be considered as supporting their religion, but as simply rendering them assistance in special circumstances. Should the Muslims be engaged in hostilities with outside Christians, no Christian resident among the Muslims should be treated with contempt on account of his creed. The Prophet declared that any Muslim violating any clause of the charter should be regarded as a transgressor of Allah's commandments, a violator of His testament and neglectful of His faith.

Among the prophet's close companions were Muslims from such diverse background as Persia, Abyssinia, Syria and Rome. Several prominent Jewish Rabbis, Christian bishops and clergymen accepted Islam after discussions with the prophets.

The Koran says about the followers of Jesus:

**You will surely find the most hostile of people to the believers are the Jews and the polytheists, and you will surely find the nearest in affection to the believers are those who said, "We are Nasara" (Christians). This is because there are among them who believe the Truth, and they are not arrogant. And when they hear what has been revealed to the Messenger, you see their eyes streaming with tears because of the truth they recognize in it. They say, "Our Lord we believe, write us down among those who bear witness- And why should we not believe in Allah, and the Truth which has come to us, and we are eager that our Lord should admit us with the righteous people." And Allah rewards them for what they say with gardens beneath which rivers flow, and they shall dwell there forever, this is the reward of those who do good. As for those who disbelieve, and reject our Revelations, they are the inhabitants of Hell (Al Maidah 82-86).**

Jews in their religion after Moses limited Allah's mercy to their chosen nation and thought of His kingdom as the dominion of their race.

The Christians limited Allah's mercy to those who believed certain dogmas. Everyone who failed to hold the dogmas was an outcast or a miscreant, to be persecuted for his or her soul's good.

Historically Islam is the final, matured expression of an original religion reaching back to Adam. It is as resolutely monotheistic as Judaism, whose major Prophets Islam reveres as links in a progressive chain, culminating in Jesus and Muhammad. Islam is essentially a Message of renewal, its Book, the Koran, caused Goethe to remark, "You see, this teaching never fails; with all our systems, we cannot go, and generally speaking no man can go further."

Islam came to break man's fetters and enable man to cast off the chains that delayed his growth, it encouraged the individual to give proper expression to his humanity and follow the path to moral perfection. It created an atmosphere of hope and optimism which gave a true meaning to human existence.

Thus, the true kingdom of Allah is manifested in Islam. Religion as determined and accepted by Allah is Islam and no other.

## Chapter 3

### What Islam is?

The Arabic word Islam means the surrender of one's will to the only true God worthy of worship, Allah. Anyone who does so is termed a Muslim. The word Islam also implies peace which is the natural consequence of total submission to Allah.

Islam is not a religion to be paid mere lip-service; rather it is an all-encompassing way of life that must be practiced continuously for it to be Islam. The Muslim must practice the five pillars of the religion: the declaration of faith in the Oneness of Allah and the prophet hood of Muhammad, prayer, fasting the month of Ramadan, alms giving, and the pilgrimage to Makkah at least once in a life time if one's financial and physical conditions permit it; and believe in the six articles of faith: belief in Allah (God), all the Holy Books, all the Prophets, the angels, the Day of Judgment and predestination, whether for good or ill.

Muslims are also commanded to exhort others to perform good acts and to abstain from evil. Ethics lies at the heart of Islamic teachings, and all women and men are expected to act ethically towards each other at all times. As the Prophet has said:

**"None of you is a believer until you love for your brother what you love for yourself."**

There is also the important concept, Al-Ihsân or virtue, which means to worship Allah as if one sees Him, knowing that even if one does not see Him, He sees us.

There are other injunctions and commandments which concern virtually all facets of one's personal, family and civic life. These include such matters as diet, clothing, personal hygiene, interpersonal relations, business ethics, responsibilities towards parents, spouse and children, marriage, divorce and inheritance, civil and criminal law, fighting in defense of Islam, relations with non-Muslims, and so much more.

Islam is the true religion of Allah since He first created man and descended him to earth. Islam represents the central principle of Allah's religion. Hence, it was not a new religion brought by Prophet Muhammad in Arabia in the seventh century, but only the true religion of Allah re-expressed in its final form. Islam is not the name of some unique faith presented for the first time by Muhammad - peace be upon him - who should on that account be called the founder of Islam. The Koran makes it abundantly clear that Islam is the one and only faith consistently revealed by Allah to mankind from the very beginning. Islam is the religion, which was given to Adam, the first man and the first Prophet of Allah, and it was the religion of all the prophets sent after him by Allah to mankind. Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Christ were prophets who appeared at different times and places; all propagated the same faith. They were not founders of faiths to be named after them. They were each reiterating the faith of their predecessors.

Allah clearly states in the Koran:

**For we assuredly sent amongst every people a prophet, (with the command) worship me and avoid false gods (Al-Nahl 16:36).**

In Arabic God is called Allah. Muslims believe in the One, Eternal Allah, who created the heavens and the earth and all that exists. There is absolutely no difference between Allah and the Allah of Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Muslims do not believe that Prophet Muhammad was the only Prophet; rather they believe he was the last of the Prophets of the Old and New Testaments. The Holy Koran is the revealed and sacred scripture of Islam, and it teaches:

**“Say (O Muslims), ‘We believe in Allah and that which is sent down to us, and in what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes; to Moses and Jesus and the Prophets of their lord. We do not differentiate between any of them, and to Him we are submissive (Muslims.)’” (Al-Baqarah, 136).**

Through the prophets and messengers mankind had been taught the wisdom of creation, and had been told what will happen to people after death, and what Allah expects from them. But most importantly, the prophets and messengers taught that Allah is one and unique, He has no partners, no sons or daughters, no helpers, and no competitors, as so many other man-made religious systems have postulated.

Faith in One Allah is the most important and fundamental principle in the teachings of the Koran and prophet Muhammad. The Prophet of Islam firmly established the Message of Tawhid, meaning, Divine Unity or Oneness of Allah. It is the bedrock of Islam and the mainstream of its power.

The Prophet of Islam taught that the foremost in religion is to know Allah. The perfection of knowing Him is to testify to Him, the perfection of testifying to Him is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection in believing in His Oneness is to regard Him as pure and the perfection of His purity is to deny all kinds of negative attributes about Him. He is Being but not through the phenomenon of coming into being. He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not by physical nearness. He is different from everything but not by physical separation. He acts but without the accompaniment of movements and instruments. He is the One, only such that there is none with whom He keeps company or whom He misses in his absence. He is infinite and eternal. He is self-sufficient and self-existent.

Allah has described himself in the Koran:

**He is Allah; there is no Allah but He. He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the most gracious, the most Merciful.  
He is Allah, there is no Allah but He. He is the King, the All-Holy, the All-Peaceable, the All-Faithful, the overall Controller, the All-Mighty, the All-Compeller, the All-sublime. Glory be to Allah above that they associate.  
He is Allah the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper. To him belongs the Names Most Beautiful. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the All-mighty, the All-Wise (Al Hashr 22-24).**

**All that in the heavens and the earth magnifies Allah; He is the Almighty, the All-wise.**

**To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth;**

**He gives life, and He makes to die, and He is powerful over everything.**

**It is He that created the heavens and the earth in six days then seated Himself upon the throne. He knows what penetrates into the earth and what comes forth from it, what comes down from heaven, and what goes up unto it. He is with you wherever you are; and Allah sees the things you do.**

**To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; and unto him all matters returned.**

**He makes the night to enter into the day, and makes the day enter into the night. He knows the thoughts within the breasts (Al Hadid 1-6).**

Allah has clearly indicated His Oneness in the Koran:

**Say: 'He is Allah, the One. Allah, the Eternal, Absolute. He begets not, nor was He begotten. And like unto Him there is none.' (Al-Ikhlâs, 1-4).**

**Allah has not taken to Himself any son, nor is there any god with Him; for then each god would have taken off that He created and some of them would have risen up over others; glory be to Allah, beyond that they describe.**

**All-Knower of the unseen and the visible; high exalted be He, above that they associated (Al-Mu'minûn 91, 92).**

**Allah is the One to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and He has never begotten a son, nor has He any partner in His dominion, and He created all things, and ordained them in due proportion (Al-Furqan, 2).**

It was this same knowledge which all the Prophets including Moses, Jesus and Muhammad - Allah's blessings are upon them all – brought to mankind. Men became guilty of polytheism or idol-worship after the demise of their prophets only because they deviated from the pure teachings of their Prophets. They relied upon their own faulty reasoning, false perceptions and biased interpretations in order to satisfy their lusts, evil desires and whims.

The Koran, the last of revelations states:

**Indeed! The only Religion with Allah is Islam (submission to the will of Allah), but the people of earlier Scripture (Jews and Christians) differed from it by reason of insolence among themselves after knowledge had come to them, and whoever disbelieves in the Revelations of Allah, surely Allah is swift in reckoning (Al Imran, 19).**

The most important fundamental creed of Islam is to believe in the Oneness of Allah, the only Creator, and the sole Master, Ruler, and Administrator of all that exists. The universe exists because Allah wills it to exist, it functions because Allah wills it to function, and Allah provides the sustenance and the energy, which everything in the universe requires for its existence and growth. All the attributes of sovereignty reside in Allah alone, and no one else has a share in them in the slightest degree. He alone possesses all the attributes of divinity, and no one other than Allah possesses any of

those attributes. He views the whole universe, and all that it contains, in a single instantaneous glance. He has direct knowledge of the universe, and all that is there in it. He knows not only its present, but also its past and future as well. This omnipresence and omniscience is an attribute of Allah alone and of no other. There was no 'before' Him and there is no 'after' Him. He had been there always and will be there always eternal and abiding. All else is transient. He alone is eternally living and present. He is no one progeny and He has no progeny. Whatever exists, besides His self, is His own creation, and no other can identify himself in any manner with the Lord of the universe, or claim to be his son or daughter. He is man's single Deity. To associate anyone in His worship is as great a sin as it is an act of infidelity. He responds to man's prayers and He alone has the power to accept or reject them. Not to ask of him is a senseless arrogance, and to turn to others is sheer arrogance. To seek of him and also of others, is to associate equals with him." (6).

All false religions teach the greatest evil, the worship of creation. Creation-worship is the greatest sin that man can commit because it contradicts the very purpose of his creation. Man was created to worship Allah alone as Allah has explicitly stated in the Koran:

**I have only created jinn and men, that they may worship me (Zaareeaat 51:56).**

Consequently, the worship of creation, which is the essence of idolatry, is the only unforgivable sin. One who dies in this state of idolatry has sealed his fate in the next life. This is not an opinion, but a revealed fact stated by Allah in his final revelation to man:

**Allah forgives not the joining of partners with Him; less than that He forgives to whomsoever He will. Whoso associates with Allah anything has indeed forged a mighty sin (An-Nissa 48, 116).**

Islam is monotheism in its purest form, and the logic of pure monotheism is the thread that runs through the entire fabric of the Islamic way of life. Islam teaches a fundamental difference between Allah the Creator and that which He has created. The sky, the moon, the stars, the harmony and perfection of the natural world, the grace and beauty of the human body and the excellence of the human mind, the alternation of day and night, the change of the seasons, and the mystery of life and death all point to something greater than man and beyond his comprehension.

To the believer these are all signs of Allah. Islam teaches that Allah is not to be likened to anything that He has created. He is All-Powerful, All-Knowing; He is beyond any imperfection, and is the fulfillment of all Perfection. He is not a substance, nor is He like any of His creatures. Allah is not a far away and distant god, nor is He unapproachable ideal. He is All-Kind, All-Merciful, and the Turner of hearts.

The sovereignty of Allah in Islam is not just a supernatural phenomenon. It covers all aspects of political and legal sovereignty also, and in these too no one other than Allah has any share. In Allah alone vests the rightful authority to exercise power on this earth, and over those whom Allah has created in it. No monarch, no royal family, no elite class, no leader of any religious group, no democracy established on the basis

of the sovereignty of the people, can participate in Allah's sovereignty. Whoever claims such sovereignty is a rebel, as are those who leave Allah and turn to other people in obedience. Similarly, any institution or individual attempting to assume political and legal sovereignty and restrict the jurisdiction of Allah to spheres of personal law or religious duties is really a usurper and a rebel. The truth is that no one can claim to be a lawgiver on Allah's earth, and no one can challenge the supreme authority of Allah Almighty in any sphere.

Allah alone is the real Deity and no one other than Allah has any right to be worshipped by man. Allah alone has authority over the forces of the universe, and he alone can fulfill or frustrate man's hopes. Man should turn to Him alone in prayer. He should never imagine that prayers could be addressed to anyone but Allah. Allah is the master of man destiny and no one else can interfere with the fate of others or with his own fate. Man's hopes and fears must therefore, be directed only to Allah. No one else should be an object of fear or source of favor.

Allah is the creator of the world and He alone has complete and direct knowledge of the reality of man and of the world. Only He can guide man through the complicated course of life and instruct him regarding good and evil. Since Allah alone is the Creator and the Master He has exclusive authority over the universe and man. It is an act of blasphemy for man to become independent or claim authority over other men. For man to become his own lawgiver to accept the authority of any other individual or institution as such is equally blasphemous. The ultimate Lawgiver and Master of His creation on this earth is no other than Allah, and His law has the status of the supreme law. Man can legislate subject to his Supreme law. Beyond that he has no legislative authority.

Muslims believe that mankind and the universe were not created by accident or chance, but according to the plan of Allah, the One and Only God. Muslims believe that Allah is the Creator of the Universe, the Creator of all human beings and Provider, Lord of all lords, King of all kings, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful, Supreme and Eternal, Infinite and Mighty. Allah has neither father nor mother, nor sons nor was He fathered. None equal to Him. He is Allah for all mankind, not of a special tribe or race.

The Koran describes Allah being perfect and active:

**“Allah, there is no Allah but He, the Living, the Everlasting.  
Slumber seizes Him not, neither sleep; to Him belongs all that in the heavens and the earth. Who is there that shall intercede with Him save by His leave?  
He knows what lies before them and what is after them, and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge save such as He wills.  
His throne comprises the heavens and earth; the preserving of them oppresses Him not; He is the All-High, the All-glorious (Al-Baqarah, 255).**

The faith of Islam can be summarized in the following narration of Omar:

Omar ibn al-Khattab-the second caliph of Muslims reported, “While we were sitting in the company of Allah's Messenger, there appeared a person to us dressed in extremely white clothes with extraordinary black hair. No signs of fatigue of journey



appeared on his face, and no one amongst us could recognize him till he sat down near the Holy Prophet of Allah. Then he leaned his knees before the Prophet's knees and placed both of his palms over his two thighs and said, **'O Muhammad, inform me about Islam.'** The Prophet replied, **'Islam is that you testify that there is no god but Allah, that you pray, pay Zakat (poor-due), fast of the month of Ramadan, and perform Hajj (pilgrimage) of the House provided you have resources of making journey to it.'**

The man replied, **'You have spoken the truth.'** We were surprised to see that the man asked the Prophet and the Prophet corroborated with him.

The man then enquired, **'Inform me about faith.'** The Prophet said, **'It is that you believe in Allah, and His Books, and His Apostles and the Last Day and that you believe in predestination-in its good and its evil.'** The man said, **'You have spoken the truth.'**

The man enquired, **'Inform me about benevolence.'** The Prophet said, **'It is to worship Allah as if you are seeing him, and even if you do not see Him, He certainly sees you.'**

The man enquired, **'Tell me about the Last Hour.'** The Prophet replied, **'That who is inquired know no more than the one who is inquiring.'**

The man said, **'Inform me about some of its signs.'** The Prophet replied, **'They are that a maid servant will beget her master and that you will find the barefooted, naked, poor shepherds taking pride in magnificent buildings.'** The man then departed.

The Messenger of Allah kept silent for sometime then addressed me, **'O Omar! Do you know who the enquirer is?'** I replied, **'Allah and His Messenger know best.'**

The Holy Prophet said, **'It's Gabriel; he has come to teach you the matters of your religion.'**

Ibn Abbas reported, "One day I was riding behind the Holy Prophet when he said:

**O boy! I wish to teach you some words. Adhere to the orders of Allah and safeguard the commandments of Allah, He will be watchful of you. Safeguard His rights; he will be ever with you. When you beg; beg of Him alone; and when you stand in need of His assistance supplicate Allah alone for help. Remember that if all the people desire to benefit you, they will be unable to bestow anything upon you except that which Allah has preordained for you, but if all of them agree to do you harm, they will not be able to afflict you with anything except that which Allah has predestined against you. The pens have been lifted and the pink of the book of pre-destination has dried up.**

The basic Message of false religion is that Allah may be worshipped in the form of His creation. False religion invites man to the worship of creation by calling the creation or some aspect of it Allah. For example, Prophet Jesus invited his followers to worship Allah but those who claim to be his followers today call people to worship Jesus, claiming that he was Allah! Buddha was a reformer who introduced a number of humanistic principles to the religion of India. He did not claim to be Allah nor did he suggest to his followers that he be an object of worship. Yet, today most Buddhists who are to be found outside of India considered him as Allah and prostrate to idols made in their perception of his likeness. Similarly, those who have asserted the Godhood of others after their passing have found fertile ground among those who believe that Allah could be worshipped in the form of His creation.

When the idol worshipper is questioned as to why he or she bows down to idols created by men, the invariable reply is that they are not actually worshipping the stone image, but Allah who is present within it. One who has accepted the concept of presence of Allah's being in his creation in any way will be obliged to accept this argument of idolatry. Whereas, one who understands the basic Message of Islam and its implications would never concede to idolatry no matter how it is rationalized. Those who have claimed divinity for themselves down through the ages have often based their claims on the mistaken belief that Allah is present in man. They merely had to assert that although Allah according to their false beliefs is in all of us; He is more present in them than in the rest of us. Hence, they claim that they should submit their will to them and worship them as they were either Allah in person or Allah concentrated within the person (6).

Allah said in the Koran:

**That which you worship besides Him are only names you and your forefathers have invented for which Allah has sent down no authority: The command belongs only to Allah: He has commanded that you only worship Him; that is the right religion, but most men do not understand.** (Yusuf 12 :40).

In this same endeavor Allah also says:

**And We never sent a Messenger before you except that We revealed to him saying: "There is no god but I, so worship Me."** (Al Anbiya, 25).

**Say: "It is revealed to me that your God is One God, will you then be Muslims?"** (Al Anbiya, 108).

**And ask those of Our Messengers We sent before you, did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped other than Allah Most Gracious?"** (Az Zukhruf, 45).

**And We have sent Noah to his people: "Surely I am a clear Warner to you- that you worship none but Allah, indeed I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day."** (Hood 25, 26).

**And to Aad (We have sent) their brother Hood, he said, "O my people, worship Allah you have no Allah other than Him, you are only inventing lies- O my people, I ask of you no reward for this, my reward rests on He Who created me, will you not understand?"** (Hood 50, 51).

**And to Samud (We sent) their brother Saleh, he said, "O my people worship Allah, you have no Allah other than Him, He has created you from the earth, and made you dwell in it, therefore ask for forgiveness from Him, then repent to Him, surely my Lord is near and responsive."** (Hood 61).

**And to Madyan (We sent) their brother Shu'aib, he said, "O my people, worship Allah, you have no God other than Him, and measure with full measure and just balance. Certainly I see you in prosperity, and I fear for you the chastisement of an encompassing day** (Hood 84).

**And indeed We did send Moses with Our signs: “Lead your people out of darkness to the Light, and remind them of the Days of Allah.” (Ibrahim 5).**

Jesus said to his people:

**Indeed! Allah is my Lord and Your Lord, so worship Him, this is the straight path. I am indeed a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet.**

**And surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord; therefore worship Him. This is the Right Path (Maryam 30, 36).**

Islam therefore is the religion of pure Monotheism; it denies dualism of Magians and the Trinity of the Christians. Islam teaches that Allah is One and Only One. No one shares with Him His Dominion or His Command. He has the most beautiful names and the noblest attributes.

Allah instructed the Prophet to say to his people that He has no partner, and that the Prophet's prayers, sacrifice, living and dying are for only Allah the Lord of the world, and of this the Prophet has been commanded, and he is the first of those that surrendered in Islam.

**Say: 'My prayer, my ritual sacrifice, my living, my dying – all belongs to Allah, the Lord of all Being.**

**No associate has He. Even so I have been commanded, and I am the first of those that surrender.'** (Al-An'âm 162, 163).

One who has grasped the basic Message of Islam and its implication could never agree to worship another human being under any circumstances.

Another important Islamic creed is to believe in Muhammad's prophet hood. Allah conveyed His Message to man through Muhammad. This took two forms: 1) Allah revealed the Koran to the Prophet in his own language. 2) The acts and sayings (Sunnah) of the Prophet, which is an unerring guide to man in respect of all that, is permissible and all that is prohibited in the eyes of Allah. Without this belief in the Prophet, belief in Allah would become a mere theoretical proposition. It is the example of practical leadership, and the ideological guidance provided by the Prophet, which transforms belief in Allah into a culture and civilization, and enables man to evolve a way of life. Muslims get from the Prophet not only rules of guidance, but a complete scheme of values and a practical code of conduct. No one can be a practicing Muslim unless he believes in the Prophet as he believes in Allah (7).

The Koran stated in this respect,

**It is not befitting for a believing man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger, to have any option about their decision (Al-Ahzab 36).**

The position of the Prophet Muhammad has been so clearly defined in Islam. The Prophet is no more than a servant of Allah. He was to make people servants of Allah

and not servants of himself. At least seventeen times a day Muslims recite in their prayers: "I bear witness that Muhammad is a servant of Allah and is His prophet." The Koran leaves no doubt that the Prophet is but a human being and is not divine by any means. The Prophet is neither superhuman nor is he free of human weakness. He owns no treasure from Allah, nor does he possess knowledge of the unknown that he should become all knowing like Allah Almighty. Let alone being able to benefit others or cause them harm, the Prophet cannot do so even in respect of himself. The precise task of the Prophet is to communicate the Message of Allah. He has no power to make people righteous and faithful. Nor can he call to account those who refuse to believe, and he certainly has no power to punish them for their disbelief. Should the Prophet himself choose to defy Allah or fabricate things on behalf of Allah or make any change in the Message revealed to him, he will incur divine displeasure and punishment.

Muhammad is no more than a Messenger; Messengers have passed away before him.

**Why, if he (Muhammad) should die or is slain, will you turn about on your heels?**

**If any man should turn about on his heels, he will not harm Allah in any way; and Allah will recompense the thankful** (Al-Imran, 144).

Muhammad is one of the prophets of Allah, and he cannot by himself prohibit or permit anything. Without a mandate from Allah he cannot legislate for people. He has to strictly conform to divine commandments.

Islam ensured that the believers should not turn the Prophet into demi-Allah. Some of the earlier prophets suffered this fate at the hands of their followers. They attributed all kinds of supernatural powers to their prophets and made them Allah's equals or progeny or incarnation. The Prophet confirmed this when he said:

**"I am a mortal like you. In matters revealed to me by Allah, you must obey my instructions. But you know more about your worldly affairs than I do, so my advice in these matters is not binding."**

The Sunnah of Muhammad is in fact, an exposition of the purpose of the Koran, and Allah Himself, as the author of the Koran also conveyed this exposition to the Prophet. The Prophet's explanation of the Koran enjoys divine sanction, and no one else can interpret the Koran in a way contradicting the explanation given by the Prophet. Allah declared the life of Muhammad as a model life. No one can be a true believer unless he accepts the decision of the Prophet. Muslims have not an independent position in a matter determined by the Prophet. Before deciding any matter Muslims must first ascertain whether Allah and his Prophet decided any analogous matter earlier, and if a precedent exists they must follow it.

Allah conveyed through the Prophet to mankind not only a supreme law but also a permanent scheme of values. That, which is good, according to the Koran and the Sunnah is good for all times, and that, which is evil, shall remain evil forever. That which is enjoined as duty, in the Koran and the Sunnah, shall always be a duty. What is declared permissible is permissible forever, and what is prohibited is prohibited for all times. In this law no amendment, deletion, addition, or abrogation, is possible

unless some person or community decides to renounce Islam. So long as Muslims remain Muslims, it is impossible in their social and legal system that something, which was evil yesterday, turns into good today, and reverts to evil tomorrow. Man has not been unleashed on the earth as an irresponsible savage. He is accountable to Allah for his actions. Today's life is only a test and an examination. At the end we will all be called upon to render a complete account of our acts of commission and omission to Allah. Allah fixes the time of accountability. The time allotted to mankind, on this earth, shall terminate on the doom's day, when the present order will be annihilated and replaced by another. The whole human race will rise once again in the New World. That will be the time when they will appear before Allah Almighty, and every one will face the consequences of his acts in his individual capacity.

The judgment will rest not on Allah's knowledge alone. A complete record of the actions of every individual, without the slightest alternation, will be put in the open court, and evidence, of different categories, will be presented to prove what was done by man in private or in public, and the motives which inspired his conduct. There will be no undue intercession. Neither bribery, nor advocacy against the truth will be tolerated. No one will be able to shift his burden to another. Even the closest relations, friends, leaders, religious guides, or self-styled deities, will not be able to offer any help to anyone. Man will stand by himself helpless and alone and render his account, and await the pronouncement of the judgment, which shall be in the power of Allah alone.

Another important Islamic creed is to believe in the Koran and all previous divine Books, such as the Pages (Scrolls) of Abraham, the Torah of Moses, the psalms of David, the Gospel of Jesus etc. Muslims believe in all these divine Books because they were mentioned in the Koran, however, and as taught by the Koran and the Sunnah, the Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus had been tampered with and the Message of pure monotheism was obliterated. The Koran came therefore to correct the distorted books.

Believing in the Hereafter is also an important fundamental creed of Islam. Denial of the Hereafter is the denial of Islam even though one may believe in Allah, in the Prophet and in the Koran.

Muslims believe that there will be another life after this present life. When the determined term of this life comes to an end, Allah will command angel Isrâfil to sound the trumpet and all mankind and all other creatures will die. Then the angel Isrâfil will sound it again, and then, all dead since Adam will stand out of their graves and gather for the reckoning. Those who believed in Allah, accepted the Messengers and did good deeds as commanded by Allah, Allah will grant them paradise where they will enjoy eternal bliss. But those who rejected the Messengers and disobeyed Allah's commands will be thrown in Hell Fire where they will suffer continuous eternal punishment.

Belief in the Hereafter divides people into three distinct categories. First, there are those who do not believe in the Hereafter and regard life on this earth as the only life. Naturally, they judge good and evil by the results, which manifest themselves in this world. If an action produces beneficial results, it is good, and if it brings about harmful results, it is evil. Second, those people who do not deny the Hereafter but

depend on the intercession or atonement of someone to absolve them of their sins. Among them there are some, who regard themselves as Allah's chosen people, who will receive only nominal punishment however grave their sins are. This false belief deprives them of the moral advantage, which they could have derived from their belief in the Hereafter. As a result they also become very much like the people who deny the Hereafter. Third, are those people who believe in the Hereafter in the form in which Islam presents. They do not delude themselves that they have any special relationship with Allah, or that anyone can intercede on their behalf. They know that they alone are responsible for their actions. For them the belief in the Hereafter becomes a great moral force. A person who has the conviction that he is fully accountable for all his actions finds a permanent guard, stationed within him, which cautions him and admonishes him whenever he deviates from the right path. There may be no court to summon him, no policemen to apprehend him, no witnesses to accuse him, and no public opinion to press him, but the guard within him is ever on the alert, ready to seize him whenever he transgresses.

Man's deeds in the Hereafter are not judged by materialistic gains. Allah created the heavens and the earth, and created life and death for the purpose of testing human beings. The time and place of our birth, the environment that surrounds us, the mental capabilities we have and the opportunities that come our way are pre-destined for us. But Allah gave man the freedom to choose between right and wrong. This granted freedom is the very essence of the grand scheme of things without which the whole existence becomes meaningless. If Allah had so willed, He could have made all men follow the right path. But that would have meant that man was not given any freedom to choose. And without this freedom the human soul could not have been tested. Reward or punishment would then have become meaningless. It was Allah's abounding mercy to give eternal life to man in the Kingdom of Heaven. With His absolute wisdom Allah decided to make this eternal life conditional to man's behavior in a temporary life subjected to Allah's laws relating to life and death. Those who cleanse their minds, bodies and souls in the life of this world and follow the laws of their Creator shall deserve the bliss of the eternal life in the kingdom of Allah. Those who ignore the call of their Creator and live a life of arrogance, turning a deaf ear to the commands and interdictions of their creator shall be put to a painful chastisement. Thus, Allah is testing man on earth by giving him free will to choose between good and evil. The purpose is to select cleansed souls for Paradise.

Allah is High and Supreme but He is very near to the pious thoughtful believers. He answers their prayers and helps them. He loves the people who love Him and forgives their sins. He gives them peace, happiness, knowledge and success. Allah is the Loving and the Provider, the Generous and the Benevolent, the Rich and the Independent, the Forgiving and the Clement, the Patient and the Appreciative, the Unique and the Protector, the Judge and the Peace and the Most Glorious.

Muslims believe that Allah is the God for the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims, the Buddhists, the Hindus, the atheists, and all others. The Koran states that it is the duty of all individuals to learn about Allah and to live according to His will. As this cannot be accomplished by itself, Allah has sent messengers and prophets to guide humanity. All of these chosen prophets and messengers from Adam until Muhammad have brought the same Message and have served as examples to their people of how Allah desires all human beings to live.

The recompense on the Day of Judgment will rest on one question. Did man conduct himself, in submission to Allah, in strict conformity with the truth revealed to the Prophets, and with the conviction that he will be held responsible for his conduct in life on the Day of Judgment? If the answer is in affirmative, the reward will be Paradise, and if in the negative, Hell will be the punishment.

A Muslim must accept all of Allah's prophets and messengers as legitimate, for denial of one, means denial of all. Muslims believe that all prophets from Adam to Moses, to Jesus, to Muhammad all came with the Message of Islam (total submission to Allah). The Prophets of Christianity and Judaism are indeed the prophets of Islam. It was the people who misinterpreted and misunderstood them. So Islam is not a new religion. It is a continuity of the original Message and guidance, which Allah revealed to all His Prophets.

The Koran says:

**"Say. We believe in Allah and that which was revealed to us and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit."** (Holy Koran).

Islam dates back therefore to the age of Adam and its Message had been conveyed to man by Allah's Prophets and Messengers over the centuries. Islam's Message had been restored and enforced in the last stage of the religious evolution by Allah's last Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad peace be upon him.

In Islamic tradition, Allah has sent 124,000 prophets to earth, the first being Adam, 'the chosen of Allah'; Noah, 'the preacher of Allah'; Abraham, 'the friend of Allah'; Moses, 'the speaker'; Jesus, 'the word and spirit of Allah'; and Muhammad, 'the seal of the prophets.'

The Koran states that each people have received revelation from Allah in its own tongue so that all individuals know what is required of them. The Message of all the prophets and messengers is the same. They all asked the people of their time to obey and worship Allah and none other. They were sent at different times to bring back straying people to the right course. The Koran mentions twenty-five of them by name, among them Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, John, Jesus, and Muhammad. There are, however, many others who are not named.

Faith without action is a dead letter. Islam teaches that faith by itself is not enough until it is transformed into action. Prophet Muhammad said:

**"Faith does not depend on raising hopes, but it is something that is firmly established in the heart and is ascertained by action. Indeed, there are people who have been deceived by their hopes, so that they finally leave this world without merit. They used to say, 'We have good expectations in Allah.' Yet they only deceived themselves, for had they truly placed good expectations in Allah, they would have excelled in good deeds."**

Islam believes that man can come to know Allah and feel close to Him by means of proper praying, fasting, charity, pilgrimage, and righteous deeds. The very practice of Islam is meant to purify the believer's soul and to bring him closer to Allah.

Allah is very aware of human weaknesses and imperfection. He does not condemn His servants because they are imperfect; rather He guides them to self-perfection and He forgives them and showers His Mercy upon them when they fail and then sincerely ask His forgiveness.

As mentioned above, embracing Islam necessitates the practicing of its five pillars. Declaring one's faith, prayer, charity, and fasting are activities pursued repeatedly throughout one's life. Conditions permitting, each Muslim is additionally charged with undertaking a pilgrimage to Makkah once in a lifetime. The Arabic term for this fifth rite is Hadj (pilgrimage). Scholars relate the word to the concept of Kasd (aspiration) and to the notion of men and women as travelers on earth. In Western religions pilgrimage is a vestigial tradition, a quaint, folkloric concept commonly reduced to metaphor. Among Muslims, on the other hand, the Hadj embodies a vital experience for millions of new pilgrims every year. In spite of the modern contents of their lives, it remains an act of obedience, a profession of belief, and the visible expression of a spiritual community. For a majority of Muslims the Hadj is an ultimate goal, the trip of a lifetime.

Muslims believe in the Angels of Allah. They are unseen creatures created by Allah in the universe for special missions. They carry out Allah's commands and are His messengers to His Prophets. One of the angels is Gabriel who brought down divine revelation to Prophet Muhammad. Another angel is Michael who is in charge of rain falling. A third one is the angel of death who is in charge of taking the souls of people whose death is due. Angels play an important role in Islam, especially the two recording angels who write down each person's good and bad deeds. Both will have to be accounted for on Judgment Day, and only persons whose good deeds outweigh the bad deeds will be admitted to heaven. Hence Muslims honor angels and speak of them respectfully, but they worship none of them, nor do they take them as Allah's sons or daughters.

One of the great beauties of Islam is its simplicity, naturalness, and lack of formalities. Islam is the religion of Adam and of mankind in its earliest and most advanced stages of development. Allah says in the Holy Koran:

**Therefore set your face to the religion (pure Islamic monotheism) upon which He originated mankind. There is no changing of Allah's creation. That is the right religion; but most men know it not (Ar-Rum, 30).**

Among the many benefits of embracing Islam are that once man or woman bears witness that: "There is no Allah except Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet" all his or her past sins are forgiven and are transformed into merits with an enormous award awaiting him or her in paradise. In addition, they receive the reward of believing the religion of the Prophet Jesus if they are Christians, or Prophet Moses if they are Jews, and the religion of Prophet Muhammad, which means that they receive two huge rewards, and they know that Allah loves them because He guided them to Him.



Based on the Koran and the Sunnah, Muslims live according to their own Code of Conduct. It is a Divine Code that doesn't submit to laws made by man. Code put by Allah to his subjects to live upright without crookedness until the day of resurrection. This is why Muslims don't pay much attention to any other life systems made by man such as capitalism or socialism because Allah's laws are divine and final. Any deviation from Allah's laws would be a big sin and Allah would afflict Muslims if they deviate from His Code of Conduct. Consequently, Muslims believe that Islam is the only principle capable of solving the world problems, and eradicating the disastrous legacies of the capitalist's creed. It is Islam, which will guarantee prosperity and permanent peace and tranquility for all mankind. Islam, as a Code of Conduct does not only deal with ethical matters, but also with all aspects of civil life. Because Islam was descended on Prophet Muhammad as the last of religions, it enclosed comprehensive laws organizing every aspect of Muslims' life on earth.

There is no distinction in Islam between private and public conduct. The same moral code, which one observes at home, applies to one's conduct in public. Politics must be based on truth and justice. Nations should deal with one another, on the basis of mutual recognition of rights, and due discharge of obligations. Even if there has to be war, those engaged in it should conduct themselves not as barbarians but as civilized human beings. When man decides to submit to the will of Allah, and accepts His law as the supreme law, and organizes his life in accordance with the revealed moral code, and on the principle of accountability to Allah, the quality and character of his life cannot be limited to the precincts of prayer halls. It must extend itself to every sphere of his work as a man of Allah (7).

The inner presence of Allah in the heart of a Muslim makes him fear Allah even when he is all by himself. He discharges his duties honestly, and refrains from doing anything, which is prohibited. Should he succumb to temptation, and violate the law of Allah, he is ever ready to offer sincere regrets, and to enter into a firm contract with the future that he will not repeat the mistake. There can be neither greater instrument of moral reformation nor any better method to help man to develop a sound and stable character. It is the Hereafter, which helps men, under all circumstances, to conform to Allah's scheme of permanent values. It is for this reason Islam represents a whole civilization, a complete culture, and a comprehensive world order. It provides moral guidance in all walks of life. That is why Islamic values are not for the ascetic who renounces the world, but for him who actively participates in different spheres of life, and works with them. Islam presents the moral values which people look for in convents, monasteries, and cloisters, right in the current of life.

Islam rejects the idea of chosen people, making faith in Allah and good action is the only way to Heaven. Thus a direct relationship is established with Allah and his subjects all alike, without any intercessor.

Islam does not teach or accept mere ritualism, but emphasizes intention and action. There is no hierarchy of priests, or any complicated rites, and rituals. Everybody may approach the Koran directly and translates its dictates into practice.

In Islam faith is not merely a matter of words. Conformity of life and conduct to the requirements of the divine law and to righteous living does not mean simply turning our faces at prayer toward the East or the West, but it entails the adherence to the

principles and rules which serve as the ground work of Allah's system of faith and worship. In Islam the purpose of life is to worship Allah, to know Him, to love Him, and to act upon His Laws in every aspect of life, to enjoin goodness and forbid evil and oppression, to practice charity and justice and to serve Allah by serving mankind. Islam seeks to implant in man's heart the strongest conviction that his every thought and action are with Allah, Who sees him at all times and in all places.

The Koran presents this concept in the following sublime manner:

**It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but righteousness is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the prophets; and gives his wealth for the love of Him to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observes proper worship and pays the Zakat (almsgiving). And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and are patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are those who are sincere. Such are the Allah fearing (Al-Baqarahh, 177 ).**

In Islam human being enjoys an especially high ranking status in the hierarchy of all known creatures. Man occupies this distinguished position because he alone is gifted with rational faculties and spiritual aspirations as well as power of action.

Man is the highest creation of Allah and was given the ability to choose his own way. Created with the highest potentialities, man is left relatively free in his will, action and choice. Allah has shown him the right path in the Koranic laws and in the prophet's Sunnah. Man's success and salvation lies in following them. Man is given fundamental guide lines about a purposeful life and then he is left with the challenge of human existence before him so that he might put these high ideals into practice.

In Islam man is a wholesome, integrated unit and not a collection of fragmented, competitive parts. The sacred and secular are not separate parts of man; they are united in the nature of human being.

Islam stands for the middle path and the goal of producing a moral man in the service of a just society. Islam is a guide towards a better and complete life and glorifying in all its phases Allah, the Almighty Creator.

Man is not a condemned race from birth to death, but a dignified being potentially capable of good and noble achievements. Every person's birth takes place according to the will of Allah in realization of His plans and in submission to His commands. People are born free of sin. It is only after they reach the age of puberty and it is only after they commit sins that they are to be charged for their mistakes. No one is responsible for or can take the responsibility for the sins of others. However, the door of forgiveness through true repentance is always open. There is no inherited sin, no original sin. Adam committed the first sin, he prayed to Allah for pardon and Allah granted him pardon.

As the Koran teaches, Allah ordered the angels to prostrate to Adam, so they prostrated in admiration, except Iblis (Satan) who declined and was disobedient rebel. Allah created from Adam his mate Eve and ordered them to dwell in Paradise but not

to approach the fruit of the forbidden tree. Iblîs (Satan) however succeeded in tempting them and they ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree, and in consequence, Allah got them down to earth. Prompted by sense of guilt Adam felt shame. Here, Allah in mercy inspired Adam with a prayer for invoking His forgiveness, and in turn Allah did pardon his offense for it is He Who always accepts true repentance and the atonement made by the people.

**And when We said to the angels, ' Bow yourselves to Adam' ; so they bowed themselves, save Iblîs; he refused, and waxed proud, and so he became one of the unbelievers.**

**And We said, 'Adam dwell thou, and thy wife, in the Garden, and eat thereof easefully where you desire; but draw not nigh this tree, lest you be evildoers.'**

**Then Satan caused them to slip therefrom and brought them out of that they were in; and We said, 'Get you all down, each of you an enemy of each; and in the earth a sojourn shall be yours, and enjoyment for a time.'**

**Thereafter Adam received certain words from his Lord, and his Lord pardoned him.**

**Verily He is the One Who forgives, the Most Merciful (Al-Baqarahh 34-37).**

Muslims believe that man must work out his salvation through the guidance of Allah. No one can act on behalf of another or intercede between him and Allah. In order to obtain salvation, a person must combine faith and action, belief and practice. Faith without doing good deeds is as insufficient and worthless as doing good deeds without faith.

People are created equal. There is no superiority of one race over another. Allah made mankind of different colors, nationalities, languages and beliefs so as to test who is going to be better than others. No one can claim that he is better than others. It is only Allah Who knows who is better, for this depends on piety and righteousness. Islam teaches the sanctity of the human personality and confers equal rights upon all without any distinction of race or sex. The law of Allah, enunciated in the Koran and exemplified in the life of the prophet, is supreme in all cases. It applies equally to the highest and the lowest, the prince and the peasant, the ruler and the ruled.

The Koran teaches that life is a test for each individual, for everyone must choose whether he will or will not follow the commands of Allah. On the Day of Judgment, a person will be resurrected and asked to account for what he did while he was alive. All people's deeds are accounted for and kept in accurate records. Those with good records will be rewarded and enter Paradise, while those with bad records will be punished and enter Hell. This belief develops within the individual an awareness of Allah's presence and a desire to obey His laws sincerely and voluntarily.

If some good deeds are seen not to get full appreciation and credit in this life, they will receive full compensation and be widely acknowledged on the Day of Judgment. If some people who commit sins, neglect Allah and indulge in immoral activities, seem superficially successful and prosperous in this life, absolute justice will be done to them on the Day of Judgment. The time of the Day of Judgment is only known to Allah alone.

Muslims believe in fate and pre-destination. They are related to Allah's timeless knowledge and His ultimate power to plan and execute His plans. Allah is not indifferent to this world nor is he neutral to it. Everything on this earth originates from Him, the One and Only Creator, and the Sustainer and the sole source of guidance.

Allah has full knowledge and control over all that occurs. Nothing will happen to man except what Allah has decreed for him. For Muslims, everything in the world that occurs, good or evil, has been pre-ordained and nothing can happen unless permitted by Allah.

**Say: "Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Lord." And in Allah let the believers put their trust. (Al-Taubah, 50).**

In Islamic theology, divine pre-ordainment does not suggest an absence of Allah's indignation against evil, because any evils that do occur are thought to result in future benefits men may not be able to see. Although events are pre-ordained, man possesses free will to choose between right or wrong, and is thus responsible for his actions. According to Islamic tradition, all that has been decreed by Allah is written in the Preserved Tablet.

**Surely it is We who bring the dead to life and write down what they have forwarded and what they have left behind; everything We have numbered in a clear register. (Yasin, 12).**

Allah is Wise, Just and Loving and whatever He does must have a good motive, and a meaningful purpose, although man may fail sometimes to understand it fully. Allah's servants should have strong faith in Him and accept whatever He does because man's knowledge is limited and his thinking is based on individual consideration, whereas Allah's knowledge is limitless and He plans on universal basis. Man should think, plan and make sound choice, but if things do not happen the way he wants, he should not lose hope and surrender himself to mental strains or shattering worries, but rather accept with good faith all that Allah has decreed.

The Koran teaches that everything and every phenomenon in the world, other than man, are administered totally by Allah-made laws. In other words they are obedient to Allah and submissive to His laws thus being in the state of Islam.

In Islam there is no compulsion in religion. Muhammad is not a guardian over the people. His role is only to deliver the message of Islam. Muhammad established the religion of Allah among the people through his admonitions and teachings and glad tidings and warnings. He cannot force people to act contrary to their inclinations. The Prophet was directed not to force people to believe, he was not appointed by Allah to punish. Allah has reversed that for himself. It is for Allah to call people to account for their evil conduct and to punish them for it. The reckoning rests with Allah. Allah would inflict the chastisement at its due time according to His perfect Wisdom.

Allah says to his prophet in the Koran:

**You are not a dictator over them (Al-Ghashiyah, 22).**

**This is an admonition. Whosoever will, let him take a (straight) path to his Lord. But ye will not, except as Allah wills, for Allah is full of knowledge and Wisdom (Al-Imran 29, 30).**

**Say: for myself I have no power to benefit, no power to hurt, save that which Allah willeth. Had I knowledge of the unseen, I should have abundance of wealth, and adversity would not touch me. I am but a warner, and a bearer of good tidings unto folk who believe (Al-A'raf, 188).**

**My counsel will not profit you if I were minded to advise you, if Allah's will is to keep you stray. He is your Lord and unto him ye will be brought back (Hûd, 34).**

If Allah willed he could have brought every soul its true guidance, but knowing beforehand that most of the people – jinn and mankind shall counsel deaf to the truth, the decree has been already set forth by Him to fill Hell with both jinn and mankind all together.

**If We have so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance, but the word from Me concerning evildoers took effect: that I will fill Hell with the jinn and mankind together (As-Sajdah, 13).**

The Koran states that should the people of the book (Jews and Christians) argue with Muhammad and deny his message, then he should say to them: "I have vowed to resign myself to Allah's purpose and I have conformed my will to His blessed Will, and so did those who followed me." The Koran also urge the prophet to say to the people of the Book and the pagan Arabs: "Are you satisfied of what you heard and have your doubts been satisfied? If you are, then conform to Islam." If they do, they are on the path of rectitude, but should they turn a deaf ear, the Prophet is only responsible for relating the message, and Allah keeps a watching eye upon His creation and upon the way they conduct themselves in life.

**So if they dispute with you say: I have submitted myself to Allah (in Islam), and (so have) those who follow me." And say to those who were given the scripture (Jews and Christians) and to those who are illiterates (Arab pagans): "Do you (also) submit yourselves (to Allah in Islam)?" If they do, they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the message; and Allah I All-Seer of (His) slaves (Al-Imran, 20).**

Allah ordered the Prophet to say to all people: "You people have now received divine evidence, so whosoever sees, it is for his own good, and whoso is blind is blind to his own hurt. And I am not a keeper over you.

**Clear proofs have come to you from your Lord. Whoso sees clearly, it is to his own gain, and whoso is blind, it is to his own loss; I am not a watcher over you (Al-An'am, 104).**

Islam teaches that guidance comes only from Allah. Allah guides whom He pleases and as He pleases. He alone knows who are willing to be guided.

**Thou guidest not whom thou likest, but Allah guides whom He wills, and knows very well those that are guided (Al-Qasas, 56).**

Islam teaches that Allah has decreed all things, good and evil from eternity, all that happens, whether obedience or disobedience, faith or infidelity, sickness or health, riches or poverty, life or death.

**Say: "Nothing will happen to us except what Allah has decreed for us: He is our protector", and on Allah let the believers put their trust." (At-Tabah, 51).**

**And with Him are the keys of the unseen treasures – none knows them but He; and He knows what is in the land and the sea, and there falls not a leaf but He knows it, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green or dry but (it is all) in a clear book (Al-An'am, 59).**

If Allah guides those whom He wills does that mean people have no choice to choose between good and bad? Does Allah select some people to guide and leave others without guidance?

In the Koran there are in fact some criteria explicitly given according to which Allah guides.

The Koran says:

**Allah guides to Himself whosoever turns, penitent (Ash-shura, 13).**

**There has come to you from Allah a light, and a Book manifest whereby Allah guides whosoever follows His good pleasure in the ways of peace... (Al-Maidah, 16).**

**Surely those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness their Lord will guide them for their belief...(Yunus, 9).**

**Give thou good tidings to those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, that for them await gardens underneath which rivers flow... (Al-Baqarah, 25).**

**Allah leads none astray save the ungodly (Al-Baqarah, 26).**

**How shall Allah guide those who reject faith after they accepted it and bore witness that the Messenger was true and that clear signs had come unto them? Allah guides not the people of the evildoers (Al-Imran, 86).**

Islam teaches that Allah gives His servants free will but he knows beforehand – even before creating the universe – what His servants' choices will be. Because Allah guides to the truth, He presents the signs of His presence and sends messengers to guide mankind. He also is patient, merciful and forgiving. Anyone who sins but repents before his death is forgiven and his sins passed over. Allah also does not take people in their sins right away, rather He provides sustenance and provisions for them in this life in spite of their transgression and continues to allow them to seek forgiveness or repent. If someone in spite of all that insists on disbelieving then in this

case Allah gives him rope in order to do as he wishes and transgress as he wishes. He then imagines that Allah can not take him, is unable to exact retribution, or does not exist. He mistakes patience for weakness and this causes him to immerse himself in further evil out of arrogance. This is how Allah misguides the evildoers. Those who have chosen to leave the straight path preferring to trespass beyond the command of Allah are the ones whom Allah misguides by leaving them to become as immersed in misguidance as they wish.

In the Koran we read the description of those who were misguided and entered Hell fire.

**They have hearts wherewith they understand not, they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle, rather they are further astray; those! They are the heedless ones (Al-A'raf, 179).**

As for those seeking guidance, Allah does not force them into guidance, however, if they follow the signs He has sent down then He increases them in guidance.

**As for those who accept guidance, He increases their guidance and bestows upon them their piety (Muhammad, 17).**

Islam states clearly that everyone is born a Muslim and is therefore monotheistic by nature. The Koran mentions that humanity has been created with the natural disposition towards the unity of Allah. Allah, who has breathed His spirit in each human individual, is himself the example of perfect unity.

Prophet Muhammad said,

**“Every person is born with the innate religious faith (submission to Allah Almighty).”**

Thus when an individual accepts Islam, he is not turning his back on any prior revelation but rather is turning to the original and true revelation of Allah and to his own nature as a creation of Allah. Thus Islam is not a new religion founded by Muhammad, but a final restatement of the original revelation that has been conveyed to humanity by Messengers and Prophets sent by Allah for that very purpose.

Allah said in his Koran:

**“This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.” (Al Maida, 5).**

Consequently, Islam is the only true religion that is accepted by Allah, simply because it is the true religion of all prophets. All people are therefore required to accept Islam and adopt it as their religion. People are among Allah's creatures, belong to Him alone, live on His earth and eat sustenance provided by Him. All people are obliged to follow his Commands and avoid His Prohibitions. As the Koran is the final revelation and Muhammad is the final prophet, humanity is obligated to accept Islam.

The Koran says,

**“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, (submission to Allah’s will) never shall it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he shall be one of the losers.”(Al Imran, 85).**

The Islamic belief in the unity of mankind is the corollary of the doctrine of the Unity of Allah. The self-same Allah is the Creator and Nourisher of men and women of all nations, races, colors, creeds and cultures. Hence all mankind are slaves of Allah and the dearest to Him is the one who is most pious and righteous of them.

According to Islam there is no compulsion in religion. Man is free to choose between the way of Allah and the way of Satan. The Prophet was only to convey the Message:

**...It is yours only to convey the Message, and for us is the reckoning (Ar’Rad 40).**

**And obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and take heed, but if you turn away, then know that it is only for Our messenger to convey the Manifest Message (Al Maidah 92).**

**It is only for the Messenger to convey the Message, and Allah knows what you reveal and what you conceal (Al Maidah 99).**

**Clear proofs have come to you from your Lord. Whoever sees clearly it is he who will gain, and whoever is blind it is he who is at loss, and I am not a keeper over you (Al An’am 104).**

**And if Allah had pleased, they would not have been polytheists, and We have not appointed you as a keeper over them, neither are you their trustee (Al Ana’m 107).**

**There is no compulsion in Religion. Truth has become clear from error. Whoever disbelieves in Satan and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing (Al Baqara, 256).**

In Islam every individual has the inalienable right to freedom in all its forms-physical, cultural, economic and political - and shall be entitled to struggle by all available means against any infringement or abrogation of this right; and every oppressed individual or people has a legitimate claim to the support of other individuals and/or peoples in such a struggle.

Freedom is a must for moral flowering but it should be enjoyed with responsibility otherwise it shall degenerate into anarchy.

In their economic pursuits, all Muslims are entitled to the full benefits of nature and all its resources. These are blessings bestowed by Allah for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

Allah commands Muslims to uphold justice for all nations:



**O you who believe stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, to your kin; be he rich or poor. Allah stands closest to either; then follow not caprice, so as to swerve; for if you twist or turn, Allah is aware of the things you do (4: 135).**

Despite the fact that Allah explained to Muslims in the Koran the issues about which people of the Book (Jews and Christians) held misconceptions, yet He also commanded Muslims to treat them well. Allah commanded Muslims to say to the people of the Book,

**We believe in what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to you. Our God and your God are one and we submit to Him. (29: 46).**

Islam totally rejects social discrimination. It promotes the feeling of brotherhood and equality among people. Allah clearly says:

**O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes, that you may know one another.”**

Therefore, no one can claim superiority over others based on racial or tribal difference. A person is to be judged by his character, not by his color or race.

Allah continues:

**Surely the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you. Indeed Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Al-Hujurat, 13).**

The tolerant attitude that must be assumed by Muslims towards the People of the Book has manifested itself throughout the Islamic history. For centuries, Muslims treated Jews in a friendly manner and Jews responded to this friendship with loyalty.

## Chapter 4

### Universality of Islam

The universality of Islam lies in the fact that all mankind have the recognition of Allah imprinted in their souls, before they were born. Allah explained in the Koran that when He created Adam, He caused all of Adam's descendants to come into existence and took a pledge from them saying, **"Am I not your Lord?"** To which they all replied, **"Yes, we testify to it."**

Allah then explained why He had all mankind bear witness that He is their creator and that He is the only God worthy of worship. He said, **"That was in case you (mankind) should say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Verily we were unaware of all this.'** i.e., we had no idea that you Allah were our God. No one told us that we were only supposed to worship you alone. Allah went on to explain: **that it was also in case you should say, 'Certainly it was our ancestors who made partners (with Allah) and we are only their descendants; will you then destroy us for what those liars did?'"**

Thus, every child is born with a natural belief in Allah and an inborn inclination (called in Arabic the 'Fitrah') to worship Him alone. If the child were left alone, he would worship Allah in his own way, but all children are affected by those things around them, seen or unseen.

The prophet reported that Allah said:

**I created my servants in the right religion but devils made them go astray."**

The Prophet also said:

**"Each child is born in a state of 'Fitrah', then his parents make him a Jew, Christian or a Zoroastrian, the way an animal gives birth to a normal offspring. Have you noticed any that were born mutilated?"**

So, just as the child submits to the physical laws which Allah has put in nature, his soul also submits naturally to the fact that Allah is his Lord and creator. But, his parents try to make him follow their own way and the child is not strong enough in the early stages of his life to resist or oppose the will of his parents. The religion which the child follows at this stage is one of custom and upbringing and Allah does not hold him responsible for enjoining the religion of his parents because of his early age.

Throughout people's lives from childhood until the time they die, signs are shown to them in all regions of the earth and in their own soul, until it becomes clear that there is only one true god (Allah) responsible for all signs of creation. If the people are honest with themselves, reject their false gods and seek Allah, the way will be made easy for them but if they continually reject Allah's signs and continue to worship creation, the more difficult it will be for them to escape worshipping false deities.

Prophets were sent to every nation and tribe to support man's natural belief in Allah and man's inborn inclination to worship Him as well as to reinforce the divine truth in the daily signs revealed by Allah (7).

Much of the Prophet's teachings became distorted, and Muhammad, the seal of the Prophets had to be sent with a well preserved Book to reform the distorted beliefs of the followers of preceding Prophets, and to restore to mind the main core of all Allah's religions; the Oneness of Allah. The Prophet came therefore, with the one and only universal religion of Allah, Islam. The Prophet came also as a Warner, urging people to turn to Allah alone, and this requires that one chooses between right and wrong, and such a choice implies accountability.

Since the consequences of false religion are so grave, the true religion of Allah must be universally understandable and attainable, not confined to any people, place or time. There can not be conditions like baptism, belief in a man, as a savior etc., for a believer to enter paradise. Within the central principle of Islam and its definition (the surrender of one's will to Allah) lie the roots of Islam universality. Whenever man comes to the realization that Allah is one and distinct from His creation, and submits himself to Allah, he becomes a Muslim in body and spirit and is eligible to paradise. Thus, anyone at any time in the most remote region of the world can become a Muslim, a follower of Allah's religion (Islam) by merely rejecting the worship of creation and by turning to Allah alone. It should be noted, however, that the recognition of and submission to Allah requires that one chooses between right and wrong and such a choice implies accountability. Man will be held responsible for his choices, and, as such, he should try his utmost to do good and avoid evil. The ultimate good being the worship of Allah alone and the ultimate evil being the worship of His creation along with or instead of Allah (10).

The name Islam was not thought up by its followers or applied by other people, as is the case with the names of other religions, but was revealed by Almighty Allah. Other religions are named after their founders, such as Christianity and Buddhism; after a tribe or ethnic group, such as Judaism; or after a specific geographical region, such as Hinduism. Islam, however, is unique because it expresses a deep spiritual meaning as well an overall outlook on life and concept of worship. The name Islam expresses nothing new, because submission to the will of Allah, i.e. Islam, has always been the true religion of Allah.

The command to worship none other than Allah and to submit to His will has been revealed by Allah to all of His Prophets throughout mankind's history. The pure essence of the beliefs and teachings that were revealed by Allah to the Prophet Muhammad are the same as Allah revealed to Abraham. So actually, Muhammad is the final Prophet of Islam – not the first. Islam is the true religion of Abraham, because Abraham completely submitted himself to the will of Allah. Since religious truth is eternal and unchanging, and mankind is one universal brotherhood, Allah's revelations to man have always been consistent and universal. Submission to the will of Allah, and worshipping Him alone without intermediaries, has always been the only religion accepted to Allah (9).

Because Muhammad is the last Warner Allah wished that Islam becomes universal, and to be proclaimed to the Jews, the Christians and the rest of mankind.

Consequently, Muhammad's Message of Islam was not only addressed to the pagans and Jews in Makkah, but also to the Christians. Some of the people of the Book who knew the truth about Muhammad's mission as mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel either accepted Islam as the last of religions or admitted that it was a true religion and descended from Allah.

**And there are among the people of the Book who believe in Allah, and what has been sent down unto you, and what has been sent down unto them, men humble to Allah, not selling the signs of Allah for a small price; those – their wage is with their Lord; Allah is swift in reckoning** (Al Imran, 199).

Islam is truly unique among the religions of the world because it is addressed to all of mankind. The Koran repeatedly addresses all human beings by saying: "O mankind!" In the Koran Allah is never addressed as the God of a particular people or nation, but to all mankind. From the very beginning of the mission of the Prophet, his followers came from a wide spectrum of individuals; there was Bilal, the African slave; Suhaib, the Byzantine Roman; Ibn Salam, the Jewish Rabbi; and Salman, the Persian.

After the advent of Muhammad, the issue now is not to save Israel from the bondage of Egypt, nor teaching Madian the ethics of honest business, not reclaiming the people of Lût from sexual sin or Thamûd from the sin of oppression in power, or Ād from arrogance and ancestor worship. Now are set forth plainly the issues of life and death, the last and final Message of Allah, the One universal God to all mankind (10).

**Say: "O mankind, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, the Messenger of Allah to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and of the earth. There is no Allah but He. He gives life, and makes to die. Believe then in Allah, and in His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him; haply so you will be guided** (Al-A'râf 155-158).

The Message of Islam is for the entire human race. According to Islam Allah is the God of the entire world and Prophet Muhammad is a Messenger for the whole of mankind.

Abu hurayrah, the companion of Muhammad reported that the Prophet said:

**"Every prophet was sent to his own people, but I have been sent to all of mankind."**

The culmination of Allah's revelations is in the Koran, which confirms previous scriptures, corrects the errors which men introduced into them, and explaining many points in detail for all who seek right worship to Allah.

The Koran says:

**It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that he may proclaim it over all religion, even though the pagans may detest it** (Al-Saff, 9).

**We have not sent thee, save as a mercy unto all beings** (Al-anbya, 107).

The latter two verses clearly indicate that there is no question now of race or nation, of a "Chosen People" or the "seed of Abraham"; or "the seed of David"; or of Hindu *Arya-varta*; of Jew or Gentile, Arab or Persian, Turk or Tajik, European or Asiatic, white or colored; Ayrian, Semetic, Mongolian or African; or American, Australian, or Polynesian. To all men, the principles of Islam universally apply.

We read in the Koran:

**Say: "It is revealed unto me only that your God is One god; do you then surrender to His will (in Islam)?"** (Al-Anbiya, 108).

The Prophet here didn't say: 'Surrender to my God only' but he said, 'my God is also your God' for there is but One God, the Universal Lord, Who loves and cherishes all.

The Koran continues:

**Then, if they should turn their backs, say: ' I have proclaimed the Message to you all equally, even though I know not whether near or far is that you are promised.' (the Day of Judgment)** (Al-Anbyia, 109).

The Prophet here is saying to all people, 'If you do not realize the significance of the Message, I at least have done my duty. I have given the good news for the righteous and the warning for the unjust without abating one jot of the truth, openly and squarely for all. Do not ask me when the good news and the warning will be fulfilled. That is for Allah to decide, not for me or for you to know.'

The Koran continues:

**It is He Who knows what is spoken aloud and He knows what you hide. I know not but that it may be a trial for you and an enjoyment for a time. He (Muhammad) said: 'my Lord, judge Thou with truth! Our Lord is the All-Merciful; whose help is ever to be sought against the blasphemies ye utter (Allah has offspring, or son, Muhammad is a sorcerer, the Koran is poetry etc.)** (Al-Anbiya 110-112).

The Prophet teaches all how to carry out Allah's Will and live a good life. If some of them are hypocrites and join Islam with baser motives and not the pure motives of the love of Allah, their motives and conduct will be judged by Allah and not by men. In the same way, if men who join Islam with pure motives and yet feel aggrieved that those outside are better off from a worldly point of view, they are wrong. It may be that the fleeting enjoyment of this world's goods is but a trial, and they should be grateful for being saved from temptation.

Islam is international in its outlook and approach. It does not admit barriers and distinctions based on color, race, clan, blood or territory such as were prevalent before the advent of Muhammad. Islam is a way of life that transcends race and ethnicity. The Koran repeatedly reminds people of their common origin:

**O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most god-fearing of you. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware (Al-Hujurat, 13).**

The Koran always calls upon the “progeny of Adam” or “the mankind” to accept Islam. The specific instructions and injunctions are meant for those who have come to believe in Islam, and they are always addressed as “those who believe.” That the Message of Islam is universal in character is proved by the fact that those who accepted the Message acquired equal rights and status as believers, regardless of all differences of origin. The Koran says:

**“The believers are all like brothers.”**

The Prophet said:

**“Those who subscribe to our belief, and adopt the Islamic way of life, have the same rights and the same obligations as we have.”**

The Prophet announced,

**“Listen! You have one Allah as you have one father (Adam). There is no distinction between an Arab and a non-Arab. There is no preference for the black over the fair or the fair over the black. There is distinction only in submission to Allah. The most virtuous among you is the most honorable in the eyes of Allah.”**

The universality of Islam is expressed in the Koran in several verses among which are:

**Allah is the One who has sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religion. And Allah is sufficient for witness (Al-Fath, 28).**

**Blessed is Allah the One Who has revealed the Criterion to His servant; that he may be a Warner to the worlds (Al-Furqan 1).**

Muhammad is the summation and the culmination of all the prophets and messengers that came before him. He came with the same pillars of faith. He purified the previous Messages from adulteration and completed the Messages of Allah to all humanity. He was entrusted with the power of explaining, interpreting and living the teaching of the Koran. Unlike any other religion, Islam confirmed and completed what was true in the religions before it. Islam is the only religion which recognizes as a part of its own system of beliefs that other religions exist.

The religions prior to Islam were not meant to be universal religions. During the countless centuries of human history, when the different nations of mankind lived in more or less complete isolation, there was no means of rapid communication between one nation and another, so Allah sent different Prophets to different people. Each nation was separately guided to the truth by a national prophet. Moses and Jesus were

the prophets to the Israelites. Jesus himself declared his mission to be restricted to the Israelites by saying:

**"I have been sent only to the lost sheep of the people of Israel."** (Matthew, 15: 24).

As far as their fundamental Messages and teachings are concerned, the religion of Moses and Jesus was not different from Islam, yet neither did contain complete guidance for all aspects of human life for all nations and ages.

Each nation having been separately guided to the truth by the national Prophets, the time became ultimately ripe for the World-Prophet - peace be upon him – to be raised to preach the universal religion. Thus, when the world was on the eve of becoming one, Allah raised up the Prophet Muhammad to transmit the essential Message of all the Prophets, and revealed to him the all-embracing religion as a universal faith, containing the unadulterated Message of all the prophets. He united the peoples of all nations and lands into a single world-wide brotherhood and gave the world a complete code of life for the whole of humanity. There is nothing in Islam which is of benefit only to the people of a particular region or age. The Holy Koran enjoins nothing which is not of uniformly inspiring, edifying and practicable for peoples of all nations and times. Muhammad's mission was for the whole world and for all times. The universality of his Message has been clearly confirmed by the Koran:

**And We have sent you to the entire mankind as a bearer of glad tidings and as a Warner, but most people do not understand.** (Saba'a, 28).

**O people of earlier Scripture! There has come to you Our Messenger, revealing to you much of that which you used to hide of the Book, and pardoning much. Indeed there has come to you from Allah a Light and a manifest Book (the Koran) (Al Maida, 15).**

**Say, "O people, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, to whom belongs the Dominion of the heavens and the earth, there is no Allah but He, He bestows life and ordains death, so believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, follow him that you may be guided (Al-A'raf, 158).**

As previously mentioned, the advent of Muhammad and his universal Message to the world was clearly known to the Jews and the Christians as prophesied in their Books, however, out of envy and obstinacy they denied and obliterated this important fact.

**Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel, bidding them honor, and forbidding them dishonor, making lawful to them the good things, and making unlawful to them the corrupt things, and relieving them of their loads, and the fetters that were upon them. Those who believe in him, and support and help him, and follow the light that has been sent down with him, they are the prosperous (Al-A'raf, 157).**

Because the religion with Allah is Islam, the Prophet in addition to inviting the Arab pagans to Islam, he also invited the Jews and the Christians to Islam.

**O you who have been given earlier scripture! Believe in what We have revealed, affirming of what you have been given, before We obliterate faces and turn them upon their backs, or curse them as We cursed the violators of the Sabbath, and Allah's command is surely carried into effect (An Nisa, 47).**

**People of the Book, now there has come to you Our Messenger, making things clear to you, upon an interval between the Messengers lest you should say, "There has not come to us any bearer of good tidings, neither any Warner." Indeed, there has come to you a bearer of good tidings and a Warner; Allah is powerful over everything (Al-Maidah, 19).**

These verses clearly show that the Jews and the Christians were ordered in the Torah and the Gospel to follow Prophet Muhammad when he would come as a Messenger of Allah to all mankind.

The universality of Islam is also expressed by the clear prophecies indicated in the Torah and the Gospel about the coming of Muhammad, e.g. Deut. 18: 18, 21: 21; Psl. 118: 22-23; Isa. 42: 1-13; Hab. 3: 3-4; Matt. 21: 42-43; Jn. 14: 12-17, 26-28, 16: 7-14.

Since the religions prior to Islam were of a national character, their followers tended to believe that they were chosen peoples. Such is the case with Christianity too, which believes the Israelites to be a chosen people. The Christians acknowledge only the Prophets of Israel while the Jewish people reject the prophet hood of Jesus. According to the Holy Koran, Allah is the Lord and Sustainer of all the worlds. As He has not discriminated between nations in sending His revelations, so Muslims make no distinction between any of His Messengers:

**“The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what was sent down to him from his Lord, and the believers; each one believes in Allah and His angels, and His Books and his Messengers; we make no division between any of His Messengers. They say, ‘We hear, and obey. Our Lord, grant us Thy forgiveness; unto You is the homecoming.’” (Al-Baqarah, 285).**

By accepting the Prophets and Scriptures of all nations, Islam affirms the unity and universal providence of Allah and the universality of religious experience, and also seeks to bring together people of all races and creeds in a single all-embracing faith and brotherhood.

Muslims totally reject the terms ‘Muhammadan’ or ‘Muhammadanism’, terms used by non-Muslims. The labeling of Islam as Muhammadanism is the result of a false analogy with Christianity. Muslims do not worship Muhammad as Christians worship Christ. Muhammad was neither an Allah, nor an incarnation, nor the son of Allah. He never claimed to be more than a man who received revelations from Allah. He did not make or invent Islam; he simply received the Message of Islam.

The universality of Muhammad's mission is a logical consequence of the finality of his Prophet Hood. He had to be the guide and the leader for all men and for all ages. Allah has provided through him a complete code which is to be followed, and this in



itself supports the concept of finality, because without completeness, the need for other prophets would remain.

In Islam, the Oneness of Allah implies the equality and unity of all human beings in their relation with Allah. It bears the notion of homogeneity, equality and unity of human origin. All are the creation of one and the same Allah, and are all uniform in their fundamental essence:

**”O mankind, fear your Lord, Who created you of a single soul... (An-Nisa, 1).**

Islam, thus, considers all human beings as a unity and eliminates all barriers between black and white, ruler and ruled, employers and employees, intellectual and the masses, noble and vile, clergy and laity, eastern and western, Arab and non-Arab, capitalist and proletarian etc.

The Koran states:

**Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the prophets; Allah has knowledge of everything (Al-Ahzab, 40).**

Stating that Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets indicates the universality of his Message. No other Messenger will come after Muhammad, and the final divine revelation he brought will always be the only unadulterated Message leading mankind to the upright path until the Day of Resurrection.

When the Prophet first proclaimed the Message of Islam, he began with his family, namely his wife khadijah, his servant Zayd ibn Harithah and his cousin Aly ibn Abi Taleb. Then, he invited to Islam his closest companions, Abu Bakr and Uthman ibn Affan and others. After three years he called to Islam the people of Makkah, including the tribes of Quraysh. After that the Prophet went in his call beyond the geographical and tribal boundaries of Makkah. He carried his Message to at-Ta'if. In the fifth year of Prophet Hood, the call to Islam reached Abyssinia when the Prophet commanded some of his companions to migrate there in order to escape persecution of the pagan Arabs of Quraysh. The Muslims stayed for several years in Abyssinia and founded the Islamic community there. Because Islam is universal the Prophet sent envoys with letters of invitation to Islam to the kings of Persia, Byzantine and the ruler of the Copts in Egypt.

The concept of Allah in Islam is characterized by purity and clarity; it is not marred by myths, superstitions or man-made philosophical ideas. In the pure and straightforward teachings of Islam, Allah has clearly revealed His unique nature and qualities to man in the way which He wants them to be understood. While other religions have either mixed man-made doctrines with divine revelation, or ignored the divine revelation almost completely. Islam's concept of Allah is pure and straightforward because there is a clear distinction made between the Creator and the created. There is no ambiguity in divinity. It is made clear that nothing divine or worthy of being worshipped except for Almighty Allah. In Islam calling someone other than Allah 'Lord' or 'savior' is completely prohibited because such terms compromise Allah's uniqueness, and because all our trust should be put in Almighty Allah who is the Most Merciful and the Controller of all Affairs. Everything else

besides Allah is part of His creation and thus, not worthy of worship. Allah is Unique, Eternal, and Transcendent above His creation.

Allah as He has described Himself in the Koran is absolutely One and the most Merciful of those who show mercy. Even though Allah is infinite, unique and incomprehensible, He has revealed Himself in the Koran in a way suitable to the finite and limited human mind. By reaching out to man and sending revelations through all of His prophets, Allah has allowed Himself to be known through His unique and most beautiful attributes. Because the concept of Allah in Islam was sent by Him specifically for mankind, it appeals to the innate nature of the human being. Due to this fact, Islam does not ask man to accept irrational, ludicrous or man-made doctrines about Allah. The Islamic concept of Allah strikes a unique balance between various religions and because it avoids reducing Allah to just being some remote and impersonal 'First Cause' or 'Higher Power', while on the other hand it also teaches that a direct and personal relationship with Allah can be maintained without believing Allah to be like His creation or incarnate in it (9).

In other religions, even the ones which claim belief in 'One God', people often approach Allah through an intermediary, such as a saint, and angel, the Virgin Mary or Jesus. However, it is only in Islam that a person is required only to pray to Allah. Some people also nullify a truly proper and direct relationship with almighty Allah by mistakenly believing that they have a special relationship with Him simply because they are members of a certain ethnic group, tribe or chosen people. Additionally, in Islam there are no priests or clergy, each worshipper, man or woman, has a direct relationship with their Merciful Creator, Allah. Since Allah is the Owner and Sustainer of everything, as well as the only one who can grant true and complete forgiveness, it is completely futile to try to approach Him through anyone else. According to the teachings of Islam, praying to or worshipping anything or anyone besides Almighty Allah is the greatest sin a person can commit.

Unlike other religions, Islam does not need to be updated or reformed in order to appeal to human being living in today's troubled world. Since the teachings of Islam are both spiritually true and eternally practical, they can be lived and implemented in the daily life of a people in order to make their lives more fulfilling. Unique among world religions, Islam has not had to sacrifice its integrity in order to be both applicable to modern life and to have enough spiritual impact to change people's lives.

Because Islam is universal it is not only confined to acts of worship, morality and other aspects of personal piety. The teachings of Islam also encompass all other aspects of life such as guidance to social reform, economics, politics, warfare and family life. Due to Allah's wisdom and because Islam is the final revealed religion, the guidance that Allah has sent is applicable to all times and for all places. Islam does not teach people to 'render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's' because according to Islam, everything belong to Allah.

Islam doesn't view other religions as being either completely true or completely false the way other religions think, but believes that all true religions were at one time divinely revealed, however, over time the teachings of the various religions, due to a variety of reasons, had become distorted and mixed with man-made ideas.

Nonetheless, Muslims were instructed to be tolerant of other revealed religions since the Koran clearly says: **"Let there be no compulsion in religion"**.

It is only by worshipping Almighty Allah, directly and without intermediaries, that man can fulfill his true innate nature and purpose of existence. Islam is realistic, it portrays human beings just as they are and the life of the world just as it is. Islam has a positive view of mankind in general, since it teaches that the best person in the sight of Allah is the one who is most Allah-conscious. In this way the truth of Islam and the universality of Allah's Message transcend all of the barriers of race, nationality, ethnic group and economic status (9).

The last sermon of Prophet Muhammad was delivered during pilgrimage in the tenth year of migration to Medina. It was in the Uranah valley of Mount Arafat in Makkah. The Prophet died few months after delivering this sermon.

After praising, and thanking Allah he said:

**"O people, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.**

**O people, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury; therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah has judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas ibn Abd al Muttalib (the Prophet's uncle) shall henceforth be waived.**

**Beware of Satan for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.**

**O people, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. 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 anyone whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.**

**O people, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat (alms-giving). Perform Hajj (pilgrimage) if you can afford to.**

**All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety**

**and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.**

**Remember, one day you will appear before Allah and answer your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.**

**O people, no Prophet or Apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O people, and understand words which I convey to you. I leave behind two things, the Koran and my example, the Sunnah, and if you follow these you will never go astray.**

**All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O Allah, that I have conveyed your Message to your people.”**

The Prophet Muhammad directed his last speech to all mankind. He was addressing his speech to the sincere Muslims who were with him at that time, but he was speaking to all mankind through those Muslims. For this reason he used the terminology ‘O people – meaning mankind) eight times in the same speech. He never used the terminology ‘O Muslims’ or even ‘O believers’ His Message was addressed to every person everywhere in the world irrespective of his religious or political affiliation.

One can easily understand the universal values included in the Prophet last sermon.

The first value is equality of mankind. People are equal in the sight of Allah and in front of the law. The prophet stated that “No Arab has any privilege over a non-Arab, except that based on piety.”

The second value is the declaration of Human Rights. The charter of the UN on Human Rights was written in the 1940s, but human rights in Islam were recognized, declared and executed since over 1400 years. The human rights declared in the farewell Sermon of the Prophet are summarized in the following: freedom to all; sanctity of life, wealth and property, people are to be protected, their lives are to be preserved and their properties are to be saved; equality of all races; justice in front of the law and in front of Allah; women’s rights and obligations, they were to be treated as partners but not as subjects. Husbands should treat the wives with kindness and gentleness. The man is the head, while the woman is the heart of the family; No exploitation or monopoly, the rich is not to be richer while the poor is to be poorer; rights of others are to be preserved and to be delivered; People are to take these rights seriously, they are to preach it and to practice it too everywhere they go or move.

The third value is abolition of usury. The concept of economic exploitation is totally prohibited in Islam. Usury is a form of economic exploitation and Islam prohibited this kind of business. Because of such economic monopoly and exploitation in a capitalistic system, the rich will become richer and the poor will become poorer.

The Prophet of Islam died more than 1425 years ago, and the final divine revelation to mankind had stopped. Muhammad was upon a straight guidance and was true to his promise. He had perfected his job and left behind a Book and a tradition well preserved. The last revelation had been perfectly conveyed to the whole world, first through the Prophet then through his successors. Allah had witnessed that His Messenger had done his best in conveying to all mankind the last of religions.

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