

LIFE OF
MUHAMMAD

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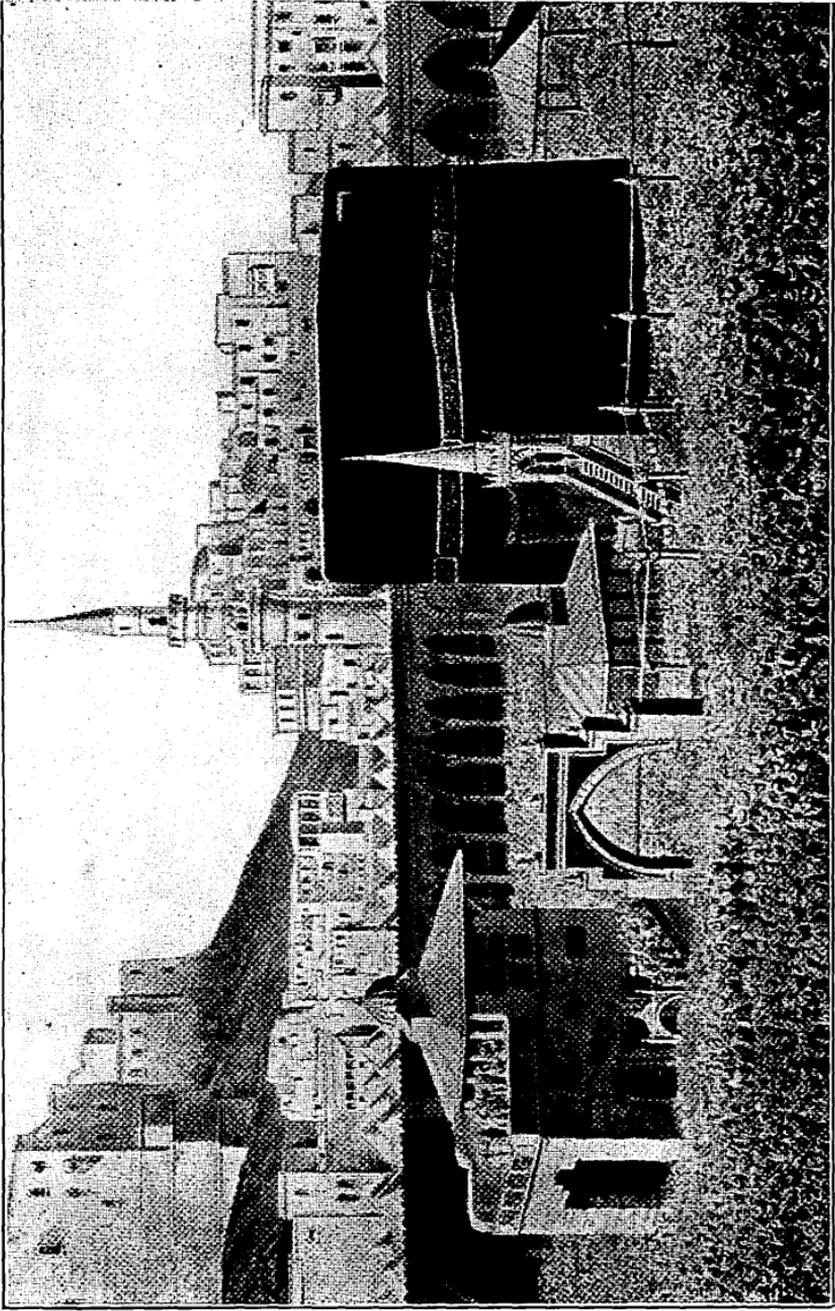
SUFI MUTIUR RAHMAN BENGALIEE was born in Bengal, India, and was educated in the universities of Calcutta and Punjab, taking his Master's degree from the latter university. In 1928, he was selected by the leaders of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Qadian, Punjab, India, to represent them in the United States of America.

During the last thirteen years he has traveled extensively in the United States, lecturing on Islam, India, and other Oriental topics.

While religion is his paramount interest, his lectures and writings also embrace the daily lives of the peoples of India and the Moslem world, their social and political activities, customs and problems. He delves deeply into his subjects, and brings a wealth of interesting information to his listeners and readers. He is an enthusiastic advocate of world peace, for which he constantly labors, and has brought a sympathetic understanding of oriental peoples and their problems to thousands of Americans.

The author of "*The Life of Muhammad*", is the editor of the only magazine of the faith of Islam published in this country, "*The Moslem Sunrise*."

Otis Adelbert Kline,
Author and Literary Agent



The Ka'aba in Mecca. (See pages 8-14)

THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD

By

SUFI MUTIUR RAHMAN BENGALIEE, M. A.

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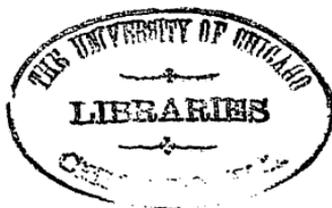
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DEDICATION

In token of love, loyalty and fealty,
this book is respectfully dedicated by a humble servant
to his master

HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIRUDDIN MAHMUD AHMAD

Khalifatul Massih II

The Supreme Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam,

Qadian, Punjab, India

with an earnest solicitation for his prayers.

The Preface

There are numerous biographies of the Holy Founder of Islam in the English language. Most of them have been written by the Western writers, who have, notwithstanding their scholarship and diligent research, characterized their monographs by prejudice and bias. There is another class of writers who have approached their task in a spirit of genuine sympathy. But due to their inadequate knowledge of the canons of Islamic history and jurisprudence or owing to their lack of access to the original fountain sources of information, they failed to do justice to their subject. The result is, the books on the life of Muhammad, produced from the pens of the Western scholars, are a combination of fact, fancy, fiction and mythology. The real Muhammad is not known in the Western world.

The purpose of this book is to sketch in broad outlines and in concise and summary form, the life, character and teachings of Muhammad, so that the general Western public may gain a correct idea about this great benefactor of mankind. It aims to serve as a basis for further and extended study of the subject. It is also the purpose of this book to remove the false impressions which have gained currency about Islam and its Founder in the Occidental world, for the reasons stated above. Still, another object of the present work is to place in the hands of the Moslems living in the Western countries, a brief but authentic account of the life and teachings of their Prophet.

If I have achieved any measure of success in my objects, I will deem myself richly compensated.

The first incentive to write this book came to me in 1927, when Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Supreme Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Qadian, Punjab, India, made an appeal to the effect that many books need to be written in order to acquaint the general public with true facts concerning the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and I humbly dedicate this book to him.

This volume is the result of several years' labor. During my visit to India in 1936, Hazrat Mirza Basheer Ahmad, M.A., kindly read three chapters of it and gave me permission to publish it, in his capacity as the Nazir Talif-O-Tasnif (the Head of the Department of authors). To him I record my deep gratitude. Since then, the book has been thoroughly revised and considerably enlarged.

The foot notes and the Bibliography at the end of the book will indicate the sources of information. It must be noted that in preparation of the present work, I have read many books besides those whose names appear in the footnotes and Bibliography.

I have done my best to be accurate in every respect; still, there must have occurred some mistakes. I shall be highly grateful to any scholars who may deign to bring them to my notice.

I wish to express my profound thanks to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago for courteously granting me the use of their library. Without their help, it would not have been possible for me to complete the arduous task of references.

It is my duty to extend my sincere thanks to Professor A. Eustace Haydon of the University of Chicago, and Miss

Nina A. Stauffer of Chicago for reading the manuscript, and to Mr. H. J. Young, attorney of Chicago, and Mr. Otis Adelbert Kline of New York for helping me by reading the proofs, all of whom made valuable suggestions.

I am also grateful to those who came forward with pecuniary help in response to my appeal and made it possible for me to send this book to the press. Among them, special mention must be made of the groups of the Moslems in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; of Chicago, Illinois; Indianapolis, Indiana; Kansas City, Missouri; Cleveland, Ohio; Youngstown, Ohio; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. May Allah grant them the best rewards and to all those who have helped me in any shape, form or fashion in this undertaking.

In conclusion, I lift my hands in prayer to the Merciful and Forgiving Lord that He may accept this book in heaven as well as upon earth; make it a source of countless blessings, a potent means for bringing unity, concord and peace among mankind, and an effective interceder with Him on the day of Judgment for this sinful one. Our last cry is "All praise belongs to Allah."

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE	vi
I—ARABIA BEFORE ISLAM	1
II—THE MECCAN LIFE OF MUHAMMAD	31
III—MUHAMMAD AT MEDINAH	73
IV—A GLIMPSE INTO MUHAMMAD'S CHARACTER	166
V—THE TEACHINGS OF MUHAMMAD WHAT HE ACCOMPLISHED	191
VI—SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF MUHAMMAD	224
VII—MUHAMMAD IN THE BIBLE	262
BIBLIOGRAPHY	281
INDEX AND GLOSSARY	283
MOSLEM CALENDAR	286

The Life of Muhammad

CHAPTER I

ARABIA BEFORE ISLAM

ARABIA is a land of matchless charm. Her trackless deserts with sand dunes and mirages in the dazzling rays of the tropical sun and her starry, azure sky with all its sublimity and splendor, have from time immemorial excited the imagination and fancy of poets, mystics and travelers. This is the country where was born the Holy Founder of Islam, Muhammad, who was destined to shape, materially, the history of the world.

THE NAME ARABIA

Authorities differ concerning the derivation of the name Arabia. Some hold that the word Arab is originally Arbah, which means a desert. As the major portion of the country consists of deserts, it is called Arab or Arabia.

Others maintain that the word Arab means eloquent. The Arabian people pride themselves on the superiority and excellence of their language. So they named their country "Arab" in order to distinguish themselves from the rest of the world which they regarded as far inferior to them in this respect and called all others "Al-ajam"—the Dumb¹.

THE ANCIENT RACES

The Arabs have been ethnologically divided into three classes:

First, the primitive Arab tribes such as Ad, Thamud, Tasm, and Jadis. We possess but scant knowledge concerning them. This much, however, is certain, that they attained a degree of civilization and developed certain organized states in an early period of antiquity. But long before the era of Islam, they had fallen into decay and destruction. They are known as Arab Baida or the Vanished Arabs.

Second, the race which comprises the tribes of Banu Qahtan or the children of Qahtan. The original home of these people was Yeman, whence they spread forth to Hedjaz and other parts of Arabia. Long before the birth of Christ, they had flourished and developed a high form of civilization. Glowing accounts are re-

¹ Lisanul Arab.
Tajul Urus
The word "Arab."

corded of their wealth and magnificence. Some of these tribes survived down to the early period of Islam. They are called Arabul Ariba — the pure Arabs.

Third, the posterity of Ishmael, whose history we will presently trace. They are sometimes called Adnani as they were the descendants of Ishmael through Adnan. They are designated as Arabul Mustaribah or the foreigners, because Ishmael came from outside of Arabia. All Arabs belong to the family of nations known as the Semitic races.

THE CITIZENS AND THE NOMADS

The eminent historian, Ibn Khaldun, divided all mankind into two classes — Hazar and Bedu — the dwellers of towns and the Nomads. This is particularly true about the Arabs. Since the dawn of mankind the Arabs represented these two divisions. The dwellers of the cities adopted a settled mode of life and developed agriculture and commerce. The Bedouins lived in tents in the open space of broad deserts. They wandered from one place to another with their herds and flocks, in endless caravans. The simplicity of life, purity of language, courage and war-like spirit, and a loyal devotion to family are their chief characteristics.

MECCA

The picturesque city of Mecca, which is regarded as the most holy city in the world of Islam, is situated

some fifty miles from the shores of the Red Sea. It enjoys the proud distinction of being the birthplace of the great prophet, Muhammad. In Mecca, stands the celebrated temple Ka'aba.

ABRAHAM, ISHMAEL AND HAGAR

The Patriarch, Abraham, is the rallying point of the three great world religions, namely, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The Moslems designate him with the venerable titles of "the father of the prophets" and "the friend of God." The Holy Quran honors him by calling him the father of the Arabs and of Muhammad, who according to this Holy Book, was raised for the regeneration and completion of the faith of Abraham. "*The religion of thy father Abraham, who gave you the name Muslims before,*"² says the Holy Quran.

In the following paragraphs, it will be our endeavor to sketch a brief outline of Abraham, Ishmael, and their posterity, so far as they relate to the subject of the present discussion.

Abraham had three wives, Sarah, Hagar (Hajirah), and Qatura. Ishmael was the first child of Abraham by Hagar, and Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Ishmael was yet in his tender years when something prompted Sarah to ask her husband to cast out Hagar with her son. Abraham felt extremely grieved over such an unpleasant demand. But the voice of God spoke: "*Let it not be grievous in thy sight . . . in all that Sarah said unto thee,*

² Al-Quran XXII-78.

hearken unto her voice."³

In fulfillment of this divine command, Abraham took his wife Hagar (Hajirah) and their son Ishmael (Ismail) to the barren tract of land known as Bekka and there, leaving them alone, he returned to his native land. The pathetic departure of Abraham after he had brought them to the wilderness has been described thus: "Hagar asked Abraham why he was leaving them alone in that sterile valley with but a little food. She repeated the same question several times, but Abraham did not answer. At last, she inquired: 'Are you doing this at the command of God?' Abraham answered in the affirmative. Thereupon, Hagar said: 'In that case, God would not suffer us to perish.' Then he went away and standing on a hillock, where he could not be seen by Hagar, he turned his face toward the Ka'aba, lifted his hands and prayed in the following memorable words: 'O Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in an incultivable valley near Thy sacred house. Our Lord, that they may offer prayers, so incline the hearts of men toward them and provide them with fruits, that they may be thankful.'"⁴

THE WELL ZAM ZAM

After the departure of the Patriarch and when the scanty provisions were exhausted, Ishmael was gripped

³ Genesis XXI-12.

⁴ Bukhari.

Al Quran XIV-37.

with a dreadful thirst. Hagar began to run frantically to and fro between the two hills of Safa and Marwa in search of water. Tortured by the agony of thirst, the little boy began to cry and kick the ground. Hagar could not bear to see the sight and turned to God for prayers. Lo, a stream of clear and sweet water gushed forth from beneath the child's feet with rhythmical bubbling which sounded like "Zam, Zam, Zam." Thus originated the famous sacred well of Zam Zam.

THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM AND ISHMAEL

Another most significant episode of the life of Abraham and Ishmael must be set forth here. When Ishmael was yet young in his years, Abraham was shown in a vision that God commanded him to offer his son in sacrifice. Dreams and visions are subject to interpretation. For example, if you see in a dream that you are drinking milk, then it means you will acquire spiritual knowledge. The interpretation of Abraham's vision was that it was the will of God that he dedicate his son Ishmael for the service of God. In his extreme zeal to carry out the divine command literally, Abraham did not think of the interpretation. He communicated his dream to his son who was no less zealous than his father to do the Divine will. Accordingly, Ishmael laid himself down and Abraham was about to sacrifice his son, but he was prevented by the voice of God. He looked down

and lo, Ishmael was standing by, safe and sound and an animal was sacrificed instead. The Holy Quran relates this incident in the following words:

“And when he (Ishmael) was old enough to walk with him, Abraham said: ‘My son. I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee. So, look, what is thine own view?’ He said: ‘My Father, do what thou art bidden. Thou shalt find me of the patient, if it be the will of God.’

“Then, when they had both resigned themselves (to Allah’s will) and he had laid himself down upon his forehead, We cried unto him: ‘O Abraham, now verily hast thou fulfilled the vision.’ Thus indeed, do we reward the righteous. This was indeed a manifest trial. Then We ransomed (his son) with a great sacrifice. And We left for him among posterity (the salutation):

*‘Peace be on Abraham!’ Thus do We reward the righteous.”⁵ **

⁵ Al-Quran XXXVII-102-110.

*There has been considerable controversy regarding the son whom Abraham sacrificed; Ishmael or Isaac?

St. Paul Contended that Abraham had two sons, the one by a handmaid, the other by a free woman. But he (Ishmael) who was of the handmaid was born after the flesh; but he (Isaac) of the free woman was by promise.

A careful study of the Bible will make it evident that Paul’s assertion is groundless. The old Testament makes several statements which disprove the theory that Ishmael was born after the flesh as Paul and other Israelites were prone to think, and further proves that his birth took place in complete accordance with the promise that

BUILDING OF THE KA'ABA

As has been said above, Mecca is the city where stands the sacred sanctuary of Ka'aba, in which lies the famous Black Stone. This temple is regarded as the

God had given to Abraham before Ishmael's birth and in response to his long and continuous supplications.

According to the Book of Genesis, Ishmael's birth, even the name fulfilled a promise. Some specific statements alluding to this subject are:

"And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold to me thou hast given no seed: and lo', one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, 'This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir'. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be'."—(Genesis, 15:2-5)

The above quotation shows that God had promised Abraham a son, and that son would be blessed and honored, and that he was to be Abraham's lawful heir.

Hagar, the mother of Ishmael also received glad tidings from God that a son would be born to her who would be called Ishmael. The following verse points out that Hagar enjoyed perpetual communion with God, and that she was not a mere handmaid of Sarah as the Israelites have represented her to be:

"And the angel of the Lord said unto her, (Hagar) I will multiply thy seed exceedingly that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, 'Behold thou art with child and shalt bear a son and shalt call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction'." (Genesis, 16:10,11.)

The construction of the word Ishmael reveals that God had heard Abraham's prayer for a son. The word Ishmael is composed of two separate words, *samia*, meaning he heard and *eil*, meaning God, so that the combination of the two words mean that "God heard." Hence the name of Ishmael signifies that Abraham had addressed incessant implorings and entreaties to God to bless him with a son and that God

"first house" meant for the worship of One True God, and for the unification of all mankind. History fails to assign any date when its original foundations were laid, although it has existed since remote antiquity. Long before Abraham, the temple had been wiped out of

had granted his request and a son was born to him who was named Ishmael.

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation."—(Genesis, 17:20.)

Moreover there are Biblical scriptures which support the fact that Hagar was commanded by God to take care of Ishmael. This unusual kindness of God toward Ishmael at a time when he was actually in the jaws of death upholds the fact that Hagar's son was something more than a mere handmaid's son, also that God was with Ishmael.

"And God heard the voice of the lad (Ishmael) and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, 'What aileth thee Hagar? fear not; for God had heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand for I will make him a great nation: And God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness and became an archer.'"—(Genesis, 21: 17, 18, 19, 20.)

God had made a covenant with Abraham and his seed that every manchild among them should be circumcised. Ishmael was also included in this covenant as he was circumcised when he was thirteen years old,

"And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised."—(Genesis, 17:9, 10)

Thus, it is without doubt that Ishmael was offered for sacrifice, because throughout the Old Testament we find that in accordance with the old Law, only the first born issues of both men and animals were offered for sacrifice because the first born child was considered preferable to all other children. For instance the Bible states:

existence, only the site remaining and the spot was held sacred. Under a divine command, Abraham and Ishmael jointly rebuilt the Ka'aba on its original site, which was shown to Abraham by an angel of God. The Holy Quran relates the following prayer which Abra-

"And Lord spake unto Moses, saying, sanctify unto me all the first born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast is mine."—(Exodus 13:1,2.)

"If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first born son be her's that was hated. Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first born before the son of the hated, which is indeed the first born. But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the first born by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength, the right of the first born is his.—(Deut. 21:15, 16, 17.)

Therefore, since Ishmael was fourteen years older than Isaac, it must necessarily be assumed that according to the Old Law, Ishmael, the first born, was offered for sacrifice.

Despite the fact that the Israelites claim that Isaac was offered for this great sacrifice, there is no reminiscence of this great sacrifice among the Israelites. On the other hand, the Holy Quran claims that Ishmael was offered to undergo the renowned immolation, but unlike among the Israelites, God has made a pilgrimage to the Holy Temple of God one of the fundamental principles of Islam, the observance of which is obligatory on every Moslem who possesses the means to do so, and has thus kept alive forever the blessed memory of the holy pair (Ishmael and Hagar) which is celebrated every year at Mecca in all seriousness and solemnity.

Hence there are four definite reasons why Ishmael was offered for sacrifice in place of Isaac.

First: Ishmael was born according to promise in answer to Abraham's supplications.

Second: That the word Ishmael, which God admonished Hagar to name her son, means God heard.

ham and Ishmael offered unto God on that momentous occasion:

“O our Lord, accept it from us, verily Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing, and make us our Lord, resigned unto Thee. And show us our ways of worship and turn unto us with mercy. Verily Thou art the Compassionate, the Merciful.

“And raise up from among them, our Lord, a messenger from among themselves who may recite unto them Thy signs and teach them the Book and wisdom and may purify them; verily Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.”⁶

The advent of the holy prophet Muhammad is believed by the Moslems to be the fulfillment of Abraham's prayers.

THE BLACK STONE

Tradition tells us that when the walls of the building were erected to a certain height, Abraham asked Ishmael to bring him a stone to be placed in one of the corners of the temple. The stone was to mark the starting point of the pilgrim's circumambulation

⁶ Al-Quran II—128-129.

Third: That according to the old Law the first born was always offered for sacrifice and Biblical history proves that Ishmael was fourteen years older than Isaac.

Fourth and lastly: This day is commemorated among the Moslems in memory of Hagar and Ishmael and the great sacrifice.

(Tawaf) of the Ka'aba. This is the celebrated Black Stone which is kissed by the pilgrims. When overcrowding prevents access to it, a gesture is made toward it with the hand, which is kissed instead of the stone, by the pilgrim.

In short, Abraham and Ishmael constructed the Ka'aba—a roofless house made of uncut stones measuring thirty-two cubits in length, and twenty-two cubits and nine cubits in breadth and height respectively.

PILGRIMAGE

After the construction of the building had been completed, God spoke unto Abraham: "*Cleanse and purify My house for the pilgrims and for those who may stay in it for specific worship, and for those who may bow and prostrate themselves before Allah. And proclaim unto the people that they may come to it for pilgrimage. Verily they will come to you on foot and on lean camels coming from afar.*"⁷

This divine command marked the beginning of the Ka'aba as a religious center.

RECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE KA'ABA

It must not be supposed that the Ka'aba of today is the same as was built by Abraham and Ishmael. Occasionally turbulent floods would sweep down the valley of Mecca, causing severe damage to the Ka'aba. So, all

⁷ Al-Quran XXII—26-27.

through the ages, this "*ancient house*" underwent many repairs and reconstructions in which the different tribes who had the honor of its custody had their share, in their respective times. Even during the era of Islam, it has been rebuilt more than once.

SANCTITY

Since the ancient times, the sanctity of the Ka'aba has been preserved down to our own day. In pre-Islamic days, offerings were brought to the sanctuary with extreme devotion. The sanctity of the Ka'aba sanctified Mecca. Haram, or the sacred territory miles around the city, is regarded hallowed or inviolable. Four months during the year are held sacred. During this period all hostilities are suspended and peace reigns supreme, so that the pilgrims repair to the sacred territory and perform pilgrimage without interference or molestation.

KISWA

The Ka'aba has long been richly decorated with handsome brocaded hangings. We are told that Tubba Asad, a king of Yeman, once dreamed that he was mounting curtains on the walls of the temple. In order to fulfil his dream literally, he covered the walls with a veil (Kiswa) of striped Yeman cloth. The caliphs substituted a covering of figured brocade.

In these days, Egypt possesses the honor of sending

the curtain to the Ka'aba. Each year, a new Kiswa of black brocade, adorned with the golden inscriptions of the Moslem formula of the faith, as well as from the Quran, comes from that country to be mounted on the walls of the holy shrine.

CHILDREN OF ISHMAEL AND THE PROSPERITY OF MECCA

The Ka'aba and the well of Zam Zam attracted certain Semitic tribes who inhabited the valley of Mecca. Ishmael grew up among them and married a daughter of their chief. The progeny of Ishmael multiplied exceedingly and spread forth far and wide into distant parts of Arabia, as the barren valley of Mecca could no longer support them. The Ka'aba had become a national rendezvous into which streams of pilgrims poured from all quarters of Arabia. This raised Mecca into prominence as the center of the national faith, and commerce, and substantially contributed to her prosperity and fame.

Jurhum was the first of the tribes that were attracted by the Ka'aba and settled in Mecca and in its vicinity. Madhadh, son of Amr, was a distinguished chief of that tribe. It was his daughter whom Ishmael married. He had twelve sons by her. Most of the Arabs trace their pedigree to Kedar, son of Ishmael. After his death, Ishmael was succeeded by his son, Nabit, in the guardianship of the sacred shrine. Upon the death of Nabit,

the custody of the holy temple passed into the hands of his grandfather, Madhadh. Thus, the tribe of Jurhum became the rulers of the sacred territory, and they continued in that capacity for a long time, until they were overthrown by another tribe, the Khuzaa, an offshoot of Banu Qahtan. The Khuzaa also lost their power in turn, and the custody of the Ka'aba again came to the rightful owners—the descendants of Ishmael, who will now engage our attention exclusively.

THE QURAYSH

Since the time of Ishmael, from generation to generation, his posterity maintained a respectable position. But it was Qussaiyy, son of Kilab, who won for them undying glory and honor. He it was who wrested from the tribe of Khuzaa, his forefather's lost, but rightful hegemony of the sanctuary of Ka'aba. After he became the master of the temple and the town, the first step he took toward his great work of organization and administration was to bring together his tribe who were hitherto scattered over a wide area, in the valley of Mecca. He gathered his tribe and settled them around the shrine by allotting to each family a specific quarter. Thus he substantially improved and enlarged the city. This earned for him and his tribe the honorable title of the Quraysh—the Congregator. It was from this illustrious tribe that the great Arabian prophet Muhammad sprang.

Before we proceed with the story of this great adventurer Qussaiyy, we may pause for a while, for some short observations. Authorities differ as to who first assumed the title Quraysh. According to some, it was Nazr, son of Kinana, while others hold that Fihir, son of Malik was the first to adopt this title. Still there is the third theory according to which it was Qussaiyy who first won the title of Quraysh, as we have already noted.

Similarly, various interpretations have been given to the word Quraysh. According to some authorities, the word Quraysh is the name of a big fish, and Nazr, son of Kinanah or Fihir, son of Malik—the descendants of Adnan, a great great grandson of Ishmael—assumed that title for their tribe in order to signify their vast power and influence over others. According to another interpretation, the word Quraysh means the congregator and was given to Qussaiyy for the reasons stated above.⁸

Some western writers have endeavored to cast a shadow of doubt upon the lineage of the Quraysh to Ishmael. It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to enter into any controversy upon this subject. Suffice it to say that according to the authentic and unanimous Arab history and traditions, the tribes of Quraysh are the direct and undisputed lineal descendants of Adnan. Genealogists have preserved the unbroken chain of the Quraysh from Muhammad to Adnan. As

⁸ Zurquani I—90.

Ibn Saad Part I—Vol. I, Page 36-42.

to Adnan being descended from Ishmael, though some of the minor links may be missing, it is an unquestioned, and established fact that Adnan is the direct descendant of Ishmael, recognized by all Arab historians.⁹ *

QUSSAIYY

We will now return to the reputed chieftain Qussaiyy. He was born about the close of the fourth century. His name stands out as a shining star in the annals of the children of Ishmael. His sovereignty marked the beginning of a new epoch for the Quraysh. He obtained supreme power by bringing vast changes in the government of Mecca and in the superintendence of the sanctuary.

Proper arrangements for the supply of food and drink for the pilgrims (Rifadah and Siqaya), the keeping of the keys of the Ka'aba and its defense (the Hijabah), the bearing of the national standard (Liwa), the departments of the army and embassy (Qiyadah and Safarat), and the settlement of disputes relating to blood money (Magharim) are among the most important civil

⁹ Tabari.

European Edition—Pages 1115-1118.

*The Historical Geography of Arabia by Rev. C. Forster, Vol. 1, pages 210-211:

"We have thus a clear and full concurrence of scriptural, heathen, Jewish, and Christian testimonies to the historical fact, that the great northern desert of Arabia, including the entire neck of the peninsula, was colonized by the twelve tribes descending from the sons of Ishmael, and called after their names.

See Section III, pages 176-316 of the same book.

and military institutions which he founded in those early times. He also built a House of Assembly (Darun-Nadwa) where justice was administered and affairs relating to common weal were discussed by the leading members of the tribe. It was a sort of national Parliament.

We are told that this unlettered son of the desert wielded such enormous influence and authority, that even after his death, his ordinances were held sacred and inviolable.

HASHIM

After the glorious reign of Qussaiyy, during the century before Islam, we find the Quraysh in undisputed rulership of Mecca and hereditary guardians of the Ka'aba. Hashim, the grandson of Qussaiyy, extended the power and influence of the Quraysh far and wide by his multifarious works of extraordinary ability and unbounded generosity.

ABDUL MUTTALIB

Hashim was succeeded in his civil and sacerdotal dignities by his son, Abdul Muttalib, who commands our especial attention.

DISCOVERY OF THE WELL ZAM ZAM

For a long, long time, the sacred well Zam Zam was filled up and its location was lost. Aided by his only

son, Abdul Muttalib made a diligent search to find the well but met with no success. Instead of giving any assistance, the Quraysh taunted him for his failure. Abdul Muttalib prayed to God for success in his undertaking and took a vow to which we shall refer later. History tells us that shortly afterward, Abdul Muttalib discovered the site of the well and had it dug again. This was of no mean importance to the Arab pilgrims and considerably increased his influence and raised him in the esteem of his fellow-citizens.^{9A}

INVASION OF ABRAHA

During Abdul Muttalib's time, the fertile province of Yeman was under Abraha, who acted as viceroy of the province under the Christian king of Abyssinia. He built a magnificent cathedral at Sana, the capital of the province, with the avowed object of diverting the Arab pilgrims from the sanctuary of Ka'aba. The Arabs were highly incensed at this. A man of the Banu Faqaym stole into the church and defiled it. Filled with wrath Abraha resolved to avenge upon the Ka'aba for the sacrilege committed in his church. He marched against Mecca with a considerable army, in order to demolish the temple. He encamped in the vicinity of Mecca and his men captured a herd of Abdul Muttalib's camels.

^{9A} Ibn Hisham, Page 71.

Ibn Saad.

It is related that the Quraysh at first thought of repulsing the attack as they regarded the defense of the Ka'aba as their sacred duty. But they soon lost heart and sent a deputation to Abraha under the leadership of their noble, Abdul Muttalib. Highly pleased with the manner and address of the Quraysh chieftain, Abraha granted him a boon. "I desire," said Abdul Muttalib, "that you should return to me my two hundred camels that have been taken away from me."

Struck with astonishment, Abraha said: "Thou speakest to me of the two hundred camels that I have taken from thee, yet thou sayst not a word of the Ka'aba which is the sanctuary of thee and thy fathers and which I have come to destroy." Abdul Muttalib replied in the characteristic tone of the Quraysh: "I am only the master of the camels. The Ka'aba has its own Master and He will defend it."¹⁰

Drunk with pride, Abraha said: "He cannot defend it from me." Abdul Muttalib answered: "That is an affair between you and Him, give me my camels back." Abraha returned the camels. Having recovered the camels, Abdul Muttalib retreated with the Quraysh to a hillock in the neighborhood of Mecca. Before he left the city, he went to the Ka'aba and grasping the curtain of the door, earnestly prayed to God to protect His holy house.

God sent flocks of birds which dropped stones upon

¹⁰ Ibn Hisham 29-38.

Ibn Saad, Part I, Vol. I, Pages 55-56.

the Abyssinians and all who were struck by these stones, perished. Also, a virulent pestilence raged in the camp of Abraha and utterly destroyed the invading army.¹¹ *

The Holy Quran mentions this memorable event in the following words:

"Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the people of the elephant?"

"Did He not make their plot end in ruin?"

"He sent against them hosts of birds that cast on them pieces of clay.

"And He made them like chaff consumed."¹²

Ibn Hisham relates: "When God repulsed the Abyssinian army from Mecca and smote them with His vengeance, the Arab held the Quraysh in high respect and said: 'They are God's people. God hath fought for them and hath defended them against their enemy.'"^{12a}

THE YEAR OF ELEPHANT

The year of this momentous expedition of Abraha and his disgraceful defeat is known in history as the year of the Elephant, and the memorable occurrence is known as the event of the people of the elephant, as there were elephants in Abraha's army, a strange sight for the Arabs.

¹¹ Ibn Saad, Part I, Vol. 1—Pages 55-56.

Ibn Hisham, 29-38.

*According to another version, the stones which the birds let fall, caused the pestilence. Tabari states: "Whenever a man was struck, sores and pustules broke out on that part of the body."

Tabari, Volume 1, Page 945.

¹² Al-Quran—CV.

^{12a} Ibn Hisham, Page 38.

THE DAYS OF IGNORANCE

Arabia was steeped in grossest barbarism during the centuries before the advent of Islam. The Arab historians designate that period as "*the Days of Ignorance.*" We will give below a brief description of the conditions prevailing in Arabia during that Dark Age.

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

The religion of Abraham and Ishmael—the worship of One God—was corrupted by the succeeding generations who gradually fell into idolatry so that by the time of Muhammad, the sanctuary of Ka'aba which was originally dedicated to One Supreme Being, became a pantheon of many deities. History tells us that the holy shrine alone housed three hundred and sixty idols. Besides those in the Ka'aba, every clan had its own tribal deities.

The great authority Ibn Hisham tells us how idoltry was introduced in Arabia.

Amr Ibn Luhayy of the tribe of Khuzaa who was the guardian of the Ka'aba, made a business trip from Mecca to Syria whence he brought to Mecca an idol which he set up near the Ka'aba and induced people to offer worship unto it.

Others followed his example and brought their own idols and implanted them around the holy temple.¹³

¹³ Ibn Hisham, Page 51.
Mujamel Buldan.

From Mecca, the practice of idolatry overspread the whole of Arabia and heathenism completely conquered the pure faith established by Abraham and Ishmael.

The Arabs believed in the existence of God, but thought that it was not possible for them to reach Him save through the intermediation of idols.

OTHER RELIGIONS

Though the principal religion in Arabia during the Dark Age was idolatry, there were other religions besides it.

Some of the pagan Arabs did not believe in the existence of God but attributed the origin of things to nature. Still there was another class of people who were believers in God but did not believe in the life to come nor in the Divine judgment of actions.

From an early period, Sabaenism, or the worship of the heavenly planets existed in Arabia. Sacrifices were offered to the sun, moon, stars and other heavenly bodies.

Though Arabia was generally under the sway of gross idolatry, the light of monotheism was not completely extinguished. There was a small group of people called Hanifs, who condemned and abstained from idol-worship and other pagan customs and sought to follow the true religion of Abraham.

Christianity and Judaism were also prevalent in Arabia. Najran was the center of Christianity and

Khaibar and Yathrib (later Medina) were the strongholds of the Jews.

Both these religions, however, exerted but little influence. Sir William Muir says:

“After five centuries of Christian evangelization, we can point to but a sprinkling here and there of Christian converts. . . . Judaism vastly more powerful, had exhibited spasmodic efforts at proselytism; but as an active and converting agent, the Jewish faith was no longer operative. In fine, viewed in a religious aspect, the surface of Arabia had been now and then gently rippled by the feeble efforts of Christianity; the sterner influences of Judaism had been occasionally visible in a deeper and more troubled current; but the tide of indigenous idolatry and Ishmaelite superstition, settling strongly from every quarter toward Ka’aba, gave ample evidence that the faith and worship of Mecca held the Arab mind in rigorous and undisputed thralldom.”¹⁴

THE POSITION OF WOMEN

The women of pagan Arabia occupied a very low position. The birth of a female child was regarded as a calamity. The Holy Quran vividly describes it as follows: “*When a female child is announced to one of them, his face darkens wrathfully; he hides himself from the people because of the bad news, thinking: ‘Shall I*

¹⁴ The Life of Mohamet by William Muir.
Introduction: Chapter II.

keep the child to my disgrace or cover it away in dust? ”¹⁵

The barbarous custom of burying infant girls alive was prevalent. Women were deprived of the right of inheritance, but often were the inherited property of their stepsons, who could make them their wives and dispose of them at their will.

The veil was unknown. Women lived, promiscuously intermingling with men.

The pagan Arab women were free to choose their husbands, but after marriage they were used as chattels or slaves. They could be divorced a thousand times and taken back by their husbands.

Polyandry was practiced, and as for polygamy, a man could marry an unlimited number of wives. Two blood sisters could be married to the same man at the same time.

On the other hand, the pagan Arab woman had a keen sense of honor and loyalty, and inspired the poet to sing and the warriors to fight. The pre-Islamic women of Arabia cultivated the art of poetry and renowned poetesses were not unknown.

MORAL CONDITIONS

During the “Days of Ignorance” the Arabs were submerged in moral degradation. Drinking and gambling were rampant. They exulted in immorality and prac-

¹⁵ Al-Quran XVI—59-61.

ticed plundering and robbery as professions. Slavery was the basis of the whole social structure.

Bloodshed was a daily occurrence. With the pagan Arabs, blood revenge was a necessity based on their code of honor, and for trifling causes, warfare raged incessantly and continued for centuries, so that the pre-Islamic history of Arabia is a record of deadly tribal feuds and constant guerrilla warfare.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The pre-Islamic Arabs had no government worthy of the name. They were divided and subdivided into numerous petty tribes and clans, each with its head whose powers, however, were very limited. His chief prerogative consisted of conducting all affairs relative to warfare. Otherwise the tribe, the clan and the individual maintained their independence which was as dear to the Arabs as life itself. By the time of Muhammad, the peninsula was in a state of hopeless political disunity. The authority already quoted, says:

“The prospects of Arabia before the rise of Mahomet were as unfavorable to religious reform as they were to political union or national regeneration.”¹⁶

VIRTUES

Notwithstanding their vices, the Arabs of the Dark

¹⁶ The Life of Mohamet by William Muir.
Introduction to Chapter II.

Age, possessed many virtues which made them famous in the annals of mankind.

The Arab was loyal and true to his word. He would defend with his life the covenant to which he was solemnly pledged. The following story abundantly illustrates this point:

The reputed prince and poet Imra-ul-Qays fled from his enemy, the King of Hira and took refuge with Samawal in his castle. Before his departure, the poet left his five coats of mail in charge of the owner of the castle. Afterward the King of Hira sent an army to Samawal and demanded that he surrender the armor. Samawal refused to betray the trust committed to him and defended himself in the castle. Meanwhile, the enemies captured his son and said that unless Samawal would deliver the armor they would kill his son. Samawal answered: "Do with him as you please, I will never break my pledge nor give up the property of my guest." So they took his son's life.¹⁷

To an Arab, hospitality is inviolable. It is part and parcel of his being. No race has yet approached him in his unbounded generosity. He defends his guests at the peril of his own life and shares his last morsel with his deadly enemy.

The ideal of Arabian generosity and hospitality is personified in Hatim of Tayyi.

There are many anecdotes of his extravagant liber-

¹⁷ Kitabul Aghani—XIX—99.

ality. One is that Hatim entertained his three guests by slaughtering three camels and at the time of their departure, he divided the whole of his herd among them, each of whom went with ninety-nine camels.¹⁸

Courage and bravery in battle, patience in misfortune, grim resolution, unshaken devotion to and tender affection for kith and kin, protection of the weak, defiance of the strong, and contempt for death are the characteristic Arab virtues.

EDUCATION

According to our conception, there was no education in pagan Arabia. Though the art of writing was not entirely unknown, the peninsula was in a state of appalling ignorance and illiteracy, with noticeable exceptions here and there.

POETRY

Side by side with the ignorance which prevailed throughout the country, poetry flourished. The pre-Islamic Arabs developed the art of poetry, refinement of their language, and eloquence to a degree almost unsurpassed.

The poet occupied a unique and important position in society, and wielded dominant influence. "The pagan shair (poet), was the oracle of his tribe, their guide in peace and their champion in war. It was to him they turned for counsel when they sought new pastures.

¹⁸ Kitabul Aghani—XVI—98, II 5-22.

Only at his word would they pitch or strike their 'houses of hair,' and when the tired and thirsty wanderers found a well and drank of its water and washed themselves, led by him they have raised their voices together and sung like Israel:

'Spring up, o well, sing ye unto it.'

The rise of a poet was regarded as good luck as he was supposed to immortalize their glory, honor and renown, and it was celebrated with great pomp.

Eloquence and poetry were much cherished for accomplishments which most Arabs strove to acquire. At Ukaz, near Mecca, was held an annual fair in which a kind of national assembly was convened for poetical contests. The choicest productions were recited in rivalry. The best pieces were written in letters of gold and were hung in the Ka'aba.

The seven suspended poems which have won undying fame have been handed down to us as masterpieces of pre-Islamic poetry.

MEMORY

The Arabs were by nature, endowed with exceedingly strong, retentive memories. Pre-Islamic poetry has been preserved and handed down to us by oral tradition only. There were Rawis or reciters whose profession it was to commit poems to memory. It is related that Hammad said to Caliph Walid B. Yazid: "I can recite to you, for

each letter of the alphabet, one hundred long poems, without taking into account short pieces, and all that composed exclusively by poets before the promulgation of Islam."¹⁹

In the same way the genealogists carried in their amazing memories pedigrees which could be traced to the father of mankind.

¹⁹ The Literary History of The Arabs.
By R. A. Nicholson, Page 132.

CHAPTER II

THE MECCAN LIFE OF MUHAMMAD

ABDUL MUTTALIB stands out as the most prominent figure in Mecca during the middle of the sixth century of the Christian era. This illustrious chief came of the noble tribe of Quarysh and rose to power and fame by his outstanding achievements, an account of which has already been given.

ABDUL MUTTALIB FULFILLS HIS VOW

During the early years of his struggle, Abdul Muttalib had but one son to help him against his opponents. He keenly felt his weakness in man power and made a vow: Should God ever grant him ten sons and should they attain maturity in his life time, he would offer one of them in sacrifice to the Deity. In the course of time, Abdul Mutallib was providentially blessed with ten sons. When they reached the required age, he took all of them to the Ka'aba and besought the priest therein, to cast lots and divine which one was to be offered up in sacrifice.

The fatal lot fell upon Abdullah, the youngest and the best beloved. Abdul Muttalib was overwhelmed

with grief, but the vow had to be fulfilled. So, the unhappy father proceeded toward the altar with his dearest son to perform the sacrifice. His daughters clung to him and wept bitterly. They and the leading men of Mecca prevailed upon the venerable patriarch to draw lots between Abdullah and ten camels, the customary blood-ransom among the Quraysh. The lots were cast and the fatal arrow fell to him a second time. The anxious father now doubled the number—twenty camels against the life of Abdullah. But fate again inexorably refused to spare him. For nine successive times, the lots decreed that Abdullah should die. Each time, Abdul Muttalib vowed ten camels more. At length, it was the tenth throw when the number reached one hundred, the arrow of death fell to the lot of the camels. And Abdullah was, to the infinite joy of all concerned, released from his tragic doom. Henceforward one hundred camels were fixed as the ransom for human bloodshed among the Quraysh.

BIRTH OF MUHAMMAD

Abdullah grew up to be a handsome young man of robust health and became well known for piety and goodness. When he was four and twenty years of age, his father had him married to a virtuous and accomplished lady named Amina who came of another branch of the same distinguished stock of Quraysh. A few months after his marriage, Abdullah went on a mercantile expedition to Syria from which he never re-

turned, having died on his way back at Yathrib.

At the time of her husband's death, Amina was pregnant and in due course gave birth to a son. No sooner was the child born, than she sent for Abdul Muttalib. The chief hastened to Amina and took the child in his arms and joyfully went to the Ka'aba. Standing beside the holy house, Abdul Muttalib offered thanks to God, prayed for his grandson and gave him the name of Muhammad—the praised.

Muhammad was born in the memorable year of the Elephant, only fifty three days after the destruction of the Abyssinian Army, on the 12th of Rabiwal Awwal, which according to many historians corresponds to April 20th, 571 A.D.

MUHAMMAD IN THE CARE OF HALEEMA

For a few days after his birth, Muhammad was nursed by his mother and Thuwaiba, a slave of his uncle, Abu Lahab. After that, according to the custom of the Arab nobles, the child was entrusted to the care of a Bedouin nurse, Haleema, of the tribe of Banu Saad, an offshoot of Hawazin. At the end of two years when the child was weaned, Haleema brought him to his mother. At that time an epidemic was prevalent in Mecca and as the climate of the town was unhealthful, the sagacious mother sent him back with Haleema. Muhammad lived with her for another two or three years and enjoyed the blessings of the fresh air of the pastoral valleys and had opportunity to learn the most eloquent of the

Arabic dialects. He returned to his mother when he was about five years old.

Muhammad ever retained the grateful memory of Haleema all his life with intense love and affection, and treated her with extreme kindness as long as she lived. History recounts that on one occasion, when there was drought in the country, Haleema came to Mecca and Muhammad gave her one camel and forty sheep.¹ Upon another occasion, when Haleema came to Mecca, Muhammad exclaimed, "My mother, My Mother," and spread out his mantle for her to sit upon, as a token of his especial respect toward her.²

IN THE CARE OF ABDUL MUTTALIB

Shortly after his return, his mother went with him on a visit to her relatives at Medina. On her way back to Mecca she passed away and was buried at Abwa, a place of loving recollection to the Prophet in his later years. Thus he was deprived of the affectionate care of his mother and being already fatherless he now became an orphan before he was six years old.

After his mother's death, Muhammad returned to Mecca with his nurse Umm Ayman, who had accompanied him and his mother on this journey. Abdul Muttalib became exceedingly grieved when he heard the sad news of Amina's demise and took his grandson into his own home. Abdul Muttalib treated young Mu-

¹ & ² Ibn Saad-Part 1, Vol. 1, Page 71.

hammad with great care and tenderness. Scarcely had three years passed when the old man, stricken in years, breathed his last. So, at the early age of eight, Muhammad was bereft of all who loved him dearly.

IN THE CARE OF ABU TALIB

At the time of his death, Abdul Muttalib gave his beloved grandson into the custody of his son, Abu Talib, who succeeded him as the guardian of the Ka'aba and in all other civil dignities. The boyhood of Muhammad passed smoothly, in the care of his benevolent uncle, whose heart he won by his exemplary conduct. Even in his boyhood he was conspicuous for the virtues of self-control, dignity, discretion and truthfulness. Abu Talib's maid relates that Muhammad was never found to contend over food, a habit which is so common among children. He would sit silently apart while other children fought with one another to get the largest share. He would take without remonstrance whatever was given him and eat it with pleasure.³ Abu Talib himself relates that Muhammad never quarreled with anybody nor would he utter a lie.⁴ In his early years, he sometimes tended his uncle's sheep. The ownership of flocks was the mark of wealth in Arabia of that day.

At about the twentieth year of his life, Muham-

³ Life and Teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.
By Hazrat M. B. Mahmud Ahmad—Page 4.

⁴ Tirmudhi: Manaquib.

mad took part in the war known as Harbe Fijar which broke out between the Quraysh and the tribe of Qais. He, however, took little part in the actual fighting.

HILFUL-FUZUL

During that period, Muhammad joined the society known as Hilful Fuzul, which can aptly be called a national league. Originally, it had been an ancient institution but long out of existence. The association was named Hilful Fuzul, in memory of its early founders Fazal, Fazeel, Fuzail, and Mufazzal—collectively Fuzul, who came of the tribe of Jurhum. After the Fijar War, Zubair Ibn Abdul Muttalib, an uncle of Muhammad and a distinguished leader in Mecca, thought of reviving this league. In response to his call, a group of prominent men, representing the different Quraysh families, assembled at the house of Abdullah Ibn Judaan and took a solemn oath to help the poor and needy, safeguard the rights of the oppressed and espouse the cause of justice.⁵ In his later years when Muhammad was a prophet, he was reported to have said about the oath taken by the members of the League on the occasion of its formation: "I would not exchange the oath which we took at the house of Abdullah for the choicest camel, and even today I am ready to join such an alliance"⁶

⁵ Ibn Saad—Part 1, Volume 11, Page 83.

⁶ Ibn Hisham — Page 86.

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES AND
MARRIAGE WITH KHADIJA

Muhammad launched into commercial enterprises and took various expeditions to Yeman and Syria. He established for himself a reputation for business ability and honesty. People had such unquestioned faith in his integrity that they called him "Al-Ameen"—"The Trusty." When Muhammad was about twenty-five years of age he was employed by a wealthy Quraysh lady, Khadija by name, as her business manager. He made a commercial journey to Syria on her behalf. The success won by him was far beyond her expectations. Moreover, her slave who accompanied him, gave such an account of the nobility, purity and diligence of Muhammad that Khadija was captivated by the beauty of his character and offered him her hand in marriage.

He accepted the offer and the wedding ceremony was performed. At that time Khadija was a widow and fifteen years his senior. Thus he set the noble example of widow remarriage which was looked upon with some disfavor in Arabia of that day.

Khadija presented all she had to her husband and made him the sole master of her possessions. Among the first things he did was to set at liberty all her slaves.⁷ Thus he dealt a fatal blow at the root of slavery which constituted the foundation of the social fabric in Arabia.

⁷ Life and Teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.
By Hazrat M. B. Mahmud Ahmad — Page 5.

THE REBUILDING OF THE KA'ABA

During those days the Ka'aba was severely damaged and had to be rebuilt. The whole body of the Quraysh joined in the work with great enthusiasm. They continued in perfect harmony until they came to the point when it became necessary to move the Black Stone to its new location. This was regarded by all the Quraysh families as such a great honor that they would not hesitate to give their lives for it. Hence, there was considerable rivalry among them, which resulted in a violent quarrel. The danger of bloodshed within the precincts of the Ka'aba was grave and the building was suspended for several years.

At last, a venerable old man offered a solution for the amicable settlement of the contention. He proposed that the first man who passed by the sanctuary should act as a judge and settle the dispute. All agreed to the proposal and awaited the issue with extreme anxiety.

It so happened that the first man who was seen coming toward the Ka'aba was none other than Muhammad. "Here comes Al-Ameen, the Trusty," exclaimed the citizens, and presented the case before him for decision. Muhammad spread a mantle upon the ground and rolled the Black Stone on it with his own hands. "It's a simple thing," he calmly said to the heads of the different clans. "Carry it, all of you, and share the honor equally." Instantly it was done and when the stone was lifted to the required height,

Muhammad himself set the stone in its proper place. All the contending tribes were conciliated and were astounded by his keen judgment and wisdom.

THE DAWN OF ISLAM

Arabia was a country entirely cut off from the rest of the world. For centuries, before Islam, it had but little civilization and possessed no attractions for the outside world. That is what kept it immune from invasion. Infanticide, or chiefly the killing of baby girls, or burying them alive, and drinking and gambling were common. Profanity and profligacy were rampant. Sanguinary feuds between the tribes were of common occurrence. Blood revenge was a physical necessity with the Arabs. Though corrupted Christianity and Judaism had their place, polytheism and idol worship formed the common religion of the country, so much so that there were three hundred and sixty idols in the sanctuary of the Ka'aba. In short, Arabia was at that time both morally and religiously in the lowest depths of degradation.

From his early years, Muhammad was of a thoughtful bent of mind. With added years, he grew more and more concerned over the welfare of his countrymen. The evils that were prevalent weighed heavily upon his mind and saddened him. Thomas Carlyle beautifully describes Muhammad's condition in the following words: "The great mystery of existence, as I said, glared in upon him, with its terrors, with its splendors;

no hearsays could hide that unspeakable fact, 'Here am I.' Such *sincerity*, as we named it, has in very truth something of divine. The word of such a man is a voice direct from nature's own heart. Men do and must listen to that as to nothing else—All else is wind in comparison. From of old, a thousand thoughts, in his pilgrimings and wanderings, had been in this man: What am I? What is this unfathomable thing I live in, which men name universe? What is life; what is death? What am I to believe? What am I to do? The grim rocks of Mount Hara, of Mount Sinai, the stern sandy solitudes answered not. The great heavens rolling silent overhead, with its blue-glancing stars, answered not. There was no answer. The man's own soul and what of God's inspiration dwelled there, had to answer!"⁸

Frequently Muhammad retired to a cave at the top of a mountain called Hira, some three miles from Mecca. Here he devoted himself to search after the One and Only God, and prayed ardently, opening his whole heart to his Creator Whom his soul longed to meet. He became so fully absorbed in the ecstasy of his devotions that he would remain for days in the mountain cavern. Often his beloved wife brought him food. This went on for a considerable length of time, till at last, in his fortieth year, there appeared before him the angel of God and thus addressed him; "*Read!*" "*I cannot read,*" ans-

⁸ "Heroes and Hero Worship" By Carlyle, Page 63, 64.



The Mount Hira—Jabalun-Nur (The Mountain of Light)

wered Muhammad. "Read!" repeated the angel. "I cannot read," was the reply again. "Read thou"! repeated the angel, at the same time embracing the prophet and hugging him close to his bosom:

*Read in the name of Thy Lord,
Who created man from clots of blood,
Read! And Thy Lord is the Most Beneficent,
Who hath taught by the pen;
He hath taught man what he knoweth not.⁹*

The majesty of the revelation, and the appearance of the angel filled Muhammad with awe, as is usual with the prophets at the moment of receiving revelation. The same was the case with Moses. We read in the Bible:

"Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."¹⁰

Again

"And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

"When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,

"Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of

⁹ Bukhari — Chapter: "Wahy."
Al-Quran XCVI — 1-5.

¹⁰ Exodus, Chapter III — 6.

*Abraham, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled and durst not behold.”*¹¹

Thus divinely commissioned for the guidance of mankind, the Prophet returned home trembling, and related the whole story to his beloved wife and added: “I am afraid of myself.” No sooner had Khadija heard him than she said: “Fear not, but rejoice! God will not suffer you to fall into disgrace; for you have always behaved well toward your kinsfolk, helped the distressed, been hospitable to guests, kind to the poor and to your neighbors. You have been true to your word and exhibited the noblest and rarest virtues of man.”¹²

These observations of his wife throw a strong light on the character of the Prophet. A man can sometimes assume a character not his own in society. But it is impossible for him to hide his defects from the ever watchful eye of his wife, who has the best opportunity to watch day and night each and every movement of her husband and to know him thoroughly.

Thus comforted by his wife, Muhammad was conducted to Waraqa, a relative of Khadija, and a well-known Bible scholar. On hearing what had happened to the Prophet, Waraqa observed: “This is the same angel who appeared in times long past to Moses. Would that I might still be alive when you will be turned out of your native city. I could then help you to my heart’s

¹¹ Acts VII, 30, 31, 32.

¹² Bukhari, Chapter: “Wahy.”

content." "Shall I be banished from my native city?" asked the Prophet. "The like of you is always banished,"¹³ said the old man. This sounded strange in the ears of the Prophet and he was struck with wonder. How could he meet with such treatment at the hands of those who were the subjects of his constant sympathies? He had always treated them kindly, and in his heart of hearts cherished only the best wishes for them. He was ready even to give his life for their sake. Moreover, he had always led a pure and saintly life. How, then, could people be at enmity with him? This was beyond his understanding.

THE EARLY CONVERTS TO ISLAM

The Prophet's wife, Khadija, was the first soul to embrace Islam. His cousin, Ali, his uncle Abu Talib's son, a young lad of twelve, also adopted the new faith. There was another person, Zaid, son of Haritha, Khadija's slave, who had been set free by the Prophet a year previously. Zaid was so much attached to the Prophet and so greatly charmed by his kindness that he declined to accompany his father when the latter came to take him home. The more the father tried to persuade his son to go with him, the more the heart of the son seemed to break. At last the father had to leave Zaid behind. Such was the magnetic influence of the Prophet's character.¹⁴

¹³ Bukhari, Chapter: "Wahy."

¹⁴ Isabah.

ABU BAKR'S CONVERSION

The household of the Prophet were the first converts. The most important of all the early proselytes, and ever after a stalwart follower of Islam, was the Prophet's intimate friend, Abu Bakr, a leading merchant and a man of wealth and influence. He was well known for his virtues and enjoyed the respect of the people. The basis of Abu Bakr's instantaneous acceptance of Islam was his most implicit trust in the outstanding purity of the Prophet's character. Such a man could not tell a lie.

It was Abu Bakr who became the first caliph (khalifa) or successor to the Prophet after his death and occupies a most exalted place in the annals of Islam.

SECRET PREACHING

For the first three years the preaching of Islam was conducted rather secretly. Many of the converts were won by the influence of Abu Bakr. The number of Moslems went on increasing slowly, but steadily. Prayers and other religious rites were performed in such a manner as to avoid the notice of the public. The Prophet was accustomed to go to the foot of some hill with his band of followers and pray.

With great surprise one day his uncle, Abu Talib, happened to see Muhammad engaged in his devotions, along with his cousin Ali, Abu Talib's son. When the prayer was over, Abu Talib, wondered at the new mode of worship and inquired of his nephew: "My

nephew! What is this new faith which I see you following?" "This is the religion of the angels and of the Prophets. The same was the religion of Abraham." He then explained the doctrines of Islam to his uncle and invited him to adopt the new faith. Abu Talib had not the courage to renounce the religion and the customs of his people, but he advised his son Ali to adhere to the Prophet and the religion preached by him, for he knew that in no wise would his nephew lead him to ought save that which was good. Abu Talib, however, gave his word to stand by the Prophet as long as he was alive—even at the cost of his life.¹⁵

PUBLIC PREACHING

Things continued thus for three years. Muhammad was now commanded by God to promulgate Islam publicly. God Spoke:

*"Therefore, proclaim (publicly) what thou art commanded and withdraw from the idolaters."*¹⁶

Again:

*"And warn thy nearest kinsfolk and lower thy wing (in kindness) unto those believers who follow thee: And if they (thy kinsfolk) disobey thee, say, verily I am innocent of what they do. And place thy trust in the Mighty, the Merciful."*¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibn Hisham, Page 159, 160.

Al Kamil By Ibnul Athir, Volume II, pages 42-43.

¹⁶ Al-Quran, XV — 94.

¹⁷ Al-Quran XXVI — 214-217.

Accordingly, one day, Muhammad ascended the hill of Safa, summoned his relatives and addressed them thus: "O people of the Quraysh, were I to tell you that an army is coming from behind the hill, would you believe me?" "Yes," they answered in one voice, "Thy veracity is beyond question among us. We have always known thee to have been truthful." The prophet continued: "I have come to you as a warner, and if ye do not respond to my call, a great punishment will befall you." Then he called all the different clans of the Quraysh by name and said: "I have been commanded by God to warn my kinsmen that there is no benefit for them in this world or in the life to come, unless they acknowledge the truth that there is none worthy of worship but One and the Only God." The assembly dispersed, laughing the prophet to scorn. Among them was his uncle Abu Lahab who said: "Destruction to thee for the remainder of thy life. Is it what thou calledst us for?"¹⁸

The Prophet was by no means to be daunted. After a few days he arranged a dinner to which he invited all his relatives. As soon as the repast was over, the Apostle of God began to propound the doctrines of Islam to the assembly saying: "No Arab ever brought to his people more precious gifts than those I bring to you. I come to you with the blessings of this world and of the next.

¹⁸ Bukhari: Kitabut-Tafseer.
Muslim: Kitabut-Tafseer.
Ibn Saad — Part I, Vol. 1, Page 133.

Who among you will help me in this task? . . . I have been sent to you especially and to humanity in general." Perfect silence prevailed; no one spoke a word. They began snickering. At last a young man stood forth and spoke out, with tears in his eyes: "O Prophet of Allah, though I am the weakest and youngest of all, I shall champion thy cause." It was none other than Abu Talib's son, Ali. Thereupon the whole assembly burst into a fit of laughter and left the place mocking and sneering.¹⁹

During those days the Prophet once went to the Ka'aba and expounded the doctrines of Islam and admonished the people to abandon idol worship, which he most vehemently and emphatically denounced. The audience became enraged and were about to strangle the Prophet. Harith, son of Hala, who was a devoted follower of the Prophet, came to his rescue, but in the confusion that followed he was killed by some unknown hand. Harith was the first Moslem martyr and his was the first blood that was shed in the cause of Islam.²⁰

The progress of Islam was slow, but steady. The Prophet, in spite of stubborn opposition, continued the propaganda of his mission with increasing zeal and redoubled energy. The essence of his doctrines was to proclaim the unity of God. The Prophet was the messenger of God, and the words of God were revealed to

¹⁹ Ibnal Athir — Vol. II — Page 46.
Tabari — 1182-1183.

²⁰ Isabah; On Harith Ibn Halah

him. It was, therefore, imperative for the people to follow him and act according to his commands. Islam was, from the very outset, utterly opposed to all forms of polytheism. "*There is none worthy of worship but Allah; and Muhammad is His Apostle,*" was the most important formula of the new faith.

DELEGATION TO ABU TALIB

The wrath of the people of Mecca was aroused when they saw that the cause of the Prophet suffered no check. The elders of the different clans of the Quraysh, greatly exasperated, sent a delegation to Abu Talib and besought him to restrain his nephew from speaking against the established religion. Abu Talib, who was very mild and courteous, tactfully appeased their anger and sent them away. But as the Prophet did not desist from his evangelical and ministerial work, the heads of the clans approached Abu Talib a second time, and threatened him with the combined opposition of the Quraysh. Abu Talib found himself in a sorry plight. All the chiefs of the Quraysh would unite against him in case he espoused the cause of his nephew. He was alone and helpless, so he became frightened and related the whole story to the Prophet, exhorting him not to put on his shoulders a burden too heavy for him to bear. It was plain to the Prophet that his uncle wanted him to give up his mission. In calm majesty the Prophet forthwith answered: "My dear uncle, if they should place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my

left, even then I shall not abandon the proclamation of the unity of God. I shall set up the true faith upon the earth or perish in the attempt." Profoundly impressed by the high resolve of the Prophet, Abu Talib said: "Son of my brother, go thy way, none dare touch thee. I shall never forsake thee."²¹

THE DEPUTATION OF UTBA

The Quraysh now began to persecute the Prophet and his followers ruthlessly. All this barbarous tyranny, however, could not retard the progress of his mission. At this the people were extremely puzzled. What could that mean? They then devised a plan for enticing the Prophet. They sent a representative named Utba, a Meccan chief, who addressed the Prophet in the following words: "O, Muhammad, if you want to sit on the throne of Arabia, we shall elect you our monarch; if you want money, we shall give you no end of it, and if you desire the hand of a beautiful woman, we are ready to present you with the most beautiful lady in the land." The Prophet was far above any worldly temptations. In reply, he recited certain verses of the Holy Quran in which the glory and unity of God were proclaimed and the claim of the Prophet as the true Apostle of God was set forth. The following were among the verses he recited:

²¹ Ibn Hisham — Page 167-168.

“Say (unto them O Muhammad) I am a man like unto you, only the word of God hath come unto me that your God is One God. Therefore adopt the straight path which will lead you unto Him and seek forgiveness of Him. And woe to the idolaters.

(And) who give not the Zakat (poor-tax) and believe not in the life to come.

*As for those who believe and do good deeds, for them is a reward unending.”*²²

The charm of the Quran exercised a great influence on the mind of Utba and a change was wrought in him. On his return, he asked the people to leave the Prophet alone.²³

MISSIONARY HEADQUARTERS

The Prophet wanted a place where he could assemble the little band of his followers, perform the religious rites and peacefully carry out his mission without fear of molestation. For this purpose he chose his faithful follower Arquam's house, which stood at a short distance from the cliff of Safa. This was the centre of his activities for about three years. Some important converts were won over to Islam during the period of the Prophet's stay in that house, which was known as "Darul Islam," or "The House of Islam."

²² Al-Quran XVI 6-9.

²³ Ibn Hisham, Page 185-187.

THE CONVERSION OF HAMZA

Among the uncles of the Prophet was Ameer Hamza, a hero of martial spirit and a well known soldier whose gallant courage made him famous throughout the whole of Mecca. He was of about the same age as the Prophet, and had been suckled by the same nurse, Thuwaiba. Hamza entertained a great love for the Prophet, and was keenly sensitive to the maltreatment of the Prophet by the people. Once, while he was out hunting, Abu Jahl, perhaps the most powerful chief in Mecca, and an inveterate enemy of Islam, reviled the Prophet shamefully. A maid servant of Hamza, who witnessed the affair, related the sad occurrence to him on his return home. The noble hero became enraged, and ran, sword in hand, to the Ka'aba and declaring his faith in Islam, he challenged Abu Jahl, to oppose him if he had the courage to do so. Some of the latter's followers were provoked, but Abu Jahl pacified them, saying: "I have, indeed, treated his nephew Muhammad very roughly." Thus was the famous Ameer Hamza won for Islam. It was indeed a matter of great rejoicing for the Moslems.

THE CONVERSION OF OMAR

Omar, a man of towering personality, of uncommon strength and indomitable courage, was one of the bitterest enemies of Islam. He was very cruel to the new converts, but they were proof against all his ruthless persecution. At last he became tired and resolved to put

an end to the person who was at the root of the trouble. Sword in hand, he set out in search of Muhammad. On the way, Omar was told by some one that his sister Fatima and her husband Saeed Ibn Zaid had turned Moslem, and he was advised first to set his own house in order. Exasperated, he ran to his sister's house. While Omar was yet outside, the melodious voice of the recitation of the Holy Quran came to his ears. As he entered the house, he found Khabbab teaching the couple the Holy Book. On being asked as to whether they had embraced Islam, Omar's brother-in-law at first gave an evasive answer. Omar began to deal his brother-in-law heavy blows. The wife came to the succor of her husband and received a blow herself which caused her to bleed. The heroic lady addressed her brother in a voice which melted his heart and wrought an instant change: "Brother, we do believe in this true religion and in the Prophet of God. Do your worst, nothing can shake us." Omar began to tremble and asked his sister to hand over to him the book they were reading. She declined on the ground that he had first to purify himself by performing an ablution for it is the pure alone who may touch the Holy Quran. He complied with the demand and after he had obtained the book* he read the chapter Hadeed (Iron) which begins as follows:

"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the

*It must be noted that the Holy Quran is the exact word of God, which has been handed down to us in its original text without the

earth, proclaims the holiness of God. He is the Mighty, He is the Wise. Unto Him belongeth the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He giveth life and He giveth death. He is the First and He is the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden. He possesseth the knowledge of all things.”²⁴

It is related that when Omar came to the verse, “*Believe in Allah and in His Prophet,*” he spontaneously declared: “*I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Prophet.*”

He ran toward the lodging of the Prophet, an entirely different man. He had started with the determination to kill Muhammad, but now went to be enlisted as one of the most humble followers of the new faith. The Prophet accorded him a warm reception and great

²⁴ Al-Quran, LVII — 1, 2, 7.

slightest change. History tells us that as soon as the verses of the Holy Quran were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, he did the following things:

First: He not only learnt the words of God by heart himself, but he also had a group of his followers commit them to memory. Those who proved to be more capable in learning the Quran, were appointed to teach it to others. (Bukhari: Fazailul Quran)

Second: He dictated the words of God to a group of his followers who wrote them on palm leaves, leather, and on similar other materials. (Bukhari: Chapter Fazailul Quran).

Third: Under the divine guidance, the Prophet Muhammad arranged the verses into Suras or chapters. Hazrat Uthman reports: “It was the custom with the Holy Prophet that when the words of God were revealed to him, he summoned the Scribes who used to commit the

was the joy of the whole Moslem community. This was the same Omar who became the second successor of the Prophet. This champion of the faith was destined to win glorious victories and everlasting fame.²⁵

FLIGHT TO ABYSSINIA

When the sufferings of the Moslems became unendurable, and it was impossible for them to practice their religion in peace and safety, the Prophet thought it expedient to send a group of Moslems to take refuge with the Abyssinian king, Negus, who was renowned for justice, goodness and generosity. It was a great sacrifice on the part of the Prophet for the number of the

²⁵ Ibn Saad — Part III, Vol. 1, Pages 191-192.

Ibn Hisham 224-228

Mawahib — Vol. I — Page 51.

revelations to writing and said, 'Write these verses in such and such chapters where such and such verses occur! (Fathul Bari; Volume 9, Pages 19, 20, and 39. Abu Daud, Tirmudhi, Musnad Ahmad on the Authority of Mishkat.)

The result was that by the time the revelation of the Holy Quran was finished, it was recorded in full, arranged in Suras or chapters in its present form and was preserved in the "breasts of men" in its entirety.

All down the ages wherever Islam has gone, the Holy Quran in its original Arabic text has been in wide circulation and preserved intact. And there are millions upon millions of Moslems who know the whole book by heart. Hence, there is no fear of the change or loss of the Holy Quran, until eternity. William Muir says, concerning the Holy Quran:

"But there is good reason for believing that many fragmentary copies, embracing amongst them the whole Qur-an, or nearly the

Moslems was still extremely meager. The expulsion of a number of the already small community would make it thinner and more helpless. That would mean a great reduction of their strength. Moreover, it was heart-rending for the Prophet to send away his devoted followers for whom it would have been a pleasure to die. But the situation had become untenable and dire circumstances compelled him to make the sacrifice.

Among the refugees were the Prophet's daughter, and his son-in-law Uthman, a man of wealth and influence, as well as his cousin Jafar, son of Abu Talib. The thirst of the Quraysh for cruelty upon the distressed refugees who fled with their lives was not slaked. The Quraysh pursued them to Abyssinia by means of a deputation under the leadership of Amar-Ibnal-As, sent to the Christian King of Abyssinia. Through presents and adu-

whole, were during his lifetime made by the Prophet's followers. Writing was without doubt generally known at Mecca long before Mahomet assumed the prophetic office. And at Medina many of his followers were employed by the Prophet in writing his letters or dispatches. . . . The poorer captives taken at Badr were offered their release on condition that they taught a certain number of Medina citizens to write. And although the people of Medina were not so generally educated as those of Mecca, yet many are noticed as having been able to write before Islam." (Introduction to Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, Page XVIII). Again,

"but one Coran (Quran) has been current amongst them; and the consentaneous use by all of the same Scripture in every age to the present day is an irrefragable proof that we have the very text prepared. . . . There is probably in the world no other work which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text." (The *Life of Mahomet*, by William Muir. Introduction pps. XXI-XXII).

lation, they influenced the courtiers against the Moslems and requested the king to extradite their misguided countrymen who had fallen away from the religion of their forefathers. The wise King, however, convened an assembly in which the fugitives were called upon to give an account of their faith. Jafar, who was chosen to be the spokesman of the Moslems, addressed the king in the following words: "O, king, we were the most barbarous and ignorant idolaters and did not make any distinction between good and evil. Immorality, robbery, deception and evils of all description were common among us. Our own kinsfolk, orphans and neighbors were not free from our highhandedness. In short, we had sunk into the lowest depths of degradation, till at last God in His boundless mercy raised up the Prophet Muhammad, whom we knew from his infancy to be of the purest and noblest character. He taught us how to worship the One and Only God, the Creator of the heavens and of the earth. He enjoined upon us to do good and abandon evil. This is the crime of which we have been convicted and on account of which we have been subjected to terrible hardships. At last we have been compelled to bid farewell to our dear hearths and homes. We hope, O noble king, that no injustice will be done to us under your kind protection." Negus was deeply affected and requested the speaker to read to him a portion of the Quran. The bold man recited a passage from the Holy Quran. On hearing this, the king was moved to tears and was convinced that the words

of the Holy Quran and the revelations of Jesus Christ sprang from the same fountain. He refused to hand the Moslems over to the Qurayshites, who became extremely grieved at their failure. So, on the second day Amar-Ibna'l-As approached the king and poured in his ears a story that the Moslem's attitude toward Jesus was very derogatory. The Moslems were sent for again and called upon to state the doctrines of Islam regarding Jesus Christ. The dauntless Jafar expounded that the Moslems believed Jesus to be one of the honored Prophets of God, but did not attribute any particle of divinity to him. The king, satisfied and convinced, openly declared that he himself did not believe Jesus a jot more than that. History tells us that the king picked up a straw and pointing to it, said: "I do not consider Jesus even in the least more than this." Thus the efforts of the deputation were utterly frustrated and the Qurayshites went back to their people sorely disappointed.²⁶

The Moslem fugitives lived in peace and tranquility under the kind protection of the King of Abyssinia.

After some time a fake rumor was spread that the people of Mecca had entered into the fold of Islam. Most of the refugees did not believe this rumor. Those who believed it found it to be utterly false when they came near Mecca. Some returned to Abyssinia while others entered and remained in the city in strict secrecy.

²⁶ Musnad Ibn Hambal, Volume I, Page 201-203.
Ibn Hisham.

THREE YEARS' BAN

The failure of the Abyssinian deputation of the Quraysh against the Moslem fugitives mortified the Quraysh. But they were not to stop their mischief. They formed a league and pledged themselves to a complete boycott of the family of Banu Hashim which defended the Prophet from every molestation. Very stringent stipulations formed the articles of this covenant. Unless the Prophet was given over to the Quraysh for capital punishment, the members of the excommunicated clan were to be denied the common rights of citizenship. All kinds of social relations were severed. The Prophet's family was placed in desperate straits. The decree was put down in a scroll which was hung on the wall of the Ka'aba. The Banu Hashim took refuge in a vale known as the Vale of Abu Talib from which they could hardly escape for fear of their lives. They suffered starvation, personal indignities and humiliation of every description. The piteous cries of the famished children of the Hashimites added to the joy of the stony-hearted Qurayshites. This siege continued for fully three years. At last when the parchment on which the pledge was written was found to have been eaten away by worms, the hearts of some of the Qurayshites were softened and they were bold enough to bring about the rescue of the innocent sufferers.²⁷

²⁷ Ibn Hisham — Pages 230-232.

THE YEAR OF SORROW

In the tenth year of the Prophet's career he received two severe shocks. His beloved uncle and kind protector, Abu Talib, who had been a father to him since the death of Abdul Muttalib and who had defended him against the whole of Mecca; and his beloved and devoted wife, Khadija, who faithfully and bravely championed the cause of his mission and made him the master of all her wealth, were, to his infinite sorrow, taken away from him by death. Thus he was deprived of the love and support of his only worldly benefactors. His heart became so full of grief that that year is called "The Year of Sorrow." The opposition of the Qurayshites was now more vehement. They had none to fear, and left no stone unturned in an attempt to put an end to the new religion.²⁸

THE PROPHET'S JOURNEY TO TAYIF

From these sad bereavements the Prophet sought solace in the promulgation of truth. In the ardour of his sacred enthusiasm and with implicit trust in God, he went out to Tayif, an important town in Arabia about sixty miles from his native city. The people of Tayif proved little better than the Meccans. They did not heed his preachings. On the contrary, they insulted him most

²⁸ Ibn Saad.

Ibn Hisham — Page 276.

shamefully. At last he set out for Mecca. For several miles a rabble of fanatical youths pursued the Prophet and stoned him mercilessly until he almost fainted, and his entire body was lacerated and bleeding. The Prophet's devoted servant, Zaid, who was his master's companion, tried to help him but in vain. Sometimes, out of excessive pain the Prophet would sit down, but the assailants held his arms and made him stand. When he stepped forward they stoned him again. He had run three miles, not knowing from whence he was coming nor whither he was going. It was a scene of sheerest brutality.²⁹

At last the Prophet took shelter in a garden which belonged to two Meccans, Utba and Shaiba. History has preserved the moving prayers which the Prophet offered in that place:

“O Lord, I make my complaint unto Thee, of the feebleness of my strength, of the lack of my resources and of my insignificance in the eyes of people. Thou art the Most Merciful of all the merciful. Thou art the Lord of the weak and Thou art my Lord. . . . I seek refuge in the light of Thy countenance. It is Thou Who dispelleth all darkness and bestoweth the good of this world and of the next. Let not Thy wrath light upon me nor Thy indignation. There is no power nor strength except through Thee.”³⁰

²⁹ Ibn Hisham — Pages 279-281; *Al Kamil* by Ibnul Athir.

³⁰ Ibn Hisham, Page 279-280.

Al Kamil by Ibnul Athir, Volume II, Page 70-71.

The owners of the garden, Utba and Shaiba, seeing the Prophet in distress, were moved to compassion and sent some grapes which the Prophet accepted with gratitude. The man who brought the grapes was a Christian slave of Utba, Addas by name, who was an inhabitant of Ninevah. The Prophet conveyed the message of Islam to Addas who, fully convinced of the truth, readily embraced it.

From the garden of Utba and Shaiba, the Prophet went to Nakhla where a group of chiefs accepted the faith of Islam. Thus God gave him ample compensation for his sufferings at Tayif. Thence he went to mount Hira where he made his abode for some days.

About Muhammad's journey to Tayif, Sir William Muir remarks: "There is something lofty and heroic in this journey of Muhammad to Tayif; a solitary man, despised and rejected by his own people, going boldly forth in the name of God, like Jonah to Ninevah, and summoning an idolatrous city to repent and support his mission. It sheds a strong light on the intensity of his belief in the divine origin of his calling."³¹

THE PERSECUTION

Humanity recoils at the very mention of the terrible calamities, the inhuman tortures and the ruthless tyranny to which the early Moslems and their Prophet were subjected. Even after thirteen hundred long years

³¹ Life of Mahomet by William Muir, Page 109.

we shudder at the imagination of those horrible events. On the one hand, one is struck with the staunch faith and the unflinching steadfastness of the Prophet and his followers; on the other, by the fierce barbarity of the enemies of Islam. The brief account given in the next few paragraphs will prove the truth of the above statement.

A pious Moslem blacksmith Khabbab by name was once forced to lie down on a bed of red-hot charcoal in his own home, from which bed he was not allowed to move an inch till the fire had died out.³²

Bilal, an Abyssinian slave, was forced to lie down in the scorching rays of the sun, on the fiery sands of the Arabian desert, while a large slab of hot stone was laid upon his breast. Then the persecuting Meccans whipped him mercilessly and commanded him to renounce his faith. But when he remained firm in his faith and continued to say, "*There is but One God,*" the cruel Meccans tied him with a rope and dragged him from one end of the city to another.³³

A Moslem slave Yasir by name was literally torn to pieces, when his legs were tied to two camels and the beasts were driven in opposite directions.

Not only the men but also the women were maltreated. History has recounted how, for the simple crime of embracing Islam, a pious and respectable Moslem lady, Sumayya, was killed most cruelly and shamefully.

For ³² and ³³ see next page footnote.

The personal indignities suffered by the Prophet were equally brutal and horrifying; for instance, once, while he was at prayer, Abu Jahl put the intestines of a camel on his shoulders.³⁴ It has already been related how the Prophet was about to be strangled to death in the Ka'aba while he was engaged in prayer; and how brutally he was stoned for three miles at the time of his return from Tayif. When the Prophet went out people would cry: "There goes the imposter, the madman and the liar!" Ashes were thrown upon him and thorns were put in his way.³⁵

The cruelties of the Meccans which forced the Moslems to flee to Abyssinia and to endure three years' ban in the Vale of Abu Talib have already been briefly sketched.

MIRAJ OR ASCENSION

In the tenth year of the Prophet's mission, an event of singular interest took place. We allude to Muhammad's ascension to heaven. This is known in Islamic history as "Miraj" or "Ascension." This event has been the subject of considerable controversy and dispute among the Moslem divines and theologians as to whether it was physical or otherwise. The most authentic version is that it was in spirit only, not with the physical

^{32, 33, 34 and 35.}

Musnad Imam Hambal — Vol. I, Page 302.

Bukhari: Chapters: Tahara, Jezya, Jihad, What the Prophet suffered at the hands of Idolators, and Hijrah.

Musnad Imam Hambal — Vol. I, Page 63.

body. God says in the Holy Quran with reference to the Prophet's ascension to heaven:

*"The vision which We (God) showed you"*³⁶

Again,

"And He (God) revealed unto His servant what He revealed"

"And what the heart (of the Prophet) saw was quite true."^{36A}

These verses make it crystal clear that Muhammad's ascension was purely a mental vision and a spiritual experience. Similarly, Hadith (traditions) clearly indicate that the Prophet's ascension belonged entirely to the realm of the spirit. According to one report, at the time when the Holy Prophet witnessed the sights of the heavens, his body was asleep in his bed. Still, there is another report which states that at the end of this experience, the Holy Prophet *woke up*.^{36B} Likewise, we read in Ibn Hisham when the ascension took place, the body of the Holy Prophet did not disappear. He made the journey with his spirit only.^{36C} In short, it was a vision in which Muhammad was shown to have made the ascension to heaven. He was shown that he rose higher than the seventh heaven and finally appeared before the Divine presence. In the course of his ascent he met with some of the great Prophets of God, such as

³⁶ Al-Quran: XVII — 60.

^{36A} Al-Quran: LIII — 10-11.

^{36B} Bukhari: Abwab Sifatun-Nabi.

^{36C} Ibn Hisham, 265.

Jesus, Moses and Abraham. While Muhammad was in the presence of God, he received from Him the commandment of the five daily prayers. Then he came down to the earth.

This vision was of enormous spiritual significance. The ascension to heaven meant that the Prophet's cause was destined to triumph. Secondly, that he would make the highest spiritual progress and would leave all behind in his nearness to God. The seven heavens meant that the path of spiritual journey was to be traversed gradually, and step by step.

This vision was shown to the Prophet at a time when he was surrounded by insurmountable difficulties on all sides and was rejected by people. Thus God comforted and uplifted him by making the prophecy of his ultimate victory through this vision.

THE PROPHET MEETS A PILGRIM PARTY FROM YATHRIB

It was the Prophet's custom to preach his faith to the pilgrims who came annually to Mecca, on the occasion of the pilgrimage, from distant parts of Arabia.

In the eleventh year of his mission, he met with several persons who came from Yathrib, a well-known city about two hundred and seventy miles north of Mecca. It was the same city which later came to be known by the name of Medina and which was destined to be the seat of Islam and to be esteemed as a holy city by the Moslems to the end of time. History tells us that the

people whom the Prophet met were a group of six persons, belonging to the tribe of Khazraj, one of the two most important pagan tribes living in Yathrib—Aus and Khazraj, with whom we shall deal later. The Prophet expounded the doctrines of his religion to these people who readily adopted the new faith and upon their return home served as worthy evangelists in Yathrib. Thus the seed of Islam was sown in that city.³⁷

THE FIRST OATH OF AQUABA

The next year, that is, in the twelfth year of his mission, the Prophet met with another group of people from Yathrib. This time it was a group of twelve persons, including some of those who had embraced Islam a year previously, and they represented both the powerful pagan tribes of Yathrib—Aus and Khazraj. In his usual way, Muhammad promulgated his faith to these twelve people, all of whom entered into his fold and became his devoted followers. As the oath of allegiance was taken in a place called Aquaba, which was situated near Mina, it is known in history as the first oath of Aquaba. Upon their request, the Prophet deputed to Yathrib with these new converts one of his most learned followers, Musab Ibn Umair, who played the role of a teacher for the new Moslems and a missionary to the people of Yathrib.

³⁷ Zurquani.

Ibn Saad, Part I, Vol. I, Page 148.

THE SECOND OATH OF AQUABA

In the following year, that is, in the thirteenth year of his mission, seventy-two people, representing the tribes of Aus and Khazraj, came from Yathrib to Mecca on the occasion of the pilgrimage and became Moslems. The oath of fealty was taken in the same place, Aquaba, and as such it is known in history as the second oath of Aquaba.

Thus, as a result of Muhammad's preachings among the pilgrims on the occasion of the pilgrimage, a community of sincere and zealous Moslems was formed in Yathrib and Islam was firmly established in that city.

PLOT TO ASSASSINATE MUHAMMAD

When the Meccans came to know that the cause of the Prophet was making rapid and steady progress, their indignation knew no bounds. They now resorted to a new plan to put an end to the Prophet's life and cause. They selected one man from each tribe who pledged himself to assist in making a united assault in order to assassinate the Prophet at night when he was asleep so that the guilt of the crime would be evenly distributed. If they could kill the Prophet, they believed it would be impossible for the Prophet's people to stand against the combined tribes of Mecca.³⁸

³⁸ Bukhari, Chapter on Hijrah.
Manaquib.
Zurquani.

EMIGRATION

Muhammad, however, received a revelation, which warned him of the danger; he was commanded by God to leave town and seek refuge in Medina. A substitution had to be made, so his cousin Ali volunteered to lie down upon the prophet's bed. Ali fully appreciated the danger of doing this at the time of such a mortal peril. But he was proud to risk his life in order to save that of his blessed master.

In spite of their fanatical antagonism, the people of Mecca trusted in the honesty of the Prophet to the utmost, hence they would take their valuables and belongings to him for protection and custody. When the Prophet left he gave all these goods to Ali with the instructions to deliver them to their owners.

When the Prophet informed Abu Bakr of his intended departure from Mecca, the latter volunteered to be his master's companion and offered one of his camels for the journey. The Prophet acceded to the wishes of his devoted friend and follower, and took him as a companion, but paid the price of the camel.³⁹

The Meccans besieged the Prophet's house, but God so contrived that in the dead of night they fell asleep. While his foes were sleeping, the Prophet left his house and departed. With tears in his eyes he gazed at the Ka'aba and said: "Oh, Mecca, thou hast been to me

³⁹ Bukhari, Chapter on Hijrah.

the dearest spot in all the world, but thy sons would not let me live here.”⁴⁰

Then the Prophet and his companion went to the famous hill of Thaur, which is about three miles from Mecca. They took refuge in what is known as the Cave of Thaur, where they remained concealed for three days.

Early in the morning the Prophet’s enemies awakened and to their utter surprise found Ali in Muhammad’s bed. They were so angry that they put Ali in confinement, but finding such procedure useless, they soon released him.

A desperate search for the fugitive was made. Scouts were sent in all directions. A trailing party even reached the mouth of the cave where the Prophet was hidden. It was natural for them to peep into the cave, but a combination of circumstances coupled with some hidden force caused the pursuers to hesitate. At last they retraced their steps, and did not return to the cave.

While they were hesitating whether to peep into the cavern or not, Abu Bakr’s heart sank and he showed signs of fear. Just one glance and their lives would be lost. It was at this critical moment that the Prophet calmly spoke: “Fear not. God is with us.”^{40A} Abu Bakr relates: “When I was in the cave of Thaur with

⁴⁰ Tirmudhi: Manaquib Mecca.

^{40A} Bukhari on Hijrah.
Al-Quran IX—40.

the Holy Prophet I raised my head and heard the sound of people's footsteps, I said, 'O Prophet of Allah, if they cast their glance into the cave, they will see us.' The Holy Prophet replied: 'O Abu Bakr, we are two, God is the third to protect us.'"⁴¹ Such was the implicit trust he had in God.

SURAQUA PURSUED THE FUGITIVES

On the fourth day when the vigilance of the Quraysh had somewhat slackened, the Prophet and his companion departed for Medina. After a continuous journey of a day and a night, followed by a short rest, when they were about to resume their journey, they were seen by a Bedouin, Suraqua, who, tempted by a fat reward of one hundred camels, had pursued the fugitives. When he came near the Prophet his horse stumbled and fell. According to the Arab custom he drew lots to divine whether to continue the chase or not. He received an answer in the negative, but the reward of one hundred camels was too tempting for him to give up the adventure, so he remounted the horse and pursued the Prophet. But when his mount stumbled the second time and the feet of the animal sank deep into the sand, he hesitated to continue the attempt on the life of the Prophet. He felt strongly, that the Prophet's cause was ordained to triumph and any endeavor on his part to retard such a divine mission would result only in his own destruction. A mortal fear paralyzed his whole be-

⁴¹ Bukhari: Chapter Manaquib Abu Bakr.

ing. He then went to the Prophet and begged his forgiveness. The Prophet complied with his request and the man departed in peace.⁴²

While the Prophet and Abu Bakr were on their way to Medina, they met Zubair, a gallant Moslem, returning from a commercial expedition to Syria, who presented the Prophet with some clothes and provisions and assured him that he would also soon come and live with his master in Medina.

After a wearisome journey of eight days, the party reached Medina, on the twelfth of Rabiul Awwal. They were accorded a warm reception by the people of that city, whose joy knew no bounds, and who rent the heavens by their thunderous shouts of greeting, "Alla-ho Akbar! God is Most Great."

This migration or Hijrah (Hegira) introduced a new epoch in the life of the Prophet. It was upon this event that the Moslem chronological system was based.

We think it fitting to conclude the Meccan life of Muhammad with the following passages:

"We have seen this wonderful man as an orphan child who had never known a father's love, bereft in infancy of a mother's care, his early life so full of pathos, growing up from a thoughtful childhood to a still more thoughtful youth. His youth as pure and true as his boyhood; his manhood as austere and devout as his youth. His ear ever open to the sorrows and sufferings

⁴² Bukhari, Chapter Hijrah.

of the weak and the poor; his heart ever full of sympathy and tenderness towards all God's creatures. He walks so humbly and so purely, that men turn round and point: 'There goes Al-Amin, the true, the upright, the trusty.' A faithful friend, devoted husband; a thinker intent on the mysteries of life and death, on the responsibilities of human actions, the end and aim of human existence—he sets himself to the task of reclaiming and reforming a nation, nay, a world, with only one loving heart to comfort and solace him. Baffled, he never falters; beaten, he never despairs. He struggles on with indomitable spirit to achieve the work assigned to him. His purity and nobleness of character, his intense and earnest belief in God's mercy, bring round him ultimately many a devoted heart; and when the moment of the severest trial comes, like the faithful mariner, he remains steadfast at his post until all his followers are safe, and then betakes himself to the hospitable shore: such we have seen him. We shall see him now the king of men, the ruler of human hearts, chief, lawyer, and supreme magistrate, and yet without any self-exaltation, lowly and humble. His history henceforth is merged in the history of the commonwealth of which he was the centre. Henceforth the Preacher who with his own hands mended his clothes, and often went without bread, was mightier than the mightiest of sovereigns of the earth.'⁴³

⁴³ *The Life and Teachings of Muhammad.*
By Ameer Ali, Page 130-131.

CHAPTER III

MUHAMMAD AT MEDINA

IN the last chapter we left Muhammad at the close of his momentous and epoch-making Hijrah or Flight. Instead of entering directly into Medina, he chose to halt at a suburb known as Quba, situated three miles from the city. During his brief stay there, he laid the foundation of a Mosque devoted to the worship of Allah. It was indeed a propitious augury to build a shrine of worship on the eve of his entrance into the city! The Prophet assisted his followers, with his own hands, in the construction of the Mosque. He was accustomed to visit it once every week and was much attached to saying prayers in it. Many authorities maintain that the verse of the Holy Quran "*Verily the Mosque was founded upon righteousness*"¹ refers to this Mosque.

ENTRY INTO MEDINA

After a fortnight, on the morning of Friday, Muhammad mounted his camel, left Quba and, surrounded by a crowd of followers, advanced toward

¹ Al-Quran, IX—108.
Bukhari, Chapter on Hijrah.

Medina. When he reached the vale of Bani Salim it was midday, the time of prayer. So the Prophet halted there and performed his first Friday service. On that spot, to this day, there exists a Mosque which is called, in memory of the event, the Masjidul Juma or the Friday Mosque.²

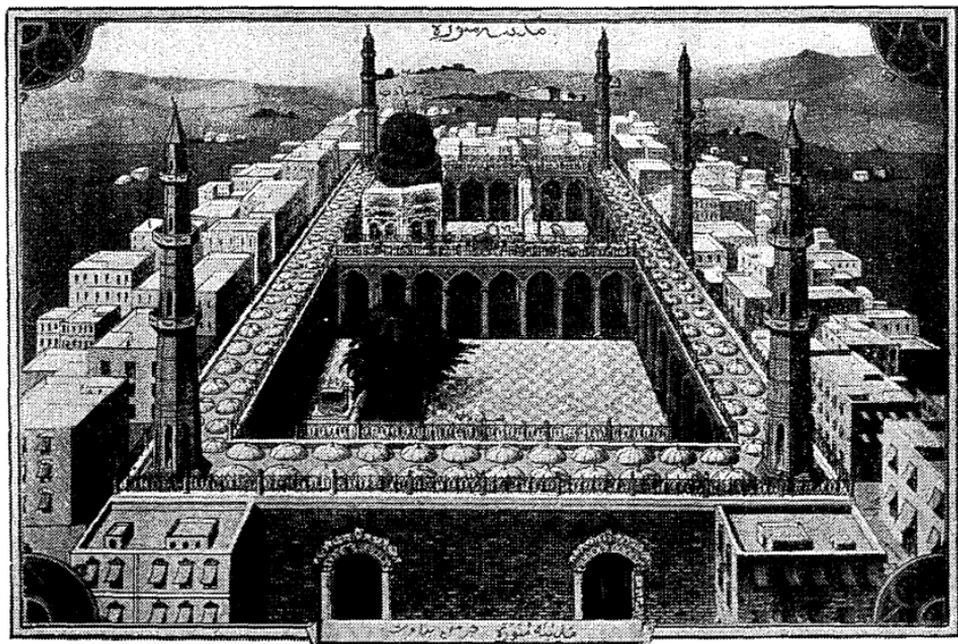
After finishing the Friday prayers, Muhammad set forth toward Medina. The people of that city were overwhelmed with joy. A great concourse came forth to show honor to their illustrious master. They accorded him an enthusiastic welcome. Each one requested the Prophet to be his guest. As he passed by, there was an incessant call from one and all: "Alight here, O Prophet, we have plenty of means." The Prophet was not disposed to refuse any, so he left the decision with the camel, which was permitted to proceed at will. The animal, with seeming unconcern, lay down near the house of Abu Ayyub.³ The proud Abu Ayyub lost no time in escorting the blessed guest to his house and offered him the upper chamber. The Prophet, however, preferred to occupy the ground floor for the convenience of the constant stream of visitors.

THE MOSQUE OF THE PROPHET

Muhammad lived in the house of Abu Ayyub for seven months. During this period, the famous Masjida-

² Abu Daud, Chapter on Juma.
Bukhari on Hijrah.

³ Bukhari, Chapter Hijrah



Masjidan-Nabavi—the Mosque of the Prophet
in Medina.



Nnabavi "The Mosque of the Prophet" was built. Bordering the Mosque were also built apartments for the Prophet, and he made his home there.

In the erection of the Mosque, the companions of the Prophet united with enthusiasm. As the laborers worked, they chanted the following song with loud and cheerful voices:

"O Lord, there is no reward and blessing—except
the reward and blessing of the Life to come;

O Lord, have mercy upon the Helpers and the
Refugees."⁴

Muhammad joined in the chant while he worked with his own hands and thus stimulated the zeal of his followers.

It was a simple building. In after times, it was repeatedly repaired and enlarged and at the present day a magnificent Mosque occupies the spot where the Prophet built his first humble house of worship. Sir William Muir says about this Mosque: "But though rude in material, and insignificant in dimensions, the Mosque of Mahomet is glorious in the history of Islam. Here the Prophet and his companions spent most of their time: here the daily service, with its oft-recurring prayers, was first publicly established: and here the great congregation assembled every Friday, listening with reverence and awe to messages from heaven. Here the Prophet planned his victories; here he received embas-

⁴ Bukhari, Chapter Hijrah.

sies from vanquished and contrite tribes; and from hence issued edicts which struck terror amongst rebellious to the very outskirts of the peninsula. Hard by in the apartments of Ayesha, he yielded his ghost; and there side by side with his first two successors, he lies entombed.”⁵

In a corner of the courtyard of the Mosque was raised a platform with a shed which accommodated a class of homeless poverty-stricken people who devoted their lives to the study and service of religion. They were called “Ashabus Suffa,” or “The residents of the platform.” Most of the missionaries were recruited from among these people.

They were too poor sufficiently to clothe and feed themselves. At times, owing to excessive hunger, they would collapse while standing for prayer. They lived upon the charity of the Prophet and other wealthy Moslems. Some of them would go to the forest and cut wood, and whatever was earned by the selling of it would be distributed among all.

CALL TO PRAYER

After the Mosque of the Prophet had been built, the question arose as to the method in which the faithful should be summoned to prayer, because, prior to that time, there was no formal call. The worshippers assembled at different times for devotions, and that occa-

⁵ The Life of Mahomet by William Muir, Page 168.

sioned much confusion. The Holy Prophet held a consultation in which the question was discussed. Some suggested the Christian bell while others the Jewish trumpets; still others proposed that a fire should be lit on some high place. None of these proposals met with the Prophet's approval. At last Omar came forward with the suggestion that someone should be appointed to call the faithful to prayer.⁶ The Prophet accepted the proposal and appointed Bilal, who had a loud and powerful voice, to do this sacred duty. The words used were these: Assalato Jamia-tun. This simple call continued for some time, not only for summoning the faithful to prayer, but on other occasions of public gathering.

Finally, Abdullah Ibn Zaid, one of the companions of the Holy Prophet, had a dream in which the words of the call to prayer in its present form were revealed to him. Abdullah communicated his dream to the Prophet who said, "This is from God" and instantly adopted it. The Holy Prophet commanded Abdullah to teach these words to Bilal. History tells us that when Omar heard the call as given by Bilal, he hastened to the Prophet and related: "O Prophet of Allah, last night identically the same words were revealed to me in a dream as were uttered by Bilal in his call to prayer."⁷ This was an additional support of the divine

⁶ Bukhari, Chapter Azan.
Ibn Saad — Part I Vol. II, Page 7-8.

⁷ Ibn Saad — Part I Vol. I, Page 8.

origin of the sacred institution. Since that moment, the same celebrated call to prayer has sounded five times every day from countless minarets throughout the Moslem world.

“This Azan or call to prayer is a point of special excellence of Islam. Instead of ringing the bell or blowing the trumpet, or similar other mechanical methods, Islam has adopted a rational mode of call. It is a fact that the resonance of the human voice is more capable of communicating emotion than the most perfect metal instrument of music. The words are so impressive and pregnant with meaning as to mark the mode as the only one worthy of the nobility of the human intelligence.”^{7A} Azan, or the call to prayer, is the cry of the Islamic soul. It is the whole Islamic religion couched in a few words.

This Azan or call is announced by the Muazzin (the person who gives the call to prayer) in a loud and melodious voice with his face turned toward the Ka’aba which is in Mecca. It runs as follows:

Allaho - Akbar

Allaho - Akbar

Allaho - Akbar

Allaho - Akbar

Ash-hado Alla-ilaha illallah

Ash-hado Alla-ilaha illallah

^{7A} Islamic Mode of Worship By Hazrat M. B. Mahmud Ahmad.

Ash-hado Anna Muhammadar Rasoolullah

Ash-hado Anna Muhammadar Rasoolullah

Hayya ala-ssalah

Hayya ala-ssalah

Hayya alal Falah

Hayya alal Falah

Allaho Akbar

Allaho Akbar

La ilaha illallah

Translation:

Allah is Most Great

Allah is Most Great

Allah is Most Great

Allah is Most Great

I bear witness that there is none worthy of
worship but Allah

I bear witness that there is none worthy of
worship but Allah

I bear witness that Muhammad is the
Messenger of Allah

I bear witness that Muhammad is the
Messenger of Allah

Come to prayer

Come to prayer

Come to success

Come to success

Allah is Most Great

Allah is Most Great

There is none worthy of worship but Allah

In the early morning prayer the following is added after the words "Come to success":

Assalato Khairum Minan-Nawm

Prayer is better than sleep

THE BROTHERHOOD

After the "Hijrah" or Flight of the Prophet to Medina, Mecca was no place for his followers to live unless they renounced their faith. The Moslems, therefore, had to flee to the new city of refuge. How could these penniless and homeless refugees live without any means of livelihood? Muhammad came forward with an effective solution for this baffling problem. He established between the Moslems of Mecca and Medina a brotherhood unique in the history of the world. Each Meccan was tied with a Medinite in a bond of brotherhood. The Medinites were called "Ansars" or the "Helpers," while the Meccans were called the "Muhajireen" or the "Emigrants" or the Refugees."

The Ansars, or Helpers, divided all their homes, goods and properties and gave one-half to their brothers-in-faith, the Muhajireen. This bond of brotherhood was as good as blood-relation. The property of an Ansar was inherited at his death, both by his brother-in-blood as well as by his brother-in-faith. Such was the spirit of mutual love and sacrifice infused into the Moslems by

Muhammad. The Meccans, however, were not the people to depend solely upon the charity of the Helpers. They soon took to trade and earned their own living. After the battle of Badr, however, the bond between the Helpers and the Refugees so far as it concerned the rule of inheritance was abolished as being no longer necessary⁸

THE TRIBES OF MEDINA

Medina was inhabited by a mixed population of the pagans and the Jews. There were two pagan tribes, Aus and Khazraj, and the Jews were subdivided into three clans: Banu Nadheer, Banu Quayunqua and Banu Quraidha. Most of the Pagan Arabs belonging to the two tribes of Aus and Khazraj embraced Islam and Muhammad was to all intents and purposes their ruler.

THE CHARTER WITH THE JEWS

One of the most important accomplishments of Muhammad in Medina was the establishment of friendly relations with the Jews, with whom he soon entered into a covenant. A treaty of mutual obligations, binding equally upon the Moslems as well as the Jews, was drawn up. The more important stipulations of the charter were as follows:

First: Both the Moslems and the Jews were to enjoy perfect religious freedom.

⁸ Zurquani On Brotherhood.
Ibn Saad — Part I Vol. II, Page 8.

Secondly: The Moslems and the Jews were to have mutual friendly relations.

Thirdly: In the event of warfare, the Moslems and the Jews were to help each other.

Fourthly: Peace could not be made with a third party without mutual consultation of the Moslems and the Jews.

Fifthly: The Prophet was to decide important civil and criminal cases arising in Medina, but the case of each individual was to be decided according to the law of the community to which he belonged.⁹

Thus, by this treaty, Muhammad turned the heterogeneous and conflicting tribes of Medina into a strong, harmonious and united political nation, which was in reality the foundation of a great commonwealth of which the Prophet was the president.

THE CHANGING OF THE QUIBLA

The word Quibla signifies the point or the direction toward which people turn their faces while at prayers.

It is indispensable for all the Moslem devotees to have one and the same Quibla. Otherwise, there would be confusion and the scene of the congregational prayers would present a most disturbing spectacle. Furthermore, the uniformity of the Quibla symbolizes the uniformity of action and belief and the unity of purpose and goal.

In the beginning of his ministerial career, while

⁹ Ibn Hisham, Volume I, Page 178-179.

Muhammad was in Mecca, he followed the Quibla of the Christians and the Jews who were regarded as the people of the Book. In other words, while offering prayers, the Prophet and his companions stood facing the temple in Jerusalem. He continued to do so until he received the explicit word of God, directing him to change the Quibla from the temple of Jerusalem to the sanctuary of the Ka'aba in Mecca, which had been the Quibla of his forefathers from ancient times. The Holy Prophet received divine revelation in this regard while he was in Medina, about seventeen months after the Hijrah.

Though Muhammad at first followed the Quibla of the children of Israel, in his heart of hearts, he cherished a strong desire to have the Ka'aba as the Quibla because the Ka'aba was the first house dedicated to the worship of the One, True God, built for the unification of all mankind. And it was the Ka'aba which was built by the ancestors of the Arabian people—Abraham and Ishmael—and thus vividly brought the reminiscences of the sacrifices made by them. It inspired the devotees with the highest ideals of worship and sacrifice. Again, the Ka'aba was in Mecca which enjoyed the proud distinction of being the birth place of Muhammad and of Islam. Hence, the Ka'aba had the prior right to be the Quibla of the Prophet and his followers.

The verses of the Holy Quran dealing with the change of the Quibla from the temple at Jerusalem to

the sanctuary of Ka'aba in Mecca are as follows:

*“The fools from amongst the people will say, ‘What hath turned them from the Quibla which they formerly had?’ Say: Unto God belongeth the East and the West. He guideth whom He pleaseth to the straight path. . . . And We appointed the Quibla which ye formerly had only that we might know him who followeth the prophet, from him who turneth back on his heels. In truth, it was a hard test save for those whom Allah guided. . . . We have seen the turning of thy face to heaven (for guidance O Muhammad), verily, we shall make thee turn toward a Quibla which is dear to thee. So turn thy face toward the sacred house of worship and ye (O Moslems), wheresoever ye may be, turn your faces toward it. . . . And each one hath a direction toward which he turneth; so, vie with one another in good deeds. Wheresoever ye may be, Allah will bring you all together. Verily, Allah is powerful over all things.”*¹⁰

It must be noted that the Quibla is a physical necessity for the observance of prayer and for the realization of the uniformity of action and the unity of purpose, as has already been pointed out. The Ka'aba has never been regarded by the Moslems to have possessed any divine attribute. No petition or prayer has ever been addressed to it. The Holy Quran vividly describes this fact in the following verses:

“It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the

¹⁰ Al-Quran, II—142, 143, 144, 148.

East and the West: but righteous is he who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Scriptures and the Prophets: and giveth his wealth for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the poor and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free: and observeth prayers and payeth the poor-rate. And those who keep their promises when they make them and are patient in tribulation and adversity and in time of stress. These are they who are true and these are they who are God-fearing.”¹¹

It has been asserted by some western writers that Muhammad at first followed the Quibla of the Jewish people with a view to conciliate the Jews. When all his efforts proved failure in his object, he changed the Quibla from the temple of Jerusalem to the sanctuary of Ka’aba in order to win the Quraysh of Mecca.

It must be pointed out that Mecca was the holy city of the Quraysh whereas Medina was the stronghold of the Jewish people. If the alleged assertion were true, Muhammad ought to have made the Ka’aba his Quibla while he was in Mecca and while in Medina, he would have followed the Jewish Quibla. But precisely reverse had been the case.

The truth is that nothing could be farther from the Prophet’s thought than to conciliate either the Jews or the Meccans. In making the change of his Quibla Muhammad was guided by the Word of God as he always was, in all matters of importance.

¹¹ Al-Quran, II—177.

THE FAST OF RAMADHAN

Prior to this time, the fast of Ramadhan which constitutes one of the five pillars of the Moslem religion, was not prescribed as an ordinance of Islam. History tells us that Muhammad and his followers kept fast at different times, especially on the tenth day of the seventh month, which is called Ashora. On the second year of Hijrah the Prophet received divine revelation which enjoined upon every adult Moslem the duty of keeping fast during the whole month of Ramadhan, every year.¹² Those keeping the fast are required to abstain from food and drink of all kinds, and from the marital intercourse between the husband and the wife, from the hour of dawn till sunset. Those who suffer from permanent illness or are too old or weak to be able to go through the fast are exempted. But those who suffer from some temporary illness, or are on journey during the month of Ramadhan, are permitted to substitute an equal number of days during some other part of the year. The aims and objects of this sacred institution are described thus:

“The Holy Quran describes the object of fasting as i.e., *‘That you may exalt the greatness of Allah for having guided you, and that you may learn to be grateful.’*¹³ In other words, one object in view is that being relieved from the necessity of preparing and eating food and

¹² Ibn Saad — Part I, Vol. II, Page 8.

¹³ Al-Quran, II—185.

having more time to spare, men should pay greater attention to spiritual matters and should remember God oftener. Another object is that the pangs of hunger and thirst should help men to realize the value of the favours and bounties of God which they ordinarily enjoy and should render them grateful to God. Man does not value that which he possesses, and he learns the value of it only when he loses it. Most people never realize that sight is a great blessing of God, but when they lose it they realize the value of it. Similarly when a man abstains from food during a fast and suffers from hunger he begins to realize how many comforts God has bestowed upon him, and that he ought to employ such a comfortable life in good and useful occupations and should not fritter it away in trivial pursuits.

“Again, God says, the object of fasting is that you should attain *Taqwa*.¹⁴ The word *Taqwa* is used in the Holy Quran in three senses. It signifies security from pain, security from sin, and the attainment of a high spiritual level. Fasting produces all these three effects. At first sight it appears paradoxical to say that fasting saves a man from suffering, for fasting itself imposes a certain amount of suffering on man. But a little consideration would show that fasting teaches men lessons which secure their national welfare. The first lesson is that a rich man, who has never suffered hunger or privation can never realize the sufferings of his poorer

¹⁴ Al-Quran, II—183.

brethren who have very often to go without food, but when he is keeping fasts himself he realizes what hunger is and can imagine all that the poor have to suffer. This produces in his mind a wave of sympathy with the poor which finds vent in measures calculated to ameliorate the lot of the poor, the natural result of which is an increase in the national welfare; and it is obvious that the welfare of the individual is bound up with the welfare of the nation. Another aspect of fasting is that Islam does not wish to encourage in its followers sloth and laziness and a disinclination to bear hardships. On the contrary it desires them to be ready and able to accept all manner of privations and inconveniences in times of need. Fasts habituate the Moslems to bear hunger and thirst and to restrain themselves in all their desires and passions, and those who faithfully carry out this command never become lazy or self-indulgent.

“Again, fasting secures one against sin, for sin is born of inclination towards material pleasures. When a man becomes accustomed to a course of conduct it becomes very difficult for him to renounce it. But a man who is able to give up a habit or a course of conduct at his will never becomes its slave. A man who gives up all material pleasures which sometimes draw him towards sin, for a whole month, to seek the pleasure of God, and learns to exercise self-control and self-restraint, can easily overcome temptations to commit sin.

“Again, as during the month of fasts, a man has to rise

during the latter part of the night for his breakfast, he gets extra opportunities of prayer and worship which speed him on the path of spiritual progress, and when he sacrifices his ease and comfort for the sake of God, the Latter strengthens his spirit and draws him toward Himself.”¹⁵

ALMS OF THE BREAKING OF THE FAST

In the month of Ramadhan of the Second Hijrah, the Holy Prophet enjoined upon the Moslems what is called Sadaquatul Fitr or the Alms of the Breaking of the Fast. This act of charity requires that every Moslem, male or female, young and old has to make an offering for the poor and consists of a specified amount of money or a measure of foodstuffs. The alms should be given toward the end of the month of fast. If a Moslem has not made his offering before the end of the month of Ramadhan, he is recommended to do it on the first day of the following month at the latest before the public prayer. During the life time of the Holy Prophet, alms were collected on that occasion and distributed amongst the poor, the needy, the orphans and the widows. Since that time, this almsgiving has been observed throughout the Moslem world with great enthusiasm and particular scrupulousness. The Moslems regard it as a part of their duties of the sacred fast and feel that it serves as an atonement for any involun-

¹⁵ The True Islam By Hazrat M. B. Mahmud Ahmad, Pages 92-95.

tary negligence that might have occurred during the month of Ramadhan. The principal object of this particular almsgiving is to help the poor in the celebration of I'dul Fitr which we shall presently describe.

THE FESTIVAL OF THE BREAKING OF THE FAST

In the same year, the Holy Prophet ordained for the Moslems I'dul Fitr or the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast. At the completion of the month of Ramadhan, the Moslems were ordered to celebrate the festival on the first of the next month, the month of Shawwal. On that day, the Moslems are instructed to wash themselves, put on new or at least their best clothes, eat good food, exchange congratulations and bestow presents upon one another. A distinctive feature of the festival consists in a public prayer of congregation immediately after which the Imam or the leader makes a sermon appropriate to the occasion. This I'dul Fitr is one of the two most important festivals of the Moslems and is joyfully celebrated all over the world. The celebration of the festival marks the believers' sense of thankfulness to God for enabling them successfully to complete the blessed fast. It is a noteworthy fact that worship and remembrance of God constitute an integral part of the festivals of the religion founded by the Prophet Muhammad.

TROUBLES IN MEDINA AND CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE BATTLE OF BADR

In spite of the splendid progress of Islam in Medina,

the difficulties of the Holy Prophet were by no means alleviated. On the contrary, they increased manifold. In the first place, all his strenuous efforts to conciliate the Jews were frustrated; the latter in violation of their covenant were a constant source of trouble, and left no stone unturned to bring about his ruin.

A second source of trouble was Abdulla Ibn-Ubay-Ibn-Salul, whose ambition it was to become the ruler of the city. The advent of Muhammad eclipsed this man's fortune, as the Prophet's powerful influence won the hearts of the people. A smouldering fire of jealousy raged within the heart of this man, and goaded him to stoop to any means that might bring about the downfall of the Prophet.

The third and most important trouble came from the Meccans. When the Quarysh perceived the magnificent success of the Prophet in Medina, they were stung with poignant feelings of indignation and resolved to make a united assault on that city with the intention of crushing the Prophet and his cause. As the Ka'aba was located in Mecca, to which people from different parts of Arabia made pilgrimage, the Meccans had an enormous influence over the entire country. They kindled a wild fire of bitter enmity against the Prophet and his followers and made vast preparations for launching a united attack on Medina. Before they did so, Abu Jahl, the most implacable enemy of the Prophet, addressed a letter to Abdullah-Ibn-Ubay-Ibn-Salul, of

Medina, which ran as follows:

“Verily you have given refuge to our man and we swear by God that either you will kill him, or turn him out, or else we will come to you with all our forces and destroy you and enslave your women.”¹⁶

It was at about this time that Sa’ad Ibn Muadh, a highly placed Moslem of Medina, went to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage. The same Abu Jahl threatened to murder him, and also to debar the Moslems from coming to Mecca. He said: “Had you not been under the protection of Ummaya-Ibn-Khalf (a Meccan chief and friend of Sa’ad) you could not have travelled safely.” Sa’ad in turn retorted, paying him in his own coin: “If you stop us from coming to Mecca for the pilgrimage, we will block your way to Syria.”¹⁷

In addition to other offenses, the Meccans made a raid on the pasture ground of Medina and took away the Holy Prophet’s camels. In those days, the Prophet and his followers had to be constantly on their guard against hostile depredation on the part of the Quraysh. There was the constant menace of attack; even sleep at night was well nigh impossible. Nesai relates: “When the Holy Prophet first came to Medina, he spent many wakeful nights.”¹⁸

¹⁶ Abu Daud, — Vol. II, Page 67.
Kitabul Kharaj: Khabarun Nadheer.

¹⁷ Bukhari: The Beginning of the Chapter on Maghazi.

¹⁸ Nisai.
Fathul Bari, Volume II—Page 60.

Also, we read in the Lubabun-Nuzul by Sayuti:

“Kaab is related to have said, when the Holy Prophet and his companions came to Medina, “The Ansars or Helpers gave them refuge, but the whole of Arabia united to fight against them.’ Day and night the Moslems had to remain well armed for fear of attacks.”¹⁹

The Holy Quran depicts a vivid picture of the utter helplessness of the Moslems, in the following words:

*“And remember, when Ye were few and reckoned feeble in the land, and were in fear lest men should snatch you away, how He gave you refuge and strengthened you with his help and bestowed upon you good things, that haply ye may be thankful.”*²⁰

Now the cup of unexampled patience was filled. After suffering from inhuman tortures for thirteen long years, the Moslems fled to Medina to save their lives, but the Meccans would not let them alone. They planned to pursue the Moslems in order to extirpate them from their only place of refuge.

It was under such circumstances that the Holy Prophet received revelations to take up arms in self defense. The words of God revealed in this connection are as follows:

*“Permission to fight is granted to those against whom war has been waged because they have been oppressed. And verily Allah is powerful to help them.”*²¹

¹⁹ Lubabun Nuquool.

Fee Asbabin-Nuzool.

²⁰ Al-Quran—VIII—26.

²¹ Al-Quran—XXII—39.

Again . . .

*“Fight in the path of God against those who fight against you, but be not the aggressors. For verily, Allah loveth not the aggressors.”*²²

It must be remembered that the Prophet was justified in taking up arms not only in self defense, but it was his moral duty to save Medina from the horrors of a siege to which it had fallen victim by giving refuge to him and his followers.

At this point, it must be made increasingly clear that the propagation of faith did not form the object of Muhammad’s taking resort to arms. The Holy Quran vehemently condemns such a pernicious practice as will be evident from the following verses:

*“Say: It is the truth from the Lord of you all. Then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve.”*²³

*“So, O People, the truth hath come unto you from your Lord. So, whosoever is guided, is guided for the good of his soul, and whosoever goeth astray, goeth astray only against it (his soul.) And I am not a custodian over you.”*²⁴

*“There is no compulsion in religion. The truth has become manifest from error. And he who rejecteth false deities and believeth in One True God, graspeth a firm handhold which will never break.”*²⁵

²² Al-Quran—II—190.

²³ Al-Quran—XVIII—30.

²⁴ Al-Quran—X—109.

²⁵ Al-Quran—II—256.

“Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and kind admonition. Dispute with them in the kindest manner.”^{25a}

*“And fight them until there is no persecution and religion is only for Allah. If they desist, let there be no hostility except against the persecutors.”*²⁶

These verses prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the followers of the Prophet were given permission to fight only because they were subjected to persecution for embracing the faith of Islam. Their enemies did everything in their power to force the Moslems to renounce their faith. As soon as the enemies of Islam would desist from this pernicious practice, and when perfect religious freedom would be established so that every one would be free to follow the religion of his own choice and worship God according to his own conscience, the Moslems were commanded by God to stop fighting at once.

We shall throw light on this subject later and will show that even at the hour of his greatest victory, when his enemies were at his feet, unarmed, Muhammad did not force a single person to adopt his faith.

About the Meccan life of the Holy Prophet, George Sale says in the Preliminary Discourse of the Translation of the Holy Quran: “Hitherto Mohamet had propagated his religion by fair means, so that the whole success of his enterprise, before his flight to Medina, must

^{25a} Al-Quran—XVI—125.

²⁶ Al-Quran—II—193.

be attributed to persuasion only and not to compulsion. For, before this second oath of fealty or inauguration at Akba, he had no permission to use any force at all; and in several places of the Koran, which he pretended were revealed during his stay in Mecca, he declares his business was only to preach and admonish; that he had no authority to compel any person to embrace his religion; and that whether people believed or not was not his concern but belonged to God only. And he was so far from allowing his followers to use force that he exhorted them to bear patiently these injuries which were offered them on account of their faith; and, when persecuted himself, chose rather to quit the place of his birth and retire to Medina than to make any resistance."²⁷

Prof. T. W. Arnold gives a remarkable refutation to the often repeated charge that in Medina Muhammad became a changed man and sought to promulgate his religion by sword:

"From the very beginning, Islam bears the stamp of a missionary religion, that seeks to win the hearts of men, convert them and persuade them to enter the brotherhood of the faithful; and as it was in the beginning, so has it continued to be up to the present day."²⁸

Again,

"Exactly similar efforts were made to preach the faith

²⁷ George Sale, Translation of Kuran, Page 34.

²⁸ The Preachings of Islam, by T. W. Arnold, Page 41.

of Islam and to convert the unbelieving Arabs after the Hijrah, as before in the days of Muhammad's political weakness."²⁹

To revert to our narrative—as a measure of self defense, the Holy Prophet now began to dispatch reconnoitering parties to watch the movements of the enemy. He also entered into a confederacy with a number of neighboring tribes.

In the month of Rajab of the second year of Hijrah, Muhammad sent a group of twelve persons under the leadership of Abdullah Ibn Jahsh and gave him a sealed letter with instructions not to open it until he had gone a specified distance. The contents of the letter were to the effect that the party was to wait at Nakhla and watch the enemy, and then to furnish the Prophet with the correct information regarding their movements.³⁰ It so happened that a caravan of Meccan traders were returning home. Abdullah and his party hesitated as to what to do but as there was great danger of their whereabouts becoming known to the Meccans through this caravan, Abdullah and his men at last attacked the party, killed one man, captured two, and returned to Medina with the spoils. The Holy Prophet was greatly displeased. He reprimanded Abdullah for acting against his instructions, refused to accept the spoils, and released the captives.³¹

²⁹ The Preachings of Islam, by T. W. Arnold, Page 33.

³⁰ & ³¹ Tabari: Page 1274.
Ibn Hisham: Page 525.

The Quraysh were making elaborate preparations for hostilities. They were on the lookout for an excuse to launch into actual warfare, which excuse was obviously warranted by the impetuosity of Abdullah Ibn Jahsh. Thus, an indomitable fury of vengeance was roused in Mecca. Some good-hearted Meccans tried to appease the people by saying that the incident did not justify them in making an invasion on Medina. At the most, they could demand the dead man's ransom, for the payment of which the Moslems were ready. But these good-hearted Meccans were accused of cowardice and failed in their attempt.³²

THE BATTLE OF BADR

The Meccans advanced with an army one thousand strong. When Muhammad gained intelligence of this, he came with a band of his followers, consisting of the Refugees and the Helpers. Before he launched into the campaign the Prophet held a council and sought the advice of his companions. In response, a number of the Refugees made inspiring speeches, expressing their singleness of purpose to follow the Prophet in whatever he chose to act. Their devotion can be judged from the words of a Refugee, Miqdad Ibn Aswad, who said: "O Prophet of Allah, we shall not say to you as the children of Israel said to Moses, 'Go thou and thy Lord and fight, we shall remain sitting here',

³² Tabari: Page 1290.

nay, we shall fight on your right side and on your left, in front of you and behind you." This filled the Prophet with happiness and his face beamed with joy,³³ but he still awaited the response of the Helpers, because, according to the pledge of Aquaba, they were bound to protect the Prophet only within the boundaries of Medina. Now that the situation demanded that the Prophet had to meet the enemy, away from Medina, the Helpers might consider themselves absolved from the responsibility of coming to the aid of the Prophet. The spokesman of the Helpers, Sa'ad Ibn Ubada said: "O Prophet of Allah, dost thou intend us to speak? I swear by God in whose hands is my life, if thou so biddest, we shall throw ourselves into the ocean."³⁴ Thus assured of the support of his followers, the Prophet advanced to meet the aggressors in the famous Valley of Badr. The Prophet's army consisted of three hundred and thirteen Refugees and Helpers, most of whom were young, unskilled and untrained, whereas, the Meccan force was far superior to them, as has been already pointed out.

The night preceding the onslaught, Muhammad was engaged in earnest prayers: "O, Lord forget not thy promise of assistance. If this little band be destroyed, there will be none left to worship Thee."³⁵ While the Prophet was still absorbed in his prayers, he

³³ Bukhari, Chapter on War (Maghazi)

³⁴ Ibn Hisham.

Ibn Saad.

³⁵ Bukhari . . . Battle of Badr.
Muslim . . . Battle of Badr

received the divine assurance of victory. The battle took place on the following day. The enemies of the Prophet met with a crushing defeat. The Moslems won a complete and decisive victory.

The battle of Badr was the first regular conflict in the annals of Islam. It was with the battle of Badr that there began a series of constant warfare which lasted for a number of years, ultimately resulting in the conquest of Mecca.

The importance of the battle of Badr can hardly be exaggerated. This signal victory changed the destinies of the world. Now dawned the beginning of a new era of triumph for Islam. Not only the Meccans, but also the whole of Arabia felt the full force of the Truth. Muhammad and his followers were no longer to be belittled. A great feeling of awe spread throughout the country.

A still more important result of this momentous battle was the demonstration of the Divine help which immeasurably encouraged, inspired and strengthened the weak and suffering Moslems. Though they were ill-equipped and in every way at a disadvantage, they gloriously defeated an army three times their number. The Moslem army, which mostly consisted of inexperienced and tender youths and men who were very advanced in years, had only two horsemen and seventy camels. The Meccans had one hundred horsemen and seven hundred camels with vast resources of armor and rations. The Meccan army consisted of the leading

chiefs and the bravest warriors, of whom seventy, the choicest of the lot, fell; while the casualties among the Moslems were only fourteen. Thus it was abundant proof of Divine help which brought about such a miraculous victory.

The following remarks of Sir William Muir, on the glorious victory of the battle of Badr, will be read with profound interest:

“There was much in the battle of Badr which Mahomet could plausibly represent as a special interposition of the Deity in his behalf. Not only was a most decisive victory gained over a force three times his own in number, but the slain on the enemy’s side included in a remarkable manner many of his most influential opponents. In addition to the chief men killed or made prisoners, Abu Lahab, who was not present in the battle, died a few days later after the return of the fugitive army—as if the decree marking out the enemies of the Prophet was inevitable.”³⁶

Muhammad returned to Medina in triumph. The captives received the kindest treatment. They were divided among the Moslems, who, at the injunction of the Holy Prophet, gave cooked food to the captives and contented themselves only with dates. The manner in which the captives were released is very interesting. The rich were ransomed, and the poor were released by pledging their word never again to fight against the Moslems.

³⁶ The Life of Mahomet, Page 228-229.

Those who were capable were made to teach the Moslem youths the art of writing in return for their freedom.³⁷ The following statement of Sir William Muir on this subject is very illuminating:

“In pursuance of Mahomet’s command . . . the citizens (the Helpers) and such of the Refugees as had houses of their own, received the prisoners with kindness and consideration. ‘Blessings on the men of Medina’ said one of these (prisoners) in later days: ‘They made us ride, while they themselves walked afoot; they gave us wheaten bread to eat when there was little of it; contenting themselves with dates.’ It is not surprising, therefore, some of the captives, yielding to these influences, declared themselves to be Believers and to such their liberty was at once granted. . . . The kindly treatment was thus prolonged, and left a favorable impression on the minds even of those who did not at once go over to Islam.”³⁸

After the battle of Badr, two Meccans named Umair and Safwan secretly conspired at Hajr to assassinate Muhammad. Umair besmeared the blade of his sword with poison and arrived at Medina on the pretense of liberating his son who was among the captives. The disciples of the Prophet became aware of his intention. Hazrat Omar intended to kill the culprit. Muhammad stopped Omar and addressed Umair, “O Umair, what

³⁷ Tabari, Page 1338.

Musnad Ibn Hambal. Volume I, Page 246.

Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 14.

³⁸ The Life of Mahomet by William Muir, Page 226.

brings you here?" The man replied, "I have come to liberate my son." "Then why are you armed with that sword?" The Prophet asked. Umair was completely non-plussed. The Prophet further informed him: "I know all about the conversation which you had with Safwan at Hajr." The man was deeply touched by the kindness and forgiveness of the Prophet, and was convinced that it was in no wise possible for him to have known of his conversation with Safwan except through divine intervention. Hence Umair readily embraced Islam.³⁹

THE BATTLE OF THE MEAL SACKS

The effect of the crushing defeat of Badr was overwhelming on the Quraysh. They were burning with shame and consternation. There raged an insatiable thirst for vengeance. Abu-Sufiyan, the Meccan chief who had not taken part in the battle of Badr, took a vow not to approach a woman nor to anoint his hair until he met Muhammad face to face. He came with two hundred horsemen to Medina where he was successful in winning over to himself several Jews of that city. He ravaged fields, burnt orchards and houses, and killed their occupants. The Moslems sallied forth to meet him but Abu-Sufiyan and his troops beat a hasty retreat. In their hurried flight, they left behind their provisions, which consisted of a sack of meal for each man. Hence the battle is called, the Battle of Meal Sacks.

³⁹ Tabari, Page 1354.

THE FESTIVAL OF SACRIFICE

In the second year of Hijrah, the Holy Prophet established the Festival of I'dul Adh-ha or the Festival of Sacrifice. This great festival occurs seventy days after the Festival of Breaking the Fast, on the tenth of Zul-Hajja, the day which marks the close of the Hajj or the pilgrimage to Mecca. This is a day of great rejoicing and the festival is celebrated with great solemnity and reverence throughout the world of Islam. Rites and ceremonies of this festival are almost similar to those of the festival of breaking the fast. This, however, is distinguished by the sacrifice of an animal, which is made after the public prayer is over. It is considered highly meritorious to slaughter an animal on this sacred occasion, if one can afford to do it. A feast is prepared out of the meat of the sacrificed animal. The person who makes the sacrifice is allowed to use only a portion of the meat, the remainder is distributed among the poor, relatives, friends and neighbors.

This ritual is observed in commemoration of the sacrifice made by Abraham and Ishmael in days gone by. The object underlying this pious act is to inspire the faithful with the symbolic lesson of making supreme sacrifice for the sake of God and in the service of humanity. The Holy Quran describes this high purpose thus:

“Neither the flesh nor the blood of your sacrifice reaches God but it is the motive of righteousness under-

lying them that reaches Him.”⁴⁰ In other words, “Your sacrifice will benefit you only if you fulfill the object underlying them, but if you fail to do that you will merely have killed an animal as you slaughter animals for the purpose of food.”

Among other prayers, the following verse of the Holy Quran is read at the time of slaughtering the animal, “Say: my prayer and my sacrifice, and my life and my death are for the sake of God, the Lord of all the worlds.”⁴¹

MARRIAGE OF THE PROPHET’S DAUGHTER

In the same year, Muhammad married his daughter Fatima to his cousin Ali, his uncle Abu Talib’s son. Ali was a devoted follower of the Prophet and became his fourth successor (Caliph or Khalifa) after his death and won undying fame in the annals of Islam. The celebration of the marriage was conspicuous for its stately simplicity. After the marriage ceremony was over, the Prophet offered the following prayer:

“O Lord, bless their mutual relation, bless their relation with other people and bless their progeny.”⁴² Fatima was the Prophet’s daughter through his beloved wife Khadija, and his only child who survived him after his death. And it was through Fatima that the Prophet’s race was perpetuated. She is regarded by the Moslems as one of the greatest women the world has ever known.

⁴⁰ Al-Quran, XXII—37.

⁴¹ Al-Quran, VI—163.

⁴² Isabah.

THE BATTLE OF UHUD

The Battle of Uhud was the next conflict of importance. The Meccans came with an army of three thousand under the leadership of Abu Sufiyan. Muhammad advanced toward Uhud with one thousand men, but on their way, Abdullah Ibni-Ubaiy Ibn Salul, the chief of the Hypocrites, deserted with three hundred followers. This desertion left the Moslem army only seven hundred strong, of whom only one hundred were armed soldiers. Nevertheless, they were fearless of death. The Moslems took up their position on the declivity of the hill of Uhud. Muhammad skillfully posted a number of archers on the height behind the troops with strict orders to hold that strategic position.

The fighting began, and continued for some time. The victory was almost won by the Moslems, but was frustrated by the archers. They disregarded the commands of their master and deserted their stations thinking that the victory had been gained. The enemy took advantage of this opportunity. They wheeled their army from the rear and attacked, causing great confusion. In this battle, the Moslems sustained heavy losses, though they maintained their position on the battlefield until the last.

It was in this battle that the life of the Holy Prophet was greatly jeopardized. The enemy's attacks were, at one time, wholly directed against his person. Stones were incessantly showered on him. One hit him in the

mouth and knocked out one of his teeth. It was at this time that he prayed:

“O Lord, forgive them, for they do not know.”⁴³

History recounts how the Quraysh committed ghoul-
ish acts of barbarity on the slain Moslems. They
mangled the dead bodies and out of the mutilated
noses and ears, necklaces and bracelets were made. Abu-
Sufiyan’s wife, HEND, tore out the great Hamza’s liver
and gnawed it!

Muhammad was overcome with sorrow and he en-
joined upon his followers never to mutilate dead
bodies.⁴⁴

One time in the course of this battle, the rumor was
spread that the Holy Prophet had been killed, which,
however, was shortly contradicted, to the infinite joy
of the Moslems.

When the rumor was afloat that Muhammad had
been slain, the Quraysh leaders searched for his body
and failing to find it, they doubted his death. In the
meantime, the Holy Prophet went up to the summit of
a hillock, surrounded by a number of his devoted fol-
lowers. Abu-Sufiyan drew near to the hill and called
aloud the names, Muhammad, Abu Bakr and Omar.
At the injunction of the Holy Prophet, his com-
panions kept silent. Receiving no reply, the Quraysh
leader cried, “Then all are dead.” Omar could not con-

⁴³ Muslim: Battle of Uhud,
Zurquani, Volume II, Page 49.

⁴⁴ Abu Daud.

trol himself any longer and exclaimed: "Thou liest, O enemy of God, we are all alive and God will humiliate thee at our hands." Abu-Sufiyan asked, "O Omar, tell me truthfully, is Muhammad alive?" Omar replied, "Yes, the Holy Prophet is alive by the grace of God and is hearing you." Abu-Sufiyan said, "Exalted be Hubal." That was the name of an idol worshipped by the Quraysh. The companions of the Holy Prophet said, at the command of their master, "God is the Most Exalted and Glorious." Abu-Sufiyan said again, "We have Ozza and you have no Ozza." That was the name of another idol. The Prophet's companions replied again, "God is our Lord and protector and there is no God to protect you."⁴⁵

The intensity of the respect Muhammad had for the name of God is beyond the power of the pen to describe. The words that Abu-Sufiyan uttered were meant to disgrace the Prophet. So long as it was the question of his personal honor, the Prophet kept silent, but when the honor of the name of God was involved, he could not maintain silence and commanded his followers to exalt the name of God by answering the enemy.

At the time of great confusion and consternation, a Moslem lady, whose husband, father and brother had been slain in the battle, though she was not aware of it, was anxiously seeking to find out what had happened to the Holy Prophet. She asked a passer-by: "What is the news about the Holy Prophet?"

⁴⁵ Bukhari: Battle of Uhud.

"Your husband is dead," the man replied.

"But how is the Holy Prophet," the woman went on.

"Your father is dead," the man rejoined.

"I want to know about the Holy Prophet," she exclaimed curtly.

"Your brother is dead."

"My question is about the Holy Prophet," continued the lady impatiently.

The man said, "The Holy Prophet is safe."

Filled with joy, the lady, ran up to Muhammad and said,

"When thou art safe, O Prophet of God, all calamities seem but insignificant."⁴⁶

Muhammad was enthroned in the hearts of his followers. He could not have won such genuine devotion without a perfect example and keen solicitude on his part for the good of mankind.

HOSTILITY OF THE NOMAD TRIBES

The Nomad tribes of Arabia were greatly encouraged by the disastrous happenings at the battle of Uhud, and were stirred up by the Meccans to oppose the Moslems. They made many forays into the territories of Medina which the Moslems successfully repulsed.

⁴⁶ Tabari, Page 1425.

Ibn Hisham, Page 586.

THE TRAGEDY AT BIR-MAUNA

In the month of Safar of the fourth year of Hijrah the Moslems fell victims to a treacherous conspiracy at the hands of their enemies. Abu Bara, representing the tribe Bani Sulaim, in the vicinity of Nejd, appeared before Muhammad with presents and besought him to send missionaries, as his tribe was, he said, inclined to embrace Islam. Muhammad expressed fear for the safety of his people among the treacherous tribes of Nejd. Abu Bara pledged himself to be responsible for their safety. Trusting his word, the Prophet dispatched seventy missionaries.⁴⁷ After a march of four days, when the party reached a brook called Mauna, all these teachers of the Divine message, except one, were cruelly cut to pieces. The one who had escaped came to the Prophet and related the heart-rendering episode. The Holy Prophet was deeply shocked and overwhelmed with grief.

THE TRAGEDY OF RAJEE

A similar tragedy took place in the same month. A deputation of the tribes named Adhal and Qara came to Muhammad with the request to dispatch some of his followers to their people who had, according to their report, embraced Islam. Thereupon the Prophet sent ten missionaries under the leadership of Asim Ibn Tha-

⁴⁷ Ibn Hisham.

Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Pages 36-37.

bit. When the party arrived at a place called Rajee, these teachers found themselves in a trap. They were attacked by two hundred armed men of the Banu Lihyan, the mortal enemies of the Moslems. It was at the instigation of the Banu Lihyan that Adhal and Qara sent their men to the Prophet under the above pretext in order to bring the Moslems out of Medina and hand them over to the Banu Lihyan. The little band of the Prophet's followers offered resistance. Eight of them fell fighting heroically. The remaining two, Khubaib Ibn Ade'e and Zaid Ibn Duthana, who escaped death were sold as slaves to the Meccans. Khubaib was purchased by the sons of Harith in blood-revenge and Zaid was bought by Safwan Ibn Umayya. Both the captives were kept at the house of their masters for some days before they were executed.

While in confinement, one day, Khubaib needed a razor which was supplied to him by Harith's daughter. Sometime later, the lady saw her little boy playing with the prisoner who had the razor in his hand. Her heart sank and she trembled with fear. Khubaib readily perceived the cause of the mother's alarm and said forthwith: "Nay, fear not, do you think I shall take the life of your son in revenge? No, I shall never do so. Treachery is not permissible in our religion." At these words, the frightened mother's face glowed with joy.

On the appointed day, Khubaib was taken for execution out of the limits of the Haram—the sacred territory. He requested the Quraysh to permit him to offer

prayer for the last time, which was granted. After finishing his devotion, Khubaib said: "It is my heart's desire to prolong my prayer but I cut it short lest you should think I am afraid of death." Before his head was separated from his body by the executioner, the martyr exclaimed:

"When I am killed as a Moslem, I care not on which side I fall.

"All this is in the path of Allah, He will send blessings on these mutilated limbs of mine, should He so please."⁴⁸

As for Zaid, he was likewise brought in the open out of the city of Mecca. A large crowd of the Quraysh was present at the scene. Before he was put to the sword, the Meccan leader Abu Sufiyan asked Zaid:

"O Zaid, wouldst thou not that Muhammad were in thy place, and thou sitting in security at home with thy family."

Zaid replied:

"I would not let the Holy Prophet suffer even from the prick of a thorn, in order to save my life."⁴⁹

HOSTILITIES OF THE JEWS

The Jews of Medina infringed on the terms of the compact which bound them and the Moslems to help each other. They openly entered into hostilities against

⁴⁸ Bukhari (Maghazi): Tragedy of Rajee. Tabari, Page 1435.

⁴⁹ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 40. Ibnal Athir — Vol. II, Page 129.

the founder and the followers of Islam. They slandered Muhammad and knowingly mispronounced the words of the Quran so as to give offensive meaning. On the other hand, Muhammad showed a great respect for their religion and culture, but all in vain. Of the manifold offenses which they committed, the following incident led to open and actual warfare.

THE CONFLICT WITH BANU QUAYUNQUA

One day a Moslem lady came to the market of Medina and was grossly insulted by a Jew. A Moslem witnessed the humiliating incident and took the part of the lady. There ensued an affray in which the offender was killed. Thereupon the whole tribe of Banu Quayunqua swooped down upon the Moslem and killed him. Other Moslems joined in, and a riot followed. When Muhammad came to know about it, he hastened to the spot and restrained his disciples and addressed the Jews as follows:

“Fear God, or else His punishment will fall upon you as it fell upon the people of Mecca at Badr.”⁵⁰

The Jews were uncontrollably arrogant and most offensive in their reply when they said: “O Muhammad, be not elated with your victory over your people who are ignorant of warfare. If you come into collision with us, we will show you that we are men.”⁵¹

⁵⁰ Ibnal Athir — Vol II, Pages 106-107.

⁵¹ Tabari, Page 1359.

Tarikhul Kamees, Volume I, Page 470.

These were not idle words, as the Jews actually prepared for war, whereupon the Moslems besieged the strongholds of the Banu Quayunqua. The siege lasted for a fortnight. At last the Banu Quayunqua surrendered and were banished from Medina.

Kaab Ibn Ashraf was a noted Jewish poet who had enormous influence among the people of Medina. He was an implacable enemy of Islam and directed all his influence and efforts against Muhammad. Immediately after the battle of Badr, he went to Mecca and excited the people of that city to take up arms for vengeance by means of his elegies on those who fell in Badr and by his satires against the Prophet and his followers.

On his return, he roused the people of Medina against the Moslems. He invited the Prophet to a dinner and conspired to assassinate him. The Prophet was informed of the conspiracy and abruptly left the party, thus averting the danger. Kaab Ibn Ashraf's treacherous endeavors justly led to his own death at the hands of a party of the Moslems.⁵²

THE CONFLICT WITH BANU NADHEER

After the banishment of the Banu Quayunqua, the Banu Nadheer followed in their footsteps and launched

⁵² Abu Daud, Volume II, How the Jews Were Banished. Bukhari, Chapter Kaab Ibn Ashraf.

hostilities against Muhammad. Once the Prophet went to demand *Diyat* (blood money) from the Banu Nadheer for two innocent Moslems who had been killed by some members of their tribe. They apparently agreed to pay the blood money, but secretly sent a number of people to the roof of the house to hurl down a heavy stone on the Prophet in order to kill him.⁵³ Muhammad, however, was warned of the danger and immediately returned home.⁵⁴

On another occasion, the Banu Nadheer sent for Muhammad to hold a discussion with their savants. They assured him that they would embrace Islam if they were convinced of the truth of the new faith after hearing the discussion.⁵⁵ On his way, the Prophet was informed that the Banu Nadheer were coming with arms and ammunitions,⁵⁶ so he also made preparations, and war followed. The Moslems laid siege to the strongholds of the Banu Nadheer. After the siege had lasted the better part of fifteen days, they capitulated and were banished.

THE BATTLE OF AHZAB

In the fifth year of Hijrah, a large army consisting of the combined forces of the Quraysh of Mecca, of the Nomad tribes of Arabia, and of the Jews, marched

⁵³ & ⁵⁴ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Pages 40-41.

Zurquani, Volume II, Page 93.

⁵⁵ Abu Daud, Kitabul Kharaaj, Chapter on Banu Nadheer.

⁵⁶ Zurquani on Banu Nadheer.

Fathul Bari. Volume VII—Page 255.

toward Medina, making a crowning effort to stamp out the growing power of the Moslems. To these forces was added the treacherous Banu Quraidha, the last of the Jewish tribes remaining in Medina.

The news of this impending calamity shook the Moslems and struck terror in their hearts. The Holy Quran vividly depicts the condition of the Moslems in the following words:

*“When they came from above you and from below you, when the eyes turned dull and the hearts came to the throats (out of excessive fear) and wild thoughts came to your minds; there the believers were tried and they were shaken with severe shaking.”*⁵⁷

The companions of the Prophet were undaunted even at the time of this grave peril. The spirit of resignation and faith with which they braved the calamity has been described by the Holy Quran in the following words:

*“And when the believers saw the confederate forces, they said: This is that which Allah and His Messenger promised. Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth. It did but increase them in their faith and resignation.”*⁵⁸

Muhammad and his disciples dug a trench around the city of Medina in order to prevent the onrush of the enemies into the city.

History records that the Holy Prophet joined with his followers in digging the trench as he did at the time of

⁵⁷ Al-Quran, XXXIII—10-11.

⁵⁸ Al-Quran, XXXIII—22.

building the Mosque in Medina. As he labored he chanted the following song:

“O Lord, there is no happiness except the happiness of the next life.

O Lord, forgive and have mercy upon the Helpers and the Refugees.”⁵⁹

The companions would chant by way of reply:

“Unto Muhammad, we have pledged.

To fight in the path of God so long as life lasts in us.”⁶⁰ Again, the Prophet and his companions would chant together:

“O Lord, without Thy mercy and grace, we would not have been guided.

We would not have given alms, nor have prayed.

O Lord, send down upon us tranquility.

And establish our steps, if we have to meet our enemies in battle.

O Lord, they have risen up against us aggressively.

And when they sought to pervert us from our faith, we refused.”⁶¹

It is recorded that when the Prophet and his companions would come to the last words, “We refused” they would raise their voices and repeat them several times.

The enemies laid the siege, but failed to cross the ditch, and consequently, there was very little actual

⁵⁹ Bukhari: The Battle of the Trench.

⁶⁰ Bukhari: The Battle of the Trench.

⁶¹ Bukhari: The Battle of the Trench.

fighting. The siege lasted for more than three weeks. At last the enemies were paralyzed for it was no mean task to supply a large army with provisions for such a long time. The elements conspired against them. A terrific storm arose which turned into a hurricane, blew down their tents and extinguished their fires. Mercilessly beaten by the wind and rain, and wearied and broken hearted, they took to flight.⁶²

In those perilous days of the battle of Ahzab, some of the companions of the Holy Prophet would come to him and speak to him about their distressful condition. The Holy Prophet gave them consolation by admonishing them to pray to God to remove their distress. The Holy Prophet, himself, offered the following prayers:

“O Lord, Revealer of the Book, Thou Who art swift in taking account! Defeat the confederate forces of the enemies. O Lord, turn them to flight and make them quake!”⁶³

Again:

“O Lord, Who removeth the troubles of the troubled, Who answereth the prayer of the distressed, remove my sorrow, grief and restlessness. O Lord Thou seest what hath befallen me and my companions.”⁶⁴

This was a palpable example of God's mighty help to the Moslems by which they defeated without loss, an army vastly superior to them in number. With reference

⁶² Bukhari: The Battle of the Trench.

⁶³ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 53.

Bukhari: The Battle of the Trench.

⁶⁴ Zurquani.

to this victory the Holy Quran says:

*“O ye who believe, call to mind, the favor of Allah, when there came upon you the hosts, so We sent down against them a strong wind and a host that ye saw not.”*⁶⁵

An incident of outstanding interest has been related to have happened during this battle. Once some companions of Muhammad, while digging the trench, found a rock which obstructed their way. They called the attention of their master, who at once came to their assistance. He gave one stroke and exclaimed, “Allaho-Akbar!” “God is Most Great”—then he gave a second stroke and said, “Allaho-Akbar!” God is Most Great.” He gave the third stroke and repeated the same words, “Allaho-Akbar!” “God is Most Great.” His companions humbly inquired, “O Prophet of Allah, why didst thou recite the Takbir (Allaho-Akbar)?” He replied: “While giving the three strokes, I was shown in a vision successively that the keys of the kingdoms of Syria, Persia and Yeman were handed over to me. The red stately buildings of Syria, the white palaces of Midian and the huge gates of Sana are still vivid before my eyes.”⁶⁶ Thus, at this time of great distress, God comforted the Prophet and his followers by making the prophecy of glorious victories.

THE CONFLICT WITH BANU QURAIIDHA

We have already noticed that the Banu Quraidha, the last of the Jewish tribes left in Medina broke the

⁶⁵ Al-Quran, XXXIII—9.

⁶⁶ Ibnal Athir—Vol. II, Pg. 138 — Zurquani—Vol. II, Pgs. 109-110

terms of the alliance with the Moslems, and joined their enemies on this occasion. This tribe, before the advent of Islam, had been looked down upon by other Jewish tribes. For instance, the Banu Quraidha had to pay the full amount of blood money in case one of its members happened to kill a man of the Banu Nadheer, while the latter, guilty of the same crime, had to pay only half the same amount. When Muhammad made the compact with the Jews, he raised the status of this tribe and gave it full rights and liberties.⁶⁷ Moreover, when the Banu Quayunqua and the Banu Nadheer proved to be treacherous, Muhammad renewed the compact with the Banu Quraidha which again pledged itself to be the ally of the Moslems.*⁶⁸ But on the occasion of the battle of Ahzab, this tribe not only proved treacherous, but attempted to attack the Moslem ladies who were sent, for safety, to a fortress in the city.⁶⁹ After the enemies were defeated by the Moslems, the Banu Quraidha, conscious of their crime, besought the decision of Sa'ad Ibn Muadh, the chief of the Medinite Ansars. Sa'ad ordered the massacre of some four hundred soldiers who were guilty of war and treachery, thus ending the possibility of any further trouble with the Jews.

⁶⁷ Abu Daud on Diyat (Blood money)

⁶⁸ "Abdullah Ibn Omar relates that Banu Nadheer and Banu Quraidha fought against the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet banished Banu Nadheer but let the Banu Quraidha stay and thus showed favor unto them."

Muslim: Banishment of the Jews from Hedjaz.

Bukhari on Banu Nadheer.

⁶⁹ Zurquani, Volume II, Page 129.

Two things must be taken into consideration about the treatment meted out to the tribe of Banu Quraidha by Sa'ad Ibn Muadh:

First: One of the terms of the treaty between the Moslems and the Jews required that the case of each community should be decided according to its own code of laws.⁷⁰ The sentence passed by Sa'ad Ibn Muadh upon Banu Quraidha was in accordance with the laws and practice of the Jewish people, as will be apparent from the following passages of the Bible:

"When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:

And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:

But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very

⁷⁰ Ibn Hisham on the Pact with the Jews.

far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.”⁷¹

Again:

“And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses: and they slew all the males.

And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.

And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.

And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire.

And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.

And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho.”⁷²

Second: Close scrutiny of the situation reveals that the verdict pronounced by Sa’ad Ibn Muadh upon Banu Quraidha was the only course open to him. Because, under no circumstances, could they be permitted to live in Medina. That would mean to give them chances for creating further troubles for the Moslems who were yet

⁷¹ Deuteronomy, Chapter XX—10-15.

⁷² Numbers—XXXI—7-12.

very small in number, pitted as they were, against the whole of Arabia. It should be borne in mind that Banu Quraidha was under a heavy debt of obligation to Muhammad. After his advent into Medina, when the Prophet made the treaty with the Jews, he gave all those rights and liberties to Banu Quraidha as were enjoyed by the other two tribes, and thus raised their status. Moreover, when Banu Quayunqua and Banu Nadheer were banished on account of their treachery, the Prophet renewed the compact with Banu Quraidha who were once more bound to help the Moslems in defense of Medina. In flagrant violation of the treaty, they joined with the enemies of the Moslems at the time of their gravest peril.

Banishment was the only other course open, which also could not be adopted, in consideration of the bitter experience the Moslems had with Banu Quayunqua and Banu Nadheer. After having been sent into exile, they exerted their utmost to bring destruction upon the Moslems and their religion. Hence, this also was out of the question in the present case. Stanley Lane-Poole says:

“Of the sentences upon the three whole clans, that of exile, passed upon two of them, was clement enough. They were a turbulent set, always setting the people of Medina by the ears; and finally a brawl followed by an insurrection resulted in the expulsion of one tribe; and insubordination, alliance with enemies, and a suspicion of conspiracy against the prophet’s life, ended similarly

for the second. Both tribes had violated the original treaty, and had endeavored in every way to bring Muhammad and his religion to ridicule and destruction. The only question is whether their punishment was not too light. Of the third clan a fearful example was made, not by Muhammad, but by an arbiter appointed by themselves. When the Kureysh and their allies were besieging Medina, and had well nigh stormed the defenses, this Jewish tribe entered into negotiations with the enemy, which were only circumvented by the diplomacy of the Prophet. When the besiegers had retired, Muhammad naturally demanded an explanation of the Jews. They resisted in their dogged way, and were themselves besieged and compelled to surrender at discretion. Muhammad, however, consented to the appointing of a chief of a tribe allied to the Jews as the judge who should pronounce sentence upon them. The man in question was a fierce soldier, who had been wounded in the attack on the Jews, and indeed died from his wound the same day.

“This chief gave sentence that the men, in number some six hundred, should be killed, and the women and children enslaved, and the sentence was carried out. It was a harsh, bloody sentence, worthy of the episcopal generals of the army against the Albigenses, or the deeds of the Augustan age of Puritanism; but it must be remembered that the crime of these men was high treason against the state, during time of seige and those who have read how Willington’s march could be traced by

the bodies of deserters and pillagers hanging from the trees, need not be surprised at the summary execution of a traitorous clan.”⁷³

THE DEATH OF SA’AD IBN MUADH

Sa’ad Ibn Muadh was a devoted companion of the Prophet and a leading chief of Medina belonging to the tribe of Aus. He received a deep wound in the battle of Ahzab. After he had passed the decree upon Banu Quraidha, according to the Prophet’s advice, he was conducted to a tent in the compound of the Mosque of the Prophet. The Prophet, himself, took part in attending the chief but his wound proved fatal and he died shortly afterward. The death of Sa’ad Ibn Muadh was an irreparable loss to the Moslems as he rendered signal services to the cause of Islam. The Prophet held him in high esteem. When Sa’ad approached the Mosque, riding upon an ass, the Prophet said to the Helpers: “Stand up for your chief.” The Prophet also did him honor by bearing his bier to a certain distance.⁷⁴

THE TRUCE OF HUDAIBIYYA

During the six years since Hijrah, the Moslems were deprived of performing the pilgrimage to Mecca, for which they cherished a strong desire. Moreover, Mecca

⁷³ The Studies in a Mosque by Stanley Lane-Poole—Pages 69-70.

⁷⁴ Bukhari, On the Return of the Prophet from Ahzab.

Also Manaqibul Ansaar.

Zurquani, Volume II, Page 141.

was to them the dearest spot under the canopy of heaven. Although they were brutally persecuted by their own people, the Meccan fugitive Moslems had so intense a love for their native city that at times the very mention of Mecca would bring tears to their eyes. The Holy Prophet himself was imbued with like feelings.

In the sixth year after the Hijrah, Muhammad with fourteen hundred of his followers, garbed as pilgrims, set out for Mecca, without any arms or weapons, excepting the sheathed sword, the customary companion of the Arab traveller. As soon as the Meccans learned about Muhammad's advance, they made vigorous preparations to fight against the Moslems and thus to prevent them from entering the city. By following a circuitous route, the Prophet reached and encamped at a place which is known as Hudaibiyya, a few miles from Mecca. The Prophet sent many envoys to the Quraysh with the message that he came with no intention of war, and earnestly entreated them to make peace with him and to allow him and his followers to perform the Pilgrimage. The majority of the people of the Quraysh were opposed to making a treaty, but a few leaders, perceiving the justice of Muhammad's proposal, persuaded the people to enter into an agreement with him. Hence was conducted the famous Truce of Hudaibiyya, the important terms of which were as follows:

- (1) All hostilities would be suspended for ten years.
- (2) The Arab tribes would be at liberty to form an alliance with whichever side they pleased.

(3) The Moslems should go back that year without performing the Pilgrimage; they might, however, come the following year to perform it, but were not to stay for more than three days.

(4) The Moslems should not take with them any of their co-religionists who lived in Mecca.

(5) If any of the Meccans, Moslems, or non-Moslems went to Medina, the Moslems were to return them to Mecca; but if any Moslem should come to Mecca from Medina, the Quraysh should not send them back to Medina.⁷⁵

Muhammad accepted all these terms, obviously detrimental to his own interests and contrary to the wishes of his disciples. He was the Apostle of Peace, and whenever there was a chance, he made peace even under the most adverse conditions.

Suhail Ibn Amr was the plenipotentiary deputed by the Quraysh to conclude the treaty with the Moslems. His son Abu Jandal who had embraced Islam was a captive in Mecca. While the terms of the treaty were yet being written, Abu Jandal having managed to escape, appeared in chains on the scene. He was so cruelly beaten by the Meccans that the scars and bruises were visible on his body. With tremulous voice, he begged the Moslems to rescue him from the hands of the persecutors. The Moslems were moved and as the treaty was not yet finished, they considered themselves

⁷⁵ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Pages 69-71.
Ibn Hisham.

justified in not handing their oppressed brother over to the enemies. Suhail, however, insisted on taking him. Nevertheless, true to his word Muhammad delivered Abu Jandal to the Quraysh, thus furnishing a clear example of his loyalty to the treaty. Turning to Abu Jandal, the Prophet said: "O Abu Jandal, have patience and know it for certain that Allah will work out some means for thy deliverance and for the deliverance of those who have been rendered weak and helpless like thee. We have pledged ourselves to a treaty which we shall not break."⁷⁶

The Meccan envoys were astounded to see the profound reverence paid to Muhammad by his followers. When the Prophet finished performing the ablution, his disciples would fall upon the water used by him as they considered it sanctified. The Meccan envoy Suhail, upon returning to his people, related: "I have been in the courts of Caesar and Khasru (Roman and Persian Emperors) and have seen them surrounded by their royal pomp and power, but never have I witnessed such deep respect shown to any monarch as is paid to Muhammad by the Moslems."⁷⁷

THE PLEDGE OF THE TREE

Uthman, son of Affan, was the last envoy sent by the Prophet to persuade the Quraysh to make peace with the Moslems. Several days elapsed before his return.

⁷⁶ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 73.

⁷⁷ Ibnal Athir — Vol. II, Page 154.

In the meantime a rumor was spread that Uthman had been murdered. Sorely shocked, the Prophet and his followers firmly determined to avenge the death of Uthman. He assembled beneath a tree his unarmed followers who solemnly pledged themselves to stand by him and shed every drop of their blood in the holy cause. This pledge is known in history as *Baiatur-Ridhwan*.⁷⁸ The Holy Quran says about this pledge:

*“Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts and sent down comfort unto them and rewarded them with a near victory.”*⁷⁹

Uthman, however, shortly returned, to the unbounded joy of the Moslems and thus the rumor was proven false.

A TIME OF COMPARATIVE PEACE

A time of comparative peace and tranquility was followed by the truce of Hudaibiyya. More and more people swelled the number of Muhammad's adherents. Two gallant Meccan soldiers, Khaled Ibn Walid and Amar Ibn-al As, one known in history as the sword of God, and the other as the Conqueror of Egypt, who had long been mortal enemies of Islam, voluntarily appeared before Muhammad and embraced the faith.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 70.
Ibn Hisham.

Ibn Saad — Part I, Vol. II, Page 15.

⁷⁹ Al-Quran XLVIII—18.

⁸⁰ Isabah.

Tirmudhi on Manaquib.

EPISTLE TO THE PRINCESS AND POTENTATES

The Prophet now turned his attention to delivering the message of Islam to the sovereigns of the neighboring provinces. Heraclius, the emperor of Constantinople, the kings of Persia, Abyssinia, and Egypt were among those to whom Muhammad dispatched envoys.⁸¹

Heraclius, the emperor of Constantinople, was at that time in Jerusalem. Upon receipt of the Prophet's epistle, the emperor inquired whether any Arab was to be found in that city. Abu Sufiyan, who was one of the deadliest enemies of the Prophet happened to be there at the head of a mercantile expedition, and was brought to the presence of the emperor. Then followed the famous conversation between the emperor Heraclius, and the Arab leader.

Heraclius: Of what lineage is Muhammad?

Abu Sufiyan: He comes of a noble family.

Heraclius: Did any other member of the same family ever claim to have been a prophet?

Abu Sufiyan: No.

Heraclius: Are his followers increasing or are they falling off?

Abu Sufiyan: They are increasing:

Heraclius: Have the majority of his adherents come from the poor or the rich?

Abu Sufiyan: From the poor.

⁸¹ Tabari.
Ibn Hisham.

Heraclius: Are they steadfast or vacillating in their faith?

Abu Sufiyan: Very steadfast.

Heraclius: Did Muhammad ever tell a lie before claiming to be a prophet?

Abu Sufiyan: No lie ever passed his lips.

Heraclius: Did he ever break a treaty?

Abu Sufiyan: Never.

Heraclius: What are his teachings?

Abu Sufiyan: To worship the One and Only God; to live a life of righteousness, and to be good to one's neighbors and relatives.⁸²

Greatly impressed by the testimony of the Quraysh leader, the emperor expressed his conviction of the truth of Muhammad's claim, declaring that all the statements that Abu Sufiyan made were clear signs of Muhammad's prophethood. Moreover, the emperor himself, on the authority of a vision he had seen, was expecting the appearance of a Prophet. Owing to the opposition of his subjects, he could not, however, adopt the faith of Islam.⁸³

The epistle which was sent to the king of Persia began as follows: "In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. From Muhammad, son of Abdullah, the Apostle of Allah, to Khusro Perviz, the king of Persia.

This was contrary to the Persian custom, according

⁸² & ⁸³ Bukhari.
Fathul Bari.

to which you have to start your letters to the kings with their names put first. The Prophet began his letter in the name of God and then according to Arab custom, he put his own name first.

“What” roared Khusru, in a fit of anger. “One who is my slave dares to put his name first?” So saying, he siezed the letter and tore it into shreds. He further ordered the governor of Yeman, which was at that time a satrapy of the Persian Empire, to have Muhammad arrested and executed. Thereupon the governor sent two persons to carry out the king’s command. When the Holy Prophet heard the story, he informed the messengers that the King of Persia had been killed by his own son. On their return, the two men learned, to their exceeding surprise, that the news was true. This miraculous occurrence convinced the governor of the truth of Islam.⁸⁴

The King of Egypt received the message with great respect, and as a token of the reverence in which he held the Prophet, the King sent some presents to him though he did not accept the mission of the Prophet.⁸⁵

The King of Abyssinia was already convinced of the truth of Islam, and had given refuge to the Moslem fugitives. On this occasion he readily enlisted himself as a humble servant of the new faith.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ & ⁸⁵ Ibn Saad — Part I, Vol. II, Pages 16-17.

⁸⁶ Tabari, Page 1569.

THE CONQUEST OF KHAIBAR

Khaibar, the greatest stronghold of the Jews in Arabia, was situated at a distance of about two hundred miles northeast of Medina.⁸⁷

We have already noticed that the Jews became the deadliest foes of the Moslems, and were constantly on the lookout for opportunities to attack them. The apparent weakness of the Moslems in the treaty of Hudaibiyya inspired the Jews with fresh hopes of destroying them. The Jews formed a coalition with their ally, the tribe of Ghatfan, which had settled in the neighborhood of Khaibar, and was noted for bravery in warfare.⁸⁸

Abdullah Ibn Ubbayy Ibn Salul, the chief of the Hypocrites in Medina, was in secret league with the Jews of Khaibar and incited them to begin a campaign against the Moslems.⁸⁹

The Jews of Khaibar and the tribe of Ghatfan united to launch an attack on Medina. When tidings of this contemplated assault reached Muhammad, he dispatched envoys to persuade the Jews to enter into a treaty with the Moslems. But the former were resolved to give battle. All attempts at conciliation proved futile.⁹⁰ The Prophet was, at last, compelled to lead an expedition against the enemy, which lasted nearly a month. The Moslems gained the victory and thus the

⁸⁷ Doughty, Page 73.

⁸⁸ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 66.

⁸⁹ Tareekhul Khamees.

⁹⁰ Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. I, Page 67.

fertile territory of Khaibar was conquered, for Islam. Muhammad, however, left all the lands to the occupation of the Jews, on the condition that half of the produce was to be given to the Moslems, in return for their protection.⁹¹

ANOTHER CONSPIRACY TO ASSASSINATE MUHAMMAD

It was at this time that Muhammad's enemies engineered another conspiracy to assassinate him. This time the author of the tragedy was a Jewess named Zainab whose husband, Haris, had fallen in the battle of Khaibar. She invited Muhammad to a party and presented him with food, richly seasoned with poison. As soon as the Prophet tasted the first morsel, he perceived the peculiar taste, spat it forth and was saved. His companion, Bishr, who ate some of the food, died instantly of convulsions.

The Holy Prophet never took revenge for any personal grievances,⁹² and usually the culprit would escape the penalty, but Zainab was given capital punishment for murdering Bishr.

In the study of the life of Muhammad, one cannot help being struck by an outstanding circumstance. From the first day of his call, many attempts were made to put an end to his life by groups as well as by individuals. But all such endeavors were rendered abortive. This was conclusive proof of the fact that the Prophet was

⁹¹ Futhal Buldan by Baladhuri—Conquest of Khaibar. Tabari, Page 1589.

⁹² Bukhari on *Adab*.

under the protection of God and Divine Providence saved him on all such occasions.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PILGRIMAGE

According to the terms of the treaty of Hudaibiyya, the Moslems were to visit Mecca the following year for the fulfillment of the pilgrimage. Muhammad and his followers eagerly looked forward to the day when they would behold the walls of their native city, and would be able to perform the rites and ceremonies which had been denied them for seven years. At last, at the end of the seventh year of Hijrah, the eagerly anticipated time arrived. Muhammad, with 2,000 of his followers proceeded toward Mecca. According to the agreement, the Quraysh evacuated the city for three days and ascending the adjacent hills, witnessed the streams of pilgrims performing the sacred rites with zeal and devotion.

THE PILGRIMAGE

A brief outline of the ceremonies of the pilgrimage and their significance is given below:

Hajj or the pilgrimage to Mecca, which forms one of the five pillars of Islam, is a duty incumbent upon every Moslem once in his life. It becomes compulsory only under certain conditions, such as physical health, financial ability, security in the way and transportation facilities.

The three sacred months of Shawwal, Zul Qa'da and

Zul Hajja are the appointed season of the pilgrimage. Umrah, or the little pilgrimage, may be performed at any time, except in the season of the Hajj. It differs in some of its forms from the Hajj, or the pilgrimage proper.

It is necessary for the Haji, or the pilgrim, to undertake the sacred journey with the definite purpose and intention of performing the pilgrimage. When he arrives at Miquat, the fixed stations which are at a distance of five or six miles from Mecca, on the various roads leading to the holy city, the pilgrim, after ablution and prayers, must put off his ordinary dress and assume the Ihram or the pilgrim's garb, which consists of two seamless sheets, one of which is worn around the loins and the other thrown over the shoulders. While in the state of Ihram, the Haji must abstain from the affairs of the world. He must not shave at all, nor trim his nails, nor anoint his head, nor hunt. He must devote himself entirely to prayers and to the remembrance of God. The formulas and expressions which the Haji is required to repeat constantly are as follows:

“O Lord, Here I am, Here I am. There is no partner unto Thee. All praise, bounty and the sovereignty belong to Thee. There is no partner unto Thee.”

“Allah is Most Great.”

“There is none worthy of worship but Allah.”

“Allah is Holy and all praise belongs to Allah.”

Upon arrival at Haram—the sacred territory a few

miles round the city of Mecca—when the Haji first gazes at the Ka'aba, he is supposed to pray earnestly as that is considered a special moment for the acceptance of prayers. The kissing of the Black Stone which adorns the southeast corner of the house of God constitutes the next important ceremony, after which the pilgrim makes seven circuits around the sacred house, each time kissing the Black Stone. When the overwhelming multitude prevents access to it, a gesture is made toward it with the hand, which is kissed instead. This is called Tawaf or circumambulation round the Ka'aba, at the conclusion of which the Haji has to offer prayers within the precincts of the holy house standing behind Ma-quami-Ibrahim—the place of Abraham.

The pilgrim next proceeds to the mounts Safa and Marwa. First ascending the hill of Safa, he recites the Takbir or "Allah is Most Great," with his face turned toward the Ka'aba. Then he descends and starting from Safa, he runs seven times between the two summits. This is called Sa-ee, or the Running, after which, the wayfarer to God stays in Mecca with his pilgrim's garb on, until the eighth of Zul Hajja. On that day he goes to Mina, a place three miles distant from Mecca. He reaches there before noontide and stays overnight.

On the morning of the ninth day, immediately after the early dawn prayers, the Haji proceeds to Arafat, a plain at a distance of six miles from Mina. Arriving at the Valley of Namrah, the pilgrim offers his early and late afternoon prayers together and then enters into

Arafat and remains there until sundown. This staying in Arafat forms a principal part of the ceremonies of the Hajj. The pilgrim must devote himself solely to prayers and the remembrance of God. After sunset, the Haji departs from Arafat and goes to Muzdalifa, a place midway between Arafat and Mina, where he spends the night in devotions.

On the tenth of Zul Hajja, after prayers at the break of dawn, the pilgrim visits the sacred Mosque of Masharul Haram and spends a little while in prayers. Departing thence before sunrise, the Haji goes to Mina where there are three different pillars called Jamratul Aquaba, Jamratul Wusta, the middle pillar, and Jamratul Ula, the first or the little pillar. There the Haji performs the ceremony called Rami-ul Jimar or the throwing of the pebbles. He throws seven stones at Aquaba, each time reciting "Allah is Most Great." At that time, he ceases reciting the formula, "O Lord, Here I am" which he started when assuming the pilgrim's garb. This ceremony duly over, the pilgrim offers the sacrifice of Idul Adh-ha, an account of which has already been given. The offering of the sacrifice marks the conclusion of the essential ceremonies of the Hajj. The Haji now shaves his head, cuts his nails, removes his Ihram or the pilgrim's garb, takes a bath and resumes his ordinary dress.

Next following this, the Haji should pay a visit to the Ka'aba and make circuit around it and in case he could not make the circuit of Safa and Marwa before, he must

do it now. Without this Hajj will not have been fulfilled. Then he should turn to Mina and remain there until the thirteenth of Zul Hajja. During his stay at Mina, he must perform the ceremonies of casting pebbles at the pillars each day after noontide and spend all his time in prayers and in the remembrance of God.

On the thirteenth day, the pilgrim pays his last visit to Ka'aba and makes his farewell circumambulation of the holy house at the conclusion of which he offers his prayers and thus brings his Hajj to completion. The Haji is now free to go where he wills.

The following acts are considered meritorious.

Praying with the face, the chest, and stomach touching the wall near the corner where stands the Black Stone.

The drinking of the water of the well Zam Zam.

Paying a visit to the caverns of the mounts Hira and Thaur, and to the Vale of Abu Talib, about which we have already spoken.

Offering prayers in Masji-dul Haram, the Holy Mosque in Mecca.

It is the pious custom with those pilgrims who can afford to do so to pay a visit to the holy city of Medina, where lies the tomb of the great Prophet Muhammad.

PHILOSOPHY

The ceremonies of the Hajj are not empty and meaningless forms. They have deep spiritual significance. Just as the soul cannot exist without the body and the

kernel cannot exist without the shell, similarly, the vital spiritual reality and experience cannot be attained without these outward forms of devotion. In the eyes of the true Moslems the pilgrimage is null and void unless each of the successive formal acts which it involves is accompanied by corresponding movements of the heart. Junayd of Baghdad, a great Moslem divine, explained the spiritual significance of the ceremonies of the Hajj to a man who just returned from the Pilgrimage. Junayd said:

“From the hour when you first journeyed from your home have you also been journeying away from all sins? He said ‘No.’ ‘Then,’ said Junayd, ‘you have made no journey. At every stage where you halted for the night did you traverse a station on the way to God?’ ‘No,’ he replied. ‘Then,’ said Junayd, ‘you have not trodden the road, stage by stage. When you put on the pilgrim’s garb at the proper place, did you discard the qualities of human nature as you cast off your clothes?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you have not put on the pilgrim’s garb. When you stood at Arafat, did you stand one moment in contemplation of God?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you have not stood at Arafat. When you went to Muzdalifa and achieved your desire, did you renounce all sensual desires?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you have not gone to Muzdalifa. When you circumambulated the Ka’aba, did you behold the immaterial beauty of God in the abode of purification?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then you have not circumambulated the Ka’aba. When

you ran between Safa and Marwa, did you attain to purity (safa) and virtue (muruwwat)?' 'No.' 'Then you have not run. When you came to Mina, did all your wishes (muna) cease?' 'No.' 'Then you have not yet visited Mina. When you reached the slaughter place and offered sacrifice, did you sacrifice the objects of worldly desire?' 'No.' 'Then you have not sacrificed. When you threw the pebbles, did you throw away whatever sensual thoughts were accompanying you?' 'No.' 'Then you have not yet thrown the pebbles, and you have not yet performed the pilgrimage.'"⁹³

The word Hajj literally means Qasd or aspiration and in its spiritual significance it symbolizes the journey from this material world to God, which means realization of and union with Him.

The Pilgrimage to Mecca is a symbol of respect shown to places where the will of God was manifested and serves to remind the faithful of these incidents. It is reminiscent of the story of Ishmael and Hagar who had been left in the desert by Abraham, and how those who make sacrifices in the path of God are protected and honored. This inspires the pilgrim with living faith in the power and might of God. He finds himself near the place which has been dedicated to the worship of One, True God from time immemorial. And he comes to experience a spiritual association with those who have through countless centuries been bound together by the

⁹³ The Mystics of Islam by R. A. Nicholson — Pages 91-92.

love and remembrance of God, among whom he reckons himself.

The pilgrimage trains the Moslem to leave his dear hearth and home, to suffer separation from his friends and relatives and to undergo the hardships of the arduous journey for the sake of God.

A supreme purpose of the pilgrimage to Mecca, is the fulfillment of the ideal of the equality and brotherhood of mankind. Dressed in the same simple garments, the vast concourse of the pilgrims presents an impressive sight. There the emperor cannot be distinguished from the ordinary peasant. There the king is made to realize that he is not superior to the poorest man in the street. There the humble servant is made to feel that he is not inferior to the greatest monarch. It indeed is a great academy of universal brotherhood. T. W. Arnold says:

“But above all—and herein is its supreme importance in the missionary history of Islam—it ordains a yearly gathering of believers of all nations and languages, brought together from all parts of the world to pray in the sacred place (The Ka’aba) towards which their faces are set in every hour of private worship in their distant homes. No fetch of religious genius could have conceived a better expedient for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the bond of faith. Here is a supreme act of common worship, the Negro of the West Coast of Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East; the courtly and polished Ottoman recognizes his brother

Muslim in the wild islander from the farthest end of the Malayan Sea. At the same time, throughout the whole Muhammadan world the hearts of believers are lifted up in sympathy with their more fortunate brethren gathered together in the sacred city (Mecca) as in their own homes they celebrate the festival of 'Id al Adh'a or (as it is called in Turkey and Egypt) the feast of the Bayram.'⁹⁴

We shall now proceed with our narrative. As soon as the allotted period of three days passed, the Quraysh demanded the immediate departure of the Moslems. The Holy Prophet, true to his word, took his departure from the city of Mecca. The peaceful behavior of the Moslems and their master, and the faithful fulfillment of their pledged word greatly impressed their enemies and won a goodly number of converts to the fold of Islam.

THE BATTLE OF MUTA

Shurahbil, son of Amru, was the governor of Basra, which, at the time of our story, was under the domination of the Emperor of Rome. The above named prince was one of those sovereigns to whom Muhammad had sent his envoy with his missionary epistle. The governor murdered the ambassador, an act which was an open declaration of war. Muhammad dispatched an army to avenge the murder of his messenger. In this expedition, Zaid, his freed slave, was given command of

⁹⁴ The Preachings of Islam by T. W. Arnold, Page 338.

the army under strict orders that on no account was he to kill women, children, monks or the blind; nor to destroy any house, nor to cut down any trees.⁹⁵ The enemy came with a vastly superior force and met them on the field of Muta. Zaid, Jafar and Abdullah Ibn Rawaha, all of whom were among the pillars of Islam, fought nobly and fell in this battle. Khaled Ibn Waleed was the last commander who bravely held out, but at last was forced to retreat to Medina, which he did successfully.

THE CONQUEST OF MECCA

After the conclusion of the truce of Hudaibiyya, two years passed in peace between the Moslems and the Meccans. The Quraysh, however, were the last people under the sun to remain loyal to any treaty. They sought to launch hostilities against the Moslems. The aggressive designs of the Quraysh were fulfilled in the following manner.

There were two tribes named Banu Bakr and the Khuzaa which inhabited the city of Mecca and its neighbourhood. A sanguinary feud existed between them, dating from pre-Islamic times. Since the dawn of Islam, warfare between these two clans was suspended, as all the forces of the Arab tribes were engaged in their conflict against the Moslems. During the period of peace which was followed by the armistice of Hudaib-

⁹⁵ Muslim on Jihad.
Abu Daud.

iyya, the Banu Bakr rekindled the flames of the old feud by ruthless attacks on the Khuzaa. It will be recalled that according to the agreement of Hudaibiyya, the Arab tribes were free to choose as their allies, either the Moslems or the Meccans. Taking advantage of this discretion, the Khuzaa formed alliance with the Moslems and the Banu Bakr with the Meccans. When the Banu Bakr attacked the Khuzaa, the Quraysh openly helped the Banu Bakr in flagrant violation of their treaty with the Moslems and massacred the people of Khuzaa within the precincts of the Kaaba where they took refuge.⁹⁶ And within the holy precincts, bloodshed was regarded as the greatest sacrilege from time immemorial. Thereupon forty men of the persecuted Khuzaa mounted their camels, rode in haste to Medina and besought the Moslems to rise in their defense in compliance with their mutual assistance pact. Profoundly shocked, Muhammad dispatched his ambassador to Mecca and offered the Quraysh the following three terms, giving them the choice to accept any one:

1. Pay the blood-money for the slain Khuzaa.
 2. Stop giving assistance to the Banu Bakr against the Khuzaa.
 3. Declare the treaty of Hudaibiyya null and void.
- The Quraysh flatly repudiated the first two demands the acceptance of either of which would result in peace. They chose to declare the treaty null and void.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Tabari, Page 1620.

Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. II, Page 97.

⁹⁷ Zurquani.

Later, conscious of their fatal blunder in rejecting the peace offers made by the Prophet, the Quraysh sent Abu Sufiyan to rectify their mistake but he met with no success.

The cup of forbearance was now full. Muhammad resolved to lead an expedition. He marched with ten thousand followers (mark the rapid spread of Islam during the period of peace) and triumphantly entered the beloved city of Mecca on the 10th of Ramadhan, 8th Hijrah, as a peaceful conqueror, for he was practically unopposed.

The Moslem army advanced toward Mecca from various directions. Muhammad gave strict orders that there should be no fighting. One division of the army was under the command of Sa'ad Ibn Ubada. As he led his detachment he sang: "Today is the day of fighting. There is no safety for the Ka'aba today."⁹⁸ When the Holy Prophet heard of these words, he was greatly displeased and said: "Nay, today is the day of glorification of the Ka'aba."⁹⁹ Then he took the banner from Sa'ad's hands and gave it to his son Qais, who was a man of milder disposition.

All the Moslem columns entered Mecca peaceably. But the one under the famous Khalid met opposition from a party of the Meccans who assailed the Moslems with a shower of arrows. Khalid was forced to repulse the attack. There followed a brief clash in which two

⁹⁸ & ⁹⁹ Bukhari on the Conquest of Mecca.
Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. II, Page 98.

Moslems and thirteen Meccans were killed. The enemy was, however, soon put to flight.

While the skirmish was still going on, Muhammad reached an eminence from whence he could see the gleam of the swords and lances on the farther side of the city. He was filled with grief and indignation. Upon investigation he learned that the enemy was the first to attack. He then said: "Such was the decree of God."¹⁰⁰

Muhammad then proceeded to the Ka'aba, and destroyed all the idols in the sanctuary. Even the pictures were obliterated. As he struck down each idol he recited the Quranic verse:¹⁰¹

*"Truth has come, and falsehood vanished: verily falsehood is ever vanishing."*¹⁰²

Thus he succeeded in purifying the sacred Ka'aba from all traces of idolatry.¹⁰³

Having demolished the idols and the pictures from the Ka'aba, Muhammad ordered Bilal to summon the customary call to Prayer from the top of the shrine. Worship was then performed by the surrounding multitudes.

Muhammad and his followers had been subjected to atrocious cruelties and ousted from Mecca. Their enemies pursued them to the lands of their refuge with a deadly hatred, forced them into terrible warfare and inflicted upon them all kinds of injuries and humilia-

¹⁰⁰ Bukhari on the Conquest of Mecca.

¹⁰¹ & ¹⁰² & ¹⁰³ Bukhari on the Conquest of Mecca.

tion. Even the dead bodies of the Moslems had not been free from their barbarities. Now all those mortal foes were there in a state of stupefication. They were completely at the mercy of the Prophet. How did Muhammad deal with them? He delivered the following sermon:

"Truth hath come and falsehood vanished. Verily, falsehood is ever vanishing."

"There is none worthy of worship but Allah, Who hath fulfilled His promise, helped his servant and He alone hath defeated the hosts of enemies."

"O people of the Quraysh, God hath removed from you your pride which marked the days of ignorance and your hereditary pride in ancestry. All people originate from Adam and Adam was created of clay."

Then he recited the following verse of the Holy Quran:

*"O Ye, people, We have created you male and female and divided you into clans and tribes so that ye may be recognized. Verily, the most respectable among you is the most righteous among you."*¹⁰⁴

After the sermon was over, the Holy Prophet looked at the assembly with sparkling eyes and addressed them in a majestic and inspiring voice.

"O people of the Quraysh, how do ye think that I shall act toward you?" The Quraysh knew full well that benevolence was the native quality of the Prophet. He

For ¹⁰¹ see next page footnote.

was kindness itself. They all replied in one voice:

“With mercy; thou art the noble brother and the son of the noble brother.”

Muhammad replied: “Go, ye all are free. No reproach to you upon this day.”

History tells us that the Prophet also said:

“I shall say unto you, even as Joseph said to his brothers, no reproach to you today. May God forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of all the merciful.”

As he uttered these words, the Prophet’s eyes were filled with tears.¹⁰⁵

The refugees who fled to Medina from the persecutions of the Quraysh had left their houses in Mecca. Now it was time for them to reclaim their properties, but the Prophet did not allow them to do so.¹⁰⁶

In the supreme hour of triumph, he forgot all wrongs and proclaimed a general amnesty to the people of Mecca. This is a striking instance which vividly illustrates that in magnanimity and forgiveness, Muhammad stands out as the brightest star in the constellation of the founders of faiths and the conquerors of the world.

So deep an attachment did Muhammad cherish for Mecca that he declared it was the fairest spot on the surface of the earth. After the conquest of Mecca, some Helpers expressed fears lest the Prophet should settle

¹⁰⁴ & ¹⁰⁵ Bukhari on the Conquest of Mecca.

Tabari—Pg. 1642 — Ibn Hisham—Pgs. 823-825.

Ibn Saad — Part II, Vol. II, Pages 97-105.

¹⁰⁶ Seeratun-Nabi by Maulana Shibli — Page 475.

in his native city. When he became apprised of this, the Prophet assured the Helpers that never would he abandon them. He said: "I am a servant of God and His Prophet. I fled to God and to you. Where ye live, I shall live and there too shall I die."¹⁰⁷

Truth dawned upon many people and they offered themselves to embrace the faith of Islam. Sitting upon an eminence, near Safa, the Holy Prophet accepted their oath of allegiance.

The conquest of Mecca exerted a powerful influence not only upon the Quraysh but upon the Arab tribes. Hosts upon hosts voluntarily appeared before Muhammad and adopted the religion of Islam.¹⁰⁸ Thus the prophecy of the Holy Quran was fulfilled:

"When the help of God shall come and victory,

"And thou shalt see the people enter into the religion of God by troops.

"Then hymn the praise of Thy Lord and seek forgiveness of Him.

"Verily, He is the Merciful."¹⁰⁹

It must not be supposed that all the inhabitants of Mecca were converted to the faith of Islam on that occasion. There were many who followed the religion of their forefathers. The Prophet did not compel any one to become a Moslem. He gave them complete religious freedom and they were free to follow any faith they

¹⁰⁷ Muslim: Conquest of Mecca.

¹⁰⁸ Bukhari: Conquest of Mecca.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Quran CX.

chose. The result was that we find many unbelievers fought on the side of the Prophet in the battle of Hunain about which we shall speak presently.

This is a pointed refutation of the false accusation which has been hurled against Muhammad by so many western writers that the Prophet promulgated his religion by force. If he were to use force for the purpose of proselytizing, no other occasion was more suitable than this. For there he had the power to have his wish fulfilled as the Meccans were prostrate before him. But the Prophet set an example of perfect religious freedom, the establishment of which was the mission of his life.

THE BATTLE OF HUNAIN

A great storm was gathering. Some of the hardy mountain tribes formed a league to stem the increasing power of Islam, lest it should subjugate all Arabia. The warlike tribes of Howazin and Thakif were the leaders of the coalition.¹¹⁰ When the tidings of this impending danger reached Muhammad, he dispatched one of his followers to ascertain the truth about the report. On his return, the scout confirmed the news. The Prophet sallied forth at the head of twelve thousand followers in order to repulse the enemy. But the enemy skillfully posted their troops on both sides of the narrow and steep defile which formed the entrance to the valley of Hunain. At early dawn, while it was yet dark,

¹¹⁰ Zurquani.

the Moslem army, quite unaware of the position of the enemy, marched through the rugged gorge. Suddenly the enemy sprang from their ambushade and assailed the Moslems with showers of darts, stones and arrows. This sudden onslaught frightened the horses and camels of the Moslems. The riders lost control of them. The result was a panic. The Moslem troops turned and fled. The Holy Prophet was left alone with only twelve companions out of an army of twelve thousand. It was a moment of grave peril. The small group of the companions were utterly disconcerted. Dismounting their horses, they held the reins of the Prophet's horse and begged their master to turn back, for, upon the safety of his person rested the safety of Islam. So firm was his belief in his own mission, and so implicit his trust in the protection of God, that in the midst of overwhelming numbers of enemies he was dauntless and felt sure that no harm could come to him. "Leave off the reins of my horse," he cried, and recited at the top of his voice:

"I am the Prophet of God, doubtless and true.

"I am the grandson of Abdul Muttalib."¹¹¹

The Prophet then urged his horse toward the enemy's ranks with the handful of companions left with him. At the same time he ordered one of his disciples to cry aloud:

"Ye hosts of Ansars,

Ye, men of the pledge of the tree,

Come back, for the Prophet calleth you."

¹¹¹ Bukhari: Battle of Hunain.

No sooner had the Moslems heard this cry than they came pouring back as though in a trance and rallied round the Prophet. They fought bravely. The enemy was repulsed. The flying columns took refuge in the valley of Autas and in the distant city of Tayif. Muhammad dispatched a small detachment to Autas to dislodge the portion which had taken refuge in the strongholds there.

THE SIEGE OF TAYIF

After the return of the small Moslem army from Autas, Muhammad pushed forward toward Tayif where the remaining troops of the enemy had taken refuge and were making preparations to attack the Moslems. The tribe of Thakif, which was settled at Tayif, was skilled in warfare. The Moslems laid siege to Tayif. For twenty days there was severe fighting. At last, when the enemy was reduced to such condition that the Prophet felt assured they would not be able to do any harm, he raised the siege.

FIDELITY TO THE HELPERS

From Tayif, the Moslems marched to the valley of Jirrana where the spoils taken in the battle of Hunain had been sent. In the distribution of the spoils, Muhammad gave by far the larger shares to the Quraysh of Mecca and to the newly converted Moslems of the Bedouin tribes. This liberality to the Quraysh caused a feeling of discontent among certain Ansars (the

Helpers from Medina) that the Holy Prophet had shown partiality to his own people.¹¹² When these murmurings reached the Prophet's ears, he assembled the Ansars and addressed them thus:

"Ye, Ansars, it has been reported to me that ye have been disturbed over the way in which I have distributed the spoils."

They replied:

"None of the older members of our community said anything concerning this but some youths expressed such feelings."

The Holy Prophet said:

"Is it not true, ye were misguided and Allah showed you the right path through me, ye were needy and Allah made you prosperous through me and ye were at enmity amongst yourselves and Allah filled your hearts with love and unity?"

The Holy Prophet paused and the Ansars said:

"Yes, it is true, the favor of Allah and His Prophet is great upon us."

The Holy Prophet asked:

"Ye, Ansars, why do ye not answer me?"

"What shall we answer thee, O Prophet of Allah?" replied the Ansars.

The Holy Prophet continued:

"Ye can answer and answer truly, 'Thou camest to us rejected by thy own people and we accepted thee as a

For ¹¹² see next page footnote.

true prophet of God, thou camest as a fugitive and as an outcast, we gave thee shelter and thou camest destitute and we fed thee.' Ye, Ansars, why disturb your hearts because of the things of this world. I sought to conciliate those men and strengthen them in faith in which ye already are well established. Are ye not satisfied that other people will carry flocks and herds and ye will return to your homes with the Prophet of God in your midst? Nay, to me Ansars are the nearest and most beloved of all people. I shall never forsake them. If other people go one way and the Ansars of Medina another way, I shall go the way of the Ansars. O Allah have mercy upon the Ansars and upon their children and upon their children's children."

At these words, the Ansars wept and the tears ran down their beards, and they cried with one voice:

"O Prophet of Allah, we are well satisfied with our share."¹¹³

THE RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS

The captives taken in the battle of Hunain were yet in Jirrana. A deputation of the tribe of Hawazin waited upon Muhammad and solicited the release of their families. The Prophet replied to the deputies: "My own share in the captives and that of the children of Abdul Muttalib, I give you at once. As for the shares

¹¹² & ¹¹³ Bukhari: Battle of Tayif.

Bukhari: Manaquibul Ansar.

Fathul Bari.

Ibn Hisham: Pages 885-886.

of other Moslems, ye have to appear before their assembly after the prayer is over and make petition to them." Accordingly, the deputation appeared before the Moslems and appealed to them to restore their families to them (the Hawazin). The Holy Prophet interceded with his companions in behalf of the Hawazin and the Moslems instantly released all prisoners, who were six thousand in number. Thus the Holy Prophet won the hearts of the tribe of Hawazin by this act of generosity.¹¹⁴

DEATH OF HIS SON

In the eighth year of Hijrah, Muhammad was blessed with a son by his Coptic wife Mariyah, whom he named Ibrahim. All his sons born previously died in their infancy and the Prophet was without male issue. Naturally he was exceedingly anxious to have a son. Hence, the birth of Ibrahim was a source of great joy and comfort to Muhammad. But alas! When the beloved son was a little more than one year old, he died to the intense grief of the Prophet. The Prophet wept and tears rolled down his cheeks. Some of his companions reminded him that he had forbidden his followers from doing so. The Prophet replied: "It was not the expression of grief, but the wild shrieks and wailings, beating of faces and rending of the garments that were forbidden." He added: "The shedding of tears is only a sign of

¹¹⁴ Ibn Hisham: Pages 877-878.
Ibnal Athir — Vol. II, Page 206.

mercy and he who showeth not mercy, unto him no mercy will be shown.”¹¹⁵

It so happened that on the day of the child's death, an eclipse of the sun occurred. Some Moslems interpreted this eclipse as the sign of nature's mourning for the demise of the Prophet's son. When the rumor reached Muhammad, he assembled the people and explained: "The eclipse of the sun and the moon are only natural phenomena. They have nothing to do with the birth or death of anyone."¹¹⁶ This is how he moved to eradicate superstition from among his followers.

THE CAMPAIGN OF TABUK

During the summer of the year 630 A.D., rumors were spread that the Roman feudatories in the Syrian frontier, at the injunction of the Emperor of Rome had assembled a large force with the intention of crushing the Moslems.¹¹⁷ Muhammad resolved to meet the threat. He gathered an army 30,000 strong and made an expedition into the borders of Syria. After a wearisome journey of fourteen days, the army arrived at Tabuk, a small town on the confines of the Roman Empire, midway between Damascus and Medina. The Prophet halted there for twenty days and found the situation peaceful.

¹¹⁵ & ¹¹⁹ Bukhari: Chapter on Eclipse.
Bukhari: Adab.

¹¹⁶ Bukhari: Chapter on Eclipse.

¹¹⁷ Mawahib.

When he felt sure that there was no cause for apprehension, he returned to Medina.

During Muhammad's encampment, a number of neighboring princes entered into a covenant of peace with the Prophet and agreed to pay an annual tribute in return for their protection.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ORWA, THE CHIEF OF TAYIF

After the return of the Prophet from the campaign of Tabuk, Orwa, one of the chiefs of Tayif, came to Medina in quest of the Prophet and adopted Islam. Then he returned to Tayif and invited his fellow-citizens to share in the blessing of the new faith. The people of Tayif were still stubborn. When in the morning Orwa announced the call to prayer at the top of his voice from the roof of his house, a rabble surrounded the building and shot arrows at him. He was mortally wounded. But he was happy. He praised God for the honor of martyrdom, in that he had been able to lay down his life for the sake of truth. He besought his people to bury him by the side of the Moslems who had fallen in the battle of Hunain.

TAYIF EMBRACES ISLAM

The blood of Orwa, and his dying words, had a great effect upon his fellow citizens. Seized with compunction, they sent ambassadors to Muhammad to entreat for peace and to ask permission to enter the fold of Islam. However, they begged the Prophet to allow

them to take interest, drink wine, and commit certain sexual irregularities. These requests were peremptorily denied. Then they entreated the Holy Prophet to grant them permission to worship their idol for a period of three years and to be excused from the observance of the five daily prayers. The Holy Prophet was firm. Islam and idolatry could not coexist. The idol was at last destroyed. As for prayers, "There can be no true religion without prayers," replied Muhammad. However they were to be temporarily relieved of Zakat (Poor Tax) and the obligation to fight. It is related that the Holy Prophet observed that once they had accepted Islam, they would of their own volition, both pay alms and take part in the sacred war.¹¹⁸ This is how the people of Tayif were converted to the faith of Islam. They were the same people who barbarously assailed Muhammad when he went to preach the doctrines of Islam in the early days of his mission.

THE YEAR OF DEPUTATIONS

It has already been observed that after the conquest of Mecca, the Arab tribes voluntarily appeared before Muhammad and embraced the faith of Islam. The number of the deputations that waited upon the Holy Prophet during the ninth year after the Hijrah, was so numerous that the year has been rightly called, "The Year of Deputations." Thus, within nine or ten years

¹¹⁸ Musnad, Volume III—Page 341.
Abu Daud.

after his flight from Mecca as a fugitive, the whole of Arabia tendered allegiance to him.

THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

The great mission of the Prophet's life on earth was fulfilled. He perceived that now his end was approaching. He resolved to make the final pilgrimage. Consequently, he went to Mecca on the 25th of Zul Qa'da. After performing the rites and ceremonies of the pilgrimage during the intervening days, on the 9th of Zul-Hajja, mounted upon his camel, Al-Qaswa, the Prophet addressed the crowd of pilgrims in his memorable speech which is known as the Sermon of the Farewell Pilgrimage and runs as follows:

"There is none worthy of worship but One and the Only God, Allah, One without a partner. Unto Him belongeth the Kingdom. It is He who possesseth all excellence and it is He Who giveth life and it is He Who giveth death. He hath power over all things.

"Ye people! Hearken to my words; for I know not whether, after this year, I shall have another opportunity to meet you in this place."

"Your lives and your properties and your honors are as sacred and inviolable amongst one another until ye appear before your Lord, as this day and this month is sacred for all. Ye, people, ye have rights over your wives and your wives have rights over you. . . . Treat them with kindness and love."

"And your slaves, see that ye feed them with such

food as ye eat yourselves and clothe them with the stuff ye wear.”

“The Arabs have no superiority over the non-Arabs, nor have the non-Arabs any superiority over the Arabs. All are the children of Adam and Adam was created of clay.”¹¹⁹

“All the Moslems are brothers unto one another. The Moslems are one brotherhood.”

“Verily, I have left that amongst you—the Book of God—which if ye hold fast, ye shall never go astray.”

“Ye people, worship your Lord, pray five times a day, fast during the month of Ramadhan and follow my instructions. Ye shall enter Paradise.”

Then he looked at the assembly and asked: “Have I delivered my message to you?” They all exclaimed, simultaneously: “Ay, Ay! Indeed thou hast!”

Then he said: “O Lord, I beseech thee, bear witness unto it.”

And addressing the people again he said:

“Let Him who is present convey my words to him who is absent. Haply, he that shall be told, remember it better than he who hath heard it.”

Then he recited the verse which had just been revealed:

*“Today, I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favor upon you and chosen Islam as your religion.”*¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Ikdul Fareed—Page 123.

¹²⁰ Al-Quran (V-3).

With these words, the prophet concluded his speech and dismissed the assembly. After finishing all the rites and ceremonies, Muhammad returned to Medina.¹²¹

PRINCIPLE OF BROTHERHOOD EMPHASIZED

Soon after his return from the farewell pilgrimage, Muhammad gave orders for an expedition to Syria in order to exact reparation for the murder of the envoy there. It was announced that Osama, son of Zaid, the Prophet's beloved freedman who was killed at Muta, was to lead the army. Some people remonstrated at the appointment of the youthful Osama. When the complaints reached the Holy Prophet, he addressed them: "Ye people, what is this which hath reached my ears that some among you murmur against my appointment of Osama to command the Syrian expedition? Now, if ye blame my appointment of Osama, verily heretofore ye blamed likewise my appointment of his father Zaid before him. And I swear by the Lord that he verily was well fitted for the command and that his son after him is well fitted also. Truly Osama is one of the men most dearly beloved by me, even as his father was. Wherefore do ye treat him well, for he is one of the best."¹²² Thus he once more emphasized the principle of brotherhood in Islam on the eve of his departure from this earth.

¹²¹ For the Sermon see:
Bukhari and Muslim.

Ibn Saad and Ibn Hisham.
¹²² Bukhari: Dispatch of Osama and Zaid Ibn Harith.

THE PROPHET'S DEATH

The end of Muhammad's life was drawing near; he fell ill on the 19th of Safar, 11th Hijrah. Even during his illness he would go to the Mosque to lead the prayers. One day at the time of the night prayer, his malady increased and he swooned. Abu Bakr was appointed to lead the service. This continued for several days. Four days before his death the Prophet felt a little better and at noon went to the Mosque to offer his devotions. After the service was over, he addressed the people: "God offered a servant of His the choice between the enjoyment of the earthly life and the blessings of life with Him. The servant chose the latter." Abu Bakr wept, for he knew that the blessed Prophet would soon depart from this world.¹²³

The Prophet further said: "Attribute not to me what is lawful or what is unlawful. I have not made anything lawful except that which God hath made lawful; nor have I prohibited aught but what God hath prohibited."¹²⁴ Then turning to his daughter and aunt he said: "O Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, and Safia, the Prophet's aunt, do that which shall gain acceptance with God. For surely I have no power with Him to save you anywise."¹²⁵ During his illness, he is reported to have

¹²³ Bukhari: Manaqib Abu Bakr.

¹²⁴ Musnad: Iman Shafee.

¹²⁵ Musnad: Imam Shafee.

Ibn Saad: Chapter on Death.

exhorted: "Let not my grave be an object of worship."¹²⁶

His strength failed rapidly. At noon on Monday the 12th of Rabiwal Awwal, 8th of June, Muhammad passed away. Among the last words that he uttered were: "Be steadfast in your prayers and do not forget my teachings with regard to slaves."¹²⁷ The very last words that fell from his lips were: "The Blessed companionship on High."¹²⁸

The sorrows of the companions of Muhammad knew no bounds. Thoroughly overcome with grief, Omar refused to believe that the Prophet was dead and sword in hand, he declared: "Any one who will say, the Prophet is dead, I will separate his head from his body." When Abu Bakr received the sad news, he hastened to Ayesha's chamber where lay the dead body. Raising the striped sheet which covered the bed, he stooped down, kissed the face of his departed master and wept, as he said: "Sweet wast thou in life and sweet art thou in death." Leaving the chamber, Abu Bakr forthwith went to the spot outside where Omar was in a state of excitement. He asked Omar to sit down and then gave the following speech:

"Those of you who worship Muhammad, verily, Muhammad is dead. Those of you who worship

¹²⁶ Bukhari: Prohibition of Building Mosque in the Cemetery.

¹²⁷ Ibn Maja Kitabul Wasaya.

Ibn Saad: Chapter on Death.

¹²⁸ Bukhari: Chapter on Death.

Allah, verily, Allah is living and will never die. God says:

'Muhammad is but a Prophet of Allah and all prophets before him passed away. What then! If he were to die or be killed, would ye turn back upon your heels?' ¹²⁹

When the people heard these words of God, they said:

"It was as though we did not know till that moment that such words existed in the Holy Quran."

Omar himself related: "By Allah, when I heard Abu Bakr reciting those verses, I was struck with sorrow, my legs trembled and I dropped down upon the earth, and I knew for certain that the Prophet was dead."¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Al-Quran — Chapter III — 144.

¹³⁰ Mawahib, Volume II—Pages 373-374.

CHAPTER IV

A GLIMPSE INTO MUHAMMAD'S CHARACTER

WE have finished the brief sketch of the Life of Muhammad. It is fitting that we now take a glimpse into his character.

MUHAMMAD AND WAR

The charge which is commonly leveled against Muhammad is that he resorted to the sword for the propagation of his faith. It has been made abundantly clear, throughout our story of the Life of Muhammad that he was forced to enter into warfare only in self-defense. Territorial aggrandizement and propagation of faith did not form even the slightest of his motives in his resort to arms. Furthermore, the wars brought into prominence an important aspect of his character; namely, his love for peace, magnanimity, forgiveness and mercy. For truly merciful is he who having power to wreak vengeance upon his fallen enemies, forgives them. God gave Muhammad victory over his ruthless persecutors but he forgave them. Throughout these battles and wars, numerous examples of his magnanimity shine forth in full splendor.

MUHAMMAD AND POLYGAMY

Apparently, the most damaging accusation brought against Muhammad is that of polygamy. Mr. Manly P. Hall, the erudite author of "Masonic Hermetic Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy," says in his article, "The Faith of Islam":

"Those who sincerely believe the harem to be irreconcilable with spirituality should, with consistency, move for the expurgation of the Psalms of David and the Proverbs of Solomon from the list of inspired writings, for the harem of Islam's Prophet was insignificant compared with that maintained by Israel's wisest King and reputed favorite of the Most High."¹

The modernist seems to think that there is something unedifying and unethical in the institution of polygamy under all circumstances. The history of religion, however, reveals to us that most of the religious founders and teachers who were of the noblest patterns of humanity and were of pure and spotless character, practiced polygamy, as is apparent from the above quotation. The present day Christians boldly come forward to impress upon the world that Christianity advocated monogamy. Close scrutiny and investigations throw a different light upon the subject. Jesus was a prophet

¹"Masonic Hermetic Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy," by Manly P. Hall; the article, "The Faith of Islam." Page CXCL.

who did not bring any new law, but came to fulfill the law of Moses. Jesus says:

*"Think not that I am come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."*²

*"The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all, therefore, that they bid you, observe; that observe and do; but do not ye after the words; for they say, and do not."*³

*"This is the law and the Prophets."*⁴

The above verses make it plain that Jesus did not establish any new law or dispensation. He regarded the law of Moses as still binding on the people. Alfred W. Martin says:

"The disciples of Jesus did not break with Judaism and had no thought whatsoever of constituting themselves an independent religious body. Rather it was their supreme purpose to stay within the ranks of the mother-faith while striving to convert their fellow Jews to acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah."^{4a}

Again:

"Enough for him (Jesus) that he could preach the moral reforms that his insight had grasped, conscious of no simultaneous necessity for renouncing the affilia-

² Matthew V—17-18.

³ Matthew XXIII—2-3

⁴ Matthew VII—12

^{4a} The World's Great Religions by A. W. Martin, Page 81.

tions he cherished. Nor, again, was he content to be a mere iconoclast; rather would he be a constructive reformer with a positive message, aiming to reveal the deeper meanings of the ancient moral code, to bring to light latent implications of the primary commandments, more especially those relating to murder, adultery and the attitude to be taken toward enemies. Far from being conscious of any need to renounce the religion of Israel, he saw that he could consistently remain within the fold and yet endeavor to free that religion from its narrow provincialism, its excessive ceremonialism, its slavish traditionalism.

“Nowhere in the Gospels is there an authentic utterance of Jesus to the effect that he desired to institute a new type of religious organization.”^{4b}

There does not occur one word from Jesus against plural marriages in the New Testament. His silence conclusively proves his sanction of polygamy as it runs through the whole Jewish system. Furthermore, the Christians actually practised polygamy. The following passage from no less an authority than Westermarck is very important:

“In the middle of the sixth century Diarmait, King of Ireland, had two queens and two concubines. Polygamy, was frequently practised by the Merovingian Kings. Charles the Great had two wives and many concubines; and one of his laws

^{4b} The World's Great Religions by A. W. Martin, Pages 115-116.

seems to imply that polygamy was not unknown even among priests. In later times, Phillip of Hesse and Frederick William II of Prussia contracted bigamous marriage with the sanction of the Lutheran Clergy. Luther himself approved of the bigamy of the former, and so did Melanchthon. On various occasions Luther speaks of polygamy with considerable toleration. It had not been forbidden by God; even Abraham who was a 'perfect Christian' had two wives. It is true that God had allowed such marriages to certain men of the old Testament only in particular circumstances, and if a Christian wanted to follow their example, he had to show that the circumstances were similar in his case; but polygamy was undoubtedly preferable to divorce. In 1650, soon after the peace of Westphalia, when the population had been greatly reduced by the Thirty Years War, the Frankish Kreistag at Nuremberg passed the resolution that hence forth every man should be allowed to marry two women. Certain Christian sects had even advocated polygamy with much fervour."⁵

In fact, unbiased and thoughtful students must come to the conclusion that polygamy is the only solution of certain social and ethical problems. We shall give only one out of many such considerations which justify the institution: Suppose as a result of war in a certain coun-

⁵ History of Human Marriage by Westermarck, Volume III, Pages 50-51.

try women largely outnumber men: The sex-impulse is so rash and strong that either you will have to sanction the practice of polygamy in order to fortify morality which is the back-bone of all religions, or you will have to allow free sex-life which is revolting to the human nature. There arise conditions in which polygamy may not only be ethically justifiable, but may become a necessity. Even in the United States of America where the preaching and practice of polygamy is legally forbidden, there are thinkers who have had to admit its moral justification. The following statement made by a Christian minister will be of singular interest. The reverend Dr. Caleb R. Stetson, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church says:

“It is conceivable that this government might some day make polygamy legal, and that legalized polygamy has certain features which recommend it, as compared with the progressive polygamy and respectable promiscuity toward which we are now tending.”⁶

It must be clearly borne in mind that Muhammad and the Faith of Islam did not introduce polygamy into the world. What Muhammad and Islam did was to put a *check* upon it. Islam does by no means make it obligatory. Islam allows polygamy only under certain circumstances and restrictions. Restrictions imposed by Islam are so stringent that it becomes absolutely im-

⁶ The Bankruptcy of Marriage by V. F. Calverton, Page 86.

possible for an average Moslem to practice it. Polygamy under the restrictions of Islam is on no account for self-indulgence. It is a heavy sacrifice which only the chosen few are called upon to make for the good of humanity. In Moslem countries polygamy is not commonly practiced. Hardly one in a thousand has more than one wife.

According to the unanimous verdict of the friends and foes of his time, Muhammad's character was above the reproach of sensuality. He lived an exemplary life. In the prime of manhood, in the full bloom of his youth, when he was a young man of twenty-five, he married Khadija, a widow who was fifteen years his senior. He lived with her an ideally happy life up to his fiftieth year when Khadija died. He entered into polygamy during the last ten years of his life. During those concluding years, he had to fight against the whole of Arabia, lead prayers in the Mosque five times a day and perform multifarious duties. The most of the little leisure that was left, he devoted to prayers and to the contemplation of God. Besides, with one solitary exception, all his wives were widows. It indeed surpasses comprehension that the choice of a man who aims at pleasure should fall upon widows. In short, the considerations which led Muhammad to contract polygamous marriages were for other reasons than self-indulgence. Professor Margoliouth who is perhaps the most relentless of all the modern critics of Muhammad and Islam had to admit the truth of our above remarks.

It is from an unwilling witness and as such we quote below:

“Several of his alliances were political in character, the Prophet being anxious to bind his chief followers more and more closely to himself. This was doubtless his object in marrying the daughters of Abu Bakr and Omar; while a political motive of a different sort is to be found in his alliances with the daughters of political opponents of fallen enemies. Victory over an enemy would seem to have been consummated only when the enemy's daughter was introduced into the conqueror's harem. The remainder are to be explained by his extreme anxiety to have a son, and thereby escape a reproach to which he was keenly sensitive.”⁷

We do not fully agree with the learned Orientalist in all he has said about the plural marriages of Muhammad. But he has admitted the central truth that self-indulgence was not the cause of the Prophet's marriages.

It is beyond the scope of our small treatise to enter into a detailed discussion of the noble and humanitarian grounds which motivated Muhammad in entering into polygamous life.

MUHAMMAD'S APPEARANCE

Muhammad was of medium stature; his appear-

⁷ Muhammad and the Rise of Islam by D. S. Margoliouth, Page 176-177.

ance was commanding and dignified. According to authentic traditions, those who came near him were impressed with a serene majesty, and filled with love and reverence. One of his companions says: "He was the handsomest and bravest, the brightest faced and most generous of men. It was as though the sunlight beamed in his countenance."⁸

Muhammad was accustomed to speak slowly and distinctly. Often he would repeat his sentences three times so that what he said was inscribed on the memory of his hearers. Sir Wm. Muir says: "Master of eloquence, his language was cast in the purest and most persuasive style of Arabian oratory. His fine poetical genius exhausted the imagery of nature in the illustration of spiritual truths."⁹

He wore a smile that constantly radiated from his benign countenance. One of his companions relates: "I never met the Holy Prophet when he did not smile."¹⁰ Muhammad says: "To meet your brother with a cheerful face is also charity."¹¹

It was the manner of Muhammad to walk so rapidly that people behind him half ran and yet could hardly keep up with him. When he walked he looked as though he were descending a hill.¹²

⁸ Bukhari: Manaquib.
Muslim: Manaquib.
Tirmudhi: Manaquib.

⁹ Life of Mohamet by William Muir, Page 502.

¹⁰ Tirmudhi: Manaquib.

¹¹ Muslim: Fazail.

¹² Tirmudhi: Manaquib.

SIMPLICITY OF LIFE

Muhammad was simple in his habits in the midst of the Arabian simplicity. His garments were plain and yet fastidious in their arrangement. He slept on a leathern mat. He seldom allowed himself any luxury in food. Often he would live only on dates and water, sometimes on milk. Although he was fond of honey, meat and all other pure food, he would eat it only upon occasions. Ayesha says: "During the life time of the Holy Prophet, for months together light would not be kindled at our home."¹³ He always lived the life of poverty. Muhammad said: "Those who love me must love poverty."¹⁴

It was the custom with the Prophet to do everything for himself. In the height of his dignity and power, he kindled his own fire, milked his own goat, mended his own clothes, cobbled his own shoes and helped his wives in the household duties.

Washington Irving, in his "Life of Mahomet" says: "His military triumphs awakened no pride nor vain glory, as they would have done had they been effected for selfish purposes. In the time of his greatest power he maintained the same simplicity of manner and appearance as in the days of his adversity. So far from affecting regal state, he was displeased if, on entering a room, any unusual testimonial of respect were shown to him. If he aimed at universal dominion, it was the

¹³ Bukhari: Manaquib.

¹⁴ Tirmudhi: Manaquib.

dominion of the faith; as to the temporal rule which grew up in his hands, as he used it without ostentation, so he took no step to perpetuate it in his family."¹⁵

Muhammad was extremely scrupulous about physical cleanliness. He was fond of perfumes and ablutions which he performed several times a day, before which, he always brushed his teeth. Only a few moments before his death he brushed his teeth. He would not allow anybody to come to him, or to the Mosque, after eating raw onions, garlic, or radishes. He would say: "Cleanliness is part of the faith."¹⁶

Muhammad was particular about physical exercise. He had a number of horses, asses, mules and camels, which he was accustomed to ride. At times he would participate in horse or camel races. It is recorded that once Muhammad ran a race with his wife, Ayesha who soon outdistanced him. At another time, it was the Prophet who defeated his wife.¹⁷

MORALS AND MANNERS

Muhammad's beloved wife Ayesha, when questioned about the Prophet's morals and manners says: "The morals of the Holy Quran were the morals of the Holy Prophet."¹⁸ In other words, the Holy Quran was the mirror of Muhammad's character. He demonstrated in his life all the lofty moral teachings of the

¹⁵ Muhammad and His Successors by Washington Irving, Page 195.

¹⁶ Muslim on Taharah.

¹⁷ Abu Daud on Sabaque.

¹⁸ Abu Daud, Chapter on Prayers at Night.

Book of God. We have already observed his wife Khadija's remark about his character when she addressed him in the following words: "Rejoice! By Allah! He will not suffer you to fall into disgrace, for you have behaved well toward your kinsfolk, helped the distressed, been hospitable toward guests, generous to the poor and kind to your neighbor. You have been true to your word and exhibited the rarest virtues of man."¹⁹

His enemies were no less eloquent in their testimony of his exemplary life. An-Nazr Ibn Haris, who was one of his bitterest enemies in the faith, on hearing a Meccan remark that Muhammad was a sorcerer said: "Verily, Muhammad has lived among you since his early years, he has been regarded by you all as the most virtuous, the most truthful and the most trustworthy till you have seen the signs of old age in his forelocks and he has brought what he has brought, and you declare that he is a sorcerer. By Allah! He is not a sorcerer."²⁰

The most inveterate enemy of Muhammad, Abu Jahl, who spent his life in trying to ruin the Prophet and his cause, says: "O Muhammad! We do not falsify you, we falsify what you have brought."²¹ In short, Muhammad lived such an ideal life, and possessed such high moral qualities that he won the universal respect of his friends and foes alike, and was honored with the distinguished title of Alameen, "The Trusty."

¹⁹ Bukhari: Wahy.

²⁰ Shifa: Quadhi Ayaz.

²¹ Tirmudhi: Manaquib.

URBANITY AND LOWLINESS

Politeness, modesty, and kindness were among the remarkable traits of Muhammad's character. An authentic tradition relates: "In shaking hands, he was not the first to withdraw his own, nor was he the first to break off in converse with a stranger, not to turn away his ear."²² "He was more bashful," says Ayesha, "than a veiled virgin."²³ "If anything displeased him, it was rather from his face, than from his words that we discovered it."²⁴ He never refused an invitation to the house of the meanest, and accepted the most insignificant gift."²⁵ When seated in the company of friends and followers, he would not occupy a place of distinction. He would say: "I sit at meals as a servant does and I eat like a servant for I am really a servant."²⁶ He was easy of approach, "even as the river bank to him that draweth water therefrom."²⁷ He was gentle toward children and always had a kind word for them, and greeted them with the Salutation of Peace. He especially disliked to be praised by people. He would say: "I am Muhammad the son of Abdullah, the Messenger of God." When some of his companions declared his superiority over other prophets, he said: "Declare me not superior to other prophets."²⁸

²² Ibn Saad—Part I, Volume II, Page 102.

²³ Bukhari: Manaquib.

²⁴ Bukhari: Manaquib.

²⁵ Ibn Saad—Part I, Volume II, Page 44.

²⁶ Ibn Saad—Part I, Volume II, Page 101.

²⁷ Life of Mahomet by Wm. Muir, Page 495.

²⁸ Bukhari: Kitabul Ambia.

VISITING THE SICK

It was a habit with the Prophet to visit the sick without making any distinction between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and the Moslems and Non-Moslems. We learn from the authentic tradition that the Prophet once went to express his sympathy to a Jewish slave who was sick in bed. Muhammad said: "Those who visit and sympathize with the sick, seventy thousand angels pray for them."²⁹ It is related that Muhammad said: "On the day of resurrection, God will say to such people, (those who do not visit the sick) 'O son of Adam, I was sick, you did not visit and serve me.' The man will ask: 'O Lord, Thou art the Lord of the worlds, how wert Thou sick?' God will reply: 'Such and such a servant of mine was sick and you did not care for him.'"³⁰

HOSPITALITY

From the "Days of Ignorance" Arabian hospitality has been proverbial. The following couplet well describes the ideal of Arab hospitality:

"O our guest, if you come to our house you would find,

"That we are the guests and you are the master of the house."

²⁹ Tirmudhi: *Manaqib*.

³⁰ Muslim.

Muhammad fulfilled this ideal to overflowing. He seldom ate without guests at his table. Often it so happened that whatever food was in the house he gave to the guests and he and the members of his household went without food.³¹ In his hospitality there was no distinction of Moslems and non-Moslems, friends and foes. Often he personally waited upon his guests. Even at night he would get up to look after their comforts.^{31a}

MAGNANIMITY

A conspicuous feature of Muhammad's character was his magnanimity. We learn on the authority of Ayesha who says: "The Holy Prophet never took revenge except when the honor of God was concerned. He never smote anyone with his hands."³² Anas, who served the Prophet for ten years reports: "The Holy Phophet never scolded me nor did he express his displeasure in any way."³³ His magnanimity toward his enemies has been portrayed by Sir William Muir in the following words: "The long and obstinate struggle against his pretensions maintained by the inhabitants of Mecca might have induced its conqueror to mark his indignation in indelible traces of fire and blood. But Muhammad, excepting a few criminals, granted a universal pardon; and, nobly casting into oblivion the memory of the past, with all its mockery, its affronts and persecution, treated

³¹ Tirmudhi Shamail.

^{31a} Musnad, Ibn Hambal, Volume VI—Page 397.

³² Bukhari: Kitabul Adab.

³³ Bukhari.

even the foremost of his opponents with a gracious and even friendly consideration. Not less marked was the forbearance shown to Abdallah and the disaffected citizens of Medina, who for so many years persistently thwarted his designs and resisted his authority; nor the clemency with which he received the submissive advances of tribes that before had been the most hostile, even in the hour of victory."³⁴

An incident is related of Muhammad's forgiveness. Once, the Holy Prophet was sleeping alone at the foot of a tree. He opened his eyes and lo there was a Bedouin standing by his side with a drawn sword. The man exclaimed: "O Muhammad, who will save you from my hands?" "Allah," replied the Prophet in an awe-inspiring voice. No sooner had the Holy Prophet uttered this word than the sword fell down from the Bedouin's hands. The Holy Prophet picked up the sword and asked: "Who will now save you from my hands?" The man begged the Holy Prophet to forgive him. The Holy Prophet did so and let him go without any punishment. Upon his return to his people, the Bedouin said: "I have met Muhammad who is the best and noblest of all men."³⁵

On the occasion of Muhammad's momentous Flight from Mecca to Medina, a Bedouin named Suraqua pursued him in order to kill him and thus win the prize of one hundred camels, announced by the Quraysh. When

³⁴ *The Life of Mohamet* by William Muir, Page 97.

³⁵ Bukhari.

he came near the Prophet, Suraqua's horse stumbled and fell. According to the Arab custom, he drew lots twice to find out whether to continue his attempt on the Prophet's life. Receiving answer in the negative both the times, the Bedouin went to the Prophet and asked his forgiveness, which was freely given him by Muhammad and the man departed in peace.

After the battle of Badr, a Meccan named Umair came to Medina with the secret design to take the Prophet's life. Muhammad's followers, however, became aware of his intention and one of them was about to separate his head from his body. When the Prophet learned about it, he stopped his companion from giving the culprit any punishment and forgave him without any hesitation.

Instances can be multiplied, which vividly illustrate how the Prophet forgave his mortal enemies when he had the power to give them punishment.

CHARITY

The spirit of charity and benevolence pervaded his life as though he lived only for others. Even when he became the ruler of Arabia, whatever wealth came, he distributed among the poor. He never turned away anyone who asked a boon of him. He disliked to say no. Once a man came and asked the Prophet to give him his large flock of sheep and goats. Without any remonstrance he gave the man all his flock. The man related to his tribe: "Muhammad is so bountiful that he is

not afraid of losing all his wealth and becoming poor.”³⁶ Once Muhammad said to a companion: “Were I to get a heap of gold as big as yonder hill, I would not keep it even for three days, I would distribute it among the servants of God.”³⁷

History recounts that when the Holy Prophet was engaged in a deadly conflict with the Quraysh of Mecca, they were overtaken by a terrific famine. When the Holy Prophet learned about his enemy's calamity, he collected some wealth and sent it to the Quraysh in order to help them at the time of their distress.³⁸ That shows that in his acts of charity and benevolence, Muhammad did not make any distinction between his friends and foes.

HUMOR

In spite of the austere life that he lived, hemmed in as he was by tremendous difficulties on all sides, Muhammad retained a keen sense of humor. At one time the Prophet and a group of his disciples sat down to eat dates. They put all the seeds in front of his cousin Ali who was one of the party. Pointing to Ali, the Prophet remarked: “He has eaten all the dates.” At first Ali blushed, but soon retorted: “I have eaten the dates only, but the rest have swallowed the seeds as well as the dates.” At this, all laughed heartily. Once an old lady

³⁶ Bukhari: Chapter on Adab.

³⁷ Musnad Ibn Hambal—Volume VI—Page 293.

³⁸ Kitabul Khamees—Volume I—Page 528.

came and asked the Prophet how she could enter Paradise. The Prophet said that old ladies do not enter Paradise. The lady was perplexed, but the Prophet soon pacified her saying: "When you will be in Paradise, you will be young."³⁹

STEADFASTNESS AND MORAL COURAGE

Muhammad withstood the most severe ordeals of his career with great patience. Adversity seemed to have been the only portion he inherited. From the moment of the promulgation of his divine mission among his fellow citizens in Mecca, he was made the target of vilification, ridicule, threats, insults, disappointments and cruelest persecution. For three years he was shut up in the "Vale of Abu Talib," without any prospect of rescue. During this period the Prophet with his little band suffered hardships of every description. In order to summon the people to renounce idolatry and worship One True God, he went forth to Tayif. Instead of paying heed to the Truth, the Tayefites drove him out, hooting and pelting him with stones, so that blood flowed from the wounds inflicted on him. For thirteen years Muhammad braved all these harrowing tyrannies with an unwavering steadfastness and a majestic fortitude without parallel in the annals of history. The crowning proof of his signal moral courage was evidenced when he said to his uncle, Abu Talib who, threatened by the Meccans, demanded of him to aban-

³⁹ Tirmudhi Shamail.

don the propagation of his faith: "Should they array the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, even then I will not abandon this sacred undertaking till I win success or perish in the attempt." Muhammad had to stand a harder test than that of persecution. When the Meccans failed to shake him with cruelties, they tried him with persuasion, entreaties and temptations. They offered him, under the deputation of Walid, the choice of monarchy, wealth, or the hand of a most beautiful lady. Muhammad rose superior to all temptations and sent away the deputation with the recitation of a passage from the Holy Quran, in which the truth of Islam was emphatically expounded. After Muhammad's flight to Medina, where he suffered dire calamities, with the Jews and Hypocrites on the one hand, and the Quraysh of Mecca and the Nomad tribes of Arabia on the other, in a deadly conflict during the remainder of his life, he displayed the same moral daring and unswerving firmness. The authority already quoted remarks: "Not less marked was the firm front and unchanging faith in eventual victory, which at Medina bore him through seven years of mortal conflict with his native city; and enabled him, sometimes even under defeat, and while his influence and authority were yet limited and precarious even in the city of his adoption, to speak and to act in the constant and undoubted expectation of victory."⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Life of Mohamet by William Muir—Page 502.

TRUST IN GOD AND SINCERITY

Failing to stem the increasing progress of Muhammad's cause, the Meccans planned to exterminate Islam by assassinating the Prophet. The members of all the different tribes combined in this undertaking so that the guilt of the crime might be evenly distributed. At the command of God, Muhammad fled with Abu Bakr from the city and took refuge in the cave of Thaur. The Meccans set a price upon the Prophet's head. When the trailing party came up to the cave which housed the fugitives, his trembling companion, Abu Bakr, said: "O Prophet of Allah, should they cast a glance into the cave they will see us, we are only two." Muhammad who was calm and fearless replied: "O Abu Bakr, we are two, God is the Third."⁴¹

In the battle of Hunain when the Prophet was left with only a few followers in the midst of a host of enemies, who were thirsting for his blood, his companions besought him to turn back to save his life. The Prophet fearlessly urged his horse forward saying:

"I am the Prophet, doubtless and true

"I am the grandson of Abdul Mutalib."

These are two of the many instances which vividly illustrate Muhammad's unshaken trust in God. He had a firm conviction in the depth of his heart that God would protect him by a special providence. Many and critical were the occasions when the Prophet's life was

⁴¹ Bukhari: Chapter on Hijrah.

in danger without any earthly means of safety. But never did the Prophet display the symptoms of fear, doubt and suspicion. He was as certain of the protection of God as a child feels while in the lap of its mother.

His unexampled trust in God, his implicit hope in the ultimate triumph of his Cause, and the spirit of calm resignation with which he braved all adversities from the day of his ministerial call up to the end of his life were but eloquent commentary on his adamant sincerity and his staunch faith in his Divine Mission. Stanley Lane-Poole says: "No man was ever more thoroughly filled with the sense of his mission or carried out that mission more heroically."⁴²

PRAYERS

Prayer was the very breath of Muhammad's life. With the passing years, retirement became a passion with him. He shunned society, secluded himself in a lonely cave in the recesses of mount Hira and spent days and nights in prayers and supplications. At the age of forty when he was called upon to do his duty in public, and it was not possible for him to devote all his hours to prayer, yet regularly, he occupied a great part of his time in the worship of Allah. Standing and walking, sitting and lying down in bed, in sorrow and in joy, he remembered God, in addition to the five daily prayers which he made obligatory to himself and his

⁴² Studies in a Mosque by Stanley Lane-Poole.

followers. He never entered a company but he sat down and rose up with the name of the Lord on his lips. Even on the battlefield he would dismount his camel in order to offer his devotions.

At night when the world was fast asleep, the Prophet would leave his bed and stand up for prayers so long that his feet and ankles would become swollen. On one occasion, Muhammad left his bed silently in the middle of the night and quietly went out. His wife, Ayesha, woke up, and lo! her husband was absent. Under the impulse of the moment she got up and went out in search of her husband. She found the Prophet in the cemetery, where he was engaged in earnest prayer. Well has it been said of Muhammad: "He has fallen in love with the Lord."

It will be highly illuminating to read some of his prayers which have been handed down to us:

O Allah, enlighten my heart, my eyes, and my ears. Let there be light on my right and on my left. Let there be light above me and below me, in front of me and behind me. Envelope me in light.

O Allah, I turn myself to Thee, I resign myself to Thee, I entrust myself to Thee, I submit myself to Thee, I hope for Thy mercy and fear Thy wrath. There is no refuge and peace save in Thee. I believe in the Book Thou hast sent, and the Prophet Thou hast raised.

O Allah, I seek good of Thy knowledge and strength of Thy omnipotence and solicit Thy in-

finite bounty. Verily, Thou decreest, and I decree not. Thou knowest and I know not. Thou art the knower of all that is hidden. If in Thy knowledge this affair be good for me spiritually, materially, and in its consequences, then decree it and let it abound in Thy blessings. But if in Thy knowledge this affair be evil for me spiritually, materially, and in its consequences, then turn it away and keep me from it; then provide good for me wherever it may be and let me be satisfied with it.

O Allah, guide me among those whom Thou hast guided aright, and preserve me among those whom Thou hast preserved, and befriend me among those whom Thou hast befriended, and bless me in what Thou hast granted me, and protect me from the evils of what Thou hast judged; verily, Thou judgest and none can judge against Thee. Verily, he whom Thou hast befriended cannot be disgraced, he cannot be honored whom Thou has turned against. Blessed art Thou, O Lord and Exalted; shower blessings upon Thy Prophet.

In the name of Allah, I trust in Allah, there is no power and no strength except with Allah. O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from misguiding and being misguided, from oppressing and from being oppressed and from acting ignorantly toward others and from falling victim to ignorance practiced upon me by others.

O Allah, I seek Thy protection against grief and sorrow, I seek Thy protection against want of means and sloth; I seek Thy protection against cowardice and miserliness; I seek Thy protection against indebtedness and the tyranny of men (loss of freedom).

Glory to Thee, O Allah, Thou art worthy of all praise, blessed is Thy name and exalted is Thy state. There is none worthy of worship save thee.

O Allah, we seek Thy help and beseech Thy forgiveness. We have faith and trust in Thee. We give unto Thee the best praise. We thank Thee, and we are not ungrateful. We cast off and forsake him who disobeys Thee. O Allah, Thee alone do we worship, and to Thee we pray and make obeisance. And unto Thee we flee and in Thee we seek refuge. We hope for Thy mercy and fear Thy chastisement. Verily, Thy chastisement overtakes the unbeliever.

O Allah, hide my defects and relieve me of my distresses. O Allah, I hope for Thy mercy. Leave me not unto myself even for the twinkling of an eye, and better all my conditions. There is none fit to be worshipped besides Thee!

O Allah, Thou art Peace, all peace emanates from Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Possessor of glory and honor.

CHAPTER V

THE TEACHINGS OF MUHAMMAD WHAT HE ACCOMPLISHED

TEACHING ABOUT GOD

THE most important function of religion is to furnish humanity with the true conception of the Divine Being and help man to find the living God in his manifold relationships with Him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad accomplished this grand task with supreme success. He expounded the absolute Oneness of God and emphasized the fact that the Author of the universe is free from all defects, faults and frailties. He is above all physical limitations and material needs. He is the sole Possessor of all excellences. He is the Infinite, the Omnipotent, the Manifest and the Hidden, the Merciful, the Kind and the Compassionate. He is the Creator and the Sustainer of all things. He is the light of the heavens and the earth, and perfect in all Divine qualities.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad not only taught the Unity of God, but took every precaution that he might not be deified after his death. *“Say, (O Muhammad), I am a man like unto you, only the word*

of God has been revealed unto me, that your God is only One God. And whoever hopeth to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not associate aught in the worship of his Lord,"¹ proclaims the Holy Quran concerning him. Whenever a follower of the great Prophet is to mention his name, he has to say concerning Muhammad, "the servant and the Prophet of God." "*There is none worthy of worship but One True God and Muhammad is His Messenger.*" "*I bear witness that there is none fit to be worshipped but Allah, One without a partner and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Prophet,*" are the two most important formulas of the faith, constantly used by every follower of the Prophet. By forbidding statuary, pictures and the representation of all living things in the house of worship, to which every Mosque throughout the entire world bears witness, Muhammad eternally laid axe to the root of idolatry.

Muhammad expounded the attributes of God in such a way that the beauty, the glory, the greatness and the majesty of God are so powerfully impressed upon the mind of man that an intense spiritual hunger is awakened in him. Muhammad stressed the fact that man is the manifestation of God upon earth, he is endowed with infinite, dynamic and glowing spiritual qualities by the development and unfoldment of which his spiritual hunger and the craving of his heart can be

¹ Al-Quran—XVIII—110

completely satisfied. The Holy Prophet Muhammad established a complete code of moral law and instituted a perfect mode of worship by following which a man can realize God on this side of the grave as the vital experience and reality of life, in his direct and personal dealings with Him, without the help of any intermediary.

UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS

An inestimable service which the Holy Prophet Muhammad rendered to the cause of world peace was to inculcate, for the first time in the annals of mankind, the divine origin and basic unity of all religions. He propounded the sovereign truth that God, out of His infinite mercy, sent His messengers and prophets in all ages and to all lands and nations. All these spiritual reformers and divine guides came with one and the same mission, namely to lead this benighted humanity out of darkness into light, and to help them win success in the supreme purpose of life, culminating in the realization of God.

The Holy Quran, the Sacred Book, which was revealed to the great Prophet Muhammad, proclaims in its very first chapter, "*God is the Lord of all the worlds,*" which unravels the truth that the mercy of God is not confined to Arabia or Syria only, but all countries and nations have been equally blessed with His bounties. Just as the sun, the moon and the stars illuminate all parts of the physical plane of the universe, so also

must the word of God give light to every corner of the globe. Hence the appearance of the prophets in all climes and among all peoples.

Again we read in the Holy Quran:

*"There has been no people without a Warner (Prophet)."*²

*"And verily We have raised in every nation a messenger, proclaiming: Serve One True God and shun false deities."*³

*"Say, O Moslems, we believe in One True God and in the revelation which has been sent down to us and in the revelation which was sent down to Abraham and in that which was sent down to Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and to the Tribes; and we believe in the revelation which was given to Moses and Jesus and we believe in the revelations which were granted to all the prophets from their Lord. No distinction do we make between any of them, and (thus having accepted all the prophets) do we enter the religion of Islam, resigning ourselves wholly to God."*⁴

*"The apostle believes in that which has been sent down to him from his Lord, as do the faithful also. Each one believes in God and in His angels and in the books revealed by Him and in His apostles and they say, 'We make no distinction between any of His apostles' (accepting some and rejecting others)."*⁵

² Al-Quran—XXXV—12

³ Al-Quran—XVI—36

⁴ Al-Quran—II—132

⁵ Al-Quran—II—285

The above verses will make it increasingly clear that the faith of Islam enunciates, with the utmost emphasis, the principle of the fundamental unity of all religions. The followers of Muhammad are not allowed to make any invidious distinction between any of the messengers of God who might have appeared in any part of the world and in any time of history. The Moslems have to believe not only in Muhammad but in all of them along with Muhammad, because, in essence, they all came with God's truth, as the common benefactors of mankind.

The importance and the value of this sublime principle can not be overestimated. This binds all humanity in a common and indissoluble bond of unity and fraternity.

TOLERANCE

The advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad marked the dawn of a new era of liberty and tolerance. The Sacred Quran strictly prohibits compulsion and advocates complete freedom of conscience in matters relating to faith. The Holy Quran says:

*"Say: It is the truth from the Lord of you all. Then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve."*⁶

"Say: O people, the truth hath come unto you from your Lord. So, whosoever is guided, is guided for the good of his soul, and whosoever goeth astray, goeth

⁶ Al-Quran—XVIII—29

*astray only against it (his soul). And I am not a custodian over you."*⁷

*"There is no compulsion in religion. The truth has become manifest from error."*⁸

That is not all. Muhammad went a step farther. He strongly condemned the pernicious practice of sweeping denunciation of other faiths and urged his followers not only to tolerate but to appreciate good points in all religions. The Holy Quran says: *"The Jews say Christians are on nothing and the Christians say the Jews are on nothing and they both read the book. And likewise say those who possess no knowledge."*⁹ The Moslems were enjoined upon to desist even from abusing the idols of the idolators. The Holy Quran says: *"Abuse not the idols of the idolators, for if ye do, they will abuse your God in return, as they know not your God."*¹⁰

It is to be noted that nothing is so utterly opposed to the spirit of Islam as idolatry.

History has recorded the vivid accounts as to how stoutly did the Holy Prophet Muhammad defend the rights and privileges of the champions of other faiths. Ameer Ali writes:

"In the sixth year of the Hegira, the Prophet granted to the monks of the Monastery of St. Catherine, near Mount Sinai, and to all Christians, a charter, which is

⁷ Al-Quran—X—109

⁸ Al-Quran—II—256

⁹ Al-Quran—II—114

¹⁰ Al-Quran—VI—108

a monument of enlightened tolerance. By it the Prophet secured to the Christians important privileges and immunities, and the Moslems were prohibited under severe penalties from violating and abusing what was therein ordered. In this charter the Prophet undertook himself, and enjoined on his followers, to protect the Christians, to guard them from all injuries, and to defend their churches, and the residences of their priests. They were not to be unfairly taxed; no bishop was to be driven out of his bishopric; no Christian was to be forced to reject his religion; no monk was to be expelled from his monastery; no pilgrim was to be detained from his pilgrimage; nor were the Christian churches to be pulled down for the sake of building Mosques or houses for the Moslems. Christian women married to Moslems were to enjoy their own religion, and not to be subjected to compulsion or annoyance of any kind on that account. 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 Moslems were to assist them."¹¹

Ibn-i-Hisham, has preserved for us the charter granted by the Prophet to the Jews. It runs thus:

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Given by Mohammad the Prophet, to the Believers, and also to those who have made common cause with them. All these people will constitute one nation.

¹¹ A Short History of the Saracen by Sayed Ameer Ali, Page 14-15

The Jews who attach themselves to our commonwealth shall have an equal right with our own people to our assistance and good offices. The Jews of the various branches domiciled in Yathrib shall form with the Moslems one composite nation. They shall practice their religion as freely as the Muslims: the clients and allies of the Jews shall enjoy the same security and freedom.”¹²

DEMOCRACY AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

The supreme contribution which the Holy Prophet of Islam made to the advancement and civilization of mankind was to create a veritable universal brotherhood. Muhammad appeared in Arabia at a time when race discrimination loomed large in that country. Slavery constituted the basis of the whole superstructure of society. It was at such time that he brought the heavenly message of the equality of all humanity. “*All men are created of Adam and Adam was created of clay,*”¹³ declared the Prophet. “*The most righteous among you is the most respectable among you in the sight of God,*”¹⁴ the Quran proclaimed. Difference of birth, country or color was no more to be the test of respectability. Henceforth it was the intrinsic merit—honesty, integrity, righteousness, learning and intelligence—which was to be the criterion of honor. With his infinite spiritual force, Muhammad drilled into

¹² Ibn Hisham—341-342.

¹³ Ikdul Fareed—Page 123

¹⁴ Al-Quran XLIX—13

his followers the magnificent ideal of the common brotherhood of all man. Race hatred and color distinction vanished before the Prophet's clarion call of unity.

The result was that in a short period of twenty-three years, a moral revolution took place in Arabia. A mighty change came over the land. People of low and humble origin attained to the highest offices. They became ministers of religion, generals and commanders-in-chief of armies. Even those who were formerly slaves rose to leadership of every description.

The followers of the Prophet carried this message of democracy to the ends of the earth. Wherever they went, they exterminated color and race prejudice and established an inter-racial brotherhood. That partly explains how the early Moslems succeeded in swelling their number by millions in an incredibly short period. To this day, every Mosque in the world bears undying testimony to the Prophet's noble achievement in this regard.

LIBERATION OF WOMEN

Before the advent of the great Arabian Prophet, women suffered grave injustices in all countries and under all religious systems. The so-considered fountains of iniquity were treated as chattels by men and were regarded as a means of their self-gratification. In some countries, baby girls were burned alive, widows were not permitted to remarry and women were forced to

burn themselves when their husbands died, and in others, women were denied the right of ownership of property and could be disposed of at the will of men.

The Prophet Muhammad appeared as the liberator and protector of the fair sex. He declared that he was entrusted with the special task of the emancipation of women. The Quran proclaimed the essential equality of both the sexes:

*“God created both men and women from the same essence,”*¹⁵ and by virtue of their common humanity, they were equal.

*“Women are the garments of men just as men are the garments of women.”*¹⁶ The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: *“If a daughter is born to a man and he brings her up well, he shall be saved from fire. If a man has sons and daughters or younger brothers and sisters and he educates them and provides for their needs, he shall be admitted into paradise.”*¹⁷

Parents are not allowed to marry their daughters to whom they will, without the consent of their daughters just as in the case of the sons.

The marriage relation is instituted in the Holy Quran as a partnership based on the principle of division of labour; to each is assigned a particular sphere of work and the rights and liberties of each are scrupulously safe-guarded. *“Just as men have rights over*

¹⁵ Al-Quran—IV—1

¹⁶ Al-Quran—II—187

¹⁷ The True Islam, Page 290.

women, so also women have rights over men,"¹⁸ says the Holy Quran.

A distinctive feature in the Prophet's noble work of the elevation of woman was that he gave them complete economic independence. For the first time in the annals of history, women were accorded the right of inheritance and individual ownership of property. The sister was to inherit the property of her parents just as well as her brother and the wife was to inherit the property of her husband whether or not they had children. In the same way, the mother had a share in the property of her deceased children.

Muhammad exalted the intellectual and spiritual status of women. Intellectual: "*The acquisition of knowledge is a duty on Moslems, both male and female,*"¹⁹ says the Holy Prophet.

Spiritual: "*Whoso doeth good deeds, whether male or female and he (or she) is a believer, such will enter paradise and they will not be wronged in the least.*"²⁰ "*Truly the men who resign themselves unto Allah, and the women who resign, and the men who believe, and the women who believe, and the men who obey and the women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who are patient and women who are patient, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who*

¹⁸ Al-Quran—Chapter II, Page 229.

¹⁹ Mishkatul Masabih : Kitabul Ilm.

²⁰ Al-Quran IV—124

give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard, and men who remember Allah oft and women who remember—Allah hath prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward."²¹

The founder of Islam highly sanctified, by his precept and example, widow remarriage and the remarriage of the divorced women, which carried a stigma in many quarters.

The institution of divorce was one other measure which Muhammad adopted to reclaim the fair sex from slavery. He secured for them the right of obtaining divorce in times of need so that they might not live a life of living hell when they found their marriage a failure.

The great Prophet paid a tribute and respect to motherhood, which you will seek in vain to find elsewhere. He said: "*Heaven lies beneath the feet of the mothers.*"²²

Throughout his life, the Holy Prophet Muhammad unceasingly exhorted his followers to show kindness to women. "*Best among you is he who is most kind and well-behaved to his wife,*"²³ says the Holy Prophet.

THE LIFE AFTER DEATH

The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, expounded that

²¹ Al-Quran XXXIII—35

²² Ibn Maja and Nesai.

²³ Tirmudhi Ibn Maja.

the life after death is not a new life. It is but the continuation of this earthly life. In the life to come, the human soul freed from all material and physical influences, commences its endless onward march which it prepares with its own doings in the course of its career on earth. The deeds done by man in this present life appear in an embodied form in the next life. The Holy Quran says:

“And we have made man’s bird (actions) to remain attached to his own neck and we shall bring forth for him on the Day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open.

(And it will be said unto him) : *Read thy book. Thy own self sufficeth today, as a reckoner for Thyself.”*²⁴

The word “bird” occurring in the above verse is used metaphorically to denote the actions of man. For every action, good or bad, takes flight like a bird. The pleasure or pain which a man feels in the performance of an act vanishes. But at the same time, it leaves its indelible impression which remains forever. Although the effects of man’s actions remain hidden from the human eye in this world, they will become palpable and manifest in the next. God will, as it were, turn them in the form of a book which man will be able to read clearly. In reference to the heavenly life, the Holy Quran says:

“On that day, the light of faith which is granted even

²⁴ Al-Quran XVII—13-14

*here to the faithful men and women shall be seen running clearly before them and on their right hands.”*²⁵

In short, the life after death is the continuation of our life on earth, which we ourselves have created as a result of our own actions.

This brings us to the conclusion that heaven and hell begin right from here. The Holy Quran says:

*“One who is blind here shall be blind hereafter.”*²⁶

The blindness of the next life is without doubt hell. Those who are blind here shall be blind in the next world. Thus the verse proves that spiritual blindness of this world also is hell.

Again,

*“O thou soul, that art at rest! return to thy Lord. Thou being pleased with Him and He being pleased with Thee. So, enter among my servants and enter into my paradise.”*²⁷

This refers to the highest point of spiritual progress of man. At this stage, the soul is freed from all weakness and frailties and is endowed with spiritual strength. It is inseparably united with God and cannot live without Him. The words, *“O Soul that hast found rest in thy Lord return to Him,”* show that it is in this life, and not after death, that this great transformation is worked and an access to paradise is granted.

Now we shall throw light on the nature of the bless-

²⁵ Al-Quran LVII—12

²⁶ Al-Quran XVII—72

²⁷ Al-Quran XXXIX—27-30

ings of heaven and the tortures of hell.

It must be noted that of all the false charges brought against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, nothing perhaps is commoner than the one that he advocated a sensual paradise. The man who founded a system of religion which makes the observance of prayer five times a day obligatory upon its followers, enjoins compulsory fasting and puts absolute veto upon all intoxicants, has been mercilessly assailed as having propounded a sensual paradise!

Nothing could be more foreign to the lofty teachings of the Prophet Muhammad than a sensual heaven. Some of the most beautiful Quranic metaphors, allegories, parables and figurative descriptions regarding heaven and hell have been tortuously twisted to paint such an ugly picture. The Holy Quran summarily repudiates such baseless and erroneous notions. It expressly says:

*"No soul knoweth what blessings are reserved as reward for their virtuous deeds."*²⁸

The Holy Prophet elucidates the above verse when he says:

*"The blessings of heaven are things which the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard nor the mind of man conceived."*²⁹

It is obvious that it cannot be said about earthly things that the eye has not seen them, the ear has not

²⁸ Al-Quran XXXII—7

²⁹ Bukhari

heard them nor has the mind of man conceived them. It naturally follows, therefore, that the blessings of heaven are all spiritual. The converse is true. That is, the punishment of hell is similarly spiritual.

The following verse of the Holy Quran is highly illuminating on this point:

*“And bear glad tidings to those who believe and do good deeds, that for them are gardens through which flow streams. Whenever they are provided therefrom with any fruit to eat, they will say: ‘This is that with which we were provided before and they shall have its like given to them.’”*³⁰

In the above parable, the gardens and streams promised to the faithful correspond to faith and actions. Gardens stand for faith and streams for actions. Just as gardens cannot thrive without streams running through them, likewise faith cannot flourish without good actions.

The word “*fruit*” refers to the spiritual blessings which the believers enjoy in this very world as the fruits of their good deeds. These spiritual blessings are really the blessings not of this world but of the next world, and are granted to them as specimens of the bliss that is in store for them in paradise. And as the blessed in heaven shall have already tasted of the joys and thrills and wonders of the spiritual life, on this side of the grave, they shall be able to identify the fruits of the next life with those of the present one, and witnessing

³⁰ Al-Quran II—26

the close resemblance between the two, shall cry out:

“These are the fruits which were given us in the former life.”

There is a seeming contradiction between the above statements. If the bounties of heaven are things, unseen by the human eye, unheard of by the human ear and unconceived by the human mind, how can the faithful say when they will be granted heavenly gifts in the next world: *“These are fruits which were given us in the former life.”*

A careful reflection, however, reveals that there is no contradiction, if we interpret the word, *“fruit”* as meaning not the material and physical things of this world but things which belong entirely to the realm of the spirit. As we have already pointed out, the truly righteous enjoy in this world the spiritual blessings which are, in reality, the things of the next world as a result of their good deeds and by the development and unfoldment of their fine spiritual qualities.

The following verses of the Holy Quran about heaven throw further light on the subject:

(Heaven is a place where there will be) *“Nothing vain nor sin.”*³¹

*“Their prayer in it (heaven) will be: Holy art Thou, O Lord, their greeting therein shall be: Peace. And their last cry shall be: All praise belongs to God, Lord of the worlds.”*³²

³¹ Al-Quran LII—23

³² Al-Quran X—10

*"The love, will and the pleasure of God will be the greatest blessing in Heaven."*³³

*"Their light shall run before them and on their right hands. They will say, 'O our Lord perfect for us our light and cover our weakness. Verily, Thou hast power over all things'."*³⁴

In other words, the inmates of heaven will be surrounded by, and will continue to make progress in, the Divine light.

According to the religion founded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the heaven is eternal and everlasting, while hell is temporary. The object of the creation of man is that he becomes the perfect manifestation of divine attributes. This supreme purpose will be defeated, if the punishment of hell were to be eternal and if some people were to go on burning in hell-fire for ever, without any end. Hell is like a hospital where man will be placed so that he may be cured of those spiritual diseases which he contracted in this world as a result of his actions, and that he may regain his spiritual powers which he has impaired in this life on account of their misuse. When man has been cured of his spiritual maladies, the mercy of God will lead him to paradise. The Holy Prophet says:

"A time will come over hell when its gates will clash against each other because there will be no one left in it."^{34a}

³³ Al-Quran IX—72

³⁴ Al-Quran LXVI—8

^{34a} Fathul Bari: Commentary of Verse 109 of Chap Hood.

Then man will start afresh on the path of development in a new life. Heaven is, therefore, the attainment of a life of everlasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God.

ABOLITION OF LIQUOR AND GAMBLING

One can hardly exaggerate the evils of intoxicating liquor. Gladstone said: "The combined harm of three scourges—war, famine and pestilence—is not as terrible as that of wine-drinking."

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the Arabian people were grossly addicted to this gigantic evil. It is related that they were accustomed to drink at least five times a day regularly.

One of the most conspicuous reforms which the Prophet of Islam effected in Arabia early in the seventh century was that he put an absolute veto on the use of intoxicants. He achieved unparalleled success in enforcing total abstinence among his adherents. Very dramatic is the story as to how this noble task was accomplished. God spoke to Muhammad, abolishing the use of intoxicating liquors and he proclaimed the divine decree amongst his followers. At once they all broke wine jars and punctured wine skins. Wine flowed freely in the streets of Medina. And prohibition was in force. Since then drinking was never prevalent in a strictly Moslem society. Wherever Islam has gone, drinking vanished. So dynamic was the spiritual power of Muhammad that he removed by one stroke an evil which

twentieth century America abjectly failed to remove.

Gambling was another evil which had a strong hold on Arab nature. It was one of the causes of degradation of the Arabian people of Muhammad's time. The prophet's unique and unfathomed soul force enabled him to liberate his followers from the slavery of this great demon. Bosworth Smith says:

"By absolutely prohibiting gambling and intoxicating liquors, Muhammad did much to abolish, once and for all, over the vast regions that own his sway, two of the worst and most irremediable evils of European society; evils to the intensity of which the Christian governments of the nineteenth century are hardly yet beginning to awake."³⁵

SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

At the time of Muhammad's appearance on the scene of Arabia, the people of that country were submerged in grossest ignorance. They were wallowing in intellectual darkness. The whole period is designated by the historians as the Dark Age.

The Holy Prophet instilled into them a new spirit of insatiable thirst for knowledge. Here are some of his sayings: "*Seek knowledge, even though it be in China.*" "*The ink of the scholar is greater than the blood of the martyr.*" "*Men of knowledge are superior to the devotees as the Moon is to other stars.*"³⁶

³⁵ Mohammed and Mohammedanism by R. Bosworth Smith, P. 207.

³⁶ Abu Daud: Kitabul Ilm.

Inspired by such lofty ideals, the Prophet's followers furthered the cause of science and education all over the world. They explored the heavens and the earth, in quest of knowledge and became devoted lovers of letters. It seems like magic, how this Untutored Son of the Desert drove away the darkness of ignorance from among his followers and transported them into a higher plane of light and learning and turned them into a nation of scientists, philosophers and scholars.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Thirteen hundred and fifty years ago, God revealed unto the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) an economic system, which was and is an open sesame to all of our present economic ills, and which establishes a way for all time, to live and prosper without fear or want.

Islam imposes upon the Moslem Government the sacred duty of promoting moral and material welfare of the people. As a mother and father are responsible for their children, so is the Islamic government enjoined to see that all its subjects are provided with the bare necessities of life; in short, food, clothes, shelter and all other similar things that contribute to the common welfare of the people. In this wise, the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) says: "Every one of you is like a shepherd and is responsible for the persons and things that are placed under his charge. The Sovereign is responsible and

answerable for his subjects, and every man is responsible and answerable for the members of his family, and every woman is responsible and answerable for her home and children, and every servant is responsible and answerable for the property of his master that is in his charge.”³⁷

In order to fulfill this duty of promoting moral and material welfare and interests of the people, a census was taken in Islamic countries by the government and every individual was registered with it. Such measure was taken, not to enrich the government, but to keep it well informed about the true condition of the people so that it might successfully discharge its duty.

The collection of provisions which may be needed by the people, in times of scarcity, forms an important duty of the Islamic government. During the early period of Islam, the Caliphs (Khalifas) took great care to see that this duty was not neglected. It was dispensed by means of ration tickets which in turn, enabled people to purchase needful articles and food stuffs from the government store.

However, in providing for the indigent, Islam does not condone idleness and does everything in its power to set people to productive labor of one form or another.

It is the duty of the state to see that each individual is skilled in some art or craft, that he may be enabled to earn his living. It is incumbent that everyone learn

³⁷ The True Islam, Page 321

a trade. There is no exemption from work, as long as one is physically able.

Again, it is the duty of the state to help people who are skilled in some art or craft, but have not the wherewithal to start to work. The Holy Quran directs that such people be given financial assistance from the Islamic treasury.

With regard to the worker, Islam believes and provides the just and adequate payment of wages. His wages must be livable wages and must not be paid to the worker grudgingly, for has not the worker himself contributed to the profits of his employer, and should he not enjoy these profits, too? Therefore, as the universe was created for all men, in which they have an equal right to participate and enjoy, Islam lays down the principle that those of superior intellect and more fortunate circumstances, must help and share with their less fortunate co-workers.

In spite of this, Islam recognizes that those who work harder than others and show exceptional ability are not to be deprived of their just rewards. Islam encourages the spirit of competition within reasonable bounds and in order to foster this spirit of emulation, permits people to retain that which they have honestly earned.

In short: "The share of those who have in any way contributed toward the production of wealth which is appropriated by the rich is secured to the former. The door of progress is kept open for all mankind and admission is not restricted to the members of a particular

family or class; the members of the lowest classes are afforded equal opportunities along with the rest of the people, of attaining to the highest positions and dignities; and wealth and power do not become the hereditary monopolies of any particular class”³⁸

And further: “Islam teaches that all things in the universe are the common property of all mankind, and that, therefore, there can be no complete individual ownership of anything. A is the owner of his property, not in the sense that anybody else has no rights in it but in the sense that A’s share in it is larger than that of anybody else, for he has acquired it with his labor. Islam describes the share of the poor in the wealth of the rich as a right”³⁹

The Holy Quran says: “*So give to the kinsman, the poor and the wayfarer their rights (out of your wealth).*”⁴⁰

And, “*In the wealth of the rich, the poor who can express their wants and such as cannot express them (animals), have a right.*”⁴¹

In order, however, to prevent people from spending the whole of their wealth on personal gratification, Islam has put an end to all kinds of excess and indulgence. Islam prohibits extravagance in food, dress, houses, in short in every concern or department of life, and a Moslem, therefore, who follows the injunctions of Islam, cannot possibly spend so much on his own

³⁸ The True Islam, Page 336

³⁹ The True Islam, Page 337

⁴⁰ Al-Quran XXX—38.

⁴¹ Al-Quran LI—19.

personal gratification as injuriously to affect the rights of others in his property or wealth.

This brings us to the question—by what means, Islam enjoins the wealth of the more prosperous classes to be distributed.

The following three precepts of the Islamic economic system strike at the root of the accumulation of wealth and exercise economic justice by giving equitable and wide distribution.

1. Judicious Distribution of Inheritance.
2. Zakat.
3. Ban on Interest.

INHERITANCE

According to the law of Islam, no man can bequeath the whole of his property to one person. Under the Islamic law of inheritance, a man's property must be distributed among his parents, all his children male or female, his widow, brothers and sisters, in fact among all the distant relatives. This law of inheritance brings about three important results:

First: It prevents the accumulation of a man's wealth in the hands of some of his relatives. Monopoly of the property of a man by one or two of his favored children or by his widow becomes an impossibility.

Second: Each one of the children and other relatives has his or her share of the capital to start life afresh. None is left to become a beggar in the street.

Third: The property of each and every Moslem however rich he may be, continues to be distributed and re-distributed, and within two or three generations even the largest estate is parceled out into small holdings.

ZAKAT

The institution of Zakat is the second means by which Islam counteracts the tendency toward economic inequality. Zakat consists of two and one-half per cent charge on all capital, commercial investments, securities of different kinds or deposits. This occupies such an important place in Islam that it constitutes one of the five pillars of the faith. It is to be noted that this Zakat must be levied on the rich to be restored to the poor.

The Holy Prophet says:

“God has made Zakat obligatory; it must be levied on the rich and restored to the poor.”^{41a}

Proceeds of this two and one-half per cent charge must go into the public treasury and must be spent on the poor and the needy.

It is about this Zakat that a German scholar, Joseph Hell, says: “Besides the common prayer, the conception of the social equality was an innovation peculiar to Islam. Help and maintenance of the poor became a sacred trust. It was left no longer to individuals to give what they pleased but the poor tax or Zakat became a com-

^{41a} Mishkatul Masabih: Zakat.

pulsory duty and was collected in a central treasury and was administered therefrom.”⁴²

Thus, by this institution of Zakat, Islam discharges all those rights which the poor have on the wealth of the rich. On the other hand, it constantly gives wider and wider distribution of wealth and thereby removes the evils of capitalism.

INTEREST

Concerning interest, Hazrat M. B. Mahmud Ahmad says:

“The giving and taking of interest is strictly prohibited in Islam for the obvious reason that the possibility of raising loans on interest stimulates people with established credit to enhance their borrowing to an enormous extent. If on the other hand, such borrowing were not allowed, it would be utterly impossible for them to go into such unlimited lengths of borrowing. They would be compelled to admit other people into partnership with them or to restrict the scope of their business, that other people might be able to start similar undertakings. Without interest, the huge trusts and syndicates which monopolize national wealth, would not be possible and wealth would be more evenly distributed among the people. The unlimited accumulation of wealth which is the concomitant result of the present credit system of commerce is suicidal to moral advancement and spells the ruin of the middle and lower classes.

⁴² The Arab Civilization by Joseph Hell, Page 18

“Under the present capitalistic system, commerce has been based upon credit and has been necessarily associated with interest. That is why an objection is often raised to Islam’s prohibition of interest that no commerce would be conducted without it. As a matter of fact, there exists no natural relation between them. Commerce is not necessarily dependent upon interest. Only a few centuries ago, in their palmy days, the Moslems had in their hands, a large share of the world’s commerce and yet, they successfully carried it on without interest. They used to borrow money even from the poor classes on the basis of partnership loans and the commerce conducted by them directly contributed to the welfare of the poor people. It follows, therefore, that interest is not essential, though it appears that commerce would come to a standstill without it. No doubt it would be very difficult in the beginning to bring about the change, but the present system of commerce depending on interest can gradually be relinquished as this system has been gradually adopted. Then the western world would not be confronted with the unrest which has become the constant menace to their peace.

“Interest is a leech which is sucking away the blood of humanity especially of the middle and lower classes. Even the upper classes are not entirely secure from its baneful effects, though all of them seem to derive a false enjoyment from it, like the leopard who ate away his own tongue by rubbing it against a piece of stone, foolishly thinking it to be the blood and flesh of an-

other animal. Those who are ready to forego the use of it are too weak to withstand the force of the current system."⁴³

In short, Islam removes the evils of capitalism by its laws of inheritance, by the institution of Zakat, and by prohibiting the giving and taking of interest. Islam protects the poor from the clutches of the Shylocks and creates a middle class which is the backbone of society.

TRANSFORMATION WROUGHT IN ARABIA

Space forbids us from giving a detailed account of the countless blessings which the Holy Prophet Muhammad conferred upon humanity. Suffice it to say that he appeared at a time when night with all its terrors encompassed the entire surface of the earth. Idolatry, superstition and evil of every description reigned supreme all over the world. But of all countries, Arabia was at the lowest depth of corruption and the Arabian people were most degenerate. With his unbounded sanctifying power and the perfect divine teachings which God revealed unto him, Muhammad wrought a marvelous change among his followers and raised them to the highest point of intellectual, moral and spiritual progress.

Von Kremer remarks:

“Even before his death almost all Arabia had submitted to him; Arabia that had never before obeyed one

⁴³ The True Islam, Pages 343-345

prince, suddenly exhibits a political unity and swears allegiance to the will of an absolute ruler. Out of the numerous tribes, big and small, of a hundred different kinds that were incessantly at feud with one another, Muhammad's word created a nation. The idea of a common religion under one common head bound the different tribes together into one political organism which developed its peculiar characteristics with surprising rapidity. Now only one great idea could have produced this result, viz. the principle of national life in heathen Arabia. The clan-system was thus for the first time, if not entirely crushed—(that would have been impossible)—yet made subordinate to the feeling of religious unity. The great work succeeded, and when Muhammad died there prevailed over by far the greater part of Arabia a peace of God such as the Arab tribes, with their love of plunder and revenge, had never known; it was the religion of Islam that had brought about this reconciliation.”^{43a}

Again, Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, gives a vivid description of this unparalleled transformation:

“The acceptance of Islam illuminated their hearts and changed their vices into virtue and their wickedness into genius. Their nightly carousals were abandoned for the sake of vigils and prayers and their morning bouts were changed to paeans of praise and thanksgiving. . . . Any one who would carefully ponder over

^{43a} Von Kremer, Pages 309-310.

this remarkable change, how those wild Arabs abandoned their former pastures and hewed through the forests of their passions and desires to make their way to their Lord, cannot fail to conclude that it was all due to the sanctifying power of Muhammad, the Supreme Prophet, elected by God for His everlasting grace. And one may well wonder at the uniqueness of his power which picked up the holy companions from the depths of the earth and led them to the pinnacles of heaven and step by step elevated them to the stage of the elect. He found them like beasts devoid of the notions of Divine Unity and piety, who knew not the difference between virtue and vice. He taught them the rules of human propriety and explained to them the principles of communal and social life, instructed them in the laws of hygiene, in the rules of marriage relations and domestic economy, in the principles of diet and dress, of sanitation, treatment and prevention of disease, and in general inculcated lessons in moderation in all matters. And when they had mastered the rules of physical life, he led them on from physical to moral and spiritual qualities and to lessons in principled conduct, so as to enable them to develop a spiritual life. And, after they had been confirmed in morals and versed in the practice of good conduct, he invited them to the heights of the nearness of God and union with Him and initiated them in the Divine mysteries, and directed them to the Supreme Lord of Power and Majesty, so that they might henceforth freely crop the green ver-

ture of love in holy precincts of God and enjoy the privilege of His approval and acceptance.”⁴⁴

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE TO ALL MANKIND

Muhammad’s mercy and beneficence travelled far beyond the confines of Arabia. His followers carried the torch of light to every corner of the globe and dispelled the darkness of ignorance. They gave to the nations of the earth a high culture and civilization and elevated them to the summit of glory. Alfred W. Martin remarks:

“By lifting to a higher moral and religious plane the communities of his day and place; by welding into a harmonious religious unity the conflicting creeds of Arabia, Mohammed achieved that which neither the Judaism nor the Christianity of Medieval Arabia could accomplish. Nay, more, in the successful fulfillment of his civilizing work and in the realization of his supreme religious aim, Mohammed rendered invaluable service, not only to Arabia, but to all the world.”⁴⁵

It is a matter of utmost significance that the Holy Prophet Muhammad gave to mankind a compendium of laws, which is far ahead of any code of laws that we can find in the twentieth century. The present generation is confronted with many tangled and vexed problems such as international relations, marriage and divorce problems and many others which apparently

⁴⁴ Najmul Huda—The Lode-Star Pps. 15-17.

⁴⁵ The World’s Great Religion by Alfred W. Martin, Page 186

have no solution. If the principles as promulgated by this Saviour of humanity were to be applied, how quickly and beautifully they would be solved. And peace would cover the earth even as waters cover the seas. "Most successful" says a German Scholar Noldecke, concerning Muhammad, "of all prophets and religious personalities."⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Enc. Brit., Eleventh Edition. Under the word Koran.

CHAPTER VI

SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF MUHAMMAD

PRAYER

ANAS quotes the Holy Prophet as saying: "God said to Man, 'O son of Adam, as long as you will continue to pray and hope for mercy from Me, I will forgive all your sins even if they have filled the whole earth and heavens.'" (*Tirmudhi*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Musa that the Holy Prophet said: "The man who remembers and prays to God is like a living man; the man who does not remember God and pray to Him is like a dead man." (*Bukhari*).

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet related that God said: "I challenge to fight the man who shows enmity to My friends. Nothing is dearer to Me than obligatory prayers with which My servants can attain My nearness and it is with additional prayers that My servants increase in My nearness and become dear to Me and I love them so much that I become their ears with which they hear, I become their eyes with which they see, I become their hands with which they touch and I become their feet with which they walk. I grant

them what they want and I give them refuge when they seek for it." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Every important thing which is not begun with the praise of God is devoid of blessings." (*Abu Daud*)

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The five daily prayers are like a fresh river which runs by the door of one's house. He who washes himself in it five times a day will keep perfectly clean." (*Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "He who goes to the Mosque in the morning and in the evening, will be blessed with hospitality in paradise likewise." (*Bukhari and Muslim*)

Abu Saeed Khudree relates that the Holy Prophet said: "When you see a man is accustomed to visit the Mosque regularly, bear witness that he is a true believer because God says, 'Verily, those who believe in Allah and in the Last Day inhabit the Mosques of Allah.'" (*Tirmudhi*)

Abdullah-Ibn-Busr reports that a man said to the Holy Prophet: "O, Prophet of God, the laws and the commandments of Islam are beyond my comprehension. Tell me something to which I can hold fast." The Holy Prophet replied: "Let thy tongue utter the name of God unceasingly." (*Tirmudhi*)

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "God is pleased with those who offer thanks unto Him after eating and drinking." (*Muslim*)

Ibn Abbas relates that once he was riding behind the

Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet said to him: "My boy, I want to teach you a few things. Always remember God, He will remember you always. If you remember God you will always find Him your helper. When you ask for anything, ask it of God. When you seek for help, seek it of God. Know for certain that if the whole world wants to do you good, they cannot do it unless God wills it; if the whole world determines to injure you, they shall not do so, unless God allows it. Be near God in your days of prosperity, so that He may remember you in your days of adversity. And know that the affliction sent by God cannot be avoided, and an affliction that He does not allow, can never overtake you. Remember, God's help depends upon your own patience, even as perplexity is followed by complacency and adversity by prosperity." (*Tirmudhi*)

Abdullah Ibn Omar relates that the Holy Prophet was accustomed to pray: "O God, Who has the power to turn the hearts of men, turn our hearts toward obedience to Thee." (*Muslim*)

Anas reports that the Holy Prophet said: "O Allah, there is no joy save in the spiritual life." (*Bukhari*)

Imran Ibn Hattan reports: "Once I came to Abu Zarr and found him alone in the Mosque, garbed in his black sheet. I asked him, 'O, Abu Zarr, why are you all alone in this way?' He replied, 'I heard the Holy Prophet said, 'It is better to be alone than to keep evil company, and to keep good company is better than to be alone. To tell others to do good is better than silence and to

hold your tongue is better than to use it in prompting others to do evil.' ”

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: “I ask the forgiveness and help of God more than seventy times every day.” (*Muslim*)

Shaddad, son of Awas, relates that the Holy Prophet said: “The best prayer to ask the forgiveness of God is this: ‘O God, Thou art my Lord, there is none worthy of worship besides Thee, Thou hast created me and I am Thy servant, I keep my promise and pledges with Thee, to the best of my ability, I seek refuge with Thee from the evil consequences of my trespasses, I acknowledge Thy favors unto me and I confess my transgressions unto Thee. Do forgive my sins. There is none besides Thee to forgive’.” (*Bukhari*)

Abu Zarr relates how the Holy Prophet said: “Fear God wherever you may be, and if you commit a sin or make a mistake, be anxious to atone for it, and do something good to mitigate the error; and treat everybody with kindness and be courteous.” (*Bukhari*)

Hazrat Ayesha relates that the Holy Prophet was accustomed to stand up at night praying to God so long, that his legs would become swollen. He was asked, “O Prophet of Allah, thou art sinless, why dost thou pray so long?” The Holy Prophet replied: “Should I not become a grateful servant of God?” (*Bukhari*)

Wahab Ibn Abdullah relates that the Holy Prophet established brotherhood between Salaman and Abud Darda. In other words, Abud Darda was made brother

of Salaman. One day, when Salaman went to Abud Darda's house, he found the latter's wife sad and dejected. Salaman inquired of the lady what was the matter with her. She told him that her husband had renounced the world. Presently Abud Darda came home and ordered meals for Salaman. When the food was brought in, Salaman said to Abud Darda, "You eat with me." He replied, "I am fasting." The guest said, "Then I shall not eat either. I shall eat only if you eat with me." On hearing that Abud Darda broke his fast and ate with his guest. (It should be noted that that was not the compulsory fast of the month of Ramadhan but additional fast which the pious Moslems keep occasionally).

When night came and everybody was sleeping Abud Darda got up to say his additional nightly prayers. Salaman asked him to go to bed as it was time for sleep. After a little while, Abud Darda got up again to say his prayers. Salaman again told him to go to bed as it was still time to sleep.

When the latter part of the night came, Salaman said to Abud Darda, "Wake up now and let us say prayers." Then they both performed their prayers. Then Salaman said: "O Abud Darda, your God has a right over you, your self has a right over you and your wife has a right over you; give everyone his right."

Later on they both went to the Holy Prophet and related the story to him. The Holy Prophet said: "Salaman spoke the truth." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Saeed relates that the Holy Prophet was asked as to who was the best Moslem. The Holy Prophet answered: "That believer is the best one who strives in the path of God with his life and wealth." "Who is the next?" was the question again. The Holy Prophet replied: "The man who retires to the corner or nook of a hill and devotes himself to the worship of God, fears Him and does not do any harm to anybody." (*Tirmudhi*)

Hazrat Ayesha relates: "One night when I awoke from sleep, I found that the Holy Prophet was absent from the bed. I went out in search of him and lo, he was in prostration in the Mosque, praying to God in these words, 'O Allah, Thou art free from all defects, and Thou art the Possessor of all excellences. There is none worthy of worship but Thee. I seek refuge with Thy will and pleasure from Thy wrath and displeasure. I seek refuge with Thy security from Thy punishment, and I beseech Thee to grant me Thy refuge. I possess not the power to enumerate Thy attributes, and excellences, Thou alone hast the power to describe them.' "

(*Muslim*)

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Prayer is the key to paradise and physical purity is the key to prayer." (*Musnad Imam Hambal*)

Abdullah Ibn Salam relates that the Holy Prophet said: "O people, propagate Islam, feed the hungry and pray at night when other people are asleep, then you will enter paradise peacefully." (*Tirmudhi*)

REPENTANCE

It is related on the authority of Abu Musa that the Holy Prophet said: "God extends His hands of mercy at night that those who sin in the day may repent and turn to Him at night; He extends His hands of mercy in the day that those who sin in the night may repent and turn to Him in the day." (*Muslim*)

Ibn Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Who so constantly prays to God to forgive his sins, God removes his difficulties, relieves him of his distress and provides for him from unknown sources." (*Abu Daud*)

Abdullah Ibn Masud reports that the Holy Prophet said: "The man who repents of his sin is like the one who is free from sin." (*Ibn Maja*)

Anas related that the Holy Prophet said: "When a sinner sincerely repents of his sins and determines to do good, God is more pleased with him than a traveler is pleased at finding his conveyance in a trackless desert after it has been lost." (*Muslim*)

Abu Saeed Khudree quotes the Holy Prophet as saying: "Among the early people was a man who committed ninety-nine murders. Later he inquired of the people as to who was the greatest savant on the face of the earth. Upon being informed of a monk, the man went to him to learn if his ninety-nine murders could be forgiven. The monk decreed that such sins could not be forgiven. So the man killed the monk, making in all one hundred murders. Again he asked, 'Who is

the greatest savant in the world?' This time he learned of another savant. Relating the tragedy of the hundred murders to the savant, he again inquired if forgiveness were possible. The savant replied, 'Yes, certainly.'

Thereupon the savant commanded him to leave his land of iniquity and join in worship and prayer a band of holy men in a foreign country.

"While on journey to the strange land, the man died. Thereupon arose a quarrel between the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment. The angels of mercy declared, 'In his heart of hearts he repented and turned to God, therefore, we are entitled to take him.' To which the angels of punishment replied, 'He did not do any good work, so he belongs to us.' Suddenly an angel appeared in the shape of a man. Both opponents agreed that the angel should judge between them. So the judge ordered them to find out by measuring to which land he was nearest when he died. It was learned that he was nearest by one cubit to the land of the holy men. Therefore, the judge decreed that he belonged to the angels of mercy who took him joyfully."

(Bukhari and Muslim)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "God deals with man in accordance with his faith and confidence in Him. Whenever man remembers God, He is with him right there. God becomes more pleased with His sinful servant at his repentance than a man becomes, when he finds his riding animal which he lost in a trackless desert, after he had despaired of find-

ing it. When a man moves closer to God by one cubit, God moves toward him by two and when a man walks toward God, He runs toward him." (*Muslim*)

CHARITY

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Every good deed is charity." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Every kind word is charity." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Musa Ash-ari reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Charity is the duty of every Moslem." "And if he does not find anything to give in charity?" inquired the companions. "Let him then work with his own hands and benefit himself and give to others in charity," replied the Holy Prophet. "And if he cannot or does not do so?" "Let him then assist a person who is in need of help." "And if he does not do that?" "Let him then bid others to do what is good." "And if he does not do that?" "Let him then abstain from doing injury to others, for this too is charity." (*Bukhari*)

Adee Ibn Hatim relates that the Holy Prophet spoke of the hellfire and asked the protection of God against it and turned his face like one afraid. Again he mentioned hell-fire and prayed for God's protection against it and turned his face like one afraid and said: "Shield yourself against fire even though with a piece of date, but if you cannot find it, then with a word of kindness." (*Bukhari*)

Adullah Ibn Salem reports: "When the Holy Prophet

first came to Medina, I went to him and looked at his face closely and knew that his was not the face of a false prophet. The first thing he said was: 'O people, spread the greeting of peace, feed the hungry, do good to your kinsfolk, and pray at night when others are asleep, you will enter paradise peacefully.'" (*Tirmudhi*)

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "When a Moslem sows seeds in his fields and grows crops and men, birds, and animals eat therefrom, it is counted as charity on his part." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet asked, "Who among you, is keeping fast today?" "I," replied Abu Bakr. "Who has followed the funeral bier today?" "I," again answered Abu Bakr. "Who has fed the poor?" "I," said Abu Bakr the third time. "And who has visited the sick today?" "I," replied Abu Bakr. The Holy Prophet said: "One who has done all these good deeds is sure to enter paradise." (*Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: "The best house among the Moslems is the one wherein an orphan is kindly treated and the worst house among the Moslems is the one wherein the orphan is ill treated." (*Ibn Maja*)

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The worst feast is that in which those who are more deserving of it (the poor) are not invited and those who are less deserving of it (the rich) are invited." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah reports that a poor woman of dark complexion was accustomed to sweep the Mosque in

Medina. As the Holy Prophet did not see her for several days, he inquired as to what had happened to her. His companions informed him that the woman had died. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said to them, "Why did you not tell me about her death?" and immediately went to her grave and offered prayers for her. (*Bukhari*)

Anas reports that the Holy Prophet said: "When God created the earth, it began to shake and tremble. Then He made the mountains and put them upon it and the earth became firm.

"Then the angels became surprised at the mightiness of the mountains and asked, 'O, Lord, is there anything else of Thy creation stronger than the mountains?'

"God replied, 'Yes, iron is stronger than the mountains.'

"The angels asked again, 'O, Lord, is there anything of Thy creation stronger than iron?'

"God said, 'Yes, fire is stronger than iron.'

"Then the angels asked a third time, 'O, Lord, is there anything of Thy creation stronger than fire?'

"Said God, 'Yes, water is stronger than fire.'

"Then the angels asked, 'O, Lord, is there anything of Thy creation stronger than water?'

"God said, 'Yes, wind is stronger than water.'

"Then the angels inquired again, "O, Lord, is there anything of Thy creation stronger than wind?'

"The Lord replied, 'Yes, of course. A man who gives alms with his right hand and conceals it from his left

is stronger than wind.' ” (*Tirmudhi*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Zarr who said: “One day, I was walking with the Holy Prophet along the stony ground of Medina and lo! there was the hill of Uhud in front. Then the Holy Prophet said, ‘O, Abu Zarr.’

“I replied, ‘Yes, O, Prophet of God.’

“Then the Holy Prophet said: ‘Were I to get a heap of gold as big as the yonder hill, I would distribute it among the servants of God and I would not keep it in my house even for three days. If anything was to remain, that would be to pay off debts.’ ” (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Suhail that the Holy Prophet said: “I and the man who takes care of and helps the orphans, will be together in Paradise like these two fingers.” Then he raised his forefinger and his middle finger together. (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said: “Those who help and take care of the widows and the poor will get the same reward from God as the martyrs and those who spend the whole night in praying to God and those who keep fast all their lives.” (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Zarr that the Holy Prophet said: “Don’t belittle any good deed however insignificant it might be, even so small an act as to meet your brother with a cheerful face.” (*Muslim*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Zarr that the Holy Prophet said: “Your smiling in your brother’s

face is charity; your exhortations of your fellowmen to do good and abandon evil is charity; your putting the wanderer on the right road is charity; your helping the blind is charity; your removing the stones and thorns and other obstructions from the road is charity and to give water to the bucket of your brother from your own is charity." (*Tirmudhi*)

Huzaifa relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Be not like those who say, 'we will do good to those who do good to us and we will oppress those who oppress us.' But determine to be kind to those who are kind to you and oppress not those who oppress you." (*Tirmudhi*)

Abu Hurairah related that the Holy Prophet said: "Alms giving never reduces wealth and the person who forgives other peoples' faults is never disgraced. On the contrary God increases the honors of such a man and exalts him who adopts humbleness for the sake of God." (*Muslim*)

It is related on the authority of Anas that the Holy Prophet said: "No one can become a believer unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Bakr Siddique relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The punishment of God will fall upon those who do not stop the oppressors from the acts of oppression." (*Tirmudhi*)

It is related on the authority of Abud Darda that the Holy Prophet said: "Help the poor if you want to win my pleasure." Then he added: "You can be entitled

to the help and bounty of God only when you help the poor." (*Abu Daud*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "On the Day of Judgment, God will say, 'O son of Adam, I was sick, you did not attend me, I was hungry, you did not feed me, I was thirsty and you did not give me a drink of water.' The man will ask, 'O Lord, Thou art the Creator and the Sustainer of all the worlds, how could I attend you or feed you or give you drink?' God will reply, 'Such and such servant of mine was sick, hungry and thirsty. You did not attend him, nor did you give him food and drink. Had you served him, you would have found Me there.'" (*Muslim*)

Jareer relates that the Holy Prophet said: "God does not show mercy unto the man who does not show mercy unto others." (*Bukharee*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Wealth does not consist in possessing a large amount of money, the real wealth is the wealth of the heart." (*Bukharee*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Musa that the Holy Prophet said: "Visit the sick, feed the hungry, and free the prisoners." (*Bukharee*)

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Allah shows mercy unto the people who are kind and considerate when buying and selling and when demanding payment." (*Bukhari*)

Ayesha reports that some people slaughtered a goat. The Holy Prophet asked them: "How much meat is

left (after distributing the meat among the poor)?" They replied, "Only a leg remains." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said, "Say, rather all the meat remains except that of the leg." (*Tirmudhi*)

Jareer Ibn Abdullah reports that he heard the Holy Prophet say: "The man who is devoid of human sympathy and meekness is devoid of all virtue." (*Muslim*)

Abdullah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The best Moslem is he from whose hands and tongue the Moslems are safe." (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Omar that a certain person asked the Holy Prophet: "O Prophet of Allah, what is the best teaching of Islam?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Feed the hungry and greet everyone with the greeting of peace whether you know him or not." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Saeed reports: "Once upon a time we were in the company of the Holy Prophet on one of his journeys. Suddenly a man who was riding a she-camel appeared before us and began to look around, seeking for help. At this the Holy Prophet said: 'Anybody who has an animal to ride upon more than he needs must give it to him who has none. Anybody who has provision for his journey over and above his needs, must give it to him who is in want of it.' In this way, the Holy Prophet mentioned all the different kinds of wealth till it was made clear to us that no one should keep with him his surplus wealth but give it in charity to the poor and needy." (*Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Once upon a time, a traveller, overcome by thirst, descended into a well to drink water. When he came up, after he had finished drinking, he met a dog at the edge of the well panting and licking the mud out of excessive thirst. The traveller took pity upon the poor creature and retraced his steps down into the well. He filled one of his shoes with water and, holding the vessel in his mouth, ascended the well, with the help of his hands. Then he brought the water to the dog, and thus satisfied its thirst. God became pleased with the traveller at this benevolent act, and forgave his sins." The companions of the Holy Prophet asked: "O, Prophet of Allah, are we rewarded for showing sympathy toward lower animals?" The Holy Prophet replied: "We are rewarded for doing good to every living creature." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Kabsha relates that the Holy Prophet said: "There are four kinds of people in the world:

"First: Those upon whom God has bestowed material wealth as well as knowledge and wisdom. They fear God regarding their wealth; they give their relatives the rights which they (the relatives) have upon it (upon their wealth). They also know well and perform their duty toward God with regard to their wealth. Such people are highest in the sight of God.

"Second: Those people whom God has blessed with knowledge and learning but they possess no wealth. However, they entertain pure and sincere desire that,

had they been possessed of wealth, they would spend it in good work. By virtue of their generous intentions, the second group of people will receive the same reward and blessings from God as the first.

“Third: Those people who have wealth but no knowledge. On account of their ignorance, they stumble and do not fear God with respect to their wealth. They do not give their kinsfolk the rights which they (the kinsfolk) have upon it nor do they spend it in the path of God. Such people are very low in the sight of God.

“Fourth: The people who have neither wealth nor knowledge. In addition, they do not entertain generous intentions with regard to wealth. Their desire is, like the third group of people, had they been rich, they would spend their riches in pursuit of their own selfish pleasure only. On account of their uncharitable intentions, they will be regarded as the third group.” (*Tirmudhi*)

Jabir son of Saleem relates: “Once I happened to come across a man who commanded obedience from people. In everything, people abandoned their opinion and followed his in preference to their own. Upon inquiry as to who this person was, I was told that he was the prophet of God.

“Then I went to him and inquired, ‘Are you the prophet of God?’ He said in reply, ‘I am the prophet sent by God Who removes your troubles when you pray unto Him at the time of your distress; when your crops fail and you lift your hands in prayers unto Him, He

makes your crops grow and when you lose your riding animal with which you traverse the trackless desert and you call upon Him, He brings your animal back to you.' Upon hearing this, I besought the Holy Prophet to give me some wise counsel. The Holy Prophet said, 'Never abuse any one.' Since I heard the injunction of the Holy Prophet, I never abused any one—not even a goat. The Holy Prophet continued, 'Never belittle any good deed regardless of how small it is. To meet your brother with a cheerful and a smiling face—even this is a good deed. Wear not your garments in a way which would engender pride and conceit in you, for God loves not pride. When any one abuses you and exposes your defects the exposure of which you do not like, you do not retaliate by exposing his faults. He will suffer from the consequences of his own evil.'”
(*Tirmudhi*)

It is reported on the authority of Ayesha that the Holy Prophet said: “By virtue of good conduct and excellent manners, the believer attains to the status of the man who fasts all day and offers prayers all night.”
(*Abu Daud*)

It is related on the authority of Ibn Omar that the Holy Prophet said: “Give refuge to those who seek it of you, give alms to those who ask it of you, accept the invitation when you are invited by any one and when someone does favors unto you, do good to him in return, but if you do not have the power to do so, then pray to God for him.” (*Abu Daud*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Kabsha that the Holy Prophet said: "Alms-giving never reduces your wealth, God increases the honor of the man who, when oppressed exercises patience and whoso opens the door of begging unto himself, God opens the door of poverty unto him." (*Tirmudhi*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "When a man visits the sick or his brother for the sake of God, a caller (angel) calls, 'Thou hast prepared thy place in paradise.'" (*Tirmudhi*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Many people will enter paradise, whose hearts will be like those of the birds. In other words, their hearts will be free from envy, jealousy, ill-will and malice." (*Muslim*)

MUTUAL LOVE AND SYMPATHY

Abu Musa relates that the Holy Prophet said: "One believer should be unto another believer like one brick of the building is unto another, that is, one supports the other." (*Bukhari*)

Ibn Omar relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Moslems are brothers unto one another; so one should not oppress the other, nor should one leave the other in the hands of the oppressor. God satisfies the needs of the man who satisfies his brother's needs. On the day of resurrection, God will remove the distresses of the man who removes his brother's distresses. On the day of resurrection, God will hide the defects of

the man who will hide the defects of his brother.”
(*Bukharee*)

Numan Ibn Basheer relates that the Holy Prophet said: “The mutual love and sympathy of the Moslems can be illustrated by the example of the different limbs of the body. When some one limb is wounded, the whole body feels pain.” (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: “O people! do you know what backbiting is?” They replied, “God and His prophet know best.” The Holy Prophet said: “Backbiting is to speak about your brother in his absence things that would hurt him if he would hear.” Some one asked, “O Prophet of Allah, suppose those things are true, will they still be backbiting?” The Holy Prophet answered, “Yes, of course it is backbiting if they are true. Otherwise it will be a lie and calumny.”
(*Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: “On the day of resurrection, God will say: ‘Where are the people who love one another for the sake of My Glory? Today I shall keep them under My shadow when there is no shadow beside Mine.’ ” (*Muslim*)

Abu Musa relates that the Holy Prophet said: “Believers are like walls, one unto another, just as one part of the wall supports the other, likewise one believer supports and strengthens the other.” (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: “By God in whose hands is my life, you cannot gain entrance into paradise without having faith in God and you

cannot be truly faithful without loving one another. O people, should I not tell you something which will beget and increase your mutual love? Harken, O people, greet one another frequently with the greeting, 'Assalamo Alaikum—Peace be unto you.'” (*Muslim*)

It is related on the authority of Ibn-Masud that the Holy Prophet said: “O people, speak not ill of others unto me. When I come from home to your meetings, I love to come with my heart open toward you all.” (*Tirmudhi*)

It is related on the authority of Muadh, who is reported to have heard the Holy Prophet say: “God says that those who will love one another for the sake of My glory, will occupy a high place in heaven upon which My light will shine. Even the prophets and the martyrs will be envious of that.” (*Tirmudhi*)

It is related that the Holy Prophet said: “The believers are like one person. When one of his eyes is hurt, then his whole body feels pain, and when there is a complaint in his head, his whole body aches.” (*Muslim*)

Ibni Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet said: “Do not quarrel with your brother nor deride him and never make a promise which you cannot fulfill.” (*Tirmudhi*)

Anas relates that once a companion of the Holy Prophet who was sitting by him, said to the Prophet when a man passed by them: “O Prophet of Allah, I love the man who just passed by us.” The Holy Prophet inquired, “Have you told him that you love him?” The

man replied, "No, O Prophet of Allah." Then the Holy Prophet admonished his companion to go and tell his friend that he loved him. Whereupon, the companion went to the man and said, "I love you for the sake of God." The man said in answer, "May God love you for Whose sake you love me." (*Abu Daud*)

Ibn Omar relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Moslems are brothers unto one another. Therefore let no Moslem oppress another Moslem nor leave him in the hands of an oppressor. And God helps him who helps others in times of their needs. On the day of judgment, God will remove the distress of him who removes the distress of his brother. On the day of judgment God will hide the faults of him who hides the faults of his brother." (*Bukhari*)

DUTY TO THE NEIGHBORS

Abu Zarr relates that the Holy Prophet said: "O Abu Zarr, when you prepare curry, keep a large quantity of gravy and send a part of it to your neighbor." (*Muslim*)

Hazrat Ayesha relates that she asked the Holy Prophet to whom she should send presents most often. The Holy Prophet replied: "To those who live next door to you." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Huraira relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The man who has faith in God and in the Day of Judgment must not give any trouble to his neighbors. It is incumbent that he honors his guest and holds his

tongue when he cannot speak good things." (*Bukhari: Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet addressed the Moslem ladies and said: "O, ladies, one should not neglect to do even such little favors to their neighbors as to send them a part of the leg of mutton one cooks." (*Bukharis Muslim*)

It is related on the authority of Ibni Omar that the Holy Prophet said: "The angel Gabriel lays so much emphasis on the duty toward neighbors that I begin to suspect that he will enjoin the inheritance of property upon neighbors." (*Bukhari: Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet repeated three times: "By God one cannot become a believer." His companions asked, "O, Prophet of God, who cannot become a believer?" The Holy Prophet replied, "The one from whose encroachments, his neighbor cannot feel absolutely free." (*Bukhari: Muslim*)

FORGIVENESS

It is related that the Holy Prophet said: "The most respectable person in the sight of God is the one who when in power, forgives the other who shall have injured him."

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet was once on a journey, returning from Nejd in the company of an army. In the middle of the day, the party halted in a valley which was full of thorny trees. The army dispersed hither and thither in order to take rest and the

Holy Prophet himself dismounted his animal under a tree and suspended his sword on it. Jabir relates: "In a little while, when the companions of the Holy Prophet were asleep, he called us all. When we went to him, we saw a village rustic standing by him. The Holy Prophet told us that the man had come to him with a drawn sword and thus addressed him: 'Who will save you from my hands?' The Holy Prophet replied, 'Allah.' No sooner had the Holy Prophet uttered this word than the sword fell down from the man's hands. The Holy Prophet picked up the sword and asked, 'Who will now save you from my hands?' The man besought the Holy Prophet to forgive him. The Holy Prophet did so and let the man go without any punishment. Upon his return to his people, he told them, 'I have come from the man who is best and noblest of all men.' " (*Bukhari*)

MISCELLANEOUS

Ibn Omar reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Islam is based on five principles: (1) To acknowledge that there is none worthy of worship but One True God and Muhammad is His messenger. (2) To say five daily prayers. (3) To pay Zakat—the poor-rate. (4) To perform the pilgrimage. (5) To keep fast during the month of Ramadhan." (*Bukhari*)

Ibn Omar reports that the Holy Prophet heard a man saying to his brother, "Be not so much bashful." The Holy Prophet said: "Bashfulness is a part of your faith." (*Bukhari*)

Imran reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Modesty always leads you to that which is good." (*Bukhari*)

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Whoso wishes to meet God pure and purified, let him marry." (*Ibn Maja*)

Anas reports that three persons came to the apartments of the Holy Prophet's wives making inquiries concerning his worship of God. Upon being told of it (that he spends a great deal of his time in devotions), they said to one another, "The Holy Prophet is the most righteous among us, still he worships God so much. What about us who are so full of sins?" One of them said, "As for me I will pray the whole night and will not sleep at all." The other said, "I will keep fast during the rest of my days without interruption." The third one said, "I will separate myself from women and will not marry." Upon hearing this, the Holy Prophet said to them: "Are you the men who said so and so? By Allah, I fear God more than you all, yet sometimes I fast and sometimes I do not; at night I both pray and sleep; and I live a married life. Whoso does not follow my precept and example is not of me." (*Bukhari*)

Ibn Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The elder persons who do not treat the younger ones with kindness and the young persons who do not treat the elder ones with respect are not of us." (*Tirmudhi*)

Abdullah Ibn Omar reports that a man came to the Holy Prophet and besought his permission to serve the cause of Islam. The Holy Prophet asked, "Are your

parents living?" On receiving answer in the affirmative, the Holy Prophet said, "Them do you serve." (*Bukhari*)

Abdullah Ibn Omar relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The pleasure of God consists in the pleasure of the parents and the displeasure of God consists in the displeasure of the parents." (*Tirmudhi*)

Malik son of Rabee-a relates: "Once while we were sitting in the assembly of the Holy Prophet, a man from the tribe of Bani Salma came and asked, 'O Prophet of Allah, my parents are dead, is it possible for me to do any service to them even now?' The Holy Prophet replied, 'Yes, pray to God to have mercy upon them and to forgive them their transgressions. Fulfill the promises which your parents made to people during their life time but could not fulfill them on account of death, show kindness to those relatives to show kindness to whom it was your parents' duty and respect their friends.'" (*Abu Daud*)

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet said: "On the day of judgment, the nearest and most beloved to me will be those of you who have the best moral qualities and the most far and hated to me will be those of you who talk much and uselessly with pretended eloquence, and those who are arrogant and proud." (*Tirmudhi*)

Abu Masood relates that the Holy Prophet said: "It is not allowed to envy anyone; but two persons may be envied. One who has wealth and spends it for the wel-

fare of humanity, and the other who has knowledge and serves humanity with it." (*Bukhari and Muslim*)

Abud Darda relates that the Holy Prophet said: "God will make the way to paradise easy for those who go out in quest of knowledge. The angels spread their wings to give shadow to those who search for knowledge. All creatures in the heavens and the earth pray to God to forgive and bless the possessors of knowledge and wisdom. Men of knowledge and wisdom are superior to the devotees as the moon is to other stars. They are the heirs of the prophets of God who do not leave behind them material wealth to be inherited but knowledge and wisdom. Those who acquire knowledge and wisdom from them, become the inheritors of all values." (*Abu Daud*)

It is related that Anas said: "I served the Holy Prophet continuously for ten years but he never rebuked me, nor did he say, 'Why have you done this, or why have you not done that?'" (*Bukhari. Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah quotes the Holy Prophet as saying: "He is not a hero who throws his opponent in wrestling; the real hero is he who when in anger controls himself." (*Bukhari. Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "God does not look at the features of your body, He looks at your hearts." (*Muslim*)

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Three things go to the cemetery with the man's dead body—his wealth, his relatives, and his good deeds. Wealth

and relatives return but good deeds stay with him.”

(Bukhari)

Abu Masud reports that the Holy Prophet said: “If a man advises another to do good, he (the adviser) will get the same rewards as the doer, himself.” *(Muslim)*

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said: “Help your brothers, be they oppressors or oppressed.” A man asked, “O Prophet of Allah, we can help the oppressed but how can we help the oppressor?” The Holy Prophet replied, “Stop him from the acts of oppression.”

(Bukhari)

It is related on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said: “O people, guard against jealousy for jealousy eats up virtue like fire burns the fuel.”

(Abu Daud)

Abu Dajana relates that the Holy Prophet said: “To live a simple life is included in your faith.” *(Bukharee)*

Suhaib relates that the Holy Prophet said: “All the actions of the believer are admirable. He alone possesses the quality that in prosperity he expresses gratitude which brings more prosperity, and in adversity he shows patience, the result of which is always good.” *(Muslim)*

It is related on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said: “On the day of resurrection, seven persons will be under the shadow of God; the first, the judge who is just; the second, the man who devotes his life in the worship of God even in his youth; the third, the man who eagerly awaits the call to the prayer to go to the Mosque and worship God; fourth, the two

friends, who love each other for the sake of God, when they meet, they meet for the sake of God, when they separate, they separate for the sake of God; fifth, the man who resists the temptation of a woman who is beautiful and comes of a respectable family and tries to incline him toward her for evil purposes; the sixth, the man who gives alms with his right hand but conceals it from his left; the seventh, the man, when alone, meditates on God, and his eyes become filled with tears.” (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah also relates that the Holy Prophet said: “The beauty of a man’s Islam is that he shuns talking unnecessary things.” (*Tirmudhi*)

Abu Omar reports that he requested the Holy Prophet to give him some advice so that he might not stand in need of seeking anybody else’s advice. Upon this, the Holy Prophet said: “Have faith and trust in God and be steadfast in your faith.” (*Muslim*)

Omar relates that during the time of the Holy Prophet there came a group of prisoners, among whom was a woman who was restlessly running to and fro; whenever she came across a child she would take hold of him, hug and press him to her bosom and nurse him. The Prophet asked: “Can you think that this woman would throw her child into the fire?” His companions replied: “No, O Prophet of Allah.” The Holy Prophet said: “God is more merciful unto man than the woman is unto her child.” (*Bukhari*)

It is reported on the authority of Muawiya that the Holy Prophet said: “If you search for people’s faults

you will harm more than reform them.” (*Abu Daud*)

Ayadh reports that the Holy Prophet said: “O people, God has revealed to me that you must adopt humbleness so that you may not consider yourselves superior to others, nor be boastful one unto the other.” (*Muslim*)

Abu Sufiyan relates: “I besought the Holy Prophet, ‘O Prophet of Allah, give me some wise counsel to which I can hold fast.’ The Holy Prophet replied: ‘Say God is my Lord and be steadfast in it.’ I asked him again, ‘O Prophet of Allah, what do you fear in me most?’ Touching the tongue, he said: ‘The thing I fear in you most is this’ (the tongue.)” (*Tirmudhi*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: “The man who calls people to the truth will receive blessings from God, as much as all those who accept it through Him, in addition to the rewards of his own actions.” (*Muslim*)

Abu Musa reports that the Holy Prophet said: “The good and the bad companions are like the perfumer and the blacksmith. If you sit by the perfumer, he will present you with the perfume or at least you will enjoy the fragrance of his perfume. If you sit by the blacksmith, you are liable to burn your clothes or at least you will suffer from the odor of the smoke.” (*Bukhari*)

Abdullah Ibn Masud relates that the Holy Prophet said: “The man who entertains even a jot of pride in his heart will not be admitted into heaven.” Some one asked: “People naturally love to have good clothes and

good shoes. Is that pride too?" The Holy Prophet replied: "No, it is not. God is beautiful and loves beauty. Pride consists in rejecting the truth and in looking down upon others." (*Muslim*)

Abdullah Ibn Umar relates how once the Holy Prophet told this little story:

Three persons, long ago, were journeying through the land. These three stayed for the night in a mountain ravine. In the night a huge stone rolled over the mouth of the ravine and imprisoned the three. The unfortunate men conferred on what was to be done, until they agreed that if they prayed to God, reminding Him of their past good deeds, He might release them.

Then the first man began thus: "O God, my father and my mother are very aged, and I love them so much that I feed them before I feed my children. Once, coming home with my flock after a journey, I found my father and mother asleep. I milked my animals, and with the milk by my side I kept vigil by my parents' bedside till dawn. Then my parents woke up and drank gratefully. Even as I waited for their waking my children clamored around, crying for food, so hungry were they. O God, if I did this to win Thy pleasure, surely Thou wilt help us in our distress."

Lo! the stone slid back a fraction, not leaving enough space, however, through which to pass.

Then the second man prayed thus: "O God, I had a cousin and she was very dear to me. O God, my passion ruled me, and I wanted to sleep with her. She be-

came most indignant and did not consent. A famine came upon our country, and my cousin came to me for help, as she starved. I reminded her of my desire, and told her that I would give her a sum of money if she would agree to sleep with me. The unfortunate lady agreed. However, just as we made ready, she said, 'O cousin, fear God and do not commit the unlawful act.' Whereupon I set her free and left her. O God, if I did this to seek Thy pleasure, wilt Thou not help us in our distress?"

Lo! the stone gave way a little more, yet there was not enough room through which to pass to the open air. Then the third man prayed thus: "O God, I had a laborer and I paid him. Once, however, he went away, without wages. In the meanwhile, I invested his wages in many ways. Soon I got much wealth and became exceedingly prosperous. Then the laborer returned and asked for his wages. I gave him it, and with it all the wealth I had accumulated from it. He thought I jested, but became assured of my seriousness and took it all gratefully. O God, if I did this to secure Thy pleasure, wilt Thou not help us in our distress?"

Lo! the stone rumbled, and rolled back, and the three men stepped out and went on their way.
(*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: "A man's faith is influenced by his friends. Every one must, therefore, be careful in choosing them." (*Tirmudhi*)

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah that

the Holy Prophet said: "The man who looks at those who are superior to him in wealth and in physical strength must look at those also who are inferior to him in these respects." (*Bukhari*)

Khubbab relates that during the days when the Holy Prophet was in Mecca, the idolaters severely persecuted the Moslems. Unable to endure the oppression, once they came to the Holy Prophet and implored him to pray to God to have mercy upon them:

The Holy Prophet at that time was reclining on a cloth in the shadows of the Ka'aba, and seeing the anxiety and consternation and distress around him, he said: "Virtuous people before you were buried waist deep in the ground by the persecutors and their heads were then sawn into pieces; but these people did not swerve from truth. And by Allah, Islam will spread in Arabia and all obstacles shall be removed in such a way that a single man, weaponless, shall be able to travel from Sana'a to Hadarmout without fear, except the fear of God. But you are in a hurry." (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Ibn Masud that the Holy Prophet said: "You must always speak the truth, for, truthfulness will lead you to righteous actions which will lead you to paradise. One who acquires the habit of speaking the truth is known to God as Siddique—the truthful. And you must never tell a lie, because, falsehood will lead you to wicked deeds which will lead you to hell. One who is accustomed to tell lies is known to God as Kazzab—the great liar." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "On the day of resurrection, you will find that the worst man is he who wears two faces. He goes to one party and says one thing and goes to another and tells a different story." (*Bukhari*)

Hazrat Ummi Salma reports that the Holy Prophet said: "O, ye people, I am a man like unto you. You bring your disputes before me to settle. It is possible, that influenced by the power of tongue, I give one man's right to another. Remember, such a decision shall prove like a red-hot charcoal to the party who has wrongfully won the case." (*Bukhari*)

Osama reports that one of the Holy Prophet's daughters sent for him, saying that he should come and see her son, who was in the agonies of death. The Holy Prophet, in presenting his compliments through the messenger, stated that what Allah gives and what Allah takes is Allah's property, and Allah knows when we all have to die. He continued by saying that she should be resigned and look upon her patience in resignation as a reward. The daughter again sent for him, imploring him to come. The Holy Prophet went to her with Sa'ad, and some friends. When he arrived the child was given to the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet took the child, who was in great pain, and seeing its agony, his eyes brimmed with tears. Sa'ad asked: "Why weep, O messenger of Allah?" The Holy Prophet replied: "This is the love which Allah gives to every heart. Blessing on him who loves Allah's creation." (*Bukhari*)

Abu Sufiyan relates that Heraclius the Emperor asked him about the teachings of the Holy Prophet, and he replied: "Worship God alone, never associate anything else with God; give up everything bad that your forefathers did, offer prayers, speak truth, be charitable to the poor, be righteous, and do good to your relations." (*Bukhari*)

Anas relates how the Holy Prophet said: "Beware, let no man wish for death when calamity and misfortune overcome him. If he is hard pressed he may say, 'O God, let me live so long as life is better for me, and let me die when death is better for me.'" (*Bukhari*)

Abu Hurairah says that once a man went to the Holy Prophet and asked him to teach him something virtuous. The Holy Prophet said: "Never lose your temper." The man asked for something else. The Holy Prophet said: "Never lose your temper." And finally the man asked again. The Holy Prophet said: "Never lose your temper." (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said: "He who believes in God and in the last day, must speak that which is good when he speaks or else he must hold his tongue." (*Bukhari*)

It is related that when Utba, son of Ghazwan, was the governor of Basrah, he said in the course of a sermon: "I remember the days when there were only seven Moslems in Mecca along with the Holy Prophet and I was the seventh one among them. We could not have any other thing for food except the leaves of the trees.

On account of eating the leaves, our intestines became wounded. In those days I received as a gift a sheet of cloth which I divided into two parts, one of which I used myself and gave the other to Sa'ad, son of Malik to wear. Today every one of us is a governor of some province. I seek refuge with God from the slightest thought of self-importance." (*Muslim*)

It is related on the authority of Suhail that a man asked the Holy Prophet: "O Prophet of Allah, give me counsel to do such work as would help me to win the love of God as well as the love of men." The Holy Prophet replied: "Renounce the love of this material world, then God will love you. Desire not to have any wealth from people and they also will love you." (*Ibn Maja*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The best believer is he who has the most excellent manners and the best among you is he who gives the kindest treatment to his wife." (*Tirmudhi*)

Hakeem Ibn Hizam relates that on one occasion he asked the Holy Prophet to give him some wealth, a number of times. The Holy Prophet gave him something every time he asked for it. At last, the Holy Prophet said: "O Hakeem, the material wealth indeed is very attractive to look at and enjoyable and is a source of blessings for the man who acquires it without greed. It is, however, devoid of blessings for the man who acquires it with greed. Such a man is like the glutton who keeps on eating but is not satisfied. O Hakeem,

the upper hand is better than the lower one, i.e., it is better to give than to receive." Hakeem then said: "O Prophet of God, by Allah, Who has sent you with the true religion, I shall never accept anything from anyone in the future until I depart from this world." (*Bukhari*)

It is related on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said: "All the good deeds of man is for himself except the fast which is for Me; I am the reward of it (fast). Fasts are shield and protection for him. If any one of you is fasting, he should not indulge in abusive language or in unnecessary talks. If somebody wants to quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am keeping fast.' By Allah in whose hands is Muhammad's life, the smell of the mouth of the man who fasts is sweeter to God than that of the musk. The man who keeps fast is blessed with two pleasures—one when he breaks his fast and eats and the other when he will meet his Lord." (*Bukhari*)

Ibn Omar relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The Merciful God shows mercy unto the merciful people. Show mercy unto the inmates of the earth, then the One Who is in heaven will show mercy unto you." (*Abu Daud*)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet said: "God divided love and mercy into hundred parts. He kept ninety nine parts with Himself and sent down the remaining one part upon the earth. It is out of this

part that creatures show love and mercy unto one another so much so that the mare raises up her hoof lest she should injure her colt." (*Bukhari*)

CHAPTER VII

MUHAMMAD IN THE BIBLE

THE purpose of this chapter is to show the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecies in the person of Muhammad, the Holy Founder of Islam. Therefore, a brief statement concerning the Moslem attitude toward the Christian Bible is of vital importance. For there seems to be a contradiction in the fact that the Moslems who do not accept the Christian Scripture as a verbally inspired Word of God would seek to employ it in order to establish the truth of their prophet. This is a riddle which needs to be solved. Hence the necessity of the following introduction.

It is a well-known fact that the Moslems believe in Jesus, Moses and all other Biblical prophets and in their verbal revelations. The followers of Islam *do* believe that actual words of God came unto all the prophets. If it could be proved that the revelations received by those prophets were recorded by them or under their own directions, dictated by them during their life time, then the Moslems would be quite willing to accept those revelations as the inspired word of God. But unfortunately, the extant Bible does not contain those exact words of God that came unto the prophets. The

history of the Bible reveals that the existing Bible was committed to writing from various sources covering many, many centuries and underwent great changes, interpolations, and corruptions. We read in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* a statement regarding the text of the Old Testament:

“The form in which the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is presented to us in all Mss. and printed editions is that of the Messoretic text, the date of which is usually placed somewhere between the 5th and 8th centuries of the Christian era . . . but, before that date, owing to various causes, it is beyond dispute that a large number of corruptions were introduced into the Hebrew text.”¹

Such is the position of the Old Testament. Let us take a running glance over the New Testament which is the latest and constitutes the sacred scriptures of the Christians. A noted Oxford scholar writes in his book, “*The Story Behind the Gospel*,” regarding the historicity of the New Testament:

“The first important point to bear in mind here is that none of the Gospels could have been written until many, many years after the death of Jesus. The Gospel according to Mark is by common consent recognized as the earliest. The date usually assigned to its composition is about A.D. 65. The crucifixion is generally assumed to have taken place in the year A.D. 29 or 30. The

¹ *Enc. Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, under the word Bible.

Gospel is, therefore, about thirty-five years later than the story it records. The other Gospels were written subsequently. . . .

“During the early years that succeeded the death of Jesus no written records appear to have been made of his life and teachings. A few of the most striking of his sayings were perhaps embodied in some simple liturgy. As, however, the years passed by and memories grew dim, the need was felt for committing his words into writing. . . . These early writings must have been based upon the oral traditions of the day and upon the reminiscences of the disciples and apostles who had lived with Jesus and heard his words, and it is upon the reminiscences and traditions that our existing gospels are built.

“When it is realized how impossible it is for a story to pass from mouth to mouth, even a short time after the occurrence of an incident, without undergoing some modification, it is inevitable that narratives and sayings which had been passed from mouth to mouth over a period of thirty years should become transformed in process. Moreover, we must remember that in ancient times it was the common practice for even the most conscientious chroniclers and historians to put into the mouths of the characters, of whom they wrote, words which they considered appropriate to the occasion without any intention of implying that they were the exact words used. Nor did an ancient chronicler scruple, on

occasion, to modify his record in such a way as to bring out the particular point of view which he was anxious to stress in his writing. There is no doubt that the Gospels, which were written not only for the purpose of record but for edification have been affected by this attitude of mind.

"We have, therefore, no security that the narratives and sayings as given in the Gospels necessarily represent what actually happened and what was actually said."²

It is quite clear from the above discussion that the Bible is not the verbally inspired Word of God. It is purely a human document and has been recorded, based upon the oral traditions and sayings which were handed down from generation to generation. Centuries passed before it assumed its present form and it suffered many changes, interpolations and corruptions. It necessarily follows that it contains many beautiful truths and many untruths as well—many words of God (by no means literal) and many inconsistencies, discrepancies and contradictions. Of the words of God and truths contained in the Bible, there certainly are many prophecies, a number of which have been fulfilled in the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This chapter aims to show the fulfillment of some of those prophecies. Now we will proceed with the subject proper.

²The Story Behind the Gospel by Bernard M. Allen. Pages 4-6.

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

I

We read in the Bible:

And I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee and will put my words into his mouth: and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him.³

In these verses, God speaks to Moses and makes a prophecy concerning the coming of a prophet. These verses furnish us with four specific signs with which to recognize and identify that prophet and these signs are as follows:

First: The prophet will be raised from among "*their brethren.*" Moses was a prophet unto the children of Israel; so, the prophet spoken of here will be from among the brethren of the children of Israel. Now, who are the brethren of the children of Israel? It is a matter of common knowledge that Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. The children of Israel are the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and the Arabian people (The Quraysh) are the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael. Israelites and Ishmaelites are the offspring of the common progenitor Abraham. Therefore, Ishmaelites are the brethren of the children of Israel. Hence the prophet whose advent has been prophesied

³ Deuteronomy—Chapter XVIII—18-19.

in the passage must come from among the Ishmaelites.

Secondly: The prophet must be "*like unto thee*," that is, Moses. Moses was a law-bearing prophet and in order to fulfill this point of similarity, the prophet must bring a new dispensation.

Thirdly: "*He shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.*" In other words, the prophet will not speak aught from himself. He will transmit to the people all that God will command him to speak.

Fourthly: "*Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I shall require it of him.*" This shows that the prophet will speak unto the people the words of God in the name of God.

The prophecy, contained in the above-mentioned passage, has been unquestionably and most beautifully fulfilled in the person of Muhammad, the Holy Founder of Islam. For, in the first place, he came from among the descendants of Ishmael, the brethren of the children of Israel. Secondly, he was the prophet who came with a new law—the law of the Holy Quran. None of the Israelite prophets including Jesus of Nazareth, who succeeded Moses, brought a new law or dispensation. Nor did any of them claim to have been the like of Moses. On the other hand, it has been expressly written about Muhammad in the Holy Quran that he was the prophet like unto Moses. The Quran says:

*"We have raised a prophet among you like unto the prophet that we sent unto Pharaoh."*⁴

⁴ Al-Quran LXXIII—15.

The third proof that the prophecy found fulfillment in the prophet of Arabia is that Muhammad spoke naught from himself. He delivered unto the people what God commanded him to speak. He was only the mouthpiece of Allah. The Holy Quran says:

“Say, O Muhammad, I am a man like unto you: Only the words of God came unto me.”⁵

Again,

“He (Muhammad) speaks naught from himself: verily it is the word of God that came unto him.”⁶

The fourth and conclusive proof of the fulfillment of the prophecy in the person of Muhammad is that whatever he spoke, he spoke in the name of God. Open the Holy Quran and you will find that all the Suras or Chapters begin with, “*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*” It is related of Muhammad that at the commencement of doing or saying anything, he was in the habit of saying, “*In the name of God.*”

It may incidentally be mentioned here that some people erroneously try to apply this prophecy to Jesus. But none of the conditions of the prophecy can be found in Jesus, as has been clearly stated above. Furthermore, it has been plainly mentioned in the New Testament that the prophet like unto Moses would appear after the advent of Jesus.⁷

⁵ Al-Quran—XVIII-110.

⁶ Al-Quran—LIII-3-4.

⁷ Acts III—18-26.

In short, the prophecy in the passage under discussion, has come to pass in the minutest detail in the person of the Holy Founder of Islam.

II

There is an important prophecy which runs as follows:

*“And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.”*⁸

“Coming from Sinai” refers to the appearance of Moses and “Rising up from Seir” alludes to that of Jesus. The prophet who shone forth from Mount Paran could be no other than the Holy Prophet of Arabia as Paran is the ancient name of that part of Arabia where the children of Ishmael, the ancestors of Muhammad settled.* What unmistakably points to the identity of Muhammad is “*he came with ten thousands of*

⁸ Deuteronomy XXXIII—2

* The Arabic form of the word Paran is Faran or Pharan. Jerome speaks of Pharan as ‘the desert of the Saracens’ (Encyclopedia Biblica, Col. 3584). Makrizi, whom Burckhardt quotes and calls ‘the excellent historian and describer of Egypt,’ says: ‘It is said that Faran is the name of the mountains of Mekka’ (Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, Page 617). Jacut’s Geographisches Worterbuch (F. Wustenfeld, Leipzig, 1862, Volume III, Page 834) says that Faran is a name of Mecca, and that it is also applied to the mountains of Mecca. The word Faran seems to be the Arabic Farr an. It means ‘two refugees.’ It appears that the place took its name from Hagar and Ishmael who came there as refugees.

Dr. A. Benisch calls it in his translation of the Pentateuch ‘the desert of Paran.’

saints" and "from his right hand went a fiery law for them." At the time of the conquest of Mecca, ten thousand holy men followed at his heels and he was the bearer of the law of the Quran. Hence, the prophecy has been wonderfully fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

III

A third prophecy is: *The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.*

The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.

For, they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword and from the bent bow, from the grievousness of war.

For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail:

And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished, for the Lord God of Israel has spoken it.⁹

The first point to bear in mind in connection with this prophecy is that Arabia is the scene of the prophecy, as the passage begins with, "*The burden upon Arabia.*" This is most significant. Muhammad appeared in Arabia.

⁹ Isaiah XXI—13-17.

Secondly: The prophecy speaks of him that fled. This sheds further illumination. The flight of Muhammad is a momentous event in the history of the world. It is upon that Flight of Muhammad from Mecca that the Moslem calendar began.

Thirdly: "*fled from drawn swords*" conclusively proves the fulfillment of the prophecy in the prophet of Arabia. Muhammad fled from Mecca while his house was surrounded by his deadly enemies who stood there, drawn swords in hands, thirsty for his blood.

Fourthly: Another important and clear testimony of the fulfillment of the prophecy in Muhammad is to be found in "*Within a year, all the glory of Kedar shall fail, the mighty men of Kedar shall diminish.*" This was fulfilled in the battle of Badr which occurred within a year from the flight of Muhammad and, in which battle, the Quraysh of Mecca (Kedar*) sustained a crushing defeat; most of their mighty men fell.

* Rev. C. Forster locates the Kedar in Hedjaz and identifies them with the Koraish. He says: "Thus, for the Kedar of the O. T., we meet in Pliny, the Cedrei, Cedareni, or Gedranitae, as an Arab tribe or people extant in his day. . . . Uranius, cited by Stephanus of Byzantium, makes mention of the Kerdanitae or Kedranitae (manifestly the same people with the Gedranitae of Pliny). . . . Ptolemy places the Darrae (an abridgement only of Kedarrae . . .) on the very site assigned by Pliny to the Cedrei. . . . By consent of the ancients the seats of this people have been already fixed in Hedjaz . . . it was the immemorial tradition of the Arabs themselves, that Kedar and his posterity originally settled in Hedjaz. From this patriarch, the tribe of Koreish in particular, the sovereigns of Mekka and guardians of the Caaba, always boasted their descent. . . . Mekka, correctly pronounced by the learned to be the Macoraba of Ptolemy, has, from times immemorial, been the Metropolis of the Harb nation."

"The Historical Geography of Arabia" by Rev. C. Forster. Pages 244-265.

IV

There is an important prophecy in Solomon's song. The lengthy passage under discussion gives a beautiful description of the Beloved one of God. The prophecy reads as follows:

"What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

*My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand Yea, he is altogether lovely, (Muhammad-im) This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*¹⁰

In this prophecy, the one who is spoken of here is the beloved of one God. One of the titles of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is Habibullah. *"The friend or the Beloved one of God."*

Secondly, *"my beloved is white and ruddy."* This was exactly the color of Muhammad. Take any biography of Muhammad and you will find that this Biblical description has been literally fulfilled in him.

Thirdly, *"Chiefest among ten thousand."* We have already shown that Muhammad was at the head of ten thousand followers, at the time of the conquest of Mecca. How clearly the prophecy has been fulfilled in Muhammad.

The fourth and the most striking point which arrests our attention in this prophecy is the name of Muham-

¹⁰ Solomon's Song V—9-16.

mad in verse sixteen. For it reads, "yea, he is altogether lovely" in the English Bible. In the original Hebrew Bible the word is Mohammad-im.^{10a}

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

I

*"A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out. Then said the lord of the vineyard. What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying. This is the heir: come let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy the husbandmen, and shall give the vineyards to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid."*¹¹

^{10a} Hebrew Bible printed for the British and Foreign Bible Society by Trowitzsch & Son, Berlin. Page 1159.

¹¹ Luke XX—9-16.

This is one of the most important parables of Jesus. The vineyard stands for divine guidance and God is the Lord of the vineyard. The children of Israel are the husbandmen and the prophets sent unto the children of Israel are the servants sent for fruits. Jesus was the beloved son who was maltreated by the children of Israel and was put on the cross.

How clearly the prophecy has been fulfilled? It only remains for us to consider the prophecy, contained in the last part of the parable, namely, "*What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to the others.*"

It must be noted that the coming of the Lord can only mean the coming of a prophet. The advent of a prophet has been metaphorically called the coming of the Lord as he would appear as the greatest manifestation of the glory, power and the attributes of God. In other words, a prophecy concerning the appearance of a great prophet has been made in the concluding verses of the famous parable of Jesus. It cannot be applied to Jesus for the obvious reason that the coming of Jesus has been called the coming of the beloved son of the Lord whereas the appearance of this prophet has been described as the appearance of the Lord Himself after the death of the son, as the words of the parable clearly indicate.

"*Shall give the vineyard to others*" gives further clue to the interpretation of the prophecy. That shows that

the prophet will come not from among the children of Israel but from another nation. The same thing has been expressed elsewhere in these words. "*The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and be given to a nation bringing forth fruits thereof.*"¹² Jesus speaks not of nations in general but of a nation. That evidently shows that he referred to a particular nation to which the vineyard was to be given after the death of the son.

The prophecy has been clearly fulfilled in the Holy Prophet Muhammad. He came as the manifestation of the glory, power and attributes of God thus fulfilling the words, "*The Lord will come.*" He came not from among the children of Israel but from among the children of Ishmael and fulfilled the words, "*shall give the vineyard to others.*" and "*The Kingdom of God will be given to another nation.*" Muhammad came after the death of Jesus and the words of God that the Lord will come after His son would be killed came true.

II

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*¹³

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will

¹² Matthew XXII: 43

¹³ John XIV—25-26-27.

*send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.*¹⁴

Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

Of sin, because they believe not on me:

Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.

Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.

*A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.*¹⁵

¹⁴ John—XV—26.

¹⁵ John XVI—7-16.

In the above verses, there occurs the prophecy of the coming of the Comforter. Verse 26, John, Chapter 14, says that the Holy Ghost is the Comforter. This claim is contradicted by verse 7 in John, Chapter 16, when it says:

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I not go away, the Comforter will not come unto you." Herein Jesus says that his going away, i.e., the death of Jesus is inevitably necessary for the coming of the Comforter. But it is a matter of common knowledge that the Holy Ghost was co-existing with Jesus. This proves that the Comforter was some one other than the Holy Ghost. This also strongly supports our assertion that there have been many interpolations in the existing Christian Bible.

It is quite obvious that the Comforter cannot be the Holy Ghost, the Spirit, as Jesus used the Pronoun "he" instead of "it" in connection with the Comforter.

According to the prophecy, the Comforter, the Spirit of the Truth, *"will guide you unto all Truth."* Muhammad was the only prophet who claimed to have brought the universal law. To him was revealed the Holy Quran which guides mankind to all truth. The Holy Quran says:

*"Today We have perfected your religion for you and completed Our favors upon you."*¹⁶

It is said that the Comforter would not speak himself but *"Whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak."*

¹⁶ Al-Quran V—3.

When Peter appeared before the people of Jerusalem, his words were:

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you."

John's words were, *"I, John, who am your brother."*

Phillip used the words, *"I pray thee."*

"My brethren" are the words of James.

The twelve assembled together said, *"We will give ourselves continually to prayer."* The spirit that descended upon the Apostles at Pentecost was not the Comforter who should not speak of Himself, for this spirit broke ever in the body in which it dwelt.

"Me, I—John, I, my, we—ourselves."

Muhammad spoke naught of himself—he spoke only what he heard. He was the mouthpiece of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Through him, "the Spirit of Truth" did reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment.

As had been foretold by Jesus, Muhammad did glorify Jesus. In short, the prophecy of the Comforter has been literally fulfilled in its minutest details in Muhammad.

III

"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus worship God for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse:

and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and righteousness he doth judge and make war.¹⁷

"*Heaven open*" shows that Heaven is the scene of the prophecy. This has been fulfilled in the famous spiritual journey (vision) of Muhammad.

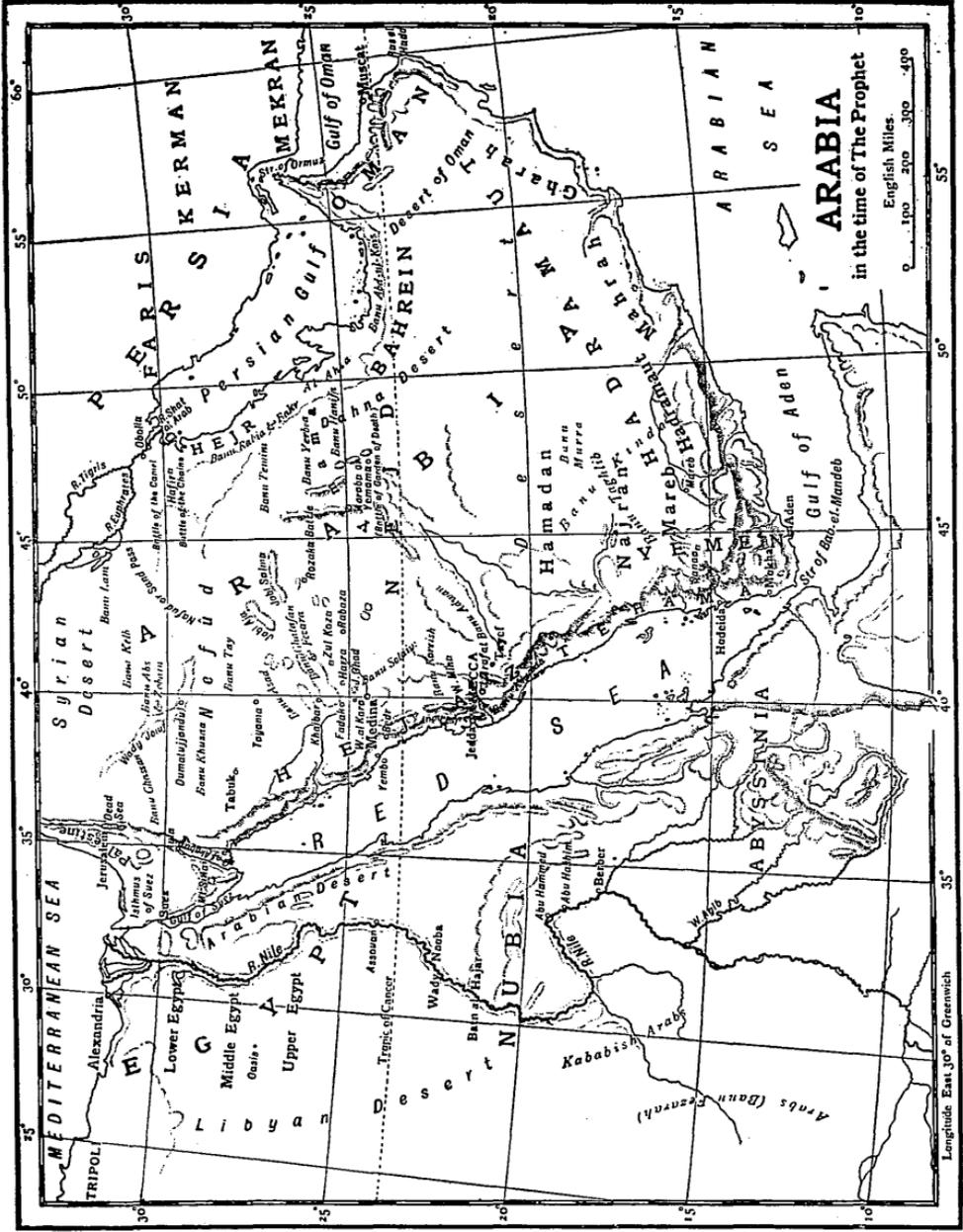
"*And a white horse*" is a further testimony of the fact that the prophecy has been fulfilled in Muhammad. The well-known Burak—that Muhammad sat upon in his spiritual journey of vision—was white in color.

The prophecy mentions that the one who sat upon the white horse would be called "*The Faithful and the True.*" This settles the question beyond the shadow of a doubt that the master-prophet Muhammad fulfilled the prophecy. It was he who was distinguished by the name of Al-Ameen, The Faithful and True.

Also, it was Muhammad who had to "make war" in self-defense in order to do righteousness.

Therefore, the foregoing references conclusively prove that the Biblical prophecy was splendidly fulfilled by the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

¹⁷ Revelation XIX—10-11.



ARABIA

in the time of The Prophet

English Miles.

0 100 200 300 400

Longitude East 30° of Greenwich

55°

50°

45°

40°

35°

30°

25°

60°

55°

50°

45°

35°

30°

25°

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INDEX AND GLOSSARY

A

- Abdullah, Father of the Holy Prophet, 31, 32
 —, Ibn Jahsh, 97, 98
 —, Ibn Judaan, 36
 —, Ibn Uby Ibn Salul, 91, 106, 133, 181
 Abdul Muttalib, Grand Father of the Holy Prophet, 18, 19, 20, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 59, 152, 186
 Abu Bakr, 44, 68, 69, 163, 164
 — Bara, 110
 — Jahl, 51, 63, 91, 92, 177
 — Jandal, 127, 128
 — Lahab, 33, 46, 101
 — Talib, 35, 44, 45, 48, 49, 59, 184
 — Sufiyani, 103, 107, 108, 130, 131, 146
 — Ayyub, 74
 Abraha, 19, 20, 21
 Abraham, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 23, 45, 65, 83, 104, 137, 141, 170
 Abyssinia, 19, 21, Flight to 54-57, 132
 Abwa, 34
 Ad, 2
 Addas, 61
 Adnan, 16, 17
 Ahzab, Battle of, 115-119, 120
 Al-Ameen, 37, 38, 177, 279
 Ali, 43, 44, 45, 47, 105
 Alms of the Breaking of the Fast, 89-90
 Amina, Mother of the Holy Prophet, 32, 33, 34
 Amr Ibn Luhayy, 22
 Aquaba, First Oath of 66, 96, 99, Second Oath of 67
 Arab, Arabia, Name 1-2, Races 2-3, 16, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 37, 39, 81, 83, 91, 97, 109, 123, 130, 145, 161, 175, 193, 209, 210, 219, 220, 222, 266, 268, 269, 270, 271
 Arquam, 50
 Arafat, 137, 138, 140
 Aus Tribe, 66, 67, 81
 Autas 153
 Ayesha, Wife of the Holy Prophet, 76, 164, 175, 176, 178, 180
 Azan (Call to Prayer) 76-80, 147

B

- Birth of the Holy Prophet, 32-33
 Badr, 90, Battle of 98-103, 114, 182, 271.
 Banu Bakr, 144, 145
 — Lihyan, 111
 — Nadheer, 81, Conflict with 114-115, 120
 — Quayunqua, 81, conflict with 113-114, 120
 — Quraidha, 81, 116, conflict with 119-125
 — Sulaim, 110
 Bible, Historicity, 262-265
 Bilal, 62, 77, 147
 Bishr, 134
 Bir Mauna, Tragedy, 110
 Black Stone, 11, 12, 38, 137
 Brotherhood, 80, 142, 161, 162, 195, 198, 199
 Burak, 279

C

- Cave of Hira, 40, 61, 139, 187
 — of Thaur, 69, 139.
 Christianity, 24, 39, 167, 222
 Christians, 19, 24, 55, 61, 77, 83, 167, 169, 170, 196, 197
 Caravans, 3, 97
 Comforter, 275, 276, 277, 278

D

- Darun Nadwa (House of Assembly) 18
 Delegation to Abu Talib, 48-49
 Deputation of Utha, 49-50, 155, 156,
 Dawn of Islam, 39-43
 Diyat, 115
 Drinking 25, 39, 159, abolition of 209-210

E

- Economic Justice, 211-219
 Eclipse, 157
 Egypt, 13, 132, 129, 269
 Elephant, Year, Event of 21, 33
 Emigration (Hijrah or Flight) 68-71

F

- Fast (Ramadhan) 86-90
 Fatima (Sister of Omar) 52
 Fatima (Daughter of the Prophet)
 105, 163
 Fijar, 36
 Fihir, 16
 Flight, See Emigration
 Friday Prayer, 74
 Festival of Idul Fitri, 90
 — Adha, 104-105

G

- Gambling 25, 39, 209
 Gospels, 169, 263, 264, 265
 Ghost (Holy) 275, 277
 Ghatfan, 133
 Genealogists, 16, 30

H

- Hagaar, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 141
 Hajj, See Pilgrimage
 Hajr, 102, 103
 Haleema, 33, 34
 Hamza, 51, 107
 Hanif, 23
 Haram (Sacred Territory) 13, 136
 Harith, son of Hala, 47
 Hatim of Tayy, 27, 28
 Hawazin, 53, 155, 156
 Helpers (Ansars) 75, 80, 81, 93, 98,
 99, 102, 117, 150, 153, 154, 155
 Hend 107
 Hilful Fuzul (League) 36
 Hira (Mount, Cave) See Cave of,
 King of 27
 Heaven and Hell, 205-209, 278, 279
 Hubal, 108
 Hudaibiyah (Truce of) 125, 128,
 129, 135, 144, 145
 Hunain, Battle of 151-153, 155, 186
 Hypocrites, 106, 133, 185

I

- Ihram (Pilgrim's Garb) 136, 138
 Ibrahim (The Prophet's son) 156
 Imraul Qais, 27
 Ishmael, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12,
 14, 15, 17, 23, 83, 104, 141, 266,
 269, 275
 Isaac, 4, 7, 10, 266
 Israel, 7, 8, 9, 10, 266
 Israelites, 267, 270, 274, 275,
 Interest, 159, 215, 217-29
 Inheritance, 215-26

J

- Jadis, 2
 Jafar, 55, 56, 57
 Judaism, 4, 24, 39, 222
 Jews Jewish, 81, 82, 83, 85, 103
 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 119, 120,
 121, 123, 124, 185, 196, 197, 198,
 133, 134
 John, 277, 278
 Jurhum, 14, 36
 Jesus, 57, 167, 168, 169, 262, 263,
 264, 268, 269, 274, 275, 277, 278
 Junayd of Baghdad, 140, 141

K

- Ka'aba, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17,
 19, 20, 22, 24, 29, 31, 33, 38, 39,
 47, 51, 63, 68, 83, 84, 85, 137,
 139, 140, 142, 145, 146, 147
 Kiswa, 13, 14
 Kaab Ibn Ashraf, 114
 Kaab, 93
 Kedar, 271
 Khabbab, 62
 Khaibar, Conquest of 133-134
 Khubbaib, 111, 112

M

- Marwa, 137, 141
 Mecca, 3, 4, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18,
 20, 21, 22, 24, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36,
 40, 48, 51, 57, 59, 60, 65, 67, 68,
 69, 80, 93, 84, 85, 91, 92, 96, 98,
 104, 112, 114, 115, 125, 126, 127,
 135, 136, 137, 139, 141, 142, 143,
 Conquest of 144-151, 153, 160, 185,
 269, 270, 271, 272
 Medina, 24, 65, 68, 70, 71, 73, 74,
 80, 81, 82, 83, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94,
 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 103, 112,
 116, 117, 119, 120, 123, 124, 125,
 127, 133, 144, 145, 149, 154, 155,
 157, 158, 162, 181, 182, 185, 209
 Midian, 119, 122
 Mina, 67, 137, 139
 Meal Sack (Battle of) 103
 Miraj, 63-65
 Moses, 41, 42, 65, 122, 168, 194, 262,
 266, 267, 269
 Mosque of Quba, 73, Friday 74, of
 the Prophet 74-76, 125, 138, 139,
 163, 172
 Muta, Battle of 143-144
 Muzdalifa, 138, 140

N

- Najran, 23
 Nakhla, 61, 97
 New Testament, 169, Historicity, 263-265, Prophecies fulfilled in Muhammad, 273-279
 Negus, 4, 56
 Nejd, 110

O

- Old Testament, Historicity, 263, Prophecies fulfilled in Muhammad, 266-273
 Omar, Conversion of 51-54, 102, 164, 165
 Orwa, 158
 Osama, 162
 Ozza, 108

P

- Paran, 269
 Persia, 130, 131, 132
 Pilgrimage (Hajj) 10, 12, 65, 67, 92, 125, 127, 135-143, The Farewell Pilgrimage of the Holy Prophet, 160-162
 Pilgrim, 14, 18, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140
 Pledge of the Tree, 128-129, 152
 Poligamy, 167-173

Q

- Qahtan, 2
 Qais, 36, 146
 Qara, 110
 Al-Qaswa, 160
 Quibla, 82-85
 Quraysh, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 31, 32, 36, 37, 38, 46, 55, 57, 58, 59, 91, 92, 98, 103, 107, 108, 112, 115, 126, 127, 128, 131, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 153, 181, 183, 266, 271
 uran, Historicity Footnote, 52-55
 ussaiyy, 17-18

R

- Rajee, Tragedy, 110-112
 Ramadhan, See Fast
 Refugees (Muhajireen) 75, 80, 81, 98, 99, 102, 117
 Release of the Prisoners, 155-156
 Rome Roman, 157, 143

S

- Sa'ad Ibn Muadh, 92, 120, 121, 122, 125

- Ubada, 99, 146
 Sabaenism, 23
 Safa, 46, 50, 137, 141, 150
 Safwan, 102, 111
 Safia, 163
 Salaman, 227-228
 Sana, 256
 Seir, 269
 Seven Suspended Poems, 29
 Shurabil-bin Amru, 143
 Sinai, 40, 269
 Solomon, 167, Prophecy in Solomon's Song, 272-273
 Suffa, 76
 Sumayyah, 62
 Suraqua, 70, 71
 Syria, 71, 92, 93, 269

T

- Tabuk, Campaign of 157-158
 Tasm, 2
 Tayif, Prophet's Journey to 59-61, 63, Seige 153, 158, Embraces Islam, 158-159, 184
 Thakif, 151, 153
 Thuaiba, 33, 51

U

- Uhud, Battle of 106-109
 Ukaz, 29
 Umair, 102, 103, 182
 Umayya Ibn Khalf, 92
 Umm Ayman, 34
 Umrah, 136
 Uthman, 55, 128, 129

V

- Vale of Abu Talib, 58, 184

W

- Waraqaa, 42
 Women, Pre Islamic, 24-25, 92, 197, Liberation of 199-202
 Writing, 28, Footnote 55, 102

Y

- Yasir, 62
 Yathrib, 24, 33, 65, 66, 67, 198
 Yeman, 19, 132

Z

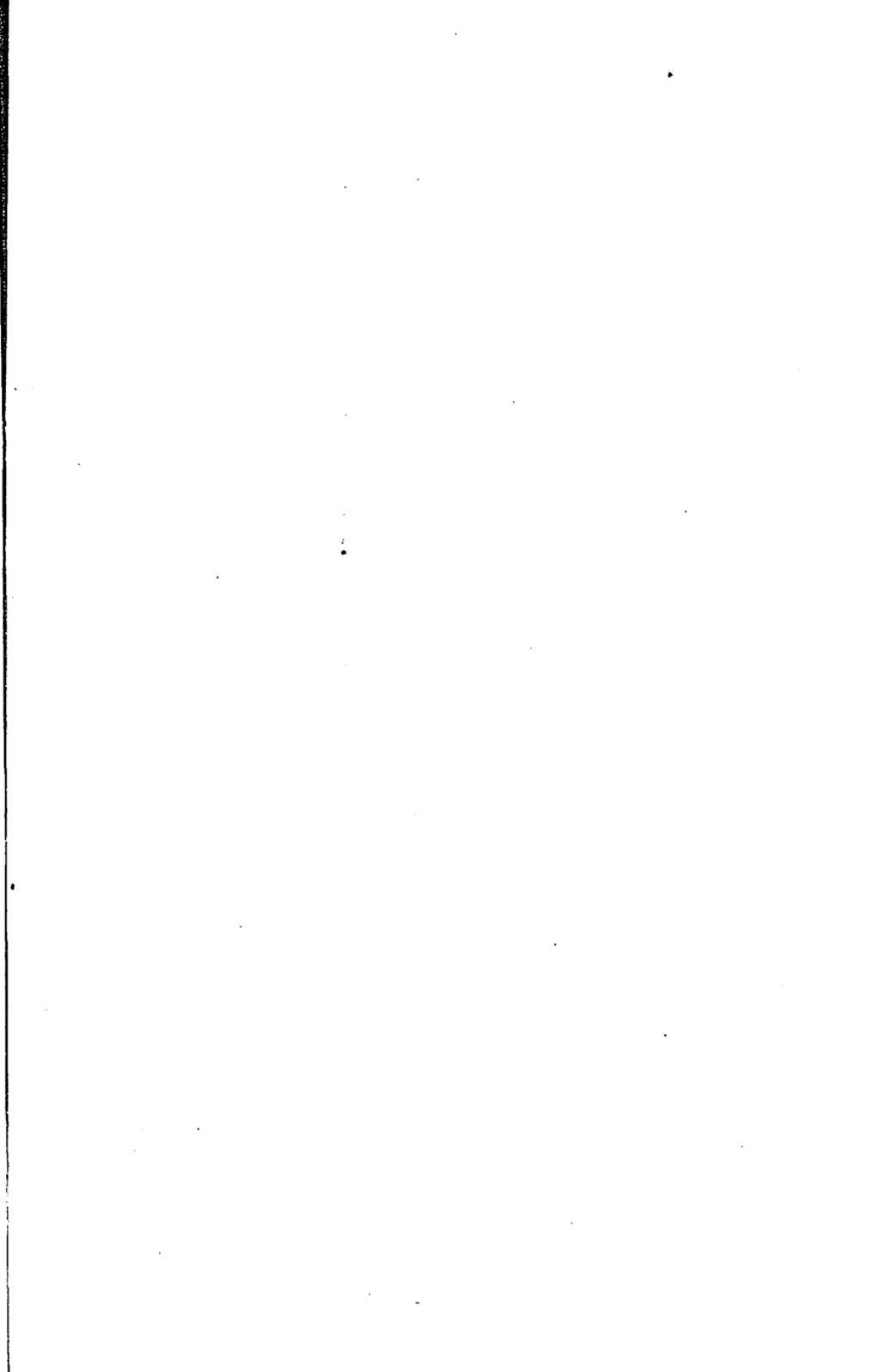
- Zaid Ibn Duthana, 111, 112
 — Haritha, 43, 60, 143, 144
 Zainab, 134
 Zakat, 50, 215, 216-217, 219
 Zam Zam, 5-6, 18-19, 139
 Zubair, 71

THE MOSLEM CALENDAR

Months

Muharram
Safar
Rabiwal Awwal
Rabiwath-thani
Jumadiwal Awwal
Jumadiwath-thani
Rajab
Shaaban
Ramadhan
Shawwal
Zul Qaada
Zul Hajjah

The Moslem year (which is called Hijrah vide pps. 68-71) is purely a lunar one and is shorter by about eleven days than the solar year. As the lunar months of the Moslem Calendar constantly revolve, it will be wrong to give the names of the solar year by way of comparison.



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Bengalee

The life of Muhammad.

May 10 '43 *N. Lerner* May 26 '43

Mar 13 '45 *Esther Goldstein*

Mr 1 '60 *Heraldine Kalub*

~~Mr 1 '60~~

