



Pictorial Presentation

Muhammad Pocket Guide



ENGLISH

The Prophet of Islam ﷺ
MUHAMMAD

A Biography and Pictorial
Guide, Featuring the Moral
Bases of Islamic Civilization



MUHAMMAD



مركز الأصول
OsoulCenter
www.osoulcenter.com

7th Edition



وَالْعَظِيمِ
۱۶۴۴

You Are Of Great Moral Character

The Quran 68:4

"And We have not sent you
but as a mercy to the worlds"

Quran, 21:107 (The Prophets)

The Prophet of Islam

MUHAMMAD ﷺ

A Biography and Pictorial Guide,
Featuring the Moral Bases of the Islamic Civilization



Seventh Edition



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Disclaimer & Important Notes

When Muslims mention Muhammad's name, it is a religious requirement to express respect by saying "peace be upon him" which is commonly abbreviated as (pbuh). In Arabic, it is written like this (ﷺ).

However, since this is a summarized pocket guide where Prophet Muhammad's name is frequently mentioned, it is skipped in some locations in order to save space and not to distract non-Muslim readers. No disrespect is intended.

Muslims believe in one God (one deity) Who created the universe and all beings. His name is "Allah". Whenever the word God or Lord is mentioned in this pocket guide, it means Allah, the Glorified and Exalted.

Arabic words that have become recognized in English usage will follow Webster's spelling, for example, the cities of Makkah and Medina. However, when helpful, an exact transliteration of the original Arabic word may be used.

Makkah is often written "Makkah" in many Islamic books. Similarly, Medina is written "Madinah" or "Al Madinah Al Munawwarah" which means the "Enlightened City".

Information provided in this pocket guide was obtained from authentic sources according to the best knowledge of the author. Readers may email their comments to:

muhammadpocketguide@gmail.com





" My similitude in comparison with other prophets before me, is that of a man who built and completed a house except for one missing brick.

When people see the house, they admire its beauty and say: How splendid the house will be if the missing brick is put in its place!

So I am that brick, and I am the last of the Prophets."

Muhammad

(peace be upon him)

(Narrated by Bukhari 4.734, 4.735)

Introduction

All praise be to Allah the Lord of the universe and all beings. He created man in the best stature and made him able to hear, see and think. He made him a successor in the earth and entrusted him to build the earth and not to cause any mischief in it. Accordingly, man should worship God and establish His religion (Law) on the earth. Our Creator Commandments are clear. They command people to do good deeds and refrain from all types of bad deeds and abominations.

Our Creator made our lives on earth short and temporary. Life on earth is a bridge to the eternal life in the Hereafter. That is the Day of Judgment. Whoever does good will see it and will be rewarded for it. And whoever does bad will see it and will be punished for it.

Across the history, God sent many messengers to people to guide them to their Creator and explain to them the truth behind their creation and purpose of life. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were Messengers of God.

However, Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him was distinguished by some important characteristics. God chose him to convey the last

divine Message to humanity. It is preserved in the Quran, the last divine book to humanity. Also, Prophet Muhammad's life was a practical demonstration and application to God's Commandments. His teachings proved to the whole world that the sincere and honest abiding with our Creator Commandments, brings benevolence, wellbeing and peace to the whole humanity. Prophet Muhammad set the moral basis of a civilization that became a turning point in the development of humanity.

However, nowadays, the world is passing through a critical stage that is burdened with social, economical and political problems as well severe catastrophes. All peoples on the globe are looking for a safe exit from this stage.

Osoul Center is introducing a brief biography about Prophet Muhammad and his teachings that enlighten the hearts of millions of people on the earth. When his companions and followers sincerely believed in God's final Message and applied the teachings of His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him), they were able to lead the world and spread justice, mercy and benevolence wherever they reached.

The current complications in the world are escalating violence and terrorism. They are causing negative media and unfair association with Prophet Muhammad

teachings. After reading this book which is supported by authentic narrations, we invite our non-Muslim readers to be objective and unbiased.

When they read the book carefully and reflect on Prophet Muhammad biography, they will reach a fair conclusion. God says in the Quran: “And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds” Quran 21:107

We ask our Lord, the creator of the universe and all beings to guide us to the true and straight path.

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Note: In Islam there are five prayers a day. The following is a translation of the words of the "Azaan" (call for each prayer). Each statement is repeated twice: Allah is the Greatest. I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Come to the prayer. Come to the real success. Allah is the Greatest. There is no deity but Allah.



Penzberg Mosque, Penzberg, Germany: The minaret is engraved with words of the "Azaan", the Muslim call for the daily prayers. The Arabic calligraphic design was made by award winner calligrapher Mohammed Mandi from U.A.E.

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This is the word Muhammad in Arabic written in a formative style. It looks like the upper part of a mosque with a dome in the middle. Please note the dome is the letter “h” in the word “Muhammad”. The lower part of the mosque is formed from the sentence “rasoolu-Allah” رسول الله which means “The Messenger of God”.

The hexagon is formed from the Arabic word “Muhammad” being written in a different style of Arabic calligraphy and repeated 6 times.

Courtesy of Farid Al-Ali

In Arabic, the word “Muhammad” means the person who is highly, frequently and repeatedly praised for his good deeds. Therefore, he is a praiseworthy person.

Chapter

1

Testimonials





John Adair

Author of "The Leadership of Muhammad". Chair of Leadership Studies United Nations System Staff College in Turin

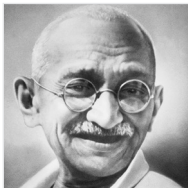
"Leadership glimpsed more than once in the life of the Prophet Muhammad accords well with what we know to be the universal truth about the nature and practice of leadership. You will judge for yourself how close Muhammad comes to this ideal."



William Montgomery Watt

(1909 – 2006) The Scottish historian and Emeritus Professor in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Author of "Muhammed at Mecca", Oxford, 1953, p. 52

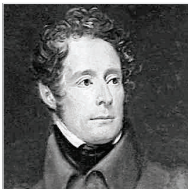
"His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as a leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity. None of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad."



Mahatma Gandhi

(1869 - 1948) The political and spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement

"I wanted to know the best one who holds today undisputed sway (controlling influence) over the hearts of millions of mankind. I became more than convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement (humbleness) of Prophet Muhammad, the scrupulous regard (extreme care) for his pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity (fearlessness) and his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. When I closed the second volume (of the book about his life) I was sorry that there was not more for me to read about his great life."



Alphonse de Lamartine

*(1790 - 1869) A French poet, writer and politician
Histoire De La Turquie, Paris, 1854, Vol. II, Pp. 276-277*

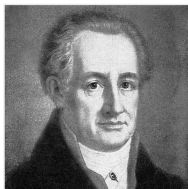
"Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; That is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than him?"



William Durant

(1885-1981) *The American historian, philosopher and author of "The Story of Civilization", part 4, vol. 4, p. 25*

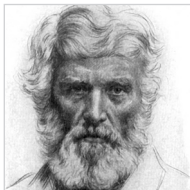
"His name, meaning, "highly praised," lent itself well to certain Biblical passages as predicting his advent. Muhammad was never known to write anything himself. His apparent illiteracy did not prevent him from reciting the Quran which is the most famous and eloquent book in the Arabic tongue.



Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

(1749 - 1832) *A great European poet. Noten und Abhandlungen zum Weststlichen Dvan, WA I, 7, 32*

"He is a prophet and not a poet and therefore his Quran is to be seen as Divine Law and not as a book of a human being made for education or entertainment."

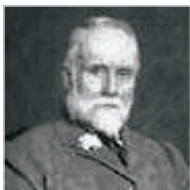


Thomas Carlyle

(1795 - 1881) *The Scottish historian, philosopher and author of "Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History"*

"How one man single-handedly, could weld warring tribes and wandering Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades."

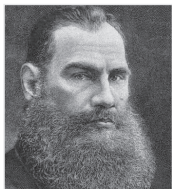
Note: Thomas Carlyle made an attempt to draw a picture of the development of human intellect by using historical people as coordinates and accorded the Prophet Muhammad a special place in the book under the chapter title "Hero as a Prophet". In his work, Carlyle declared his admiration with a passionate championship of Muhammad as a Hegelian agent of reform.



Reverend Reginald Bosworth Smith

(1839-1908) *Author of Mohammad and Mohammedanism, London, 1874, p. 92*

"Head of the state as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but, he was Pope without the Pope's claims, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue. If ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by a right Divine, it was Muhammad, for he had all the power without instruments and without its support. He cared not for dressing of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life."



Leo Tolstoy

(1828 - 1910) *The famous Russian writer and novelist. Author of "War and Peace".*

"There is no doubt that Prophet Muhammad is one of the greatest reformers who served the social framework profoundly. It suffices him that he led a whole nation to the enlightenment of truth and made it more inclined towards tranquility and peace, and prevented it from shedding blood and giving human sacrifices. He widely opened to his nation the gate to development and civilization. This is a great deed that only a strong man can do and a man like that deserves to be regarded with respect and admiration."



Maurice Bucaille

(1920 - 1998) *A French medical doctor and a specialist in gastroenterology. A member of the French Society of Egyptology. Author of "The Bible, The Quran and Science".*

"Islam teaches that God has given man the faculty of reason and therefore expects man to reason things out objectively and systematically. In view of the state of knowledge in Muhammad's days, it is inconceivable that the verses of Quran could have been the work of man. A totally objective examination of the Quran in the light of modern knowledge, leads us to recognize the agreement between Quran and science."



Muhammad Attributes Portrait :

Documented character and attributes as seen by his companions.

Produced by the Spanish calligrapher Nuria García Masip

Muhammad's Character

Muslims have no drawings or pictures for prophet Muhammad or the prophets before him. However, unlike the founders of the great faith traditions prior to his time, the Prophet Muhammad is much more a recognizable historical figure as his companions and family members described him very well and recorded many stories from his life for posterity.

What did he look like?

Muhammad was an Arab of noble lineage with a white complexion and a rosy tinge. He was a little taller than average and well built with broad shoulders. His belly never protruded out from his chest. He walked briskly and firmly.

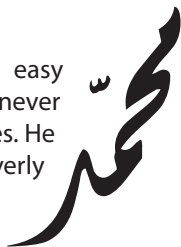


Muhammad's companions described him as a handsome person with prominent forehead, high tipped nose, long eyelashes, large black eyes with well set teeth and a pleasant smile. He had slightly curly hair and a thick beard. His hair was black but included few white hairs.

His companions indicated that he had a friendly bright face that looked like a full moon. He did not laugh loudly; his laugh was mostly a smile that would show his teeth a bit like hailstones. His cheerfulness and open personality were felt by all people.

His nature

Muhammad was unfailingly cheerful, easy going by nature, and mild mannered. He never resorted to offensive speech or obscenities. He did not find fault with others nor did he overly praise the others.



The way he spoke

Muhammad did not speak unnecessarily and what he said was always to the point and without any padding. His sayings were precise and concise having complete meaning in few words. He spoke with excellence, and there was no excess in it and no abnormal brevity.

When he emphasized a point, he used to repeat it three times with a gesture. He spoke of nothing unless he hoped a reward from God for it. He told his companions:

"I am a guarantor for a house at the outskirts of the Paradise for those who quit arguing even if they were right and I am a guarantor for a house in the middle of the Paradise for those who quit lying even if they were kidding and I am a guarantor for a house in the highest part in the Paradise for those who behave with good manners."

(Sahih Abu Dawood, 4974/4800)

His emotions and passions

Muhammad kept his feelings under firm control. When annoyed, he would turn aside or keep silent. When someone committed an act that violates God's law, he used to show serious anger and a firm stand. No one would stand against his anger in matters of the Lord's truth being opposed, he would stand fast in protecting the truth as revealed in the Quran. Muhammad never got angry for his own sake.



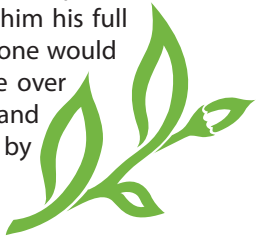
His interactions with people

Muhammad was always the first to greet others and would not withdraw his hand from a hand shake until the other man withdrew his.

Whoever saw him unexpectedly would admire and revere him. And whoever socialized or associated with him familiarly, loved him. He was gentle by nature. He was neither coarse nor disdainful of anyone.

When he looked at the others, he looked at them in full face. If someone called him he didn't turn his face only, but gave attention with his whole body.

When he used to visit a group, he would sit in the nearest available spot. He did not like reserving seats for others and he ordered his companions to follow his practice. Also, he used to give those seated near him his full share of attention in such a way that no one would think others had been given precedence over him. He was fair with his companions and all people. They were distinguished only by virtue and devotion to God.



His style of living

Everything he did was in moderation, without excess or contrariness. He never criticized the food or drink that was prepared for him, nor did he overly praise it.

When at home, he would divide his time into three parts: One for God, one for his family, and one for himself. He always joined in household work and would at times mend his clothes, repair his shoes and sweep the floor. He used to dress well and smell good.

After dawn prayers, he preferred sitting in the mosque reciting the Quran and praises of Allah, till the sunrise. After midnight, he used to get up for the (Tahajjud) prayers (extra prayers and supplications to God at night).

He declared unlawful for himself and his family anything given by people by way of the alms (zakat given by Muslims for the welfare of those in need). He was so particular about this,



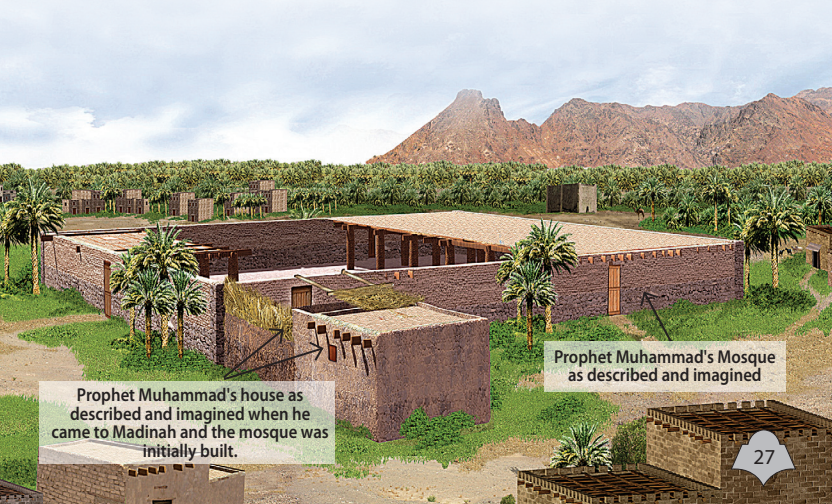
that he would not appoint any member of his family as a collector of alms for the community.

His house was but a hut with walls of unbaked clay and a roof of palm leaves covered by camel skin.



Muhammad said: "What have I to do with worldly things? My connection with the world is like that of a traveler resting for a while underneath the shade of a tree and then moving on." (2/666- 2788, Musnad Ahmad, Narrated by Abdullah bin Abbas)

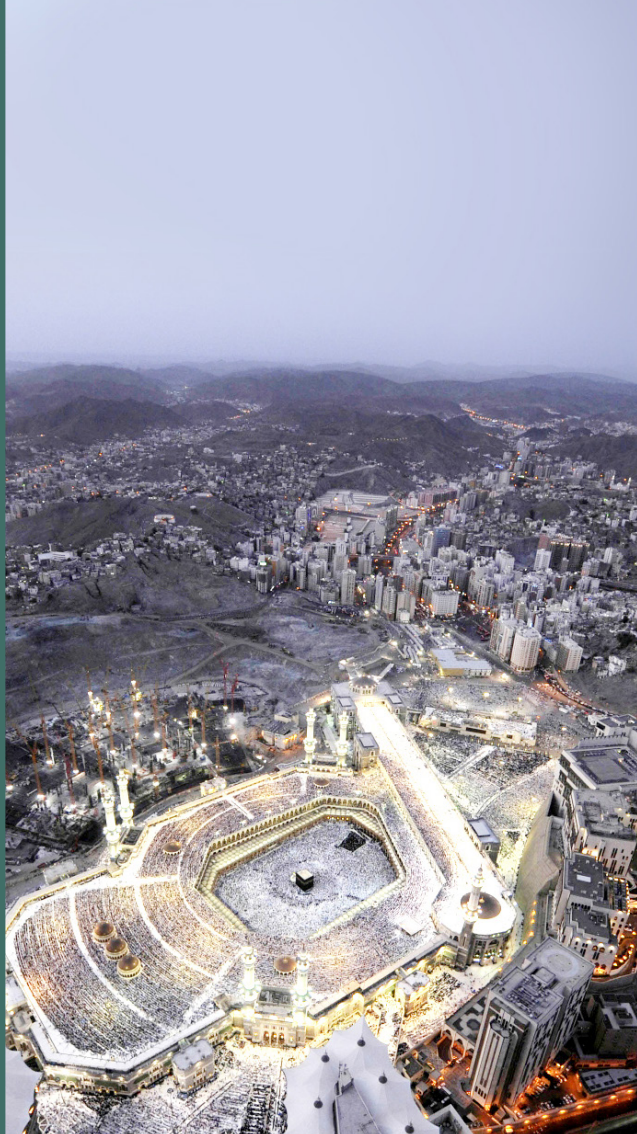
When he died, he did not leave any thing valuable except his white mule and a piece of land, which he had dedicated for the good of the community of Muslims (Sahih Bukhari).



Prophet Muhammad's house as described and imagined when he came to Madinah and the mosque was initially built.

Prophet Muhammad's Mosque as described and imagined

Biography



Biography

Personal Details

Name	Muhammad ﷺ
Father's Name	Abdullah, son of Abdul-Muttalib (ancestry reaches back to the Prophet Ishmael son of Prophet Abraham)
Surname (Clan)	He was from Bani-Hashim family (Bani-Hashim was from Quraysh, a tribe that was highly ranked in Arabia)
Date of Birth	20 th - 22 nd April, 570 CE ¹ Approximately
Place of Birth	City of Mecca (Makkah) – Arabian Peninsula (currently in Saudi Arabia)
Date of Death	6 th June, 632 CE. (Approximately, he was 63 years old when he passed away)
Death & Burial Place	City of Madinah (about 400 km north of Makkah)



Childhood & Adolescence

Birth - 2 years old	Muhammad had no brothers or sisters. His father passed away before he was born. His mother sent him out of Makkah to be breast-fed by a wet nurse called Halima (this was an old Arab custom).
2-6 years old	He lived with his mother "Aaminah" until she passed away in the year 576 CE.
6-8 years old	He lived with his grandfather Abdul-Muttalib until he passed away.
8-25 years old	He lived with his paternal uncle (Abu-Talib), who had 10 children.

Education

Muhammad ﷺ was illiterate: He could not read or write. He never lived outside Makkah or sought foreign knowledge. Muslims believe that Muhammad ﷺ did not write or author the "Quran". He conveyed it (as Allah's Message to humanity) letter by letter and word by word without rephrasing any part of it with his own words.

Muhammad's sayings and teachings were not mixed with the Quran: They were collected in books which are called "Hadith or the Sunnah of the Prophet", which means his teachings, way of life and explanation of the Book (The Quran).²



Working Life

Childhood – mid twenties	He worked as a shepherd for some time (looking after sheep and goats for others). In addition, he worked in trading with his uncle Abu-Talib. According to authentic narrations, Muhammad was 12 years old when he, for the first time, joined his uncle Abu-Talib in a trading trip to Syria.
Mid twenties - 40 years old	<p>He worked as a merchant or a trader for a wealthy woman called Khadijah, who had a general trading business (they used to buy commodities from one area and sell them in another).</p> <p>He was famous for his fidelity, integrity and trustworthiness. It was not long before he earned the title of “As-Sadiqul Ameen”, which means “the truthful and the trustworthy”.</p>
40-63 years old	When he was 40 years old (year 610 CE) Muhammad received the divine revelation and dedicated his life to conveying God’s Message to all people. He taught people the oneness of God and conveyed God’s Book (The Quran), which calls for social justice, peace, harmony and wellbeing.



Marital Status

Married to one wife for 25 years: Muhammad married Khadijah, the daughter of Khuwaylid, who came from a noble family called Asad.

She was a respected woman in her community and she was a widow. Muhammad worked for her for two years before she proposed marriage to him through a third party. She found him a very loyal, transparent and an ethical person.

Successful marriage: Although Khadijah was 15 years older than Muhammad, both of them came from a similar social class in the community.

The age difference was no obstacle to the establishment of a successful marriage, which lasted for 25 years³ until Khadijah died in the year 619 CE at the age of 65. Muhammad remarried after Khadijah passed away. (Please see Chapter 6)

A father of 6 children and a family man: Muhammad & Khadijah lived in harmony and peace; they had four daughters (Zaynab, Ruqayya, Um Kulthoum & Fatima) and two sons (Al-Qasim, who died when he was 3 years old and Abdullah, who died at the age of 4). Muhammad used to spend time with his family, help his wife in house matters, sew his own clothes and look after his children.

Muhammad loved Khadijah and was loyal to her

On several occasions he described her as the best woman of her time alike to Mary the mother of Jesus, who was the best woman of her time.

(Narrated by Bukhari)



Photo taken from Baqee Cemetery, which is next to Prophet Muhammad Mosque in Madinah. Some of Muhammad's companions, relatives, wives and children were buried in this cemetery.



Al-Ma'ala cemetery in Makkah, where Khadijah was buried.

Mission Accomplished in 23 Years

610 CE

Divine revelation commenced:

Muhammad received the first revelation from God and was appointed as the Messenger of God to all people. A mission that required strong belief, dedication, commitment and honesty.

610- 612 CE

Core Muslims formed:

Muhammad invited his friends, his inner circle and selected people to believe in one God and accept Islam as His final Message to humanity. In the first three years after prophecy, around 130 people accepted Islam and became a strong nucleus that was able to spread Islam publicly. These core Muslims were a mix of rich and poor people.

613- 615 CE

Muhammad's public invitation resisted:

Muhammad and his followers started to talk to people openly about Islam. Although Muhammad was known as a trustworthy and an honest man, Meccan leaders did not believe him. They described him as a poet, a magician and a crazy man.

Muhammad tempted and threatened:

Meccan leaders tried to dissuade Muhammad from inviting people to Islam by tempting him one time and threatening him another time.

Also, they tried to prevent people from listening to him. They showed increased hostility towards new Muslims. They persecuted and tortured the poor and weak Muslims.

Muhammad supported his followers and sent some of them to Abyssinia:

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

Muhammad saw the suffering and tribulation some of his followers endured and advised them to seek refuge in Abyssinia, describing it as a land of virtue ruled by a fair Christian king, under whom no one was treated unjustly.

Two influential men embraced Islam:

Two strong and well respected Meccan men accepted Islam, Omar Bin Al-Khattab and Hamza Bin Abdul-Muttalib (Muhammad's uncle). That was an important turning point for Muslims. Hamza became a strong supporter and protector for Muhammad until he (Hamza) died in the battle of Uhud (625 CE). Three years after the passing away of Prophet Muhammad, Omar became the second caliph and ruled the Islamic state for 11 years.



616- 618 CE**Muhammad boycotted:**

Meccan leaders boycotted Muhammad and his followers and imposed a social and economic blockade on them, which lasted for 3 years. During this time, Muhammad and his followers suffered great tribulation. This period was a tough test for their patience, belief and commitment to the truth.

619- 620 CE**A Sorrowful year:**

Meccan chiefs cancelled the social and economic blockade as they found it not useful. In the same year, Muhammad's wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu-Talib passed away.

Muhammad lost hope in Makkah and decided to convey the Message of God and seek support outside Makkah. He went to the city of Ta'if but was met with hostility⁴. In addition, he spoke to more than 20 Arab tribes about Islam but he didn't receive any positive response.

620- 622 CE**A glimpse of hope:**

Muhammad met six people from Yathrib (a city located 400 km north of Makkah) during the pilgrimage time and talked to them about Islam. They believed Muhammad and returned to their city with intentions to invite more people from their own tribe and other tribes in Yathrib. They agreed to return to Makkah the next year at the time of pilgrimage to meet again with Muhammad "the Prophet and the Messenger of God".

New Muslims pledged allegiance to Muhammad:

The same group returned the following year (621 CE) with six more people. They pledged their allegiance to Muhammad (accepting him as the Messenger of God).

They promised him:

(1) not to worship anyone except Allah (2) not to steal, (3) not to commit adultery, (4) not to kill, (5) not to slander neighbors and (6) not to disobey the Messenger of God.

The group went back to Yathrib and invited their tribal leaders and their people to accept Islam. They returned again in the following year (622 CE) at the time of pilgrimage with more than 70 men and two women. A similar pledge of allegiance was given by this group to Prophet Muhammad.

Aqaba or Al-Bay'aa "Pledge" Mosque⁵



A new Muslim community formed 400 km north of Makkah:

The leaders of the two main tribes in Yathrib (Aws & Khazraj) embraced Islam and subsequently their people became Muslims. Muhammad the Prophet of God was invited to come to Yathrib and become its ruler and leader.

622 CE

Chiefs of Makkah plotted to kill Muhammad; migration to Yathrib commenced:

Things were becoming worse in Makkah. Muhammad asked Meccan Muslims⁶ to migrate to Yathrib. Following their migration, Muhammad migrated to Yathrib in September 622 CE⁷. His migration represented the most important turning point in the Islamic history. From Yathrib, Islam blossomed, an Islamic state was established and a just social order was born.

623-624 CE

Muhammad the ruler of Yathrib:

Muhammad, "The Messenger of God" became the ruler of Yathrib willingly and peacefully with the agreement of the majority of people.

The people of Yathrib were a mix of Arabs and Jews. Although there were two main Arab tribes and three smaller Jewish tribes, the Arab community was larger than the Jewish one.



Muhammad changed the name of Yathrib the multicultural society:

"Madinah" was the new name Muhammad gave to the city of Yathrib.

After the migration of the Meccan Muslims, Yathrib no longer belonged to a certain group of Arabs, instead, it became the homeland of believers who accepted Islam.

Since there were Jewish tribes in Yathrib and other Arab people who didn't embrace Islam, Muhammad did not call it the city of Islam. Instead, it was named "Al-Madinah" which means "The City", in which all inhabitants had similar citizenship rights.



Muhammad called for peace and unity in Madinah:

In his first public address to the people of Madinah, Muhammad delivered a very concise speech which promoted harmony and social cohesion. He said:

"O People, seek and spread peace and offer food to each other, look after your kinship and pray to God at night while others are sleeping so you gain God's pleasure and enter His Paradise". (Ibn Majah, 4331) and (Tirmidhi, 5842)

Muhammad linked these acts to God's pleasure in order to motivate people to love each other and live in peace and harmony in a multicultural society.



623-624 CE**Muhammad signed the first agreement with Jews in Madinah which protected human rights and liberties:**

Most of the Jews hoped that the last Prophet would come from a Jewish background. Although the majority of Jews did not accept Muhammad as a Messenger of God, Muhammad (as the ruler of the state) signed an agreement with them which was like a "Constitution and Charter of Human Rights and Liberties" to which all Arab and Jewish tribes agreed upon.

The agreement guaranteed the freedom of worship for Muslims and Jews as well as Arabs who did not accept Islam.

In addition, the agreement protected the safety and security of all citizens in Madinah and required all parties to be part of the national defense should Madinah be attacked by enemies. The agreement stated justice, human rights, liberties and prohibition of crime and immoral practices.

624 CE**The unavoidable battle of Badr:**

When Muslims migrated from Makkah to Madinah, many of them were forced to abandon their homes and their properties were confiscated.

Location of Badr

The chiefs of Makkah used the confiscated money in trade and business. Muslims knew about a trade caravan belonging to the Meccan chiefs, led by their enemy Abu-Sufyan, which would pass through a trade route close to Madinah.

Muhammad called upon Muslims to take the caravan in return for their wealth that was confiscated in Makkah. A force of only 313 Muslims took up the mission. The Meccan intelligence advised Abu-Sufyan to change the route of the trade caravan. In addition, Makkah sent an army of 950 soldiers to fight the Muslim force, which was not prepared for war and was far less equipped than the Meccan army.

It was astonishing and beyond expectation that Muslims won their first battle against the Meccan chiefs. Many Meccan chiefs and important figures were killed in this battle.



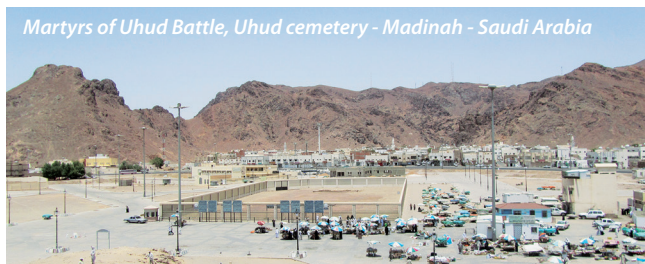
625 CE**Meccan chiefs attacked Muhammad and his followers in the battle of Uhud:**

In retaliation for their loss in the battle of Badr and their fear of losing their leading role in Arabia, Meccan chiefs with some Arab allies, sent an army of 3000 soldiers to attack Muslims at the mount of Uhud north of Madinah.



Location of Uhud - Madinah - Saudi Arabia

The Muslims lost this battle and Muhammad was wounded but saved. In the battle of Uhud some of Muhammad's companions were killed including his beloved uncle Hamza.



Martyrs of Uhud Battle, Uhud cemetery - Madinah - Saudi Arabia

626 CE**Meccans and other tribes attacked Muhammad and his followers in the battle of trench:**

This battle is also called the “Battle of Confederates”. Since Muhammad was not killed in the previous battle, Meccan chiefs and some Arab & Jewish tribes called for a united effort and a comprehensive assault to kill Muhammad and destroy the Muslim community.

10,000 soldiers marched towards Madinah. After consulting his companions, Muhammad decided to adopt the proposal of a Persian Muslim named Salman to dig a trench on the northern access of Madinah (5.5 km long X 4.6 m wide).

Muslims were in their most awkward situation and tried their best including psychological warfare to defend themselves. After a month-long siege the Meccan army and its allies became impatient and strong storms and wind blew, which forced the confederates to pack up their tents and withdraw.

627 CE**Treaty of Hdaybiya, a truce for 10 years:**

One year after the battle of trench, Muhammad took a peaceful initiative to perform Umrah (visit the Sacred Mosque in Makkah and perform other religious rites). Visiting Makkah for the purpose of worship was a religious right that Makkah undertook to give to all people in Arabia.

**10-Year
Truce**

It was a great surprise for Meccan chiefs to see Muhammad approaching Makkah with 1400 civilians coming from Madinah.

After several negotiations, a truce was made between the Meccan chiefs and Muhammad for 10 years during which time Muhammad and his companions returned to their homes with a condition to come again to visit Makkah in the following year (628 CE). The truce had many other terms which were disappointing for Muslims because they weighed heavily in favor of the Meccan side.

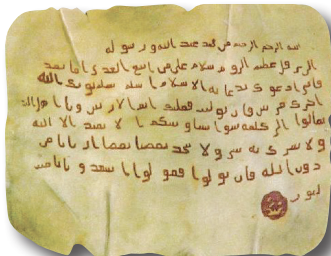


628- 629 CE

During the truce, Muhammad conveyed God's Message inside & outside Arabia:

The truce was a golden chance for Muhammad to freely speak to people about Islam without being stopped or intercepted by other forces.

Muhammad sent delegations to other Arab tribes in Arabia and wrote letters to the rulers and kings of neighboring countries and superpowers such as Persia, Byzantine and Egypt inviting them to accept Islam as "the Message of God". Muslims increased in numbers as people found the truth in Islam.



630 CE

Peaceful take-over of Makkah:

Within less than 2 years, the truce was broken from the Meccan side when their allies killed 20 Muslims.

In response to this shocking act, Muhammad marched with 10,000 Muslims to conquer Makkah but asked his soldiers not to fight any one unless they were fought.⁷

The Meccan chiefs were embarrassed and were not prepared to fight the Muslims. When the Muslim army arrived in Makkah, Muhammad addressed the whole people of Makkah confirming the oneness of God, referring victory to Him and reminding people that all of them descended from Adam and Adam was created from dust of the ground.



Then he asked the people of Makkah: "What do you expect me to do with you? They replied: "We hope for the best. After all, you have been a gracious brother and a courteous cousin".

Exemplar of forgiveness: Despite the hardship caused by the Meccan people during the previous 21 years, Muhammad behaved with high moralities. He replied: "Have no fear today. Depart then (to your homes), you are free". Muhammad's address was very influential and many people came to him to make a pledge and embrace Islam. (Sunan Al-Bayhaqi, 9/118, 18342, 18343)

630 - 631 CE

Arab tribes embraced Islam:

After the peaceful takeover of Makkah, delegations from all over Arabia came to learn about Islam. Except the Hawazen tribe, who fought the Muslims and eventually lost the battle of Hunayn, most Arab tribes embraced Islam. Muhammad sent many of his companions to various provinces in Arabia to teach people Islam "The Message of God".

When Prophet Muhammad returned to Makkah, his main goal was to purify the Sacred Mosque. He knocked down all idols that were worshipped by the Arabs and restored the Ka'bah as the House of Allah, the One God.



632 CE

Muhammad's farewell address:

Muhammad's mission was accomplished and his life was nearing to an end. In the year 632 CE Muhammad performed pilgrimage and gave his final sermon to more than 100,000 people.

His sermon reminded people about belief in One God, sanctity of lives, protection of wealth and property, equality of all races, rules of justice, women's rights and morals.

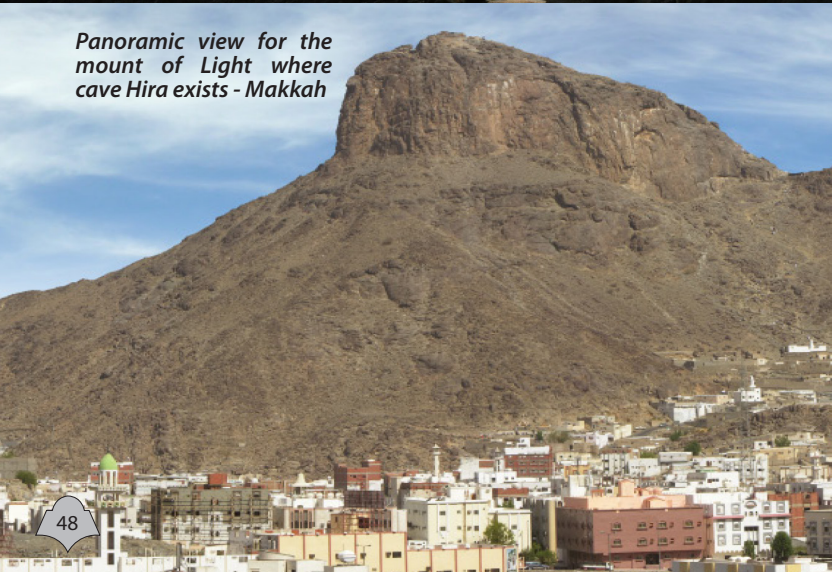
The passing away of Muhammad ﷺ:

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

"To err is human, to forgive is Divine" Alexander Pope



Mountains in Makkah - Saudi Arabia



*Panoramic view for the
mount of Light where
cave Hira exists - Makkah*



*Aerial view of the Sacred
Mosque, Makkah - Saudi
Arabia*

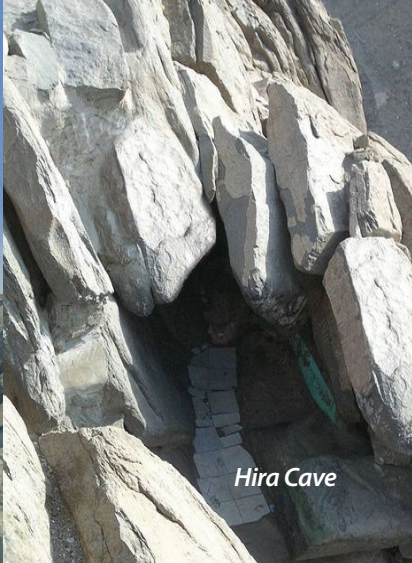
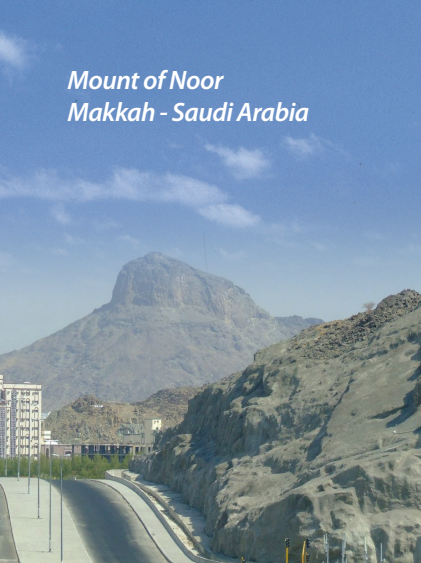




*Aerial view of Makkah, Saudi Arabia.
Showing the Sacred Mosque (Al-Masjid Al-Haram).
Courtesy of professional photographer Suzan Eskander*

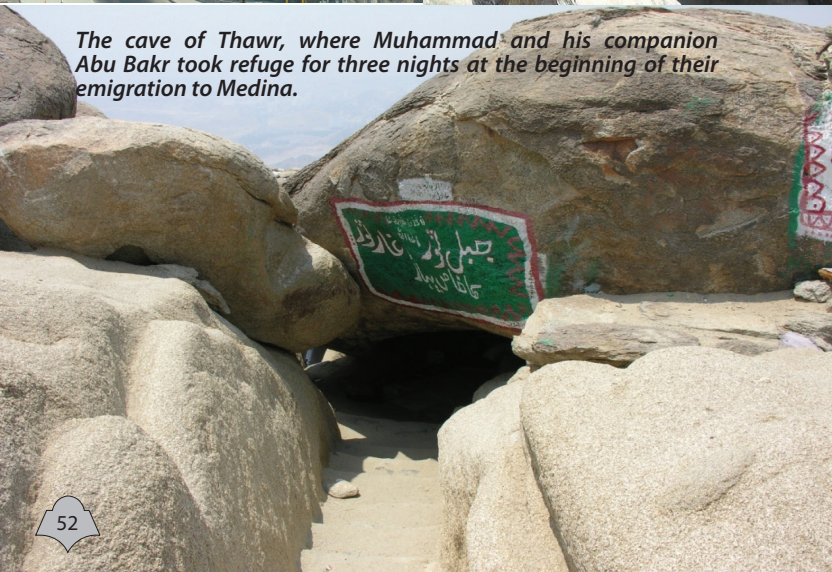


*Mount of Noor
Makkah - Saudi Arabia*



Hira Cave

The cave of Thawr, where Muhammad and his companion Abu Bakr took refuge for three nights at the beginning of their emigration to Medina.





Qubaa Mosque; the first mosque in Islam, 8 km south of the Nabawi Mosque Madinah, KSA



Qubaa Mosque, Madinah, KSA

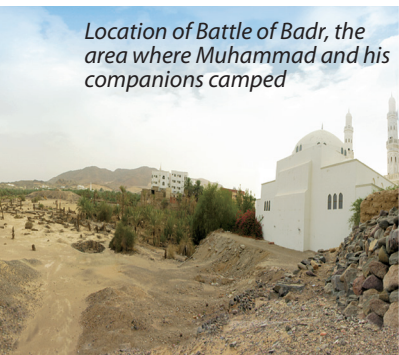
Aerial view of Badr town



The area where Quraish army camped in Badr



Location of Battle of Badr, the area where Muhammad and his companions camped



Location of Battle of Badr

Panoramic view, Uhud Mountain



Location of Uhud battle. The photo shows the archery mount and the cemetery of Martyrs. More than seventy of Muhammad's companions and his beloved uncle Hamza are buried there.



Trench Battle

Mount of Uhud



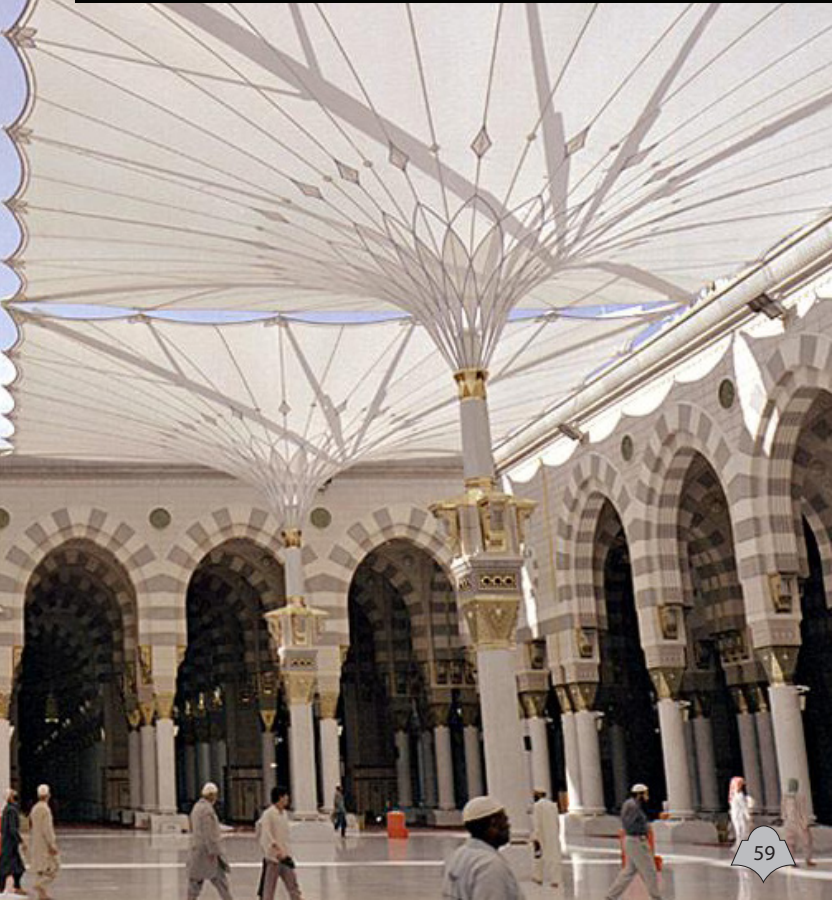


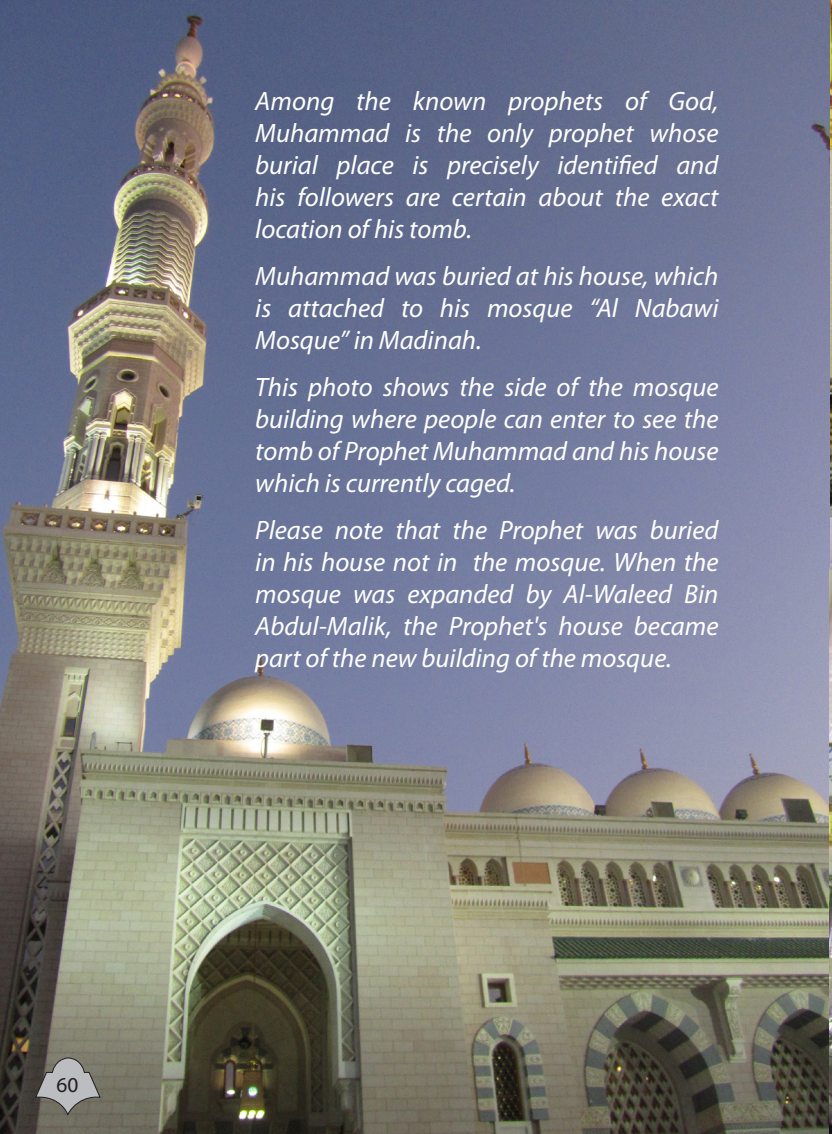
An imaginary view of Madinah city showing Prophet Muhammad's mosque (Nabawi Mosque) surrounded by houses and palm trees.

(Courtesy of : Madinah Research and Studies Center, Saudi Arabia)



The development of the Prophet Mosque





Among the known prophets of God, Muhammad is the only prophet whose burial place is precisely identified and his followers are certain about the exact location of his tomb.

Muhammad was buried at his house, which is attached to his mosque "Al Nabawi Mosque" in Madinah.

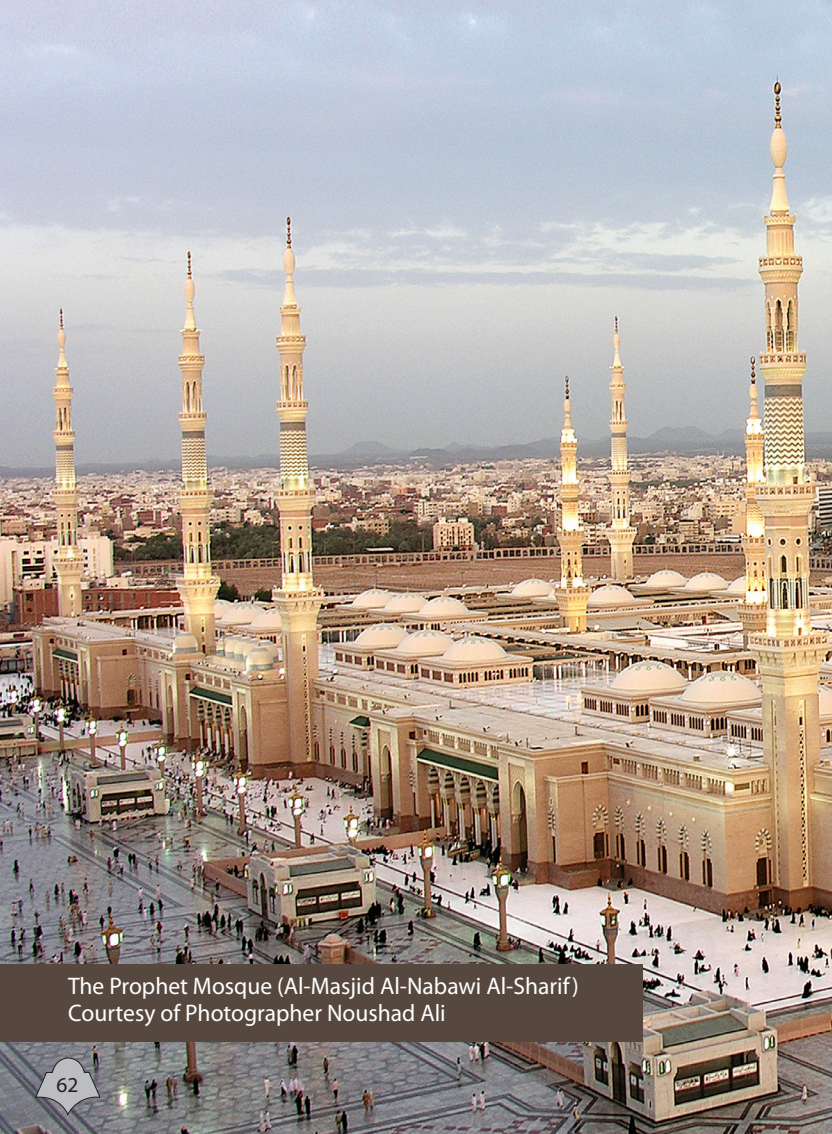
This photo shows the side of the mosque building where people can enter to see the tomb of Prophet Muhammad and his house which is currently caged.

Please note that the Prophet was buried in his house not in the mosque. When the mosque was expanded by Al-Waleed Bin Abdul-Malik, the Prophet's house became part of the new building of the mosque.



The tomb of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at the Nabawi Mosque in Madinah (first on the left). Next to it are the tombs of the first Caliph (successor) and ruler of the Islamic state Abu Bakr Al Siddiq and the second Caliph Omar Bin Al-Khattab.



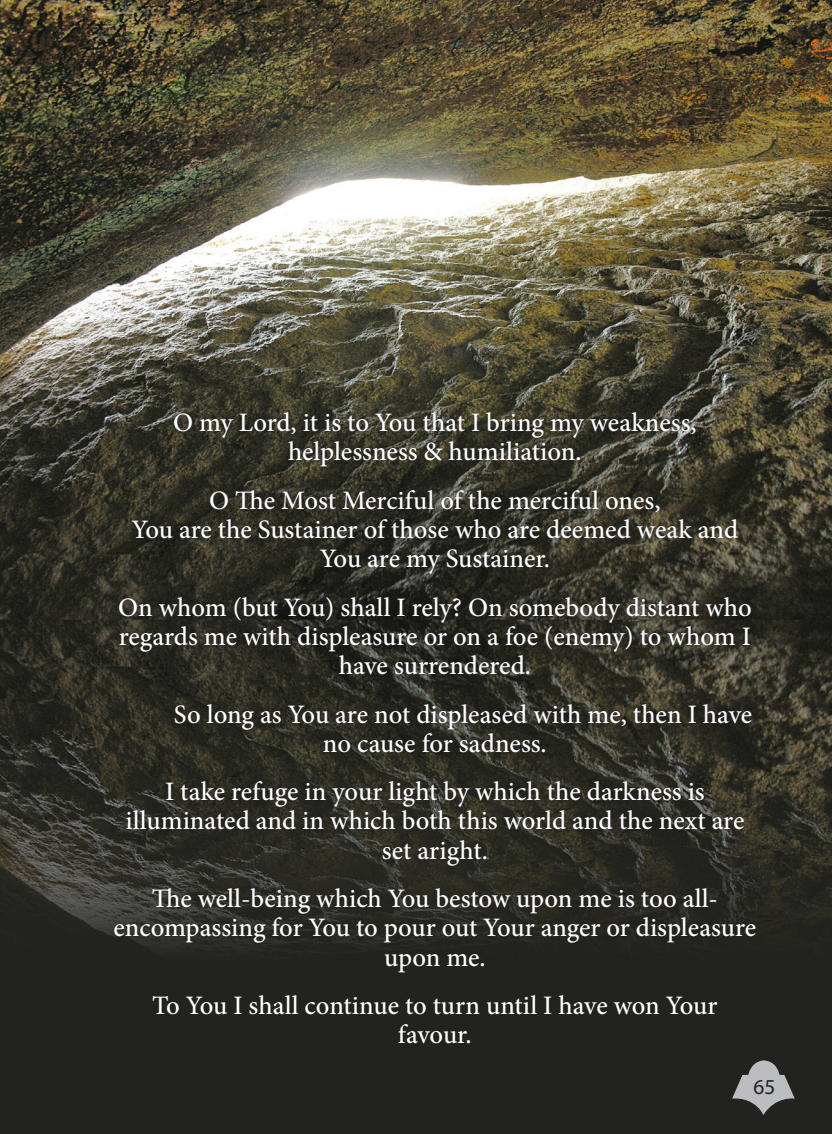


The Prophet Mosque (Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi Al-Sharif)
Courtesy of Photographer Noushad Ali



ENDNOTES

- 1 According to some narrations and calculations Muhammad was born in the year 571 CE.
- 2 There is one and only one Quran which was revealed to Muhammad in original Arabic. However, there are many translations for the meanings of the verses in the Quran to different languages such as English, French, Chinese, etc. The quoted verses in this pocket guide from the Quran are presented in simple English based on the English translation mentioned in the cited references.
- 3 Some narrations state that the marriage of Muhammad and Khadijah lasted for 24 years and several months.
- 4 Muhammad was attacked in Tai'f and experienced the worst treatment there. When he left Taif he was very disappointed. According to some narrations, he called God with a wonderful supplication (see next page).
- 5 Aqaba or Al-Bay'aa Mosque (Pledge Mosque): established by the Abbasside Caliph Abu Jaafar Al Manssour on the same place that is believed the new Muslims from Madinah pledged commitment to Prophet Muhammad as they embraced Islam.
- 6 A small Muslim community stayed in Makkah and were not able to migrate to Yathrib (Madinah).
- 7 The Islamic calendar starts from the date Muhammad migrated from Makkah to Madinah (13th Sep 622 CE approx. The peaceful taking over of Makkah was on the 8th Jan 630 CE approx).



O my Lord, it is to You that I bring my weakness,
helplessness & humiliation.

O The Most Merciful of the merciful ones,
You are the Sustainer of those who are deemed weak and
You are my Sustainer.

On whom (but You) shall I rely? On somebody distant who
regards me with displeasure or on a foe (enemy) to whom I
have surrendered.

So long as You are not displeased with me, then I have
no cause for sadness.

I take refuge in your light by which the darkness is
illuminated and in which both this world and the next are
set aright.

The well-being which You bestow upon me is too all-
encompassing for You to pour out Your anger or displeasure
upon me.

To You I shall continue to turn until I have won Your
favour.

Prophecy 4

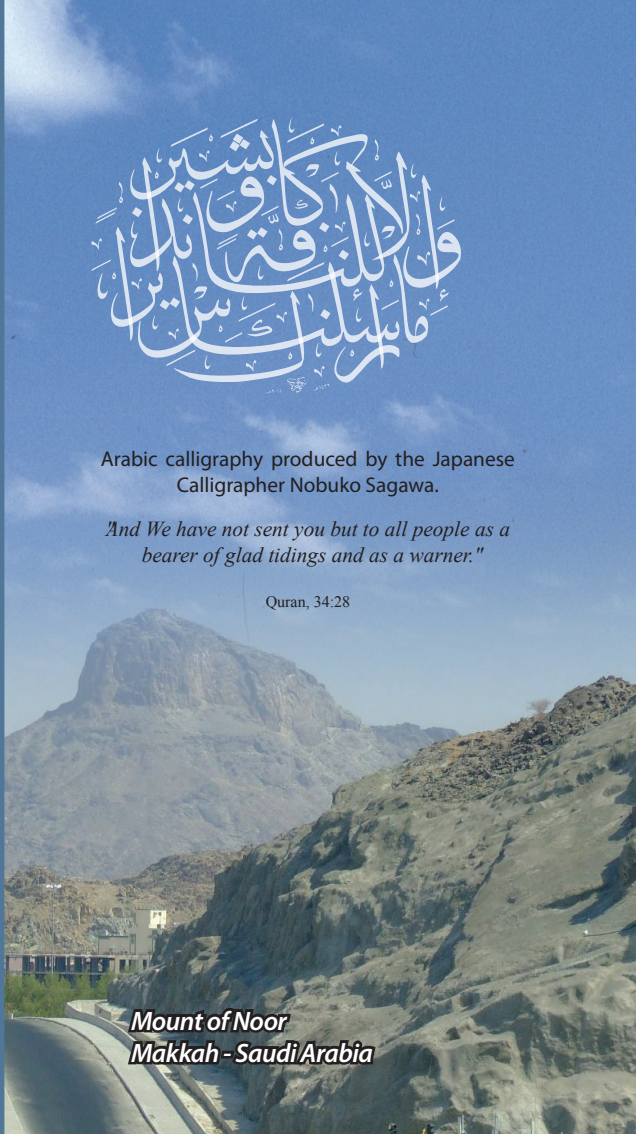


Arabic calligraphy produced by the Japanese
Calligrapher Nobuko Sagawa.

*And We have not sent you but to all people as a
bearer of glad tidings and as a warner."*

Quran, 34:28

**Mount of Noor
Makkah - Saudi Arabia**



Muhammad & Prophecy

Muhammad didn't know that he would be a Prophet: He led an ethical and ordinary life. He was known for his fidelity, integrity and trustworthiness. He never worshipped idols when idol worship was rife in a polytheistic society.

He always believed that the whole universe must have been created and controlled by one God. He used to worship God by retreating to a cave (634m above sea level) on a mount 4 km east of Mecca (Makkah).

The cave is known as Hira cave which is on a mount called "Jabal Al Noor" (i.e. Mount of light). This is because Muhammad received the first revelation from God when he was meditating in this cave.

It wasn't illusion and it wasn't a dream:

When Muhammad reached forty years old, he used to meditate frequently in Cave Hira. At the month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the lunar year, 610 CE approx), Archangel Gabriel appeared to him for the first time while he was in the cave and asked him to "Read". Muhammad was frightened.

Read !



Hira Cave

As he was illiterate, he could not read and did not know what to read. Archangel Gabriel repeated his word “read” again and again then he recited the following verses from God:

*“Read in the Name of your Lord Who created (everything),
He created man from a clot (clinging to the wall of the
womb)...Read ! and your Lord is the All-Munificent
Who taught man by the pen...He taught man what he
didn't know!”*

The Quran, 96:1-5

Archangel Gabriel disappeared after this short meeting.

Muhammad was terrified: He was extremely scared. He ran back to his home. He was trembling. He told his wife Khadijah what happened to him and asked her to cover him. She told him that God would not let him down or allow devils to touch him as he kept good relations with

his relatives, helped the poor people and liked doing charity.



This is the word Muhammad in Arabic designed by Artist Abdul Majid Al Noerat. It simulates the climb of Muhammad on the mount of Noor (Light), and his striving to find about the One God, the Creator and Lord of all beings.



A divine revelation or satanic whisperings? Muhammad was afraid that he was possessed by evil. He went with his wife Khadijah to tell the whole story to Waraqa Bin Nawfal (a relative of Khadijah) who was a religious Christian person and knowledgeable in the Bible. Waraqa predicted that Muhammad would be a Prophet and assured him that what he experienced was a divine revelation similar to what Moses the Prophet of Jews received. Waraqa wished to support Muhammad but he was very old at that time. He told Muhammad that he would be driven out of Makkah by his own people and would be treated with hostility by some people.

You are God's Messenger: Muhammad needed a few days to settle down and didn't return to the mount. After some time Archangel Gabriel came back to him and informed him that he would be a messenger of God (Allah The Glorified and Exalted) in order to convey His Divine Message to all people. Gabriel recited the following verses from God:

"O you cloaked (enveloped in your garments); Arise and warn; and glorify your Lord; and purify your clothing; and keep away from bad deeds and don't consider your fulfillment of these orders as a favor to God or people; and be patient for the sake of your Lord"

The Quran, 74:1-7

Gabriel continued to come to Muhammad over a period of 23 years. During this period, God's Message to humankind (the Quran) was revealed.

Muhammad conveyed Gods' Message to all people:

Muhammad acted according to the revelation he received in year 610 CE. He invited the people in Arabia and outside Arabia to believe in one God (Allah) and obey His commandments as they are set for the wellbeing of the whole humanity.

What is the "Message" about? The Message of Islam is based on "Aqidah" i.e. a declaration of faith in One God and "Shariah" which means God's Law; the system and regulations that govern people's day to day transactions, activities and practices.

Shariah is divided into three main branches: (1) Worship: such as daily prayers, fasting, supplications, giving Zakat (alms), etc. (2) Life transactions and dealings with others such as rules of justice, people's rights, commerce and business ethics, inheritance, etc. (3) Morals: such as right actions, etiquettes and values (honesty, sincerity, fidelity, love, cooperation, etc).

Note: After receiving divine revelation, Muhammad focused on teaching people monotheism (Aqidah) for thirteen years. After migration to Madinah, there was more focus on explaining and implementing Shariah.

God's Commandments

“Say (O Muhammad):

Come, I will recite what your Lord prohibited you from, (1) Don't join any partners as equal with Him; (2) And be good to your parents; (3) And don't kill your children on a plea of want, We provide sustenance for you and for them; (4) And don't approach or get close to doing shameful deeds openly or secretly (e.g. adultery and deeds of corruption); (5) And don't kill any soul which God made sacred except by way of justice and law. This is what He commands you, thus you may learn wisdom; (6) And don't touch the orphans' wealth or property, except to improve it, until he or she reaches maturity; (7) And give measure and (8) weight with (full) justice (when buying & selling and when doing financial & non financial transactions), We place no burdens on any one but that which he or she can bear; (9) And whenever you speak (or bear witness) speak justly even if near relative is concerned; (10) And fulfill the Covenant of God. This is what He commands you that you may remember ”

The Quran, 6:151-152

A practical introduction of Muhammad's teachings in Abyssinia: Ja'far bin Abi-Talib was among eighty Muslims who fled for protection in the land of Abyssinia (currently Ethiopia in Africa). Speaking to the King of Abyssinia on behalf of the Muslims who sought asylum there, Ja'far said:

"O King, we were once people living in ignorance (unawareness and lack of knowledge), worshipping idols, eating carrion, committing acts of abomination, neglecting our kith & kin, treating our neighbors badly and allowing the strong among us to oppress the weak. This is how we lived until God sent us a messenger from among ourselves, a man whose origin, honesty, integrity and chastity were well known to us.

He called upon us to worship God alone and leave away the stones and idols which we worshipped as our forefathers had done. He instructed us to be truthful in our words, to fulfill our promises and to respect our obligations to our blood relations and he forbade us from committing abominations.

So we trusted & believed him and followed the message he received from God. However, our people denounced us, tortured us and did everything in their capacity to turn us away from our religion. When they continued to oppress us, we came to your land choosing you above all others in order to get protection and be treated with impartiality."



A Christian King acknowledged Muhammad's religion:

After Ja'far delivered his talk, the King of Abyssinia (who was a religious and God fearing person) asked Ja'far to recite some verses from the "Book" revealed to Muhammad.

Ja'far recited a portion from the chapter "Mary"¹, the Mother of Jesus. He continued recitation until the King wept and his beard was moist with tears.

The King then said:

"The message brought by Muhammad and that which was brought by Jesus are from a single source."



The Message of Islam

Islam in simple words:

"Islam" means submission and devotion to One God. It is a religion of monotheism where the adherent to Islam believes that God is one and incomparable. He has no partners or sons. He begets not nor was he begotten (neither gives birth nor was born). He created the whole universe and all beings. No one shares with Him His Divinity and no one has the right to be worshiped or prayed to but Him alone.



Courtesy of
Abdul Aziz Al Rashidi



What is the name of God? His name is "Allah". It

is pronounced Allaah with a long vowel "a". Also, God has many beautiful names and attributes. Some of these attributes were mentioned

in the Old Testament. For example, the name Quddous in Arabic is similar to the name Qadosh or Hakkadosh in Hebrew, which means "The Holy". The name Ahad in Arabic is similar to the name Echad in Hebrew, which means "The One". In Islam, God is often described as "The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful".



English	Arabic	Hebrew	Aramaic
God	Elah	Eloha	Elaha

"He is Allah besides Whom there is no God: The Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.

He is Allah, besides Whom there is no God; the King, the Holy, the Author of Peace, the Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of greatness. Glory be to Allah from that which they set up (with Him)!

He is Allah; the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner: His are the most beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise".

The Quran, 59:22-24

Muhammad and Islam: When a man asked Muhammad to explain Islam in simple words so that he should not seek any further clarification from anyone else, Muhammad concisely said:

**Be
Straight**

"Say, I believe in Allah (the one God) and then be straight."

Embracing the Islamic faith requires following a balanced way of life without diversion to extremism in words, actions or deeds.

Note: In the Arabic Bible, the word Allah is frequently mentioned to indicate God. In Islam there are 99 acknowledged "beautiful names" and attributes for God.

Islam and peace: Linguistically the word “Islam” in Arabic comes from the root word “salama”, which means free of harm and is related to the word “Salaam”, which means peace.

Prophet Muhammad defined a Muslim as “the one whom other people are safe from harm coming from his tongue and hands”, i.e. people should not receive any harm from his actions and words.



In Islam, “The Peace” is one of the magnificent names and attributes of God (Allah). The one who submits to Allah should find inner peace within him/ herself and should be at peace

with the environment and the people.

It is interesting to know that in a Muslim society, people greet each other with the word “Assalamo Alaykom” which means “peace be upon you” instead of the words “Hi” or “Hello”. The full version of this statement is “peace be upon you as well as Allah’s mercy and blessings”.

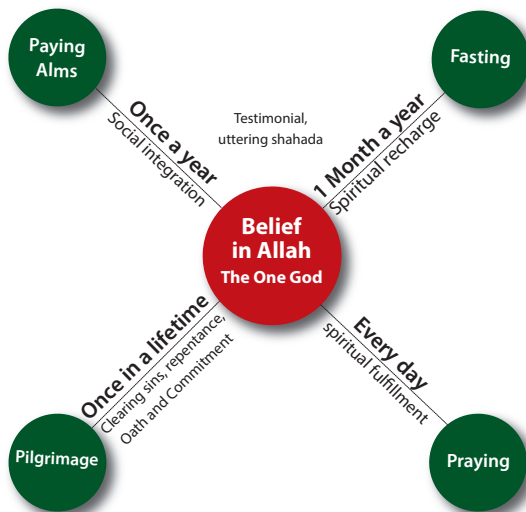
Muslims or Muhammadans? Unlike the followers of other religions, the followers of Muhammad are not called Muhammadans. An adherent to Islam or the one who embraces it as a faith and a way of life is called a “Muslim” i.e. the one who believed in one God and submitted to Him.

The six elements of the Islamic creed: The belief in One God requires the belief in His Angles, His Books, His Messengers as well as the belief in the Day of Judgment and the belief in God's Divine Pre-ordainment.

Pillars of Islam, practicing the Islamic faith

The Islamic religion is based on five pillars that a Muslim must perform.

1	Shahada	Uttering (verbally saying) the creed of Islam (there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is a messenger of Allah)
2	Salat	Performing daily prescribed prayers
3	Siyam	Fasting the lunar month of Ramadan
4	Zakat	Paying alms as charity once a year
5	Hajj	Pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque (the House of God) in Makkah once in a life time for those who have the physical and financial ability



1. Uttering the Creed of Islam, Shahada

This is to acknowledge that there is one and only one God Who created all beings. His name is Allah.



A person is said to be a Muslim when he or she believes in heart and utters (acknowledges verbally) the statement of Shahada "there is no deity but Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah."

(In Arabic it is spelled: Ash'hado an la Ilaha illa Allah, Wa Ash'hado anna Muhammadan rasoolo'Allah.)



Acknowledging Muhammad ﷺ as a Prophet and a Messenger of God requires the acknowledgement of all Prophets and messengers God sent before him.

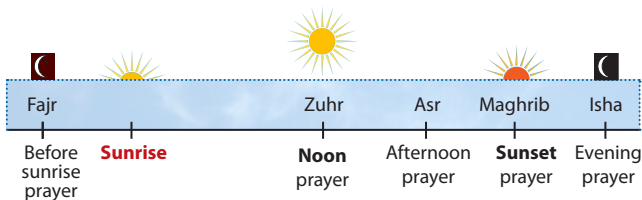


This is a testimony in Arabic calligraphy, which was designed in an artistic way. It states: I witness that there is no God except Allah and Muhammad is His servant and His messenger.

2. Prescribed Daily Prayers, Salat

Prayer (Salat) in Islam is an act of worship that enables the individual to communicate with his creator and get close to Him. There are five daily-prescribed prayers in Islam, which are distributed during the whole day cycle. The essence of worship is to glorify, exalt and praise God with the heart, tongue and body.

Islam...
Faith in
Practice



"And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he/she calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided".

The Quran, 2:186

**Powerful
Meditation**

In fact, the word 'salat' literally means 'hot connection'. It is a practical demonstration of faith. Each prayer includes physical movements of bowing and prostrating to Allah. Prayer shows progressively increasing levels of submission to Allah. It requires full concentration and isolation from worldly matters. Prophet Muhammad said: "A person is closest to Allah during prostration."

Praying five times a day may seem excessive to some people. In reality, it is a type of meditation that does not take more than forty minutes a day. Just as we eat three or four times a day and we never complain because we need physical nourishment to survive, we also need spiritual nourishment for our soul. Salat at spaced intervals throughout the day provides such spiritual nourishment.

3. Zakat, Alms Giving

Zakat is an essential pillar of Islam. It means giving alms (paying a charity) once every year to poor, needy and other rightful beneficiaries as stipulated by the Quran. It is specified with (2.5%) of excess personal wealth.

2.5%
of Annual
Net Savings

Zakat cleanses one's heart from greed and removes hatred and jealousy from the hearts of the poor. It fosters social integration and collaboration, compassion and respect. It enhances the wellbeing of the whole society and achieves social justice.

4. Fasting in Ramadan

Muslims are required to fast the whole lunar month of Ramadan (29 or 30 days), from the break of dawn to sunset. During the fasting time, Muslims are required to abstain from eating, drinking and sexual contact while practicing a normal life.



Fasting for the sake of Allah helps acknowledging that the sustenance (that may be taken for granted) actually comes directly from Allah.

When people feel the pangs of hunger, they experience the suffering needy people go

محرم

through specially in areas that starve or lack the basic sustenance. The rich will be more inclined to give charity when they fast. This builds up a relationship between the rich and the poor and helps build social harmony.

Fasting enables one to curb the inner desires, learn self-control and hence achieve better spiritual development. Fasting has many health benefits and doctors recommend it to cure some diseases.

5. Pilgrimage to Makkah, Hajj

Hajj is the pilgrimage to Makkah at the lunar month of Zul Hijjah with the intention to visit the Sacred Mosque (House of Allah) and perform certain religious rites. It is the fifth pillar of Islam that must be done once in a lifetime by all Muslims (who reached the age of puberty) provided they have the financial and physical ability to perform it.

Lunar Months	
1	Al-Muharram
2	Safar
3	Rabi' Al-Awal
4	Rabi' Al-Akharah
5	Jumada Al-Oula
6	Jumada Al-Akharah
7	Rajab
8	Sha'ban
9	Ramadan
10	Shawwal
11	Zul Qui'da
12	Zul Hijjah

As people from all races and nations gather at the spiritual epicenter of the Islamic world, they are affirming their common paternal ancestry with Adam and their spiritual ancestry with Abraham.

One God, One Message

The prophets and messengers of God in the Quran

Islam acknowledges all prophets and messengers God sent before Muhammad for the guidance of humanity. They confirmed one message, monotheism, which is the belief in God's existence and oneness.

God sent them to educate people about the purpose of life, protect them from falling astray and teach them good morals.

The Quran mentioned 25 prophets and messengers by name and focused on the stories of some of them. For example, in the Quran Adam was mentioned 25 times, Noah was mentioned 43 times, Abraham was mentioned 69 times, Moses was mentioned 136 times and Jesus was mentioned 25 times.



Muhammad said: "My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me, is that of a man who has built and completed a house except for a place of one missing brick. When people see the house, they admire its beauty and say: how splendid the house will be if the missing brick is put in its place. So I am that brick, and I am the last of the Prophets." (Narrated by Bukhari 4.734, 4.735)

Verily We sent messengers before you, among them those of whom We have told you (their story), and some of whom We have not told you (their story); and it was not given to any messenger that he should bring a sign (miracle) except by God's leave (permission)

The Quran, 40:78

Say : We have believed in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered.

The Quran, 2:136



Torah, Gospel and Quran are God's revelations to humankind: Believing in God's revealed Books before the Quran is an essential pillar of the Islamic faith. Muslims believe that the Quran does not contradict the previous revelations but it does point out and correct deviations from truth that happened through the history.

We did reveal the Torah, where in it there is guidance and a light. The Quran, 5:44

And We sent following in their footsteps, Jesus, the son of Mary confirming that which came before him in the Torah, and We gave him the Gospel in which was guidance and light and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah as guidance and instructions for the righteous.

The Quran, 5:46

And unto you (Muhammad) We revealed the Book (The Quran) with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watcher (criterion) over it.

The Quran, 5:48

Those whom God bestowed favor among the Prophets, of the descendents of Adam and of those whom We carried (in the ship) with Noah, and of the seed of Abraham and Israel, and from among those whom We guided and chose. When the revelations of (The Lord) The Beneficent were recited unto them, they fell in prostration, adoring and weeping.

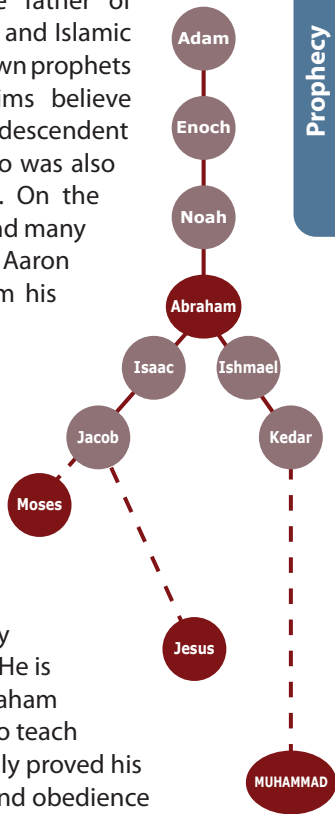
The Quran, 19:58

Prophet	Muhammad	Jesus	Moses	Abraham
Approx. Period	570 - 632 CE	1-33 CE	around 1400 BC	around 1700 BC
Approx. Age	63	33	120	175

Muhammad ﷺ and Abraham ﷺ

Abraham is considered as the father of prophets in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions because most of the known prophets were from his offspring. Muslims believe that prophet Muhammad is his descendent through his first son Ishmael who was also the father of many Arab tribes. On the other hand, the nation of Israel and many prophets such as Jacob, Joseph, Aaron and Moses have descended from his second son Isaac.

The Quran frequently mentioned the story of Abraham, who used personal observation, reason and common sense to search for the truth. He recognized that God cannot be the sun, or the moon or any idol or creature. God is the creator of the universe and all beings. He is the only deity that is worthy to be worshipped. He is one and He has no partners. Abraham dedicated his life and struggled to teach people monotheism. He practically proved his sincerity, honesty, thankfulness and obedience to God. He presented one of the greatest and most memorable examples in the history for full submission to One God, the Lord of lords and all beings.



Who is better in religion than the one who submits him / herself to Allah (surrender his/her purpose to God) while being a doer of good and follows the religion of Abraham (tradition inclining towards truth, the upright? And Allah chose Abraham as an intimate friend.

The Quran, 4:125

Abraham was a man of truth who showed an exemplar obedience to God, therefore, according to the Quran, God chose Abraham as a friend and as one of the elite in the world and among the righteous in the Hereafter (Quran, 4:25, 2:130). God guided him to the right religion and made him an "Imam" i.e. a leader for people (Quran, 2:124) and described him as a nation (Quran, 16:120).

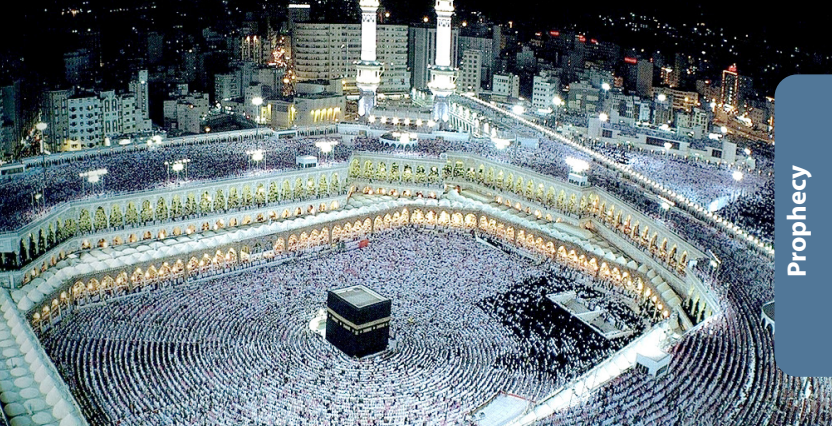


Abraham is revered by Muslims as the person who gave them their name as "**Muslims**" (i.e. those who believe in One God and submit to Him) (Quran, 22:78).

"Abraham was neither a Jew, nor a Christian; but he was "Musliman Hanifan" an upright man who had surrendered and sincerely submitted to Allah (God), and he was not of the idolaters"

The Quran, 3:67

Note: The origin of the name "Abraham" was Abram or Avram and it is written and pronounced "Ibrahim" in Arabic. The Roman Catholic Church calls Abraham "our father in Faith". The Eastern Orthodox Church commemorates him as the "Righteous Forefather Abraham".



It is believed that the first building for worshipping one God was established when Adam first descended on the earth. Muslims believe that the most important person who rebuilt this building and raised its walls was Prophet Abraham together with his son Ishmael. The building is cubical in shape and it is called “Ka’bah”. It is located in Makkah, which is currently in Saudi Arabia. God imposed a duty upon Abraham and his son to purify the Ka’bah for those who pray, meditate and prostrate to Him. God made it a place of worship, and a sanctuary (a safe place and a resort) for the people.

Abraham and Ishmael's supplication

“Our Lord! make us submissive unto You and of our Seed (descendants) a nation submissive unto You, and show us our ways (rites) of worship, and accept our repentance. You are the Most Forgiving the Most Merciful.” The Quran, 2:128



The Sacred Mosque (Al Masjid Al-Haram) in Mecca (Makkah), Saudi Arabia. This is the holiest Mosque in Islam. The black building is the Ka'bah. Muslims believe God commanded Prophet Abraham to establish the Ka'bah to glorify and worship Him (The One God). When Muslims pray to God, they direct their faces (from all over the world) toward the Ka'bah.



Prophet Muhammad indicated that praying in the Sacred Mosque (God's house of worship) is highly rewardable. The reward for one prayer in the Sacred Mosque is equivalent to the reward of 100,000 prayers.



Hajj

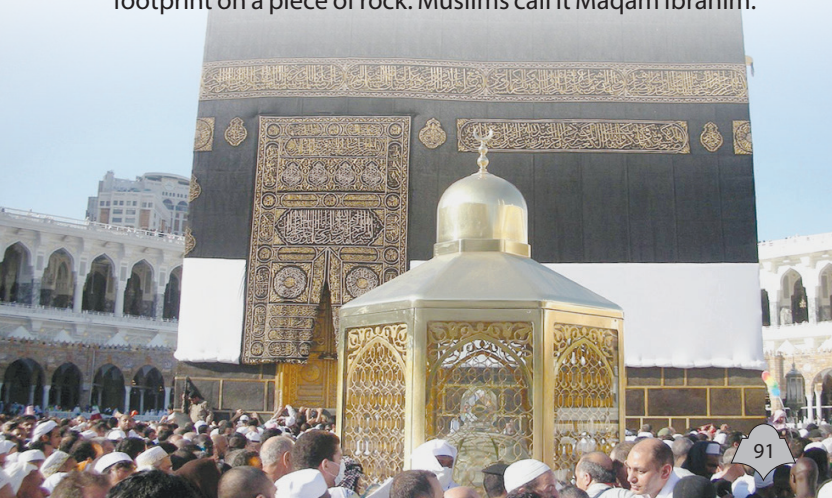
Every year, more than three million Muslims perform pilgrimage "Hajj" to the Sacred places in Makkah. It is the fifth pillar of Islam that must be done once in a lifetime by those who have the financial and health capabilities to perform it.

Muhammad taught people how to perform Hajj, which mainly contains Abrahamic rites. He circumambulated the Ka'bah, i.e. walked around it in circles. This is commonly known "Tawaf". *Please remember Ka'bah is the cubical building established by Abraham as the House of God.*

Circumambulation is performed seven times and goes counterclockwise as an act of submission to God, which is also harmonious with the motion of the planets and even the electrons.



Then Muhammad prayed behind Abraham's station. Currently it is an enclosure that contains Abraham's footprint on a piece of rock. Muslims call it Maqam Ibrahim.





Then Muhammad walked between the Safa and Marwa hills, the same place Hagar walked thousands of years ago searching for water after her husband Abraham left her there with their son Ishmael. Abraham asked her to stay there as an act of obedience and submission to God's Command Who wanted the place to become a sanctuary and a place of worship.

The distance between these two hills is approximately 395m. This Hajj rite is called "**Sa'ee**" i.e. a brisk walk between Safa and Marwa hills that resembles the walk of Hagar in the same place.

Also, Sa'ee resembles the daily motion, activities, actions and efforts a person performs during his / her life. These deeds should be for good, benevolent and useful goals that add positive values to the world and humanity.

Sa'ee consists of 7 laps (with a total distance of 2.76 Km) starting from Safa and finishing at Marwa.

In addition to other Hajj rites, Muhammad went to a place currently known as "Jamarat" in a town called Mina (8 Km east of Makkah). There he threw stones in resemblance of Abraham's act, when he stoned the satan who appeared to him as an old man trying to dissuade him from slaughtering his son as a sacrifice to God. Abraham stoned the satan several times. When Muslims perform the same act, they in fact challenge the satan and the inner evil desires within themselves.



Finally, as God saved Abraham's son and instead substituted a ram, Muhammad taught Muslims to provide a sacrifice to God by slaughtering a sheep or a goat as a symbol of Abraham's sacrifice, and divide the meat among the poor.



Muhammad taught Muslims to dedicate a supplication for Abraham and his family in every prayer of the daily five prayers. Also, it is worth mentioning that Muhammad named one of his children "Ibrahim", who died in his childhood.

"Say (O Muhammad): My Lord has guided me to a straight path, a correct (right) religion, the way and community of Abraham, the upright way inclining towards the truth and he was not an idolater (he didn't associate others with God)"

The Quran, 6:161

It is believed that Abraham was buried in Hebron, Palestine. The building complex that contains the cenotaph of Abraham is called “Al-Masjid Al-Ibrahimi” (Abraham’s Mosque). Also called by non-Muslims “Tombs of the Patriarchs”.



The building is primarily a large mosque (rectangular shape) with two square minarets. It also includes many rooms and a series of subterranean caves.

The central room of the building contains the cenotaphs of Abraham and Sarah. The southern room (Ohel Yitzhak in Hebrew) contains the cenotaphs of Isaac and Rebecca.

The northern room of the building contains the cenotaphs of Jacob and Leah. It is widely believed the remnants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah were enshrined in the subterranean chambers below the building.

Note: Muslims do not glorify tombs. According to Islamic teachings, the structure of the tomb must not be raised above the ground level except for (one shibr which is about 20 centimeters).



Cenotaph of Abraham

The Islamic teachings forbid directing prayers or supplications towards the tombs or the buried people. Prophet Muhammad said: If you ask (for something) ask Allah and if you seek support, seek it from Allah.

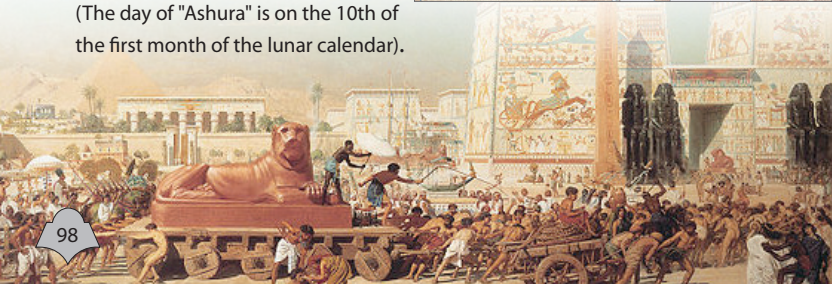


Muhammad ﷺ and Moses ﷺ

The Man
God Spoke
to Him

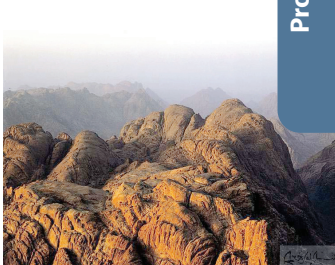
Muhammad praised highly the Prophet Moses and indicated that on the Day of Resurrection he will see Moses standing and holding the side of the Throne of Allah. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 4/157, 3408. 4/159, 3414)

On another occasion when Muhammad came to Madinah and found that Jews fasted on the day of "Ashura" (which God saved the children of Israel from Pharaoh of Egypt), he asked Muslims to fast this day voluntarily because Moses fasted that day as an expression of thanks to God (The day of "Ashura" is on the 10th of the first month of the lunar calendar).



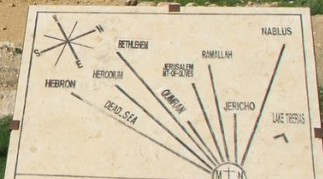
Approximately one third of the Quran talks about Moses and the incidents the children of Israel went through. In addition, the Quran mentions some of the prophets who were sent to the children of Israel such as Aaron, Zachariah and John.

The Quran mentions that God spoke to Moses and described him as one of the five messengers and prophets who had heavy missions (Ulu Al Azm). God took from them a solemn covenant. The five messengers are **Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad** peace be upon all of them. (See Quran, 33:7).



Moses died near or at the mount Nebo which overlooks the Dead Sea and the land of Palestine. A memorial was built on the mount, which became an important tourist attraction in Jordan.





Muslims see many similarities between Moses and Muhammad. Both were prophets and messengers who brought a Divine Book that included God's Law and Commandments. Both led their people and lived among them for a long period of time. Both married and had children.



Muhammad ﷺ and Jesus ﷺ

According to authentic narrations Muhammad said:

"I am the nearest of all the people to the son of Mary and all the prophets are paternal brothers, and there has been no prophet between me and him (i.e. Jesus)".
(Bukhaari, 3285)

The Quran describes Jesus as "God's Word" and "glad tidings" conveyed to Mary. His name is "The Messiah Jesus son of Mary".

God supported him with the Holy Spirit (Archangel Gabriel) and sent him as a messenger to the children of Israel to guide them to the straight path and to worship God "Allah" his Lord and their Lord and the Lord of all beings. (See the Quran, 2:87, 3:45-49, 4:171).

Jesus in
the Quran



Nazareth is a historic town in lower Galilee, Palestine. Mentioned in the Gospels as the home of Mary, it is closely associated with the childhood of Jesus Christ.

Also, the Quran describes Jesus as illustrious (memorable and prominent) in the world and the Hereafter, and one of the righteous and those brought near unto God.

The Quran indicates that God taught Jesus the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel. Allah supported him with miracles of healing the blind, and the leper, and raising the dead by His leave and Will.



Photos from Bethlehem: The Church of the Nativity is one of the oldest operating churches in the world. It is believed by many Christians it marks the birthplace of Jesus the Christ.

Muslims believe that Jesus will return.

Prophet Muhammad indicated that the Day of Resurrection will not take place until Jesus descends from the heavens.

Jesus
Return

He will return before the end of the world in order to bring people to monotheism and establish the Law of God on the earth. He will fight the false Messiah, and unite all believers in one God. He will be a just ruler and he will bring peace to the whole world. Muslims are required to be amongst the supporters and followers of Jesus upon his return.



Photos from Damascus, Syria: According to some narrations, Prophet Muhammad indicated that Jesus will descend in the eastern side of Damascus.

Universality of the "Message" conveyed by Muhammad

Muslims believe that Muhammad received the same Message that was given to Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other prophets but his mission was universal. He was entrusted to correct people's beliefs, bring them back to the true faith and teach them good deeds.

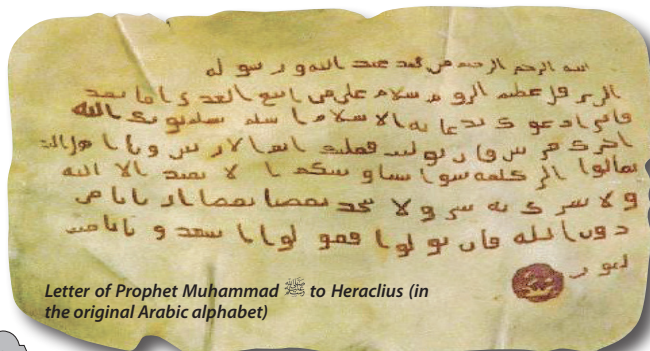
"And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds"

The Quran, 21:107

Muhammad's Letter to the Roman Emperor

Muhammad sent letters to the rulers and kings of neighboring countries and superpowers such as Persia, Byzantine and Egypt calling them to accept Islam as

"the Message of God". When Heraclius King of Byzantine received Muhammad's letter, he invited Abu-Sufyan (one of the main chiefs and tradesmen of Makkah who was by chance doing business in that area) to attend him. Heraclius asked Abu-Sufyan a few questions and requested him to be honest.



Letter of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to Heraclius (in the original Arabic alphabet)

Heraclius : Which social class of the society does Muhammad come from?

Abu-Sufyan : He comes from a noble family in Makkah.

Heraclius : Did he ever betray, break a promise or lie?

Abu-Sufyan : No.

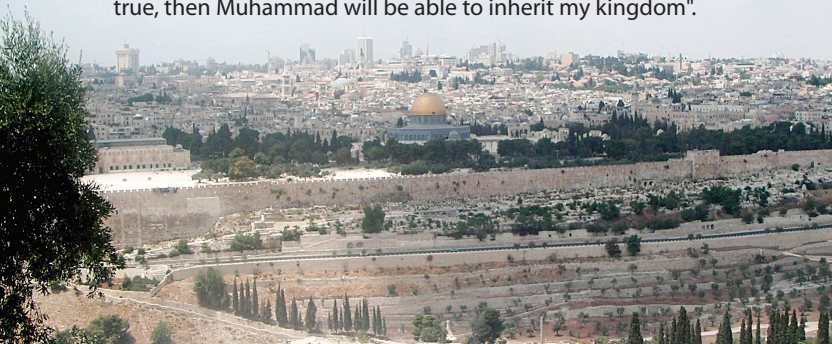
Heraclius : How about his followers, are they increasing or decreasing? And have any of his followers quit because he was not pleased with Muhammad?

Abu-Sufyan : In fact, Muhammad's followers admired him. They were increasing in number.

Heraclius : Then what does Muhammad teach his followers?

Abu-Sufyan : Belief in One God and social justice.

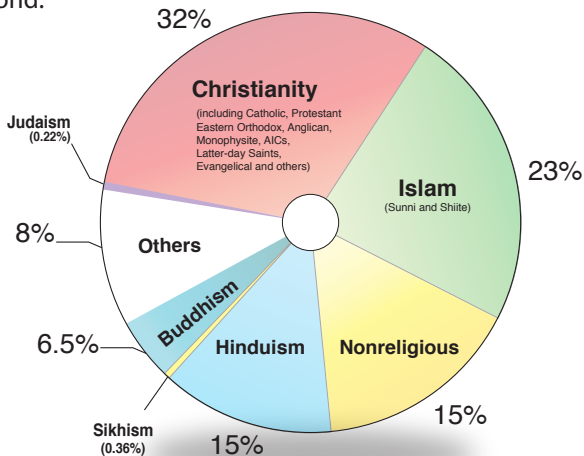
Heraclius thought for a while, then he said: "If what you told me is true, then Muhammad will be able to inherit my kingdom".



Emperor Heraclius ruled the Roman Empire from 610 to 640 CE. During that time he conducted three military campaigns and defeated the Persian Empire and regained Syria, Palestine and Egypt. In year 636CE Islam reached Palestine, Syria, Egypt and most of Northern Africa. In the year 642 CE Islam reached Persia.

Islam, a universal religion: Currently Islam is the second largest religion in the world after Christianity. A comprehensive demographic study of more than 200 countries finds that there are 1.57 billion Muslims of all ages living in the world today, representing 23% of an estimated 2015 world population of 6.8 billion (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 2015).

Not all Muslims are Arabs: Arab Muslims constitute less than one fourth of the total number of Muslims in the world.



There are approximately 2.1 billion Christians in the world representing 32% of world's population and 1.1 billion non religious / atheist people in the world (15% of world's population). Judaism represents 0.22% of world's population (approx. 14 million people).

ENDNOTES

- 1 Abstract from the story of Mary from the Quran, chapter 19:Verses 16-23 "Mary"

*And mention Mary in the Scripture,
when she had withdrawn from her people to an eastern place as a seclusion
from them. Then We sent unto her Our spirit (Angel Gabriel) who appeared
to her as a flawless human being.*

*She said: I seek refuge from you to God, The Beneficent One if at all you
fear Him.*

He said: I am none other than a messenger of your Lord to grant you a pure boy.

*She said: How shall I have a boy (son) and neither a human being has ever
touched me nor have I been unchaste!*

*He said: So (it will be). Your Lord said: It is easy for Me and We will make him
a miraculous sign for all people and a Mercy from Us. It is a decreed matter.*

*Soon she conceived him, and she hurried to a remote place but the birth pangs
drove her unto the trunk of the palm tree. She said: Oh, I wish I had died before
this and had become a thing utterly forgotten!*

According to the story mentioned in the Quran, Mary brought her son to her own people who blamed her but Jesus (the newborn) miraculously spoke and said: chapter 19 :Verses 30-35, Mary:

*Indeed, I am the servant of Allah. He (decreed) to give me the Scripture
and make me a prophet and make me blessed wherever I may be. And He
enjoined me to pray to him and give alms as long as I am alive and to be
virtuous towards my mother. He didn't make me insolent or wretched. May
all peace be upon me the day I was born and the day I will die and the day I
shall be raised alive.*

*That is Jesus son of Mary; it is the truth concerning what they doubt. It is not
for God to take any son (Exalted Be He). When He decrees a matter, He but
says to it : Be and so it is.*

The Islamic Civilization

Chapter

5

Values and Morals



وَالْعَالِي مَرَاتَبًا

"You Are Of Great Moral Character"

The Quran, 68:4

Values and Morals

Personal Development and Leadership

Perfect balance in satisfying body and soul needs Muhammad called for maintaining the right balance between materialism and spiritualism. He taught his followers that the needs of body and soul must be satisfied but in the right balance and in lawful ways.



He encouraged people to take religion as a motivator for a better way of life which adds value to their bodies and souls.

Muhammad condemned extremism: He called for a balanced way of life, balanced views and rational thinking. It is narrated that three people came to his house to ask about his style of worship. Muhammad wasn't at home and his wife talked to them. However, they found his level of worship less than what they expected.



They thought that a religious way of life requires focusing on spiritualities and ignoring some of the body needs or depriving it from natural desires.



According to their understanding, a religious person needs to stay single and must not get married. Also, he or she needs to fast every day and perform every night extra prayers besides the daily prayers.

When Muhammad knew what they said, he was upset but he stated that he usually performed extra prayers at night and rested like other people. In addition to the annual fasting in the month of Ramadan, he fasted for some time and he did not fast for other times. Finally, he got married and did not like people to stay single. He said:



"This is my Sunnah (the way of life that God likes). Whoever does not accept it, he / she is not one of us". (Bukhaari, 1184) and (Muslim, 849)

Muhammad does not like difficulty: It is narrated that whenever Muhammad had to decide on a matter or an issue where more than one option or alternative was given, he always avoided hardship and chose the least complicated one provided that it fulfilled the required goals and did not involve unlawful acts.

(Sahih Al-Bukhari, 8/160, 6786. Sahih Muslim, 7/80, 2327)



Courtesy of Calligrapher
Wissam Shawkat



Purification and cleanliness

Cleanliness and personal hygiene are essential requirements in the Islamic faith.

"...Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves (physically and spiritually)".

The Quran, 2:222

"And your clothing purify."

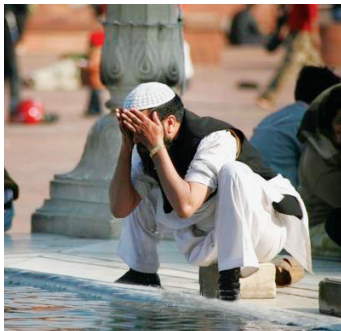
The Quran, 74:4

**Ablution
Every day**

Performing ablution before praying is an essential requirement for prayers. It includes washing the hands, face, forearms up to the elbows, wiping the head and washing the feet.

Ghusul, complete body wash

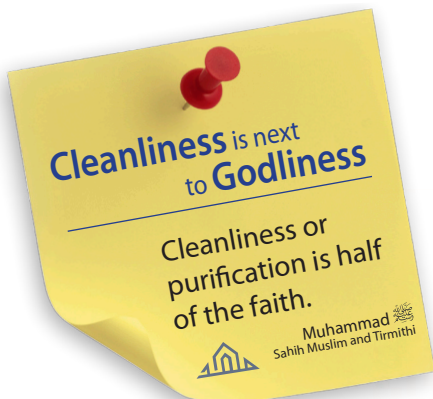
Performing "Ghusul" (washing the whole body) on a regular basis is strongly recommended and is considered as part of Muhammad's Sunnah (teachings and way of life). However, Ghusul is a must for purity on certain occasions (e.g. after marital contact and menstruation).



Muhammad emphasized cleanliness and purification in all aspects of life. He asked his companions to clean their homes and surroundings regularly. He taught them that removing harm or garbage from the road is a rewardable charity act.

Also, Muhammad urged his companions to maintain high personal hygiene and cleanliness. His sayings in this context indicate the following:

- Dress in clean and tidy clothes but do not be prodigal
- Use perfumes (Teeb) to smell good
- Trim your nails, remove pubic and armpit hair
- Wash hands before and after eating. Do not touch food after waking up until hands are washed.



Miswak and dental care. Clean mouth and good breath during the whole day

Muhammad said: "If it did not trouble you, I would ask you to brush your teeth with miswak before each prayer." (i.e. five times a day) (Narrated by Bukhari & Muslim)



What is miswak ?

Miswak is a common name for *Salvadora persica* (tooth brush tree, also known as the Arak tree). It is popularly used in Saudi Arabia. Miswak wicks clean between the teeth and do not break under pressure, rather they are flexible and strong.

The chemical analysis of Miswak shows that it contains many useful minerals and elements such as fluorides in large amounts, silica, vitamin C and small quantities of chlorides, tannins, saponins, flavenoids and sterols.

Note: According to analytical research, Miswak helps fight plaques, recession and bleeding of gums. The Miswak stick releases fresh sap and silica (hard glossy material) which acts as an abrasive material to remove stains. Miswak can clean teeth gently and effectively, whitens the teeth without harming enamel or gum.

The chloride content helps remove the plaque and tartar stains and vitamin C contributes to the healing and repair of the tissues. It is believed that Miswak extract relieves headache, common cold, nausea, tensions, and dizziness.



Seek knowledge

Muhammad brought a Message of light and guidance that encouraged scientific advancement and the development in civilization. It commenced from a divine revelation that had begun with the word "**Read**". Within decades, it revolutionized knowledge and all types of sciences in Arabia and the whole world.

The words: read, think, learn, observe, explore, understand, ponder, contemplate, see and reflect are frequently mentioned in the Quran.

read

think

learn

observe

explore

reflect

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alteration of the night and the daylight are signs (of God's creative power) for those of understanding and discretion.

The ones who remember Allah (the Lord of all beings) with reverence while standing and while sitting and while lying on their sides. And who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, and say:

Our Lord! You have not created all this in vain, exalted are You, then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Quran, 3:190-191

And in the earth, there are wondrous (incredible) signs (indicating the presence of God) and in yourselves (there are similar signs), can you not then see?

The Quran, 51:20-21

Muhammad added value to peoples' lives by encouraging them to learn and seek useful knowledge. He urged his companions to utilize knowledge for the wellbeing of humanity and not to cause mischief on the earth. He linked that to God's pleasure when he said:



"That who follows a way for acquiring knowledge, God facilitates a way for him to Paradise"

(Sahih Muslim, 8/71, 2699)

For many centuries, Muslim scientists were the frontiers in pure and applied sciences. Arabic, the language of the Quran, became the language of sciences that were taught in full-fledged universities granting degrees in chemistry, mathematics, calculus, medicine, astronomy, geography, engineering, art and literature.

Some researchers acknowledge the truth that the western civilization relied primarily on the Islamic civilization. Without it, the western civilization would need at least 500 years to accomplish what it has already achieved.

Scientist	Major Contributions
<p>Geber</p> <p>Father of Chemistry</p> <p>721-815 CE</p>	<p>Jaber Ibn Hayyan was a prominent polymath: a chemist, astronomer, astrologer, engineer, geologist, philosopher, physicist, and pharmacist and physician. He is considered by many scientists to be the father of chemistry.</p> <p>He was the first to discover many acids such as nitric, hydrochloric and sulfuric acids. He described many chemical processes such as evaporation, sublimation and distillation. The historian of chemistry Eric John Holmyard gives credit to Geber for developing alchemy into an experimental science.</p>
<p>Algoritmi</p> <p>Father of Algorithms</p> <p>780-850 CE</p>	<p>Mohammad Ibn Musa Al-Khwarizmi was one of the greatest scientists of his time. He was a mathematician, an astronomer and a geographer. He introduced the decimal positional number system to the world.</p> <p>He made a great contribution to Mathematics when he developed Algebra (derived from the word Al-Jabr) and "algorithms" which were named after him. His name is the origin of the word guarismo in Spanish and the word algorismo in Portuguese, both meaning digit.</p>
<p>Rhases (Rasis)</p> <p>Father of Physicians</p> <p>865-929 CE</p>	<p>Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Zakariya Al-Razi. He was considered by many scientists as the father of physicians. He was the first to differentiate smallpox from measles.</p> <p>He discovered numerous compounds and chemicals including alcohol and kerosene. Edward Granville Browne considers him as the most original of all the physicians.</p> <p>He wrote many important books which were translated to different languages including English such as "Al-Hawi" medical Encyclopedia, The Big Pharmacology, Kidney and Bladder Stones and The Book of Experiences.</p>

<p>Avicenna Father of Modern Medicine</p> <p>980-1037 CE</p>	<p>Abu Ali Al-Hussein Ibn Sina is one of the most eminent Muslim scholars in medicine and one of the most famous Muslim scientists in the world. He was a polymath and the author of almost 200 books on science, religion and philosophy.</p> <p>Avicenna's two most important works are: Shifa (The Book of Healing) which is a philosophical encyclopedia based on Aristotelian tradition and Al Qanun Fi-Tibb (The Canon of Medicine).</p> <p>The Canon is a 14-volume book, which classifies and describes diseases, and outlines their assumed causes. It was translated to different languages and was a standard medical text in Europe for seven centuries (until early 18th century).</p>
<p>Al Jazari</p> <p>1136-1206 CE</p>	<p>Abul-Iz Bin Ismael Al-Jazari. He is best known for writing the "Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices" where he described fifty mechanical devices along with instructions on how to construct them.</p> <p>Al-Jazari is also known as the inventor of the largest astronomical "castle clock", which is considered to be the first programmable analog computer.</p> <p>According to Donald Routledge Hill, Al-Jazari described the most sophisticated candle clocks. He also invented the water clock and the crank shaft that transforms rotary motion into linear motion.</p>



Avicenna

Latin Figures:

I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X

Arabic numbers :

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Personal development through sport

Muhammad used to encourage his companions to maintain healthy bodies and learn different types of sports such as swimming, archery, horse riding and horse racing (horsemanship).

In addition, he participated in several running competitions with his companions, a sport that brings happiness and excitement. It is narrated that Muhammad used to do running races with his wife Aisha. She won the race once and he won the race on another occasion. This activity reflected the mutual love, harmony and fun Muhammad had with his wife. (Abu-Dawoud, 2/334, 2578. Ibn-Majeh, 3/149, 1979)




Muhammad allocated an area to be a racing field in the western side of the Nabawi Mosque in Madinah. Horse racing used to be conducted in the same field as well. A mosque was built next to the racing field and it was called the Sabaq Mosque (i.e. the mosque of the racing field).



Social Values

Muhammad encouraged people to love each other



Muhammad said: "I swear by God that you will not be true believers in Him unless you love each other. I will tell you something, if you do it you will love each other. Greet each other frequently and make it a common habit."

(Narrated by Muslim 54)

And he said: "No one will become a good believer unless he wishes for his brethren what he likes for himself." (Narrated by Muslim 2699)

He also said: "Whoever helps a believer overcome a difficulty, God will help him overcome a difficulty on the Day of Judgment, and God will always help an individual as long as he/she is helping others." ¹ (Narrated by Muslim)



Meeting others with a bright smiling face is an act of charity.

Muhammad (pbuh)

Greeting people is a message of peace: Muhammad said: "Don't ever underestimate any kind act, even if you meet others with a bright (smiling) face." ² And he said: "The one who greets others first is closer to God than the others." ³ On another occasion he said to someone who asked him about a good way to deal with people: "Offer people food and greet whom you know and whom you don't know." ⁴

(Narrated by Muslim 2626)



Muhammad used to greet people warmly: According to authentic narrations, Muhammad used to meet people with a bright face and when he shook hands with others, he never released his hand before the other person.

Muhammad had a high sense of humour: He was a very cheerful and optimistic person. People who dealt with him described him as a likable person and at the same time he was venerated and respected. On several occasions he joked with his friends and family members.



During Muhammad's time, racing (as running) was a common activity to have fun. It was narrated that Muhammad was seen several times racing with his wife.

High sense of humor with an old woman: It was narrated that an old woman asked him to pray for her so that she would enter God's paradise. Muhammad replied in a non serious way: "There are no old women in the God's Paradise." She misunderstood what he said and got confused. But soon he elaborated: "You will be young when you enter the Paradise" (and all people will be). 😊



High sense of humour with his friends: One time, Muhammad saw a sore-eyed person named Suhayb (who was a Roman Muslim), looking miserable and was eating a ripe date. Muhammad wanted to joke with him in order to cheer him up so he said to him: "How come you eat the date and your left eye is sore?" Suhayb realised that



Muhammad was joking with him so he replied: "Don't worry I am eating it on the right side of my mouth (the side where the right eye was sound)." (Al-Hakim, 4/411, 8357. Ibn-Majeh 4/500, 3443)

Anas Bin Malek narrated that a man came to Muhammad and asked him to give him a ride on a camel. Muhammad said: "I will give you a ride on the child of the she camel". The man replied: "What am I going to do with the camel's child?" Then Muhammad said: "Are not all camels the children of she camels?"⁵



Muhammad cared for and loved children Muhammad paid attention to children. He used to greet them and play with them. One time Muhammad saw a little boy who was sad because his little bird died. Although Muhammad was heading elsewhere, he spent some time with the little boy to please him and relieve his sadness.⁶ (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 8/30, 6129. Muslim 6/176, 2150)

Muhammad used to ask parents to express their love to their children by kissing and hugging them and being fair with all their children.



Muhammad described a father who never kissed his child as lacking mercy in his heart.

Muhammad loved his neighbors: Muhammad had a Jewish neighbor who did not accept Islam and was not kind to him. When the Jewish neighbor became sick, Muhammad visited him at his home, which softened his neighbor's heart. Also, Muhammad visited a Jewish boy at his home when he became sick because the boy had worked for some time as a helper or a servant for Muhammad. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 2/94, 1356)

Be Kind to Your
Neighbours

Muhammad emphasized kindness to neighbors: Muhammad told his companions that Archangel Gabriel frequently asked him to treat his neighbors well.⁷ Muhammad stated that whoever believes in God and the Day of Judgment should be kind to his / her neighbors. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 8/10, 6015)

On one occasion he said to a companion called Abu-Tharr: "If you cook soup, cook it with more water (i.e. increase its quantity) so that it becomes enough to give some to your neighbors." (Sahih Muslim, 8/37, 2625)

Muhammad abolished bad social manners: He stated on several occasions that the people of good morals would be the closest to him on the Day of Judgment and the most beloved by him. Also he stated:

"Don't hate each other and don't envy each other and be brothers."⁸

"A believer in God does not curse or swear or use bad language."⁹

No derision or defamation:

Muhammad recited the following verses from the Quran:
(considered by Muslims as God's Words not Muhammad's own words).

"O believers, don't disdain (or ridicule or deride) each other neither men deride men nor women deride women, the latter could be better than the former.

"Don't defame one another and don't insult one another and whoever does so and does not repent to Allah he or she is indeed a wrongdoer."

The Quran, 49:11

No ill opinion, evil suspicion, spying and backbiting:

"O believers, avoid much suspicion, for some suspicion is a grave (serious) sin and don't spy on one another, nor backbite against one another.

Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it. So fear Allah (God), He is the Most Forgiving the Most Merciful."

The Quran, 49:12

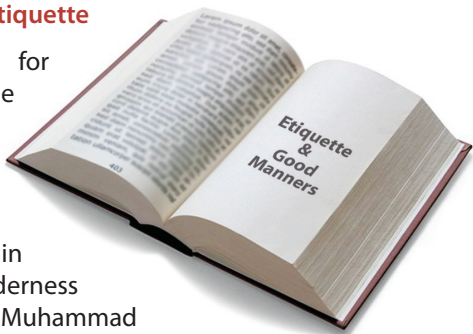
Don't pass wrong news:

"O believers, if a transgressor brings you some news (that may require taking action then verify it carefully before you believe him or her and act upon it, so you don't harm people in ignorance and then become regretful for what you have done."

The Quran, 49:6

Adding value through etiquette

Muhammad cared for behavioral etiquette. He taught his companions that etiquette is part of his example and way of life (Sunnah). In addition, many verses in the Quran urge on tenderness and good manners. Muhammad indicated that Angels get upset by what upsets human beings (e.g. loud voices, bad smells, etc.)



The following points summarize some of the Islamic behavioral etiquettes:

- Do not talk loudly and do not walk arrogantly.
- Do not stay long when visiting a sick person, give him or her time to rest.
- One should smell good when he/she comes to the mosque.
- Those who ate garlic or onion should not come to the mosque, so as not to disturb the others by any unfavorable smell or act (e.g. burping).
- Be helpful and give space to others in congregation areas where finding a free space is difficult.
- Call others with the names and nicknames they like.

- Put your hand on your mouth when yawning and bless others when they sneeze.
- When talking to others, one should use the best and the most acceptable words to them so as they like it. The good word is a form of charity in Islam.
- Talk kindly to your parents and don't shout at their faces, never say a bad word even "**uff or fie**" (the smallest negative word in Arabic).
- Children should always knock on the door and seek permission to enter, before going into their parents' room at certain times during the day.
- If you are serving water to others, you are the last one to drink (a preferred etiquette).
- If you are invited for a dinner or a banquet, eat from the closer pots to you and don't annoy the others.
- Don't breath in a cup of water while drinking from it.

Etiquette with Women

Lower your gaze, don't stare at women or at passing people.

Muhammad was seen bending his knees for his wife Safiya to help her climb first on the camel by stepping on his thigh.

(Narrated by Anas bin Malek – Bukhari - 9/20)

Muhammad used to respect others' views

Whenever he gave instructions to his followers that were understood or perceived in two different ways, he used to accept both ways provided that both of them achieve the required goal in a lawful manner.

In the battle of "That Al-Salassel", the Muslim Commander Amr Bin Al-Aass was criticized for leading a prayer without performing ghusul and ablution (he was in a state of spiritual impurity). Muhammad listened to his justification and accepted it. Amr told Muhammad that it was cold that night and if he showered his body, he could fall sick and could not lead his group. (Al-Hakim, 1/177, 634. Abu-Dawoud 1/132, 334)

**Muhammad Was
Realistic and Easy
to Deal With**

Anas Bin Malik said that he served Muhammad for ten years and he was never asked by Muhammad "why did you do this and why didn't you do that". (Al-Tirmidhi, 3351)

Muhammad encouraged consultancy and democracy (Shura): Muhammad always consulted his companions and even his wife. He advised his followers to be objective and use rational thinking. He empowered them and involved them in the decision making process.



When the Meccan chiefs, along with other Arab tribes, planned to attack Madinah, a Persian Muslim put forward a proposal to dig a trench on the northern side of Madinah.



Although that was a foreign concept never applied before in Arabia and it was put forward by an ordinary person, Muhammad considered it seriously and it was approved by the majority of Muslims. They dug a trench 5.5 km long x 4.6 m wide.



On another occasion, (battle of Badr) a commoner (an ordinary person) told Muhammad:

"O Prophet, if your choice to camp in this area is not inspired by a revelation from God, can I suggest we move to another area?"

The person put forward the reasons for his suggestion and after consultations, Muhammad welcomed the proposal likewise his companions; they moved to the other area.



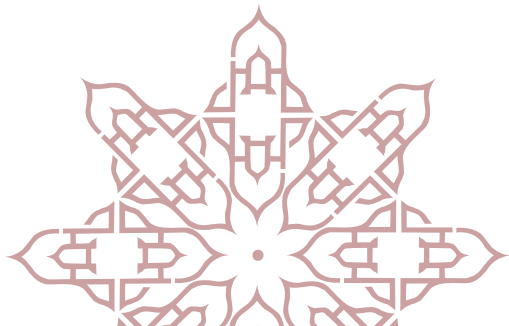
The word Muhammad in Arabic being designed in an artistic way. Courtesy of Artist Farid Al-Ali.

Respect people of other faiths: Muhammad encouraged his companions to be friendly and transparent with people of other faiths while maintaining an assertive personality and clear understanding about their Islamic faith.

Muhammad demonstrated how highly he respected people regardless of their faith in several occasions. It is narrated that he stood up showing respect for a funeral carrying a coffin of a Jewish man that passed him and his companions. Muhammad answered a companion who wondered why Muhammad stood up for the carried body: "He is a human being" (regardless of his race, faith and social class).

Interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence with people of other faiths: Interfaith dialogue can be defined as a two way communication or discussion between people of different religious faiths and traditions in order to reach positive outcomes such as moving from suspicion and confusion to understanding and awareness or from hostility to friendliness.

Interfaith
Dialogue



In the year 632 CE, Muhammad received and hosted at his mosque in the city of "Madinah" a Christian delegation who came from Najran (in Yemen) to learn about Islam and discuss the differences between Islam and Christianity.

Dialogue
with a
Christian
Delegation

Muhammad set guidelines and etiquettes for dialogue and debate with others, based on respect, wisdom, mutual understanding and kindness. The Quran states:

"Call (invite people) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and with "good admonition". And reason (debate) with them in the best manner. Your Lord Knows best who strayed from His Path and who received (able to receive) guidance."

The Quran, 16:125

"And do not debate with the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) except with the best manner unless those of them who were aggressors (unjust or exceeded just limits). Say (to them): we believe in what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to you; our God and your God is One, and to Him we are submitting." The Quran, 29:46



Arabic calligraphy: " The best of people are those who benefit others".

Courtesy of Hasan Çelebi.



Omar Mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem

Religious
Tolerance

In the old city of Jerusalem, a great example of religious tolerance has been existing for many centuries. It started when the second Muslim ruler of the Islamic state Caliph Omar Bin Al-Khattab took over Jerusalem (638 CE) peacefully without shedding a drop of blood.

Omar was invited by the Archbishop of Jerusalem, Sophronius, to pray in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The Church is also known as the Church of the Resurrection (Anastasis to Eastern Orthodox





Christians). It is the holiest Christian site in the world. It encompasses Calvary where the Christians believe Jesus was crucified, and the tomb (sepulcher) where he was buried. It has been an important pilgrimage destination since the 4th century, C.E.

In a remarkable gesture, Omar refused to pray in the Church, saying: **"If I had prayed in the church, it would have been taken by Muslims as a mosque"**.

Omar instead prayed a few yards outside the church. His act confirmed the peaceful coexistence between Islam and other religions. It confirmed freedom of worship for non Muslims under the Islamic state.





A mosque was built on that site where Omar prayed to commemorate this historical event (later, it was called Omar Mosque).

Caliph Omar entrusted the custody of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, to 'Ubadah Ibn Al-Samit, a companion of prophet Muhammad who became the first Muslim judge of Jerusalem. Ubadah died in the year 658CE and was buried in the "Gate of Mercy" cemetery at the southern corner of the wall enclosing the Noble Sanctuary. The Sanctuary includes the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque.



The Covenant of Omar

Omar granted the people of Jerusalem a covenant of peace and protection which came to be known the "Covenant of Omar". It has been mounted at the wall of the mosque for many centuries and even until now.



The Covenant of Omar

In the Name of (God) Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

This is an assurance of peace and protection given by the servant of Allah Omar to the people of Ilia' (Jerusalem). He gave them an assurance of protection for their lives, property, churches as well as the sick and healthy and all its religious community.

Their churches shall not be occupied, demolished nor taken away wholly or in part. They shall neither be coerced in their religion nor shall any of them be injured. The people of Ilia shall pay tax (Jizya) as inhabitants of cities do (and as Muslims do pay a similar tax "zakat").

Trade and Business Ethics

Muhammad encouraged trade and commerce based on noble Islamic values that denounce cheating, unethical dealings, deception, fraud, monopoly and exploitation.

Muhammad said: "Whoever cheats is **not** one amongst us" (i.e. among the righteous believers). Narrated by Muslim. Also he said: "God bestows His mercy on a person who is tolerant when he buys, tolerant when he sells and tolerant when he asks for his rights." (*Applicable for males and females - Bukhari, 2076/16*)

Lying or breaking a promise is hypocrisy

Muhammad said:



"Whoever has the following four (characteristics) will be a hypocrite and whoever has one of them will have one characteristic of hypocrisy until he gives it up:

- ❶ Whenever he is entrusted, he betrays;
- ❷ Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie;
- ❸ Whenever he makes a covenant, he proves treacherous;
- ❹ Whenever he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent, evil and insulting manner."

Soon after he arrived in Madinah, Muhammad instructed his companions to buy a piece of land and dedicate it for free trade. People used to buy and sell in it without paying any fees or custom charges. They called it Manakha.

Free
Trade
Zone

Values & Morals



Manakha means the place where camels are seated on the ground in order to off load goods carried on their backs (for trade purposes).

The following picture shows the wall surrounding the land that prophet Muhammad allocated for free trade 14 centuries ago.



Fence of Manakha, present time

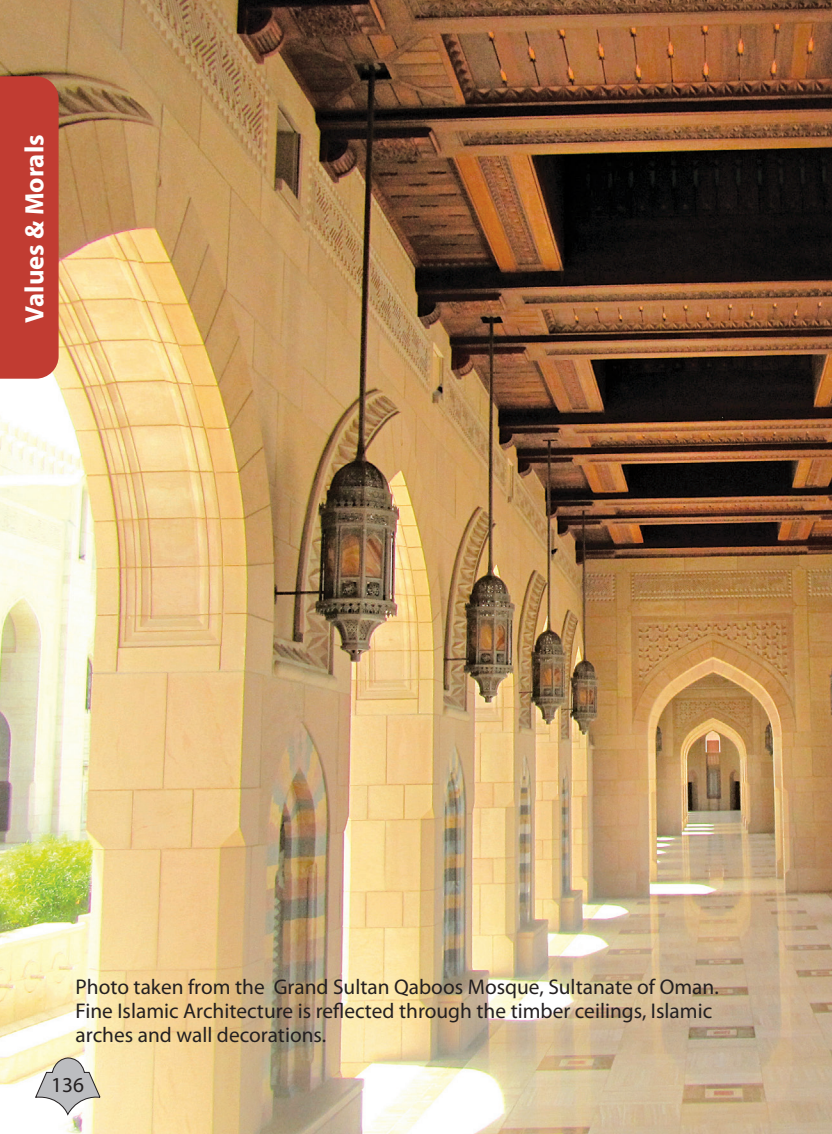


Photo taken from the Grand Sultan Qaboos Mosque, Sultanate of Oman. Fine Islamic Architecture is reflected through the timber ceilings, Islamic arches and wall decorations.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Riyadh Al-Salihin (183/3), (245/2), Sahih Al-Bukhari (13).
- 2 Riyadh Al-Salihin (121/5).
- 3 Riyadh Al-Salihin (858/2).
- 4 Sahih Al-Bukhari (11).
- 5 Sahih Al Albani, Abu Dawood, Emam Ahmed and Trimithi.
- 6 Riyadh Al-Salihin (862/1), Bukhari (598/10).
- 7 In another narration, Prophet Muhammad said: "Gabriel continued to advise me to treat the neighbor well until I thought a man would make his neighbor his heir."
- 8 Riyadh Al-Salihin (1591/1), Sahih Al-Bukhari (6065).
- 9 Riyadh Al-Salihin (1734/1) (1738/3).



The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem. Photos taken by professional photographer Peter Sanders

Chapter

6

Women



Blue Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey

Women Rights


Before the advent of Islam, women had no civil rights. Arabs used to give preference to male babies over female ones to the extent that many fathers used to bury their female babies or children alive.

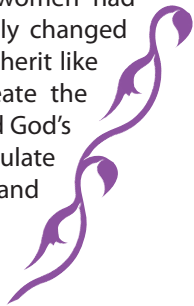
No gender discrimination: Muhammad condemned discrimination between male and female children and taught his companions to love their children and raise them properly regardless of their sex. In fact, he emphasized giving more care and attention to female children until they grow up and get married. Muhammad said:

"Women are the twin halves of men." (Tirmithi, 1/154, 113)

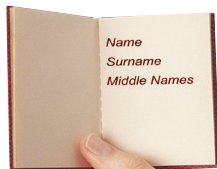
Women inherit like men: Before Islam, women had no right to inherit. Muhammad successfully changed this custom. Females gained the right to inherit like males. However, Muhammad did not create the Islamic inheritance system, but he conveyed God's Words (preserved in the Quran) which stipulate the portions for each individual (male and female) eligible to inherit.



The word "Muhammad" in Arabic calligraphy being designed in an artistic and symmetrical way. The actual word looks like this . Letters M and H which form the first half of the word "Muhammad" are symmetrical with letters M and D which form the second half of the word "Muhammad" in Arabic.



Women have a unique identity: A wife is not considered part of her husband's belongings. She has a unique identity. When a woman gets married, she does not need to change her surname. Her identity is preserved and her wealth and property are protected by the Islamic law. When her husband passes away, she is considered as one of the heirs and not a property that is inherited by male heirs as it had been before Islam. (Note: Before Islam, women were treated as chattel).



A woman is not a sex tool: Prostitution and adultery are strictly forbidden in Islam. Muhammad indicated: When a person commits fornication or adultery then he/she is not in a state of "Eaman" (faithfulness) (i.e. faith in God has not yet established strongly in his/her heart, therefore the person does not feel guilty or fear God when fornication is committed).

"And don't approach (come near unto) fornication (unlawful premarital or extramarital sex), Lo! It is an abomination and an evil way".

The Quran, 17:32



This calligraphy means: "The peak of wisdom is the fear of God". Courtesy of calligrapher Ismail Hakki.

Hijab and modesty in Islam: Wearing the headscarf and modest clothing is an obligation on adult women. In addition, Islamic teachings forbid women from using their bodies or femininity for public entertainment and sexual temptation.



Businesses, commercials and advertisements that rely on exposing women's bodies for temptation and sexual attraction are not allowed in Islam.

Islamic teachings block out the means that could lead to sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape crimes, sexual diseases, and other abominations such as nudity and pornography.

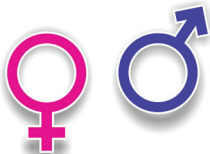


Get married!

Muhammad encouraged people to get married and establish a family life. He taught his followers noble Islamic values which ban illegal sexual relations other than a normal marital relationship between a man and a woman. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 3/26, 1905)



A young man asked Muhammad to give him permission to fornicate (have non-marital sex with a girlfriend or a prostitute), Muhammad replied: "Do you accept this for your mother?" The man answered: "No." Muhammad said: "Likewise people don't like it for their mothers."



Then he asked the young man the same question three more times: "Do you like it for your daughter, sister, aunt?" Every time the man replied no and Muhammad repeated the same statement: "Likewise, people don't like it for their daughters, sisters and aunts".

Then Muhammad put his hand on the man's heart and supplicated to God: "Oh my Lord: forgive his sin, purify his heart and grant him chastity". (Munsad Ahmad, 10/5220, 22641)



Muhammad empowered women

Within his endeavors to empower women's roles in the society, Muhammad allocated certain days of every week for women education.

He urged them to participate in Islamic events, feasts and prayers. Even housemaids could meet Muhammad, talk to him and seek his help or advice.

He also asked women to do a formal pledge (as men did) since they were responsible to the Islamic law.

Women play a crucial role in society as they nurture and raise the next generation who will form the nation. Muslim women were empowered to take an active role in the society without overlapping men's role.

Although priority was always given to the task of raising children and caring for their wellbeing, women used to work and participate in the social and political life.



Muhammad encouraged caring for girls/daughters

Muhammad emphasized on several occasions the good treatment of females and he described them as delicate and "as fragile as glass". He told his companions that whoever raises his daughters properly and obeys God in caring for them and guiding them to faith, he will gain Paradise.¹

Muhammad encouraged full respect of mothers

A man asked Muhammad: "Who would deserve my closest support and companionship?" Muhammad replied: "Your mother". Then the man asked Muhammad who would be after her. Muhammad replied: "Your mother".



The man asked the same question again and Muhammad replied for the third time: "Your mother". Then out of curiosity the man asked the same question for the fourth time (he realised that Muhammad wanted to emphasise the best treatment of mothers). Then Muhammad said to him: "Your father" (i.e. your father deserves your closest support and company after your mother)². (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 2/8, 5971. Muslim, 8/2, 2548)

Scholars commented on the above story that mothers cannot escape three main sufferings: (1) pregnancy, (2) labor and delivery, (3) breastfeeding and weaning.

Muhammad encouraged good treatment of wives : He stated that if a man disliked one of a woman's traits he will be pleased with another. And he said:



The believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best character; and the best of the believers are those who are best to their wives. (Tirmithi, 6/188, 3895)

This promotes love, harmony and mutual understanding.

Divorce in Islam

Divorce is permitted in Islam but it should be the last option after exhausting honest attempts to save the marriage. Should divorce become unavoidable, separation should be on good terms and with kindness.³



When women are divorced and they have reached their set time (a waiting time set to review the decision of divorce), then either you keep them in all decency or release them in all decency (fair manner).

Do not hold on to them with intent to harm them and commit aggression: anyone who does this wrongs himself. The Quran, 2:231

Muhammad loved his wife: A few years after his first wife Khadijah passed away, Muhammad got married to Aisha, the daughter of his closest friend Abu-Bakr. Despite his loyalty to his late wife, he loved Aisha and was honest to her. He was asked once by Amr bin Al-Aas (a companion): "Who is the most beloved person to you?" Muhammad replied without hesitation: Aisha. (Al-Bukhari, 5/5, 3662)



Confirm your love to your wife: Aisha narrated that Muhammad described his love to her like a knot firmly tied on a rope. Aisha used to ask Muhammad from time to time "how is the knot" and Muhammad used to confirm his love to her. He said: "The knot is still tied as firmly as it used to be."

Muhammad demonstrated exemplary loyalty to his late wife Khadijah

Muhammad used to ask Aisha to send a serving of food to the friends of his late wife Khadijah every time Aisha cooked a sheep or an ewe.

Muhammad mentioned to Aisha that no one was better than Khadijah at her time, she believed him when he first received God's revelation but many people did not (*some of his uncles and relatives did not believe him*). She consoled him with her money and supported him without hesitation.

Despite the fact that some people may view Muhammad's comments about his late wife Khadijah as it was triggering jealousy in his current wife Aisha, he was a fair and a loyal husband to his wives.

Be
a Loyal
Husband



This is the word "Muhammad" in Arabic being designed in a formative style which looks like a flower. Courtesy of Artist Farid Al-Ali.



Muhammad and Polygamy

Muhammad did not introduce polygamy: In fact polygamy existed before Islam without any limit in number. It was very common for a man to have more than one woman either as wives or as concubines or slaves.⁴

It is known that Prophet Abraham was married to Sara, the mother of Isaac and Hagar, the mother of Ishmael. Also, it is narrated that Jacob had four women, two wives and two concubines.⁵

Muhammad lived most of his life married to one woman: He was married to Khadijah for almost 25 years and he was a father of four girls and two boys. Both of his sons died in their childhood.

Married to
One Wife
for 25 Years

After Khadijah passed away he married a poor old widow called "Sawdah". Her husband passed away after they returned from Abyssinia, the country where Muhammad sent some of his companions to seek refuge.

His marriage to Sawdah was a form of support for her. Muhammad was almost 50 years old when he married Sawdah, who was older than him.



Muhammad married the daughter of his closest companion Abu-Bakr:

A few years later, Muhammad married Aisha, the daughter of his closest friend and most supportive companion Abu-Bakr. The marriage was an honour for Abu-Bakr and Aisha.



Muhammad married the daughter of his second closest companion Omar:

Two years later, Hafsa, the daughter of his second closest companion Omar, lost her husband in the battle of Uhud and became a widow. Omar preferred that his daughter gets married to one of his trusted friends but no one proposed to her.



Then Muhammad took the initiative and proposed to her. The marriage was an honour and support for Omar and his daughter Hafsa.

Muhammad married a Muslim widow who was the daughter of his enemy:

Ramlah was known by the nickname "Um Habibah". She was the daughter of the top man in Makkah (Abu-Sufyan). Although Abu-Sufyan did not believe Muhammad and fought him for 20 years, his daughter embraced Islam.

She was one of the early Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia with her husband and lived there for almost 15 years.



Her husband converted to Christianity and passed away there. She was left alone in Abyssinia, so Muhammad proposed to Um Habibah and she accepted and got married to him. Surprisingly, one year later, her father embraced Islam.

Muhammad married Safiyya, a woman from

a Jewish tribe: Bani Al-Nadhir was one of the Jewish tribes who betrayed Muhammad and worked against him. After Muhammad besieged them in their city Khaybar, they surrendered.

Safiyya, the daughter of their leader was amongst those who were captured. Muhammad released her and proposed marriage to her. Safiyya accepted and they were married.



Muhammad proved to all people that he had nothing against the Jewish community but aggressors had to be stopped regardless of their race or faith.

On several occasions and even after Muhammad passed away, Safiyya described him as a loving and fair husband.

(Tirmithi, 6/188, 3894. Musnad Ahmad, 5/2609, 12587)



Mariya the Copt

In the same year, Muhammad sent a messenger to the ruler of Egypt who was Christian, calling him to accept the message of Islam.

The ruler of Egypt replied with a polite apology and sent Muhammad some gifts as well as a physician and a servant or concubine called Mariya (Mary). Muhammad accepted the Egyptian ruler's gifts. He married Mariya and later on she gave birth to a baby boy named Ibrahim. Ibrahim died when he was a little boy and Muhammad was very sad for losing him.⁶



Muhammad conveyed God's Command to control polygamy:

Islam didn't forbid polygamy but it restricted and regulated it. In Islam, it is not compulsory to marry more than one wife but it is permissible for genuine reasons.

A man can marry a second wife if he can demonstrate full respect, justice and impartiality to his wives. Verse 3, Chapter 4 in the Quran indicates clearly that a man cannot marry more than one woman if he cannot treat them rightly and impartially.



Also, the verse puts a limit of four wives only for unbiased and fair husbands.

Before this revelation, men used to have scores of wives with no limits or conditions.

Limits on Prophet Muhammad:

Prophet Muhammad was married to more than 4 wives before this revelation. Being wives of the "Messenger of God" was a great honour to them besides their being regarded as the mothers of believers. God revealed in the Quran that Muhammad's wives were lawful to him. However, no more women could be married to Prophet Muhammad even if he divorced any of his wives.⁷



Limits on prophet Muhammad's wives

Muslims were not allowed to marry any of the wives of Prophet Muhammad after he passed away because they were like their mothers.

Mothers of Believers

In the Quran, God described the wives of the Prophet as being unlike other women (they should be seen by other Muslims as exemplary and as the mothers of believers).

If any of the Prophet's wives committed a manifestly sinful deed, the punishment would be doubled for her. But if any of the Prophet's wives devoutly obeyed God and His Messenger and performed righteous deeds, she would receive double rewards.



Muhammad's wives had freedom of choice:

God asked Muhammad (as indicated in the Quran, chapter 33 verses 28,29) to give his wives two options, either be released (i.e. divorced) if any of them desired the world's life and its adornment, or stay married to Prophet Muhammad and devote their lives fully for the cause of Islam.

All of them chose the second option and all of them stayed married to Prophet Muhammad. After Muhammad passed away, none of them remarried.

ENDNOTES

- 1 According to other narrations prophet Muhammad indicated that whoever had one or two or three daughters and he properly looked after them (until they became independent) he would get into God's Paradise.
- 2 The Quran emphasized in many verses that a person must be good to both parents (e.g. Chapter 17, Verse 23).
- 3 See also Quran (Chapter 2, V 229 -232)
- 4 Regarding polygamy in other religions, earlier, there were no restrictions even in Hindu religion. It was only in 1954, when the Hindu Marriage Act was passed that it became illegal for a Hindu to have more than one wife. At present, it is the Indian law that restricts a Hindu man from having more than one wife and not the Hindu scriptures.
- 5 For more details about Jacob family, see Genesis 32:22-24.
- 6 Muhammad was very sad for the loss of his son to the extent that he cried in front of his companions. Being a father, he couldn't hold his tears. Muhammad told his companions that he would say only what pleases God and a believer should accept God's fate.
- 7 Please see Quran, Verses 50, 51, 52, Chapter 33, regarding the wives of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).



Human Rights

“O mankind!

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

*Verily the most honorable of you in the sight of
Allah, is the most pious.*

Verily Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware”.

The Quran, 49:13

The Inner Apartments (Al-Hujurát)



Human Rights

Freedom, Justice & Protection

"No compulsion" in Islam

Muhammad proclaimed himself as a Messenger of God. He received a Divine Message to humanity and struggled to convey it to all people but he did not force anyone to accept it. He recited the Quran which confirms the freedom of belief and freedom of choice for all people.

"And had your Lord willed, all people in the earth would have believed (all of them) together. So will you (Muhammad) compel or force people until they become believers?" The Quran, 10:99

"There is no compulsion in religion, truth (the right path) has become distinct from error (wrong path), and whoever rejects evil and believes in God has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And God is All-Hearer All-Knower." The Quran, 2:256

Morality & equality of all races: In Islam, all people are considered equal under law by reason of their being members of the human race. Piety and excellence of moral character are the only criteria for individual superiority in the eyes of God. Muhammad put it in these words:

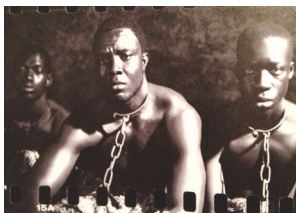


"Your Lord is One. All humankind are from Adam and Adam was created from dust. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab except by piety (piety motivates good deeds)." (Musnad Ahmad 10/5586, 23972)



Muhammad encouraged freeing slaves and introduced Islamic regulations to eliminate slavery

Slavery existed before Muhammad's time. In fact, it was part of many social systems in the world. Slaves were considered as assets and part of people's wealth. Since Islam protects peoples' wealth and property, slavery was gradually abandoned.



In the early days of Islam, abusing and mistreating a slave was considered a sin that required repentance to God by releasing the slave free.² In addition, repentance from violations of many Islamic rules required releasing slaves or buying a slave from someone and freeing him or her. This had continued until slavery was fully abolished.

Muhammad encouraged believers to release slaves for the sake of God. On one occasion, Muhammad saw a person called "Abu Mas'ud Al-Badri" hitting and lashing his slave. Muhammad said to him firmly:

"You should know that God is more able and has more power over you than your power over this slave." Abu Mas'ud cooled down and said to Muhammad in an apologetic language: "I will release him for the sake of God." Muhammad said to him: "If you don't do that, the Hellfire will touch your face."³ (Sahih Muslim, 5/91, 1659)

Protection and security of people: Addressing more than 100,000 people, Muhammad said in his last sermon:

"O people, believers are but brothers. No one may take his brother's property without his full consent. Have I delivered the Message? O Allah, my Lord, be my witness.



Never go back smiting each other's necks. Verily, I have left among you that which if you take, you will never stray after me: the Book of God and my example. Have I delivered the Message? O Allah my Lord, be my witness." (Al-

Hakim, 1/93, 317. Al-Bayhaqi, 6/96, 11640)



All people stand on equal footing before the law:

Prophet Muhammad introduced and taught people Sharia Law, i.e. God's Law that regulates people's life and controls their dealings and transactions. He emphasized that all people should respect the law and the offenders must be punished regardless of their social standing. When the law is applied justly, all people enjoy justice and security.

The Prophet made clear that no one is above the law including his own relatives. For example, theft and robbery are an attack on people's properties. Offenders must be punished regardless of their race and social class.

Muhammad stated clearly that he would punish his beloved daughter Fatima if she stole from anyone.⁴



Judge with justice; the story of To'mah and a Jewish man:

On one occasion, an Arab man called To'mah Bin Ubayriq stole a metal shield which was part of a suit of armour and hid it in the house of his Jewish friend. The Jewish person was accused of stealing the metal shield but he denied the charge and accused To'mah.

As the offender was not known yet, many Arab Muslims sympathized with To'mah and tried to influence Muhammad's opinion to turn the case against the Jewish man but Islamic justice prevailed. To'mah was proved guilty and the Jewish man was proved to be innocent. In this context, a verse was revealed in the Quran asserting justice:



"Surely We have sent down to you the Book with truth so that you judge between people according to what God has shown you (taught you justice). So don't be a pleader on behalf of those who betray their trust." The Quran, 4:105

Women's rights and obligations

Muhammad reaffirmed protection of women's rights in his farewell address. He said:

"O people, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women but they also have rights over you."

"Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under God's trust and with His permission. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 6/27, 5185. Muslim, 4/178, 1468)



Protection of orphans' rights

Muhammad conveyed God's Commandments in relation to orphans. The Quran commands Muslims to protect orphan's rights and to treat them with kindness and justice.



"Indeed, those who consume the wealth (property) of the orphans unjustly are only consuming fire into their bellies. For they shall roast in Blaze (burn in Hellfire)."

The Quran, 4:10

Muhammad said:



"I and the person who looks after an orphan will be in Paradise like this, putting his index and middle fingers together."⁵

(Sahih Al-Bukhari, 7/53, 5304)

Looking
after
orphans

Deliver the trusts to those entitled to them: Muhammad was asked to lead a funeral prayer for a person, but he first asked his companions: "Did this man borrow any money or



have in his possession any trusts that belong to others?" They said: "Yes". So Muhammad asked them first to deliver the trusts to those entitled to them and then he would pray for him. Verse 58, Chapter 4 in the Quran states:

"Allah Commands you to deliver (render back) trusts (duties) to those entitled to them, and when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent what Allah exhorts (admonishes, cautions) you; surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing."

Protection of heirs' rights

According to Islamic law, when someone dies, his or her closest family members are entitled to get stipulated portions of the inheritance (wealth and property of a deceased person). Islam does not allow a person to allocate in the will more than one third of his / her wealth for charity or donation purposes. This is to protect the inheritors' rights and ensure fair distribution of the inheritance among all of them.

Muhammad visited one of his companions who recovered from an illness. The man said he owned a great wealth and he had only one daughter as an heir (inheritor). He asked Muhammad if he could leave two-thirds of his wealth as charity. Muhammad said: "No". The man asked about the half. Muhammad said: "No". The man asked about one-third? Muhammad said: "One-third (agreeing) and one-third is a lot. To leave your heir(s) wealthy is better than leaving them poor asking for help."

No usury in Islam

Muhammad said: "God has forbidden you to take usury, therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived. Your capital is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah has judged that there shall be no usury (interest)."

"Those who charge usury are in the same position as those controlled by the devil's influence. This is because they claim that usury is the same as trade. However, God permits trade, and prohibits usury." The Quran, 2:275



This is the word "Muhammad" in Arabic being designed in a formative style then repeated in an artistic way. Courtesy of Artist Farid Al-Ali.



Honor killing and bloodshed is forbidden: Muhammad abolished blood vengeance (revenge or retaliation) and vendetta (blood feud or dispute). At his farewell address he declared:



“Every right arising out of homicide (murder) in pre-Islamic days is henceforth waived and the first such right that I waive is that arising from the murder of Rabi’ah (a relative of Muhammad).” (Tirmithi, 5/167, 3087. Ibn-Majeh, 4/243, 3055)

Deliberate murder and killing by mistake: A deliberate murder is subject to retaliation in kind, the killer must be sentenced.



But, whoever kills someone by mistake and causes accidental death must pay compensation to the family of the killed person. At the time of Muhammad, the indemnity was one hundred camels. Muhammad told his people that whoever asks for more than this figure is a person of the Era of Ignorance.

Fighting In Islam: Muhammad taught his followers to be assertive with their enemies, neither submissive nor aggressive. He was inevitably involved in battle fields. Muhammad set rules and ethics of engagement with enemies in battles and dealing with prisoners of war.



He taught Muslims not to fight civilians and not to attack or kill children or women or elders. He asked them not to destroy the environment or damage trees.

He always reminded them that their involvement in battles should be on assertive ground and for the sake of God Who does not like transgressors. Verse 190, Chapter 2 of the Quran sets the basic rule for fighting enemies and aggressors. It clearly states:

DO NOT KILL

**civilians, children,
women and elders**

DO NOT DESTROY

**environment and
do not cut trees**

“And fight for the sake of Allah those who fight you and don’t transgress the limits. Verily, Allah does not like transgressors.”

Muhammad considered committing suicide a major sin

Muhammad put it in these words: “Whoever kills him / herself with a piece of metal, he/she will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment holding the same piece of metal and killing him / herself continuously in the Hellfire forever, and whoever kills him /herself with a poison, he/she will be resurrected holding the same poison and swallowing it continuously in the Hellfire



forever, and whoever kills himself / herself by throwing himself / herself from a high place such as a mountain, he or she will do the same in the Hellfire forever.”⁶

Sanctity & inviolability of human lives

Because God is the creator of life and the only controller of it, He owns every creature's life. God states in the Quran in relation to the first murder incident in the history when Cain, the son of Adam, killed his brother Abel:

“For that We decreed for the Children of Israel that whosoever murders a human-being who had not committed murder or horrendous crimes (mischief on the earth), it shall be as if he had murdered all the people, and whosoever saves the life of a human-being, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all humankind.” The Quran, 5:32



Muhammad condemned violence

Muhammad never used violence as a tool to convey God's Message or impose God's religion. Although he established an Islamic state in Madinah, he never used the small Muslim community who remained in Makkah to create trouble or assassinate his enemies. In fact, he asked his followers to respect the social order of the society they lived in.



Muhammad taught believers that whenever and wherever gentleness or kindness is used in a matter, it will add value to it and will bring good results. He also taught that roughness and indelicate behaviors will spoil every matter. Narrated by Muslim





Islamic calligraphy produced by the Turkish calligrapher Hassan Chelebi for a verse in the Quran. God says to people: "When you judge between people you judge with justice." The Quran, 4:58.



Islamic calligraphy produced by the Egyptian calligrapher Isaam Abdul Fattah for a verse in the Quran. God says to people: "And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another (at the Day of Judgement)." The Quran, 17:15.

ENDNOTES

- 1 **Nelson Mandela** (the first president of democratic South Africa) is a great example for the struggle against apartheid and discrimination among people of different races. South Africa became a country in which all people live together as one nation united in their diversity.



The Quran teachings confirm the fact that God created humankind from different nations and tribes so that they may know one another. A white man has no superiority over a non-white man except by piety (and visa versa). *"Verily the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah, is the most pious. Verily Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware."* The Quran, 49:13.

- 2 Riyadh Al-Salihin (1603/4), (1605/6)
- 3 Prophet Muhammad indicated that at the Day of Judgment, God will be the foe for those who hire workers and don't pay them their wages. Prophet Muhammad emphasized that wages must be paid for workers before their sweat dries. Wages cannot be delayed and must be paid immediately after finishing work.
- 4 For more information about Islamic law please see:
<http://www.islamreligion.com/category/110/>
<http://www.islamhouse.com>
- 5 Sahih Al-Bukhari (34/8)
- 6 Sahih Al-Bukhari (5778) and Sahih Muslim (109)



*Artistic design from the word "Muhammad" in Arabic.
Courtesy of Farid Al-Ali.*

Chapter

8

Environment



Environment Protection

Muhammad's Teachings to Preserve the Environment

He linked the preservation of the environment to the belief in one God, Who created all beings. Therefore, a believer in God cannot cause mischief to the environment because it is part of God's Kingdom. Harming the environment and wasting or polluting its resources (water, plants, animals, soil, air, marine ecosystem, etc.) is not acceptable from an Islamic point of view.



"Any Muslim who plants a seed that grows to a level, people or animals or birds can benefit or eat from it, then this act is considered as a Sadaqa"
(a charity that is rewarded by God).

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
(Bukhaari, 2320) and
(Muslim, 1188)

Natural resources are in perfect equilibrium

Muhammad taught his followers that all natural resources were created by God and were set by Him in perfect equilibrium.

*"Verily all things We created are in proportion and measure."
"... and everything with Him is in due proportion (measured)."
"...the work (creation & artistry of Allah) Who perfected all things (disposed all things in perfect order)."*

The Quran, 54:49; 13:8; 27:88

People have equal rights in natural

resources: Natural resources are the gift of God to all mankind. They should not be wasted or monopolized.

Muhammad stated that people have equal shares in water, grass (green cover) and fire (energy) (except what was legally privatized).

Add Value

Don't pollute the environment

Don't damage the environment

Don't waste/overuse natural resources

Use natural resources efficiently, consider recycling

Fauna and flora are the creation of God.
"Blessed be Allah, the best of creators"

The Qu'ran, 23:14

"No Harm" is a general rule
 Muhammad set a general rule for protecting the natural resources, preserving the environment and securing people when he said to his companions:

"You are not to harm or to be harmed."

"Faith (in God) can be branched into more than 70 parts topped by testifying the oneness of God. The last part is removing harm from people's way."

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
 (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 1/11, 9)



This is the word "Muhammad" written in a formative style of Arabic calligraphy. It looks like green leaves from a tree.

Muhammad emphasized water rationing and condemned wasting and overspending

Muhammad stated clearly to a companion (who was performing ablution) not to waste water even if he were close to a running river.

On another occasion Muhammad told his companions not to pollute stagnant water or urinate in it. God said in the Quran:



"...Out of water, We made every living creature."



"Verily the spendthrifts (wasteful people) are the brothers of devils and the Satan has ever been ungrateful to his Lord."

"...Eat and drink with no extravagance. Certainly He does not like the prodigals (those who waste and overspend)."

The Quran, 21:30; 17:27; 7:31

Add value to the environment: Muhammad encouraged people to continuously add value to the environment even if the whole universe were collapsing and life were ending on this planet. He said:



"If the Hour came (i.e. the end of the life on the earth) and someone had a seedling in his hand and he were able to plant it, then let him do it." (Musnad Ahmad, 5/2727, 13100)

Believers in God are required to add value to the environment and protect it. God does not like those who cause mischief (on the earth) and destroy the crops and cattle.

**Add
Value**

"And seek the dwelling of the Hereafter and don't forget your portion of lawful enjoyment in this world and do good as Allah has been good to you and seek no mischief in the land, Verily Allah does not like those who cause mischief." The Quran, 28:77

Animal Welfare

Muhammad called for the ethical treatment of animals:

The Prophet was against detaining or confining or restraining animals for no genuine reason. Also, he didn't like lashing animals or hitting them. He used different teaching styles to emphasize the spiritual call to treat animals with care and dignity.

Animals and all creatures form part of a greater community of life on Earth:

"There is not an animal or creature that lives and moves on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but they are communities like you. We have not neglected anything in the Book and they [all creation] shall be gathered to their Lord in the end." Quran, 6:38



Halal Meat

Halal means more than halal food:

Halal is most commonly used to define permissible foods, but the term is much broader. *Halal* means “permissible” foods or actions, and is the opposite of *haram*, unlawful acts. Muhammad taught that Muslims have no right to kill any animal unless permitted by God. It is only with God’s permission (to whom all creatures belong) that certain types of animals can be slaughtered for human consumption. Only herbivorous animals can be slaughtered to be eaten (e.g. cows, sheep, chicken and birds that eat no flesh).

Please note that pigs are omnivorous animals that feed on plants and animals. Eating ham or pork is forbidden in Islam and Judaism.

Muhammad taught his followers that lawful killing of animals should be done in the least painful manner:

For example, the animal cannot be killed by a blunt blade (it must be sharp). An animal must not be hit by a stone or slaughtered next to another animal watching the slaughtering process. Muhammad said to a person who was slaughtering an animal beside another one: **“Do you want to kill the other animal twice?”** (Al-Hakim,

4/231, 7658)





Ethical Treatment of Animals

On one occasion, Muhammad wanted to pass a message to a person regarding good treatment of animals. He told him that his camel “complained” to him because it was loaded with more than it could bear. (Abu-Dawoud, 2/328, 2549)



On another occasion, Muhammad said to his companions: “Whoever captured the babies of this bird should return them back to their mother (which was running like a headless chick). (Abu-Dawoud, 3/8, 2675, 4/539, 5268)



You will be rewarded for being kind to animals: A kind act, even to animals, deserves to be rewarded by God. Muhammad once told his companions the story of a thirsty man who found a well of water and went down to drink. When he went up, he found a thirsty dog gasping in thirst, so the man went down in the well again to fill his shoe with water and brought it up to the dog. God was thankful for this man's compassion and forgave his past sins. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 3/132, 2466. Muslim, 7/44, 2244)

On another occasion Muhammad told his companions that God had punished a woman because she imprisoned and confined a cat until it died. She neither fed the cat nor let it go. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 3071)



The Miracle



*"And it was not possible for this Quran
to be produced by other than Allah, but
it is a confirmation of the revelation
made before it
and a detailed explanation of
the Book (former scripture),
without a doubt it is (a revelation) from
the Lord of the worlds
(entire Universe)."*

The Quran, 10:37



God's Miracle to Muhammad

Many scholars believe that Muhammad's mission to convey God's Message and bring people to monotheism was harder than the mission of many messengers and prophets before him. The main miracle he brought was the Quran, which was a book recited in original Arabic as a divine revelation from God.

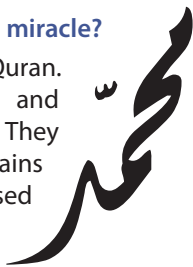


Despite the resistance he received from his own people who spoke Arabic, he and his companions conveyed Islam to nations and communities of different languages, cultures and religions outside the Arabian Peninsula.

"Will they not ponder on the Quran? If it had been from other than Allah they would have found therein much incongruity (inconsistency)." The Quran, 4:82

Why is the Quran considered an eternal miracle?

There is no human author for the Quran. Muslims consider it as God's Words and His eternal Message to all humankind. They believe that it is the only book that contains the Words of God without being rephrased by His Messenger or anyone else.



Unlike physical miracles that were brought by true prophets and messengers and seen only by the people who lived at their times, the Quran is considered by Muslims as an eternal miracle that can be touched, seen, read and conveyed from one generation to another.



"Say (O'Muhammad): "If the whole humanity and Jinni were to gather together to produce the like of this Quran they could not produce the like thereof even if they backed up each other with help and support."

The Quran, 17:88

Incomparable preservation of the Quran text: The present Quran is identical to the one revealed to Prophet Muhammad more than fourteen centuries ago. Initially, it was memorized by most pious Muslims (word by word and letter by letter).

Then, soon after the passing away of Muhammad, the complete Quran was first compiled in one book when Abu Bakr As-Siddiq became the first caliph in Islam. Several genuine copies were generated and distributed to different Islamic states or regions when Othman Bin Affan became the third caliph 13 years after the passing away of Prophet Muhammad.



This is part of a verse in the Quran. God says to His people: "Call Me and I will answer you." V 60, Ch 40 (The Forgiver)



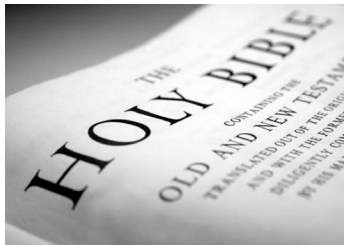
The concept of recurrence “Tawaator” confirms the absolute authenticity of Quran because it indicates that the same text was narrated by different groups of people and passed from one generation to another without contradictions or

discrepancies or discontinuity.

Distinctiveness of Quran It should be noticed that Muhammad’s ﷺ sayings and teachings were not mixed with the Quran (which only contains God’s Words without any human comments or elaborations). Muhammad’s sayings and teachings were collected in books which were called “**The Sunnah or Hadith of the Prophet**”. They included his teachings, his way of life and explanation of the Book (the Quran).

Comparison between Hadith books and other holy books

Most holy books of different religions are authored and written by individuals with their own words and phrases. Since Hadith books were collected by Muslim scholars and contained Muhammad’s own sayings and teachings, many researchers consider them as similar to other holy books.



For example, the Bible was written over a period of 1400 to 1800 years by 40 different authors. It is a compilation of 66 separate books, divided into two primary divisions: the Old Testament (containing 39 books) and the New Testament (containing 27 books).

It is to be noted that the reference of God to Himself as "We" in many verses in the Quran is necessarily understood in the Arabic language to denote grandeur and power. In the English language this is known as the Royal We, where a plural pronoun is used to refer to a single person. On the other hand, the Qura'n frequently uses the word "say" which means "Say to them O Muhammad."

Incomparable preservation of the style of reciting Quran:

When the Quran is read or recited, the term "Tajweed" is commonly mentioned or highlighted to describe the knowledge that deals with the rules controlling the way of reading the Quran.

Muslims trust it is not only the text of the Quran that was uniquely preserved but also the styles in which Muhammad and his companions recited it.

The styles of reciting the Quran are documented by the names of the narrators and reciters starting from those who heard it from Muhammad until now. This is across the whole Islamic world and continued from one generation to another generation until now.



Tajweed a Unique Science

It is believed that "Tajweed" is a very unique science not available in other religions. It reflects the highest level of attention given by the companions of Muhammad in order to preserve the way he recited the Quran (word by word).

Rich language: The Quran was revealed in original Arabic. Muslim scholars believe that Arabic language is superior to many other languages as it is well supported by a huge number of words and a strong Arabic grammar.

Arabic language has 28 letters, some of them don't exist in other languages such as "Dhad" which is the heavy "D" and "Tau" which is a heavy "T".

The number of derivations from each original or root word can exceed 100 derivations and accordingly the total number of words in Arabic language may exceed **six million words**. This is far higher than the number of words of most known languages in the world.



Significant Scientific Facts in the Quran

The big bang and the creation of the universe



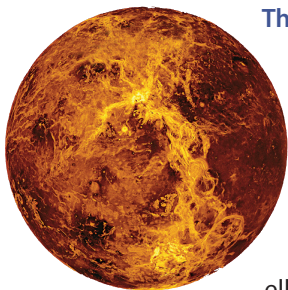
At Muhammad's time nobody knew anything about the creation of the universe and the motion of the planets and whether the earth was flat or round. Muslims believe that God, the Creator of the universe, is the only One, Who knows how it was created.

Fourteen centuries ago, the Quran mentioned the creation of the universe, the motion of the sun and the the moon, the rotation of the earth and the formation of day and night.

Modern science explains the creation of the universe by the "Big Bang theory" which is supported by observational and experimental data gathered over decades. According to the "Big Bang theory" the whole universe was initially one big mass then there was a huge explosion which resulted in the formation of galaxies out of agglomerated clouds of celestial matter in a smoke or gaseous form.



The expansion of the universe



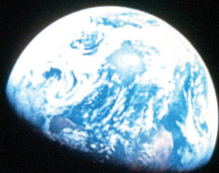
In 1925, American astronomer Edwin Hubble provided observational evidence that stars are moving away from each other which implies that galaxies and the whole universe is expanding. Also, it is an established scientific fact that planets move in elliptical orbits around the sun and rotate around their axes.

One will be surprised at the similarities between the modern scientific discoveries and the following verses in the Quran, which were recited by Muhammad more than 14 centuries ago and preserved until now.



"Haven't the disbelievers known that the heaven and the earth were joined together as one piece and We separated them apart and We made every living thing of water? Will they not then believe?" The Quran, 21:30

"He (the Almighty God) turned to the heaven when it was smoke and said to it and to the earth: come together willingly or unwillingly, they said: we come together in willing obedience." The Quran, 41:11



"And it is He Who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. All (the celestial bodies) swim along (float), each in its rounded course (orbit)."

The Quran, 21:33

"With power and skill We created the heaven and We are continuously expanding it." The Quran, 51:47

Embryology and creation of humankind: Muhammad recited the following miraculous verse that explains the creation of mankind. Such knowledge was not known at his time and the science of embryology was not yet discovered 1400 years ago.

“...He creates you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation, in a three veils of darkness (threefold gloom). This is Allah, your Lord. The Sovereignty is His. There is no God except Him. How then are you turned away?” The Quran, 39:6



Modern science explains that there are three layers that form veils of darkness that surround the fetus in the womb and provide sturdy and powerful protection for the embryo; (1) the interior abdominal wall of the mother, (2) the uterine wall and (3) the amino-chorionic membrane.





The creation of humankind is described miraculously in the following verse from the Quran:

"Verily We created man from clay (quintessence of product of wet earth), then We placed him as a drop (of sperm) in a safe lodging; Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed (solid) blood, then of that clot We made a fetus lump, then We made out of that lump bones then covered the bones with flesh, and then produced it another creation."

The Quran, 23:12-14

Surprisingly, embryo development as stated in the Quran was found identical to the discoveries of medical science. Also, it was found that



bones were formed before the formation of flesh, exactly as mentioned in the above verse.²



In addition, scientists discovered that the hearing sense for the embryo develops in the mothers' womb before the sense of sight. This is compatible to the sequence mentioned in the Quran (32:9, 76:2, 23:78). All verses refer to the hearing sense before the sight sense.

"...So blessed be Allah the best of Creators."

The Quran, 23:14

309

Astonishing counting of years

Verse 25, Chapter 18 (The Cave) in the Quran talks about the **seven sleepers** and states that they spent 300 years in the cave and additional "9 years". Nobody knew during Muhammad's time why the verse didn't state the total number as "309 years" instead of the above expression.

Also, in Arabia, nobody knew at that time the difference between lunar year and Solar / Gregorian calendar. The Lunar year is 11 days shorter than the Solar one. The amazing fact is this: In 300 years, the difference between the lunar year and Solar/Gregorian year is **9** years.

The Quran is commonly printed in 604 pages. It contains 80,000 words approximately which form 6348 verses that comprise 114 chapters. The longest chapter in the Quran is composed of 286 verses and the shortest one is composed of 3 verses only.

Amazing information of future events

Verses 2-5, Chapter 30 in the Quran state:



"The Romans have been defeated at the nearest/lowest land but they will gain victory within a few years. Allah has the Command in the former case and in the latter and on that day believers (in God) will rejoice and will be pleased with the victory of God. He helps to victory whom He Wills. He is the All Mighty, the Merciful".

At Muhammad's time, it is virtually impossible for Arabs to predict how the development of the conflict would be between the two superpowers (at their time) within the next ten years and whether a defeated empire can restore victory within a few years. It is a historical fact that the Persian Empire defeated the Roman Empire in the period (614-619 CE) in Palestine area and captured Jerusalem. But within a few years, the Romans had restored victory over the Persians at Nineveh (a city in Iraq).

Incredible geography

Surprisingly, the recent geological research found that the Dead Sea which lies in the Jordan rift valley is the deepest hyper saline lake in the world. It is 422 meters (1,385 ft) below the sea level. Its shores are the lowest point on the surface of earth. The above verses indicate that the Romans were defeated at the nearest Roman land to Arabia and in fact it included the lowest land on the earth.

Note: The original Arabic word "adna" (verse 3 above) indicates both meanings, nearest and lowest.

ENDNOTES

1. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew 1500-400 BC. New Testament was composed in Greek and written during the second half of the first century AD. It is generally agreed that the Book of Matthew was the first Gospel written between 50 and 75 AD. Of the four Gospel's, John's is considered to have been the last one written, around 85 AD.
2. To get more information about embryology and the scientific facts in the Quran, visit www.eajaz.org, www.eajaz.org, www.islamhouse.com





Prophet Muhammad said while interlacing the fingers of his two hands:

“Believers are like a structure, they support each other.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (481) and Muslim (2585)



Muhammad drew three lines on the sand and said: “This is the human being (who has many hopes and plans in this worldly life). While he lives to attain or accomplish these hopes, death comes to him.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (6417) and Muslim (1671)

His Sayings

Muhammad's sayings and teachings are highly influential as they cover most aspects of life: spirituality, morals, social matters, commerce, and more. His sayings emanate from a base of wisdom and divine revelation.

Muhammad's sayings, actions, and attributes are known as *sunnah* and are embodied in collections of sayings, or hadith. The sunnah represents the second source of Islamic legislation after the Quran.

"Your companion [Muhammad] has not strayed from the path of truth nor has he been deluded. Nor does he speak out of whim." Quran, 53:2-3

Here is a selection of his sayings in relation to various life matters.

"Avail five before five:

Your youth before senility (old age)

Fitness before sickness

Wealth before poverty (needy)

Free time before busy time

Life before death." Narrated by Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadriq No. 7846 (4/341)



"The perfect believers are those who have the best manners." (Narrated by Tirmithi)



"Two graces, many people underestimate; health and free (leisure) time." (Bukhaari, 6049)



"Envy is forbidden except in two cases (you wish to have the same thing others have but no bad wishes to them). The first one is a man on whom God bestowed wealth and he spends it righteously. The second case is a man on whom God bestowed wisdom and he acts according to it and teaches it to others." (Bukhari, 73/15)



"Make things easy to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them; give them good tidings and do not make them run away." (Bukhari, 69/11)



"Those who do honest trading and business based on clear terms, God blesses them and their business (trade). On the contrary, God does not bless those who lie and hide facts." (Bukhari, 2082/22)

"You will not be a believer in God unless you like for your brethren what you like for yourself."

(Bukhari, 13/7)



"Every Muslim should pay Sadaqa (spend something for charity), if he didn't find what to spend then let him work in order to benefit himself and be able to pay charity, if he didn't find a job, then let him help others (this is an act of charity), if he didn't find anyone to help, let him do good deeds and refrain from (avoid) doing bad or evil deeds. This is a charity for him."

(Bukhari, 1445/30)



"When a man dies, he gains no rewards except from three things; in case he had dedicated a charity that people can continuously profit from, or he had left knowledge or a science that benefits the humanity, or if he had left a good (faithful) son who keeps on praying and asking God's blessings and forgiveness for his parents."

(This is applicable to both males and females)

(Narrated by Muslim, Tirmithi, Nassa'i)



"Fear Allah wherever you are, follow a bad deed with a good deed as it erases it, and deal with people with high ethics." (Tirmithi - 1987 & Ahmad 5/153) "Goodness (rightness) is good morality; and sin (misdeed) is what embarrasses you (i.e. you are not comfortable within yourself) and you hate it to be known by others." (Muslim, 15/2553)



"A strong person is not the one who throws his adversaries to the ground. A strong person is he who contains himself when he is angry."

(Bukhaari, 5785) and (Muslim, 4853)



"Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment should say good (words) or keep silent and whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment must honor (be generous with) his neighbor and whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment must honor (be generous with) his guest."

(Bukhari, 6018 & Muslim 74-47)

(Please note that all of the above sayings are applicable to both males and females)



Sayings of Prophet Muhammad in Relation to Food and Medicine

Prevention is better than cure

Although Muhammad was not a physician, his sayings in relation to food, healthy eating habits, treatment with herbs were collected in books later known as "The Prophetic Medicine".

Muhammad indicated on several occasions that the belly is the worst pot to fill. Small meals and a few bites that satisfy hunger will be better than filling the stomach. They help a great deal avoid health complications.

The Belly, the
Worst Thing
to Fill

He encouraged his companions to eat and drink in moderation, avoid obesity and maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. He recited God's Words in this context. Verse 31, Chapter 7 in the Quran states:

"O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but do not be prodigal (waste by excess). He (God) does not like prodigals (extravagant people)."



Muhammad prescribing barley

Today, there is a great deal of research that demonstrates the amazing health benefits of barley. Barley grass is a whole food supplement.

It contains a wide spectrum of enzymes, vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals and all eight essential amino acids including tryptophan, which helps prevent depression.



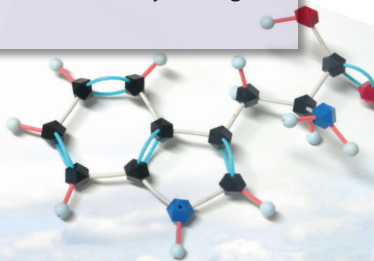
Barley
as an Anti-
depressant

Muhammad recommended barley soup (**talbinah**) for stomach disorders and indicated in his undisputable sayings that it helps relieve sorrow and depression. His wife Aisha used to recommend the close relatives of a deceased person to have talbinah soup in order to relieve sorrow.

(Bukhaari, 5365) and (Muslim, 2316)

According to medical research, depressive illness is found to be caused by a decrease of certain chemicals or neurotransmitters in the brain that are responsible for mood. Antidepressants stimulate chemical changes that increase the levels of these neuro-transmitters.

The three main neuro-transmitters associated with mood are serotonin, norepinephrine and dopamine. Barley was found to influence serotonin in a positive way that relieves depression. The prescription of barley by Muhammad 1400 years ago was definitely incredible.



Wheat or Barley?

It is revealing that Muhammad did not indulge in regular wheat consumption, but ate instead mostly barley and bread made from barley flour.



It has been discovered that whole grain barley has many health benefits. It can regulate blood sugar, prevent tiny blood clots, and reduce the body's production of cholesterol.

It is part of Muhammad's teachings to have small meals during the day. Should someone like to eat more, the belly must not be more than two thirds full. He told his companions to keep one third of their stomach's space for food and one third for drink and the last third should be kept empty for breath.

(Source: Miqdam Bin Ma'di Yakrib)
Riyadh Saliheen, (516).

$\frac{1}{3}$ Food
+
 $\frac{1}{3}$ Drink
+
 $\frac{1}{3}$ Empty



Zamzam mineral water:

Zamzam is the name of mineral water that comes out of a well 20 meters east of Ka'bah in the Sacred Mosque in the city of Makkah. Muslims believe that it was miraculously generated thousands of years ago when Ibrahim's son Ishmael was thirsty and kept crying and kicking the ground until water gushed out (after his mother Hagar spent a lot of time looking for water).

Zamzam water is slightly alkaline (pH=7.5) and has a distinct taste. *(Please note that drinking de-mineralized water such as distilled waters will create an acid pH in the stomach and intestines. Also, it will aggravate acid reflux.)*

Muhammad said that Zamzam water is a blessed water from God. It is a lavish meal and a healer from many diseases. (Narrated by Bazzar and Tabarani)

Mineral water is classified by the U.S. Food and Drug Authority as having at least 250 parts per million (ppm) (total dissolved solids TDS).

Chemical analysis of Zamzam water revealed that it has an average of 1000 ppm of mg/L, TDS. However, it complies with World Health Organization standards for potable water.

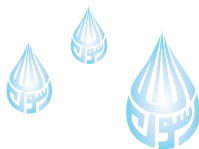


It is a plentiful meal that contains a range of minerals that the human body needs such as calcium, (which is needed for strong bones and for the heart, muscles and nerves to function properly), fluoride, which is necessary for teeth and bicarbonates, which helps food digestion.



Zamzam water is one of the richest potable waters with calcium. It has 195-200 mg/L calcium (this is about 20% of the average recommended daily intake of calcium for adults).

It is higher than many known mineral waters on the earth such as "Evian" (78-80 mg/L calcium) and "Perrier" (147-150 mg/L calcium).



Mineral water has a wide range of therapeutic functions that can relieve and treat muscle and joint inflammation, rheumatism and arthritis.



This is the word "Rasul Allah" (Messenger of God) in Arabic being written in a formative style which looks like a droplet of water. Courtesy of Farid Al-Ali

Truffle as a medicine

Muhammad said: "Truffles are a kind of 'Manna' (sent down upon the children of Israel) and their juice is a medicine for the eyes."

(Bukhaari, 5708) and (Muslim, 5244)



Truffle is a fleshy fungus mushroom-like plant that belongs to the Agaricaceae family. It grows in groups under the surface of the soil (2-50 cm deep) in desert moist areas without leaves or roots. It has a distinct smell and can be white, gray or brown in color.

According to the analytical research, 77% of the truffle is water and the remaining part is a mix of protein, fat, carbohydrates and other materials.

However, modern science discoveries indicate that the liquid of truffles has an effective curable effect on many eye diseases including trachoma, which is an infectious eye disease that causes damage to the cornea cells.



Muhammad and olive oil

Muhammad described olive oil as coming from a blessed tree. He recommended his companions to eat olive oil and to anoint or smear it over their body skin.

(Tirmithi, 1851)

All modern scientific discoveries confirm that olive oil is full of health benefits. Most of the fatty acid “building blocks” that make up olive oil come from mono-unsaturated fat (good fat), which offers protection against heart disease by controlling LDL (bad cholesterol) levels while raising HDL (the good cholesterol) levels.




Olive oil is very well tolerated by the stomach. Its protective function has a beneficial effect on treating ulcers and gastritis.



Extra virgin olive oil, from the first pressing of the olives, contains higher levels of antioxidants, particularly vitamin E and phenols, because it is less processed.

Today, olive oil is considered a good remedy for skin problems and an effective moisturizer.

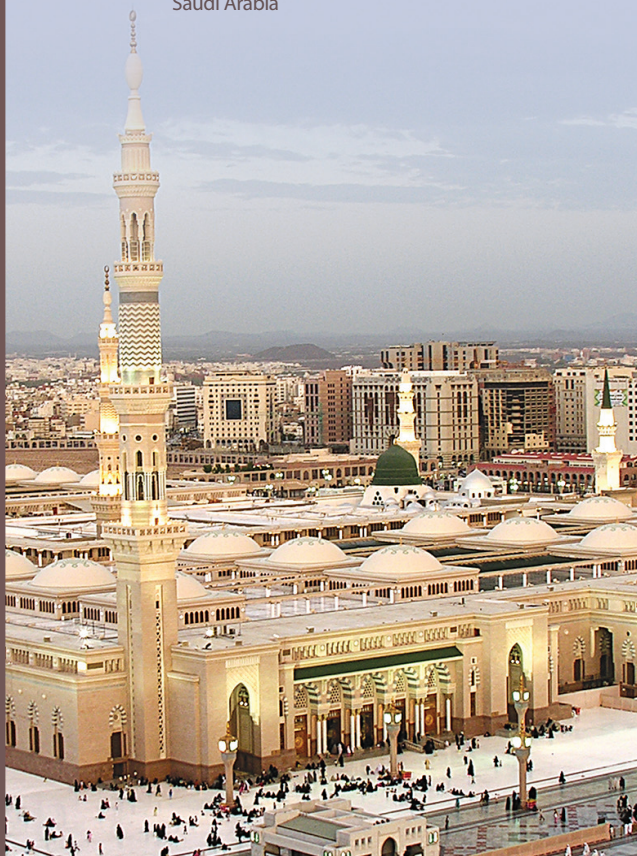
Those at risk of diabetes are advised to combine a low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet with olive oil. Studies show this combination is superior at controlling blood sugar levels compared to a diet that consists entirely of low-fat meals.



*Allah is
the Light of
the heavens and the earth;
the example of His light is like
a niche in which is a lamp;
the lamp is enclosed in a glass;
the glass is as if it were a star
shining like a pearl, kindled by the
blessed olive tree; neither of the east
nor of the west; whose oil would almost
glow (get ablaze) by itself although the
fire does not touch it; light upon light;
Allah guides towards His light whomever
He wills; and Allah illustrates examples
for mankind; and Allah is Knower of
everything.*

The Quran, 24:35

Prophet Muhammad Mosque
(Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi) Madinah,
Saudi Arabia



This is the word "Muhammad" in Arabic being designed in a formative style.

Epilogue

Muhammad, the Man

History has recorded fine details of Muhammad's life as well as his sublime and humane dealing with people.

Michael Hart stated in his book "The 100; A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History":

"Of humble origins, Muhammad founded and promulgated one of the world's great religions and became an immensely effective political leader. Today, thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive. The majority of persons in this book, had the advantage of being born and raised in centers of civilization, highly cultured and politically pivotal nations".



"It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history."

Michael Hart

Muhammad however was born in the year 570 CE, in the city of Mecca, in southern Arabia, at that time a backward area of the world, far from the centers of trade, art and learning."

Note: Muslims dislike the descriptions of Prophet Muhammad as a "founder of a religion". Muslims consider him as the Messenger of God.

“It is probable that the relative influence of Muhammad on Islam has been larger than the combined influence of Jesus Christ and St. Paul on Christianity. On the purely religious level, then it seems likely that Muhammad has been as influential in human history as Jesus.”

Muhammad, the Leader

Speaking objectively about Muhammad, the French writer and politician Alphonse de Lamartine wrote in his book *Histoire de la Turquie*:

“Never has a man proposed for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a goal more sublime, since this goal was beyond measure: undermine the superstitions placed between the creature and the Creator; give back God to man and man to God, reinstate the rational and saintly idea of divinity in the midst of this prevailing chaos of material and disfigured gods of idolatry. Never has a man accomplished in such a short time such an immense and long lasting revolution in the world”.

“If the grandeur of the aim, the smallness of the means, the immensity of the result are the three measures of a man’s genius, who would dare humanly compare a great man of modern history with Muhammad?”





Lamartine also indicated that Muhammad didn't move weapons and empires to create a material power but he moved ideas, beliefs, and souls. He founded upon a Book, of which each letter has become a law, a spiritual nationality embracing people of all languages and races in the world.



Muhammad, the Messenger of God

The story of Suraqah; a promise fulfilled 20 years later

When Muhammad migrated to Madinah with his close companion Abu Bakr (622 CE), the Meccan leaders announced a large reward of 100 camels for anyone who could bring Muhammad dead or alive.

Unfortunately Muhammad and his companion were tracked down by one of the Arab knights named Suraqah bin Malik who was tempted by the big reward. On the way, his horse stumbled and he fell on the ground a few times. He considered these unusual incidents as an indirect message that Muhammad probably had been supported by divine power.

When Suraqah approached Muhammad, Muhammad said to him: "Do return to your people and I promise you that one day (under the umbrella of the Islamic state) you would wear the bangles (bracelets) of Chosroes, the Persian ruler." Al-Bayhaqi in Al-Sunan Al-Kubra (6/357), no. 13156

Suraqah asked in wonderment if Muhammad meant the bangles of Khusrow bin Hormuz, **the emperor of Iran**. Muhammad replied "yes" with full confidence. He had a strong faith that the religion of Islam would reach Persia and would be known all over the world.



Suraqah returned back to Makkah but he didn't embrace Islam until Muhammad took over Makkah peacefully 8 years later (year 630 CE).

Muhammad passed away in the year 632 CE and his promise to Suraqah was believed by his companions as genuine and would happen one day.

Time passed until Omar Bin Al-Khattab became the second caliph (ruler of the Muslim state). At his time, Islam reached Persia in the year 642 CE and all the treasures of Khusrow, the emperor of Persia fell in the hands of Omar.

Omar remembered the story of Suraqah and asked his companions to bring him in. (20 years passed since this story took place and Suraqah had become an old man).

After prayer congregation, Omar said to Suraqah: *"Here are the bangles of Khusrow, the emperor of Persia, this is what Muhammad had promised you. Put them on and let all Muslims see them so everyone becomes certain that Muhammad's promise is fulfilled."*

Suraqah cried and every one wept. Muhammad's promise became a reality 10 years after he passed away.

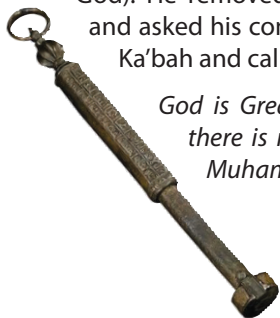


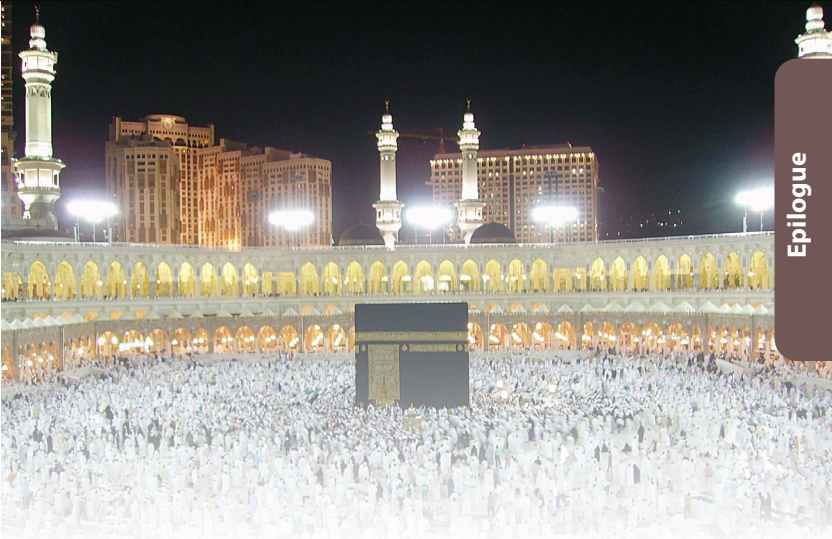
The story of the Ka'bah key; a lasting promise

In the year 630 CE, Muhammad gained victory over the Meccan chiefs and entered Makkah peacefully. He returned home not to live there for the rest of his life but to clear paganism and liberate or restore the original purpose of Ka'bah (the cubical building that was established by Prophet Abraham to worship one

God). He removed all idols from around the Ka' bah and asked his companion Bilal to climb on top of the Ka'bah and call:

God is Greatest, God is Greatest, I witness that there is no deity but Allah and I witness that Muhammad is His messenger.





Muhammad wanted the key for the Ka'bah door, so he called Othman Bin Talha (of Bani-Shayba family) who was the keeper of the Ka'bah key. It is important to know that there was a treaty before Islam in which the honour of being a custodian or a warden of the Ka'bah was given to the family of Bani Shayba. This honour and responsibility was passed from the grandfathers to the sons in the same family until it reached Othman Bin Talha.

Othman Bin Talha was a new muslim at that time. Many years ago he refused to let Muhammad even enter the Ka'bah and pray inside it like other people since he did not believe him. When Muhammad returned to Makkah, Othman had no choice but to give him the key and lose the honour of keeping it.

At that moment many people asked Muhammad to grant them the honour of keeping the key of the Ka'bah and thousands of Muslims were looking at Muhammad to see who would be the new custodian of the Ka'bah key.

Breaking a moment of silence, Muhammad opened the door of the Ka'bah and cleared it of idols. He looked at Othman Bin Talha and said to him (respecting previous agreements):

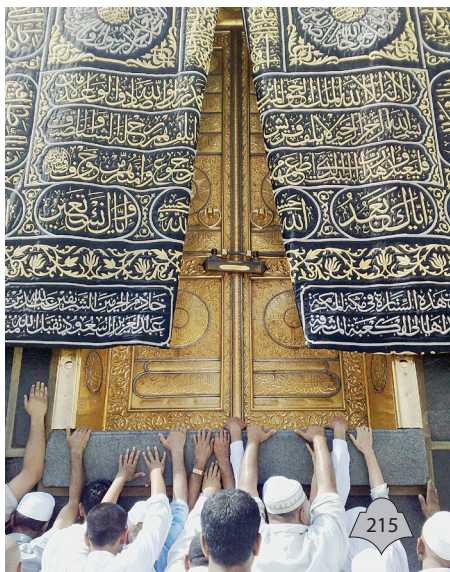
"Today is a day of loyalty and piety! Take the key back. As from now and until the Day of Judgment, no one can take it from you (family of Bani Shayba) unless he was an aggressor." Narrated by al-Tabaraani in al-Kabir (11/120) No. 11234.



A moment of fidelity that has been lasting until now: You may be surprised to know that the key is still being held by the offspring of Bani Shayba family until NOW!

More than 1400 years passed and the key is still given from one generation of the Bani Shayba family to the next generation. Until now, no one dares to take it from them otherwise he or she would be considered as an “aggressor” according to Muhammad’s description.

Nowadays, when the Saudi authorities perform their annual cleaning and preparation of the Ka’bah for the annual pilgrimage, they contact a person from the Bani Shayba family (who is currently a Saudi family) to open the Ka’bah door for them.



Muhammad, a Prophet for Our Time

Karen Armstrong, the author of, *"Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time"*, indicated that we must approach the life of Prophet Muhammad in a balanced way in order to appreciate his considerable achievements. He had important lessons, not only for Muslims, but also for the Western people.

She also indicated that If we are to avoid catastrophe, the Muslim and Western worlds must learn not merely to tolerate but to appreciate one another. A good starting point is the figure of Muhammad.





Gold plated door from Prophet Muhammad Mosque
(Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi), Madinah, Saudi Arabia



Chapter
12
**Islamic Art, Calligraphy
and Architecture**



Photo taken by Peter Gould. Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque - Oman



Islamic art and calligraphy, Bahrain

Peter Gould, Australia

Sydney-born designer and artist Peter Gould has passion for contemporary graphic design, art, photography and the rich visual & spiritual traditions of Islam. His travels and studies throughout the Muslim world have inspired a unique cultural fusion that is reactive to a world of misunderstanding. Peter's work has reached many audiences locally and abroad through exhibitions and collaborations with other artists.

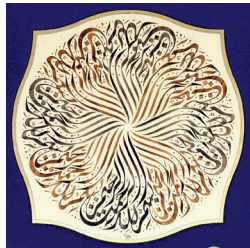
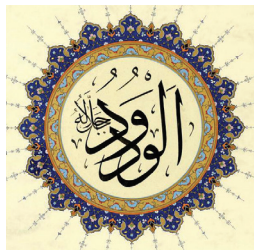
Peter Sanders, UK

Peter Sanders is a British professional photographer that started his career in the mid 1960s. He built up a photographic archive of more than quarter million photographs from all over the world. His first book "In the Shade of the Tree" gives a wonderful insight into the diversity of the Muslim cultures around the world. Sanders was selected by the Moroccan government to photograph and document the most important mosques and Islamic Architecture in Morocco.



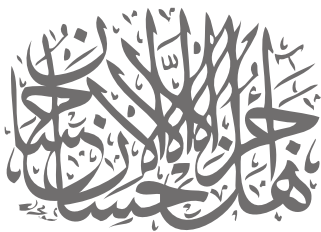
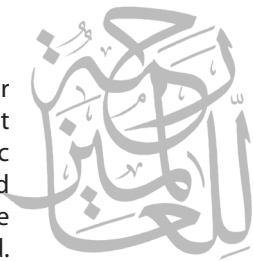
Hassan Çelebi, Turkey

He is one of the most famous Islamic calligraphers in the world. Since he started teaching Islamic calligraphy in 1976, he gave "ijazah" (diploma in Islamic calligraphy) to more than 40 students from all over the world. He produced unique calligraphy pieces for renowned Islamic historical places and mosques all over the world. Examples are: Prophet Muhammad Mosque and Quba Mosque in Al-Madinah, Saudi Arabia, the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Fatih Mosque in Pfortzheim, Germany, Jum'ah Mosque in Johannesburg, South Africa, Almati Jum'ah Mosque in Kazakhstan and the Islamic Medical Centre in Kuwait.



Mohamed Zakariya, USA

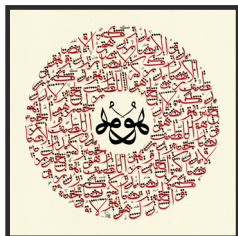
Mr. Zakariya is an American calligrapher who is considered the preeminent ambassador of the art of Islamic calligraphy in America. He learned Arabic and Islamic calligraphy when he was 19 in Morocco, Spain and England. He is the first American that earned two licenses in Islamic calligraphy form Turkey. He is also known for his design of the "Eid Greetings" U.S. postage stamp (Eid means feast). He concentrates primarily on classical Arabic and Ottoman Turkish calligraphy.



This calligraphy is a presentation for the verse: *"Is the reward for good [anything] but good?"* The Quran, 55:60

Nuria Garcia Masip, Spain

She is a professional calligrapher from Ibiza, Spain. After receiving her literature degree from The George Washington University, U.S.A., she studied Islamic arts in Morocco, then moved to Istanbul where she received her diploma in Islamic calligraphy in 2007. She currently pursues her calligraphic career through exhibitions, competitions, and workshops, moving between the United States, Morocco, Turkey, Europe, South Africa and the Middle East. Her works revive classical texts through aesthetically arresting presentation.



Salva Rasool, India

Salva holds a degree of applied art from Mumbai 1985. She incorporates an element of harmony in each genre she creates by keeping the balance between the original Arabic text and her modern contemporary artwork. She is known for creatively incorporating unconventional materials like terracotta, ceramics, pottery, glass and leather in her works.



﴿In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful﴾

"All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all worlds. The Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgment. You alone we worship and You alone we seek help. Guide us to the right (straight) path. The path of those on whom You bestowed Your blessings, those who have not incurred Your displeasure, and those who did not go astray." The Quran, Chapter 1



This piece shows the main chapter in the Quran which Muslims recite in their daily prayers. It is called "Al Fatiha" i.e. the opener.

Celina Cebula, Poland

Graduated from Pedagogical University in Cracow and specialized in decorative art and artistic education. With her distinctive talent to mix calligraphy with painting she was able to reflect new meanings in her artistic designs.

- The word Muhammad, The Messenger of God in Arabic mirrored over a colorful background



"Unless you show mercy to others, Allah will not be merciful to you".



"Who does not thank people does not thank God".

Haji Noor Deen, China

Born in 1963 in Shangdong province, China. He is one of the most renowned calligraphers who created a unique link between Chinese and Arabic calligraphy.



The artistic pieces indicate: "There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah". The dome in the bottom part is formed from the statement "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah"

壬午年夏
米廣江書



Nobuko Sagawa, Japan

She is one of the most renowned Japanese certified masters of Arabic calligraphy. She studied fine arts in Japan and became interested in the Arabic calligraphy. Mrs. Sagawa developed a style of "collaboration" among combinations of Japanese scripts (kana), Chinese characters (kanji) and Arabic letters. Her talent in mastering the "Thuluth" and "Kufi" Arabic fonts enabled her to generate creative calligraphic designs.



And We have not sent you but to all people as a bearer of glad tidings and as a warner."

The Quran, 34:28



Farid Al-Ali, Kuwait

He is the director of Kuwait Center of Islamic Art and one of the most well-known artists in the Middle East for his resourceful designs and inventive art. In 2005 he released "Muhammadeyat", a collection of 500 artwork designs generated from the word "Muhammad" in Arabic (please see below). The 500 designs are split into 11 groups (soft, square, hexagonal, octagonal, etc). Moreover, Mr. Al-Ali did a similar collection to "Muhammadeyat", but derived from the word "Allah".

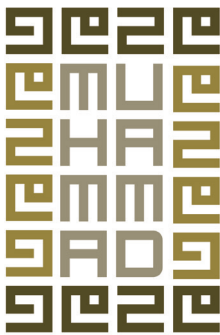


Mohammed Mandi, U.A.E.

With his unique experience and creative designs, he was nominated to design the Arabic calligraphy on the banknote and passports of U.A.E. and many other countries. In addition, he was nominated to supervise calligraphic designs in Shaikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. and many other mosques in the world.



An artistic design of the word "Muhammad" based on Arabic script (separate letters). It is the main component of the piece designed by Mr. Mandi which reflects transparent harmony between the artistic designs of the word "MUHAMMAD" in Arabic and English scripts.



Achmat Soni, South Africa

He is the founder of the South African Foundation of Islamic Art. In his works he succeeded in creating elements of harmony between the Arabic calligraphy and the African culture. He used Ndebele art which is an indigenous art form practiced by the African Ndebele tribe. It is characterized by its vibrant colors and geometric shapes.



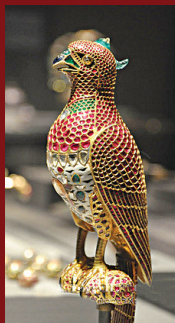
Chapter One in the Quran (Surah Faatiha) in Kufic Arabic letters with Ndebele illumination.



◀ The artwork glorifies the Almighty Allah in Arabic text. It reads "Glory & praise be to Allah, There is no God but Allah, Allah is the Greatest". A combination of traditional arabesque pattern and modern design fused into one. Arabic letters are extended in a way that looks like the ivory of elephants.



The Museum of Islamic Art, Qatar: Opened to the public in December 2008, it was designed by the American architect I.M. Pei, the famous designer of the Pyramid in Louvre. The displayed artifacts in the museum reflect the plurality and diversity in the arts of the Islamic world.





The Grand Mosque of Kuwait: Photo taken by photographer Ahmad Al Amiri on the 27th night of the lunar month Ramadan. In its peak time, the mosque can accommodate more than 45,000 people including the outdoor areas.



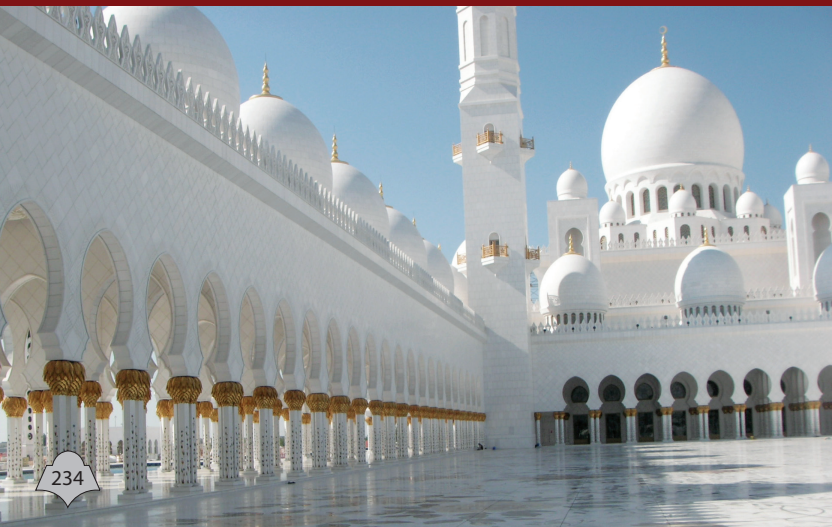


Muslims fast the month of Ramadan from dawn to sunset. At night Muslims perform extra prayers and supplications.





Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.: It is the largest mosque in the United Arab Emirates and the eighth largest mosque in the world. The mosque site is equivalent to the size of five football fields approximately. It can accommodate more than 40,000 worshippers. It has





82 domes and 4 minarets each 107 m high. The mosque has the world's largest carpet, which measures 5627 m² and the world's largest chandelier (15 m high and 10 m diameter). The mosque is considered as one of the most important tourist attractions in U.A.E.





The Jumeirah Mosque, Dubai, U.A.E.: One of the most attractive mosques in Dubai which reflects modern Islamic architecture.



King Hussein Mosque, Amman, Jordan: Was inaugurated in 2005 as one of the largest mosques in Amman that reflects the modern Islamic art and calligraphy. With its square shape and four minarets, it overlooks the city of Amman as it was built over a mount 1000 m approx. above the sea level.



Ahmed Al-Fateh Mosque, Kingdom of Bahrain: Was opened in 1988 by the late Amir of Bahrain, Sheikh Issa bin Salman Al-Khalifa. The mosque occupies an area of 6,500 square meters and it can accommodate up to 7000 worshippers. The mosque reflects a transparent blend of Islamic architecture and the local heritage.





Al-Saleh Mosque, Sanaa – Yemen: It is the largest mosque in Yemen. It was opened in 2008, with an overall area of 27,300 m² approx. and a capacity of 40000 worshippers. The mosque was built in a Yemeni architectural style. It includes 15 wooden doors as well as 6 large minarets.





Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, Oman: It is the largest mosque in Oman. It was opened in 2001 and includes the world's second largest hand-woven carpet and chandelier. (mosque area - 416,000 sq. meters, complex of the mosque extends to 40,000 sq. meters) .





Al-Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem: It is believed by Muslims that it is the second mosque placed on the earth for humanity to worship one God (Note: the first one is the sacred mosque in Makkah). Al-Aqsa Mosque is a sacred place for Muslims and used to be the first Qiblah in Islam (the place Muslims used to direct their faces towards it when praying to God). After Quranic revelation from God, Muslims were commanded to change the “Qiblah” towards the Mosque of Sanctuary in Makkah, which has the Ka'bah (the cubical building built by Prophet Abraham (pbuh) to worship one God). The total area of



Qibli Masjid



Al-Aqsa Mosque/ Sanctuary is about 14.4 Hectare or 144,000 m². It includes two important shrines, the "Qibli Masjid" (where the imam usually leads the prayers) and the "Dome of the Rock".

Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem: *It is an Islamic shrine and a mosque built in the period of 688-692 CE by the Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malik Bin Marwan over the rock that is believed by Muslims the place where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) ascended to the Heavens. It is an octagon building with a golden dome of 29.4m diameter.*





Umayyad Mosque, Damascus, Syria: The Umayyad Mosque, established (706 -715 CE) under the Umayyad caliph Al Walid. It is one of the largest and oldest mosques in the world that has a great architectural importance (mosque interior is approx. 4000m²).

In 2001 Pope John Paul II visited the mosque and it was the first time a pope paid a visit to a mosque. The minaret in the southeast corner is called the Minaret of Jesus as many Muslims believe that when Jesus returns, he will descend near this Minaret.



The Great Mosque of Samarra, Iraq: It is a 9th century mosque which is located in the Iraqi city of Samarra. The mosque was commissioned in 848 and completed in 851 by the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mutawakkil .

The Great Mosque of Samarra was at one time the largest mosque in the world; its minaret, the Malwiya Tower, is a vast spiraling cone (snail shaped) 52 meters high and 33 meters wide with a spiral ramp. The mosque had 17 aisles, and its walls were paneled with mosaics of dark blue glass. The minaret is in the style of Babylonian ziggurat .



Sultan Ahmet Mosque, Turkey: It is better known as the "Blue Mosque", with cascading domes and six slender minarets. Commissioned by Sultan Ahmet of the Ottoman Empire in the 17th century (construction began in 1609 and took seven years).







Aya sofya, Istanbul, Turkey : Aya Sofya (Hagia Sophia) in Istanbul – Turkey. It is a former Byzantine church which then served as an Ottoman mosque for approx. 500 years. Now it is a museum and a major tourist attraction place.





Taj Mahal, Agra, India: It was built by Shah Jahan (1592–1666) in memory of his wife. Due to its unique architectural design, it is considered as one of the most important tourist attractions in the world. Next to Taj Mahal, Shah Jahan built a mosque which is part of the Taj Mahal complex. Engraved on Taj Mahal walls, there are full chapters "Surahs" from the Quran.

Please note that Islamic teachings prohibit building structures over graves. A tomb is a structure above ground, and a grave is the hole below ground. According to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, the tomb should not be more than one "shibr" i.e. about 20 cm above the ground. After putting the body in the grave, the excavated sand is collected and packed over the grave in a way that looks like a camel hump over the grave.

In addition, Prophet Muhammad recommended people visit cemeteries to remember the fact that every living creature will die and will return to his or her Lord. It is God only to be glorified, exalted and worshiped not human beings.





Jama Masjid in New Delhi, India: The largest mosque in India, built in 1656

Red Fort, Agra, India





Faisal Mosque, Islamabad, Pakistan

Lahore Fort in Pakistan





Auburn Gallipoli Mosque, Sydney, Australia

Star Mosque, Dhaka, Bangladesh





Sultan Mosque, Singapore

Sultan O. A. Saifuddin Mosque, Brunei





Tokyo Jami, Japan Pattani

Central Mosque, Thailand





The Crystal Mosque, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia: The mosque is mainly made of crystal. It is located at Islamic Heritage Park on the island of Wan Man. It was officially opened in 2008.

Putrajaya Mosque, Malaysia





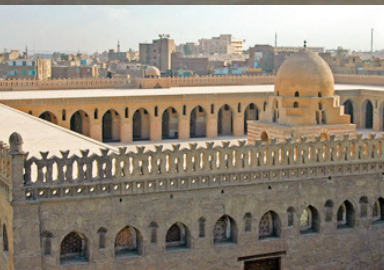
Kuantan Mosque in Malaysia

Ubudiah Mosque, Perak, Malaysia



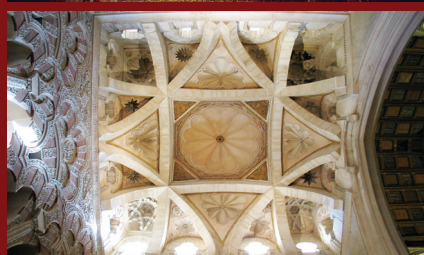
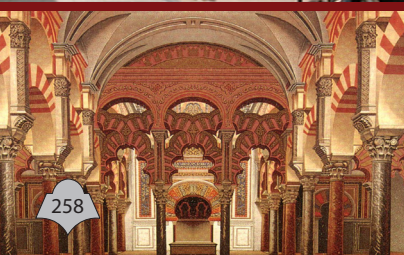


Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, Egypt: Established in 971 CE, connected with one of the oldest operating universities in the world (opened 988 CE).



The Ahmad Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo, Egypt: Completed in 879 CE, one of the largest in the world, (26,113 m²) it is also famed for its lovely architecture and unique minaret.







The Mezquita of Cordoba, Spain: Mezquita is the Spanish word for "mosque". It is an 8th century mosque designed by Islamic architects under the supervision of the Emir of Cordoba, Abdul-Rahman II (822-852). Today, the Mezquita is the cathedral of Cordoba (officially the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption).



Alhambra Calat, Spain: Also called "the red fortress". It is a palace and fortress complex, constructed during the ruling of the Muslim Sultan of Granada (1353-1391 CE). Today it is one of Spain's major tourist attractions exhibiting the most famous Islamic architecture in Spain.

Note: Within Alhambra, the Palace of Roman Emperor Charles V was erected in 1527 CE.





***Masjid Baiturrahman, Darussalam Aceh:** This is a historical mosque in Aceh Darussalam. This mosque is one of the mosques that survived the tsunami in 2004.*

***Masjid Istiqlal, Jakarta:** This is the largest mosque in Southeast Asia. Istiqlal means independence. It is located side by side with the largest cathedral in Indonesia.*



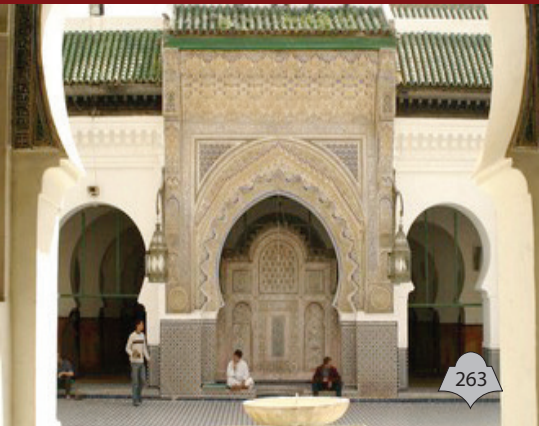


The Hassan II Mosque, Casablanca, Morocco: It was completed in 1993. Designed by French architect Michel Pinseau. The Great Mosque's minaret is the tallest structure in Morocco and the tallest minaret in the world (210 meters). At night, lasers shine a beam from the top of the minaret toward the Mosque of Sanctuary in Makkah. (Capacity: 25,000 worshippers)





The Kairaouine Mosque, Fes, Morocco: Founded in 987 CE. It is the second largest mosque in Morocco (after the new Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca) and one of the oldest universities in the world. Also, it is the oldest Islamic monument in Fes.





Kipchak Mosque in Ashgabat Turkmenistan

Azadi Mosque in Ashgabat Turkmenistan





Shir Dor Madrasah, Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Kalon Mosque, Bukhara, Uzbekistan





The Grand Mosque of Paris, France: It is the largest mosque in France. It was founded after World War I. Inaugurated on 15th July 1926.



Grand Mosque, Semarang, Indonesia

Hui Mosque in Ningxia, China







Grand Mosque, Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso

Djenné Mosque in Mali



Djenné is home to the world's largest mud mosque. This is more impressive than it may sound: the building is huge, and manages to be elegant both up close and from a distance. Two times a year all the city's residents drop everything, cart mud up from the nearby Bani river, and together they re-pack the Mosque walls.



Masjidul Quds in Gatesville, Cape Town, SA



Nizamiye Mosque in Midrand, Johannesburg, SA



Auwal Mosque in Bokaap, Cape Town, South Africa. The first mosque established in South Africa (1794)

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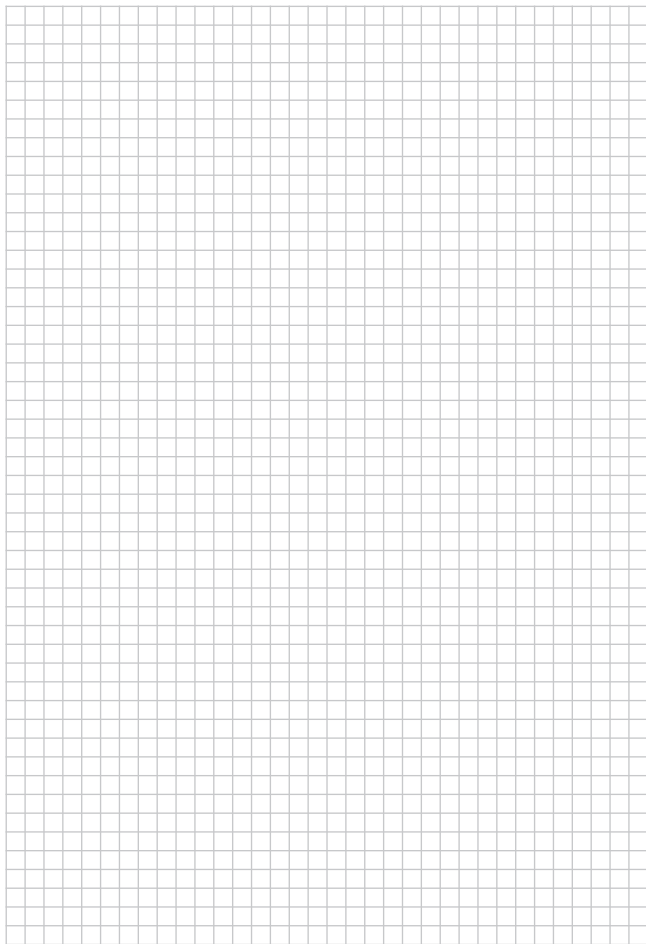
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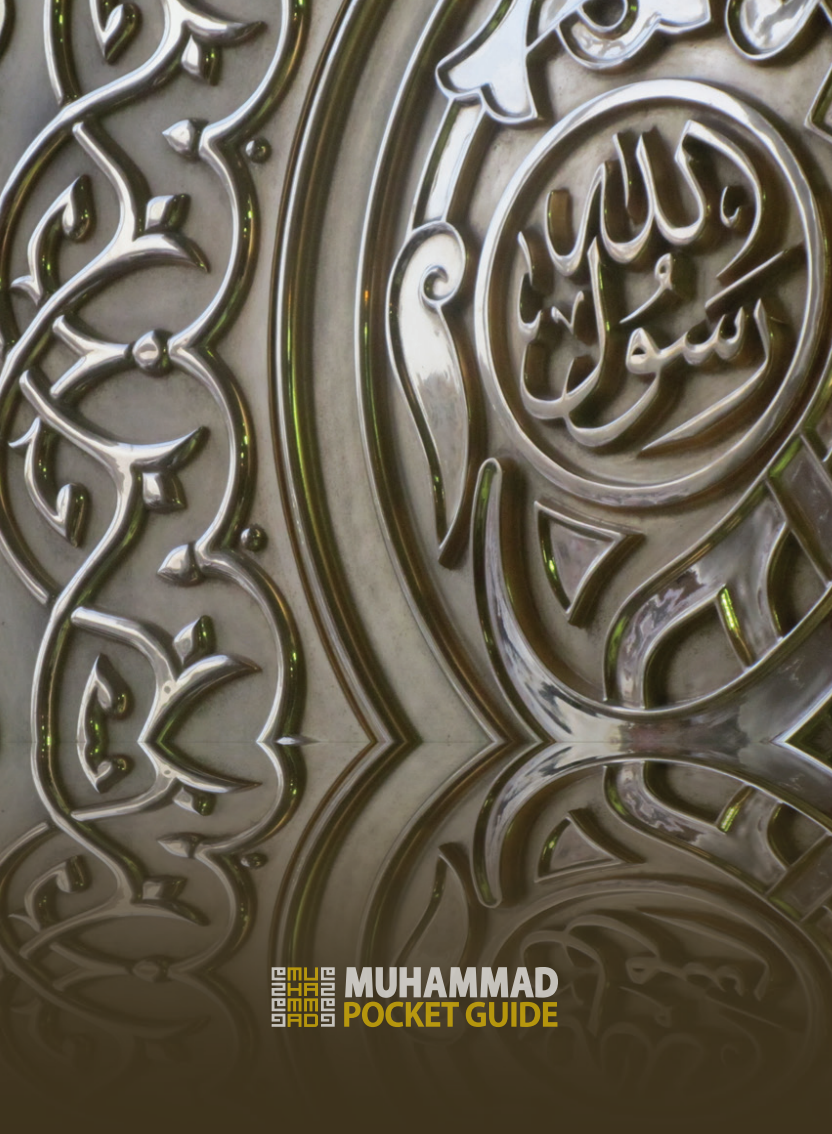
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