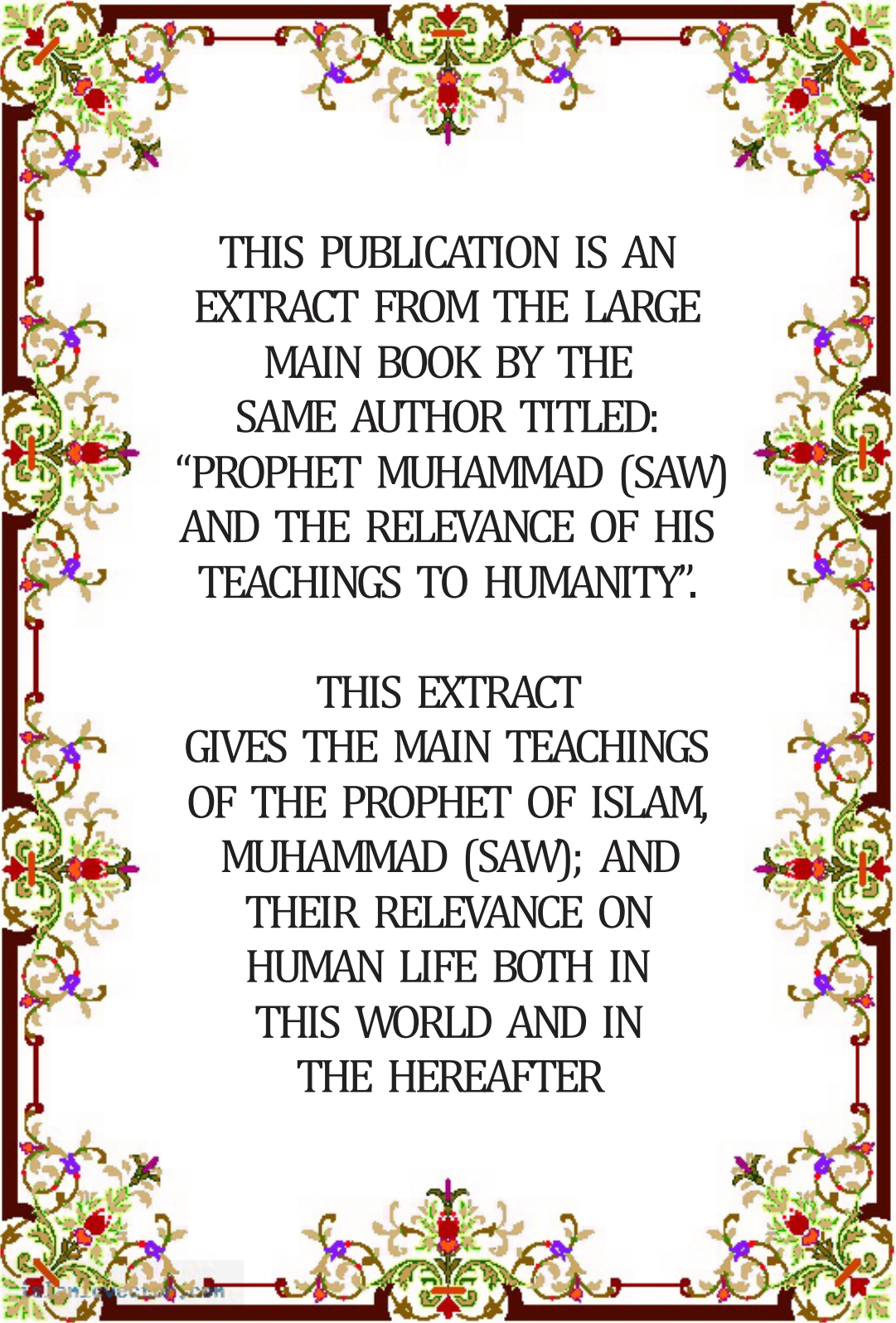


THE TEACHINGS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ



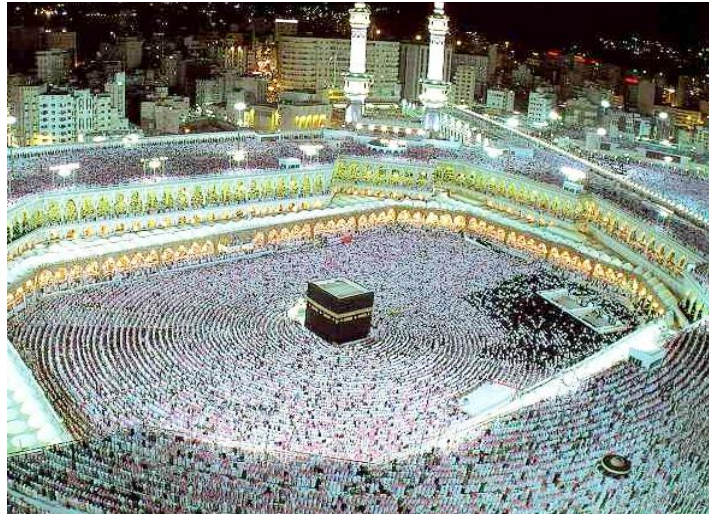
Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga, MFR, FNIM
The 5th Waziri of Katsina

A decorative border with a repeating floral and vine pattern in green, red, and purple, framing the central text.

THIS PUBLICATION IS AN
EXTRACT FROM THE LARGE
MAIN BOOK BY THE
SAME AUTHOR TITLED:
“PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)
AND THE RELEVANCE OF HIS
TEACHINGS TO HUMANITY”.

THIS EXTRACT
GIVES THE MAIN TEACHINGS
OF THE PROPHET OF ISLAM,
MUHAMMAD (SAW); AND
THEIR RELEVANCE ON
HUMAN LIFE BOTH IN
THIS WORLD AND IN
THE HEREAFTER

THE KA'ABA IN MECCA



MASJID OF THE PROPHET IN MEDINA



THE TEACHINGS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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**Ramadan, 1444 Hijrah
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**NOTES ON SOME TITLES OF RESPECT
AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BOOK**

**(SWT) - Subhanahu wa Ta'ala - Pure and Most High be He
– title of respect used for Allah**

**(SAW)- Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam - Peace and Blessings
of Allah be upon him - title of respect used for Prophet
Muhammad**

**(pbuh)- Peace and Blessings be upon him - title of respect
used for Prophet Muhammad**

**(AS)Alaihis Salaam - Peace be upon him - title of respect
used for all other Prophets of Allah**

**(RLA) Radhiyal Lahu Anhu or Anha - May Allah be
pleased with him or with her - title of respect used for
Colleagues or family members of Prophets or Senior
Muslim Clergy**

BC - Before Christ – BCE – Before Christian Era

AD - Anno Domino - Christian Era (AC - After Christ)

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It is pertinent for me to give credit to Leila Azzam And Aisha Gouverneur of Al Rashid Masjid, Canada; who Co-Authored the Book *“The Life Of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)”*. In addition, I appreciate Farida Khanam who Authored the Book, *“Life and Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW): Its Relevance in a Global Context”*. These two Books assisted in this Publication.

I extend my love and profound gratitude to my wives, Hajiya Binta, Hajiya Hadiya and Hajiya Azhar, my children and grandchildren; and other members of my family for their continued obedience and respect; and for their patience and encouragement. May Allah bless all of you, ameen.

I pray to Allah to have mercy and to bless the souls of our late parents, Alhaji Abubakar Lugga, the Sarkin Dawa of Katsina and Hajiya A'isha; and the souls of my late wife Hajiya Ummah and my late daughter Fatimah. We pray to Allah (SWT) that we shall all join them in Paradise; Ameen. May Allah (SWT) forgive our mistakes and our sins and may He accept this work from me and by His Mercy and Grace make Jannat Al-Firdaus our final Heavenly abode, ameen.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ

سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

*Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatul Lahi
Ta'ala wa Barkatuhu,*

All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Universe, the One Who Sustains the Heavens and the Earths, Director of all that is created, who sent the Messengers (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them) to rational beings, to guide them and explain the Religious Laws to them with clear proofs and undeniable arguments. I praise Him for all of His bounties. I ask Him to increase His Grace and Generosity to me, my family and all the Faithful. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah alone, who has no partner, the One Who Subdues, the Generous, the Forgiving. I bear witness that our Leader Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, His beloved and dear one, the best of all creations. He was honoured with the Glorious Qur'an that has been and shall always be an enduring miracle throughout times. The Prophet was also sent with his guiding Sunnah that shows the way for those who seek

guidance. Our Leader Prophet Muhammad has particularly been given eloquent and pithy speech, and simplicity and ease in the Religion of Islam. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the other Prophets and Messengers of Allah, their families and the righteous people of Islam. May Allah make us His faithful servants and may He grant us His Pardon and His Grace in this World and in the Hereafter, ameen.

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Chapter One

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: LESSONS FROM THE FAREWELL SERMON

The **Farewell Sermon** (*Khuṭbatul Wida*) is a Religious Speech, delivered by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) on Friday the 9th day of the Month of Zhul Hajj, 10 AH (6th March 632 AD) in the Uranah Valley of Mount Arafat, during the Islamic pilgrimage of the Hajj. The Sermon is quoted in *Sahih al-Bukhari*; in *Sahih Muslim* and in *Sunan Abu Dawood*.

Some scholars are of the view that, the Major Friday Farewell Sermon has in it embedded some other Small Series of Sermons that were made by the Prophet (pbuh) in the Arafat Plains and in Mina beginning from the day of Arafat (9th Zhul Hajj) until the middle day of *Tashriq* (12th Zhul Hajj). Given the Various Arabic Versions of the Sermon and the several English Translations that have been published; this view seems to be credible. But, the most important thing to note is that, there is indeed a Major Friday Sermon and that, the various Versions of the Sermon consist of a series of general exhortations for Muslims to follow in the Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) from the Quran and the Sunnah. And they all concur with each other in context.

One of the generally accepted Arabic Versions, which can easily be downloaded from very many websites, is reproduced below:

أيها الناس اسمعوا قولي ، فإني لا أدري لعلي لا ألقاكم بعد عامي هذا بهذا الموقف أبدا ، أيها الناس إن دماءكم وأموالكم عليكم حرام إلى أن تلقوا ربكم كحرمة يومكم هذا ، وكحرمة شهركم هذا ، وإنكم ستلقون ربكم فيسألكم عن أعمالكم وقد بلغت ، فمن كان عنده أمانة فليؤدها إلى من ائتمنه عليها ، وإن كل ربا موضوع ولكن لكم رءوس أموالكم لا تظلمون ولا تظلمون . قضى الله أنه لا ربا ، وإن ربا عباس بن عبد المطلب موضوع كله وأن كل دم كان في الجاهلية موضوع وإن أول دمائكم أضع دم ابن ربيعة بن الحارث بن عبد المطلب ، وكان مسترضعا في بني ليث فقتلته هذيل فهو أول ما أبدا به من دماء الجاهلية . أما بعد أيها الناس فإن الشيطان قد يئس من أن يعبد بأرضكم هذه أبدا ، ولكنه إن يطع فيما سوى ذلك فقد رضي به بما تحقرون من أعمالكم فاحذروه على دينكم أيها الناس إن النسيء زيادة في الكفر يضل به الذين كفروا ، يحلون ما يحرمونه عاما ويحرمون ما حرم الله فيحلوا ما حرم الله ويحرموا ما أحل الله . إن الزمان قد استدار كهيئته يوم خلق الله السموات والأرض وإن عدة الشهور عند الله اثنا عشر شهرا ، منها أربعة حرم ثلاثة متوالية ورجب مضر ، الذي بين جمادى وشعبان . أما بعد أيها الناس ، فإن لكم على نساءكم حقا ، ولهن عليكم حقا ، لكم عليهن أن لا يوطئن فرشكم أحدا تكرهونه وعليهن أن لا يأتين بفاحشة مبينة فإن فعلن فإن الله قد أذن لكم أن تهجروهن في المضاجع وتضربوهن ضربا غير مبرح فإن انتهين فلهن رزقهن وكسوتهن بالمعروف واستوصوا بالنساء خيرا ، فإنهن عندكم عوان لا يملكن لأنفسهن شيئا ، وإنكم إنما أخذتموهن بأمانة الله واستحللتم فروجهن بكلمات الله فاعقلوا أيها الناس قولي ، فإني قد بلغت ، وقد تركت فيكم ما إن اعتصمتم به فلن تضلوا أبدا ، أمرا بينا ، كتاب الله وسنة نبيه . أيها الناس اسمعوا قولي واعقلوه تعلمن أن كل مسلم أخ للمسلم وأن المسلمين إخوة فلا يحل لامرئ من أخيه إلا ما أعطاه عن طيب نفس منه فلا تظلمن أنفسكم اللهم هل بلغت ؟ فذكر لي أن الناس قالوا : اللهم نعم فقال رسول " الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " اللهم اشهد

Equally, a generally available English Translation of the Sermon in many websites is reproduced below:

After Glorifying, Praising, and Thanking Allah (the only One True God) the Prophet (pbuh) began with the Sermon saying:

O People! Lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore, listen carefully to what I am saying and Take These Words to Those Who Could Not Be Present Here Today. O People! Just as you regard this Month, this Day, this City as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your LORD, and that he will indeed reckon your deeds.

Allah has forbidden you to take usury (interest), 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 interest and that all the interest due to Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib (Prophet's uncle) be waived. Every right arising out of homicide in pre-Islamic days is henceforth waived and the first such right that I waive is that arising from the murder of Rabiah ibn al-Harithiah.

O people! The unbelievers indulge in tampering with the calendar in order to make permissible that which Allah

forbade, and to prohibit which Allah has made permissible. With Allah the Months are Twelve in number. Four of them are Holy, three of these are successive and one occurs singly between the months of Jumada and Sha'aban. Beware of Satan, for the safety of your Religion. He has lost all hope of that he will be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People! It is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with who you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

O People! Listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during the Month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to do it. All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a Non-Arab nor a Non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also the White have no superiority over the Black nor the Black have any superiority over the White except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a Brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one Brotherhood. Nothing shall

be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not therefore do injustice to yourselves. Remember one day you will meet Allah and answer your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People! No Prophet or Apostle will come after me and no New Faith will be Born. Reason well, therefore, O People! And understand words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the QUR'AN and my SUNNAH (i.e., sayings, deeds, and approvals) and if you follow these you will never go astray.

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

As part of this sermon, the Prophet recited them a Revelation from Allah which he had just received and which completed the Qur'an, for it was the last passage to be revealed: Verse 3 in Chapter 5 of the Qur'an that was quoted in the Sermon, where Allah says:

اَلْيَوْمَ اَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِيْنَكُمْ وَاَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ

لَكُمْ اِلَّا سَلَامَ دِيْنًا

This day, I have perfected your Religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your Religion

The sermon was repeated sentence by sentence by Safwan's brother Rabiah (RA), who had a powerful voice, at the request of the Prophet (pbuh) and he faithfully proclaimed to over 100,000 Muslims who gathered on the occasion of that Farewell Hajj. Toward the end of his sermon, the Prophet (pbuh) asked the Muslims: “*O people, have I faithfully delivered unto you my message?*” A powerful assent of “*O Ya RasululLah, yes; you have done so!*”, arose from the thousands of Pilgrims and the vibrant words of “*Allahumma na’am*” rolled like thunder throughout the Valley. The Prophet (pbuh) raised his forefinger and said:

Be my witness O Allah, that I have conveyed your message to your people.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT VERSION OF THE SERMON

Al-Jahiz in the *Kitāb al-Bayān wa-al-Tabyīn* presents the following text of the Farewell Sermon, which is also mentioned in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad (Hadith no.19774):

All praise is Allah's. We praise Him, seek His help, ask His forgiveness, and we repent unto Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves and our bad actions.

Whomever Allah guides none can lead astray, and whomever He leads astray has no one to guide him. I testify that there is no god but Allah alone, without any partner, and I testify that I, Muhammad, am the servant and Messenger of Allah. I enjoin you, O servants of Allah, to be Allah-fearing towards Allah, I urge you to obey Him, and I begin with that which is best.

To commence: O people, hear me well: I explain to you. For I do not know; I may well not meet you again in this place where I now stand, after this year of mine.

O people: your lives and your property, until the very day you meet your Lord, are as inviolable to each other as the inviolability of this day you are now in, and the Month you are now in. Have I given the message? O Allah, be my witness. So let whoever has been given something for safekeeping give it back to him who gave him it.

Truly, the usury (money interest) of the Era of Ignorance has been laid aside forever, and the first usury I begin with is that which is due to my father's brother 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib. And truly the blood-vengeance of the Era of Ignorance has been laid aside forever, and the first blood-vengeance we shall start with is that which is due for the blood of (my kinsman) 'Amir ibn Rabi'a ibn Harith ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib. Truly, the hereditary distinctions that were pretensions to respect in the Era of Ignorance have been laid aside forever, except

for the custodianship of the Ka'abah (by Bani 'Abd al-Dar) and the giving of drink to pilgrims (by al-'Abbas).

A deliberate murder is subject to retaliation in kind. An accidental death from a deliberate injury means a death resulting from (something not usually used or intended as a deadly weapon such as) a stick or a rock, for which the indemnity is one hundred camels: whoever asks for more is a person of the Era of Ignorance. O people: the Devil has despaired of ever being worshipped in this Land of yours, though he is content to be obeyed in other works of yours, which you deem to be of little importance, so, be careful.

O people: postponing the inviolability of a Sacred Month (claiming to postpone the prohibition of killing in it to a subsequent month, so as to continue warring despite the Sacred Month's having arrived) is a surfeit of unbelief, by which those who disbelieve are led astray, making it lawful one year and unlawful in another, in order to match the number (of months) Allah has made inviolable. Time has verily come full turn, to how it was the day Allah created the Heavens and the Earth. Four months there are which are inviolable, three in a row and forth by itself: Zhul Qa'da, Zhul Hijja, and Muharram; and Rajab, which lies between Jumada and Sha'ban. Have I given the message? O Allah, be my witness.

O people: Verily you owe your women their rights, and they owe you yours. They will not lay with another man, let

anyone into your houses you do not want without your permission, or commit indecency. If they do, Allah has given you leave to debar them, send them from your beds, or (finally) strike them in a way that does no harm. But if they desist, and obey you, then you must provide for them and clothe them fittingly. The women who live with you are like captives, unable to manage for themselves: you took them as a trust from Allah, and enjoyed their sex as lawful through a word (legal ruling) from Allah. So fear Allah in respect to women, and concern yourselves with their welfare. Have I given the message? O Allah, be my witness.

O people, Believers are but Brothers. No one shall take his brother's property without his full consent. Have I given the message? O Allah, be my witness. Never go back to being unbelievers, smiting each other's necks, for verily, I have left among you that which if you take it, you will never stray after me: the Book of Allah (Qur'an) and the Sunnah. Have I given the message? O Allah, be my witness.

O people! Your Lord is One, Allah. And your father is one: you are all from Adam, and Adam was from the moulded clay. The noblest of you in Allah's sight is the most Allah-fearing: an Arab has no merit over a non-Arab; and a non-Arab over an Arab; a White over a Black or a Black over a White; other than the fear of Allah.

O people, Allah has apportioned to every deserving heir his share of the estate, and no deserving heir may accept a

special bequest, and no special bequest may exceed a third of the estate. A child's lineage is that of the (husband who owns the) bed, and adulterers shall be stoned. Whoever claims to be the son of someone besides his father or a bondsman who claims to belong to other than his masters shall bear the curse of Allah and the Angels and all men.

Have I given the message? O Allah, be my witness. At this, they all shouted "yes" in unison. He said, then let whomever is present tell whomever is absent.

And Peace be upon all of you, and the Mercy of Allah.

VERY IMPORTANT LESSONS FROM THE FAREWELL SERMON OF THE PROPHET (pbuh)

The Farewell Sermon of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was arranged in the most beautiful way that encompasses the whole structure of the human life on Earth. It is an emotional yet impactful Sermon for Muslims from that Time of the Prophet's Living up to the Time Today! It is imperative to reflect on the universality of the Lessons in that Great Sermon; therefore a list is made below:

Accountability in This World and in the Hereafter

Belief in being accountable to people in this World and to Allah in the Hereafter are major pillar in the Islamic Religious Belief. People who believe in this accountability shall strive to uphold all the does and don'ts in Islam. Such people are the True Muslims. The Prophet (pbuh) stressed

this in his statement that, *“Remember, one day, you will appear before Allah and answer for your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the Path of Righteousness after I am gone”*.

Upholding Human Dignity and Moral Values

The Prophet (pbuh) equated the sanctity of life and humankind with the Sacred Months. This indicates the importance of humanity and the value of respecting one another's lives and rights in Islam. It also shows the importance of upholding human moral values. Society is entitled to and worthy of reverence and respect. Human rights should be highly valued and our human lives made sacred. To attain peace in any society, no one shall harm or hurt one another, or even trespass upon another's property. The Prophet (pbuh) states that, *"Hurt no one, so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord and that He will indeed reckon your deeds"*. It is a great responsibility for someone to treat people how he wants to be treated. Hurt can be in various forms, be it physical, emotional or psychological, verbal or non-verbal.

Entrenching Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an attribute of just, fair and humble persons. It is a major attribute in Leadership as no one who is not trustworthy shall be given any leadership responsibility either in public service or in private enterprise. The Prophets states that, *"Return the things kept*

with you as trust (Amanah) to their rightful owners”. Public Servants shall render public property to the citizens and private servants shall account to their masters.

Abolishing Racism and Discrimination

The Prophet (pbuh) states that, *“All humankind is from Adam (AS) and Hawwa (AS). An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab has superiority over an Arab; also a White has no superiority over a Black, nor does a Black have any superiority over a White - except by piety and good action.”* A human being is therefore judged entirely by his/her righteousness, not by his/her race, colour or socioeconomic status. Racism, discrimination, bigotry and social injustice are prohibited by Allah.

Upholding Servants/Employees Rights

The Farewell Sermon contains most of the Charter of Human Rights points, but this is only fully seen in the Glorious Qur'an. The Qur'an is the ultimate Charter of Human Rights. The Prophet spoke on some of those Human Rights points under the Servant/Employer relationship, when he states that, *“Oh, people, be mindful of those who work under you. Feed and clothe them as you feed and clothe yourselves”.*

Enshrine Socio-Economic Justice

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphasised the importance of socio-economic justice. Economic inequality happens

when wealth and opportunities are not distributed evenly within the society. This may lead to the poor being stuck at the low socio-economic situation that may lead into conflicts or even crises. He mentioned that, *“And give your wealth in Zakat”*. The practice of Zakat will ideally create a more just society through this wealth-sharing mechanism to achieve a fairer distribution of wealth and for the socio-economic development of the community. He also states that, *”Allah has forbidden you to take usury (interest). 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 interest”*.

Honour and respect the rights of women

The Prophet (pbuh) emphasised that, women are not the property of men that shall be treated anyhow. Women rights are given by Allah and no man can take them away from them. The Prophet (pbuh) emphasised the principles of mutual love, trust and respect in his Sermon that, *”O People, it is true that you have certain rights concerning your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives, only under Allah's trust and with his permission. I enjoin you to treat women well and be kind to them”*. He stated that, indeed women and men are partners. As partners, women and men complement one another. Being partners to each other, it

means that men and women share a lot of things together as husband and wife. In creating a harmonious living environment, there is a need to understand each other and to be kind to one another.

Hold Truthfully to the Teachings of Islam

Throughout his Sermon, the Prophet (pbuh) profoundly reminded Muslims about the importance of rights between humankind. He also reminded Muslims that after his departure from this World, there shall be no other Messenger of Allah after him. Therefore he was leaving two major guides for the Muslims, that is: the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah. He states, *"O people, no Prophet or Messenger will come after me and no new Faith will be born. Therefore, understand the words which I convey to you. I will leave you two things; the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and if you follow these you will never go astray"*.

The Prophet (pbuh) also gave Muslims the responsibility, to pass on the baton of his Messages and the Word of Islam and its goodness to others. It is, therefore, the duty of all Muslims to ensure the timeless Message of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) remain relevant to all time and to all localities. He states, *"All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; perhaps some of those who receive my words would understand them better than those who listened to me directly"*.

Chapter Two

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: THE HOME AND THE FAMILY

This Chapter is dedicated to the lessons that could be learnt from the childhood and the adulthood of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The Chapter extends to his complete home and family life and the excellent lessons that could be learnt from them.

THE EARLY LIFE OF THE PROPHET (pbuh)

The birth and the infant life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was extraordinary. Indeed there were the Divine blessings surrounding him, which clearly showed his extraordinary future life in advance. The major lessons to be learnt in his youthful life included the many reports about his humble nature and his love for action and not being lazy. Some reports tell of how he used to take the family's sheep to graze and was always kind even to those animals. While they grazed he would sit thinking about the mysteries of nature. Unlike those around him, he never worshipped the idols and had never sworn by them.

He also wondered why people were always struggling for power and money, and this saddened him and made him feel lonely, but he kept his feelings to himself. He was a quiet, thoughtful and lovable boy, and only played fair and just games with other boys of his age. Allah had prevented

him from doing anything foolish for He was keeping the young Muhammad (pbuh) for something much more important.

By the time Muhammad (pbuh) was twenty-five he was famous for his honesty. He was respected by everyone, including the elders of Mecca. The purity of his nature increased with the years. It seemed he had an inner knowledge that other people did not have. He believed in one God-Creator of the World, and he distinctly worshipped Him with all his heart and with all his soul. Muhammad (pbuh) was the finest of his people, the most kind, truthful and reliable person in Mecca. He was known among the Quraysh as “Muhammad the Trustworthy” (Muhammad al-Amin) because of the good qualities Allah had given him. He spent many quiet hours in a cave in Mount Hira, not far from Mecca, meditating about Allah. As a sign of his trustworthiness, Ibn Ishaq (2004) narrates that some years before Muhammad (SAW) was ordained as a Prophet by Allah, a serious flood occurred in Mecca, which destroyed the Ka’abah and necessitated its rebuilding. The responsibility for the rebuilding was shared among the progenies of Prophet Ismail (AS) who made up the Quraysh Tribe’s four Clans. Muhammad (SAW) belongs to this noble tribe therefore he helped with the reconstruction. This reconstruction did not cover the entire foundation of the Ka’abah as built by Prophet Ibrahim

(AS). Therefore, that marked the first time the Ka'abah acquired the cubical shape it has today, unlike the rectangular shape with one end curved, which it had earlier. The curved portion of the Ka'abah that was left out is called the "*Hateem*" and is currently marked out with a dwarf wall. There was then an argument by the four Clans of the Quraysh on which of them would fix the famous Black Stone on the corner of the Ka'abah. A consensus was reached for the Trustworthy Muhammad (pbuh) to fix the Stone, which would be put in a blanket, which shall be held by Leaders of the four Clans.

THE FIRST MARRIAGE OF MUHAMMAD (pbuh)

Among Quraysh was a respected and wealthy merchant woman called Khadijah. She was involved in trade and on hearing of Muhammad's reputation, sent for him and asked him to take her merchandise and trade with them in Syria. Muhammad (pbuh) agreed and left for Syria with one of Khadijah's caravans. With him went her trusted slave, Maysarah, who soon came to admire Muhammad (pbuh). He saw that he was quite different from all the other men of the Quraysh that he had interacted with.

Two unusual events took place during this journey which puzzled Maysarah very much. The first happened when they stopped to rest near the lonely home of a Monk. Muhammad (pbuh) sat under a tree while Maysarah was busy with some work. The monk came up to Maysarah

and asked, “Who is the man resting under the tree?” “One of the Quraysh, the people who guard the Ka’abah”, said Maysarah. “No one but a Prophet is sitting beneath this tree”, replied the Monk. The second event occurred on the journey back to Mecca. It happened at noon, when the sun is at its hottest. Maysarah was riding behind Muhammad (pbuh) and as the sun grew hotter he saw something appear above Muhammad (pbuh) and shielded him from the sun's harmful rays. The trading in Syria was very successful and Muhammad (pbuh) made more profit for Khadijah than she had ever received before.

When they returned to Mecca, Maysarah told Khadijah everything about the trip and what he had noticed about Muhammad’s character and behaviours; and the wonderful events pertaining the Monk and the Sun Shield.

Khadijah was a widow in her forties and as well as being rich and highly respected, she was also very beautiful. Many men wanted to marry her but none of them suited her. When she met Muhammad (pbuh), however, she thought he was very special. She sent a friend to ask Muhammad (pbuh) why he was not married. Muhammad (pbuh) said that it was because he had no money, to which the friend replied: “Supposing a rich, beautiful and noble lady agreed to marry you?” Muhammad (pbuh) wanted to know who that could be. The friend told him it was Khadijah. Muhammad (pbuh) was very happy, because

he greatly respected Khadijah. He went with his uncles, Abu Talib and Hamzah, to Khadijah's uncle, and asked his permission to marry her. The uncle gave his permission and soon after, Muhammad (pbuh) and Khadijah (RLA) were married.

THE FAMILY LIFE OF MUHAMMAD (pbuh)

The subsequent marriages of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the family life he led were outstanding examples of how a family should be. The Prophet was an excellent example of how to balance work and home life. No matter how much things have changed when it comes to entertainment and external influences, the humanity can still learn and hold on to his traditions of good character while taking care of the households and the families. Learning these examples by the parents and modelling them early can help the children build good habits to manage successful homes in their futures. Wendy Díaz (Mrs), a Puerto Rican Muslim writer living in Maryland, gives some examples that highlight the ways in which the Prophet (pbuh) conducted his family affairs at home that people can learn from.

Maintaining A Worship-World-Family Life Balance

The Prophet (pbuh) advised that, *“Your Lord has a right over you, your own self has a right over you (your work and your resting), and your family has a right over you; so give each one who has a right that which is*

due” (Bukhari). When he was giving this advice, he was addressing a companion who was neglecting his home to excel in worship and good deeds. The Prophet (pbuh) informed him that to truly achieve a balance, there must be justice and fairness with those inside and outside the home. Care should be taken to give appropriate time to spouses, children, and maintain a healthy house environment.

Imbibing Good Personal Hygiene

Maintaining our bodies healthy and clean should always be a priority and something that should be promoted throughout the day. The Prophet (pbuh) was an excellent role model in this regard. It was reported that when the Prophet (pbuh) arises at night, he will clean his mouth with the *siwak* (tooth-stick). He will also clean his mouth with *siwak* first thing when entering his house after being outside. Abu Huraira (RLA) reported that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, “*Verily, I am only like a father to you in the way that I teach you. When one of you goes to relieve himself, he should not face the direction of prayer or turn his back to it completely, and he should not cleanse himself with his right hand*”. Such minute issues like toilet manners were not left out by the Prophet (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) was informing his Companions (RLA) that he was advising them out of love just like a father would for his biological children. Therefore, it is incumbent upon people to teach

good manners and hygiene to their children and all those associated with them.

Establishing Prayers In The Home

The Five Daily Compulsory Prayers are incumbent on every adult male to be performed in congregation in the Masjid. However, Non-Compulsory *Nafil* Prayers are best observed in the house together with the family members. A family that prays together stays together. There are countless benefits in making a routine out of praying together; these include modelling good behaviour for everyone in the house, establishing a connection with Allah as a family, and prioritising prayer over other worldly affairs. The Prophet (pbuh) would wake up to pray and wake his family to pray. Aisha (RLA) said that during the last ten nights of the Month of Ramadan, it was their routine to wake up together for worship. She said, “When the last ten nights of Ramadan arrived, the Prophet (pbuh) would tighten his belt, spend the night in worship, and awaken his family” to do the same. It is therefore, important to organise a schedule of maintaining a lifestyle of family worship of Allah (SWT) throughout the year.

Being Patient During The Times Of Adversity

In marriage and in raising a family, there are times of prosperity and times of hardship; like in the story of Prophet Yusuf (AS) and the King’s dream of the fat cows and the lean cows. The Prophet’s home life was so

designed to teach lessons to humanity, otherwise who would expect food scarcity in the Prophet's house? If there was no food available in the home, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, would not complain or place demands on his family. Rather, he would make the intention to fast and carry on about his day while fasting. It was narrated that Aisha (RLA) said: *"The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would enter to the house and ask me: "Do you have any food?" If we said: "No", he would say: "Then I will be fasting". So he would continue fasting, then if we were given some food, he would break his fast"*. That was teaching people the dignity of patience in the face of adversity. This shows that being flexible teaches the family all about resilience, patience, and trusting Allah.

Sharing Responsibilities In The Home

Just imagine a Prophet and a Messenger of Allah doing household chores like cleaning, cooking, or serving. The thought should not be surprising because Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) helped his wives in household chores. That teaches people that: if he can do it, so can all other people and their children. When describing what the Prophet used to do at home, Aisha (RLA) said: *"He used to keep himself busy serving his family and when it was time for the prayer, he would go for the prayer"*. Not only will the Prophet (pbuh) help his family, but he will also tend to his own affairs without being asked. He will not wait for

other people to seek to help him with simple tasks. No matter how insignificant the job, he would do it himself. Aisha (RLA) was asked about what he would do in his spare time, she said: *“He did what one of you would do in his house. He mended sandals and patched garments and sewed.”* She also said, *“He was a man like other men. He removed the fleas from his garment and milked his sheep.”*

People should therefore teach their family members, particularly the children, to be responsible for their own belongings and to take care of the things at home that may not necessarily belong to them. Life at home is about teamwork and everyone in the family should be working together to keep things functional, clean, and organised.

Educating, Admonishing and Consulting The Family.

Whenever the Prophet (pbuh) was not busy with his Companions (RLA) outside or handling State Affairs, he would be at home educating, admonishing and consulting his family. He was especially compassionate when speaking with his Wives (RLA). He always admonished them to be upright in their worship of Allah and to be compassionate with all living things, be them human or animals or birds. Aisha (RLA) once said: *“I was on a camel that was somewhat intractable, and I began to beat it. The Prophet (pbuh) said to me, “You must be compassionate. Whenever there is compassion in something, it adorns it,*

and whenever it is removed from something it disgraces it". The Prophet (pbuh) will also consult his family on home affairs so as to create good home rapport. Indeed, the Prophet (pbuh) always dealt with his family and his all his people kindly, softly and lovely, so that they would gracefully accept his words and actions. He also involved them in consultations so as to make them an integral part of the daily system of affairs. Allah says of these in the Quran:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا
 مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا
 عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

And by the Mercy of Allah, you (Muhammad) dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah. Certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him). (Qur'an 3:159)

Being Generous With Guests, Maintaining Good Relationships With Relatives, And Assisting Those In Need

The Prophet (pbuh) taught his family that, one of the best ways that children can learn good manners is by assisting in home chores, in greeting and helping in the service of

guests. They should participate in meal preparation, serving food, and offering drinks. The Prophet (pbuh) taught the importance of these noble actions with the following words: *“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honour his guests. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him protect his neighbour. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak only of goodness or remain silent.”*

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is an embodiment of what he teaches. Recast back when he received the First Revelation and he was in fear of the ordeal, when his wife, Khadijah (RLA) comforted him, she said about his character: *“By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously, and assist those afflicted by calamity”*. From her words, the good qualities of her husband were leant as: being generous with guests, maintaining good relationships with relatives, and assisting those in need. These are the qualities every human being should strive to adhere to when dealing with family members at home, with visitors and with all other humans. The Prophet (pbuh) has been reported to have said that: *“No father has ever given a child a gift that is superior to education and good manners.”*

Chapter Three

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: THE DIVINE MESSAGE OF ISLAM

Allah's message through all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (AS) had always been the same, that is, "to worship One God-Allah; to be fair and just in their dealings; to shun all vices; to live a good life and to be at peace with one another". That is "monotheism"- meaning "Islam" in Arabic.

So much good is to be learnt in the Final Message of Islam as brought by Allah (SWT) through the Prophet and Messenger of Allah Muhammad (pbuh). The Arabic root word for Islam is "*silm*" or "*salaam*" that literally translates to "peace". Simply put, Islam means "peace with the soul and peace with the body". Peace with the soul includes "peace with Allah", that is to totally submit spiritually to Allah's will, decrees, rules and regulations as contained in the Qur'an and the Sunnah; and to worship Allah alone. Peace with the body includes handling day-to-day activities of the World, individually and/or collectively, as ordained by Allah through Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Here love, peace, faith and justice between and with one another come in.

This simplified definition of Islam exemplifies the fact that

all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (AS) and their followers practiced Islam as it was ordained by Allah during their lifetimes. All those generations were taught by the Prophets (AS) to worship Allah alone and stop associating Him with man-made idols or other objects like the sun, the moon, etc. that is “Islam”. Allah (SWT) explains this assertion in the Glorious Qur’an as follows:-

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ^ج

He (Allah) has ordained for you (Muslims) the same religion (Islamic Monotheism) which He ordained for Nuh (Noah), and that which We (Allah) revealed to you (Muhammad), and that which We ordained for Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus), saying you should establish the religion (of Islam, worship of One God) and make no divisions in it. (Qur’an 42:13)

The Glorious Qur’an, the Muslim Religious Book from Allah (SWT), the Sunnah, words, acts and actions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and all other genuine teachings of Islam clearly provide the Laws, rules and regulations of *ibadat* (worship) and *mu’amalat* (day-to-day dealings with each other). Islamic provisions cover the lives of Muslims from birth to death. They cover individual, family and community relations. They also cover National and International relations, be they economic, political or

social. Islam provides on how to tend pregnancy and how to receive a newborn baby. Islam has provisions for childcare up to puberty and old age. Islam has provisions for social and economic interactions between individuals, communities and Nations. Islam provides for such minute things as how to eat, drink, go to sleep, go to the toilet and how to bury the dead. Islam has provisions on how to rear domestic animals and birds and how to hunt wild ones. Islam has given men, women and children their rights and obligations. Islam prescribes the rights of animals and birds to such minute details as how to slaughter them without inflicting unnecessary pain, etc., etc.

A Book titled, “Life And Teachings Of The Prophet Muhammad, (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam)”, by Farida Khanam is an excellent reference material that gives brief concepts and the implications of worship in Islam. This Section gives credit to that Book by Farida.

WORSHIP OF ALLAH: THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

From the Divine Message of Islam, as presented by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), “Worship of Allah” is the sole purpose of the creation of Human Beings and the Jinn. The Qur’an states that:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥١﴾

And I (Allah) created not the Jinn and Humans except they

should Worship Me (Alone). (Qur'an 51:56)

Although worship's real connotations are humility and fearfulness, when the word is used in relation to Allah, it also includes the concept of love. Imam Ibn Kathir states that, in the Shari'ah, "worship" is used to express a condition of extreme love coupled with extreme humbleness and apprehension to Allah. The essence of worship then is to adopt an attitude of lowliness and humility before Allah by complete prostration of oneself before Him.

THE ESSENCE OF WORSHIP OF ALLAH

The Prophet (pbuh) has taught humanity that, what Allah desires of humans, first and foremost, is that they display humility in His presence. It is this attitude, which is called Worship of Allah by Believers. If the Believer has truly surrendered his being before Allah, then this spirit will manifest itself in his dealings with everyone he comes in contact with. This submission, which is a manifestation of true worship, can be divided into two categories: 1: The individual and 2: The collective.

As exemplified by the Prophet (pbuh), individual obedience means obeying Allah in those matters which are related to human's personal life. It covers all those commandments which pertain to morals and dealings with all humans, like speaking the truth, keeping one's promises, being honest and trustworthy, upholding justice, being a well-wisher for

all, etc. All this involves surrendering to the will of Allah in one's personal affairs as Allah clearly states:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَىٰ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ
الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا

It is not for a Believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, He has indeed strayed in a plain error.
(Qur'an 33:36)

In addition, this individual obedience is an obligation for every Believer, who has to mould his external life entirely on the pattern indicated by Allah, as follows: (2:208)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

O You who believe! Enter perfectly into Islam (by obeying all the laws, rules and regulations of the Islamic Religion) and follow not the footsteps of Satan. Verily! He (Satan) is to you a plain enemy. (Qur'an 2:208)

The second category, that is the collective, may be termed social commandments. These can be carried out only when the whole of the society is willing and able to obey them. That is why such commandments have always been sent by

Allah only when the Believers had already established a political organisation among themselves. Because only then are they in a position to enforce such social laws. That is why social laws are addressed only to a Muslim society, which is vested with authority, rather than to individuals who have no political or social power. As noted in the Life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), during the period at Mecca, only the basic parts of the Shari'ah were Revealed. The rest of the Shari'ah continued to be Revealed according to the circumstances. These laws are directed only at those groups of believers who are in a position to carry them out, as Allah never burdens humans with what they cannot bear. This is clearly stated in the Qur'an:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ
 رَبَّنَا لَا تَأْخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا
 كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ
 لَنَا بِهِ ۚ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا ۚ أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى

الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. (Believers pray that) "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into

error, Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us; Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are Our Maula (Patron, Supporter and Protector, etc.) and give us victory over the disbelieving people". (Qur'an 2:286)

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM IN BRIEF

In his Message of Islam, the Prophet (pbuh), in order to enable man to successfully carry out this life-long, life-giving duty, he has emphasised that Muslims must adhere to the Quran and the Hadith where the Five Pillars of Islam have been adequately addressed. After belief in Allah (SWT) and the Prophet (pbuh), four practices enjoy the status of Pillars of Islam, that is, Fasting, Prayers, Zakah (almsgiving) and the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).

These Five Principles form the Pillars of Islam. Just as a house stands on pillars, so does the Islamic Faith on these tenets. However, the performance of these rituals is not all that is desired, as of much importance is the true spirit in which these are performed. Without the spirit the form is meaningless. All these different observances: Faith, Prayer, Fasting, Charity and Pilgrimage: are not mere rituals, but they are the source of receiving the choicest Divine Blessings.

Prayer is an exercise in physical and mental prostration before Allah, aimed at banishing all notions of personal

greatness. Fasting teaches one to be steadfast in one's trust in Allah. Charity entails the recognition of others' claims upon one, so that one shall not forfeit one's own share in Allah's bounty. The Pilgrimage serves to unite the servants of Allah around their Maker.

The Spirit of Faith

One is required to testify to one's Faith, in the oneness of Allah (SWT) and the Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh). But its spirit lies in its acceptance. Through this article of Faith a man accepts Allah and all His attributes. He also accepts that Allah sent Muhammad (pbuh), to this World as the eternal guide for all mankind. If this reality reaches one's heart, it becomes a part of one's being. One's heart opens to the truth and reality. There are seven articles in the declaration of Faith. These are: to believe in one God-Allah, in His Angels, in His Revealed Books, in all of His Messengers, in the Last Day (the Day of Judgement), in *Taqdir* (the doctrine of predestination which means that everything good or bad is decided by Allah) and in the Life after Death. A true Believer is required not only to testify to his Faith by word of mouth only, but also to accept it with all his heart and soul.

The Spirit of Salat (Prayers)

The spirit of the Five Daily Prayers is humility. One who bows before his Creator in the true spirit will be devoid of pride and ego. The prayers are prescribed for five times

daily, that is at daybreak, at noon, at mid-afternoon, at sunset, and at the early night. Muslims have been admonished in the Qur'an to be steadfast in their prayers:

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ^ط إِنِ الصَّلَاةَ
تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ^ق وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ^ق وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا
تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Recite (O Muhammad) what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur'an), and perform As-Salat (Prayer). Verily, As-Salat (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahsha' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.) and the remembering (praising, etc.) of (you by) Allah (in front of the Angels) is greater indeed (than your remembering of Allah in prayers). And Allah knows what you do. (Qur'an 29:45)

The Spirit of Fasting

The Arabic term for Fasting is “*Sawm*” which means to abstain. It is aimed at detaching oneself from the World and devoting one's life entirely to Allah. The outer sign of Fasting is the abstention from food from morning till evening. But in its essence it is to withdraw from all worldly attachments, and reduce all mundane necessities to a minimum. The Fasting aims at weakening the material

aspect of man and strengthening the spirituality in him. Man is made up of body and soul. Just as the body requires physical nourishment, so must the soul be nourished spiritually. Certainly, Fasting results in physical discomfort; but Allah has nothing to gain from causing human beings unnecessary trouble and man has to satisfy his material needs; but if he wants to discover the truth it is essential, at least for a few fixed days, to retire from the material World in order to develop the spiritual part in him, so that he will be able to attain spirituality.

The Spirit of Zakah

Zakah, in reality, is a form of sacrifice meant to underlie those ethical values of the fulfilment of one's responsibilities towards others. Thus the spirit of Zakah is the service to mankind. It requires an annual contribution of 2.5 percent of an individual's money kept for a full year, and some prescribed amounts of specified foods and other items of wealth and assets. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as made it clear that, in Islam, the true owner of things is not man but Allah. People are given their wealth as a trust from Allah. Therefore, Zakah, far from being viewed as "charity," is an obligation for those who have received their wealth from Allah to help the less privileged members of the community who have not received such wealth.

The Spirit of Hajj

The root meaning of the word, "Hajj" is to set out or to

make a pilgrimage. Canonically it has come to refer to the act of worship performed annually in the Month of Dhul Hijjah, the twelfth Month of the Islamic Calendar. At least once in his or her lifetime, every adult Muslim who is physically and financially able is required to make the sacrifice of time, money, comforts, to become a Pilgrim totally at Allah's service. The pilgrims wear simple garments, two seamless white clothes for men and a dress that entirely covers the body, except the face and hands, for women. These coverings symbolise purity as well as the unity and equality of all believers.

Among Muslim acts of worship, Hajj holds a pre-eminent position. But it is not just the rites of pilgrimage that constitute this importance; it is the spirit in which Hajj is performed. Hajj has been prescribed so that it may inspire pilgrims with a new religious fervour. To return from Hajj with one's Faith in Allah strengthened and rekindled: that is the hallmark of a true pilgrim. Hajj reigns supreme in acts of devotion, just as the Sacred Masjid of the Ka'abah in Mecca has a station above any other Masjid, so the worship that is performed there, as part of the pilgrimage, stands head and shoulders above all other acts of devotion.

Chapter Four

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: THE SUPREMACY OF KNOWLEDGE IN ALL ACTIONS

The prime Message of Islam began with knowledge without which nothing can be achieved in Life, so stated the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (pbuh). For the worship of Allah (SWT) and for worldly affairs, first and foremost a person must strive to be educated. Nothing can be achieved spiritually or otherwise without knowledge. You cannot worship Allah in ignorance. You cannot practice any trade or delve into production or manufacture without knowledge. You cannot treat the sick without knowledge. You cannot be a successful farmer, trader or leader without knowledge. Nothing can be done without the knowledge of how it is done. The momentous achievements of the early Muslims in spiritual matters and in science and technology due largely to their vast knowledge cannot be overemphasised.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

In order to appreciate the importance of knowledge, just cast the minds on how a newborn baby learns to suckle milk from his mother's breasts, how he learns to eat food and drink water, how he learns to crawl, walk, speak, etc. A baby becomes a mature being only after having undergone

training in all the aspects of life for several years. Indeed, the first Revelation from Allah (SWT) to the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (pbuh) was to seek for knowledge. Allah says,

أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَقْرَأْ
وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). **Read!** And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has **taught** (the writing) by the pen. He has **taught** man that which he knew not. (Qur'an 96:1-5).

Allah (SWT) said in Hadisil Qudsi that,

فاعرفوني قبل أن تعبدوني وان لم تعرفوني كيف تعبدوني؟

*You should **know** Me before you worship Me and if you do not **know** Me, how can you worship Me?*

Allah (SWT) therefore made knowledge come before anything including worshipping Him. Al-Tirmidhi reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said,

*There is nothing parents can bequeath to their children that is more precious than adequate **education**".*

Al Baihaqi reports that, the Prophet (pbuh) said,

اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين

*Seek for **knowledge** even if it means going to Sin (China).*

The words of Allah (SWT) and those of the Prophet (pbuh) quoted above point to the importance of religious and all other forms of education. As people learn how to worship Allah (SWT) from Muslim clerics, people were instructed also to seek for other forms of knowledge on worldly affairs (like commerce, industry, science, technology, etc) from whoever could teach them. The Prophet (pbuh) wouldn't ask Muslims to travel to China to learn Islam, but it was definitely to learn some form of manufacturing or trade, for which China was, and is still famous today.

Many predicaments today are first and foremost hinged on the people's lack of adequate education. Many Muslims are not learned enough on the rudiments of the Religion of Islam, thereby making them easy targets of destruction through the manipulation of Islamic injunctions.

Likewise the people of other Faiths, they are illiterates in the rudiments of their Religions leading to all sorts of chaos.

Many Muslims, for example, are pushed into acts that are clearly un-Islamic but made to believe that they were performing Islamic duties due to gross ignorance.

Many Muslims do not know the Islamic injunctions pertaining to **Jihad, martyrdom, murder or suicide**; therefore they are sometimes pushed into murder in the name of Jihad or martyrdom.

ISLAMIC KNOWLEDGE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE GREAT ISLAMIC CIVILISATION

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) set the foundation for Islamic Knowledge, which led to the Great Islamic Civilisation that started the developments, which culminated into today's unprecedented developments.

A lot has been written and said about the Islamic Civilisation. But what is it? Islamic Civilisation could be defined as an advanced level of social and cultural development, which makes the Muslim Community (the *Ummah*) distinct from other communities and which makes life more comfortable for Muslims and those who live with them.

The extremely rapid and unprecedented wide spread of Islam within its first 100 years brought with it a civilisation the type of which was never witnessed and on which today's so-called Western Civilisation was built.

The era of Islamic Civilisation spanned a period of about 1,000 years, from Islam's 1st to its 10th century, i.e. from about 700 to 1,700 AD. During this period, engineers, scholars and traders of the Islamic world contributed enormously to the arts, agriculture, economics, industry, literature, navigation, philosophy, the sciences, and technology, both by preserving and building upon earlier traditions and by adding many inventions and innovations of their own.

By the year 900 AD, Muslims had established an Islamic Caliphate, the largest the world had ever seen. About that period, an Islamic Civilisation was inaugurated by the ascension of the Abbasid Caliphate named after the Prophet's uncle, Al-Abbas (RLA), and the transfer of the Capital to Baghdad in Iraq from Damascus in Syria that was under the Umayyad named after Caliph Mu'aweyah, who succeeded Caliph Ali bin Abu Talib (RLA)

The Abbasids were influenced by the Qur'an and Hadith injunctions that stress the value of knowledge. During this period the Muslim world became the unrivalled intellectual centre for science, philosophy, medicine and education, as the Abbasids championed the cause of knowledge and established the equivalent of today's University called, *Baitul Hikma* (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad; where both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars gathered and translated all the world's knowledge into the Arabic language.

Many classical works that would otherwise have been lost were translated into Arabic and later in turn translated into Turkish, Persian, Hebrew and Latin. During this period, the Muslim World was a huge reservoir of cultures that collected, analysed and significantly improved on the knowledge gained from the ancient Roman, Chinese, Indian, Persian, Egyptian, North African, Greek and Byzantine civilisations.

Other Muslim dynasties, such as the Fatimid of Egypt, the descendants of Fatimah (RLA), the Prophet's daughter and the Umayyad who moved from Damascus to al-Andalusia (Spain) set up major intellectual centres with cities, such as Cairo (home of today's second oldest World University, Al-Azhar University) and Cordoba (in Spain) rivalling Baghdad in knowledge.

A major achievement of Islamic Civilisation was paper making that resulted in paper mills being built in Samarqand and Baghdad as improvement over those of the Chinese. The Muslims improved upon the Chinese techniques of using mulberry bark by using starch that accounted for the Muslim preference for pens instead of Chinese brushes.

By 900 AD, there were hundreds of businesses employing scribes and binders for books in Baghdad, and even public libraries began to be established, including the first lending libraries of the world. From here paper-making spread west up to Fez in North Africa and then to al-Andalusia (Spain) and from there to Europe in the 13th century AD.

Even prior to the advent of Islam, the city of Mecca had served as a centre of trade in Arabia, thereby bringing about both the exchange of ideas and of goods. Therefore, with Islam coming, the influence held by Muslim merchants over African-Arabian and Arabian-Asian trade routes became tremendous. As a result, the Islamic

civilisation grew and expanded on the basis of its merchant economy that is mobile in nature, in contrast to the Christian, Indian and the Chinese, who built societies from agricultural and landholding economy that is static in nature.

Muslim Merchants took goods and the Islamic Faith to Sinn (China) (now having over 450 million Muslims), Southeast Asia (now having over 230 million Muslims), Central Asia, the Kingdoms of North, West and East Africa, Persia and ancient Antonia (Turkey). Sufi Missionaries also played a big role in the spread of Islam, by bringing their message to various regions around the world. Below are some brief specifics on the Great Islamic Civilisation.

Islamic Art and Architecture

Islamic art and architecture refers to the works of art and architecture produced by Muslims and other people who lived within the territory that was predominantly inhabited by Islamic populations and led by Muslims.

Islamic art frequently adopts the use of geometrical floral or vegetal designs in a repetition known as arabesque. Such designs are highly non-representational, as Islam forbids representational depictions as found in pre-Islamic pagan, Jewish and Christian religions. Arabic calligraphy is a beautiful decoration in Islamic art, and is usually expressed in the form of Qur'anic verses. Two of the main scripts

involved are the symbolic *kufic* and *naskh* scripts, which can be found adorning the walls and domes of mosques, the sides of *minbars*, etc.

The designs of Islamic architecture have always been distinguished by repetition, radiating structures and geometrical patterns, especially for mosques and palaces and generally for all Muslim dwellings and other buildings at varying extents.

The role of domes in Islamic architecture has been considerable. Its usage spans centuries, first appearing in 691 AD with the construction of the Dome of the Rock Mosque (the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem), and recurring up to 1650 AD with the construction of the Taj Mahal Mosque (one of the seven wonders of the world located in India). Islamic domes had been incorporated into Western architecture in palaces, Churches, etc. in France, Italy, Germany, England and other European countries.

From between the eighth and eighteenth centuries AD, the use of glazed ceramics was prevalent in Islamic buildings. The first Islamic opaque glazed tiles can be found as blue-painted ware in Basra, Iraq, dating to around the 8th century AD. Other centres for innovative ceramic pottery in the Islamic world included Fustat (from 975 to 1075 AD), Damascus (from 1100 to around 1600 AD) and Tabriz (from 1470 to 1550 AD).

Science and Technology

Muslim scientists made significant advances in mathematics and astronomy. The mathematician Al-Khwarizmi, from whose name the word “algorithm” derives, contributed significantly to algebra (which is named after his book, *Kitab al-Jabr*).

Recent studies show that ancient Muslim artists were aware of advanced decagonal geometry (discovered half a millennium later in the 1970s and 1980s in the West) and used it in intricate decorative tile-work in their architecture.

The knowledge of gunpowder was also transmitted to the West by Islamic countries. The knowledge of chemical processes (alchemy or chemistry in English) and distillation (to extract alcohol- for medical use- and pure liquids for lawful use) spread to Europe from the Muslim world.

Agriculture and Trade

Advances were made in irrigation and farming, using technology, such as the windmill, advanced shadoofs, etc. Crops, such as almonds and citrus fruit, were brought to Europe through al-Andalusia, and sugar cultivation was gradually adopted by the Europeans.

Arab merchants dominated trade in the Indian Ocean until the arrival of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Hormuz was an important centre for this trade. There was also a dense network of trade routes in the Mediterranean, along which Muslim countries traded with each other and with European powers, such as Venice, Genoa and Catalonia. The silk trade route crossing Central Asia passed through Muslim states between China and Europe.

Medicine

Muslim physicians contributed significantly to the field of medicine, including the subjects of anatomy and physiology. They included the 15th century AD Persian, Mansur ibn Muhammad ibn al-Faqih Ilyas, whose work, entitled *Tashrih al-Badan* (Anatomy of the body), contained comprehensive diagrams of the body's structural, nervous and circulatory systems. Also included is the work of the Egyptian physician, Ibn al-Nafis, with his theory of pulmonary circulation.

Abu'l Qasim al-Zahrawi (Abulcasis) contributed to the discipline of medical surgery with his *Kitab al-Tasrif* (the Book of Concessions), which was considered a medical encyclopaedia and was later translated into Latin and used in European and Muslim medical schools for centuries. Other medical advancements came in the fields of pharmacology and pharmacy.

Some Specific Examples of the Islamic Civilisation

At the time of the rise and growth of Islamic Civilisation, Muslims led in all intellectual, social and economic activities. However, the West misrepresented this fact to their advantage and claimed Islamic successes as theirs and not that of the Muslim Ummah. Below are a few of those misrepresentations:-

The Western claim: The first mention of man in flight was by Roger Bacon, who drew a flying apparatus around 1250 AD.

The fact: Abbas Ibn Firnas of Islamic Spain (Andalusia) invented, constructed and tested a flying machine around 800 AD. That was about 450 years before Roger Bacon.

The Western claim: Isaac Newton's 17th century AD study of lenses, light and prisms formed the foundation of the modern science of optics.

The fact: About 600 years before Isaac Newton (in the 11th century AD) Ibn Al-Haytham determined virtually everything that Newton advanced regarding optics. He was thus regarded as the "founder of optics" and his works were utilised and quoted by a greater number of European scholars during the 16th and 17th centuries than those of Newton and Galileo combined.

The Western claim: Gunpowder was developed in the Western world from Roger Bacon's works in 1242 AD.

The fact: Researches by world renowned historians, Reinuad and Fave, had clearly shown that gunpowder was formulated initially by Muslim chemists. These historians asserted that the Muslims developed the first fire-arms.

The Western claim: Robert Boyle, in the 17th century, originated the science of Chemistry.

The fact: A variety of Muslim chemists, including Ar-Razi, al-Jabr (the founder of Algebra), Al-Biruni and al-Kindi, performed scientific experiments in chemistry some 700 years before Boyle. Mr Durant clearly asserted that the Muslims introduced the experimental method to the science of chemistry and Mr Humboldt regarded the Muslims as the founders of chemistry.

The Western claim: Galileo (17th century) was the world's first great experimenter.

The fact: About 700 years before Galileo, Al-Biruni (d. 1048 AD) was the world's first great experimenter. He wrote over 200 books, many of which discuss his precise experiments. His literary works in the sciences amounted to over 13,000 pages, far exceeding those written by Galileo or even by Galileo and Newton combined.

The Western claim: The first surgery performed under inhalation-anaesthesia was conducted by Dr C W Long, an American, in 1845 AC.

The fact: Eight hundred years before Dr Long, Islamic

Spain's Az-Zahrawi (d 1013 AD) and Ibn Zuhri (d 1161 AD), among other Muslim surgeons, performed hundreds of surgeries under inhalation-anaesthesia with the use of narcotic-soaked sponges, which were placed over the face.

The Western claim: Kerosene was first produced by an Englishman, Mr Abraham Gesner, in 1853 AD. He distilled it from asphalt.

The fact: Muslim chemists produced kerosene as a distillate from petroleum products over 1,000 years before Mr Gesner (see “Petroleum” in Encyclopaedia Britannica)

Examples of Muslims Intellectual Contributions

The table below shows a partial list of Muslims whose intellectual contributions brought to the fore the Islamic Civilisation. Europe built on their works and rarely mentioned them, and where they are mentioned, their names are Latinised or changed in order to obscure their identity, their origin, and their association with Islam. (All dates are “AD” as they refer to them)

<u>Jabir Ibn Haiyan</u> (Geber)	Chemistry (Father of Chemistry)	Died 803
<u>Al-Asmai</u>	Zoology, Botany, Animal Husbandry.	740 – 828
<u>Al-Khwarizmi</u> (Algorizm)	Mathematics, Astronomy, Geography. (<u>Algorithm</u> ,	770 – 840

	Algebra, calculus)	
Amr ibn Bahr <u>Al-Jahiz</u>	Zoology, Arabic Grammar, Rhetoric.	776 – 868
Ibn Ishaq <u>Al-Kindi (Alkindus)</u>	Philosophy, Physics, Optics, Medicine, Mathematics, Metallurgy.	800 – 873
Thabit Ibn <u>Qurrah (Thebit)</u>	Astronomy, Mechanics, Geometry, Anatomy.	836 – 901
Abbas Ibn <u>Firnas</u>	The Mechanics of Flight, Artificial Crystals.	Died 888
Ali Ibn Rabban <u>Al-Tabari</u>	Medicine, Mathematics, Calligraphy, Literature.	838 – 870
<u>Al-Battani</u> (Albategnius)	Astronomy, Mathematics, Trigonometry.	858 – 929
Al-Farghani (Alfraganus)	Astronomy, Civil Engineering.	C. 860
<u>Ar-Razi</u> (Rhazes)	Medicine, Ophthalmology, Smallpox, Chemistry, Astronomy.	864 – 930
<u>Al-Farabi</u> (Alpharabius)	Sociology, Logic, Philosophy, Political Science, Music.	870 – 950

Abul Hasan Ali Al-Masu'di	Geography, History.	Died 957
<u>Al-Sufi (Azophi)</u>	Astronomy	903 – 986
Abu Al-Qasim <u>Az-Zahrawi</u> (<u>Albucasis</u>)	Surgery, Medicine. (the Father of Modern Surgery)	936 – 1013
Muhammad Al-Buzjani	Mathematics, Astronomy, Geometry, Trigonometry.	940 – 997
Ibn <u>Al-Haitham</u> (<u>Alhazen</u>)	Physics, Optics, Mathematics.	965 – 1040
<u>Al-Mawardi</u> (<u>Alboacen</u>)	Political Science, Sociology, Jurisprudence, Ethics.	972 – 1058
Abu Raihan <u>Al-Biruni</u>	Astronomy, Mathematics. (first to Determine the Earth's Circumference)	973-1048
<u>Ibn Sina</u> (<u>Avicenna</u>)	Medicine, Philosophy, Mathematics, Astronomy.	981 – 1037
<u>Al-Zarqali</u> (<u>Arzachel</u>)	Astronomy (Invented the Astrolabe).	1028 – 1087
<u>Omar Al-Khayam</u>	Mathematics, Poetry.	1044 – 1123
<u>Al-Ghazali</u>	Sociology, Theology,	1058 – 1111

<u>(Algazel)</u>	Philosophy.	
Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Yahya (Ibn Bajjah)	Philosophy, Medicine, Mathematics, Astronomy, Poetry, Music.	1106 – 1138
<u>Ibn Zuhr</u> <u>(Avenzoar)</u>	Surgery, Medicine.	1091 – 1161
<u>Al-Idrisi</u> <u>(Dreses)</u>	Geography (drew the first World Map, First Globe).	1099 – 1166
Ibn Tufayl, Abdubacer	Philosophy, Medicine, Poetry.	1110 – 1185
<u>Ibn Rushd</u> <u>(Averroes)</u>	Philosophy, Law, Medicine, Astronomy, Theology.	1128 – 1198
<u>Al-Bitruji</u> <u>(Alpetragius)</u>	Astronomy	Died 1204
<u>Ibn Al-Baitar</u>	Pharmacy, Botany	Died 1248
Nasir Al-Din <u>Al-Tusi</u>	Astronomy, Geometry.	1201 – 1274
Jalal Al-Din Rumi	Sociology	1207 – 1273
<u>Ibn Al-Nafis</u>	Anatomy	1213 – 1288

Damishqui		
Al-Fida (Abdulfeda)	Astronomy, Geography, History.	1273 – 1331
Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (Ibn Battuta)	World Traveller. 120,000 km voyage from Morocco to China and back.	1304 – 1369
<u>Ibn Khaldun</u>	Sociology, the Philosophy of History, Political Science.	1332 – 1395
<u>Ulugh Beg</u>	Astronomy	1393 – 1449

THE PROPHET (pbuh) AND KNOWLEDGE

It is an undeniable fact that, the relevance of the Islamic Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) led to the advancement of the Islamic Civilisation. Another undeniable fact is that, the Islamic Civilisation led to the advancement of today's science and technology, which the Muslim World is denied credit to.

Chapter Five

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: POWER AND LEADERSHIP

One of the areas where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is greatly praised by Muslims and Non-Muslims alike was his ability to establish the Muslim Community (the *Ummah*) that grew into the Muslim Nation and ultimately into the great Muslim State of an unprecedented nature within his 23 years of Active Life on Earth.

In establishing the very powerful Muslim Community, Nation and State, the Prophet (pbuh) had always been guided by the fact of Allah's ultimate authority over Power and Leadership; as contained in the Glorious Qur'an:

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ
تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

Say (O Muhammad): "O Allah! Possessor of the Kingdom (power and authority), You give the Kingdom to whom You will, and You take the Kingdom from whom You will, and You endow with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is all the good. Verily, You are able to do all things. (Qur'an 3:26)

Some points are made here very clearly: one being that the actual possessor of power is Allah and that it is He who grants power on Earth to whom He wants and it is He who takes away power from whomsoever He wants. So the whole matter in this regard rests with Allah. Thus the dominance or subjugation by any leader of any group, community or nation, is ultimately for Allah to decide. Here what comes to light is that political or any form of power is totally governed by Allah, just as the entire Universe is running in accordance with His divine plan. It is like saying that, just as Allah exercises full power over the setting and rising of the Sun, so also has He full power over the granting of political or any form of ascendancy.

THE CONCEPT OF GOOD LEADERSHIP

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was an embodiment of a good leadership. His successive successors who held the titles of “*Amirul Mumineen*” (Caliph or Leader of the Faithful) were also embodiments of good leadership. Leadership in Islam is so important that whenever Muslims pray, they must appoint an Imam to lead in the prayers.

To buttress the importance of leadership, Allah (SWT) placed leaders as third in the hierarchy of those to be obeyed, after Him and the Prophet (pbuh). Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ^ط

فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

O You who Believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority (Leaders). (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and his Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (Qur'an 4:59).

Obedience here is premised on the fact that, Allah and His Messenger must always be obeyed. But Leaders (including parents) shall only be obeyed if they give lawful instructions.

The Prophet (pbuh) emphasized the importance of leadership; as narrated by Abu Huraira (RLA) where the Prophet said, “*Whenever three people are to be on a journey, they must appoint one of them to be the leader*” (Reported by Abu Daud).

Also, Ibn Umar (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, “*Every one of you is a guardian (shepherd) and steward (responsible) for his immediate charge and is accountable (to Allah) for those people (or things) that are committed to his charge. A leader is a steward in respect of those who are placed under him. A man is a steward in respect of his family and others in the household. A woman*

is a steward in respect of her husband's property and children. In short, everyone is a steward and is accountable (to Allah) for those people and things placed under his care".

ELECTING OR SELECTING GOOD LEADERSHIP

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has amply emphasised that it is only by having good leadership that the Community or Nation can unite, progress and be able to ward off all the verbal and physical aggressions against it. Therefore, people must strive to elect or select good leaders in order to be able to attain felicity in this World and in the Hereafter.

The much talked about "democracy" or government by the people, for the people and of the people, is not a new phenomenon in Islam. Whether by election or by selection, Islam has provisions for the appointment of good leaders in a most "democratic" way. In Islam, the mode of appointing leaders changes with time and exigencies. The first Successors of the Prophet (pbuh), generally known as the "Caliphs", were appointed through slightly different ways. Muslim scholars are agreed that time could change the mode of appointing leaders, as long as the method used is not repugnant to the Shari'ah. The Prophet (pbuh) was appointed by Allah (SWT) to lead humanity. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr (RLA) was unanimously selected by the group of Muslim Elders as the Prophet (pbuh) did not nominate anyone to succeed him after his death. The

second Caliph, Umar (RLA) was nominated by Abubakar (RLA) to succeed him after his death. Therefore, it could be seen that within a set of three leaders, the mode of the appointment differed. A confirmation of this was as follows:-

Abdullahi bin Umar (RLA) narrated that Caliph Umar (RLA) was asked, *“Will you nominate your successor?”* He answered, *“If I nominate a successor, I am right since someone better than me did so”*. (He was referring to Caliph Abubakar who nominated him as a successor). *“If I leave the matter undecided, I am right since someone better than me did so”*. (He was referring to the Prophet pbuh who did not nominate a successor). He continued that, *“People are of two kinds, i.e. those who want to be Caliphs and those who want be free from its responsibility. I do not want to bear the burden of caliphate responsibility after my death as I do now”*. He meant that when you nominate a successor and he messes up you will share the burden with him in the Hereafter. So he did not nominate a successor. (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

The general consensus of the *Ulama* (Muslim Scholars) is that Muslims must elect or select good leaders based on the qualities of leadership, as enshrined in the Shari’ah. The method to be followed must be just and transparent. It could be by consensus (“unopposed” in modern parlance) or by an electoral college or by an open or secret ballot.

Islam encourages giving leadership to those who merit it. Allah (SWT) assists such leaders and in most cases those who are led by such deserving leaders will most willingly assist them in the discharge of their responsibilities. On the other hand, Islam discourages giving leadership to those who clamour and manoeuvre for it, because in most cases they have sinister motives for doing so. Allah does not help such people; neither will those being led assist them! So the attainment of leadership positions through clamouring and manoeuvring usually spells disaster for the leaders and the people they lead.

AbdulRahman ibn Samura (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said to him, *“Oh AbdulRahman, do not clamour for leadership. If you are appointed to a leadership position without clamouring for it (i.e. on merit), you will be assisted in discharging the responsibility (by Allah and the people you lead). If you are appointed to a leadership position because you clamoured for it, you will find obstacles in the discharge of your responsibilities”*. (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, *“A time will come when people will be clamouring for positions of authority. You better know that this will be a source of worry and regret on the Day of Judgement”* (Reported by Bukhari).

The Prophet (pbuh) spoke those words over 1,440 years

ago and people are now witnessing their effects! People clamour, manoeuvre, rig, kill, maim and destroy lives and properties with a view to becoming leaders. Nations are all suffering for these ignominious acts that are prevalent in many countries today.

However, as usual with the beauty of Islam, there are times when general rules are exempted from being implemented in a *dharura* (special or emergency) situation. For example, it is compulsory to Fast during the Month of *Ramadan*, but if you are sick, you may not Fast. Likewise you can perform the five obligatory prayers seated or even lying down if you cannot stand up. In a similar vein, the rule that one should not clamour for leadership can be set aside. For example, if you see that someone is about to be appointed into a position he is not qualified to occupy and you are better qualified for the job, you are bound to say so in order not to allow the person to turn out to be a bad leader. The justification for this was drawn from the case of Prophet Yusuf (AS) who asked the King of Egypt that he be placed to head the Egyptian Food Stores because he was more trustworthy and knowledgeable than all those clamouring for the job. The Glorious Qur'an reports this as follows:-

قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

(Yusuf) said: *Set me over the store-houses of the Land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge* (Qur'an 12:55).

THE BASIC QUALITIES OF GOOD LEADERS

Islam likens leaders to drivers. A good driver is expected to drive his passengers safely to their destinations. Even if the vehicle develops some minor mechanical faults along the way, a good driver uses his expertise to drive safely. However, it doesn't matter how good a vehicle is, as long as the driver is a bad one, accidents are likely to happen and if the vehicle is in bad shape, that worsens the matter. Likewise, good leaders deliver the "dividends of democracy" to their people, especially in a wealthy Nation. They also manage to turn a poor Nation into a wealthy one and make life meaningful for its citizens. Therefore, good leaders would ensure that the people of their Nations are united, becomes strong and progressive, and able to ward off all aggressions against it.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has demonstrated how and what a good leader should be. Muslim Scholars have, over several centuries, studied the Life and Times of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), those of his Companions (RLA) and those of good Muslim Leaders; and advanced what they deduced as the qualities of a good leader. Ten of such leadership qualities are discussed below:

1. A Good Leader must have Knowledge and Wisdom

People who are not knowledgeable and lack wisdom in their approach to daily affairs should not be made leaders. For example, if a carpentry trade group wants to appoint a

Chairman to lead it, the most qualified person will be a skilled carpenter, who is full of wisdom in handling people and has knowledge in carpentry affairs.

At the national level, a well educated and experienced person who is full of wisdom will make a better National Leader than a dull and illiterate person. Those chosen by Allah (SWT) to be His Prophets and Messengers (AS) were given knowledge and wisdom before they were asked to embark on their assignments. Indeed, Allah instructed Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to call people to His Way of Islam with wisdom and fair preaching. Allah says,

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُمْ بَالَّتِي
هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

Invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the Way of Your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'an) and fair preaching (of good knowledge), and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, Your Lord knows best who has gone astray from his path, and He is the best aware of those who are guided. (Qur'an 16:125)

The greatest leaders in history, known to the Glorious Qur'an and the Holy Bible (and by extension to billions of

Muslims and Christians), were King Da'ud (AS) (David) and his son, King Sulaiman (AS) (Solomon). Both were endowed with knowledge and wisdom before they were made Great Kings and Prophets by Allah (SWT). Allah says,

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ
 الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

And We (Allah) made Sulaiman (Solomon) to understand, and to each of them We gave wisdom and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify Our praises along with Dawud (David), and it was We who were the doers (of All These things). (Qur'an 21:79)

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِى فَضَّلَنَا
 عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

And indeed We (Allah) gave knowledge to Dawud (David) and Sulaiman (Solomon), and they both said: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, who has preferred us above many of His believing slaves!" (Qur'an 27:15)

There is no basis for comparison between a knowledgeable person who is full of wisdom and a stark illiterate who is dull! Therefore, good leaders are those who have knowledge and wisdom.

2. A Good Leader must be Fair and Just

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was an embodiment of fairness and justice. Muslim scholars are all agreed that justice and fairness sustain leadership and injustice and tyranny destroy leadership. People must therefore ensure that only fair and just rulers lead them. When a leader tyrannises and inflicts injustice upon any person, and he is not appropriately punished in this World (because he enjoys political might or immunity), he will pay back on the Day of Judgement (where there is no political immunity).

Unjust and unfair rulers who tyrannise people were referred to by the Prophet (pbuh) as “paupers”. Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) asked us, “*Do you know who is a pauper?*” Someone among the people replied, “*Among us, a pauper is one who has nothing in cash or in property*”. The Prophet (pbuh) said, no, “*A pauper among my people is one who faces the Day of Judgement with a good record of Salat, Fasting and Zakkat, but who has unjustly abused this one, poured calumny on that one, devoured the property of the third, shed the blood of the fourth and beaten a fifth. Then each one of them shall be allotted a portion of his good deeds as compensation (by Allah). Should his good deeds not be enough, then the bad deeds of those others shall be transferred from them to him and he will be thrown into Hell-fire*”. (Reported by Muslim)

Allah (SWT) instructed leaders in particular and all people in general (several times) to be fair and just in all their dealings. Some of such several Allah's instructions are as follows:

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴾

Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is ever All Hearer, All Seer. (Qur'an 4:58)

﴿ يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ تَلَوْرَأْ أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴾

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah; even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both (than you). So do not follow the

lusts (of your hearts), lest you avoid justice. (Qur'an 4:135).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۚ اَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as just witnesses; and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety; and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do. (Qur'an 5:8).

At the beginning of this Section, it was related how the Prophet (pbuh) described the unfair and the unjust as “paupers” in the Hereafter. What then is the reward for those who are fair and just in the Hereafter? The Prophet (pbuh) said that seven sets of people will enjoy a special shade from Allah on the Day of Judgment; and the set that is made up of the Fair and the Just Leaders was mentioned first before the other six sets.

Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, “Seven sets of people shall be shaded by Allah in His special shade on the day when there is no shade except that of Allah. Those people are, first a just leader...” (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

Abdullah bin Amr bin As (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, *“The just shall be on the brightly-lighted first-rows in front of Allah (on the Day of Judgment). Those are the ones who were just in their dealings with their families and in running that which was entrusted to them as leaders.* (Reported by Muslim)

3. A Good Leader must be Honest, Trustworthy and Strong and Healthy

Honesty and sincerity lead to trustworthiness, which is a major quality of good leadership. Dishonest and untrustworthy people cannot make good leaders, as they cannot discharge their responsibilities creditably well. Good leaders hold a nation’s income in trust and expend it in the interest of the people they lead. Therefore, when people want to “hire” a “servant” to work for them (as leaders now to call themselves “public servants”) the people should look for a combination of honesty, trustworthiness and strength of character in such persons to be “hired”. Allah says,

...إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ أَسْتَجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ ﴿٢٦﴾

...Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy. (Qur'an 28:26).

Muslim reported that Abu Dharr (RLA) asked the Prophet (pbuh), *“Oh the Messenger of Allah, wouldn't you appoint me to an office?”* The Prophet (pbuh) touched him on his

shoulders and said, “*Oh Abu Dharr, you are a weak person and an office is a trust and a source of limitations and remorse on the Day of Judgment except for him who takes it up with a full sense of responsibility and duly discharges its obligations*”. (Riyadhul Saliheen).

4. A Good Leader must be Able to Fulfil His Promises

It is a very common practice today for leaders not to fulfil their promises. This is a grave error, as Allah hates those who do not fulfil their promises and people do not have an iota of respect for such leaders. Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾

O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do. (Qur'an 61:2-3).

ج... وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا ﴿٢٤﴾

And fulfill (every) promise (covenant). Surely, you will be questioned about your promises (by Allah). (Qur'an 17:34).

5. A Good Leader must Shun Bribery, Corruption and Embezzlement

Bribery, corruption and embezzlement are three evils that bedevil particularly governments of developing nations. These evils contribute greatly to the decay in both the

public and private sectors. Therefore good leaders must shun them and those who indulge in them should be booted out and sanctioned according to the laws of the land. Allah strongly warned against betraying trust (i.e. bribery, corruption and embezzlement) when He says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمْنَتَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

O you who believe! Betray not (the trusts of) Allah and His Messenger, nor betray (embezzle) knowingly things entrusted to you. (Qur'an 8:27).

Abu Hamid Sa'idi (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, “If I appoint any one of you to go and perform a duty as prescribed by Allah (e.g. collect Zakat) and he then comes to me and says, this is for the assignment you sent me and this is a gift given to me. If it is true that it is a free gift, why was he not given it when he was in his parent's house? I swear by the Almighty Allah that if any one of you receives anything in the form of bribery, he will come before Allah carrying that thing on the Day of Judgement. I would therefore not want to see anyone of you carrying a howling camel or a bleating goat on his shoulders in front of Allah”. (Bukhari)

What irony! Just imagine how many tonnes of Naira or how many barrels of crude oil or how many tonnes of

fertilisers some people will come carrying on their shoulders in front of Allah on the Day of Judgement!

Adiyy ibn Umaira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, *“If I appoint anyone of you to any position and he takes or receives a needle or anything smaller than that, in the form of bribery or embezzlement, he will be called to bring that thing out on the Day of Judgement”*. (Reported by Muslim)

6. A Good Leader must be Patient and a Visionary

People differ in their behaviours, outlook and perception of affairs. Therefore, a good leader must have the capacity to be patient and accommodate all shades and characters of people. At the same time, he must have vision and good foresight. Allah says,

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ

And We made from among them leaders, giving (visionary) guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and believe with certainty in Our Revelations. (Qur'an 32:24).

Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, *“A strong person among you is not the one who is capable of downing opponents in a wrestling contest, but one who is capable of controlling his temper when instigated”*. (Bukhari and Muslim).

Sheik Naseur Jabnun wrote on page 210 of his book, “Islam wal Idara” (Islam and Management) that, “*Vision is what distinguishes a leader from a simple manager*”

7. A Good Leader must be Gentle, Kind, Consultative and Listener to Advice

Anyone who is not gentle, who does not consult his lieutenants and who does not listen to the advice of his people should not be made a leader. Allah says,

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا
مِّنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا
عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

And by the Mercy of Allah, you (Muhammad) dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them. And consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah. Certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him). (Qur'an 3:159)

Allahu Akbar! Despite the special position of Muhammad (pbuh), as a Prophet and a Messenger of Allah, he was instructed to deal with people gently (otherwise they will desert him!), to consult his lieutenants and to listen to advice before taking any decision. Who then can be harsh,

claim monopoly of wisdom, refuse to consult people or to listen to their advice and expect them to obey him?

Those people who conduct their affairs by mutual consultations are among those whom Allah loves. Allah says,

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

And those who answer the Call of their Lord, and perform As-Salat (prayers), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend (in charity) of what We have bestowed on them. (Qur'an 42:38).

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

A good leader does not wait for people to come and advise him, no, he seeks for their advice. The First Caliph after Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Abubakar (RLA), said immediately after his appointment that: *“I have been made your leader not because I am better than you, so, please assist me when I am doing things rightly and correct me when I am wrong”*.

8. A Good Leader must be Able to Groom Future Leaders

A good leader must identify prospective future leaders, bring them close to him and groom them as his successors.

The continuity of a good leadership depends on the grooming of those who would continue in the event of the incapacitation or demise of the current leader. The Prophet (pbuh) identified and groomed his successors (the Caliphs) and that led to the continuity of the Islamic State. Indeed, that continuity accounted for the rapid spread of Islam within a very short period. A leader is deemed to be selfish if he corners all responsibility to himself and does not allow others to learn the art of leadership. In such a situation, the State will have to grapple with the search for new leadership when the incumbent leaves office.

9. A Good Leader must be Worthy of Emulation

No one can be certified as a good leader unless what he does is worthy of emulation. Allah says,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to emulate; for him who hopes for (the mercies of) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much. (Qur'an 33:21).

Therefore, a good leader must say excellent things and act in the best ways in order to make others to emulate him. Allah says,

﴿ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾

(So) you enjoin Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (or refuse to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture! Have you then no sense? (Qur'an 2:44).

10. A Good Leader must Appreciate the Limits of His Capacity and that of His People

One of the qualities of a good leader is the ability to assess the capabilities and limits of himself and those of his people. No one has monopoly of knowledge, wisdom or ability neither could one expect his people not to have limitations in thoughts and in actions. Therefore a good leader should do what he can within his limits and guide his people to do what they can within their limits. Anything beyond this will lead to chaos.

Allah (SWT), Who created human beings appreciates their limits and therefore gives some leeway in Worship and in Worldly transactions. For example, if someone cannot pray while standing he can pray in a seating position. Likewise, if someone cannot fast the Month of Ramadan he has options to make up for it. So, if Allah (SWT) will appreciate human limits, who can say he is a “Mr Know-all and Mr do-all?” Allah says,

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا^ج لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ^ق

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He (the person) gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. (Qur'an 2:286)

The major lesson here is that, whatever someone cannot absolutely perform, he has to leave it. Therefore, a leader should not burden his people with tasks that they cannot absolutely perform. Likewise, if a leader cannot perform his duties as a leader, he should either resign or be booted out in order to place someone who can perform to take over.

THE OBLIGATIONS OF LEADERSHIPS AND FOLLOWERSHIP

The Prophet (pbuh) has enumerated several times that there are certain basic obligations incumbent upon both leaders and followers if success is to be achieved. Both parties must strive to fulfill their obligations in order to have the much needed balance to succeed. No nation can live in peace and harmony and attain progress and development without a cordial leadership and followership relationship.

The Obligations of Leaders to their Followers

The major obligation of leaders to followers is that they must be just and fair in their dealings with them and honest

and sincere in the distribution and utilisation of State wealth. Leaders who are not fair and just have the torments of Hell-Fire awaiting them in the Hereafter, as Allah told Prophet Dawud (AS) (King David) that:

يَدَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ

Oh Dawud (King David)! Verily, We have placed you as a successor on the Earth; so judge you between men in truth (and justice) and follow not your desire, for it will mislead you from the path of Allah. Verily, those who wander astray from the path of Allah (shall) have a severe torment (in Hell-fire); because they forgot the Day of Reckoning. (Qur'an 38:26).

Leaders must be fair and just and must fulfill all promises they made to their people. They must ensure that peoples' health, education and economic wellbeing are safeguarded and boosted. They must ensure the peace and security of lives and properties in order to provide a free atmosphere for the worship of Allah and for day-to-day worldly comfortable living.

The Obligations of the Followers to their Leaders

The Prophet (pbuh) admonished the followers that, they are

obliged to respect and obey their leaders, as Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ
فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

O You who Believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority (Leaders). (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and his Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (Qur'an 4:59).

But, it should be noted here that, obedience is premised on the fact that, Allah and His Messenger must always be obeyed. But Leaders (including parents) shall only be obeyed if they give lawful instructions.

Without respect and obedience to leaders, whatever good plans they have for the people cannot be actualised. On the other hand, when leaders are not doing the right things, it is obligatory to advise them accordingly. However, caution must be exercised in giving the advice.

Leaders should not be castigated; they should be approached using wisdom and fair speech in advising them. People should remember that there can never be a worse leader than the Pharaoh associated with Prophets Musa and

Harun (AS) (Moses and Aaron) whose transgression culminated in his saying:-

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴿٢٤﴾

He (Pharaoh) said "I am your supreme lord (god)"
(Qur'an 79:24)

Despite the Pharaoh's great transgressions and the worst leadership style in recorded history, Allah sent two Messengers, Prophets Musa and Harun (AS) to him and Allah asked them to use mild and respectable language in talking to him, and not to castigate him in whatever way. Allah says:

أَذْهَبَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ تَخْشَىٰ

Go both of you to Fir'aun (Pharaoh), verily, he has transgressed (all bounds in disbelief and disobedience and behaved as an arrogant and as a tyrant). And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear (Allah).
(Qur'an 20:43-44).

Allah (SWT) knows that the Pharaoh will not accept admonition, but at the same time He asked Prophets Musa and Harun (AS) to use mild language while talking to the Pharaoh. That was in order to teach people how to approach leaders with respect (even if they are tyrants).

Therefore, leaders should be respected and obeyed in all lawful matters; and if they go wrong, they should be advised through the use of mild and not harsh language. In addition, they should be assisted to carry out good works.

THE RESULT OF GOOD OR BAD LEADERSHIP

The results for good or bad leadership are obvious. Good leadership leads to peace, stability and progress. Bad leadership leads to the opposite! Besides the worldly benefits of having good leaderships, the leaders have Allah's bounties waiting for them in the Hereafter. On the other hand, bad leaders have the wrath of Allah awaiting them in the Hereafter.

On the Day of Judgement, when skulls shall boil due to intense heat from the sun that has been lowered by the command of Allah to some few meters above human heads, there will only be one cool shade, that is the shade of Allah's Grace. Good and just leaders shall be the first to occupy that shade. Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Seven sets of people shall enter the shade of Allah's grace on the day that there is no other shade except that of Allah. These sets of people are, just leaders..."* (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

Maqil Ibn Yasam (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Whoever is placed in position of leadership and he did not treat his people justly, shall not enter Paradise"*. (Reported by Muslim)

Abu Maryam Azdi (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said, *“Whoever is placed in a position of leadership and he distanced himself from the needs of the people, thereby leaving them in abject poverty, Allah shall distance Himself from the needs of that leader thereby making him live in abject poverty in the Hereafter”*. (Reported by Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi)

Aisha (RLA) narrated that she heard the Prophet (pbuh) praying in her room as follows:- *“Oh Allah, on whomever you bestow leadership and he tyrannises his people, please tyrannise him, and if the leader cushions the hardships of his people, please cushion his hardships”*. (Muslim)

Chapter Six

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: PEACE AND WAR IN ISLAM

It is imperative to understand that the Final Message of Islam as brought by the Prophet and Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (pbuh), has the Arabic root word of “*silm*” or “*salaam*” that literally translates to “peace”. Simply put, Islam means “peace with the soul and peace with the body”. Peace with the soul includes “peace with Allah”, that is to totally submit spiritually to Allah’s will, decrees, rules and regulations as contained in the Qur’an and the Sunnah; and to worship Allah alone. Peace with the body includes handling day-to-day activities of the World, individually and/or collectively, as ordained by Allah through Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Here love, peace, faith and justice between and with one another come in.

This simplified definition of Islam exemplifies the fact that all the Prophets of Allah (AS) and their followers practiced Islam as it was ordained by Allah during their lifetimes. All those generations were taught by the Prophets (AS) to worship Allah alone and stop associating Him with man-made idols or other objects like the sun, the moon, etc. that is “Islam”.

Allah (SWT) explains this assertion in the Glorious Qur’an as follows:-

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ^ج

He (Allah) has ordained for you (Muslims) the same religion (Islamic Monotheism) which He ordained for Nuh (Noah), and that which We (Allah) revealed to you (Muhammad), and that which We ordained for Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus), saying you should establish the religion (of Islam, worship of One God) and make no divisions in it. (Qur'an 42:13)

The early life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as rendered in the earlier Chapters of this Book and as has been amply demonstrated in millions of documents and publications by Muslims and Non-Muslims alike, from all over the World; must have justified the extraordinary peaceful nature of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Despite all the years of persecution in his birthplace of Mecca, from his childhood to his adulthood, the Prophet (pbuh) never resorted to violence even in self defence! He resorted to Hijrah (the first and the second) to Negash in Habasha and finally to Hijrah (the third) to Medina; all in order to keep the peace. He clearly showed that, Islam is built on a Tripod of Peace. (1) Peace with Allah by worshipping Him as He ordained; (2) Peace with oneself by living uprightly; and (3) Peace with other people by safeguarding their rights and dealing justly and fairly with them. The Muslim Brotherhood in

Medina, the Constitution of Medina, the Covenant with the Monks of Sinai in Egypt and Palestine and the Covenant with the Christians and Jews of the World; are very clear testimonies to the peaceful nature of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and that of the Religion of Islam.

A classical example of the peaceful nature of the Prophet (pbuh) was that, despite all the years of persecution in Mecca, the Prophet (pbuh) and his Followers (RLA) never resorted to violence; talk less of fighting or full scale war. They maintained peace and even signed the Hudaibiyya Peace Accord with the Mecca people in that regards. He only instituted a fight after he was given expressed leave to do so by Allah (SWT). That was because, the Muslims who had gone to Medina had left all their belongings behind in Mecca and these had been confiscated by their enemies.

Those Muslims who remained behind in Mecca had been fought and maltreated to the extent of killing them and sexually harassing their wives and daughters.

Thus, when the Muslims heard that Abu Sufyan, one of the leaders of the Quraysh, and an enemy of Islam, was on his way back to Mecca from Syria, and passing not far from Medina, with a large caravan of goods, they decided that the time had come for them to retrieve some of their losses. However, they did not act until they got permission from Allah (SWT), as follows:

أَذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا^ج وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ
 الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ
 وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهْجَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ
 وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا^ق وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ
 مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ^ق إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

39. Permission to fight is given to those (i.e. believers against disbelievers), who are fighting them, (and) because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them (believers) victory 40. Those (are the believers) who have been expelled from their homes unjustly; only because they said: "Our Lord is Allah." - for had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. (Qur'an 22:39-40)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) never forced the Religion of Islam upon anyone, but rather he only fought those who waged war against him and fought him first. As for those who made peace with him or conducted a truce, then he never fought them and he never compelled them to enter

the Religion of Islam. That was because the Prophet (pbuh) has always been guided the peace provisions in Islam as ordained to him by Allah (SWT).

PEACE PROVISIONS IN ISLAM

Below are only a few of the uncountable number of admonitions for peace in the Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):-

Qur'an 25:63. *The servants of the Most Merciful (Allah) are those who walk upon the Earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say words of peace.*

Qur'an 28:55. *When they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say: For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace be upon you, we seek not the way of ignorance.*

Qur'an 43:89. *So turn aside from them and say words of peace.*

Qur'an 36:58. *Peace, a word from a Merciful Lord (Allah).*

Qur'an 19:47. *Abraham said: Peace will be upon you. I will ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Verily, He is ever gracious to me.*

Qur'an 51:24-25. *Has there reached you the story of the honoured guests of Abraham? When they entered upon him and said: We greet you with peace, so he answered: I greet you with peace, a people unknown.*

Qur'an 8:61. *If the enemy inclines to peace, then incline to it also and rely upon Allah. Verily, it is He who is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.*

Qur'an 4:90. *So if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not made for you a cause for fighting against them.*

Qur'an 6:108. *Do not revile (insult) those (idols, their gods, etc.) that they call upon (worship) besides Allah, lest they revile Allah out of spite in their ignorance.*

Aisha (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (RLA) would invoke peace while sitting in prayer saying, "*O Allah, You are Peace and from You is Peace. Blessed are You, O Majestic and Generous One*". (Sahih Muslim 592)

Abu Huraira (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "*You will not enter Paradise until you believe and you will not believe until you love each other. Shall I show you something that, if you did, you would love each other? Spread peace between yourselves*". (Sahih Muslim 54)

Abdullah ibn Umar (RLA) reported that, a man asked the Messenger of Allah (SAW) "Which Islam is best?" The Prophet (pbuh) said: "*To feed the hungry and to greet with peace those you know and those you do not know*". (Sahih Bukhari 28)

Ali ibn Abu Talib (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "*Verily, after me there will be conflicts,*

so if you are able to end them in peace, then do so".
(Musnad Ahmad 697)

Abu Ad-Darda (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said to his Companions: *"Shall I tell you about what is more virtuous in degree than fasting, prayer, and charity? They said, "of course, tell us!" The Prophet (pbuh) said: "It is reconciliation between people. Verily, corrupted relations between people are the razor. I do not say that it shaves hair, but rather it shaves the Religion".* (Sunan At-Tirmidhi 2509)

Abdullah ibn Salam (RLA) said, when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came to Medina, the people rushed towards him. The first thing he said was: *"O you people, spread peace, feed the hungry, and pray at night when people are sleeping and you will enter Paradise in peace".* (Sunan Ibn Majah 1334)

Abdullah ibn Amr (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: *"Worship the Most Merciful (Allah) and spread peace.* (Sunan Ibn Majah 3694)

Abu Umamah (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: *"Verily, the best of the people to Allah are those who begin the greeting of peace".* (Sunan Abu Dawud 5197)

Chapter Seven

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: PEACE WITH CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

THE CONSTITUTION OF MEDINA

The most classical documents that show love, mutual respect, peaceful co-existence and the firm guarantee for safety and religious freedom given to Christians, Jews and indeed to all Non-Muslims by Islam, are (1) "The Constitution of Medina" and (2) "The Ahtiname of Muhammad" that is popularly called the "Covenant of Prophet Muhammad to the Monks of Sinai".

The first Covenant in Islamic history was the Constitution of Medina that granted peace, security and freedom of Religion to the Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities of Medina. The Constitution was drawn-up immediately after the Hijrah (migration) from Mecca to Medina in the first year of the Hijrah (1 Hijrah - 622 AD).

Composed within months of the arrival of the Prophet (pbuh) in Yathrib (Medina), in 622 AD, the Constitution of Medina detailed an administrative and governmental structure and specific rights and benefits of all citizens, Muslims, Jews and Christians. When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) arrived in Medina, the Jews, all of them, and the few Christians; were reconciled with him, and he wrote

an agreement between him and them. The Prophet attached every tribe with its confederates and established a protection between himself and them. In addition to this, the Constitution of Medina drew up Laws that took the *Ummah*, the Islamic Nation State, from a mere theocracy, or even a strictly political entity, into a social construction that had never before been attempted, a hybrid State in which a benign umbrella was spread over all, regardless of whether they were Muslim, Christian or Jew, all monotheists in the Abrahamic Tradition. As Islam spread among the people of Yathrib and the Arabian Peninsula, the Prophet went further, reaching out to multiple communities with an eye to achieving a mutually beneficial relationship. Two of the first recipients were the Christian Community in Najran, in what is now the southern part of Saudi Arabia, and the Monks who occupied the Monastery of St. Catherine, located far away at the base of Mount Sinai in Egypt.

The Covenant with the Christians of Najran, written in 2 AH (After Hijrah) or 624/5 AD, partially states that:

To the Christians of Najran and its neighboring territories, God's protection and the pledge of His Prophet extend to their lives, their Religion, and their property. It applies to those who are present as well as those who are absent. There shall be no interference with the practice of their Faith or their religious observances. There will be no change to their rights and privileges. No Bishop shall be

removed from his Bishopric; no Monk from his Monastery, and no Priest from his Parish. They shall all continue to enjoy everything they previously enjoyed great or small. No image or Cross shall be destroyed. They will not oppress or be oppressed.

THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET (pbuh) TO THE MONKS OF SINAI, EGYPT

The second Covenant was that granted to the Monks of St. Catherine Monastery located at Mount Sinai (in present day Egypt). The Covenant was made to be applicable to all Jews and Christians universally and it was granted in the Muslim Month of Muharram 2 Hijrah (July 624 AD). The Covenant granted to the Monks of St. Catherine Monastery was translated by John Davenport (1789-1877) in his book “*An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran*”, published by Dryden Press, London in 1869 and a copy made available to many websites by the Princeton Theological Seminary Library. An electronic copy of this Book is available for free download on Google Book Platform and on several other Platforms. The Covenant, as translated by Dr. Davenport, runs as follows:

The Covenant of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to the Monks of St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt

“As God is great and governs, from whom all the Prophets are come, for there remains no record of injustice against

God; through the gifts that are given unto men, Mohammed, the son of Abdullah, the Apostle of God, and careful guardian of the whole world, has written the present instrument, to all those that are his national people, and of his religion, as a secure and positive promise to be accomplished to the Christian nation and relations of the Nazarene, whosoever they may be, whether they be the noble or the vulgar, the honourable or otherwise, saying thus:

I. “Whosoever of my nation that presumes to break my promise and oath which is contained in this present agreement, destroys the promise of God, acts contrary to the oath and will be a resister of the faith (God forbid!) for he becomes worthy of the curse, whether he be the king himself or a poor man, or what person whosoever he may be.

II. “That whenever any of the Monks in his travels shall happen to settle on any mountain, hill, village, or in any other habitable place, on the sea or in deserts, or in any Convent, Church, or House of Prayer, I shall be in the midst of them, as the preserver and protector of them, their goods and effects, with my soul, aid and protection, jointly with all my national people, because they are a part of my own people, and an honour to me.

III. “Moreover, I command all officers not to require any poll tax of them or any other tribute, because they shall not

be forced or compelled to anything of this kind.

IV. “None shall presume to change their judges or governors, but they shall remain in their office without being deposed.

V. “No one shall molest them when they are travelling on the road.

VI. “Whatever Churches they are possessed of, no one is to deprive them of them.

VII. “Whosoever shall annul any of these my decrees, let him know positively that he annuls the ordinance of God.

VIII. “Moreover, neither their judges, governors, monks, servants, disciples, or any others depending on them, shall pay any poll tax or be molested on that account, because I am their protector, where so ever they shall be, either by land or sea, east or west, north or south; because both they and all that belong to them are included in this my promissory oath and patent.

IX. “And of those that live quietly and solitary upon the mountains, they shall exact neither poll tax nor tithes from their incomes, neither shall any Mussulman (Muslim) partake of what they have, for they labour only to maintain themselves.

X. “Whenever the crop of the Earth shall be plentiful in its due time, the inhabitants shall be obliged, out of every bushel, to give them a certain measure.

XI. *“Neither in time of war shall they take them out of their habitation, nor compel them to go to the wars, nor even then shall they require of them any poll-tax.”*

XII. *“Those Christians who are inhabitants, and with their riches and traffic are able to pay the poll-tax, shall pay no more than 12 drachmas (a silver coin).*

XIII. *“Excepting this, nothing more shall be required of them, according to the express word of God, that says: ‘Do not molest those that have a veneration for the Books that are sent from God, but rather, in a kind manner, give of your good things to them, and converse with them, and hinder everyone from molesting them.’*

XIV. *“If a Christian woman shall happen to marry a Mussulman (Muslim), the Mussulman shall not cross the inclination of his wife to keep her from her Chapel and prayers and the practice of her Religion.*

XV. *“That no person hinder (restrict) them from repairing their Churches.*

XVI. *“Whosoever acts contrary to this my grant, or gives credit to anything contrary to it, becomes truly an apostate from God and his divine Apostle, because this protection I have granted to them according to this promise.*

XVII. *“No one shall bear arms against them, but, on the contrary, the Mussulmans shall wage war for them.*

XVIII. *“And by this I ordain that none of my nation shall*

presume to do or act contrary to this promise until the end of the World.

Witnesses:-

Ali the son of Abu Thaleb. (Ali bin Abu Talib)

Homar, the son of Hattavi. (Umar bin Khattab)

Ziphir, the son of Abuan. (Zubair bin Awwam)

Saith, the son of Maat. (Sa'id bin Mu'adh)

Thavitt, the son of Nesis. (Thabit bin Qais?)

Amphachin, the son of Hassan.

Muathem, the son of Kasvi.

Azur, the son of Jassin.

Abombaker, the son of AmbiKaphe. (Abubakr bin AbiQuhafah)

Ottoman, the son of Gafas. (Uthman bin Affan)

Ambtelack, the son of Messutt. (Abdullah bin Mas'ud)

Phazer, the son of Abbas. (Fadl bin Abbas)

Talat, the son of Amptolack. (Talhat bin Ubaidullah)

Saat the son of Abbatt. (Sa'ad bin Ubadah)

Kasmer the son of Abid.

Ambtullack the son of Omar. (Abdullah bin Umar)

This document was written in the second year of Hegira (Hijrah), the third day of the month of Machorem (Muharram 2 Hijrah - July 624 AD).

THE COVENANTS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (pbuh) WITH THE CHRISTIANS AND THE JEWS OF THE WORLD

The Constitution of Medina and the Covenant with the Monks of Sinai gave rise to a series of several other Covenants and related correspondences that had universal application. In October 2013 a book by Professor John Andrew Morrow (later Ilyas Abd al-Alim Islam) appeared titled, *The Covenants Of The Prophet Muhammad With The Christians Of The World*, published by Angelico Press/Sophia Perennis, USA. Professor Marrow rediscovered the Covenants of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with various Christian Communities in obscure Monasteries and collections. All the Covenants rediscovered by the Professor uniformly state that Muslims should not attack peaceful Christian Communities, or rob them, or stop Churches from being repaired, or tear down Churches to build Mosques, or prevent their Christian wives from going to Church and taking spiritual direction from Christian priests and elders, etc. In the Covenants, the Prophet (pbuh) commands Muslims to actively protect these Communities “until the End of the World.”

In the various Covenants of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with the Christians and Jews of the World can be found the following graet provisions that expressly call for peace:

Never should any Christian or Jew be subjected to tyranny or oppression in this matter. It is not permitted to remove a Bishop from his Bishopric, a Monk from his Monastic life, or Anchorite from his vocation as a Hermit. Nor is it permitted to destroy any part of their Churches or Synagogues, to take parts of their buildings to construct Mosques or the homes of Muslims. Whoever does such a thing will have violated the pact of Allah, disobeyed his Messenger, and become estranged from the Divine Alliance.

The great Muslim Scholar, Sheik Al-Islam Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim (1292-1350 AD/691-751 Hijrah), summarised the nature of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as follows:

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) never forced the Religion of Islam upon anyone, (as he knows that Allah has said that “there is no compulsion in Religion”) but rather he only fought those who waged war against him and fought him first. As for those who made peace with him or conducted a truce, then he never fought them and he never compelled them to enter his Religion of Islam. (Hidayat Al-Hayara: 237)

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WORLD’S GREAT RELIGIONS OF ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

When Muslims arrived in Medina, they found a great number of Christians that grossly surpassed that of the adherents of Judaism (Jews). Equally, the population of Christians in Arabia by far surpassed that of the Jews.

Currently as at the beginning of this Second Millennium, Christianity is said to have 2.3 Billion Followers, Islam is said to have 1.9 Billion Followers and Judaism is said to have 14.7 Million Followers (according to Pew Research Centre). Therefore the relationship between Islam and Christianity has been most close; and most referred to by Islamic Literature from the Glorious Qur'an to the Sunnah and to all other publications. Therefore, peace between Muslims and Christians can easily translate into Global Peace!

Islam is the only non-Christian Faith that believes in the miraculous birth of Isa (AS) (Jesus Christ) by the Virgin Maryam (Mary), his raising of the dead, his healing of the blind and the lepers by the authority of the Powers of Allah; and his ascension to the Heavens. Christianity and Islam are different only in some Faith issues that relate to the relationship between adherents of these two Religions and their Creator, Allah-God. However, both Religions are quite similar in all issues regarding relationships among all people. In reality, there are no differences between the two Religions regarding the way that people of different Religions should treat each other. This, logically and spiritually, calls for all Christians and Muslims to live together in love, peace, harmony, understanding and mutual respect.

Islam made the belief in all the Prophets of Allah (AS), all

the Books of Allah and all the Angels of Allah as part of one of the fundamental Pillars of Islam. Allah states in the Qur'an that,

The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been sent down to Him from his Lord; and (so do) the (Muslim) believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books and His Messengers. They (Muslims) say, "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers"; and they say, "We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your Forgiveness, Our Lord, and to You (everyone) shall return". (Qur'an 2:285)

Allah also states in the Glorious Qur'an that,

Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and to Al-Asbat (the twelve sons of Ya'qub), and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam). So if they believe in the like of that which you believe, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice for you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. (Qur'an 2:136-137)

The Holy Bible, Jesus Christ (Prophet Isa-AS), his mother Mary (Maryam), Christianity and Christians receive principal and respectable mentions in the Glorious Qur'an and in other Islamic literature. Specifically, the Glorious Qur'an has a long narrative on Jesus Christ (Prophet Isa-AS) and his mother, as contained in the Chapter of the Qur'an named after the Mother of Jesus, Mary (*Surat Maryam*, i.e. the Chapter of Mary); which is Qur'an Chapter 19. Verses 16 to 34 of this Chapter of the Qur'an state that,

16. *And mention in the Book (the Qur'an, O Muhammad), the story of Maryam (Mary), when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east. 17. She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We (God) sent to her Our Ruh (Angel Gabriel), and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. 18. She said: "Verily! I seek Refuge with the Most Beneficent (God) from you, if you do fear God". 19. (The angel) said: "I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son". 20. She said: "How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?" 21. He said: "So (it will be), your Lord said: "That is easy for Me (God): and We (God) shall appoint him (the son) as a sign to mankind and a Mercy from Us (God), and it is a matter (already) decreed, (by God)". 22. So she conceived him (Isa-Jesus), and she withdrew with*

him (the pregnancy) to a far place (i.e. Bethlehem valley). **23.** And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a date-palm. She said: "Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!" **24.** Then (a voice) calls her from below her, saying: "Grieve not! Your Lord has provided a water stream under you. **25.** "And shake the trunk of the date-palm towards you; it will let fall fresh ripe-dates upon you. **26.** "So eat and drink and be glad, and if you see any human being, say: "Verily! I have vowed a fast to the Most Beneficent (God) so I shall not speak to any human being this day". **27.** Then (after giving birth) she brought him (the baby) to her people, carrying him. They said: "O Mary! Indeed you have brought a thing "Fariya" (an unheard of, mighty thing). **28.** "O sister of Haroon (Aaron - not the brother of Moses)! Your father was not a man who used to commit adultery, nor was your mother an unchaste woman." **29.** Then she pointed at him (the baby). They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?" **30.** He (the child, Isa-Jesus) said: "Verily! I am a servant of God. He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet. **31.** "And He (God) has made me blessed where ever I be, and has enjoined on me Salat (prayer), and Zakat (poor-dues), as long as I live. **32.** "And (God instructed me to be) dutiful to my mother, and (He) made me not arrogant, unblessed. **33.** "And Salaam (peace) be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive (in the Hereafter)!" **34.**

Such is Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). (It is) a statement of truth, about which they (unbelievers, pagans) doubt (and/or dispute over).

The above is the incredibly detailed and highly honourable narration of the miraculous birth of Jesus (Isa AS) in the Glorious Qur'an. The Holy Bible narrates the birth of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:18-25 as:-

18. *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19.* *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. 20.* *But while he thought on these things, behold, the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21.* *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22.* *Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23.* *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. 24.* *Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the Angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25.* *And*

knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

The excellent relationship between Muslims and Christians has roots during the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as narrated in the Glorious Qur'an as follows:-

Qur'an 5:82. *..You will find the nearest in love to the believers (Muslims) are those who say: "We are Christians". That is because amongst them are priests and clerics, and they are not proud. 83. And when they (Christians) listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger (Muhammad), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of the Truth they have recognised. They say: "Our Lord! We believe; so write us down among the witnesses. 84. "And why should we not believe in Allah and in that which has come to us of the Truth (Islamic Monotheism)? And we wish that Our Lord will admit us (in Paradise) along with the righteous people".*

Qur'an 3:64. *Say: "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): come to a word that is just between us and you, that we Worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah".*

The relationship between Muslims and Christians was so close that, not only did Islam decree the freedom for Christians (and indeed for Jews and all other non-Muslims) to practice their Religions freely, but also decreed that they

be treated justly. Warning against the abuse of Christians, Jews and other non-Muslims, the Prophet (SAW) said,

Beware! Whoever is cruel and hard on a non-Muslim minority, curtails their rights, burdens them with more than they can bear, or takes anything from them against their free will; I (Prophet Muhammad) will advocate against this person on the Day of Judgment. (Sunan Abu Daud)

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM ARE FULFILMENTS OF THE LAWS OF MONOTHEIST PROPHETS BEFORE THEM

The Holy Bible and the Glorious Qur'an respectively state that Jesus Christ (Isa AS) and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) have come to **fulfil** the Laws and Messages of the Monotheist Prophets before them, thereby making the Laws and the Messages of Christianity and Islam very similar to, for example, those in the Scrolls of Abraham/Ibrahim (AS), the Psalms of David/Dawud (AS) and the Torah of Moses/Musa (AS).

The Holy Bible states that: *(Jesus said) "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them"* (Matthew 5:17)

The Glorious Qur'an states that: *"He (Allah) has revealed to you (Muhammad) the Book (Qur'an) with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Torah (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this as*

guidance for the people. And He sent the Criterion (of judgment between right and wrong) (Qur'an 3:3-4)

The Old and the New Testaments of the Holy Bible have contents of the Gospel (of Jesus), the Psalms (of David) and the Torah (of Moses). Indeed, the Holy Bible constantly makes references to Jewish Laws in the Gospels that came before it. And the Glorious Qur'an has contents that are similar to those of the Gospel (of Jesus), the Psalms (of David), the Torah (of Moses) and the Scrolls (of Abraham). It should be reemphasised that the similarity in contents of the Books of the Monotheist Religions were a result of their divine natures having been revealed to the various Prophets of Allah-God through inspiration. Therefore those Books that came after have the contents of those Books that came before them. That accounts for many Verses of the New Testament of the Holy Bible having a lot in common with those of the earlier Gospels that came before it. The Qur'an has a similar nature, having a lot in common with the earlier Books that came before it, including the Bible.

The Monotheist Prophets lived hundreds of years (and in some cases even thousands of years) apart, but their messages have been constant and very similar. The messages of the Glorious Qur'an and those of the Holy Bible are however the closest, even though their revelations were over five hundred years apart. Both Jesus Christ (AS)

and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were many a times revealing the Divine Messages instantly in front of their Disciples/Companions thereby eliminating any insinuation of someone else teaching them from some older texts. For example, authentic and verified religious and historical records have amply demonstrated that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was “unlettered” therefore did not know how to read or write; and even the pagan enemies of Islam of his time and beyond have not been able to ascribe any Jewish or Christian teacher to him. In addition, the revelations of Allah’s Messages in the Glorious Qur’an came by divine inspirations to the Prophet (pbuh) either in seclusion (in his residence or Mosque), or in the presence of his Companions and/or his Family Members. Therefore the miraculous similarities between the Glorious Qur’an and other Monotheistic Holy Scriptures (especially the Holy Bible) were purely revelations from Allah (SWT) to His Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh). Jesus Christ (Isa AS) had exactly the same attributes, as he was revealing God’s Messages instantly to his disciples in many cases at public gatherings through inspirations. Therefore the Holy Bible and the Glorious Qur’an are Divine Messages of very pure Divine Origins that have come to fulfil divine monotheistic messages before them.

Chapter Eight

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: JIHAD IN ISLAM

THE CONCEPT OF JIHAD

It is interesting to note that the Arabic word “*Jihad*” has now found its way as an English word on page 639 of the 1995 edition of the Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary, and is defined as “*a holy war fought by Muslims against those who reject Islam*”. This is a fabricated, falsified and distorted definition, which clearly contradicts the actual meaning of the word which literally means “*to strive*”. In Islam, war is not waged to compulsorily convert people into the Religion of Islam. Allah (SWT) has stated this fundamental fact in many parts of the Glorious Qur’an, including the following:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۚ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمَرْ
بِاللهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

There is no compulsion in Religion. Verily, the Right Path (of Islam) has become distinct from the Wrong Path (of idolatry). Whoever disbelieves in Taghut (idols) and believes in Allah; then he has grasped the most trustworthy Handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. (Qur’an 2:256)

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ ۚ إِنَّآ
 أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا ۚ وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَآءٍ
 كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ ۚ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾

And say (Oh Muhammad): "The Truth is from your Lord". Then whosoever wills, let him believe (in Islam), and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We (Allah) have prepared for the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil, which will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil Murtafaqa (dwelling, place)! (Qur'an 18:29)

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۚ وَجَدِلْهُمْ بِلَاَّتِي
 هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
 بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

Invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is the better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the best aware of those who are guided. (Qur'an 16:125)

WHAT IS ACTUALLY “JIHAD” IN ISLAM?

Allah (SWT) defines “Jihad” as follows:-

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا هَلْ أَدْلُكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجْرَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾
تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۖ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

*O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful torment (of hell-fire)? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), and that **you strive hard** in the cause of Allah with **your wealth** and **your selves**, that will be better for you, if you but know! (Qur'an 61:10-11).*

This verse mentions the verb “***Jahidoo***” from the noun “***Jihad***” and clearly directs that Muslims are **to strive hard** (*wa-tu-jahidoona*) in the cause of Allah (*fi sabilil Lah*) with your wealth (*bi amwaali kum*) and your selves (*wa amfusi kum*) and not “*to fight a holy war against those who reject Islam*”.

Aisha (RLA) reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said, “*Certainly, (one of) the best Jihad is Hajj Mabrur*” (i.e. the Muslim pilgrimage that was accepted by Allah). (Bukhari)

Abu Dharr (RLA) reported in Saheeh Jaami as-Sagheer that the Prophet (pbuh) said, “*The best Jihad is for one to perform Jihad against his own self and against his*

desires". (That is to positively control himself and his desires).

The Prophet (pbuh) was asked, "What kind of Jihad is among the best?" The Prophet (pbuh) replied, "*A word of truth before an oppressive ruler*". (An-Nasa'i)

Al-Bukhari, Abu Dawood, An-Nasa'i and Al-Tirmidhi all reported Ibn Umar to have related that the Prophet (pbuh) asked a man who came to him to join in fighting the unbelievers, "*Are your parents alive?*" The man replied, "*Yes*". Then the Prophet (pbuh) said, "*Go back and exert your Jihad in their service.*"

These quoted references to "Jihad" by the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) do not refer to "Jihad" as "*fighting a holy war against those who reject Islam*", as has been the erroneous definition of the term.

"Wealth" (*amwaal* in Arabic) means the sum total of material and intellectual belongings. The Wealth of a Nation refers to its natural and human resources. Allah (SWT) directs Muslims to start Jihad by the use of their wealth (as mentioned in the Qur'an verse above), for example, to do all that would uplift the standards of living for mankind. Going to school to learn is jihad against illiteracy. Establishing a charity in order to assist the less privileged in the society is jihad against poverty. A word of truth before an oppressive ruler is Jihad against tyranny and injustice. Serving ones parents is jihad against indolence.

Purifying hearts and living decent lives is jihad of the soul.

In striving to achieve a goal, obstacles may occur. Some could be removed peacefully through dialogue, while discomfort, injuries or even loss of lives might occur in the removal of others (like when people are militarily aggressed upon and they retaliate in self defence). Muslims are firstly instructed by Allah (SWT) to use their wealth through peaceful means in the cause of Allah and only allowed to stake “their selves” (bodies, health, lives, etc) as a last resort and only when it becomes inevitable. Inevitability leads to fighting or war. By the provisions of the Glorious Qur’an - which is the Words of Allah (SWT) - when this stage is reached the word “**jihad**” ends and the word “**qital**” takes its place.

The world acclaimed online encyclopaedia, Wikipedia, states that, “*Jihad, an Islamic term, is a religious duty of Muslims. In Arabic, the word jihād translates as a noun meaning "struggle". Jihad appears 41 times in the Qur'an and frequently in the idiomatic expression "striving in the way of Allah (al-jihad fi sabil Allah)". A person engaged in jihad is called a mujahid; the plural is mujahideen. Jihad is an important religious duty for Muslims. The Qur'an, however, never uses the term **Jihad** for fighting and combat in the name of Allah; **qital** is used to mean “fighting.”* Wikipedia is a non-Muslim sponsored website and it could be so frank and fair in defining the meaning of the word

“jihad”! Why should others not be so fair?

It is appropriate at this juncture to go down history lane in order to appraise the origins of Jihad. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) proclaimed Allah’s message of Islam in his hometown, Mecca. The Prophet (pbuh) and his followers were tortured and some of them even killed by the rulers of Mecca, who felt threatened by the new Religion that seeks to eliminate idol worshipping and injustice, the two pillars that were sustaining their power. The Prophet (pbuh) and his followers had to migrate to Medina some 450 kilometres away. The Meccans, firstly confiscated all the lands and properties left behind by the Muslim emigrants, and, secondly followed them all the way to Medina and inflicted atrocities on them. It was after several years of being persecuted that the Muslims retaliated by defending themselves. They did that only after an expressed permission from Allah (SWT) as follows:-

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ
الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَن يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ۚ

*Permission to **fight** is given to those (believers against disbelievers), **who are fighting them**, (and) because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them (believers) victory 40. Those (are the believers)*

who have been expelled from their homes unjustly; only because they said: "Our Lord is Allah." (Qur'an 22:39-40)

وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

...And fight against the disbelievers collectively, as they fight against you collectively. But know that Allah is with those who are pious believers (Qur'an 9:36)

In order to strengthen Muslims' resolve to fight in self defence Allah (SWT) says,

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ
خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ

Qital (Holy fighting in Allah's Cause) is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows, but you do not know. (Qur'an 2:216) Here Allah (SWT) uses the noun "Qital" directly.

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (pbuh) and his Companions (RLA) have clearly exemplified what the Jihad should be. They preached, used their human and

material wealth in the cause of Allah and migrated from their hometowns. They used force only as a last resort in self defence and the defence of Islam.

The opinions of Muslim Scholars on the context of the term “jihad” as codified from the Qur’an and the Sunnah, leads to the following classification:-

1. **Jihad of the soul** (*jihadil nafs*). This is concerned with purifying the soul with a view to doing good and avoiding doing evil. Here lies the will to learn, to be pious, to work hard and earn a decent living, to help the needy in whatever way possible, to be fair and just to all, to be kind and tender to those on the weaker levels (women, children, the aged, the poor, etc). This type of Jihad is incumbent upon all Muslims and is regarded as the **greatest jihad** (*al-jihad al-akbar*).
2. **Jihad by the tongue** (*jihad bil lisan*). This is concerned with speaking the truth, teaching others to do good, propagation of Islam through preaching, etc. In today’s world, this kind of Jihad rests most on those who have the ability and means to publicity like radio, television and internet, access to pulpits and public address systems, etc. It is regarded as the **greater jihad**.
3. **Jihad by the hand** (*jihad bil yad*). This is concerned with doing what is right, acting against whatever is wrong and combating injustice. This kind of Jihad is incumbent mostly upon leaders at all levels (family,

community, state, nation, etc). This is because leaders have the “hands” (power and authority) to ensure peace, justice and fairness. It is regarded as the **great jihad**.

4. **Jihad by the sword** (*jihad bis saif*). This refers to *qital*-fighting when it becomes inevitable and absolutely necessary. By the provisions of the Qur'an, here is when *jihad* turns into *qital* and this is regarded as the **lesser jihad** (*al-jihad al-asghar*).

Fighting a war is considered in Islam as a lesser Jihad in comparison with the greatest Jihad of cleansing the inner-selves (the souls) and living morally upright lives. Jabir bin Abdullah (RLA) narrated that Muslims under Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were attacked at the Battle of Uhud and they fought back. After the Battle, the Prophet (pbuh) said to his Followers (RLA),

We have come back from a Lesser Jihad to a Greater Jihad.

His Followers (RLA) asked him, “*O Messenger of Allah, we have fought a war and lost many lives and many got injured and you call it a Lesser Jihad, which then is the Greater Jihad?*”

The Prophet (pbuh) answered,

It is the Jihad of purifying our souls and living morally upright lives, which is more difficult than fighting a war.

The point to note here is that, “Jihad” encompasses striving

hard in the cause of Allah. Out of the four classes of Jihad listed above, the greatest, the greater and the great all deal with peaceful co-existence of mankind for the comfort of this World and the glory of the Hereafter. The last class of Jihad and the lesser one is that dealing with fighting in the cause of Allah and only when it becomes inevitable. Therefore, Islam does not encourage violence, rancour, destruction, etc, in whatever way. It desires peace, harmony and progress.

Islam encourages dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflicts and considers fighting and War as last resorts. In Islam, war is not waged as an act of aggression or an offensive measure to shed blood, gain land or booty or compulsorily convert people into the Religion of Islam. The Qur'an and the Sunnah dictate that war is only waged:-

1. In self defence - when Muslims are attacked, aggressed upon or threatened beyond reasonable limits.
2. In the defence of the Islamic Faith - when Muslims are not allowed to practice their Religion as ordained by Allah (SWT).
3. In other cases as defined by Islamic Law (the Shari'ah) but which generally hinge on the above two.

In all the above cases, before war or combat (*qital*) is declared, all avenues for dialogue must be exhausted first. The case of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah is a clear testimony

to Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) love for peaceful resolution of conflicts against the lust for violence or war. Sahih Al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim and several other Books of Hadith have reported extensively on this Treaty as summarised below.

In the Sixth Year after Hijrah (628 AD), Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and about 1,400 Muslims set forth from Medina to Mecca to perform the Lesser Hajj (*Umrah*). After several days journey, they camped at a place not far from Mecca called Hudaibiyyah. The Muslims were dressed in the all-white pilgrimage dress and carried very light arms clearly indicating that they were not for war but for a peaceful transit to the Holy Masjid (Mosque) of Ka'abah for the pilgrimage. The leaders of Mecca met and decided that the Muslims should not be allowed passage into the Holy City despite the over 400 kilometers journey on foot and on camels, donkeys and horses. The Muslims considered this as serious provocation that warranted combat, but the Prophet (pbuh) felt otherwise. He gave audience to the Emissary sent by the leaders of Mecca and he told him that, "*We have not come to fight anyone, but to perform the Umrah. If the Quraish (major tribe and leaders of Mecca) wish, I will conclude a truce with them*".

A dialogue ensued and diplomacy rather than warfare was chosen by both parties that led to the drawing up of a

treaty, known as the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. The outline of the treaty was as follows:-

These are the conditions of Peace between Muhammad, son of Abdullah and Suhayl son of Amr the envoy of Mecca. There will be no fighting for ten years. Anyone who wishes to join Muhammad and to enter into any agreement with him is free to do so. Anyone who wishes to join the Quraish and to enter into any agreement with them is free to do so. An attack on an ally of either party will be considered an attack on the party itself. A young man, or one whose father is alive, if he goes to Muhammad without permission from his father or guardian, will be returned to his father or guardian. But if anyone goes to the Quraish, he will not be returned. This year the Muslims will go back without entering Mecca. But next year Muhammad and his followers can enter Mecca, spend three days, perform the tawaaf. During these three days the Quraish will withdraw to the surrounding hills. When Muhammad and his followers enter into Mecca, they will be unarmed except for sheathed swords.

The Treaty was quite controversial for many reasons. Originally, it referred to Muhammad (pbuh) as the “Messenger of Allah” (*RasululLah*), but this was unacceptable to the Quraish Ambassador Suhayl bin Amr who said that if they had accepted that Muhammad was the Messenger of Allah, there would be no need for the truce.

Muhammad (pbuh) compromised, and told his cousin Ali (RLA) to strike out the wording. Ali (RLA) refused, after which Muhammad (pbuh), being unlettered, asked to be shown the wordings and he rubbed them out himself.

Another point of contention, was that the Muslims objected over a clause of the Treaty that said that any citizen from Mecca entering Medina to be a Muslim was eligible to be returned to Mecca and to idolatry (if the Meccans requested so), while the reverse was not the case, as any Muslim from Medina entering Mecca into idolatry was not eligible to be returned to the Muslims.

Despite the fury among the Muslims, Muhammad (pbuh) stuck to the Islamic rule of fulfilling every promise (as contained in the Qur'an). He also believed that the glaring disadvantages against the Muslims in the contents of the agreement should not stand against peace that was paramount at all times. So he ordered that Muslims should respect and honour every word of the treaty. They obeyed; and returned to Medina without performing the *Umrah*

In the seventh year after Hijrah (629 AD), Muslims went to Mecca (as provided for in the Treaty) and made the *Umrah*. The next year (630 AD), the clan of Banu Bakr, allied with the Quraysh and attacked the Bedouin Khuza'a, who were Muslim allies. Muhammad (pbuh) considered the Banu Bakr attack on his allies, the Bedouin Khuza'a, as a breach of the Treaty, citing one of the clauses of the treaty that

states, *“An attack on an ally of either party, will be considered as an attack on the party itself”*, and therefore offered the Quraiysh three alternatives:-

1. Dissolve their alliance with Banu Bakr.
2. Compensate Bedouin Khuza'a by paying blood money to them.
3. Dissolve the treaty.

The Quraiysh chose the third alternative and dissolved the treaty. Since the peace treaty has now been dishonoured and dissolved by the Meccans, Muhammad (pbuh) decided to march on to Mecca with an army of about 10,000, leading to the Conquest of Mecca on the 20th day of Ramadan, the 8th year After Hijrah (January 630 AD). It is interesting to note that despite the might of the Muslim Army, the Prophet (SAW) issued a highly publicised warning to the people of Mecca prior to the onslaught on the City as follows:-

1. Whoever confines himself to his house and the inmates thereof are safe.
2. Whoever enters and takes shelter in the Sacred Masjid (Mosque) of Ka'abah is safe.
3. Whoever takes refuge in Abu Sufyan's House (Chief of Mecca) is safe.

That was a deliberate attempt to limit casualties. In addition, Muslim Soldiers were ordered not to kill except in

self defence. Only twelve Meccans and two Muslims lost their lives in that Great Conquest of Mecca. The Prophet (pbuh) moved into the Ka'abah and destroyed the 360 idols in it and cleansed it of idolatry that lasts up to today.

When fighting a war or outright combat becomes inevitable; Islam prescribes **warfare ethics** generally referred to in today's military parlance as "the rules of engagement". Muslim warfare rules surpass those of today's World famous Allied Forces in ensuring justice and fairness as they protect non-combatant civilians and ensure the limitation of "collateral damage" as the Americans would call it! Those who doubt this assertion should consider the following:-

1. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) ensured that non-combatant civilians were never attacked or killed and trees and the general environment never destroyed.
2. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prohibited the killing of women and children during Battles. Bukhari and Muslim, reported Abdullah bin Umar (RLA) as having said, *"In one of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) battles, a woman was found dead. Upon this, the Prophet (pbuh) prohibited killing women and children in battles."*
3. The Prophet (pbuh) ordered that, insane and senile people have no responsibility during war, and therefore they are not to be killed, but protected.

4. The Prophet (pbuh) has forbidden the killing of very elderly people who cannot participate in war. Anas bin Malik (RLA) reported that the Prophet (pbuh) would say the following words whenever he sent a military unit to war, *“Set out in the Name of Allah. Fight for the Religion of Allah and in the Name of Allah. But do not kill the elderly.”*
5. Non-combatant Clergymen residing in the Monasteries of the Jews and the Christians and their places of worship are not to be attacked. Musnad of Ahmad bin Hanbal reports Abdullah bin Abbas (RLA) to have said that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) would give the following command to his army:- *“...do not kill the children or the members of the monasteries”*.
6. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) always commanded his troops *“not to kill the workers or the servants”* because they are people who usually do not go to war and merely living among the enemy does not warrant the taking of their lives.
7. Pages 65-66 of the book, *Wars of the Holy Prophet*, by Hamidullah states that the Prophet (pbuh) acted with mercy towards prisoners of war. For example, after the battle of Badr, the Prophet (pbuh) placed prisoners among his troops and told his troops to treat them well. This order was carried out accordingly. The prisoners

were given clothes and the same food as the Muslim soldiers.

8. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) always ordered that enemy dead bodies should be treated decently by being buried and not allowed to rot in the open and wounded enemy forces should be given the same medical treatment as the Muslim casualties.

Page 22 of the book, *Islamic Rulings on Warfare*, by Aboul-Enein, H. Yousuf and Zuhur Sherifa gave a beautiful summary of the various rules Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) gave to his Forces on the conduct of war. According to the book, the summary of the rules were issued to the Muslim Army by the First Caliph who succeeded the Prophet (pbuh), Caliph Abubakar (RLA) as follows:- *“Stop, O people, that I may give you ten rules for your guidance in the battlefield. Do not commit treachery or deviate from the right path. You must not mutilate dead bodies. Neither kill a child, nor a woman, nor an aged man. Bring no harm to the trees, nor burn them with fire, especially those that are fruitful. Slay not any of the enemy's flock, save for your food. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them alone”*.

Muslim Scholars are unanimous that Muslims under the Prophet (pbuh) fought only when attacked, aggressed upon or threatened beyond limits. Fighting in self-defense is not only legitimate but considered obligatory upon Muslims.

However, should enemy hostile behavior cease, then the reason for engaging such enemy lapses. Muslim Scholars also aver that Muhammad (pbuh) was the first among the major military figures of history to lay down rules for humane warfare that limited loss of lives and “collateral damages” to the barest minimum.

As amply demonstrated in some earlier Chapters of this Book on the concepts of War in Islam, there is no justification for war (or any violence for that matter) in Islam except in defensive circumstances and within Islamic Laws, Rules and Regulations. No Muslim has the right to inflict injury, maim or kill anyone or destroy any property in the name of Religious War to convert anyone to Islam or to enforce Islam or its way of life on any non-Muslim. Allah (SWT) states in several Verses of the Glorious Qur’an that, Belief in the Islamic Religion is a person’s own affair; and that he or she is given the choice of accepting or rejecting the Religion; accepting for his/her own good or rejecting to his/her own peril. Some quotations from the Glorious Qur’an to this effect are as follows:-

Qur’an 2:256. *Let there be no compulsion in Religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the Wrong Path. Whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most Trustworthy Hand-hold that never breaks. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower of all things.*

Qur'an 18:29. *And say (O Muhammad): "The Truth (Islam) is from Your Lord". Then, whosoever wills, let him believe (in Islam), and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We (Allah) have prepared for the wrong-doers (polytheists, etc.) a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them. And if they ask for help, they will be granted water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. (How) dreadful the drink! And how terrible a dwelling!*

The first translator and commentator of the complete Glorious Qur'an in English, Sheik Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1872-1948) gives an excellent commentary on the incompatibility of compulsion with Religion in his Works, "The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary", as follows:-

Compulsion is incompatible with Religion because (1) Religion depends on Faith and will, and these would be meaningless if induced by force. (2) Truth and error have been so clearly shown by the mercy of Allah that there should be no doubt in the minds of any person of goodwill as to the fundamentals of Faith; (3) Allah's protection is continuous, and His plan is always to lead us from the depth of darkness into the clearest light.

The duty of the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (pbuh), and following him, the duty of every Muslim; is only to deliver the Message of Islam and no more. The Glorious Qur'an states this in many Verses including:-

Qur'an 3:20. *If they accept Islam, then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, your duty (O Prophet Muhammad) is only to deliver the Message.*

Qur'an 64:12: *And (you people should) obey Allah and obey the Messenger; but if you turn away, the duty of Our Messenger is only to deliver the Message clearly.*

Qur'an 24:54). *Say (to people): Obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, he (the Messenger) is responsible for the duty imposed on him, and you are responsible for the duty imposed on you. And if you obey him, you go aright. And the Messenger's duty is only to deliver (the message) plainly.*

Qur'an 39:41. *Surely We (Allah) have revealed to you (Prophet Muhammad) the Book (Qur'an) with Truth for people. So whoever follows the right way, it is for his own soul, and whoever errs, he errs only to its detriment. And you are not a custodian over them.*

Qur'an 13:40. *Your duty (Prophet Muhammad) is only the delivery of the Message, and Ours (Allah's) is to call (people) to account (in the Hereafter).*

So, who gave any Muslim, or any person of any Faith and Sense, the authority to inflict injury, maim or kill anyone or destroy any property in the name of any Religious War to convert anyone to Islam or to enforce Islam or its way of life on anyone; or for any other Religion, Faith or Belief?

Chapter Nine

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM

In Islam, it is worthwhile noting that Allah (SWT) has given some measure of equality between men and women, for example in the case of worship, education, faith and justice. Allah also prescribed differences between men and women in cases where they naturally differ, for example in the case of raising children and breastfeeding them where women are the natural beneficiaries. In addition, due to their nature, women are given reprieve even in Salat and the Fasting of the Month of Ramadan when they are menstruating or under birth-bleeding.

According to one of the World's most leading Muslim Scholars, Sheikh Dr Hassan Al-Turabi of Sudan, Muslims who advance conservative views on female affairs are normally very literal in their understanding of texts; and they tendentiously opt for an understanding that suits their prejudice.

In the religion of Islam, Sheikh Turabi asserts, a woman is an independent entity, and thus a fully responsible human being. Islam addresses her directly and does not approach her through the agency of males. A woman would assume full capacity and liability once she has attained maturity.

Moreover no woman is said to have truly accepted the message of Islam unless she does so out of original and independent will. Admission to Faith is entirely a personal matter; indeed, Faith cannot be adopted by proxy. Nor does a woman become a Muslim merely because of her relationship to father, husband or any other male. All Muslims, men and women, used to present their oath of allegiance to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) personally and independently. The Qur'an clearly establishes this:

يَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَى أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَدَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِيَنَّكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ
فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

O Prophet! when believing women come to you to give you the Bai'a (pledge to Islam), that they will not associate anything in Worship with Allah, that they will not steal, that they will not commit illegal sexual intercourse, that they will not kill their children, that they will not utter slander intentionally forging falsehood, and that they will not disobey you in any Ma'ruf (Islamic Monotheism and All that which Islam ordains); then accept their Bai'a (pledge to Islam), and ask Allah to forgive them. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an 60:12)

Women, according to Shari'ah, are counterparts of men. And in Islamic jurisprudence, there is no separate order of regulations for them. There are, however, few limited secondary regulations where a distinction is drawn between the two sexes. But these are intended purely to enable both of them to give a genuine expression of their Faith in accordance with their respective human nature. But the Shari'ah is essentially the same, and its general rules are common for both the sexes; it is addressed to both without any distinction. The underlying presumption in the Shari'ah is that sex is immaterial, except where the text makes the distinction or where proof can be adduced to that effect. Thus personal religious services for a woman in Islam, for instance, are the same as for a man. She has to perform her prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'abah; and in the remembrance of Allah. Just like men, women have to observe the general religious standards relating to personal conduct, social dealings and moral behaviour: like being truthful, fair altruistic, beneficent, righteous and well-mannered. Islam does not provide different moral codes for men and women. Even in matters of public life they, too, are expected to do their part and endure the sufferings of life as patiently as men are supposed to do. They too are expected to show solidarity with the community of believers and to forsake the comforts of their home and hearth to migrate to the State of the Muslims, to wage jihad with them, and to promote the well-being of their society.

In all these matters there is no distinction between Muslim men and women.

WOMEN AND MEN ARE PARTNERS

During his important Fare-Well Sermon at Mount Arafat, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphasised that, women are not the property of men that shall be treated anyhow. Women rights are given by Allah and no man can take them away from them. The Prophet (pbuh) emphasised the principles of mutual love, trust and respect in his Sermon that, *"O People, it is true that you have certain rights concerning your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives, only under Allah's trust and with his permission. I enjoin you to treat women well and be kind to them"*. He stated that, indeed women and men are partners. As partners, women and men complement one another. Being partners to each other, it means that men and women share a lot of things together as husband and wife. In creating a harmonious living environment, there is a need to understand each other and to be kind to one another.

The bond of partnership between men and women is so strong that Allah calls the two as "garments" to each other. They are therefore for mutual support, mutual comfort and mutual protection. They fit into each other as garments fit into the body. A garment is also for concealment of any

form of body secret, so are men to women and vice-versa. Allah says of men and women partnership that:

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ
لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ^{قُلْ} عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ^ص فَالَّذِينَ بَشَرُوا هُنَّ وَأَبْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ^ج

Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives (sexually). They are your garments and ye are their garments. Allah knows what ye used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you. So now associate with them, and seek what Allah has ordained for you (offspring) (Qur'an 2:187)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ^ج أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ^{قُلْ} إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

The believers, men and women, are protectors of one another. They enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil: They observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power; Wise. (Qur'an 9:71)

EQUALITY IN RIGHTS, STATUS AND BLESSINGS

There is no difference between the two (males and females) as regards status, rights and blessings both in this World and in the Hereafter. A Verse that explains is as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ
بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife (Hawwa - Eve), and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is ever an All-Watcher over you. (Qur'an 4:1)

This Verse of the Quran explains that Allah has created man and woman from Adam (AS) and Hawwa (Eve), the first man and the first woman; therefore all are blood brothers and blood sisters.

Cases where men and women are treated as equals include mentions in Religious Duties. When Allah mentions “Believers”, He mentions men and women with an equality notion of “**O you who Believe**” or “**Mankind**”. Below are some examples:-

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَءَامِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

O You who believe (in Musa (Moses) i.e. Jews; and Isa (Jesus) i.e. Christians)! Fear Allah, and believe too in his Messenger (Muhammad), He (Allah) will give you a double portion of his Mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk (straight), and He will forgive you. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an 57:28)

Similarly, Allah (SWT) refers to both men and women in equality as human beings and offspring of Adam (AS):-

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

O mankind! We (Allah) have created you from a male and a female, and made you into Nations and Tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (Believer) who has piety. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Qur'an 49:13)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَهُمْ فِي الْوُجُوهِ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَهُمْ مِنْ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴾

And indeed We (Allah) have honoured the Children of Adam, and we have carried them on land and sea, and have

provided them with lawful good things; and have preferred them above many of those who We have created with a marked preference. (Qur'an 17:70)

In some other cases, Allah refers to both men and women in their gender form as in verse 35 of Suratul Ahzab as follows:-

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ
وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ
وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ
وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Verily, the Muslims men and women, the believers men and women, the men and the women who are obedient (to Allah), the men and women who are truthful (in their speech and deeds), the men and the women who are patient (in performing all the duties which Allah has ordered and in abstaining from all that Allah has forbidden), the men and the women who are humble (before their Lord Allah), the men and the women who give Sadaqat (i.e. Zakat, and alms, etc.), the men and the women who observe Saum (Fasting) the men and the women who guard their chastity (from illegal sexual acts) and the men and the women who

remember Allah much with their hearts and tongues (while sitting, standing, lying, etc.). Allah has prepared for them (these groups of men and women) Forgiveness and a Great Reward (of Paradise). (Qur'an 33:35)

Almighty Allah also equalised the positions of men and women in making supplications to Him as in Verses 193 and 194 of Suratu Ali Imran as follows:-

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَءَامَنَّا رَبَّنَا
 فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ رَبَّنَا
 وَءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ
 الْمِيعَادَ

(The male and female Believers say) “Our Lord, we have heard the call of the one calling (Muhammad) us to Faith, (who says) “Believe in your Lord”, and we believe. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Yourself our souls in the company of the righteous ones. 194. Our Lord, grant us what You promise us through Your Messengers, and save us from shame on The Day of Judgment for You never renege on Your promises.” (Qur'an 3:193-194)

Allah (SWT) answered them both (men and women) in unison in the Next Ayat (Verse 195) as follows:-

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ
بَعْضُكُم مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَاذْهَبُوا وَتِلْكَ أَسْمَاءُ الَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا فِي
سَبِيلِي وَقَتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ
الْثَوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), “Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be they male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will remit from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards”. (Qur'an 3:195)

EQUALITY IN REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا

If any do deeds of righteousness, be they male or female, and have Faith (in Allah), they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them. (Qur'an 4:124)

It should be born in mind that, Allah does not equate men and women only in worship, but He has equated them in all affairs of doing the right or doing the wrong. In reward and in punishment, Allah has prepared absolute equality between men and women. Allah (SWT), Who created human beings, appreciates their limits and therefore gives some leeway in Worship and in Worldly transactions. For example, if someone cannot pray while standing he can pray in a seating position. Likewise, if someone cannot fast the Month of Ramadan he has options to make up for it. But the ultimate thing is that, Allah rewards or punishes men and women based on what each one of them has done; and Allah will never hold someone for another's faults. That is Divine Justice and Fairness. Allah says:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He (the person) gets reward (in Paradise) for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished (in Hell-Fire) for that (evil) which he has earned. (Qur'an 2:286)

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND OF CHOICE

On the basis of the uniform principles of Islamic jurisprudence, a Muslim Woman enjoys the same capacity and freedom enjoyed by a Muslim Man. She too can propose to a man for marriage, orally or in writing, she can

freely choose her spouse, reject a suitor she does not like or obtain divorce from an estranged husband against his will. But a male relative normally formalises the marriage contract, and marriage dissolution or divorce on a woman's initiative is only granted by a Muslim Judge or a Muslim Authority.

Umamah bint Abi'l-As (RLA) was one lady companion of the Prophet (pbuh) who proposed for marriage in writing. She sent a message to Al Mugheerah bin Naufal (RLA) saying: "If you feel you stand in need of us then proceed forth". He then sought her hand in marriage from Al Hasan (RLA), her cousin, who duly solemnised the marriage. An account about Sahal bin Saad Al Saidi (RLA) in the Books of authentic Hadith tells about a Muslim woman who proposed verbally to the Prophet (pbuh) himself. She told him: "I present myself to you". She then waited for quite some time while the Prophet (pbuh) kept on looking at her. A man said to the Prophet (pbuh): "If you don't need her please marry me to her". The Prophet (pbuh) asked him: "Do you have anything to offer as dowry?" The man replied: "I don't have anything except this loin cloth". The Prophet (pbuh) said to him: "If you give her your loin cloth you will remain without one, look for something else". The man said: "I can't find any". The Prophet (pbuh) then advised him, "Try to find even an iron ring". He tried in vain. The Prophet (pbuh) finally asked him: "Do you know

anything from the Qur'an (learnt by heart)?" The man replied: "Yes, such and such Surah of the Qur'an", and he named the Surah. The Prophet (pbuh) then declared: "I solemnise your marriage with her with whatever Verses of the Qur'an you have as dowry".

Regarding the freedom of marital choice of a woman, the Prophet (pbuh) ordered that a woman should not be married but with her own authority and consent. The Prophet (pbuh) ordered: "Do not marry a non-virgin except on her instruction, nor marry a virgin except with her permission; and her silence may go for permission". (Bukhari). Whether a girl is a virgin or not, the Prophet (pbuh), would not allow their marriage under compulsion. Ibn-Abbas (RLA) stated that a virgin girl came to the Prophet (pbuh) and told him that her father had got her married without her approval. The Prophet (pbuh) gave her complete freedom to choose whichever course that pleased her. (Reported by Abu Dawoud, Ahmed, and Ibn-Majah). Another girl came to the Prophet (pbuh) and complained that her father had married her to his nephew against her wish, the Prophet (pbuh) gave her the choice of rejecting the marriage. But she said to the Prophet (pbuh), "I endorse what my father did, but I wanted to show women that parents have nothing to do in the matter". (Ibn-Majah).

Women are entitled to full freedom of expression of their proper views. Aisha (RLA) is famous for going all-out to

advance her juristic opinions. Muslim ladies used to venture their views in the presence of the Prophet (pbuh) as well his successors, the Caliphs (RLA). Ibn Al-Jauzi (RLA) narrated the virtues and merits of Caliph Umar bin Al-Khattab (RLA) in the following words: Umar (RLA), was disturbed by the high bride price that had made many young men unable to get married. Therefore, while delivering the Friday Sermon he forbade the people from paying excessive dowries and addressed them saying: "Don't fix the dowries for women over forty ounces. If ever that is exceeded I shall deposit the excess amount in the public treasury". As he descended from the pulpit, a flat-nosed lady stood up from among the women audience, and said: "It is not within your right". Umar asked: "Why should this not be of my right?" she replied: "Because Allah has proclaimed: "even if you had given one of them (wives) a whole treasure for dowry take not the least bit back. Would you take it by false claim and a manifest sin?" (Surat Al Nisa: 20). When he heard this, Umar (RLA) said: "The woman is right and the man (Umar) is wrong. It seems that all people have deeper insight and wisdom than Umar". Then he returned to the pulpit and declared: "O people, I had restricted the giving of more than four hundred dirhams in dowry. Whosoever of you wishes to give in dowry as much as he likes and finds satisfaction in so doing may do so".

In an Islamic Society women also take part in the appointment of counselling and control officers responsible for the public affairs of society. This may be done either through the process of election or consultation. The account of the Shura process following the death of Caliph Umar (RLA) firmly establishes this matter. Muslim ladies did actually participate in that general consultation. Ibn Katheer, the historian, wrote that, "Then Abdur Rahman bin Auf (RLA) undertook to consult the people about (the candidates) Uthman bin Affan (RLA) and Ali bin Abi Talib (RLA). He was collecting and collating the general opinion of the Muslims through their leaders. He consulted them singly as well as collectively; privately as well as publicly. He even reached to the Muslim ladies in their privacy"

FREEDOM TO OWN PROPERTY AND ENGAGE IN TRADE

Owning of property and engaging in trade has been explicitly demonstrated in the case of Khadija (RLA), the First Wife of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the First Person to accept the Religion of Islam. Her relationship with the Prophet (pbuh), before his becoming a Prophet and Messenger of Allah, was purely his taking care of her trade and her animals. They ultimately got married. She was a very wealthy woman who was known all over Arabia, from Mecca to Sham (Syria). The Islamic rules and regulations in trade, commerce, agriculture, etc., apply to both men and

women. The various distinctions being on their nature, like women not dressing properly or mingling with men unnecessarily.

Another classical case of Women engaging in business and commerce is that of Qailah Umm-Bani Atmar (RLA), one of the merchant ladies. She said, "I am a woman who buys and sells". Indeed, there were very many women in both Mecca and Medina markets that, Caliph Umar Ibn Al Khattab (RLA) entrusted the supervision of administrative market affairs to a woman, Shaff'a bint Abdullah bin Abd Shams (RLA). Caliph Umar (RLA) used to seek her counsel, pay due regards to her and hold her in high esteem. In this regard the dialogue between Abu Al-Yasar (RLA) and a woman who came to purchase dates from him, is also significant to show how women went about shopping (Trimithi).

According to Islamic jurisprudence a woman is competent to own property and dispose of it in any manner. The Shari'ah generally provides for an equitable and fair role for women in the economic life of a Muslim society. Just as much as they share in the management of family affairs, they can contribute to the support of the family, although they are not legally bound to provide maintenance, but could do so freely. A woman can share outdoor work with the man to earn a common living. Asma bint Abu Bakr (RLA) is said to have narrated that when Al Zubair (RLA)

married her, he had no landed property, nor a servant, nor anything else, except a camel for irrigation and a horse. She said: "I would give fodder to his horse, draw the water, patch his water skin and knead the flour. I was not good at baking and preparing bread; but I had some sincere Ansar neighbour ladies who used to help me with the baking. I used to bring, on my head, fruit kernels from the land which the Prophet (pbuh) had given to Al Zubair (RLA). That land was at a distance of three farsakhs (about sixteen kilometres). Later my father, Abu Bakr (RLA) sent me a servant to save me the trouble of looking after the horse and the land work; and I felt as if I had been relieved of the bondage of slavery". (Bukhari).

Chapter Ten

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: ZAKAT, AWQAF AND CHARITY IN ISLAM

SOCIAL WELFARE IN ISLAM

All human beings, according to Islam, have been created by Allah through one man, Adam (AS) and his wife Hawwa (Eve), and therefore they have one blood relationship and belong to one great brotherhood. All people, being the descendants of the same progenitors, should naturally be each other's well-wishers and should willingly come to one another's assistance, like the members of the same large family. Charity, an important way of bringing justice to society, has been enshrined strongly in Islam.

And justice, being the essence of Religion, Islam has made a special Charity, Zakat, obligatory and binding upon all those who embrace the Faith, laying the greatest emphasis on the support of the needy and destitute members of society. It is thus a sacred duty of the affluent to give part of their wealth to fulfil the needs of the deprived members of the society.

A society can flourish only when its members do not spend all their wealth on the satisfaction of their own desires, but reserve a portion of it for, relatives, neighbours, the poor and the needy. A true believer is thus always prepared, after

meeting the needs of his family, to assist other people in need of his help. Such acts of Social Welfare were described in the Qur'an as follows:

❦ لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَءَاتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۗ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allah, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book (Qur'an), the Prophets; and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masakin (the poor), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, performs As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and gives the Zakat, and who fulfil their covenant when they make it, and who are As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.) in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during the battles). Such are the

people of the Truth and they are Al-Muttaqun (Allah fearing) (Qur'an 2:177).

In general, since Charity, including Zakat, is purely for the sake of Allah, it has value only if something good and valuable is given. It should be lawfully earned or acquired by the giver. It should include such things as are of use and value to others. So the test of charity lies in giving away not just things that someone has discarded, but things that someone greatly values. What Allah demands is unselfishness. It may be in any form: cash, personal efforts, talents, skills, learning, property or possessions. Charity is, in the words of the Prophet (pbuh), “to place a thing in the hands of Allah”. It is therefore, obvious that placing worthless things, or things acquired unlawfully, in the “hands” of Allah is a dishonour to Him.

THE INSTITUTION OF ZAKAT

Charity in its broadest sense has been called *Sadaqah* in Islam. Such great importance is attached to charity that it has been made into an institution in order to give it permanence and regularity. It is one of the compulsory Five Pillars of Islam, called Zakat.

The Law, rules and regulations on Zakat simply mean: to take from the wealthy and give to the poor. It rotates wealth in such a way as to balance social inequality. Islamic Law empowers the Islamic State or Community to collect the Zakat, and to keep a separate account for it.

Zakat is considered by Muslims to be an act of piety through which one expresses concern for the well-being of fellow Muslims, as well as preserving social harmony between the wealthy and the poor. Zakat promotes a more equitable redistribution of wealth and fosters a sense of solidarity amongst members of the *Ummah*.

According to the Quran's Surah Al-Tawba (9:60), there are eight categories of people (*asnaf*) who qualify to benefit from Zakat funds as follows:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝۶۰ ﴾

As-Sadaqat (Zakat) are only for the Fuqara (poor), and Al-Masakin (the needy) and those employed to collect and administer (the funds); and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's Cause (i.e. for Mujahidun), and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise. (Qur'an 9:60)

Islamic scholars have traditionally interpreted this Verse as identifying the following eight categories of Muslim causes to be the proper recipients of Zakat:

1. Those living without means of livelihood (*Fuqara*), the very poor
2. Those who cannot meet their basic needs (*Masakin*), the very needy
3. To Zakat collectors and administrators (*Amiliyn 'Aliha*)
4. To persuade those sympathetic to or expected to convert to Islam (*Mu'allafatu Qulubuhum*), recent converts to Islam, and potential allies in the cause of Islam
5. To free from slavery or servitude (*Fir-Riqab*), slaves of Muslims who have or intend to free from their masters by means of a *kitabah* contract
6. Those who have incurred overwhelming debts while attempting to satisfy their basic needs (*Al-Gharimin*), debtors who in pursuit of a worthy goal incurred a debt
7. Those fighting for a religious cause or a cause of Allah (*Fi Sabilillah*), or for Jihad in the way of Allah by means of pen, word, or sword, or for Islamic warriors who fight against the unbelievers but are not salaried soldiers
8. Wayfarers, stranded travellers (*Ibnu Al-Sabal*), travellers who are travelling for a worthy goal but cannot reach their destination without financial assistance.

Zakat should not be given to one's own parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, spouses or the family and the descendants of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

Neither the Qur'an nor the Hadith specify the relative division of Zakat into the above eight categories. The Shafi'i School requires Zakat is to be distributed equally among the eight categories of recipients, while the Maliki and Hanafi Schools permits Zakat to be distributed to all the categories, some of them, or just one of them. Classical Schools of Islamic Law are unanimous that collectors and administrators of Zakat are to be paid first, with the balance to be distributed equally amongst the remaining seven categories of recipients, even in cases where one group's need is more demanding.

The amount of Zakat to be paid by an individual depends on the amount of money and the type of assets the individual possesses. The Quran does not provide specific guidelines on which types of wealth are taxable under the Zakat, nor does it specify percentages to be given. However, it clearly indicates to donate the "surplus" of one's income. But the Sunnah practice in the Islamic World has been that the amount of Zakat paid on money is 2.5% ($\frac{1}{40}$). Zakat is additionally payable on some agricultural goods, some precious metals, some minerals, and some livestock at a rate varying between 2.5% and 20% ($\frac{1}{5}$), depending on the type of goods or products.

Zakat is payable on money and livestock continuously owned over one lunar year that are in excess of the *Nisab*, a minimum monetary value and livestock number.

VOLUNTARY CHARITY (Sadaqat)

The demand of Islam that all its followers should spend their wealth freely on the common good of society cannot be met solely by the payment of the obligatory levy of Zakat. There must also be additional almsgiving on a voluntary basis. This is referred to in Islamic literature as “Sadaqat”. The difference between Sadaqah and Zakat is that, Sadqat is a voluntary exercise, while the Zakat is obligatory, and collected by the government as a compulsory levy. The rate and exemption limit (Nisab) for Zakat are fixed, while the amount of other Sadaqat is entirely dependent upon the will of the giver.

The term Sadaqat, as applied to alms, is an indication of the sincerity (*sidk*) of the almsgiver’s religious belief.

The term Sadaqah is also in certain cases used in a very broad sense to cover all kinds of charity, and should be interpreted according to the context. From the root *sadaqa*, “to speak the truth, to be true”, it literally means righteousness. Ibn Arabi explains it as:

“A voluntary act of worship, a choice made by one’s own free will. If this is not the case, then it is not voluntary sadaqat . For man makes it obligatory upon himself as Allah makes mercy obligatory upon Himself towards those who repent.”

The scope of charity as defined in the Qur’an is so vast that

even a poor person who has nothing tangible to give can offer Sadaqat in the shape of a smile, or by offering a glass of water to a thirsty person, or by uttering a kindly words. Good conduct is frequently referred to in the Hadith as Sadaqat. Even planting something from which a human being, a bird or an animal may later eat also counts as Sadaqat. In this extended sense, acts of loving kindness and even greeting one another with a cheerful expression are regarded as Sadaqat. In short, every good deed is Sadaqat.

According to a Hadith, the Prophet (pbuh) observed that:

“In one’s wealth there is a due to Allah and His people besides Zakat”.

Caliph Ali (RLA), the fourth Caliph, has thus explained this Hadith:

“Allah has ordained that the rich are to pay out of their wealth to an extent sufficient for the needs of the poor, so that if they do not find food and clothing, or any other need remains to be fulfilled, it would be because the rich are not doing their duty, and for this Allah will take them to task on the Day of Judgement.”

According to Abdullah ibn Umar (RLA):

“If the Zakah levy is insufficient to meet the needs of the poor, then it is the duty of the rich to put the poor on back on their feet”

There are many Verses in the Qur’an and many Traditions

of the Prophet (pbuh), which make it quite, clear that there is a due besides Zakat, and that even if the wealthy have paid Zakat, they have still not fully discharged their duties.

Abu Dhar Ghifari (RLA), one of the Prophet's Companions, reported that the Prophet (pbuh), while sitting in the shade of the Ka'abah Wall, said:

"They are the losers". Abu Dhar enquired: *"Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?"* The Prophet (pbuh) replied: *"Those who pile up heaps of wealth and (pointing in all directions with his hands) do not spend like this and this and this."* (Bukhari and Muslim)

Inspired by the Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh), the spirit of helping others to earn Allah's pleasure has been best reflected in not only giving money and goods to people, but in giving the Muslim Society the much valued and needed education. Following the Hadith that: *"The greatest charity is for a Muslim to learn something and then teach it to others"* (as reported by Ahmad). Generation after generation, Muslims in large numbers have devoted themselves to the enlightenment of others in the field of education. They did this individually and also by establishing *Maktaba* and *Madarassa*, that is schools, colleges and libraries. These educational institutions, set up in the house of the teacher or in separate buildings, generally made no charges for instruction. Wealthy people helped in the running of these schools, not only through

Zakat but also by making them endowments (waqf) of their properties, the income from which met the needs of these schools. Orphans and poor people were given stipends in addition to boarding and lodging.

PERMANENT CHARITIES (Awqaf)

Awqaf are permanent forms of charity, which are called *Sadaqat jaariah*. Awqaf (singular “Waqaf”), are inalienable charitable endowments under Islamic Law. They typically involve donating a building, a plot of land or other assets for Muslim Religious or charitable purposes with no intention of reclaiming the assets. A charitable trust may hold the donated assets. The person making such dedication is known as a *Waqif* (a donor).

The term “Waqaf” literally means "confinement and prohibition" or causing a thing to stop or to stand still. The Waqaf system comprises of three elements: *Hayrat*, *Akarat* and *Waqif*.

1. Hayrat (*hayr*), means “goodness” and refers to the motivational factor behind Waqaf;
2. *Akarat* refers to corpus and literally means “real estate” implying revenue-generating sources, such as markets, land, baths; and
3. Waqif, in its narrow sense, is the institution(s) providing services as committed in the waqaf deed such as schools

(*madrassa*), public kitchens, Masajeed (Mosques), libraries, etc.

Generally, the Waqaf must fulfil three primary constraints:

1. The one endowing the Waqaf, and its subsequent maintainers should sequester the principal and allocate the proceeds to charity
2. The endowment should legally be removed from commoditisation such that it is no longer on the market
3. Its sole purpose must be charitable and the beneficiary group must be named.

Awqaf conception in Islamic society has been derived from a number of Hadith. It is reported that during the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), after the Hijrah, the first Waqaf was composed of a grove of 600 date palm trees. The proceeds of this waqaf were meant to feed Medina's poor people. In one tradition, Ibn Umar (RLA) reported that, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (RLA) got land in Khaybar, so he came to Muhammad (pbuh) and asked him to advise him about it. Muhammad (pbuh) said, "If you like, make the property inalienable and give the profit from it to charity". It goes on to say that Umar (RLA) gave it away as alms, that the land itself would not be sold, inherited or donated. He gave it away for the poor, the relatives, the slaves, the jihad, the travellers and the guests. And it will not be held against him who administers it, if he consumes some

of its yield in an appropriate manner or does not enrich himself by means of it.

In another Hadith, Muhammad (pbuh) said, *"When someone dies, only three deeds will survive him: (1) continuing alms, (2) profitable knowledge and (3) a child praying for him"*.

Islamic Law puts several legal conditions on the process of establishing a Waqaf. Being a contract, the founder of Waqaf (called *al-waqif* in Arabic) must be of the capacity to enter into a contract. For this reason, the founder must:

- Be an adult
- Be of sound mind
- Be capable of handling financial affairs
- Not be under interdiction for bankruptcy

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