

About The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H)

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Table of Contents

Finality of Prophethood	3
Supplement 1	8
Supplement 2	12
Supplement 3	20
Supplement 4	25
Supplement 5	30
Additional Sayings about the Prophet (PBUH).....	36
Prophet Muhammad (saas)	40
Supplement 7	44
Supplement 8	48
Prophet Muhammad's (saws) Last Sermon.....	52
Supplement 9	58
What is said about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)	66
The Prophet of Islam - His Biography	70
Supplement 10.....	74
Description of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH).....	82

Finality of Prophethood

The Islamic Information and News Network (IINN) is happy to announce that the Islamic book, Finality of Prophethood, by Syed Abul A'la Maududi, a renowned scholar from Pakistan, will be made available electronically. We will insha Allah bring it out in parts due to its length. That Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the last Messenger and Prophet of Allah is a simple fact for any Muslim. The book gives a detailed study why.

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The obvious omissions from the book are the two maps which we could not produce in ASCII format and a few Arabic phrases. The Arabic phrases however have been transliterated into the text. M.I. Zahid January 5, 1994 The Finality of Prophethood by S. Abul A'la Maududi Foreword Of all the conspiracies hatched against Islam in modern times, the most dangerous is a false claim to Prophethood made in the beginning of this century. This claim has been the main cause of wide spread mental chaos amongst the Ummah for the last sixty years.

Like all other schisms, the root cause of this mischief is that the Muslims are generally ignorant of their religion. Had they been truly imbued with its knowledge and developed a clear understanding of the article of faith relating to the finality of Prophethood, it would have been well-nigh impossible for any false claimant to Prophethood to take root and thrive among the people of Islam after the last ministry of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

At this juncture the most perfect and effective remedy for eradicating this evil is to educate the maximum number of people in the best possible manner about true faith in the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and stressing the importance and value of this article of faith in the religion of Islam. It is also imperative that all doubts and skeptical notions about the final ministry of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) should be dispelled through reason and logic.

This booklet has been prepared to serve this very purpose. Readers who find it useful should take a step further and extend their full co-operation in the propagation of its contents. This booklet ought to reach all literate people and they having studied it themselves should read it out to the non-literate. It is hoped that a study of this booklet will not only immunize people who have not been contaminated with this malady but would also make the truth manifest to the right-minded persons among those who have received some of its germs. However, those who have fallen victim to falsehood and are impervious to all reason--for them, hope and salvation lies only with Allah.

Abul A'la Maududi Lahore: February 12, 1962. In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Beneficent Finality of Prophethood by S. Abul A'la Maududi "O people ! Muhammad has no sons among ye men, but

verily, he is the Apostle of God and the last in the line of Prophets. And God is Aware of everything." (Surah Al Ahzab: 40) This verse has been revealed in the fifth Ruku' (para or passage) of Surah al-Ahzab. In this Ruku' Allah has provided answers to all those objections raised by the hypocrites, which had given rise to a storm of calumnies, slander and mischief in respect of the marriage of Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with Hadrat Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her).

These hypocrites argued that Zainab was the wife of an adopted son of the Holy Prophet and by this connection she stood in the position of the Prophet's daughter-in-law. Hence, after her divorce from Zaid, the Prophet had taken his own daughter-in-law as wife. In order to refute this allegation Allah told clearly in verse 37 that this marriage had Divine sanction behind it and was made to serve as a lawful precedent for Muslim men to marry the wives of their adopted sons after they had been divorced by their husbands. Later in verses 38 and 39, Allah affirmed that no power could hinder the Prophet from discharging a Divine obligation. The Prophets are ordained to fear God, not the people.

It has been an invariable practice of the Apostles to transmit the Divine message without any extraneous care and to perform the duties enjoined upon them by Allah without fear or hesitation. Afterwards a verse was revealed which extinguished the basis of all objections. In the first place, they had charged "You have taken your daughter-in-law as wife, in contravention of your own law that the wife of a son is forbidden to his father." In refutation of this charge it was affirmed by the Almighty: "Muhammad had no sons among ye men..." thereby making absolutely clear that the man whose divorced wife was taken into wedlock by the Prophet being not his real son; the act, therefore did not imply violation of it.

The argument of their second charge ran thus: "Admitted that the adopted son is not the real one, and on that basis a father might lawfully marry the divorced spouse of his adopted son, but where was the compulsion for the Prophet to do so?" Allah affirmed in answer to this charge: "But, verily, he is the Apostle of Allah". The implication is that it was Allah's mandate to the Holy Prophet to wipe out all prejudices and declare all taboos that pagan custom had unnecessarily imposed upon the people, as lawful.

In this respect the Prophet's action was unequivocal and left no room for doubt. (see footnote 1, below.) In order to lay particular emphasis upon this point Allah observes: (Khatim Al-Nabbiyeen) "And he is the last in the line of Prophets," which means that no messenger nor even a Prophet charged with the mission of carrying out reforms in the sphere of Law or society which might have been omitted (God forbid) during the lifetime of Muhammad (PBUH) will ever succeed him. Since Allah ordained the ministry of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to be final, it was, therefore, imperative that he should accomplish the task of uprooting this pagan custom.

Later the point has been further emphasized in the revelation (Wa Kan ul-Allahi Be-kulle Shai-in 'Aleema): "God is Aware of everything." The true import of this revelation is that Allah deemed it best to remove this pagan custom through the agency of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and that Allah

only could take cognisance of the harm that the perpetuation of this infidel custom would have entailed. Allah was well aware that the line of Prophethood ended in Muhammad (PBUH) whose precedent the whole ummah would follow, and had he not done away with this custom, there would arise no man comparable in status to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who could accomplish the task.

And suppose a reformer had arisen in later times who would break this custom, his act would not have constituted a universal or permanent precedent for Muslims of all ages and all countries to follow. No other person that follows will embody the Divine sanctity which attaches to the person of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Hence the precedent of no man but Muhammad has the potential of wiping out the idea of all pagan customs from the souls of men for all times to come. footnote 1. At this point those who deny the finality of Muhammad's Prophethood (PBUH) demand to know the tradition in which this allegation has been reported.

This query in fact lays bare their ignorance. The Holy Qur'an furnishes answers to the charges of the mischief-mongers at several points without actually mentioning the charge. In each case, however, the relevant text bears unmistakable evidence as to which allegation is being answered. In the present case also the answer contains the substance of the question. The use of the conjunctive word "but" at the end of the first sentence presupposes that part of the question had yet to be dealt with.

The second sentence, therefore, furnishes answer to the remaining part of the question. The first sentence had revealed to the objectors the answer to their charge that 'Muhammad had married his daughter- in-law.' However, the second point of the question "where was the compulsion for the Prophet to do so" still called for an answer. This answer was provided by the next sentence in the text. "But verily, Muhammad is the Apostle of God and last in the line of Prophets of God." The point may be further explained by taking an illustration from ordinary conversation. Someone says "Zaid had not risen, but that Bakr has stood up."

Now this conveys the sense that Zaid has not risen, but the matter does not end there, as it gives rise to the query, "If Zaid has not risen, who has stood up then?" The subordinate clause of the above sentence "but Bakr has stood up" supplies an answer to this query. It is the same in the above case. The Verdict of the Text of the Qur'an A group who has raised the heresy of a new prophethood in modern times explains the meaning of the idea of the "Finality of Prophethood" as the 'Stamp of Prophethood' thereby implying that all prophets who would succeed Muhammad (PBUH) will bear his stamp and will attain to prophethood by his seal alone.

No one, in other words, who does not bear the seal of Muhammad (PBUH) will attain the status of Prophethood. But the context in which the term "the last in the line of Prophets" has been revealed in the Holy Qur'an leaves no scope for such speculation. If indeed the term "last in the line of Prophets" does bear the meaning intended by this group, then this term is surely out of place in the context in which it has been revealed. Furthermore, when the term is charged with this meaning it distorts the whole purpose of the revealed verse.

In this verse God refutes the charge and dispels doubts created by the mischievous people about the marriage of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her), the divorced wife of the Prophet's adopted son, Zaid. Does it stand to reason to make a sudden interpolation in this context of the point that Muhammad (PBUH) was the 'seal of Prophets' and that Allah had delegated to him the authority of attesting the bonafides of succeeding prophets ? This interpretation bears no connection with the context-not the least even and is contrary to the purpose of Divine argument against the heretics.

If this interpretation were true the non- believers might well have argued: "There is no hurry in doing away with this custom now. You might safely leave this task for your successor prophets who will bear your stamp." According to a second interpretation of the idea of the finality of Prophethood advanced by this group it is said that the term "Last in the line of Prophets" means the "exalted Prophet." They further explain that the line of Apostles will continue, though the excellence of Prophethood has been culminated in the person of Muhammad (PBUH). This interpretation is no less defective and harmful than the other one.

It hardly bears any relation to the context and, in fact, conveys a contradictory sense of the verse. Taking this thread of argument the infidels and hypocrites would have plausibly pointed out, "Sir, there will be other prophets after you, howsoever inferior in status compared to you, to fulfil the Divine mission, why must you take it upon yourself to remove this custom also?" The Dictionary Meaning of the Word 'Khatam-al-Nabiyyin' It is evident that the text can bear one meaning and it is that Khatam-al-Nabiyyin stands for the Finality of Prophethood with a clear implication that the prophethood has been culminated and finalized in Muhammad (PBUH). It is not only the context that supports this interpretation but also the lexicography.

According to Arabic lexicon and the linguistic usage Khatam means to affix seal; to close, to come to an end; and to carry something to its ultimate end. Khatama al-'Amala is equivalent to 'Faragha min al-'Almali' which means 'to get over with the task.' 'Khatama al-Ina' bears the meaning 'The vessel has been closed and sealed so that nothing can go into it, nor can its contents spill out.' 'Khatam-al-kitab' conveys the meaning 'The letter has been enclosed and sealed so that it is finally secured.' 'Khatama-'Ala-al-Qalb' means 'The heart has been sealed so that it cannot perceive anything new nor can it forswear what it has already imbibed.'

'Khitamu-Kulli-Mashrubin' implies 'the final taste that is left in the mouth when the drink is over.' Katimatu Kulli Shaiinn 'Aqibatuhu wa Akhiratuhu means "The end in the case of everything denotes its doom and ultimate finish." Khatm-ul-Shaii Balagha Akhirahu conveys the sense, "To end a thing means to carry it to its ultimate limit."

The term Khatam-i-Qur'an is used in the similar sense and the closing verses of Qur'anic Surahs are referred to as Khawatim. Khatim-ul-Qaum Akhirhuum means "The last man in the tribe." (Refer to Lisan-ul-'Arab; Qamus and Aqrab-ul- Muwarid). (see footnote 2, below.) For this reason all linguists and commentators agree that Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin means 'The Last

in the line of Prophets.' The word Khatam in its dictionary meaning and linguistic usage does not refer to the post office stamp which is affixed on the outgoing mail.

Supplement 1

Its literal meaning is the 'seal' which is but on the envelope to secure its contents. footnote 2. We have referred to three lexicons here, yet the elucidation of this point is not confined to these works alone. All authoritative dictionaries of the Arabic language interpret the word Khatam in the sense that we have given to it.

But the deniers of the Finality of Prophethood in their endeavor to make a sneaky assault on the religion of God argue that if we refer to someone as 'Last of the Poets' or 'Last of the Legists' or 'Last of the Commentators', we do not necessarily mean that no poet, legist or commentator will come after them; rather we only mean to say that all excellence of their act has been concentrated in such men.

The actual position, however, is that when we do use these exaggerated epithets for someone we do not thereby replace or remove the original meaning of the word 'Last'. It is preposterous to assume that by its metaphorical use to refer to the excellence or perfection of a man, the word 'Last' loses its original or real significance which is 'Final'.

Such an assumption can only be accepted by a person who lacks elementary knowledge of the rules of grammar. There is no grammatical principle in any language by which the metaphorical meaning of a word may be taken as its real or original meaning. Besides, the metaphorical meaning in no case replaces or obliterates the real and basic meaning of the word. When you tell an Arab 'Ja Khatam ul-Qaum', he will certainly not take it to mean that 'the perfect or the most excellent man of the tribe has come.'

He will, on the other hand, take it to mean that 'the whole tribe, even to the last man, has come.' There is another point to be considered. Such terms as the 'Last Poet', the Last Legist' or the 'Last Narrator of hadith' are eulogies used by men for other human beings whom they deem to be perfect and excellent.

Those who use these hyperboles for other men certainly can not say, nor do they know, that people of such excellence will come in later times or not. So in human language these appellations are hyperboles, but when God uses for a person that such and such quality has been culminated in him, there is no reason to take it in the metaphorical sense in the strain of human expression. If Allah had pronounced someone as 'Last Poet', he would have been last poet in the literal sense of the word.

If Allah appoints someone as His 'Last Prophet', there is absolutely no possibility of any other person attaining to that dignity after that. God is Omniscient. Man has but limited knowledge. This being so, how can one construe the human praise of a person as 'Last Poet' or the last of the jurists in the same sense as God's pronouncement of a person as the 'Last Prophet'? The Observations of the Holy Prophet(PBUH) About the Finality of Prophethood The meaning of the word Khatam that emerges out of the context of the Holy Qur'an and which is the same as given in all lexicons of the Arabic language is also affirmed by the observations of the Holy Prophet(peace and blessings be upon him).

We quote some authentic traditions to illustrate the case in point: The Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "The tribe of Israel was guided by prophets. When a prophet passed away, another prophet succeeded him. But no prophet will come after me; only caliphs will succeed me."

(Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib). The Prophet of God (PBUH) affirmed: "My position in relation to the prophets who came before me can be explained by the following example: A man erected a building and adorned this edifice with great beauty, but he left an empty niche, in the corner where just one brick was missing. People looked around the building and marvelled at its beauty, but wondered why a brick was missing from that niche? I am like unto that one missing brick and I am the last in the line of the Prophets." (Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib).

(In other words, with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) the edifice of Prophethood has been completed and there is no empty niche in this edifice o provide room for another prophet.) Four traditions relating to this subject are recorded, in Muslim, Kitab-ul-Fada'il, Babu Khatimin-Nabiyyin. The latter tradition contains the following additional sentence. "So I came and in me the line of Prophets has ended."

The very same tradition in similar words has been reported in Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul-Manaqib, Bab-Fadlin Nabi and Kitab-Adab, Bab-ul-Amthal. In Musnad Abu Dawud Tayalisi this tradition has been incorporated among other traditions reported by Jabir bin Abdullah; and its last sentence reads, "It is in me that line of Prophets came to its final end."

Musnad Ahmad contains traditions reported by Hadrat Ubayyi bin Ka"b, Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri and Hadrat Abu Huraira(may Allah be pleased with them) on the same subject with a slight variation of words here and there.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "God has bestowed upon me six favors which the former Prophets did not enjoy: I have been endowed with the gift of pithy and perfect speech. I was granted victory owing to my awe. The spoils of war were made lawful unto me. The whole earth has been made the place of worship for me and it has become the means of purification for me also. In other words in my religion, offering of prayers is not confined to certain specified places of worship. Prayers can be offered at any place over the earth.

And in case water is not available it is lawful for my people to perform ablutions with earth(Tayammum) and to cleanse themselves with the soil if water for bathing is scarce. I have been sent by Allah to carry His Divine message to the whole world. And the line of prophets has come to its final end in me.

(Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

The Prophet of Allah (PBUH) affirmed: "The chain of Messengers and Prophets has come to an end. There shall be no Messenger nor Prophet after me." (Tirmidhi, Kitab-ur-Rouya Babu Zahab-un- Nubuwwa, Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat-Anas bin Malik)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am the effacer and infidelity shall be erased through me; I am the assembler. People shall be assembled on Doomsday after my time. (In other words

Doom is my only successor.) And I am the last in the sense that no prophet shall succeed me." (Bukhari and Muslim, Kitab-ul-Fada'il, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi; Tirmidhi, Kitab-ul- Adab, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi; Muatta", Kitab-u-Asma in-Nabi, Al- Mustadrak Hakim, Kitab-ut-Tarikh, Bab: Asma-un-Nabi.)

The Prophet of God (PBUH) observed: "God Almighty hath sent unto the world no apostle who did not warn his people about the appearance of Dajjal(Anti-Christ, but Dajjal did not appear in their time). I am the last in the line of Prophets and ye are the last community of believers. Without doubt,then, Dajjal shall appear from amongst ye". (Ibn Majah, Kitabul-fitan, bab:Dajjal).

"Abdur Rahman bin Jubair reported: "I heard Abdullah bin "Amr ibn-"As narrating that one day the Holy Prophet (PBUH) came out of his house and joined our company. His manner gave us the impression as if he were leaving us." He said, "I am Muhammad, the unlettered prophet of Allah" and repeated this statement three times.

Then he affirmed: "There will be no prophet after me".(Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat"Abdullah bin Amr ibn"-As.) The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah will send no Apostle after me, but only Mubashshirat. It was said: what is meant by al-Mubashshirat. He said : Good vision or pious vision". (Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat Abu Tufail, Nasa'i, Abu Dawud) (In other words there is no possibility of Divine revelation in future. At the most if some one receives an inspiration from Allah he will receive it in the form of "pious dream."

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "If an Apostle were to succeed me, it would have been "Umar bin Khattab." (Tirmidhi,Kitab-ul- Manaqib) The Holy Prophet (PBUH) told Hadrat "Ali, "You are related to me as Aaron was related to Moses(peace be upon him). But no Apostle will come after me." (Bukhari and Muslim, Kitab Fada'il as-Sahaba)

This tradition is recorded in Bukhari and Muslim in the account of the Battle of Tabuk also. Musnad records two traditions narrated by Hadrat Sa"d bin Abi Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) on this subject. The last sentence in one of these traditions runs as follows : "Behold there is no prophethood after me."

Detailed accounts of the traditions incorporated in Abu Dawud Tayalisi, Imam Ahmad and Muhammad bin Ishaque report that on the eve of his departure for the battle of Tabuk, the holy Prophet (PBUH) had resolved to leave Hadrat "Ali behind him in order to look after the defense and supervise the affairs of Medina. The hypocrites thereupon began to spread insinuations and rumours about Hadrat "Ali. Hadrat "Ali went to the Prophet and submitted : "O Prophet of Allah, are you leaving me behind among women and children?" On this occasion in order to set his mind at peace the Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "You are related to me as was Aaron with Moses."

In other words "as Hadrat Moses on the Mount Tur had left Hadrat Aaron behind to look after the tribe of Israel, so I (Muhammad) leave you behind to look after the defense of Medina." At the same time apprehending that this comparative allusion to Hadrat Aaron might later on give rise to

heresies, the holy Prophet (PBUH) immediately made it clear that "There will be no Prophet after me."

Thauban reports: "The Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: And there will arise Thirty imposters in my Ummah and each one of them will pronounce to the world that he is a prophet, but I am the last in the line of the Prophets of God and no Apostle will come after me." (Abu Dawud, Kitab-ul-Fitan) Abu Dawud in "Kitab-ul-Malahim" has recorded another tradition reported by Abu Huraira in the same subject. Tirmidhi has also recorded these two traditions as reported by Hadrat Thauban and Hadrat Abu Huraira. The text of the second tradition runs thus: "It will come to this that thirty imposters will arise and each one of them will put forth his claim to be the Apostle of God."

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "Among the tribe of Israel who went before you there indeed were such people who held communion with God, even though they were not his Prophets. If ever there arose a person from among my people who would hold communion with God, it would be none else but "Umar (May Allah be pleased with him)." (Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Manaqib)

A version of this same tradition in Muslim" contains Muhaddithuna instead of Yukallimuna. But then Mukalima and Muhaddith bear identical meaning i.e., a man enjoys the privilege of holding direct communion with God or a person who is addressed by the Almighty from the unseen. Thus we conclude that if there had been any person among the followers of Muhammad who could hold communion with God without being raised to the dignity of prophethood, it would have been Umar.

The Prophet of God (PBUH) said: "No Prophet will come after me and there will, therefore, be no other community of followers of any new prophet." (Baihaqi, Kitab-ul Rouya; Tabarani)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "I am the last in line of the prophets of God and my Masjid is the last Masjid (referring the holy Masjid of the Prophet)." (see footnote 3) (Muslim, Kitab-ul-Hajj; Bab:Fadl-us-Salat bi Masjidi Mecca wal Medina)

A large number of such traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have been reported by the companions and a great many compilers have recorded them from authoritative sources. A study of these traditions shows that the Holy Prophet on several occasions, and in various ways and in different words made it explicitly clear that he was the last Prophet of God; That no prophet would follow him and that the line of prophets had ended in him. Furthermore, those would claim to be Prophets and Messengers of God after his time would be imposters and liars. (see footnote 4).

Supplement 2

There can be no authentic, creditable and conclusive interpretation of the words of the Holy Qur'an, Khatam-un- Nabiiyin, than that given by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) for the credentials of the Holy prophet (PBUH) need no proof and the authority of his words is unassailable. His words are authentic and a proof in itself. When the Prophet is explaining a Nass of the Holy Quran, his explanation is the most authentic and a proof positive.

The question is who else besides the Holy Prophet (PBUH), to whom the Qur'an was revealed, is better qualified to comprehend its meaning and to explain its contents to us? And he who advances an alternative explanation, shall we regard his claims as worthy of our consideration let alone our acquiescence?

footnote 3: Referring to this tradition disbelievers in the Finality of Prophethood argue that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) called his mosque (Masjid) the last mosque" despite the fact that it is not the last mosque, as countless other mosques have been built after it all over the world. Similarly when the Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: I am the last Prophet," it did not mean that the line of prophets had ended, but that Muhammad (PBUH) was the last as regards his excellence amongst the Prophets of God and Mosque was the last one in the same sense.

Such foolish reasoning is an irrefutable proof of the fact that these people have lost the faculty of perceiving the true meaning of the words of God and those of His Prophet(PBUH). Even a cursory glance through the whole chain of traditions in the context of which this particular tradition has been recorded makes true import of the words of the Holy prophet clear to any man.

In this context the various traditions which Imam Muslim has recorded on the authority of Hadrat Abu Huraira, Hadrat Abdullah bin Umar and the mother of the Faithful Hadrat Maimuna narrate that there are only three mosques in the world to which the greatest sanctity is attached, and these are sacred above all other mosques.

Worship in these mosques is rewarded with thousandfold blessings in comparisons to offering prayers in other mosques. It is because of this reason that it has been declared lawful to undertake a journey to these mosques to offer prayers therein. No other mosque, save these three, can claim such sanctity that a person should make a journey to offer worship there leaving all other mosques. Among the three mosques which bear the greatest sanctity in Islam, the first one is Masjid Al-Haram" which was built by Hadrat Abraham(peace be upon him); the second one is theMasjid al-Aqsa" which was erected by Hadrat Sulaiman (peace be upon him); and the third mosque is Masjid-i-Nabawi" in the Holy city of Medina which was founded by the Holy Prophet(PBUH). The observation of the Holy Prophet in regard to the last mosque" should be viewed in this context.

The words of the Prophet(PBUH) meant that no Prophet would come after him, hence there would be no fourth mosque after the last Masjid-i-Nabawi(a mosque of the last Prophet). It follows, therefore, that no other mosque should bear such sanctity, that worship in it should be rewarded with more blessings in comparison with worship in other mosques and

further there shall be no fourth mosque towards which it is lawful or even desirable for people to make a journey in order to offer prayers.

footnote 4 In contrast to the observations of the Holy Prophet the deniers of the Finality of Prophethood quote the following words scribed to Hadrat Aisha: "Say, indeed, that the Holy Prophet is the Final Apostle of God; but say not that no prophet will come after him." In the first place it is an audacity to quote the words of Hadrat Aisha for contradicting the explicit command of the Holy Prophet(PBUH). Moreover the very words attributed to Hadrat Aisha are not authentic.

No authoritative work on Hadith contains this observation of Hadrat Aisha nor any notable compiler of traditions has recorded or referred to it. This tradition is derived from a commentary entitled Durr-i- Manthur and a compilation of Hadith Known as Takmilah Majma-ul- Bihar, but its source and credentials are unknown. It is the height of audacity to put forward a statement of a lady companion in order to contradict the explicit observations of the Holy Prophet which the eminent traditionists have transmitted on the most authentic chains of transmission.

The Consensus of the Companions After the Holy Qur'an and sunnah, the consensus of the companions of the holy Prophet (PBUH) holds the third position. All authentic historical traditions reveal that the companions of the prophet (PBUH) had unanimously waged a war on the claimants to the prophethood and their adherents after the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

In this connection the case of Musailama is particularly significant. This man did not deny that Muhammad (PBUH) was the Prophet of God; he claimed that God had appointed him as a co- prophet with Muhammad to share his task. The letter which had addressed to the Holy Prophet just before the Musailama's death reads:

"From Musailma the prophet of God to Muhammad the Prophet of God(PBUH). I wish to inform you that I have been appointed as your partner to share in the burden of prophethood." The historian Tabari has recorded a tradition which says that the call to prayers"(Adhan) which Musailama had devised for his followers included the words, "I testify that Muhammad is the Prophet of God."

Despite Musailama's clear affirmation of the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH), he was declared an apostate and ostracised from the society of Islam. Not only this but a war was waged on Musailama. History also bears witness to the fact that the tribe of Hunaifa (Banu Hunaif) had accepted Musailama's claim to prophethood in good faith. They had been genuinely led to believe that Muhammad (PBUH) had of his own accord declared Musailama as his partner in prophethood. A man who had learnt Qur'an in the Holy City of Medina went to the tribe of Banu Hunaifa and falsely represented the verses of the Qur'an as having been revealed to Musailama.

Though Banu Hunaifa had been deliberately misinformed, nevertheless the companions of the Holy Prophet did not recognize them as muslims and sent an army against them. There is no scope here for taking the view that the companions had fought against them as rebels and not as apostates.

Islamic Law lays down that in the event of a war against the rebel Muslims, the prisoners taken in battle shall not be taken into slavery. The law further requires that even the rebellious Dhimmis, when taken as prisoners in battle, shall not go into slavery.

But when military action was taken against Musailama and his followers, Hadrat Abu Bakr declared that the women and children of the enemy would be taken as slaves; and when they were taken prisoner in battle, they were enslaved. From among these a girl was given as a slave to Hadrat Ali. She bore him a son named Muhammad bin Hanfiya, who is a renowned figure in the history of Islam. (Al- Badaya wan-Nihaya, Vol. VI, pp. 316 & 325)

This event is a clear proof of the fact that when companions fought against Musailama, they did not charge him with rebellion. The charge against him was that he had preferred a claim to prophethood after the line of Prophets had ended in Muhammad (PBUH) and he had thus misled other people to affirm faith in his claim of prophethood. The action against Musailama was taken immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) under the leadership of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (may God be pleased with him), and it had the unanimous support of the entire body of the companions. There can be found no better and explicit example of the consensus of the companions than this.

The Consensus of all the Ulema of the Ummah Next in line of authority after the consensus of the Companions stands the consensus, in matters of religion, of those ulema of the Muslims who came after the time of Companions (may God be pleased with them).

A glance through the history of Islam from the first century up to the modern times reveals to us the fact that the ulema of all periods in every Islamic country of the world are unanimous in their conviction that no new prophet can be raised after Muhammad (PBUH). They all agree in the belief that anyone who lays a claim to Prophethood after Muhammad (PBUH) and anyone who puts faith in such a claim is an apostate and an outcast from the community of Islam. The following facts are appended as an illustration of this:

A man in the time of Imam Abu Hanifa (80 A.H.-150 A.H.) laid claim to Prophethood and said "Let me show you the proofs of my prophethood." The great Imam thereupon warned the people: "Anyone who asks of this man the credentials of prophethood, shall become an apostate, for the Prophet of God (PBUH) has explicitly declared: "No prophet will come after me." (Manaqib al-Imam-i-Azam Abi Hanifa, Ibn Ahmad al-Makki, Vol. I, p.161, published in Hyderabad, India, 1321 A.H.)

Allama Ibn Jarir Tabari (224 A.H.-310 A.H.) in his renowned commentary of the holy Qur'an gives the following interpretation of the verse, "walakin Rasul Allahi wa Khatam-ul Nabiyyin": "He has closed and sealed the prophethood and the door (of prophethood) shall not open for anyone till the end of the world." (Vide Commentary of Ibn-i-Jarir, Vol. 22, p.12)

In his book Aqida-i-Salfia, while explaining the beliefs of the pious forbearers and particularly those of Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Abu Yusuf and Imam Muhammad, Imam Tahavi (239 A.H.-321 A.H.) writes that

Muhammad (PBUH) is a highly venerable servant of God. He is the chosen Prophet and the favorite Messenger of Allah. He is the last of the Prophets, Leader of the pious, chief of the Messengers of Allah and the beloved one of the Lord. After him every claim to Prophethood is an error manifest and worship of one's evil-self." (Sharah al-Tahawiya Fil-"Aqidat-ul-Salfia, Dar-ul-Ma'arif, Egypt, pp. 15, 87, 96, 97, 100, 102)

Allama Ibn Hazm Andulasi (384 A.H.-456 A.H.) writes: "It is certain that the chain of Divine revelations has come to an end after the death of the Holy Prophet(PBUH). The proof of this lies in the fact that none but a prophet can be the recipient of Divine revelations and God has affirmed that Muhammad has no sons among ye men and he is the Messenger of God and that He has sealed the office of Prophethood." (Al-Mohallah, Vol. 1, p.26) Imam Ghazali (450 A.H.-505 A.H.) says If the right of denying the authority of consensus be admitted, it will give rise to many absurdities.

For example, if someone says that it is possible for a person to attain the office of Prophethood after our Apostle Muhammad(PBUH), we shall not hesitate to pronounce him as an infidel, but in the course of a controversy the man who wishes to prove that any reluctance in pronouncing such a person as an apostate is a sin shall have to seek the aid of consensus in support of his arguments, because reason is no arbiter against the possibility of the existance of a new prophet.'

As regards the followers of the new prophets' they will not be utterly incapable of making various interpretations of La Nabiya Badi, "There will be no Prophet after me" and Khatam-ul-Nabiyyin, Last of the Prophets.' A follower of the new prophets' might say that Khatam-ul-Naibiyyin, Last of the Prophets' bears the meaning "last of the prominent Messengers." If you argue that "prophets" is a common word, he would very easily give this term a particular significance with regard to his own prophethood.'

In respect of No Prophet will come after him', such a man would contend that this expression does not say that No Messengers will follow him.' There is a difference between a Prophet and a Messenger. The status of a Prophet is higher than that of the Messenger. The fact is that such absurdities can be indulged in ad infinitum. It is not difficult, in our view, to make different interpretations of a word. Besides, there is no ample scope for people to commit blunders ever and beyond these points in the exposition of these clear words. We cannot even say that those who make such interpretations are guilty of the denial of clear injunctions.

But to refute those who have but their faith in the false expositions we shall say that the entire Ummah by a consensus of opinion recognizes that the words No Prophet shall come after him' and the context of the traditions suggests that the Holy Prophet meant that No Prophet, nor Messenger shall follow him.' Furthermore, the Ummah is agreed on the point that above words of the Holy Prophet leave no scope for a different interpretation than given to it by the consensus of the Ummah and he who would not join the consensus is no more than a dissident. (Al-Iqtisad Fil Aiteqad, p.114, Egypt)

[We have quoted here the original Arabic text (in the Urdu Edition) of the opinion of Imam Ghazali because the deniers of the idea of the Finality

of Prophethood have vehemently challenged the authenticity of this reference.)

Mohy-us-Sunnah Baghawi (died 510 A.H.) writes in his commentary Malam-al-Tanzil: "God brought the line of Prophets to an end with him. Hence he is the final Prophet.....Ibn Abbas affirms that God(in this verse) has given His verdict that no Prophet will come after the Prophet Muhammad(PBUH)." (Vol. 3, p. 158)

Allama Zamakhshri (467 A.H.-538 A.H) writes in his commentary entitled Kashshaaf, "If you ask how Muhammad can be the last of the Prophets when Hadrat Isa (Jesus Christ) will appear towards the end of the world? I shall reply that the finality of Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) means that no one will be endowed with prophethood after him. Hadrat 'Isa is among those upon whom prophethood was endowed before Muhammad(PBUH). Moreover, Hadrat 'Isa will appear as a follower of Muhammad and he will offer prayers with his face towards the Qiblah of Islam, as a member of the community of the Muslims." (Vol. 2, p. 215)

Qazi 'Iyad (died 544 A.H.) writes: " He who lays a claim to prophethood, affirms that a man can attain the office of prophethood or can acquire the dignity of a prophet through purification of soul, as is alleged by some philosophers and sufis; similarly a person who does not claim to be a prophet, but declares that he is the recipient of Divine revelation, all such persons are apostates and deniers of the prophethood of Muhammad(PBUH), for Muhammad (PBUH) has conveyed the message of God to us that he is the final Prophet and no Prophet will come after him. He had also conveyed to us the Divine message that he has finally sealed the office of Prophethood and that he has been sent as a Prophet and a Messenger to the whole of mankind.

It is the consensus of the entire Ummah that these words of the Holy Prophet are clear enough and eloquently speak of the fact that they can admit of no other interpretation or amendment in their meaning. Hence there is no doubt that all these sects are outside the pale of Islam not only from the view-point of the consensus of the Ummah but also on the ground of these words having been transmitted with utmost authenticity." (Shifa, Vol. 2, pp. 270- 271)

Allama Shahrastani (died A.H. 548), in his renowned book, Almilal wan Nahal, writes: "And similarly who says that a prophet shall come after Muhammad (PBUH), there are no two opinions that such a man is an infidel." (Vol. 3, p. 249)

Imam Razi (543 A.H.-606 A.H.), in his work Tafsir Kabir while explaining the meaning of the verse Khatam-un-Nabiyyin states: "In this context the term Khatam-un Nabiyyin has been used in the sense that a Prophet whose ministry is not final may leave some injunctions or commandments incomplete or unexplained thus providing scope for a succeeding prophet to complete the task. But the Prophet who will have no successor is more considerate and provides clear guidelines for his followers, for he is like a father who knows that after him there will be no guardian or patron to look after his son."(Vol. 6, p. 581)

Allama Baidawi(died A.H. 685), in his commentary, Anwar-ul-Tanzil, writes: "In other words he, Muhammed (PBUH), is the last of all Prophets. He is the one in whom the line of Prophets ends or the one whose advent has sealed the office of Prophethood. The appearance of Hadrat 'Isa (peace be upon him) after Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) is not a contradiction of the finality of Muhammed's Prophethood, because Hadrat Isa will appear as a follower of the Shariah of Muhammed." (Vol. 4, p. 164)

'Allama Hafiz-ud-Din Al-Nasafi (died A.H.710), in his commentary, Madark-ut-Tanzil, writes: "And he Muhammad(PBUH) is the one who has brought the line of prophets to an end...in other words he is the last of all prophets. God shall not appoint another prophet after him. In respect of Hadrat Isa(peace be upon him) it may be stated that he is among those who were appointed Prophets before the time of Muhammad(PBUH). And when Hadrat Isa appears again, he will be a follower of the Shar'iah of Muhammad, and one among faithful." (p. 471)

Allama Alau-din Baghdadi (died A.H. 725) in his commentary, Khazin, writes: "Wa Khatam-un-Nabiyyin,' in other words, God has ended prophethood in him, Muhammad(PBUH). Henceforth there is no prophethood after him, nor is there any partner with him in prophethood...Wa Kan Allahu Bikulle Shaiin Alima, God is aware that no prophet will come after him." (pp. 471-472)

Allama Ibn Kathir (died A.H. 774) writes in his well- known commentary, "Hence this verse is a clear proof of the fact that no prophet will come after Muhammad(PBUH) and when it is said that no prophet will come after him it is a foregone conclusion that no messenger will succeed him either, for the office of a messenger holds prominence over the office of a prophet. Every messenger is a prophet, but all prophets are not messengers. Any one who lays a claim to prophethood after Muhammad(PBUH) is a liar, a disruptionist, an imposter, depraved and a seducer despite his wonderous jugglery and magical feats. Any one who would make this claim in future till the end of the world belongs to this class. (Vol. 3, pp. 493-494) Allama Jalal-Ud-Din Suyuti (died A.H. 911) writes in his commentary entitled Jalalain,

"God is aware of the fact that no prophet will succeed Muhammad (PBUH) and when Isa (PBUH) will reappear in the world he will act according to the Shariah of Muhammad (PBUH)." (p. 768) Allama Ibn Nujaim (died A.H. 970) in his renowned work of the canons of Fiqh entitled, 'Al-Ashbah wan-Nazair', Kitab- us-Siyyar:Bab: al-Raddah, writes: "A person who does not regard Muhammad (PBUH) as the last Prophet of God is not a Muslim, for the finality of Muhammad's prophethood is one of those fundamental articles of faith which a Muslim must understand and believe." (p. 179)

Mulla Ali Qari (died A.H. 1016) in his commentary Fiqh Akbar, writes: "To lay a claim to Prophethood after the ministry of our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is a sheer infidelity by the consensus of Ummah." (p. 202)

Shaikh Isma'il Haqqi (died 1137 A.H.) while elucidating this verse in his commentary Ruh-ul-Bayan, writes: "Asim reads the word Khatam with a

vowel stress on the letter ta which means the instrument of stamping and sealing, just as 'Printer' is the machine which imprints. The connotation of the word is that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was the last of all prophets and God has sealed the office of prophethood through his agency. In Persian the same meaning will be expressed by the term 'Mohar Paighambran'. The seal of Prophets i.e., his (Muhammad's) advent sealed the door of prophethood and the line of prophets ended in him. Other reciters pronounce the word Khatim with the vowel point under the letter ta which means to say that Muhammad (PBUH) was the one who sealed the doors of prophethood. In Persian the same meaning will be expressed by the term 'Mohar Konindai Paighambran,' 'Sealer of the prophets,' so both ways the word Khatam bears one and the same meaning.....Henceforth the Ulema of the Ummah of Muhammad(PBUH) will inherit only spiritual eminence from him. The inheritance of Prophethood is extinct, for Muhammad(PBUH) has sealed the office of Prophethood for all time to come. The appearance of Hadrat Isa (PBUH) after Muhammad(PBUH) is not a contradiction of the finality of Muhammad's prophethood. The term Khatam-un-Nabiyyin makes it clear that no one will be appointed a prophet after Muhammad(PBUH).

Hadrat Isa (PBUH) was appointed Prophet before Muhammad(PBUH) and Isa(PBUH) will appear as a follower of the Shari'ah of Muhammad(PBUH). He (Isa)(PBUH) will offer prayers with his face turned towards the Qiblah designated by Muhammad(PBUH). Hadrat Isa (PBUH) will be one among the faithful of Islam.

He will neither receive any Divine revelation nor will issue new injunctions; he will act as a follower of Muhammad(PBUH). Ahl-Sunnat wal Jam'at (the Sunni sect) believe that no prophet will come after our holy Prophet Muhammad(PBUH) because God has affirmed: "wa-lakin Rasul Allahi wa Khatam-un-Nabiyyin", and the Prophet has said: La Nabiya Badi (There will be no Prophet after me.) Henceforth anyone who says that a prophet will succeed Muhammad(PBUH) will become an apostate, because he has denied a basic article of faith. Similarly anyone who casts doubt about the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, will also be declared an infidel, because the foregoing discussion has distinguished right from wrong. And any claim to prophethood after Muhammad(PBUH) is absolutely false."

In Fatawa-i-Alamgiri which was compiled by the eminent scholars of the Indian sub-continent at the command of Aurangzeb Alamgir, in the 12th century Hijri, it is recorded: "A man who does not regard Muhammed (PBUH) as the final Prophet of God, is not a Muslim, and if such a man claims to be a messenger or prophet of God, he shall be proclaimed an apostate." (Vol. 2, p. 263)

Allama Shoukani (died 1255 A.H.) in his commentary, Fath-ul-Qadeer, writes: "A majority of people have read the word Khatam with the vowel point under the letter ta but 'Asim reads the same word with vowel stress on ta. The first reading means that Muhammed (PBUH) ended the line of Prophets (peace of Allah be upon them) i.e., in other words the Holy Prophet came last of all the Prophets. The second reading means that the

Holy Prophet was the seal by which the office of Prophethood was finally closed; and that his advent lent grace to the group of Allah's Prophets.

Allama Alusi (died 1270 A.H.) in his commentary, *Ruh-ul-Ma'ani*, writes: "The word 'Prophet' is common, but the word 'Messenger' has a particular significance. Hence when the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is called the 'Seal of Prophets,' it necessarily follows that he is also the 'Seal of Messengers.' The implication of the Holy Prophet's position as 'the Last of all Prophets and Messengers of God' is that by his(PBUH) elevation to the dignity of Prophethood in this world, the same dignity has henceforth been abolished and no man can attain that dignity now." (Vol. 22, p. 32)

"Anyone who claims to be the recipient of Divine revelations as a prophet after the advent of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), shall be declared an infidel. There is no difference of opinion among Muslims on this point." (ibid., vol.22, p.38) "The affirmation in the Book of God of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the Last of the Prophets' is unequivocal. The Sunnah has clearly explained this and the Ummah has reached a consensus on it. Hence anyone who lays a contradictory claim against this position shall be declared an apostate (ibid., vol.22, p. 39)

Supplement 3

These are the expositions of the leading savants, jurists, scholars of Hadith and commentators of every realm of Islam, from the sub-continent of India to Morocco and Spain (Andulus) and from Turkey to Yemen. We have indicated their years of birth and death in each case so that the reader may realise at first glance that this list includes eminent authorities of every century of the Islamic History falling between the first and thirteenth century.

We might even have added expositions by the learned doctors of Islam belonging to the fourteenth century; but we omitted the Ulema of the 14th century purposely because someone might state that these scholars had explained the meanings of Khatam-i-Nabuwat as 'the Seal of all Prophets' to refute the claim of the 'new prophets' of the modern age.

It cannot, however, be said that the ulema of the past centuries entertained feelings of animosity against a later day personality claiming to be a prophet. These writings also make it clear beyond doubt that from the first century up to the present-day the entire Muslim world has unanimously taken the expression Khatam-un-Nabiyyin to mean the Last of all Prophets.' Muslims of all periods have been unanimous in the belief that the office of prophethood has been sealed after the advent of the holy Prophet(PBUH).

There has never been any difference of opinion among muslims that any person who prefers a claim to prophethood and those who believe in such a claim to prophethood are outside the pale of Islam. It is now up to all reasonable persons to judge that in the face of all this massive evidence- the plain dictionary meaning of the phrase 'Khatam-un-Nabiyyin' the interpretation of the Quranic verse in its true perspective, the exposition of the Holy Prophet himself and the consensus on the finality of prophethood of Muhammad(PBUH) of the entire body of muslims all over the world from the time of the companions of the Holy prophet to the present day followers of Islam-what scope is left for an alternative interpretation and what justification can they give for opening the door of prophethood for a new claimant.

Furthermore, how can those people be recognized as Muslims who have not only expressed their opinion in favour of opening the door to prophethood, but they have, in fact, catapulted a man into the mansion of the Prophets of God and have become the followers of this trespasser?

In this connection three more points are noteworthy. Is GOD the Enemy of our Faith?In the first place, Prophethood is a delicate matter. According to the Holy Qur'an the idea of Prophethood is such a fundamental article of faith that one who believes in this idea is a believer and he who disbelieves is an infidel. If a man does not put his faith in a prophet, he is an apostate; similarly if he believes in the claim of an imposter to be a prophet, he becomes an infidel. In such a delicate and important matter Omniscient God certainly cannot be expected to have made a slip.

If there were to be a Prophet after the time of Muhammad (PBUH), God would have made this possibility clear in the Holy Qur'an or He would have commanded His Apostle Muhammad to make a clear declaration of it. The Apostle of God would never have passed away without having forewarned

his people that other Apostles would succeed him and that his followers must put their faith in the succeeding prophets.

Had God and His Messenger (PBUH) any intention of undermining our faith by hiding from us the possibility of opening the door of Prophethood after the advent of Muhammad (PBUH) and the coming of a new prophet, thus leaving us in a quandary that if we did not believe in the ministry of a new prophet we would apostate from Islam? Further than this, not only were we kept in the dark by God and His Messenger (PBUH) about all this, but, on the contrary, they made observations and affirmations which the Ummah for the last thirteen [now fourteen] hundred years has taken to mean and even today holds the view that no prophet will come after Muhammad (PBUH).

Could God and His Messenger really temper with our faith? Supposing for a moment that admittance to the office of Prophethood is open and a new Prophet does appear, we shall refuse him without fear.

For this refutation, God might call us to account on the Day of Judgement; but we shall place the whole record of His own affirmations and injunctions before Him and this evidence will prove that (God-forbid) Allah's Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger had led us to disbelieve the new prophet and had thus condemned us to be infidels. We have no fear that after considering this record God Almighty will consider it fit to punish us for blasphemy against the new Prophet.

But if the door of Prophethood is in fact closed and no Prophet will arise after Muhammad (PBUH), and despite this fact a person puts his faith in the claim of a new prophet, that person should think well indeed as to what record can be presented before God in his defense to avoid the punishment for blasphemy and to achieve salvation? Such a man should look through the material of his defense before he is produced in the August Court of the Almighty. He should compare this material with the record that we have presented and then judge for himself if the material upon which he is relying for his defense is worth the trust of a reasonable man and can he court the risk of facing the charge of blasphemy and be punished for it with the kind of defense that he has at his disposal? Do We Need a Prophet Now?The second point which requires consideration is that Prophethood is not a quality to be acquired by any person who proves himself worthy of it by devoting himself to prayers and righteous deeds.

Nor is it anything like a reward given in recognition of good service. Prophethood is an office and Allah appoints some person to this office to fulfill a special need. When such a need arises, God appoints a Prophet to fulfill it. Allah does not send prophets in rapid succession when there is no need or when the need has been fulfilled. When we refer to the Quran in order to find out conditions when the Prophets were appointed by Allah, we come to know that there are only four conditions under which the Prophets have been sent unto the world.

Firstly there was need for a prophet to be sent unto a certain nation to which no prophet had been sent before and the message brought by the Prophet of another nation could not have reached these people.

Secondly, there was need for appointing a prophet because the message of an earlier Prophet had been forgotten by the people, or the teachings of the former prophets had been adulterated and hence it had become impossible to follow the message brought by that Prophet. Thirdly, the people had not received complete mandate of Allah through a former prophet. Hence succeeding prophets were sent to fulfill the task of completing the religion of Allah.

Fourthly, there was need for a second prophet to share the responsibility of office with the first prophet.

It is obvious that none of the above needs remains to be fulfilled after the advent of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The Holy Quran says that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has been sent as a bearer of instructions for the whole mankind. The cultural history of the world bears testimony to the fact that since the advent of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) up to the present time such conditions have always prevailed in the world which were conducive to transmitting his message to all nations at all times. It follows,

therefore, that different nations no longer need different prophets after the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The Holy Quran and the records of Hadith and the biographical details of the life of Muhammad (PBUH) stand witness to the fact that the Divine message brought into this world by the Holy Prophet is extant in its original and pure form. The Prophet's message has suffered no process of distortion or falsification. Not a single word has been added to or expunged from the Holy Book which the Prophet (PBUH) brought unto the world from Almighty Allah, nor can anyone make additions to or delete anything from it till the Day of Resurrection.

The message which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) conveyed by word and action has been transmitted to us in such comprehensive, pure and original form that we feel as if we were living in the environment and period of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

In this way the second condition under which prophets are sent unto the world has also been fulfilled. Thirdly the Holy Qur'an clearly affirms that God has finally completed His Divine Mission through the agency of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Hence there is no room for a new prophet to carry the divine mission to completion.

As regards the fourth condition, if a partner were really needed he would have been appointed in the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to share the burden of his ministry. Since no co- prophet was appointed, this condition also stands fulfilled.

We should, therefore, look around for a fifth condition under which a new prophet might be needed after Muhammad (PBUH). If a man argues that people have fallen into depravity, hence there is need for a new prophet to reform the degenerate people, we shall ask him: when did a prophet ever come to introduce reforms only that we should need one now to carry out the work of reformation? A prophet is appointed so that he may be the recipient of Divine revelation and Divine revelations are made with express purpose of transmitting a new message or to correct the wrongs that have crept into an earlier religion.

When the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) have been preserved in their original and comprehensive form and when the Divine mission has been completed by Muhammad (PBUH), all possible need for the transmission of Divine revelations have now been fulfilled and there is further need only of reformers to cleanse the evils of mankind, but there is no room for the prophets.

A New Prophethood is a Curse Rather than a Blessing for the Ummah The third point which needs consideration is that whenever a prophet is sent unto a certain people the question of faith and infidelity invariably arises among these people. The faithful form one Ummah and the disbelievers automatically form different community. The difference that keeps these two communities apart is not peripheral or superficial but a basic and fundamental difference of belief or disbelief in a prophet; and those two communities can never merge with each other unless people of one side decide to surrender their faith.

In addition, these two Ummahs obtain guidance and derive their law from two different sources. One sect follows the law emanating from the Divine message and Sunnah of the Prophet they believe in; the other community is fundamentally opposed to the idea of this Prophet being the law-giver. On this basis, it becomes an impossibility for these two sections to join in a unified and cohesive society. It will be perfectly clear to a man who keeps the above facts in view that the Finality of Prophethood is a great blessing from Allah for the people of Islam. It is due to this that the Ummah has been able to form a permanent universal brotherhood.

The belief in the finality of Prophethood has secured Muslim society from the danger of any fundamental dissension which might result in permanent division in its ranks. Now every man who accepts Muhammad (PBUH) as a divinely appointed Guide and Leader and also is not inclined to seek instruction from any other source except the Divine message of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is a member of the brotherhood of Islam and on this basis, can join this brotherhood at any time.

If the office of Prophethood had not been sealed once and for all after Muhammad (PBUH), the people of Islam could never have forged a cohesive society; for every new prophet would have shattered the unity of the Ummah.

A reasonable man after a little deliberation will come to the conclusion that when a prophet has been sent to the whole mankind (not just to a certain group or nation), and when the Divine message has been completely transmitted through this Prophet and further when the teachings of the Prophet have been fully preserved, the office of prophethood should be sealed after him in order that the whole world may unite in allegiance to this Prophet and form one brotherhood of the faithful. Only in this way can universal brotherhood of Islam be secured against needless dissensions which might have repeatedly erupted on the appearance of every successive prophet.

A prophet may be a shadow or a buruzi prophet; or "a prophet who is law-giver and the bearer of a Divine book." The appearance of anyone of the above God-appointed prophets will invariably have the social

consequence of his followers forming one Ummah and his detractors being condemned as infidels and hence outside the pale of Islam. This division of mankind is unavoidable when the need for a prophet is inevitable.

But in the absence of such a need, it is utterly impossible to expect that Allah in His Wisdom and Beneficence will needlessly cause strife among His creatures on the question of faith and disbelief, thus for ever preventing His creatures to form one Ummah. Hence what is confirmed by the Qur'an and what is clearly affirmed to be true by the Sunnah and the consensus of the Ummah, is also corroborated by reason. Reason demands that the office of prophethood should remain sealed hereafter for all time to come.

The Reality of Masih' i.e. "The Incarnation of Jesus Christ" The propagandists of the new prophethood usually tell the Muslim laity that the traditions have foretold the arrival of a Christ incarnate'. They argue that Christ was a prophet, hence his re-emergence is not contrary to the concept of the finality of prophethood. The concept of the finality of prophethood is valid, but, nevertheless the idea of the arrival of Christ incarnate' is also tenable.

Further on, they explain that Christ incarnate' does not refer to the Christ, son of Mary(PBUH). Christ(PBUH) is dead. The person whose arrival has been foretold in the tradition is a man like Christ',An incarnation of Jesus. And he is such and such a person who has already arrived. To follow him is not contrariwise to belief in the Finality of prophethood.'

To expose the fallacy of this case we record here authentic traditions on this subject with full references to the authoritative works on Hadith. After going through this collection of Ahadith, the reader can judge for himself as to how the observations of the Holy Prophet(PBUH) are being presented today in a form which bears no relation to their original shape and content. Traditions Relating to the Descent of Christ, Son of Mary Hadrat Abu Huraira reports that the Prophet (PBUH) of God said: "I swear by Him Who hath power over my life, the son of Mary shall descend among ye as a Just ruler. He will break the cross and kill the swine;[see footnote 5] and he will put an end to war." (Bukhari, Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya; Bab:

Nuzul 'Isa Ibn Maryam; Muslim, Bab: Bayan Nuzul 'Isa; Tirmidhi, Abwab-al-Fitan; Bab Fi Nuzul 'Isa; Musnad Ahmad, Marwiat Abu Huraira) In another tradition the word jizya has been substituted for harb, "war", i.e., he will abolish the jizya on non-believers. [see footnote 6] Another tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Huraira says, "The Doomsday shall not be established before the descent of Jesus, son of Mary," and these words are followed by the text as given in the tradition above. (Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Muzalim: Bab: Kasr-ul- Salib Ibn Majah, Kitab-ul-Fitan al-Dajjal.)

Supplement 4

Hadrat Abu Huraira reports that the Apostle (PBUH) of Allah observed: "What will you be like when the son of Mary shall descend among ye and a person among ye will discharge the office of Imam (leader in Prayers)." [see footnote 7] (Bukhari, Kitab Ahadith Anbiya, Bab: Nuzul Isa; Muslim, Nuzul Isa; Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat Abu Huraira) Hadrat Abu Huraira reports the Apostle (PBUH) of Allah having said: "Christ, son of Mary, will then kill the swine and remove the Cross. A congregation for prayer will be held for him. He will distribute such an enormous quantity of goods that none will be left in need of anything. He will abolish taxes.

He will encamp at Rauha (a place situated at a distance of 35 miles from Medina) and from there, set out to perform Hajj or Umrah or both." (The reporter is in doubt as to which of these two had been mentioned by the Holy Prophet (PBUH). (Musnad Ahmad, Silsila Marwiyat Abi Huraira; Muslim, Kitab-ul-Hajj; Bab Jawaz-ul- Tamattu fil-Hajj wa-al-Qir'an)

Hadrat Abu Huraira relates that the Prophet (PBUH) of God after mentioning the exile of Dajjal said: "The Muslims will be preparing for war with Dajjal and they will be falling in line in preparation for offering Prayers and the Takbir will have been said for Prayers when in the meantime Christ (PBUH), son of Mary, will descend and lead Muslims in Prayer. The enemy of God, Dajjal, on seeing him will start melting like salt in water. If Christ (PBUH) would leave Dajjal alone, he would melt and die anyway, but God will cause Dajjal to be slain at the hand of Christ (PBUH) and Christ will display his spear strained with the blood of Dajjal to the Muslims."

(Mishkat, Kitab-ul-Fitan, Bab: al-Malahim, quoted by Muslim) footnote5 The implication of "breaking the Cross" and "killing of the swine" is that Christianity will become defunct as a religion. The whole edifice of the Christian religion is based on the belief that God crucified His only son (i.e. Hadrat Isa (PBUH) on the Cross and caused him to suffer this 'accursed' death so that he might thus expiate for the sins of man. Among the followers of God's Prophets, the Christians are unique in having rejected the entire Shariah of God and retaining this belief only.

The swine has been declared unlawful by all the Prophets, but the Christians have gone as far as to make it lawful. Hence when Jesus(PBUH) will proclaim on his appearance, "I am not the son of God; I did not die on the Cross, nor did I expiate for the sins of anyone," the whole basis of Christian belief will be demolished. Similarly, the second distinctive characteristic of Christianity will vanish when Jesus(PBUH) will say: "I never declared the swine lawful for my followers nor did I proclaim them free from the restraints of Divine Law."

footnote 6 In other words this expression means that differences between the followers of various religions will vanish and the whole mankind will join the brotherhood of Islam. Consequently, there shall no longer be any war or cause for imposing religious tax on anyone. This interpretation is supported by Tradition No. 5 and 15 quoted hereafter.

footnote 7 The implication is that Jesus(PBUH) will not act as the leader of Prayers. He will offer Prayers behind the already existing Imam of Muslims.

Hadrat Abu Huraira reports that the Apostle (PBUH) of Allah affirmed: "No Prophet shall come during the period between me and Jesus (PBUH). And Jesus shall descend. Recognize him when you see him; he is a man of medium height and of a rudy, fair complexion. He will be dressed in two pieces of yellow garment. The hair of his head will appear as if water is trickling out of them, though his hair would not be wet. He will fight for the cause of Islam. He will break the Cross into pieces.

He will slay the swine. He will abolish the Jizya on non-believers. In his time God will put an end to all other faiths except the religion of Islam. And Christ will kill Dajjal. He will live on this earth for a period of forty years and at the end of this period he will pass away. The Muslims will offer the funeral prayers of Christ (PBUH). (Abu Dawud, Kitab-ul-Malahim, Bab: Khuruj-ul-Dajjal; Musnad Ahmad, Marwiyat Abu Huraira)

Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah reports that he heard the Prophet (PBUH) as saying: "Then Christ, son of Mary, will descend. The leader of the Muslims will say to him, "Come, lead us in Prayer," but he will reply, "No be thou your own leaders in prayer." [see footnote 8] He will say this out of respect for the dignity that God has bestowed on the people of Islam." (Muslim, Bayan Nuzul Isa ibn Maryam; Musnad Ahmad, Basilsila Marwiyat Jabir bin Abdullah)

In connection with the episode of Ibn Sayyad, Jabir bin Abdullah relates that Umar bin Khattab (RAA) submitted: "O Apostle of God, allow me to slay him. In reply the Prophet of God observed, "If indeed this man is he (referring to Dajjal), then he shall be slain by Christ, son of Mary. You shall not slay him. But if this man is not he (Dajjal), then you have no right to kill an individual from amongst those with whom we have guaranteed protection (Dhimmies)." (Mishkat, Kitab-ul-Fitan, Bab: Qissa Ibn Sayyad, quoted by Shara al-Sunnah al-Baghawi).

Jabir b. Abdullah relates that while narrating the episode of Dajjal, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "At that time Christ, son of Mary, will suddenly descend among the Muslims. A congregation will be assembled for prayer and he shall be asked: " O Spirit of God, come forward and lead (us in Prayer)." But he will say, 'No, your own Imam shall step forward and act as the leader.' Thus when the Muslims will have offered the morning Prayer, they will set out to do battle against Dajjal. When that liar will look on Christ (PBUH), he will start melting like salt in water. Christ (PBUH) shall advance towards him and slay him. And it will come to pass that every stone will cry out: 'Spirit of Allah, this Jew is hiding behind me.' Not a single follower of Dajjal will escape slaughter." (Musnad Ahmad, Basissila Riwayat Jabir b. Abdullah)

footnote 8 The implication of this observation of Christ (PBUH) is that "Someone from amongst you should act as your leader."

Hadrat an-Nawas b. Sam'an (while relating the story of Dajjal) reports: "Meantime when Dajjal will be engaged in perpetrating such deeds, God shall send Christ, son of Mary. Christ (PBUH) will descend near the white

tower in the eastern quarter of Damascus, wearing two pieces of yellow garment and resting his hands upon the arms of two angels. When he will bend his head, it would seem that drops of water would fall down from his head and when he will raise his head it would seem as if pearls would be trickling in the form of drops.

Any infidel who will be within reach of the air of his breath, and the air of his breath will reach as far as his eye would see - will not escape death. Later the son of Mary will pursue Dajjal and will overtake him at the gate of Lydda [see footnote 9] and put him to death." (Muslim, Dhikr Dajjal; Abu Dawud, Kitab ul-Malahim, Bab: Khuruj; Dajjal; Tirmidhi, Abwab-ul-Fitan; Bab: Fi Fitna al-Dajjal; Ibn Majah, Kitab ul-Fitna, Bab: Fitna al-Dajjal)

Abdullah b. Amr b. al-As says that the Apostle of God (PBUH) observed: "Dajjal will arise in my people and will survive for forty (here the reporter is not certain whether the Prophet mentioned forty days or forty months or forty years). Then God shall send Christ, son of Mary, unto the world. He will resemble in appearance with 'Urwa b. Masud (a companion of the Prophet). Christ will pursue Dajjal and put him to death. Following this for a period of seven years the state of the world will be such that a quarrel between two individuals will be unknown." (Muslim, Dhikr-ul-Dajjal) footnote 9 Please note that Lod (modern Lydda) is situated at a distance of few miles from Tel Aviv, the capital of the State of Israel in Palestine. The Jews have built a large air-base at this place.

Hudhaifa b. Usaid al-Ghifari reports that "once the Holy Prophet(PBUH) visited us when we were sitting in company and talking to each other. The holy Prophet(PBUH) enquired: "What are you talking about?" The people said,"we were talking about the doomsday." The holy Prophet(PBUH) observed : "Doomsday shall not be established before the appearance of ten signs. He then enumerated those signs as:

Smoke Dajjal Daabba Rising of the sun in the West The descent of Christ son of Mary (PBUH) Appearance of Yajuj and Majuj Formation of three huge cavities or landslide on the earth, one in the east Second in the west, and third in the Arabian Isles, Finally, a huge conflagration which will arise in Yemen and drive people towards the plain of Doom."

(Muslim, Kitab ul-Fitan wa Ashtrat-us Sa'h:Abu Dawud, Kitab ul-Malahim, bab: Amarat ul-Sa'h).

It is reported by Thauban, the freed slave of the Holy Prophet that the holy Prophet (PBUH) observed: "God will grant protection from Hell-fire to two groups from among the people of my Ummah. One group consists of those who will invade India; the other group will consist of those who will align themselves with Christ, son of Mary(PBUH)." (Nasa'i,Kitab ul-jihad;Musnad ahmad, Bisilsila Riwayat Thauban)

Mujamme b. jaria Ansari reports: "I heard the Holy Prophet(PBUH) as saying: Christ, son of Mary will slay Dajjal at the gate of Lod(Lydda)." (Musnad Ahmad , Tirmidhi, Abwab-ul-Fitan).

Abu Umama al-Bahli(mentioning Dajjal in the course of a long tradition) reports "Exactly when the Imam of the Muslims will step forward to lead the morning prayers, Christ son of Mary(PBUH) will descend among them. The Imam will retreat to make room for Christ to lead the prayers. But

Christ patting the Imam in the middle of his shoulders will say "Nay thou shall act as leader, for this congregation has assembled to follow you in prayer." Hence the Imam will lead the prayers. When the prayer is over Christ(PBUH) will command, 'Open the Gate.' The gate shall be thrown open.

Dajjal will be present outside the gate with a host of seventy thousand Jewish troops. As soon as Dajjal catches the sight of Christ (PBUH), he will say to him, "I shall strike you with such force that you will not survive the blow." Christ (PBUH) will pursue and overtake him at the Eastern gate of Lod(Lydd). God will cause the jews to be defeated. Earth shall be filled with muslims as a vessel is filled to the brim with water-the entire world shall recite the same Kalima and worship shall be offered to none else except God Almighty." (Ibn Majah,Kitab-ul-Fitan ; Bab : Fitan Dajjal) Uthman b. Abi al-As reports that he heard the Prophet of God (PBUH) as saying: "And Christ son of Mary will descend at the time of morning prayer.

The leader of the muslims will say to him, "O spirit of God, Be thou our leader in prayer." He will answer "The people of this Ummah are leaders unto each other." At this, the leader of the muslims shall step forward and lead the prayers. When the prayer is over, Christ(PBUH) will take hold of his weapon and advance towards Dajjal. Dajjal, on seeing Christ shall start melting like lead.

Christ (PBUH) will slay him with his weapon. The companions of Dajjal will be defeated. They will flee away, but will not find a hiding place anywhere. Even the trees will cry out, "O pious, this infidel is hiding behind me," and the stones will say, "O pious, this unbeliever has taken cover behind me." (Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani, Hakim)

Samura b. Jundub (in a long tradition) ascribes this saying to the Holy Prophet (PBUH): "Then at morning time Christ, son of Mary, shall descend among the Muslims. And Allah shall cause Dajjal and his hosts to suffer a most crushing defeat. Even the walls and roots of the trees will cry out, "O pious, this infidel is hiding behind me. Come and strike him to death." (Musnad Ahmad, Hakim)

A tradition related to 'Imarn b. Husain says that the Prophet of God (PBUH) observed: "There will always be a group of people among my followers who will keep firm faith in right and they shall overwhelm their opponents till God issues a decree and Christ son of Mary (PBUH) descends upon earth." (Musnad Ahmad)

With reference to the episode of Dajjal, Hadrat 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reports that "Hadrat 'Isa (PBUH) will descend and slay Dajjal. After this Hadrat 'Isa (PBUH) shall rule over the earth as a just leader and a benevolent sovereign for a period of forty years." (Musnad Ahmad)

Safina, the freed slave of the Apostle of God (PBUH) reports (in connection with the episode of Dajjal) that "Hadrat 'Isa (PBUH) will descend and God shall put an end to the life of Dajjal near the slope of Afiq"[see footnote 10]. (Musnad Ahmad)

Hadrat Hudaifa b. Yama relates (with reference to Dajjal), "When the Muslims will fall in lines to offer prayers, Christ son of Mary (PBUH) shall descend from heaven before their eyes. He will lead the prayers. When the prayers are over he will say to the people: "Clear the way bewteen me and this enemy of God." God will give victory to the Muslims over the hosts of Dajjal.

The Muslims will inflict dire punishment upon the enemy. Even the trees and stones will cry out, "O Abdullah, O Abdul Rahman, O Muslim, come, here is a Jew behind me, kill him." In this way God will cause the Jews to be annihilated and Muslims shall be the victors. They will break the Cross, slaughter the swine and abolish Jizya (levied on non-Muslims)." (Mustadrak Hakim - A brief version of this tradition has been recorded in Muslim. Hafiz Ibn Hajar in Fath-ul-Bari Vol. VI, p. 450 declares this tradition to be authentic.)

The above are twenty-one traditions which have been transmitted on the authority of fourteen companions of the Holy Prophet and have been recorded with correct references in the most authoritative books on Hadith. In addition to these, there are numerous other traditions relating to the same subject, but we have not reproduced them here for the sake of brevity. We have taken as example only those traditions which are sound and authentic as regards chain of transmission.

Supplement 5

Footnote 10 Afiq known as Fiq in modern times is a city in Syria, situated on the borderline between Syria and Israel. There is a lake called Tibriya a few miles toward the west of the city. This lake is the source of river Jordan. Towards the southwest of this lake, there is a path between the mountains which descends two thousand feet to the point in the lake of Tibriya where the river rises. This mountainous path is called the slope of Afiq.

The Verdict of these Traditions Anyone who reads the above traditions will come to the conclusion that they do not mention the advent of a promised Masih or a like Masih or projection of Masih. The texts referred to above leave no scope for any man who is born of human sperm from the womb of a woman to declare "I am that Masih whose advent was foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)."

All the above traditions clearly and definitively proclaim the descent of that Holy Christ who was born to Mary without the instrumentality of father two thousand years ago. It is certainly of no avail at this juncture to open the debate as to whether the Holy Christ is dead or exists alive somewhere in the world. Supposing he is dead, God has the power to raise him alive[see footnote 11], otherwise also it is not beyond the Divine power of God to keep a man alive somewhere in the cosmos for as long as thousands of years; and to bring the man back to the world at His Will.

At any rate, a believer in the veracity and sanctity of the traditions will have no doubt that the traditions foretell the advent of 'Christ son of Mary' and no one else. On the contrary, if a person has no faith in the traditions, he would not be a believer in the descent of anyone, for traditions are the only bases of the doctrine of Descent.

In view of all this, it is a strange kind of funny logic to take the doctrine of Descent derived from the traditions and having torn out the clear reference to Christ son of Mary, establish a modern day 'Christ incarnate' in place of Mary's son.

Yet another point which is made equally clear by the traditions is that Christ son of Mary will not descend in the capacity of a newly appointed Apostle of God. He will not receive any Divine revelations. He will not be the bearer of any new message or repository of a fresh mandate from God, nor will he amend, enlarge or, abridge the Shariah of Muhammad (PBUH), nor indeed will Christ son of Mary be brought into the world to accomplish the renewal of faith. Christ son of Mary (PBUH) will not call upon the people to put their faith in his own prophethood, nor will he found a separate community of followers[see footnote 12].

He will be appointed to accomplish a particular task and this will be to root out the mischief of Dajjal. To serve this purpose, Jesus(PBUH) will descend in such manner that those Muslims among whom he appears, will have no doubt at all about his identity as Jesus son of Mary whose advent at a most opportune time was foretold by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Jesus(PBUH) will join the community of Muslims and will offer prayers behind the incumbent Imam of the Muslims[see footnote 13].

He will allow the incumbent Imam of the Muslims to supersede him so as to make it clear beyond any shadow of doubt that he has not descended to assert his position as a Prophet or to carry out the office of Prophethood. There is no doubt that in the presence of a Prophet among a community of people no other person can assume the office of an Imam or a leader.

Hence when Jesus(PBUH) will become an individual member of the Fraternity of Islam, this fact will in itself proclaim to the world that he has not descended to assume the office of a Prophet. On this basis, therefore, the question of opening the seal of Prophethood at the second coming of Christ is completely irrelevant.

It might be said (without actually comparing the two situations) that Jesus's advent will be like the appointment of a former Head of State to render some State service under the regime of the present Head of State. It is not too difficult for a man of ordinary common sense to understand that the appointment of a former Head of State to render some State duty under the regime of present Head is not a violation of the constitution of the State. Two cases, however, do violate the State Law. In the first case, if a former Head of State makes a bid to assume that office once again.

In the second case, if a person refutes the existence of the former regime of a defunct Head of State, for this would be tantamount to challenging the validity of the tasks carried out by the former regime. In the absence of any one of the above two eventualities, the mere appointment of a past Head of State to a State duty does not change the constitutional position. The same applies to the second advent of Christ, son of Mary.

The seal of Prophethood is not violated by his second advent. However, if he assumes the office of Prophethood once more and starts performing the duties of a Prophet or conversely a man repudiates the sanctity of Christ (PBUH) as a former Prophet, both these cases constitute a violation of God's law in respect of the creation of Prophets. The traditions have clearly ruled out the existence of both these possibilities. On the one hand, the traditions affirm that no Prophet shall come after Muhammad (PBUH). At the same time, they foretell the second coming of Christ, son of Mary. This is sufficient to make it clear that during his second advent in the world, Christ will not discharge the duties of a Prophet.

In the same manner, his advent will not give rise to a new question of faith or apostasy among the followers of Islam. Any one who repudiates the sanctity of Christ as a former Prophet is an apostate. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) himself affirmed Christ's sanctity as a former Prophet. The followers of Muhammad (PBUH) therefore, have from the beginning, always believed in the sanctity of Christ as a former Prophet. This belief will hold good even at the time of the second advent of Christ.

At that time Muslims will not put faith in the ministry of a new Prophet. They will retain their belief in the sanctity of Christ as a former Prophet. This position is neither contrary to faith in the Finality of Prophethood today nor will it be derogatory to this belief at the time of Christ's second advent in the world.

The last point which is made clear by these other traditions and numerous others pertains to the fact that Dajjal (for the suppression of whose grave

misdeeds God will send Christ, son of Mary(peace be on him), will arise among the nation of Jews and that he will impose as 'Masih.' No one can understand the reality of this fact without studying the history of the Jews and their religious beliefs.

After the death of Hadrat Sulaiman (PBUH) [i.e. Solomon], the tribe of Israel suffered perpetual decline until it came to pass that they became slaves of the Babylonian and Assyrian Empires and their imperial masters dispersed them over the face of the earth.

At that moment in their history the Prophet of the Jews began to deliver the glad tidings of the arrival of a 'Masih' from God who will redeem them from disgrace. On the basis of such prophecies the Jews had long awaited the advent of a 'masih' who would be a king. This king would fight and win territories. He would gather Jews from all over the world and assemble them in Palestine.

He would create a mighty Jewish Empire. Contrary to all their eager expectations when the God-appointed 'Masih', Christ son of Mary (PBUH) came without an army to win countries, the Jews repudiated his Prophethood and determined to put an end to his life. Since then the Jews all over the world have awaited the rise of a 'Masih Mau'ud,' 'The Promised Messiah,' the glad tidings of whose arrival had been delivered to them by their Prophets of yore. Their literature abounds with the wishful dreams of this millennium.

The Jews have for centuries been savoring the imaginary pleasure afforded by the description of this millennium in Talmud and the works of the Rabbis. The Jewish nation has cherished the hope that this 'Promised Messiah' would be a great military and political leader. He will restore to them the country between the rivers Nile and Euphrates (which the Jews have always coveted as their patrimony). He will gather Jews from all parts of the world and assemble them once again in this country.

Today when we look at the affairs of the Middle East in the perspective of the prophecies of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), we perceive at once that the stage has been set for the emergence of the Dajjal who as was foretold by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) would rise as a 'Promised Messiah' of the Jews.

The Muslim people have been ejected from a large part of Palestine and in that part a Jewish State named 'Israel' has been set up. Jews from all over the world are converging at this place. America, Britain and France have helped to make this Jewish State a formidable military power.

The Jewish scientists and technocrats are developing this country fast with the massive aid of Jewish capital. The military and technical potential of Israel poses a grave threat to the neighboring Muslim countries. The leaders of Israel have never concealed their design of redeeming 'the land of their patrimony.' The map of the future Jewish State which they have been publishing for a long time is given on the following page. [Map omitted] It shows that they wish to include in the Jewish State the whole of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, nearly all the area of Iraq besides taking Askandron from Turkey, Sinai and Delta area from Egypt and Upper Hejaz and Najd areas from Saudi Arabia.

This of course includes the Holy City of Madina also. In this context, it is quite clear that taking advantage of the critical conditions created by a World war, the Jews will certainly make a bid to grab these areas. And at this juncture will arise Dajjal whom the Jews will deem as their 'Promised Messiah.'

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) not only prophesied the advent of this Dajjal but also had warned the Muslims that they would suffer colossal hardships and one day will seem like one year of suffering and calamity. It was for this reason that the Prophet of God (PBUH) used to pray for protection against the great evil of 'Dajjal Masih' and he used to enjoin his followers to implore Allah to save them the severity of these evil times.

It is certain that Allah will not send any 'Christ Incarnate' to combat with this 'Dajjal Masih.' He will appoint the real Christ, the Christ who was born of Mary, and whom the Jews had declined to acknowledge as a Prophet two thousand years ago. He will send the same Christ whom the Jews believed they had put out of their way by killing him. The place where the real Christ will descend is not in India, Africa or America. It is in Damascus that he will appear, because this place will be the actual battle ground at that time. Look at the map no. 1

[map has to be omitted]

and you will find that Damascus lies at a distance of hardly 50-60 miles from the orders of Israel. If you recall the text of the traditions we have cited above, you will find it not too difficult to understand that Dajjal will penetrate into Syria with 70,000 Jewish troops and will take position before Damascus. At this moment of crisis, Christ son of Mary (PBUH) will descend near a white minaret in the Eastern quarter of Damascus. After the morning prayers, Christ (PBUH) will advance with the Muslims for fighting against Dajjal. The enemy will retreat before the powerful assault of Christ son of Mary, and Dajjal will run away towards Israel by way of the slope of Afiq (Reference to Tradition No. 21). Christ (PBUH) will pursue Dajjal and destroy him on the airfield of Lydda (Traditions No. 10-14- 15).

A great slaughter of the Jews will ensue and every one of them will be annihilated. The nation of Jews will be exterminated (Traditions No. 9-15-21).

At the proclamation of truth by Christ, the Christian religion will become extinct (Traditions No. 1-2-4-6). And the followers of all religions, their former having renounced allegiances, will amalgamate to form the one and only brotherhood of Islam. The traditions reveal this fact clearly beyond any doubt.

In view of the above, the propaganda network that has been set up in our country in the name of Masih Mau'ud, 'the Promised Messiah', is unquestionably a false and bogus venture.

One of the funniest aspects of this base movement is that the person who deems himself the subject of the prophecies of Muhammad (PBUH) has given this interesting explanation of his identity as 'Christ son of Mary':

"He (God Almighty) named me Mary in the third part of Barahin-i-Ahmadia. Later, as is evident from Barahin-i--Ahmadia I was reared in the form of Mary for two years. Then, my body was filled with the soul of

Christ just as the body of Mary was filled with Christ's soul and in a metaphorical sense I became pregnant with the soul of Christ. At last after a period of many months (lasting not more than ten months) I was metamorphosed from Mary into Christ by a Divine revelation which has been recorded at the end of part four of Barahin-i-Ahmadia. Hence in this way I became the son of Mary." (Kashti-e-Noah, pp. 87-89).

In other words he became Mary in the first place, then got pregnant, and lastly from his own abdomen he issued forth as Christ son of Mary. There was one snag left, however. According to the traditions, Christ son of Mary, would appear in Damascus, which has been a prominent and famous place in Syria for several thousand years and still exists by this name on the map of the world.

This difficulty was explained away by another fanciful statement: "Let it be known that in respect of the interpretation of the word 'Damascus', God Almighty has explained to me in a revelation that in this place the name Damascus has been given to a village whose inhabitants possess the characteristics of Yazid and are followers of the habits and ideas of the impure Yazid. This town of Qadian, because of the reason that most of its residents possess the traits of Yazid in their character, is akin to and bears certain resemblance to Damascus (marginal note of Izala-i-Auham, pp. 63-73).

But that was not all. Yet another problem demanded clearance, i.e., the traditions had prophesied that Christ would descend near a white pillar. This problem was finally solved when the new 'Christ' got a white pillar built for him. The traditions mentioned that the white pillar would be standing prior to the descent of Christ near it and in Qadian the pillar was built after the appearance of 'Masih Mau'ud.' But never mind the discrepancy. Anyone who reads the above interpretations of this 'Masih Mau'ud' with open eyes will arrive at the conclusion that a clear fraud has been openly perpetrated by an imposter.

footnote 11 Those who deny this possibility should go through verse 259 of Surah al- Baqarah, in which God affirms in clear words that He let one of His creatures lie dead for a hundred years and at the end of this period He raised the man alive.

footnote 12 The Ulema of Islam have explained this question in detail. 'Allama Taftazani (722 A.H. - 792 A.H.) in Shara 'Aqaid-i-Nasafi writes: "It is established that Muhammad (PBUH) is the Final Prophet.....If it is said that according to the Hadith the descent of Christ (PBUH) will take place after Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) we shall say, "Yes, this fact has been mentioned in the traditions. But Christ (PBUH) will appear as a follower of Muhammad (PBUH). The Shariah of Christ stands abrogated. Hence he will neither receive any Divine revelations, nor will he establish any canon. In all his actions he will represent Muhammad(PBUH) only."

The same view point has been re-affirmed by 'Allama Alusi in Tafsir Ruh- al-Ma'ani: Later when Christ (PBUH) appears, he will retain his dignity as a former Prophet. After all, God will certainly not divest him of this dignity, but he will not follow his former mandate, because the Shariahs of all prophets, including that of Christ (PBUH), stand abrogated. Hence it

will be a Divine obligation upon Christ (PBUH) to follow in letter and spirit the law of Muhammad (PBUH). He will receive no Divine revelation, nor will he be charged with the duty of giving new religious laws. In all his deeds, Christ will act as a representative of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and he will function as a deputy and one among the rulers of the followers of Muhammad (PBUH).

Imam Razi further elucidates this point like this: The period of the Prophets extended as far as the advent of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). When Muhammad (PBUH) was raised as a Prophet, the era of the advent of new Prophets came to an end. It is not beyond comprehension that Christ (PBUH), after his descent, will act as a follower of Muhammad (PBUH).

footnote 13 Although two traditions (No.5 and 21) bear ample evidence that Jesus (PBUH) will act as leader in the first prayer after his descent, the majority of the traditions which are comparatively more authentic (vide No. 3,7,9,15,16) speak of the fact that Jesus(PBUH) will decline to lead the prayers. He will call upon the incumbent Imam of the Muslims to step forward and lead the prayers. All scholars of traditions and commentators are agreed on this latter point.

Additional Sayings about the Prophet (PBUH)

III&E Brochure Series; No. 16 (published by The Institute of Islamic Information and Education (III&E)) YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS MAN ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA confirms: "...a mass of detail in the early sources show that he was an honest and upright man who had gained the respect and loyalty of others who were like-wise honest and upright men." (Vol. 12) GEORGE BERNARD SHAW said about him: "He must be called the Saviour of Humanity.

I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it much needed peace and happiness." (The Genuine Islam, Singapore, Vol. 1, No. 8, 1936) He was by far the most remarkable man that ever set foot on this earth. He preached a religion, founded a state, built a nation, laid down a moral code, initiated numerous social and political reforms, established a powerful and dynamic society to practice and represent his teachings and completely revolutionized the worlds of human thought and behavior for all times to come. "His Name is MUHAMMAD" May Peace of God Be Upon Him (pbuh) He was born in Arabia in the year 570 C.E.

(common era), started his mission of preaching the religion of Truth, Islam (submission to One God) at the age of forty and departed from this world at the age of sixty-three. During this short period of 23 years of his Prophethood, he changed the complete Arabian peninsula from paganism and idolatry to worship of One God, from tribal quarrels and wars to national solidarity and cohesion, from drunkenness and debauchery to sobriety and piety, from lawlessness and anarchy to disciplined living, from utter bankruptcy to the highest standards of moral excellence.

Human history has never known such a complete transformation of a people or a place before or since - and imagine all these unbelievable wonders in just over two decades. LAMARTINE, the renowned historian speaking on the essentials of human greatness wonders: "If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only.

They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislation, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls...his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death; all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma.

This dogma was two-fold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with the

words." "Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all the standards by which Human Greatness may be measured, we may well ask, Is there any man greater than he?" (Lamartine, HISTOIRE DE LA TURQUIE, Paris, 1854, Vol. II, pp 276-277) The world has had its share of great personalities.

But these were one-sided figures who distinguished themselves in but one or two fields, such as religious thought or military leadership. The lives and teachings of these great personalities of the world are shrouded in the mist of time. There is so much speculation about the time and place of their birth, the mode and style of their life, the nature and detail of their teachings and the degree and measure of their success or failure that it is impossible for humanity to reconstruct accurately the lives and teachings of these men.

Not so this man. Muhammad (pbuh) accomplished so much in such diverse fields of human thought and behavior in the fullest blaze of human history. Every detail of his private life and public utterances has been accurately documented and faithfully preserved to our day. The authenticity of the record so preserved are vouched for not only by the faithful followers but even by his prejudiced critics.

Muhammad (pbuh) was a religious teacher, a social reformer, a moral guide, an administrative colossus, a faithful friend, a wonderful companion, a devoted husband, a loving father - all in one. No other man in history ever excelled or equaled him in any of these different aspects of life - but it was only for the selfless personality of Muhammad (pbuh) to achieve such incredible perfections. MAHATMA GANDHI, speaking on the character of Muhammad, (pbuh) says in (YOUNG INDIA): "I wanted to know the best of one who holds today's undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind....I became more than convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life.

It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for his pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. When I closed the 2nd volume (of the Prophet's biography),

I was sorry there was not more for me to read of the great life." THOMAS CARLYLE in his (HEROES AND HEROWORSHIP), was simply amazed as to: "how one man single-handedly, could weld warring tribes and wandering Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades." DIWAN CHAND SHARMA wrote: "Muhammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him." (D.C. Sharma, THE PROPHETS OF THE EAST, Calcutta, 1935, pp. 12) EDWARD GIBBON and SIMON OCKLEY speaking on the profession of Islam write: "I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, AND MAHOMET, AN APOSTLE OF GOD' is the simple and invariable profession of Islam.

The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honor of the Prophet has never transgressed the measure of human virtues; and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion." (HISTORY OF THE SARACEN EMPIRES, London, 1870, p. 54) Muhammad (pbuh) was nothing more or less than a human being. But he was a man with a noble mission, which was to unite humanity on the worship of One and Only One God and to teach them the way to honest and upright living based on the commands of God.

He always described himself as, "A Servant and Messenger of God," and so indeed every action of his proclaimed to be. Speaking on the aspect of equality before God in Islam, the famous poetess of India, SARAJINI NAIDU says: "It was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy; for, in the mosque, when the call for prayer is sounded and worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim: 'God Alone is Great'... I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes man instinctively a brother." (S. Naidu, IDEALS OF ISLAM, vide Speeches & Writings, Madras, 1918, p. 169)

In the words of PROF. HURGRONJE: "The league of nations founded by the prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity and human brotherhood on such universal foundations as to show candle to other nations." He continues: "The fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done towards the realization of the idea of the League of Nations." The world has not hesitated to raise to divinity, individuals whose lives and missions have been lost in legend.

Historically speaking, none of these legends achieved even a fraction of what Muhammad (pbuh) accomplished. And all his striving was for the sole purpose of uniting mankind for the worship of One God on the codes of moral excellence. Muhammad (pbuh) or his followers never at any time claimed that he was a Son of God or the God-incarnate or a man with divinity - but he always was and is even today considered as only a Messenger chosen by God.

MICHAEL H. HART in his recently published book on ratings of men who contributed towards the benefit and upliftment of mankind writes: "My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels." (M.H. Hart, THE 100: A RANKING OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSONS IN HISTORY, New York, 1978, p. 33) K. S. RAMAKRISHNA RAO, an Indian Professor of Philosophy in his booklet, ("Muhammad, The Prophet of Islam,") calls him the "Perfect model for human life." Prof. Ramakrishna Rao explains his point by saying: "The personality of Muhammad, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes! There is Muhammad, the Prophet.

There is Muhammad, the Warrior; Muhammad, the Businessman; Muhammad, the Statesman; Muhammad, the Orator; Muhammad, the

Reformer; Muhammad, the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad, the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad, the Emancipator of Women; Muhammad, the Judge; Muhammad, the Saint. All in all these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is alike a hero."

Today after a lapse of fourteen centuries, the life and teachings of Muhammad (pbuh) have survived without the slightest loss, alteration or interpolation. They offer the same undying hope for treating mankind's many ills, which they did when he was alive. This is not a claim of Muhammad's (pbuh) followers but also the inescapable conclusion forced upon by a critical and unbiased history.

The least you could do as a thinking and concerned human being is to stop for a moment and ask yourself: Could these statements sounding so extraordinary and revolutionary be really true? And supposing they really are true and you did not know this man MUHAMMAD (pbuh) or hear about him, isn't it time you responded to this tremendous challenge and put in some effort to know him? It will cost you nothing but it may prove to be the beginning of a completely new era in your life.

by Eng. Husain Pasha We invite you to make a discovery of this wonderful man, Muhammad (pbuh), the like of whom never walked on the face of this earth. Please call for more information about Islam and this wonderful man, Muhammad (pbuh): The Institute of Islamic Information & Education P.O. Box 41129 Chicago, IL 60641-0129 Tel. (312) 777-7443 Fax. (312) 777-7199

Prophet Muhammad (saas)

A Blessing for Mankind CONTENTS Birth Youth Marriage Prophethood Challenges Migration (Hijrah) New Era Emmissaries Entertained in Madinah Liberation of Makkah Farewell Pilgrimage Death A Guidance to follow Economy (Expertise & Outlook) Cleanliness Orderliness Friendliness Neighborliness Goodwill Respect for Women Statesmanship Messengers of Allah Birth Muhammad (PBUH) (Blessings and Peace be upon him) was born in Makkah, Arabia, on Monday, 12 Rabi' Al-Awwal (2 August C.E).

His mother, Aminah was the daughter of Wahb bin Abd Al-Manaf of the Zahrah family. His father, Abdullah, was the son of Abd Al-Muttalib. His genealogy has been traced to the noble house of Isma'il, the son of Ibrahim (Abraham) (PBUH) (May Peace be upon him) in about the fortieth descent. Muhammad's father had died before his birth and his mother died when he was about six years old making him an orphan. In accordance with the tradition of noble families of Makkah, he was taken by a foster mother, Halimah, to her village where he lived for a few years. During these years he was taken to Makkah several times to visit his mother.

After the death of his mother, he was placed under the custody of his grandfather, Abd Al-Muttalib. When the grandfather died, he was under the care of his uncle, Abu Talib. By this time he used to look after sheep around Makkah and used to accompany his uncle on trade journeys to Syria. Youth In his youth he believed firmly in the Oneness of Allah (God)(SWT).

He lived a very simple life and hated vanity and pride. He was compassionate to the poor, widows and orphans and shared their sufferings by helping them. He avoided all vices, which were commonly practiced among young people such as gambling, drinking wine, vulgarity and others. He was well-known as As-Sadiq (the truthful) and Al-Amin (the trustworthy). He was always trusted as a mediator between two conflicting parties in his homeland, Makkah. Marriage When he was about 25 years old, his uncle urged him to work with the caravan which belonged to a wealthy widow named Khadijah. He accepted and undertook the journey to Syria.

He conducted business with such prudence and sense of duty that he returned with larger profit than usual. Khadijah was so impressed by the honest and attractive personality of Muhammad (PBUH) that she offered to marry him which Muhammad (PBUH) accepted. This marriage was a happy one. They had children. Khadijah was so far his only wife until she died at the age of 51. Prophethood Muhammad (PBUH) was born amidst a polytheistic (unbeliever) society. He was saddened and sick of the corrupt society around him.

He often went to Hira cave in the mountain near Makkah, later known as Jabal An-nur (the mountain of Light) where he meditated and pondered over the prevailing darkness brought about by ignorance. There he often remained deep in thought in communion with the unseen yet All-Pervading God of the Universe. One night, while he was meditating in the Hira cave, the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him. The Angel aroused him and his mighty voice reverberated in his ears. He was perplexed and did not

know what to do. He was asked to read. He replied: "I cannot read!" The Angel repeated three times asking Muhammad (PBUH) to read, but he replied the same answer. Finally the Angel asked: [Read in the name of your Lord , who created man from a clot. Read in the name of your God, the Most Bountiful, who taught by means of the pen, and taught man what he did not know.] (Qur'an 96: 1-5) This was the first revelation received by Muhammad (PBUH).

He was 40 years old at that time. The revelation continued to come to him from time to time in a period of 23 years. These series of revelation were arranged according to the divine guidance given to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and later collected in the form of a Mushaf (book) the Qur'an (Reading). Most of its verses have clear meaning. Some verses are interpreted in conjunction with other verses and some others were interpreted by the Prophet (PBUH) himself through his words, actions and agreements which are known as his Sunnah (Traditions). The Qur'an and the Sunnah together constitute the guidance and way of life for those who submit their life to Allah (God) (SWT).

People who follow this guidance and way of life are guaranteed by Allah (SWT) to be saved in this world and the Hereafter. Challenges When the Prophet (PBUH) called the people to the way of Allah, not many people listened to his call. Most of them were members of his family and from the low class society. Among them were Khadijah, Ali, Zayd and Bilal. When he intensified his mission (da'wah: Call to Islam) by publicly announcing the religion he preached, he won more followers but at the same time had to face many challenges from the nobles and leaders who found their position being threatened and jeopardized.

They stood together, under the pretext of defending the religion of their ancestors, to fight the new religion. The morale of the few people who embraced Islam was heightened when a small group of the respected people of Makkah joined the religion. Notable among them were Uthman bin Affan, Zubair bin Al-Awwam, Abd Ar-Rehman bin Awf, Talhah bin Ubaydullah, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, Arqam bin Abi Arqam, Ubaydullah bin Harith, Sa'id bin Zayd, Amr bin Nufail, Fatimah (the wife of Nufail), Asma binti Abu Bakr, Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Ja'far bin Abi Thalib (May Allah be pleased with them) and many others. Before this group, Abu Bakr was the first among the earlier followers that impressed the Prophet (PBUH) very much. The Prophet (PBUH) said about him: "I never invited anyone to the faith who did not display any hesitation in embracing it except Abu Bakr.

When I had offered Islam, he showed no hesitation at all in accepting it." As the result of these challenges from the Makkan unbelievers, some Muslims were subjected to torture, persecutions, isolations and boycotts. The Prophet (PBUH) had to be patient and had to look for the protection of Muslims. He asked Negus, King of Ethiopia to allow Muslims to migrate to his country. Negus welcomed the Muslims emigrants in his territory and refused to hand them over to the Makkan unbeliever rulers.

Migration (Hijrah) By the end of the Makkan period, the Prophet (PBUH) lost two people who were dear to him. They were his most affectionate uncle, Abu Talib, and his faithful and loving wife, Khadijah.

After their deaths, the Makkans felt free to do what they wanted to impose to the Prophet and his followers. In many Makkah was the Ka'bah (the Holy Mosque), which was built by Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) centuries before as a holy place to worship Allah (SWT), the One. But in the course of time, the place had been converted by unbelievers to the worship of objects other than Allah (SWT). People added to it many tradition of their own.

They used to visit this place for a few months in a year for pilgrimage. They came from all parts of Arabia, representing various famous tribes. The pilgrimage, inspite of its religious bearing, constituted for the Arabs a yearly festival where people met and indulge in their cultural activities. The Prophet (PBUH) took this opportunity to spread Islam.

Among those who were interested in his call, were a group of people from Yathrib (Madina) in the North of Arabia. They met secretly with the Prophet (PBUH) and a few Muslims from Makkah in a village called Aqabah. After becoming Muslims, they took an oath of allegiance to protect Islam, the Prophet and the Makkan Muslims. The following year, the group of Muslims from Yathrib came again to Makkah. They met the Prophet (PBUH) at the same place where they previously met. This time, Abbas bin Abd Al-Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle who was himself not a Muslim yet, was present at the meeting.

They invited the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims from Makkah to emigrate to Yathrib. They promised to treat them as true brothers and sisters. A long dialogue was held between the Muslims of Yathrib with the Prophet's uncle to make sure that they really wanted to welcome the Makkan Muslims in their town. The Prophet (PBUH) agreed at the end to emigrate to the new land. Upon knowing that, the Muslims had planned to leave Makkah, the Makkan unbelievers tried to stop the immigration but the first group had already migrated to Yathrib.

The Makkans had fearthat the movement to Yathrib would give the Muslims a new base to spread Islam. Within two months nearly all Muslims fMakkah, except the Prophet, Abu Bakr, Ali and a few helpless people had migrated. The Makkans then decided to kill the Prophet (PBUH). They made a plan for this purpose, but Allah (SWT) had made another plan over them, to quote the Qur'an. With various tactics and a good planning, the Prophet finally arrived peacefully in Yathrib, which was later known as Madinat Ar-Rasul (The city of the Prophet).

New Era In Madinah the Prophet (PBUH) was able to work freely in spreading Islam. The followers of Islam increased day after day. But the threat by the Makkans did not stop. A few physical confrontations with the Makkans were ensued. Sometimes the battles were won by the Muslims, and sometimes by the Makkans.

The Prophet (PBUH) also engaged in battles with the Byzantine and Persian powers that were jeopardizing the existence of Islam from the north and the east. But confrontation with the Makkans stopped for a while after the treaty of Hudaibiyah had been signed between the Muslims and the unbeliever Makkans. During the Madinah period, the Muslims also established treaties with the Jews of Madinah and the tribes around the city.

The Jews broke the treaty, which led to their expulsion out of the Arabian peninsula.

In Madinah, the Prophet (PBUH) succeeded in establishing Islam as a way of life in its true meaning. He was not only giving guidance on purely religious matters such as salat (prayers), zakat (almsgiving), Saum (fasting) and Hajj (pilgrimage) and examples in these matters, and also provided Muslims with rules and laws covering social, economic, political fields.

Emissaries Entertained in Madinah It was in Madinah that the Prophet (PBUH) received envoys and emissaries from various tribes and nationals, asking matters of various sorts, demanding dialogues, negotiations etc. Among the emissaries were an envoy representing the Christian community in Najran (South Arabia). The Prophet (PBUH) welcomed them, entertained them as honoured guests and even allowed them to conduct their religious service in his city. It was a good occasion to share each other's views on matters of religion. Some members of the envoy were deeply impressed by the treatment they received from the Muslims, thus leading them to embrace Islam.

Liberation of Makkah The treaty of Hudaibiyah gave the Muslims a big opportunity to exemplify the true Islam in personal conduct and in relations with peoples and communities. But the peace did not stay long due to the attitude of the Makkan tribal chiefs who broke the treaty. Soon the Prophet (PBUH) marched very quietly to Makkah in the 8th year of the Hijrah (emigration) to Madinah.

The Makkans gave no resistance and by the whole city surrendered to the Prophet (PBUH). He announced a general amnesty for all his enemies and treated all citizens of the city with generosity. A verse of the Qur'an was revealed on the occasion: [When the help of Allah and victory comes, and you see the people enter the religion of Allah in crowds. So glorify the Name of your Lord and beg His forgiveness. He, verily accept repentance.] (Qur'an 110: 1-3) After the liberation of Makkah all the remaining hostile tribes in Arabia began to realize the reality of Islamic faith. People had seen the noble teachings of Islam.

Good examples of forgiveness, tolerance, justice, fairness, steadfastness and other qualities as exemplified by the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions had left an impression in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people who became Muslims. Farewell Pilgrimage In time the whole Arabia had become the land of Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) intended to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage). He announced his intention to the Muslims in Madinah and the surrounding areas and asked them to join him.

Supplement 7

This was in fact the only Hajj performed by him during his life time. On this occasion he taught those who were present with him and to the whole world about the Hajj and the divine message that Allah had entrusted him to all mankind. At the last gathering with the Ummah (nation) during the Hajj season, the Hajj of Wada' (Farewell) a sermon was delivered by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the valley of Arafat about 81 or 82 days before his death. It contained the very fundamentals of Islam.

Seated on his camel, he spoke with a clear tone and asked who heard his speech to convey it to those who were not present there. Among others he said: "O people, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether, after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today. O people, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.

Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury, therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived. Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hopes 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. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in mildness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers.

And it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to commit adultery. O people, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah (SWT), say your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give your wealth in zakat. Perform hajj if you can afford to. You know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. You are all equal. Nobody has superiority over the other except by piety and good deeds. Remember, one day you will appear before Allah (SWT) and answer for your deeds.

So beware, do not go astray from the path of righteousness after my death. O people, no Prophet or Messenger will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O people, and understand my words, which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Qur'an and my example, the Sunnah, and if you follow these you will never go astray. All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly.

Be my witness O' Allah, (SWT) that I have conveyed Your message to Your slaves."The importance of this sermon can be seen from the Prophet's perception that this occasion may be the last one during his lifetime. He felt that this was the right time to summarize the principles of Islam to his fellow brothers and sisters. By the perfection of this religion, it means that

there's no need for humanity, and for the Muslims in particular, to look for another alternative way of life.

As long as one holds fast to the two things left behind by the Prophet (the Qur'an and the Sunnah), one will never go astray. Death About two months after returning from Makkah for Pilgrimage, the Prophet (PBUH) became ill but he was still able to perform his prayers in the mosque and give directives to the companions. His health was deteriorating day by day. At the last moment he asked Abu Bakr to lead the prayers in the mosque, Every member of his family and every companion was worried about his health.

It was on Monday, 12th Rabi'Al-Awwal, the year 11A.H., when he passed away at the age of sixty three years. Many people did not believe that he had passed away. They thought that the Messenger of Allah would live forever. It was Abu Bakr, who had the feeling, since the Farewell Pilgrimage that the death of the Prophet (PBUH) was coming near, He convinced the congregation that the Prophet (PBUH) had actually passed away. Abu Bakr said to the congregation that if they worshipped Mu, Muhammad had died , and if they worshipped Allah (SWT), He lives forever.

Then hrecited from the Qur'an: "Muhammad (PBUH) is nought but a Messenger like the Messengers who had surely passed away before him: will you, then, if he dies or be slain, turn round on your heels?"A Guidance to follow Muhammad as a man had already died, but as a Prophet (PBUH) he left behind him a legacy in the form of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. He stressed the urgent need to hold firmly to these two sources during his farewell speech in the valley of Arafat. If people hold fast to them, they will never go astray.

The teachings he left for us if put into practice in their true spirit and proper way will bring a happy life in this world and besides the indubitable rewards that will be received by those who believed in them in the life after death. In this sense, Islam is a worldly religion which cares first for the worldly affairs of humanity.

The Hereafter is merely a continuation of the worldly life. It is difficult to portend that man can be saved in the Hereafter without being saved in this world. The safe way is to follow the way shown to us by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). When his wife, Aishah, was asked by a companion about the Prophet's (PBUH) daily conduct, Aishah replied that the conduct of the Prophet (PBUH) was the Qur'an which is the guidance from Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) was given authority by Allah to interpret it. That is why his conduct was the exemplary of human conduct.

Islam as brought by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is very much misunderstood, as a religion perceived to contain souls and rituals like prayers, fasting, almsgiving and pilgrimage. Thanks to the new developments in the world, Islam is now looked upon in a wider perspective than the narrow-minded view in the past. The increased interest in Islamic studies by Muslims and non-Muslims supported by the advanced printing technology has begun to open the eyes of the world about the true teachings and intrinsic values of Islam.

Economy (Expertise and Outlook) In the field of economic development, the goal is not material gain, but human welfare in general. Islam exhorts that the balance between the material and physical aspects, between the individual and societal needs, be maintained in order to narrow the gap between two opposite sides of human world.

It is stated in the Qur'an: "Say, who is there to forbid the beauty which Allah has brought forth for His creatures, and the good things from among the means of sustenance. Say, they are for those who believe [in Allah (SWT)] in this worldly life, to be theirs alone in the Hereafter on the Day of Resurrection ... Say, the only things my Lord forbids are the shameful deeds, be they open or secret, the sin, unjustified envy, the ascribing of divinity to aught beside Allah (SWT), and the attributing unto Allah (SWT) of aught of which you have no knowledge" So everyone is free to conduct any business he likes outside the harmful and shameful circle he has been warned to refrain from.

If he does not listen to this warning, he will be in trouble. Every good quality set as a precondition to a successful business is encouraged by Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) himself was a businessman before he was appointed as a Prophet. His ability to run business prudently, by his fairness and truthful conduct in dealing with people had won him the heart of his employer, Khadijah who later offered him marriage. He advocated Muslims to follow the spirit of Prophet Daud's (PBUH) (David) industriousness who earned his living from his own labour.

He also said that faith of a Muslim is not complete if he is not good in his profession. He said: "If you leave matter to those who are not professional, you are waiting for a disaster". If he works in the production line, his products must be compatible with product of other companies or factories. In order to be marketable, it must suit the taste of buyers and their standards of living. In this regard, Islam teaches not to cheat in offering the product to the market. It must be shown as it is without any publicity it does not deserve.

In the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH), he found many cases in market places where the merchants tried to cheat the customers. The Prophet (PBUH) said to them: "Whoever cheats is not one of us (Muslim Book of Iman 164 and Ahmed V.3 PP 498)". Islam laid many regulations the field of economy such as trade, leasing, business transaction, contract and others to prevent unfair dealing within the community and in the world of business at large. What is also prevented by Islam is a monopoly and exploitation by one man or one group at the expense of the others. Cleanliness The first thing in the religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the concern for cleanliness.

The concept of cleanliness in Islam covers physical and spiritual, mundane and religious domains. Before performing any rituals prescribed by Islam, one should cleanse his body, and his dress, his place of worship and his environment should also be clean. Prior to carrying out his prayers or starting for pilgrimage, one has to make his Wudu (ablution).

If he or she is in a state of impurity after having had a lawful intimate intercourse or post-natal period or other reasons, he or she has to take a

complete bath by pouring clean water over the whole body. In the case of daily prayer, every Muslim has to clean his/her private parts, face, hands, feet, mouth, nose, and ears at least five times every day for the five daily prayers. This also reminds him/her to keep his/her soul clean from unlawful deeds. Cleanliness is not in the physical sense only. The body should be purified as well from evil doings that might harm his relationship with others and with Allah (SWT).

He has to clean his mind from bad intentions or committing unlawful acts. He has to clean his heart from jealousy, hypocrisy and other evil desires. He has to embody hope, truthfulness, forgiveness, compassion, holiness, the sense of brotherliness, neighborliness and other noble qualities. He has to pay special attention to his diet against all unhealthy food medically and religiously. He has to keep his eyes, ears, tongue from evil. These are among the noble characteristics as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

To clean the wealth, Islam instituted the zakat system (way of purifying wealth). A person whose wealth has reached a certain point is obligated to pay zakat (alms) which is a duty enjoined by God and undertaken Muslims in the interest of society as a whole. For those capable persons whose wealth does not reach the minimum chargeable rate, he can also give voluntary contribution to the needy. This does not mean that the needy should always be receiving help from the affluent ones.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "The upper hand (giver) is better than the lower one (receiver)". Muslim Kitab Zakat No. 124 If the receiver of zakat can grasp the spirit of the Prophet's (PBUH) saying, he will try his best to be the giver instead of the receiver by endeavoring to better his life as encouraged by the teachings of Islam. In Islam the possession of more wealth does not raise a man's dignity, nor does poverty degrade him. It is true that wealth is necessary for man to live on this earth but it is only a means, not the end. The end is happiness in life by attaining the higher values and not losing sight of in the pursuit of wealth.

Supplement 8

Among the great virtues of Islam is the command to do good and the prohibition to do evil. The good should be preserved and the evil should be discarded. In short, Islam is actually composed of a series of commands and prohibitions. Allah the most Knowing, the Most Merciful, did not decree any law and regulations but for the good and benefit of his creatures.

The prohibition was decree because of its evil implications to humanity. The evils were created to test the human conscience and challenge their freewill in choosing between right and wrong. All the commands and prohibitions from Allah as transmitted through His Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was intended to purify the human soul in order to live a pure and clean life adored by Allah (SWT) and human beings. Orderliness One of the teachings of Islam is about orderlin.

Discipline, regulation, management, planning and all other terms relating to organization are mostly considered as alien to Islam. On the contrary, Islam exhorts people to live in orderliness and to put the right thing in the right place. The foundation of Islamic order rests on two main principles, the crucial faith in one Allah (God) and the oneness of humanity. All the frame works were laid down in the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) applied himself to working out the essential details of that order. One of the great values taught by Islam in this regard is to make use of the time left to humanity.

The Qur'an and the Sunnah (Prophetic traditions) mentioned about time, day, week, month, year and century. People are lost if they did not spend the time available to them during this life for good things. It is a great loss if people have to waste the valuable time they have at their disposal for useless activities. It is true that life should be enjoyable but not at the expense of human resources and values which are essential for the continuation of their well-being.

Allah the Most Knowing had created time and space suitable for human activities for they can attain achievements in life. There are times for work, study, recreation, resting and even celebration. All are parts of activities in worshipping Allah (SWT) and serving His cause. The Qur'an says that Allah (SWT) had created the day for earning and night for resting and enjoyment.

He created the sun, the moon and all outer-space objects so that man on the earth can fix the time and arrange the calendar. By having standard time and standard calendar and the movements of astronomical objects, people are able to regulate their timetable in choosing the right moment for them in doing business and carrying out their activities.

Islam prescribes certain times for the daily prayers, certain month for the obligatory fasting and certain time in one's life time for performing the Hajj or pilgrimage which indicates that the religion brought by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) places the life of Muslims in systematic order. For every move and occasion made by Muslims there is a rule governing it, be it in the form of advice, spiritual guidance or practical directive. If all these directives are followed and understood properly, people will have high discipline and a well-managed life. Islam encourages people to think correctly before taking any decision. This means planning.

There are many verses in the Qur'an admonishing against doing things unthinkingly and jumping to conclusions. The Prophet (PBUH) also showed a good example in fulfilling promise and staying true to treaty, agreement or contract made between parties. As a man of honour he always remained true to the principles agreed in the treaty, depicting his high discipline and inclination of doing everything in proper order.

Friendliness Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a warmhearted and faithful friend. He loved his companions. He extended greeting to those he knew and to those he did not know. He treated all people around him with kindness and affection. He was very courteous to all those who met him. He never contradicted anybody who is not opposed to the teachings of Islam. He treated equally the humble and the lofty. He claimed no distinction and lived amongst his companions as if he was not their leader.

Neighborliness He regarded the neighbors as brother and sisters because of their closeness and living in the same vicinity. He once smelt the aroma of the soup cooked by his wife. He told her to give some of it to the neighbours who also smelt it. He said it was not right a Muslim to sleep with a full stomach after having had a good meal but let his neighbour starve.

He laid down the foundation for a friendly relation and co-operation among neighbours exemplifying that living as a neighbour, one has one's right and responsibility. In regard to the rights of a neighbour, the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Gibreel (PBUH) used to advise me to take good care of the neighbour until I thought he would make him my heir." (Bukhari Kitab Al Adab No. 28 and Muslim Kitab Al Bir No. 146)**Goodwill** He was a good exemplar to those who subscribe to a harmonious society. Islam exhorts people not to violate the rights of others and injure their interest, but should positively cooperate with each other and establish a mutual relationship and social cohesion.

To safeguard the unity and solidarity of the nation and to achieve the welfare and well-being of the community, Muslims have been enjoined to avoid mutual hostility, social dissension, backbiting one another, and hurting others with their hand or tongue. Islam as brought by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exhorts Muslims to visit the sick, to help to the needy and assist the weak. Islam makes no discrimination on the basis of race, colour or language. Its appeal is to the entire humanity.

Respect for Women The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) brought changes for the betterment of womens conditions. Woman is recognized by Islam as a full and equal partner of man in the procreation of humankind. He is the father, she is the mother, and both are essential for life. Her role is no less vital than his. By this partnership she has an equal share in every aspect; she is entitled to equal rights; she undertakes equal responsibilities, and in her there are many qualities and so much humanity as there are in her partner. She is equal to man in bearing personal and common responsibilities and in receiving rewards for her deeds.

She is equal to man in the pursuit of education and knowledge. Islam enjoined the seeking of knowledge upon Muslim, it makes no distinction between man and woman, who is entitled to freedom of expression as much

as man is. Her sound opinions are taken into consideration and cannot be disregarded just because she is a female. Islam grants woman equal rights to contract, to enterprise, to earn and possess independently. Her life, her property, her honor are as sacred as those of man. Islam has also given woman a share of inheritance. Before Islam, she was not only deprived of that share, but was herself considered as property to be inherited by man.

Statesmanship When Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) arrived at Madinah, he initiated the formation of an Islamic state. After establishing politics, brotherhood and the authority of the state of Madinah, he began negotiations with various tribes around the city and made treaties with them. When the Makkan unbelievers launched a series of attacks on Madinah, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was able to confront them, and when the Makkans were finally defeated in the battle of Al-Khandaq (Trenches), he was able to make truce with them at Hudaibiyah for ten years. This treaty was a masterpiece of practical statesmanship on the part of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

His diplomacy in sending and receiving envoys to and from the various chiefs of tribes and foreign rulers, his fairness in conducting judiciary, and his general pardon at the liberation of Makkah, was another proof of his lofty statesmanship. The State he established in Madinah was not a matter of chance. It was the very nature of his mission that he would establish a state to enforce the way of Allah. People might accept a new faith but it would take time to change their habits, custom and ways of life.

And even if a small group of people succeeded in changing their ways of life there would be many others who would not let these people practice their belief and try to stop them by force. So the Islamic State became an urgent necessity to protect the Islamic way of life. The State founded by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was built physical force, as every state must necessarily be, to fulfill its function of stopping aggression and oppression. A democratic system in Islam is expressed through the term shura (council).

The Qur'an translation reads: [And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer and their affairs [of government] by counseling among themselves and who spend out of what We have given them.] (Qur'an 42: 38) References: Abdul Hamid Siddique, The life of Muhammad. Beirut: Dar El Fath. Afzalur Rehman, Muhamma, Blessing for Mankind. London: The Muslim Schools Trust London. Ministry of Religious Affairs Pakistan, Universality of the Prophet's Message. Mohammed Hussein Hikal, Hayat Mohammed. Cairo: Dar Al Ma'arif.

Messengers of Allah (PBUT) Below are the names of the 25 Rasul (Messengers of Allah) Adam(PBUH); (Peace be upon him) Idris(PBUH). Nuh (Noah)(PBUH). Hud(PBUH). Saleh(PBUH). Lut (Lot)(PBUH). Ibrahim (Abraham) (PBUH). Ismail (Shmael) (PBUH). Ishak (Isaac) (PBUH). Ya'kub (Jacob) (PBUH). Yousuf (Joseph)(PBUH). Shuaib (PBUH). Harun (Aaron) (PBUH). Musa (Moses) (PBUH). Dawood (David) (PBUH).

Sulaiman (Solomon) (PBUH). Ayub (Job) (PBUH). Zulkifl (Ezekiel) (PBUH). Yunus (Jonah) (PBUH). Elyas (Elijah) (PBUH). Al-Yasa' (Elisah)

(PBUH). Zakariyah (Zechariah) (PBUH). Yahya (John) (PBUH). Isa (Jesus) (PBUH).

Muhammad (PBUH) Remembering Allah (SWT) at all times. When starting to do something Bism-illah When intending to do something in future Insha-Allah When in pain and distress Ya-Allah When expressing appreciation Masha-Allah When thanking someone Jazak-Allah Khayran When awakening from sleep La-ilaha-illallah When thanking Allah or When sneezing Alhamdu-lillah When someone else sneezes Yar-Hamuk-Allah When repenting of a sin Astagh-Firullah When taking oath Wallah/Billah When someone supplicates Ameen When death message is received Inna-Lillahi-wa- inna-ilaihi Raji-oun We wish to acknowledge and thank the collective efforts by the following in producing this booklet:

Ustad Rifyal Ka'bah Haji Mohd. Yuni bin Awi Imam Yakub Yusuf Vadia Abdul Rahim bin Raub Ustazah Habsah Hashim Fatimah Mohammed Norzah Yusof Rasheedah Amoo

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Prophet Muhammad's (saws) Last Sermon

[This sermon was delivered on the Ninth Day of Dhul-Hijjah 10 A.H. in the 'Uranah valley of Mount Arafat' in Mecca.] After praising and thanking Allah the Prophet (saws) said: "O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today. O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners.

Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that he will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury (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 [the 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 Rabi'ah ibn al Harithibn. O People, the unbelievers indulge in tampering with the calendar in order to make permissible that which Allah forbade, and to forbid that 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 Shaban. 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 anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste. O People, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a 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 my words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Qur'an and my Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray. All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O Allah, that I have conveyed Your message to Your people."

Mohammed The Prophet

By Prof. K. S. Ramakrishna Rao, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government College for Women University of Mysore, Mandya-571401 (Karnataka). Re-printed from "Islam and Modern age", Hyderabad, March 1978. In the desert of Arabia was Mohammad born, according to Muslim historians, on April 20, 571. The name means highly praised.

He is to me the greatest mind among all the sons of Arabia. He means so much more than all the poets and kings that preceded him in that impenetrable desert of red sand. When he appeared Arabia was a desert -- a nothing. Out of nothing a new world was fashioned by the mighty spirit of Mohammad -- a new life, a new culture, a new civilization, a new kingdom which extended from Morocco to Indies and influenced the thought and life of three continents -- Asia, Africa and Europe.

When I thought of writing on Mohammad the prophet, I was a bit hesitant because it was to write about a religion I do not profess and it is a delicate matter to do so for there are many persons professing various religions and belonging to diverse school of thought and denominations even in same religion. Though it is sometimes, claimed that religion is entirely personal yet it can not be gain-said that it has a tendency to envelop the whole universe seen as well unseen.

It somehow permeates something or other our hearts, our souls, our minds their conscious as well as subconscious and unconscious levels too. The problem assumes overwhelming importance when there is a deep conviction that our past, present and future all hang by the soft delicate, tender silked cord. If we further happen to be highly sensitive, the center of gravity is very likely to be always in a state of extreme tension. Looked at from this point of view, the less said about other religion the better. Let our religions be deeply hidden and embedded in the resistance of our innermost hearts fortified by unbroken seals on our lips.

But there is another aspect of this problem. Man lives in society. Our lives are bound with the lives of others willingly or unwillingly, directly or indirectly. We eat the food grown in the same soil, drink water, from the same the same spring and breathe the same air. Even while staunchly holding our own views, it would be helpful, if we try to adjust ourselves to our surroundings, if we also know to some extent, how the mind our neighbor moves and what the main springs of his actions are.

From this angle of vision it is highly desirable that one should try to know all religions of the world, in the proper spirit, to promote mutual understanding and better appreciation of our neighborhood, immediate and remote. Further, our thoughts are not scattered as appear to be on the surface.

They have got themselves crystallized around a few nuclei in the form of great world religions and living faiths that guide and motivate the lives of millions that inhabit this earth of ours. It is our duty, in one sense if we have the ideal of ever becoming a citizen of the world before us, to make a little attempt to know the great religions and system of philosophy that have ruled mankind. In spite of these preliminary remarks, the ground in these field of religion, where there is often a conflict between intellect and emotion is so slippery that one is constantly reminded of fools that rush in where angels fear to tread. It is also not so complex from another point of view.

The subject of my writing is about the tenets of a religion which is historic and its prophet who is also a historic personality. Even a hostile critic like Sir William Muir speaking about the holy Quran says that. "There is probably in the world no other book which has remained twelve centuries with so pure text." I may also add Prophet Mohammad is also a historic personality, every event of whose life has been most carefully recorded and even the minutest details preserved intact for the posterity.

His life and works are not wrapped in mystery. My work today is further lightened because those days are fast disappearing when Islam was highly misrepresented by some of its critics for reasons political and otherwise. Prof. Bevan writes in Cambridge Medieval History, "Those account of Mohammad and Islam which were published in Europe before the beginning of 19th century are now to be regarded as literary curiosities." My problem is to write this monograph is easier because we are now generally not fed on this kind of history and much time need be spent on pointing out our misrepresentation of Islam.

The theory of Islam and Sword for instance is not heard now frequently in any quarter worth the name. The principle of Islam that there is no compulsion in religion is well known. Gibbon, a historian of world repute says, "A pernicious tenet has been imputed to Mohammadans, the duty of extirpating all the religions by sword." This charge based on ignorance and bigotry, says the eminent historian, is refuted by Quran, by history of Musalman conquerors and by their public and legal toleration of Christian worship. The great success of Mohammad's life had been effected by sheer moral force, without a stroke of sword.

But in pure self-defense, after repeated efforts of conciliation had utterly failed, circumstances dragged him into the battlefield. But the prophet of Islam changed the whole strategy of the battlefield. The total number of casualties in all the wars that took place during his lifetime when the whole Arabian Peninsula came under his banner, does not exceed a few hundreds in all. But even on the battlefield he taught the Arab barbarians to pray, to pray not individually, but in congregation to God the Almighty.

During the dust and storm of warfare whenever the time for prayer came, and it comes five times a every day, the congregation prayer had not to be postponed even on the battlefield. A party had to be engaged in bowing their heads before God while other was engaged with the enemy. After finishing the prayers, the two parties had to exchange their positions.

To the Arabs, who would fight for forty years on the slight provocation that a camel belonging to the guest of one tribe had strayed into the grazing

land belonging to other tribe and both sides had fought till they lost 70,000 lives in all; threatening the extinction of both the tribes to such furious Arabs, the Prophet of Islam taught self-control and discipline to the extent of praying even on the battlefield. In an age of barbarism, the Battlefield itself was humanized and strict instructions were issued not to cheat, not to break trust, not to mutilate, not to kill a child or woman or an old man, not to hew down date palm nor burn it, not to cut a fruit tree, not to molest any person engaged in worship.

His own treatment with his bitterest enemies is the noblest example for his followers. At the conquest of Mecca, he stood at the zenith of his power. The city which had refused to listen to his mission, which had tortured him and his followers, which had driven him and his people into exile and which had unrelentingly persecuted and boycotted him even when he had taken refuge in a place more than 200 miles away, that city now lay at his feet. By the laws of war he could have justly avenged all the cruelties inflicted on him and his people.

But what treatment did he accord to them? Mohammad's heart flowed with affection and he declared, "This day, there is no REPROOF against you and you are all free." "This day" he proclaimed, "I trample under my feet all distinctions between man and man, all hatred between man and man." This was one of the chief objects why he permitted war in self defense, that is to unite human beings. And when once this object was achieved, even his worst enemies were pardoned.

Even those who killed his beloved uncle, Hamazah, mangled his body, ripped it open, even chewed a piece of his liver. The principles of universal brotherhood and doctrine of the equality of mankind which he proclaimed represents one very great contribution of Mohammad to the social uplift of humanity. All great religions have preached the same doctrine but the prophet of Islam had put this theory into actual practice and its value will be fully recognized, perhaps centuries hence, when international consciousness being awakened, racial prejudices may disappear and greater brotherhood of humanity come into existence.

Miss. Sarojini Naidu speaking about this aspect of Islam says, "It was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy; for in the mosque, when the minaret is sounded and the worshipers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and the king kneel side by side and proclaim, God alone is great."

The great poetess of India continues, "I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes a man instinctively a brother. When you meet an Egyptian, an Algerian and Indian and a Turk in London, it matters not that Egypt is the motherland of one and India is the motherland of another." Mahatma Gandhi, in his inimitable style, says "Some one has said that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent Islam -- Islam that civilized Spain, Islam that took the torch light to Morocco and preached to the world the Gospel of brotherhood. The Europeans of South Africa dread the Advent of Islam. They may claim equality with the white races.

They may well dread it, if brotherhood is a sin. If it is equality of colored races then their dread is well founded." Every year, during the Haj, the world witnesses the wonderful spectacle of this international Exhibition of Islam in leveling all distinctions of race, color and rank. Not only the Europeans, the African, the Arabian, the Persian, the Indians, the Chinese all meet together in Medina as members of one divine family, but they are clad in one dress every person in two simple pieces of white seamless cloth, one piece round the loin the other piece over the shoulders, bare head without pomp or ceremony, repeating "Here am I O God; at thy command; thou art one and alone;

Here am I." Thus there remains nothing to differentiate the high from the low and every pilgrim carries home the impression of the international significance of Islam. In the opinion of Prof. Hurgronje "the league of nations founded by prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity of human brotherhood on such Universal foundations as to show candle to other nations." In the words of same Professor "the fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done the realization of the idea of the League of Nations." The prophet of Islam brought the reign of democracy in its best form. The Caliph Caliph Ali and the son in-law of the prophet, the Caliph Mansur, Abbas, the son of Caliph Mamun and many other caliphs and kings had to appear before the judge as ordinary men in Islamic courts.

Even today we all know how the black Negroes were treated by the civilized white races. Consider the state of BILAL, a Negro Slave, in the days of the prophet of Islam nearly 14 centuries ago. The office of calling Muslims to prayer was considered to be of status in the early days of Islam and it was offered to this Negro slave.

After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet ordered him to call for prayer and the Negro slave, with his black color and his thick lips, stood over the roof of the holy mosque at Mecca called the Ka'ba the most historic and the holiest mosque in the Islamic world, when some proud Arabs painfully cried loud, "Oh, this black Negro Slave, woe be to him. He stands on the roof of holy Ka'ba to call for prayer." At that moment, the prophet announced to the world, this verse of the holy QURAN for the first time.

"O mankind, surely we have created you, families and tribes, so you may know one another. Surely, the most honorable of you with God is MOST RIGHTEOUS AMONG you. Surely, God is Knowing, Aware." And these words of the holy Quran created such a mighty transformation that the Caliph of Islam, the purest of Arabs by birth, offered their daughter in marriage to this Negro Slave, and whenever, the second Caliph of Islam, known to history as Umar the great, the commander of faithful, saw this Negro slave, he immediately stood in reverence and welcomed him by "Here come our master; Here come our lord."

What a tremendous change was brought by Quran in the Arabs, the proudest people at that time on the earth. This is the reason why Goethe, the greatest of German poets, speaking about the Holy Quran declared that, "This book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence." This is also the reason why George Bernard Shaw says, "If any religion has

a chance or ruling over England, say, Europe, within the next 100 years, it is Islam". It is this same democratic spirit of Islam that emancipated women from the bondage of man.

Supplement 9

Sir Charles Edward Archibald Hamilton says "Islam teaches the inherent sinlessness of man. It teaches that man and woman and woman have come from the same essence, possess the same soul and have been equipped with equal capabilities for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments." The Arabs had a very strong tradition that one who can smite with the spear and can wield the sword would inherit.

But Islam came as the defender of the weaker sex and entitled women to share the inheritance of their parents. It gave women, centuries ago right of owning property, yet it was only 12 centuries later, in 1881, that England, supposed to be the cradle of democracy adopted this institution of Islam and the act was called "the married woman act", but centuries earlier, the Prophet of Islam had proclaimed that "Woman are twin halves of men. The rights of women are sacred. See that women maintained rights granted to them."

Islam is not directly concerned with political and economic systems, but indirectly and in so far as political and economic affairs influence man's conduct, it does lay down some very important principles to govern economic life. According to Prof. Massignon, it maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites and has always in view the building of character which is the basis of civilization. This is secured by its law of inheritance,

by an organized system of charity known as Zakat, and by regarding as illegal all anti-social practices in the economic field like monopoly, usury, securing of predetermined unearned income and increments, cornering markets, creating monopolies, creating an artificial scarcity of any commodity in order to force the prices to rise. Gambling is illegal. Contribution to schools, to places of worship, hospitals, digging of wells, opening of orphanages are highest acts of virtue. Orphanages have sprung for the first time,

it is said, under the teaching of the prophet of Islam. The world owes its orphanages to this prophet born an orphan. "Good all this" says Carlyle about Mohammad. "The natural voice of humanity, of pity and equity, dwelling in the heart of this wild son of nature, speaks." A historian once said a great man should be judged by three tests: Was he found to be of true metal by his contemporaries? Was he great enough to raise above the standards of his age? Did he leave anything as permanent legacy to the world at large?

This list may be further extended but all these three tests of greatness are eminently satisfied to the highest degree in case of prophet Mohammad. Some illustrations of the last two have already been mentioned. The first is: Was the Prophet of Islam found to be of true metal by his contemporaries? Historical records show that all the contemporaries of Mohammad both friends and foes, acknowledged the sterling qualities, the spotless honesty, the noble virtues, the absolute sincerity and every trustworthiness of the apostle of Islam in all walks of life and in every sphere of human activity. Even the Jews and those who did not believe in his message,

adopted him as the arbiter in their personal disputes by virtue of his perfect impartiality. Even those who did not believe in his message were forced to say "O Mohammad, we do not call you a liar, but we deny him who has given you a book and inspired you with a message." They thought he was one possessed. They tried violence to cure him. But the best of them saw that a new light had dawned on him and they hastened him to seek the enlightenment. It is a notable feature in the history of prophet of Islam that his nearest relation,

his beloved cousin and his bosom friends, who know him most intimately, were not thoroughly imbued with the truth of his mission and were convinced of the genuineness of his divine inspiration. If these men and women, noble, intelligent, educated and intimately acquainted with his private life had perceived the slightest signs of deception, fraud, earthliness, or lack of faith in him, Mohammad's moral hope of regeneration, spiritual awakening, and social reform would all have been foredoomed to a failure and whole edifice would have crumbled to pieces in a moment.

On the contrary, we find that devotion of his followers was such that he was voluntarily acknowledged as dictator of their lives. They braved for him persecutions and danger; they trusted, obeyed and honored him even in the most excruciating torture and severest mental agony caused by excommunication even unto death. Would this have been so, had they noticed the slightest backsliding in their master?

Read the history of the early converts to Islam, and every heart would melt at the sight of the brutal treatment of innocent Muslim men and women. Sumayya, an innocent women, is cruelly torn into pieces with spears. An example is made of "Yassir whose legs are tied to two camels and the beast were are driven in opposite directions", Khabbab bin Arth is made lie down on the bed of burning coal with the brutal legs of their merciless tyrant on his breast so that he may not move and this makes even the fat beneath his skin melt.

"Khabban bin Adi is put to death in a cruel manner by mutilation and cutting off his flesh piece-meal." In the midst of his tortures, being asked weather he did not wish Mohammad in his place while he was in his house with his family, the sufferer cried out that he was gladly prepared to sacrifice himself his family and children and why was it that these sons and daughters of Islam not only surrendered to their prophet their allegiance but also made a gift of their hearts and souls to their master?

Is not the intense faith and conviction on part of immediate followers of Mohammad, the noblest testimony to his sincerity and to his utter self-absorption in his appointed task? And these men were not of low station or inferior mental caliber. Around him in quite early days, gathered what was best and noblest in Mecca, its flower and cream, men of position, rank, wealth and culture, and from his own kith and kin, those who knew all about his life. All the first four Caliphs, with their towering personalities, were converts of this period. The Encyclopedia Brittanica says that "Mohammad is the most successful of all Prophets and religious personalities".

But the success was not the result of mere accident. It was not a hit of fortune. It was a recognition of fact that he was found to be true metal by his

contemporaries. It was the result of his admirable and all compelling personality. The personality of Mohammad! It is most difficult to get into the truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes.

There is Mohammad the Prophet, there is Mohammad the General; Mohammad the King; Mohammad the Warrior; Mohammad the Businessman; Mohammad the Preacher; Mohammad the Philosopher; Mohammad the Statesman; Mohammad the Orator; Mohammad the reformer; Mohammad the Refuge of orphans; Mohammad the Protector of slaves; Mohammad the Emancipator of women; Mohammad the Law-giver; Mohammad the Judge; Mohammad the Saint. And in all these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is like, a hero.. Orphanhood is extreme of helplessness and his life upon this earth began with it; Kingship is the height of the material power and it ended with it.

From an orphan boy to a persecuted refugee and then to an overlord, spiritual as well as temporal, of a whole nation and Arbiter of its destinies, with all its trials and temptations, with all its vicissitudes and changes, its lights and shades, its up and downs, its terror and splendor, he has stood the fire of the world and came out unscathed to serve as a model in every face of life. His achievements are not limited to one aspect of life,

but cover the whole field of human conditions. If for instance, greatness consist in the purification of a nation, steeped in barbarism and immersed in absolute moral darkness, that dynamic personality who has transformed, refined and uplifted an entire nation, sunk low as the Arabs were, and made them the torch-bearer of civilization and learning, has every claim to greatness.

If greatness lies in unifying the discordant elements of society by ties of brotherhood and charity, the prophet of the desert has got every title to this distinction. If greatness consists in reforming those warped in degrading and blind superstition and pernicious practices of every kind, the prophet of Islam has wiped out superstitions and irrational fear from the hearts of millions.

If it lies in displaying high morals, Mohammad has been admitted by friend and foe as Al Amin, or the faithful. If a conqueror is a great man, here is a person who rose from helpless orphan and an humble creature to be the ruler of Arabia, the equal to Chosroes and Caesars, one who founded great empire that has survived all these 14 centuries. If the devotion that a leader commands is the criterion of greatness, the prophet's name even today exerts a magic charm over millions of souls, spread all over the world. He had not studied philosophy in the school of Athens or Rome, Persia, India, or China. Yet, He could proclaim the highest truths of eternal value to mankind. Illiterate himself, he could yet speak with an eloquence and fervor which moved men to tears, to tears of ecstasy. Born an orphan blessed with no worldly goods, he was loved by all.

He had studied at no military academy; yet he could organize his forces against tremendous odds and gained victories through the moral forces which he marshaled. Gifted men with genius for preaching are rare. Descartes included the perfect preacher among the rarest kind in the world.

Hitler in his Mein Kamp has expressed a similar view. He says "A great theorist is seldom a great leader. An Agitator is more likely to possess these qualities. He will always be a great leader. For leadership means ability to move masses of men.

The talents to produce ideas has nothing in common with capacity for leadership." "But", he says, "The Union of theorists, organizer and leader in one man, is the rarest phenomenon on this earth; Therein consists greatness." In the person of the Prophet of Islam the world has seen this rarest phenomenon walking on the earth, walking in flesh and blood. And more wonderful still is what the reverend Bosworth Smith remarks, "Head of the state as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but, he was pope without the pope's claims,

and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without an standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue. If ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by a right divine It was Mohammad, for he had all the power without instruments and without its support.

He cared not for dressing of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life." After the fall of Mecca, more than one million square miles of land lay at his feet, Lord of Arabia, he mended his own shoes and coarse woolen garments, milked the goats, swept the hearth, kindled the fire and attended the other menial offices of the family.

The entire town of Medina where he lived grew wealthy in the later days of his life. Everywhere there was gold and silver in plenty and yet in those days of prosperity many weeks would elapse without a fire being kindled in the hearth of the king of Arabia, His food being dates and water. His family would go hungry many nights successively because they could not get anything to eat in the evening. He slept on no soften bed but on a palm mat, after a long busy day to spend most of his night in prayer, often bursting with tears before his creator to grant him strength to discharge his duties.

As the reports go, his voice would get choked with weeping and it would appear as if a cooking pot was on fire and boiling had commenced. On the very day of his death his only assets were few coins a part of which went to satisfy a debt and rest was given to a needy person who came to his house for charity. The clothes in which he breathed his last had many patches. The house from where light had spread to the world was in darkness because there was no oil in the lamp. Circumstances changed, but the prophet of God did not. In victory or in defeat, in power or in adversity, in affluence or in indigence, he is the same man, disclosed the same character.

Like all the ways and laws of God, Prophets of God are unchangeable. An honest man, as the saying goes, is the noblest work of God, Mohammad was more than honest. He was human to the marrow of his bones. Human sympathy, human love was the music of his soul. To serve man, to elevate man, to purify man, to educate man, in a word to humanize man-this was the object of his mission, the be-all and end all of his life. In thought, in word, in action he had the good of humanity as his sole inspiration, his sole guiding principle. He was most unostentatious and selfless to the core. What were the titles he assumed? Only true servant of God and His Messenger.

Servant first, and then a messenger. A Messenger and prophet like many other prophets in every part of the world, some known to you, many not known you. If one does not believe in any of these truths one ceases to be a Muslim. It is an article of faith. "Looking at the circumstances of the time and unbounded reverence of his followers" says a western writer "the most miraculous thing about Mohammad is, that he never claimed the power of working miracles."

Miracles were performed but not to propagate his faith and were attributed entirely to God and his inscrutable ways. He would plainly say that he was a man like others. He had no treasures of earth or heaven. Nor did he claim to know the secrets of that lie in womb of future. All this was in an age when miracles were supposed to be ordinary occurrences, at the back and call of the commonest saint, when the whole atmosphere was surcharged with supernaturalism in Arabia and outside Arabia.

He turned the attention of his followers towards the study of nature and its laws, to understand them and appreciate the Glory of God. The Quran says, "God did not create the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in play. He did not create them all but with the truth. But most men do not know." The world is not illusion, nor without purpose.

It has been created with the truth. The number of verses inviting close observation of nature are several times more than those that relate to prayer, fasting, pilgrimage etc. all put together. The Muslim under its influence began to observe nature closely and this give birth to the scientific spirit of the observation and experiment which was unknown to the Greeks. While the Muslim Botanist Ibn Baitar wrote on Botany after collecting plants from all parts of the world, described by Myer in his *Gesch.*

der Botanikaa-s, a monument of industry, while Al Byruni traveled for forty years to collect mineralogical specimens, and Muslim Astronomers made some observations extending even over twelve years. Aristotle wrote on Physics without performing a single experiment, wrote on natural history, carelessly stating without taking the trouble to ascertain the most verifiable fact that men have more teeth than animal. Galen, the greatest authority on classical anatomy informed that the lower jaw consists of two bones, a statement which is accepted unchallenged for centuries till Abdul Lateef takes the trouble to examine a human skeleton.

After enumerating several such instances, Robert Priffault concludes in his well known book *The making of humanity*, "The debt of our science to the Arabs does not consist in starting discovers or revolutionary theories. Science owes a great more to Arabs culture; it owes is existence." The same writer says "The Greeks systematized, generalized and theorized but patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation, experimental inquiry, were altogether alien to Greek temperament. What we call science arose in Europe as result of new methods of investigation, of the method of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of Mathematics in form unknown to the Greeks.

That spirit and these methods, concludes the same author, were introduced into the European world by Arabs." It is the same practical character of the teaching of Prophet Mohammad that gave birth to the scientific spirit, that has also sanctified the daily labors and the so called mundane affairs. The Quran says that God has created man to worship him but the word worship has a connotation of its own. Gods worship is not confined to prayer alone, but every act that is done with the purpose of winning approval of God and is for the benefit of the humanity comes under its purview. Islam sanctifies life and all its pursuits provided they are performed with honesty, justice and pure intents.

It obliterates the age-long distinction between the sacred and profane. The Quran says if you eat clean things and thank God for it, it is an act of worship. It is saying of the prophet of Islam that Morsel of food that one places in the mouth of his wife is an act of virtue to be rewarded by God. Another tradition of the Prophet says "He who is satisfying the desire of his heart will be rewarded by God provided the methods adopted are permissible." A person was listening to him exclaimed 'O Prophet of God, he is answering the calls of passions, is only satisfying the craving of his heart.

Forthwith came the reply, "Had he adopted an awful method for the satisfaction of his urge, he would have been punished; then why should he not be rewarded for following the right course." This new conception of religion that it should also devote itself to the betterment of this life rather than concern itself exclusively with super mundane affairs, has led to a new orientation of moral values. Its abiding influence on the common relations of mankind in the affairs of every day life, its deep power over the masses,

its regulation of their conception of rights and duty, its suitability and adaptability to the ignorant savage and the wise philosopher are characteristic features of the teaching of the Prophet of Islam. But it should be most carefully born in mind this stress on good actions is not the sacrifice correctness of faith. While there are various school of thought, one praising faith at the expense of deeds, another exhausting various acts to the detriment of correct belief, Islam is based on correct faith and righteous actions. Means are important as the end and ends are as important as the means. It is an organic Unity. Together they live and thrive. Separate them and both decay and die. In Islam faith can not be divorced from the action. Right knowledge should be transferred into right action to produce the right results.

How often the words came in Quran -- Those who believe and do good thing, they alone shall enter paradise. Again and again, not less than fifty times these words are repeated as if too much stress can not be laid on them. Contemplation is encouraged but mere contemplation is not the goal. Those who believe and do nothing can not exist in Islam. These who believe and do wrong are inconceivable.

Divine law is the law of effort and not of ideals. It chalks out for the men the path of eternal progress from knowledge to action and from action to satisfaction. But what is the correct faith from which right action

spontaneously proceeds resulting in complete satisfaction. Here the central doctrine of Islam is the Unity of God.

There is no God but God is the pivot from which hangs the whole teaching and practice of Islam. He is unique not only as regards his divine being but also as regards his divine attributes. As regards the attributes of God, Islam adopts here as in other things too, the law of golden mean. It avoids on the one hand, the view of God which divests the divine being of every attribute and rejects, on the other, the view which likens him to things material.

The Quran says, On the one hand, there is nothing which is like him, on the other , it affirms that he is Seeing, Hearing, Knowing. He is the King who is without a stain of fault or deficiency, the mighty ship of His power floats upon the ocean of justice and equity. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is the Guardian over all. Islam does not stop with this positive statement. It adds further which is its most special characteristic, the negative aspects of problem.

There is also no one else who is guardian over everything. He is the meander of every breakage, and no one else is the meander of any breakage. He is the restorer of every loss and no one else is the restorer of any loss what-so-ever. There is no God but one God, above any need, the maker of bodies, creator of souls, the Lord of the day of judgment, and in short, in the words of Quran, to him belong all excellent qualities. Regarding the position of man in relation to the Universe, the Quran says: "God has made subservient to you whatever is on the earth or in universe. You are destined to rule over the Universe."

But in relation to God, the Quran says: "O man God has bestowed on you excellent faculties and has created life and death to put you to test in order to see whose actions are good and who has deviated from the right path." In spite of free will which he enjoys, to some extent, every man is born under certain circumstances and continues to live under certain circumstances beyond his control. With regard to this God says, according to Islam, it is my will to create any man under condition that seem best to me.

cosmic plans finite mortals can not fully comprehend. But I will certainly test you in prosperity as well in adversity, in health as well as in sickness, in heights as well as in depths. My ways of testing differ from man to man, from hour to hour. In adversity do not despair and do resort to unlawful means. It is but a passing phase. In prosperity do not forget God. God-gifts are given only as trusts.

You are always on trial, every moment on test. In this sphere of life there is not to reason why, there is but to do and die. If you live in accordance with God; and if you die, die in the path of God. You may call it fatalism. but this type of fatalism is a condition of vigorous increasing effort, keeping you ever on the alert. Do not consider this temporal life on earth as the end of human existence. There is a life after death and it is eternal. Life after death is only a connection link, a door that opens up hidden reality of life.

Every action in life however insignificant, produces a lasting effect. It is correctly recorded somehow. Some of the ways of God are known to you, but many of his ways are hidden from you. What is hidden in you and from

you in this world will be unrolled and laid open before you in the next. the virtuous will enjoy the blessing of God which the eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has it entered into the hearts of men to conceive of they will march onward reaching higher and higher stages of evolution.

Those who have wasted opportunity in this life shall under the inevitable law, which makes every man taste of what he has done, be subjugated to a course of treatment of the spiritual diseases which they have brought about with their own hands. Beware, it is terrible ordeal. Bodily pain is torture, you can bear somehow. Spiritual pain is hell, you will find it almost unbearable.

Fight in this life itself the tendencies of the spirit prone to evil, tempting to lead you into iniquities ways. Reach the next stage when the self-accusing spirit in your conscience is awakened and the soul is anxious to attain moral excellence and revolt against disobedience. This will lead you to the final stage of the soul at rest, contented with God, finding its happiness and delight in him alone. The soul no more stumbles. The stage of struggle passes away.

Truth is victorious and falsehood lays down its arms. All complexes will then be resolved. Your house will not be divided against itself. Your personality will get integrated round the central core of submission to the will of God and complete surrender to his divine purpose. All hidden energies will then be released. The soul then will have peace.

God will then address you: "O thou soul that art at rest, and restand fully contented with thy Lord return to thy Lord. He pleased with thee and thou pleased with him; So enter among my servants and enter into my paradise." This is the final goal for man; to become, on the one hand, the master of the universe and on the other, to see that his soul finds rest in his Lord, that not only his Lord will be pleased with him but that he is also pleased with his Lord. Contentment, complete contentment, satisfaction, complete satisfaction, peace, complete peace. The love of God is his food at this stage and he drinks deep at the fountain of life.

Sorrow and defeat do not overwhelm him and success does not find him in vain and exulting. The western nations are only trying to become the master of the Universe. But their souls have not found peace and rest. Thomas Carlyle, struck by this philosophy of life writes "and then also Islam-that we must submit to God; that our whole strength lies in resigned submission to Him, whatsoever he does to us, the thing he sends to us, even if death and worse than death, shall be good, shall be best; we resign ourselves to God."

The same author continues "If this be Islam, says Goethe, do we not all live in Islam?" Carlyle himself answers this question of Goethe and says "Yes, all of us that have any moral life, we all live so. This is yet the highest wisdom that heaven has revealed to our earth." Azmat N. Khan

What is said about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

III&E Brochure Series; No. 12(published by The Institute of Islamic Information and Education (III&E)) In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful During the centuries of the crusades, all sorts of slanders were invented against Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). But with the birth of the modern age, marked with religious tolerance and freedom of thought, there has been a great change in the approach of Western authors in their delineation of his life and character.

The views of some non-Muslim scholars regarding Prophet Muhammad, given at the end, justify this opinion. But the West has still to go a step forward to discover the greatest reality about Muhammad and that is his being the true and the last Prophet of God for the whole humanity. In spite of all its objectivity and enlightenment there has been no sincere and objective attempt by the West to understand the Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh). It is so strange that very glowing tributes are paid to him for his integrity and achievement but his claim of being the Prophet of God has been rejected explicitly or implicitly. It is here that a searching of the heart is required, and a review of the so-called objectivity is needed.

The following glaring facts from the life of Muhammad (pbuh) have been furnished to facilitate an unbiased, logical and objective decision regarding his Prophethood. Up to the age of forty, Muhammad was not known as a statesman, a preacher or an orator. He was never seen discussing the principles of metaphysics, ethics, law, politics, economics or sociology. No doubt he possessed an excellent character, charming manners and was highly cultured. Yet there was nothing so deeply striking and so radically extraordinary in him that would make men expect something great and revolutionary from him in the future.

But when he came out of the Cave (HIRA) with a new message, he was completely transformed. Is it possible for such a person of the above qualities to turn all of a sudden into 'an impostor' and claim to be the Prophet of Allah and invite all the rage of his people? One might ask: for what reason did he suffer all those hardships? His people offered to accept him as their King and he would leave the preaching of his religion. But he chose to refuse their tempting offers and go on preaching his religion single-handedly in face of all kinds of insults, social boycott and even physical assault by his own people.

Was it not only God's support and his firm will to disseminate the message of Allah and his deep-rooted belief that ultimately Islam would emerge as the only way of life for humanity, that he stood like a mountain in the face of all opposition and conspiracies to eliminate him? Furthermore, had he come with a design of rivalry with the Christians and the Jews, why should he have made belief in Jesus Christ and Moses and other Prophets of God (peace be upon them), a basic requirement of faith without which no one could be a Muslim?

Is it not an incontrovertible proof of his Prophethood that in spite of being unlettered and having led a very normal and quiet life for forty years, when he began preaching his message, all of Arabia stood in awe and wonder and was bewitched by his wonderful eloquence and oratory? It was

so matchless that the whole legion of Arab poets, preachers and orators of the highest calibre failed to bring forth its equivalent. And above all, how could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature contained in the Qur'an that no other human being could possibly have developed at that time? Last but not least, why did he lead a hard life even after gaining power and authority?

Just ponder over the words he uttered while dying: "We the community of the Prophets are not inherited. Whatever we leave is for charity." As a matter of fact, Muhammad (pbuh) is the last link of the chain of Prophets sent in different lands and times since the very beginning of the human life on this planet. Read the following writings of the Western authors: "If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes.

This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls. . . his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death;

all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was twofold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with words. "Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?"

Lamartine, HISTOIRE DE LA TURQUIE, Paris, 1854, Vol. II, pp. 276-277. "It is not the propagation but the permanency of his religion that deserves our wonder, the same pure and perfect impression which he engraved at Mecca and Medina is preserved, after the revolutions of twelve centuries by the Indian, the African and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran. . . The Mahometans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith an devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man.

'I believe in One God and Mahomet the Apostle of God' is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion." Edward Gibbon and Simon Ockley, HISTORY OF THE SARACEN EMPIRE, London, 1870, p. 54. "He was Caesar and Pope in

one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Caesar without the legions of Caesar: without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue; if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammed, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports."

Bosworth Smith, MOHAMMAD AND MOHAMMADANISM, London, 1874, p. 92. "It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher." Annie Besant, THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF MUHAMMAD, Madras, 1932, p. 4. "His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity.

To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad." W. Montgomery Watt, MOHAMMAD AT MECCA, Oxford, 1953, p. 52. "Muhammad, the inspired man who founded Islam, was born about A.D. 570 into an Arabian tribe that worshipped idols. Orphaned at birth, he was always particularly solicitous of the poor and needy, the widow and the orphan, the slave and the downtrodden. At twenty, he was already a successful businessman, and soon became director of camel caravans for a wealthy widow. When he reached twenty-five, his employer, recognizing his merit, proposed marriage.

Even though she was fifteen years older, he married her, and as long as she lived, remained a devoted husband. "Like almost every major prophet before him, Muhammad fought shy of serving as the transmitter of God's word, sensing his own inadequacy. But the angel commanded "Read." So far as we know, Muhammad was unable to read or write, but he began to dictate those inspired words which would soon revolutionize a large segment of the earth: "There is one God." "In all things Muhammad was profoundly practical.

When his beloved son Ibrahim died, an eclipse occurred, and rumours of God's personal condolence quickly arose. Whereupon Muhammad is said to have announced, "An eclipse is a phenomenon of nature. It is foolish to attribute such things to the death or birth of a human being." "At Muhammad's own death an attempt was made to deify him, but the man who was to become his administrative successor killed the hysteria with one of the noblest speeches in religious history: "If there are any among you who worshipped Muhammad, he is dead. But if it is God you worshipped, He lives forever." James A. Michener, "ISLAM: THE MISUNDERSTOOD RELIGION," in READER'S DIGEST (American edition), May 1955, pp. 68-70.

"My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he

was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular level."

Michael H. Hart, THE 100: A RANKING OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSONS IN HISTORY, New York: Hart Publishing Company, Inc., 1978, p. 33. INTRODUCTION OF III&EM The Institute of Islamic Information and Education (III&E) is dedicated to the cause of Islam in North America through striving to elevate the image of Islam and Muslims by providing the correct information about Islamic beliefs, history and civilization from the authentic sources. Enquiries are welcome. For more information please contact: The Institute of Islamic Information and Education P.O. Box 41129 Chicago, IL 60641-0129 U.S.A. Reprinted with the permission of World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), P.O. Box 10845, Riyadh 11443, Saudi Arabia.

The Prophet of Islam - His Biography

[Taken from Introduction to Islam by Muhammad Hamidullah (Centre Culturel Islamique, Paris, 1969), with some changes to make it more readable. The changes are marked by pairs of brackets like around this paragraph. Dr. Hamidullah's present address is: 9 Beaver Court, Wilkes Barre PA, 18702, USA.] IN the annals of men, individuals have not been lacking who conspicuously devoted their lives to the socio-religious reform of their connected peoples. We find them in every epoch and in all lands. In India, there lived those who transmitted to the world the Vedas, and there was also the great Gautama Buddha; China had its Confucius; the Avesta was produced in Iran.

Babylonia gave to the world one of the greatest reformers, the Prophet Abraham (not to speak of such of his ancestors as Enoch and Noah about whom we have very scanty information). The Jewish people may rightly be proud of a long series of reformers: Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, and Jesus among others. 2. Two points are to note: Firstly these reformers claimed in general to be the bearers each of a Divine mission, and they left behind them sacred books incorporating codes of life for the guidance of their peoples.

Secondly there followed fratricidal wars, and massacres and genocides became the order of the day, causing more or less a complete loss of these Divine messages. As to the books of Abraham, we know them only by the name; and as for the books of Moses, records tell us how they were repeatedly destroyed and only partly restored. Concept of God 3. If one should judge from the relics of the past already brought to light of the homo sapiens, one finds that man has always been conscious of the existence of a Supreme Being, the Master and Creator of all. Methods and approaches may have differed, but the people of every epoch have left proofs of their attempts to obey God.

Communication with the Omnipresent yet invisible God has also been recognised as possible in connection with a small fraction of men with noble and exalted spirits. Whether this communication assumed the nature of an incarnation of the Divinity or simply resolved itself into a medium of reception of Divine messages (through inspiration or revelation), the purpose in each case was the guidance of the people. It was but natural that the interpretations and explanations of certain systems should have proved more vital and convincing than others.

3/a. Every system of metaphysical thought develops its own terminology. In the course of time terms acquire a significance hardly contained in the word and translations fall short of their purpose. Yet there is no other method to make people of one group understand the thoughts of another. Non-Muslim readers in particular are requested to bear in mind this aspect which is a real yet unavoidable handicap.

4. By the end of the 6th century, after the birth of Jesus Christ, men had already made great progress in diverse walks of life. At that time there were some religions which openly proclaimed that they were reserved for definite races and groups of men only, of course they bore no remedy for the ills of humanity at large.

There were also a few which claimed universality, but declared that the salvation of man lay in the renunciation of the world. These were the religions for the elite, and catered for an extremely limited number of men. We need not speak of regions where there existed no religion at all, where atheism and materialism reigned supreme, where the thought was solely of occupying one self with one's own pleasures, without any regard or consideration for the rights of others. Arabia

5. A perusal of the map of the major hemisphere (from the point of view of the proportion of land to sea), shows the Arabian Peninsula lying at the confluence of the three great continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. At the time in question. this extensive Arabian subcontinent composed mostly of desert areas was inhabited by people of settled habitations as well as nomads. Often it was found that members of the same tribe were divided into these two groups, and that they preserved a relationship although following different modes of life.

The means of subsistence in Arabia were meagre. The desert had its handicaps, and trade caravans were features of greater importance than either agriculture or industry. This entailed much travel, and men had to proceed beyond the peninsula to Syria, Egypt, Abyssinia, Iraq, Sind, India and other lands.

6. We do not know much about the Libyanites of Central Arabia, but Yemen was rightly called Arabia Felix. Having once been the seat of the flourishing civilizations of Sheba and Ma'in even before the foundation of the city of Rome had been laid, and having later snatched from the Byzantians and Persians several provinces, greater Yemen which had passed through the hey-day of its existence, was however at this time broken up into innumerable principalities, and even occupied in part by foreign invaders. The Sassanians of Iran, who had penetrated into Yemen had already obtained possession of Eastern Arabia.

There was politico-social chaos at the capital (Mada'in = Ctesiphon), and this found reflection in all her territories. Northern Arabia had succumbed to Byzantine influences, and was faced with its own particular problems. Only Central Arabia remained immune from the demoralising effects of foreign occupation.

7. In this limited area of Central Arabia, the existence of the triangle of Mecca-Ta'if-Madinah seemed something providential. Mecca, deserts, deprived of water and the amenities of agriculture in physical features represented Africa and the burning Sahara. Scarcely fifty miles from there, Ta'if presented a picture of Europe and its frost. Madinah in the North was not less fertile than even the most temperate of Asiatic countries like Syria.

If climate has any influence on human character, this triangle standing in the middle of the major hemisphere was, more than any other region of the earth, a miniature reproduction of the entire world. And here was born a descendant of the Babylonian Abraham, and the Egyptian Hagar, Muhammad the Prophet of Islam, a Meccan by origin and yet with stock related, both to Madinah and Ta'if. Religion 8. From the point of view of religion, Arabia was idolatrous; only a few individuals had embraced religions like Christianity, Mazdaism, etc. The Meccans did possess the

notion of the One God, but they believed also that idols had the power to intercede with Him. Curiously enough, they did not believe in the Resurrection and Afterlife.

They had preserved the rite of the pilgrimage to the House of the One God, the Ka'bah, an institution set up under divine inspiration by their ancestor Abraham, yet the two thousand years that separated them from Abraham had caused to degenerate this pilgrimage into the spectacle of a commercial fair and an occasion of senseless idolatry which far from producing any good, only served to ruin their individual behaviour, both social and spiritual. Society

9. In spite of the comparative poverty in natural resources, Mecca was the most developed of the three points of the triangle. Of the three, Mecca alone had a city-state, governed by a council of ten hereditary chiefs who enjoyed a clear division of power. (There was a minister of foreign relations, a minister guardian of the temple, a minister of oracles, a minister guardian of offerings to the temple, one to determine the torts and the damages payable, another in charge of the municipal council or parliament to enforce the decisions of the ministries. There were also ministers in charge of military affairs like custodianship of the flag, leadership of the cavalry etc.).

As well reputed caravan-leaders, the Meccans were able to obtain permission from neighbouring empires like Iran, Byzantium and Abyssinia - and to enter into agreements with the tribes that lined the routes traversed by the caravans - to visit their countries and transact import and export business. They also provided escorts to foreigners when they passed through their country as well as the territory of allied tribes, in Arabia (cf. Ibn Habib, Muhabbar). Although not interested much in the preservation of ideas and records in writing, they passionately cultivated arts and letters like poetry, oratory discourses and folk tales.

Women were generally well treated, they enjoyed the privilege of possessing property in their own right, they gave their consent to marriage contracts, in which they could even add the condition of reserving their right to divorce their husbands. They could remarry when widowed or divorced. Burying girls alive did exist in certain classes, but that was rare. Birth of the Prophet 10. It was in the midst of such conditions and environments that Muhammad was born in 569 after Christ.

His father, 'Abdullah had died some weeks earlier, and it was his grandfather who took him in charge. According to the prevailing custom, the child was entrusted to a Bedouin foster-mother, with whom he passed several years in the desert. All biographers state that the infant prophet sucked only one breast of his foster-mother, leaving the other for the sustenance of his foster-brother. When the child was brought back home, his mother, Aminah, took him to his maternal uncles at Madinah to visit the tomb of 'Abdullah.

During the return journey, he lost his mother who died a sudden death. At Mecca, another bereavement awaited him, in the death of his affectionate grandfather. Subjected to such privations, he was at the age of eight, consigned at last to the care of his uncle, Abu-Talib, a man who was

generous of nature but always short of resources and hardly able to provide for his family.

11. Young Muhammad had therefore to start immediately to earn his livelihood; he served as a shepherd boy to some neighbours. At the age of ten he accompanied his uncle to Syria when he was leading a caravan there. No other travels of Abu-Talib are mentioned, but there are references to his having set up a shop in Mecca. (Ibn Qutaibah, Ma'arif).

It is possible that Muhammad helped him in this enterprise also. 12. By the time he was twenty-five, Muhammad had become well known in the city for the integrity of his disposition and the honesty of his character. A rich widow, Khadijah, took him in her employ and consigned to him her goods to be taken for sale to Syria.

Delighted with the unusual profits she obtained as also by the personal charms of her agent, she offered him her hand. According to divergent reports, she was either 28 or 40 years of age at that time, (medical reasons prefer the age of 28 since she gave birth to five more children). The union proved happy. Later, we see him sometimes in the fair of Hubashah (Yemen), and at least once in the country of the 'Abd al-Qais (Bahrain-Oman), as mentioned by Ibn Hanbal.

There is every reason to believe that this refers to the great fair of Daba (Oman), where, according to Ibn al-Kalbi (cf. Ibn Habib, Muhabbar), the traders of China, of Hind and Sind (India, Pakistan), of Persia, of the East and the West assembled every year, travelling both by land and sea. There is also mention of a commercial partner of Muhammad at Mecca.

This person, Sa'ib by name reports: "We relayed each other; if Muhammad led the caravan, he did not enter his house on his return to Mecca without clearing accounts with me; and if I led the caravan, he would on my return enquire about my welfare and speak nothing about his own capital entrusted to me."

An Order of Chivalry 13. Foreign traders often brought their goods to Mecca for sale. One day a certain Yemenite (of the tribe of Zubaid) improvised a satirical poem against some Meccans who had refused to pay him the price of what he had sold, and others who had not supported his claim or had failed to come to his help when he was victimised. Zuhair, uncle and chief of the tribe of the Prophet, felt great remorse on hearing this just satire. He called for a meeting of certain chieftains in the city, and organized an order of chivalry, called Hilf al-fudul, with the aim and object of aiding the oppressed in Mecca, irrespective of their being dwellers of the city or aliens. Young Muhammad became an enthusiastic member of the organisation.

Supplement 10

Later in life he used to say: "I have participated in it, and I am not prepared to give up that privilege even against a herd of camels; if somebody should appeal to me even today, by virtue of that pledge, I shall hurry to his help." Beginning of Religious Consciousness 14. Not much is known about the religious practices of Muhammad until he was thirty-five years old, except that he had never worshipped idols. This is substantiated by all his biographers.

It may be stated that there were a few others in Mecca, who had likewise revolted against the senseless practice of paganism, although conserving their fidelity to the Ka'bah as the house dedicated to the One God by its builder Abraham. 15. About the year 605 of the Christian era, the draperies on the outer wall of the Ka'bah took fire.

The building was affected and could not bear the brunt of the torrential rains that followed. The reconstruction of the Ka'bah was thereupon undertaken. Each citizen contributed according to his means; and only the gifts of honest gains were accepted. Everybody participated in the work of construction, and Muhammad's shoulders were injured in the course of transporting stones. To identify the place whence the ritual of circumambulation began, there had been set a black stone in the wall of the Ka'bah. dating probably from the time of Abraham himself.

There was rivalry among the citizens for obtaining the honour of transposing this stone in its place. When there was danger of blood being shed, somebody suggested leaving the matter to Providence, and accepting the arbitration of him who should happen to arrive there first. It chanced that Muhammad just then turned up there for work as usual. He was popularly known by the appellation of al-Amin (the honest), and everyone accepted his arbitration without hesitation. Muhammad placed a sheet of cloth on the ground, put the stone on it and asked the chiefs of all the tribes in the city to lift together the cloth.

Then he himself placed the stone in its proper place, in one of the angles of the building, and everybody was satisfied. 16. It is from this moment that we find Muhammad becoming more and more absorbed in spiritual meditations. Like his grandfather, he used to retire during the whole month of Ramadan to a cave in Jabal-an-Nur (mountain of light). The cave is called Ghar-i-Hira' or the cave of research. There he prayed, meditated, and shared his meagre provisions with the travellers who happened to pass by. Revelation 17. He was forty years old, and it was the fifth consecutive year since his annual retreats, when one night towards the end of the month of Ramadan, an angel came to visit him, and announced that God had chosen him as His messenger to all mankind.

The angel taught him the mode of ablutions, the way of worshipping God and the conduct of prayer. He communicated to him the following Divine message: With the name of God, the Most Merciful, the All-Merciful. Read: with the name of thy Lord Who created, Created man from what clings, Read: and thy Lord is the Most Bounteous, Who taught by the pen, Taught man what he knew not. (Quran 96:1-5) 18.

Deeply affected, he returned home and related to his wife what had happened, expressing his fears that it might have been something diabolic or the action of evil spirits. She consoled him, saying that he had always been a man of charity and generosity, helping the poor, the orphans, the widows and the needy, and assured him that God would protect him against all evil. 19.

Then came a pause in revelation, extending over three years. The Prophet must have felt at first a shock, then a calm, an ardent desire, and after a period of waiting, a growing impatience or nostalgia. The news of the first vision had spread and at the pause the sceptics in the city had begun to mock at him and cut bitter jokes. They went so far as to say that God had forsaken him. 20.

During the three years of waiting, the Prophet had given himself up more and more to prayers and to spiritual practices. The revelations were then resumed and God assured him that He had not at all forsaken him: on the contrary it was He Who had guided him to the right path: therefore he should take care of the orphans and the destitute, and proclaim the bounty of God on him (cf. Q. 93:3-11). This was in reality an order to preach. Another revelation directed him to warn people against evil practices, to exhort them to worship none but the One God, and to abandon everything that would displease God (Q. 74:2-7).

Yet another revelation commanded him to warn his own near relatives (Q. 26:214); and: "Proclaim openly that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the Associators (idolaters). Lo! we defend thee from the scoffers" (15:94-5). According to Ibn Ishaq, the first revelation (n. 17) had come to the Prophet during his sleep, evidently to reduce the shock. Later revelations came in full wakefulness. The Mission 21. The Prophet began by preaching his mission secretly first among his intimate friends, then among the members of his own tribe and thereafter publicly in the city and suburbs.

He insisted on the belief in One Transcendent God, in Resurrection and the Last Judgement. He invited men to charity and beneficence. He took necessary steps to preserve through writing the revelations he was receiving, and ordered his adherents also to learn them by heart. This continued all through his life, since the Quran was not revealed all at once, but in fragments as occasions arose. 22.

The number of his adherents increased gradually, but with the denunciation of paganism, the opposition also grew intenser on the part of those who were firmly attached to their ancestral beliefs. This opposition degenerated in the course of time into physical torture of the Prophet and of those who had embraced his religion. These were stretched on burning sands, cauterized with red hot iron and imprisoned with chains on their feet. Some of them died of the effects of torture, but none would renounce his religion. In despair, the Prophet Muhammad advised his companions to quit their native town and take refuge abroad, in Abyssinia, "where governs a just ruler, in whose realm nobody is oppressed" (Ibn Hisham).

Dozens of Muslims profited by his advice, though not all. These secret flights led to further persecution of those who remained behind. 23. The Prophet Muhammad [was instructed to call this] religion "Islam," i.e.

submission to the will of God. Its distinctive features are two: A harmonious equilibrium between the temporal and the spiritual (the body and the soul), permitting a full enjoyment of all the good that God has created, (Quran 7:32), enjoining at the same time on everybody duties towards God, such as worship, fasting, charity, etc.

Islam was to be the religion of the masses and not merely of the elect. A universality of the call - all the believers becoming brothers and equals without any distinction of class or race or tongue. The only superiority which it recognizes is a personal one, based on the greater fear of God and greater piety (Quran 49:13).

Social Boycott 24. When a large number of the Meccan Muslims migrated to Abyssinia, the leaders of paganism sent an ultimatum to the tribe of the Prophet, demanding that he should be excommunicated and outlawed and delivered to the pagans for being put to death. Every member of the tribe, Muslim and non-Muslim rejected the demand. (cf. Ibn Hisham). Thereupon the city decided on a complete boycott of the tribe: Nobody was to talk to them or have commercial or matrimonial relations with them.

The group of Arab tribes called Ahabish, inhabiting the suburbs, who were allies of the Meccans, also joined in the boycott, causing stark misery among the innocent victims consisting of children, men and women, the old and the sick and the feeble. Some of them succumbed yet nobody would hand over the Prophet to his persecutors.

An uncle of the Prophet, Abu Lahab, however left his tribesmen and participated in the boycott along with the pagans. After three dire years, during which the victims were obliged to devour even crushed hides, four or five non-Muslims, more humane than the rest and belonging to different clans proclaimed publicly their denunciation of the unjust boycott. At the same time, the document promulgating the pact of boycott which had been hung in the temple, was found, as Muhammad had predicted, eaten by white ants, that spared nothing but the words God and Muhammad. The boycott was lifted, yet owing to the privations that were undergone the wife and Abu Talib, the chief of the tribe and uncle of the Prophet died soon after.

Another uncle of the Prophet, Abu-Lahab, who was an inveterate enemy of Islam, now succeeded to the headship of the tribe. (cf. Ibn Hisham, Sirah). The Ascension 25. It was at this time that the Prophet Muhammad was granted the mi'raj (ascension): He saw in a vision that he was received on heaven by God, and was witness of the marvels of the celestial regions. Returning, he brought for his community, as a Divine gift, the [ritual prayer of Islam, the salaah], which constitutes a sort of communion between man and God.

It may be recalled that in the last part of Muslim service of worship, the faithful employ as a symbol of their being in the very presence of God, not concrete objects as others do at the time of communion, but the very words of greeting exchanged between the Prophet Muhammad and God on the occasion of the former's mi'raj: "The blessed and pure greetings for God! - Peace be with thee, O Prophet, as well as the mercy and blessing of God! - Peace be with us and with all the [righteous] servants of God!"

The Christian term "communion" implies participation in the Divinity. Finding it pretentious, Muslims use the term "ascension" towards God and reception in His presence, God remaining God and man remaining man and no confusion between the twain. 26. The news of this celestial meeting led to an increase in the hostility of the pagans of Mecca; and the Prophet was obliged to quit his native town in search of an asylum elsewhere. He went to his maternal uncles in Ta'if, but returned immediately to Mecca, as the wicked people of that town chased the Prophet out of their city by pelting stones on him and wounding him.

Migration to Madinah 27. The annual pilgrimage of the Ka'bah brought to Mecca people from all parts of Arabia. The Prophet Muhammad tried to persuade one tribe after another to afford him shelter and allow him to carry on his mission of reform. The contingents of fifteen tribes, whom he approached in succession, refused to do so more or less brutally, but he did not despair. Finally he met half a dozen inhabitants of Madinah who being neighbour of the Jews and the Christians, had some notion of prophets and Divine messages. They knew also that these "people of the Books" were awaiting the arrival of a prophet - a last comforter.

So these Madinans decided not to lose the opportunity of obtaining an advance over others, and forthwith embraced Islam, promising further to provide additional adherents and necessary help from Madinah. The following year a dozen new Madinans took the oath of allegiance to him and requested him to provide with a missionary teacher. The work of the missionary, Mus'ab, proved very successful and he led a contingent of seventy-three new converts to Mecca, at the time of the pilgrimage.

These invited the Prophet and his Meccan companions to migrate to their town, and promised to shelter the Prophet and to treat him and his companions as their own kith and kin. Secretly and in small groups, the greater part of the Muslims emigrated to Madinah. Upon this the pagans of Mecca not only confiscated the property of the evacuees, but devised a plot to assassinate the Prophet. It became now impossible for him to remain at home. It is worthy of mention, that in spite of their hostility to his mission, the pagans had unbounded confidence in his probity, so much so that many of them used to deposit their savings with him.

The Prophet Muhammad now entrusted all these deposits to 'Ali, a cousin of his, with instructions to return in due course to the rightful owners. He then left the town secretly in the company of his faithful friend, Abu-Bakr. After several adventures, they succeeded in reaching Madinah in safety. This happened in 622, whence starts the Hijrah calendar. Reorganization of the Community 28. For the better rehabilitation of the displaced immigrants, the Prophet created a fraternization between them and an equal number of well-to-do Madinans. The families of each pair of the contractual brothers worked together to earn their livelihood, and aided one another in the business of life. 29.

Further he thought that the development of the man as a whole would be better achieved if he co-ordinated religion and politics as two constituent parts of one whole. To this end he invited the representatives of the Muslims as well as the non-Muslim inhabitants of the region: Arabs, Jews, Christians

and others, and suggested the establishment of a City-State in Madinah. With their assent, he endowed the city with a written constitution - the first of its kind in the world - in which he defined the duties and rights both of the citizens and the head of the State - the Prophet Muhammad was unanimously hailed as such - and abolished the customary private justice.

The administration of justice became henceforward the concern of the central organisation of the community of the citizens. The document laid down principles of defence and foreign policy: it organized a system of social insurance, called *ma'aqil*, in cases of too heavy obligations. It recognized that the Prophet Muhammad would have the final word in all differences, and that there was no limit to his power of legislation. It recognized also explicitly liberty of religion, particularly for the Jews, to whom the constitutional act afforded equality with Muslims in all that concerned life in this world (cf. *infra* n. 303). 30.

Muhammad journeyed several times with a view to win the neighbouring tribes and to conclude with them treaties of alliance and mutual help. With their help, he decided to bring to bear economic pressure on the Meccan pagans, who had confiscated the property of the Muslim evacuees and also caused innumerable damage. Obstruction in the way of the Meccan caravans and their passage through the Madinan region exasperated the pagans, and a bloody struggle ensued. 31.

In the concern for the material interests of the community, the spiritual aspect was never neglected. Hardly a year had passed after the migration to Madinah, when the most rigorous of spiritual disciplines, the fasting for the whole month of Ramadan every year, was imposed on every adult Muslim, man and woman. *Struggle Against Intolerance and Unbelief* 32.

Not content with the expulsion of the Muslim compatriots, the Meccans sent an ultimatum to the Madinans, demanding the surrender or at least the expulsion of Muhammad and his companions but evidently all such efforts proved in vain. A few months later, in the year 2 H., they sent a powerful army against the Prophet, who opposed them at Badr; and the pagans thrice as numerous as the Muslims, were routed. After a year of preparation, the Meccans again invaded Madinah to avenge the defeat of Badr.

They were now four times as numerous as the Muslims. After a bloody encounter at Uhud, the enemy retired, the issue being indecisive. The mercenaries in the Meccan army did not want to take too much risk, or endanger their safety. 33. In the meanwhile the Jewish citizens of Madinah began to foment trouble. About the time of the victory of Badr, one of their leaders, Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, proceeded to Mecca to give assurance of his alliance with the pagans, and to incite them to a war of revenge. After the battle of Uhud, the tribe of the same chieftain plotted to assassinate the Prophet by throwing on him a mill-stone from above a tower, when he had gone to visit their locality.

In spite of all this, the only demand the Prophet made of the men of this tribe was to quit the Madinan region, taking with them all their properties, after selling their immovables and recovering their debts from the Muslims. The clemency thus extended had an effect contrary to what was hoped.

The exiled not only contacted the Meccans, but also the tribes of the North, South and East of Madinah, mobilized military aid, and planned from Khaibar an invasion of Madinah, with forces four times more numerous than those employed at Uhud. The Muslims prepared for a siege, and dug a ditch to defend themselves against this hardest of all trials.

Although the defection of the Jews still remaining inside Madinah at a later stage upset all strategy, yet with a sagacious diplomacy, the Prophet succeeded in breaking up the alliance, and the different enemy groups retired one after the other. 34. Alcoholic drinks, gambling and games of chance were at this time declared forbidden for the Muslims. The Reconciliation 35. The Prophet tried once more to reconcile the Meccans and proceeded to Mecca.

The barring of the route of their Northern caravans had ruined their economy. The Prophet promised them transit security, extradition of their fugitives and the fulfillment of every condition they desired, agreeing even to return to Madinah without accomplishing the pilgrimage of the Ka'bah. Thereupon the two contracting parties promised at Hudaibiyah in the suburbs of Mecca, not only the maintenance of peace, but also the observance of neutrality in their conflicts with third parties. 36.

Profiting by the peace, the Prophet launched an intensive programme for the propagation of his religion. He addressed missionary letters to the foreign rulers of Byzantium, Iran, Abyssinia and other lands. The Byzantine autocrat priest - Dughatur of the Arabs - embraced Islam, but for this, was lynched by the Christian mob; the prefect of Ma'an (Palestine) suffered the same fate, and was decapitated and crucified by order of the emperor. A Muslim ambassador was assassinated in Syria-Palestine; and instead of punishing the culprit, the emperor Heraclius rushed with his armies to protect him against the punitive expedition sent by the Prophet (battle of Mu'tah). 37.

The pagans of Mecca hoping to profit by the Muslim difficulties, violated the terms of their treaty. Upon this, the Prophet himself led an army, ten thousand strong, and surprised Mecca which he occupied in a bloodless manner. As a benevolent conqueror, he caused the vanquished people to assemble, reminded them of their ill deeds, their religious persecution, unjust confiscation of the evacuee property, ceaseless invasions and senseless hostilities for twenty years continuously.

He asked them: "Now what do you expect of me?" When everybody lowered his head with shame, the Prophet proclaimed: "May God pardon you; go in peace; there shall be no responsibility on you today; you are free!" He even renounced the claim for the Muslim property confiscated by the pagans. This produced a great psychological change of hearts instantaneously.

When a Meccan chief advanced with a fulsome heart towards the Prophet, after hearing this general amnesty, in order to declare his acceptance of Islam, the Prophet told him: "And in my turn, I appoint you the governor of Mecca!" Without leaving a single soldier in the conquered city, the Prophet retired to Madinah. The Islamization of Mecca, which was accomplished in a few hours, was complete. 38. Immediately after the

occupation of Mecca, the city of Ta'if mobilized to fight against the Prophet. With some difficulty the enemy was dispersed in the valley of Hunain, but the Muslims preferred to raise the siege of nearby Ta'if and use pacific means to break the resistance of this region. Less than a year later, a delegation from Ta'if came to Madinah offering submission.

But it requested exemption from prayer, taxes and military service, and the continuance of the liberty to adultery and fornication and alcoholic drinks. It demanded even the conservation of the temple of the idol al-Lat at Ta'if. But Islam was not a materialist immoral movement; and soon the delegation itself felt ashamed of its demands regarding prayer, adultery and wine. The Prophet consented to concede exemption from payment of taxes and rendering of military service; and added: You need not demolish the temple with your own hands: we shall send agents from here to do the job, and if there should be any consequences, which you are afraid of on account of your superstitions,

it will be they who would suffer. This act of the Prophet shows what concessions could be given to new converts. The conversion of the Ta'ifites was so whole hearted that in a short while, they themselves renounced the contracted exemptions, and we find the Prophet nominating a tax collector in their locality as in other Islamic regions. 39. In all these "wars," extending over a period of ten years, the non-Muslims lost on the battlefield only about 250 persons killed, and the Muslim losses were even less.

With these few incisions, the whole continent of Arabia. with its million and more of square miles, was cured of the abscess of anarchy and immorality. During these ten years of disinterested struggle, all the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula and the southern regions of Iraq and Palestine had voluntarily embraced Islam. Some Christian, Jewish and Parsi groups remained attached to their creeds, and they were granted liberty of conscience as well as judicial and juridical autonomy.

40. In the year 10 H., when the Prophet went to Mecca for Hajj (pilgrimage), he met 140,000 Muslims there, who had come from different parts of Arabia to fulfil their religious obligation. He addressed to them his celebrated sermon, in which he gave a resume of his teachings: "Belief in One God without images or symbols, equality of all the Believers without distinction of race or class, the superiority of individuals being based solely on piety; sanctity of life, property and honour; abolition of interest, and of vendettas and private justice; better treatment of women; obligatory inheritance and distribution of the property of deceased persons among near relatives of both sexes, and removal of the possibility of the cumulation of wealth in the hands of the few."

The Quran and the conduct of the Prophet were to serve as the bases of law and a healthy criterion in every aspect of human life. 41. On his return to Madinah, he fell ill; and a few weeks later, when he breathed his last, he had the satisfaction that he had well accomplished the task which he had undertaken - to preach to the world the Divine message. 42. He bequeathed to posterity, a religion of pure monotheism; he created a well-disciplined

State out of the existent chaos and gave peace in place of the war of everybody against everybody else;

he established a harmonious equilibrium between the spiritual and the temporal, between the mosque and the citadel; he left a new system of law, which dispensed impartial justice, in which even the head of the State was as much a subject to it as any commoner, and in which religious tolerance was so great that non-Muslim inhabitants of Muslim countries equally enjoyed complete juridical, judicial and cultural autonomy.

In the matter of the revenues of the State, the Quran fixed the principles of budgeting, and paid more thought to the poor than to anybody else. The revenues were declared to be in no wise the private property of the head of the State. Above all, the Prophet Muhammad set a noble example and fully practised all that he taught to others.

Description of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)

The following is an excerpt from the book entitled "The Message of Mohammad", by Athar Husain. Among other things, it talks about some of the personal characteristics of the prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him), the final messenger of Allah (God). It has been edited slightly in order to reduce it's length. Care has been taken not to change the content inshallah. The topics include: Appearance Muhammad (pbuh) was of a height a little above the average. He was of sturdy build with long muscular limbs and tapering fingers.

The hair of his head was long and thick with some waves in them. His forehead was large and prominent, his eyelashes were long and thick, his nose was sloping, his mouth was somewhat large and his teeth were well set.

His cheeks were spare and he had a pleasant smile. His eyes were large and black with a touch of brown. His beard was thick and at the time of his death, he had seventeen gray hairs in it. He had a thin line of fine hair over his neck and chest. He was fair of complexion and altogether was so handsome that Abu Bakr composed this couplet on him: "as there is no darkness in the moonlit night so is Mustafa, the well-wisher, bright."

His gait was firm and he walked so fast that others found it difficult to keep pace with him. His face was genial but at times, when he was deep in thought, there there were long periods of silence, yet he always kept himself busy with something. He did not speak unnecessarily and what he said was always to the point and without any padding.

At times he would make his meaning clear by slowly repeating what he had said. His laugh was mostly a smile. He kept his feelings under firm control - when annoyed, he would turn aside or keep silent, when pleased he would lower his eyes (Shamail Tirmizi). Dress His dress generally consisted of a shirt, tamad (trousers), a sheet thrown round the sholders and a turban. On rare occasions, he would put on costly robes presented to him by foreign emissaries in the later part of his life (Ahmed, Musnad, Hafiz Bin Qaiyyam). His blanket had several patches (Tirmizi). He had very few spare clothes, but he kept them spotless clean (Bukhari).

He wanted others also to put on simple but clean clothes. Once he saw a person putting on dirty clothes and remarked, "Why can't this man wash them." (Abu Dawud, Chapter "Dress"). On another occasion he enquired of a person in dirty clothes whether he had any income. Upon getting a reply in the affirmative, he observed, "When Allah has blessed you with His bounty, your appearance should reflect it." (Abu Dawud) He used to observe: "Cleanliness is piety". Mode of living His house was but a hut with walls of unbaked clay and a thatched roof of palm leaves covered by camel skin. He had separate apartments for his wives, a small room for each made of similar materials.

His own apartment contained a rope cot, a pillow stuffed with palm leaves , the skin of some animal spread on the floor and a water bag of leather and some weapons. These were all his earthly belongings, besides a camel, a horse, and an ass and some land which he had aquired in the later part of his life (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud). Once a few of his disciples,

noticing the imprint of his mattress on his body, wished to give him a softer bed but he politely declined the offer saying, "What have I to do with worldly things.

My connection with the world is like that of a traveler resting for a while underneath the shade of a tree and then moving on." Amr Ibn Al-Harith, a brother in law of the prophet (pbuh), says that when the prophet died, he did not leave a cent, a slave man or woman, or any property except his white mule, his weapons and a piece of land which he had dedicated for the good of the community (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari). He advised the people to live simple lives and himself practised great austerities.

Even when he had become the virtual king of arabia, he lived an austere life bordering on privation. His wife Aiysha (ra) says that there was hardly a day in his life when he had two square meals (Muslim, Sahih Muslim, Vol.2, pg 198). When he died there was nothing in his house except a few seeds of barley left from a mound of the grain obtained from a Jew by pawning his armour (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Chapter "Aljihad"). He had declared unlawful for himself and his family anything given by the people by way of zakat or sadaqa (types of charity). He was so particular about this that he would not appoint any member of his family as a zakat collector (Sahah-Kitab Sadqat).

His manners and disposition "By the grace of Allah, you are gentle towards the people; if you had been stern and ill-tempered, they would have dispersed from round about you" (translation of Qur'an 3:159) About himself the prophet (pbuh) said "Allah has sent me as an apostle so that I may demonstrate perfection of character, refinement of manners and loftiness of deportment." (Malik, Mawatta; Ahmed, Musnad; Mishkat) By nature he was gentle and kind hearted, always inclined to be gracious and to overlook the faults of others. Politeness and courtesy, compassion and tenderness, simplicity and humility, sympathy and sincerity were some of the keynotes of his character.

In the cause of right and justice he could be resolute and severe but more often than not, his severity was tempered with generosity. He had charming manners which won him the affection of his followers and secured their devotion. Though virtual king of Arabia and an apostle of Allah, he never assumed an air of superiority. Not that he had to conceal any such vein by practice and artifice: with fear of Allah, sincere humility was ingrained in his heart. He used to say, "I am a Prophet of Allah but I do not know what will be my end." (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Chapter "Al-Janaiz")

In one of his sermons calculated to instill the fear of Allah and the day of reckoning in the hearts of men, he said, "O people of Quraish be prepared for the hereafter, I cannot save you from the punishment of Allah; O Bani Abd Manaf, I cannot save you from Allah; O Abbas, son of Abdul Mutalib, I cannot protect you either; O Fatima, daughter of Muhammad, even you I cannot save." (Sahahin) He used to pray, "O Allah! I am but a man. If I hurt any one in any manner, then forgive me and do not punish me." (Ahmed, Musnad, Vol. 6 pg. 103) He always received people with courtesy and showed respect to older people and stated: "To honor an old man is to show

respect to Allah." He would not deny courtesy even to wicked persons. It is stated that a person came to his house and asked permission for admission.

The prophet (pbuh) remarked that he was not a good person but might be admitted. When he came in and while he remained in the house, he was shown full courtesy. When he left Aiysha (ra) said, "You did not think well of this man, but you treated him so well." The prophet (pbuh) replied, "He is a bad person in the sight of Allah who does not behave courteously and people shun his company because of his bad manners." (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari) He was always the first to greet another and would not withdraw his hand from a handshake till the other man withdrew his. If one wanted to say something in his ears, he would not turn away till one had finished (Abu Dawud, Tirmizi).

He did not like people to get up for him and used to say, "Let him who likes people to stand up in his honour, he should seek a place in hell." (Abu Dawud, Kitabul Adab, Muhammadi Press, Delhi). He would himself, however, stand up when any dignitary came to him. He had stood up to receive the wet nurse who had reared him in infancy and had spread his own sheet for her.

His foster brother was given similar treatment. He avoided sitting at a prominent place in a gathering, so much so that people coming in had difficulty in spotting him and had to ask which was the Prophet (pbuh). Quite frequently uncouth bedouins accosted him in their own gruff and impolite manner but he never took offence. (Abu Dawud Kitabul Atama). He used to visit the poorest of ailing persons and exhorted all muslims to do likewise (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Chapter "Attendance on ailing persons").

He would sit with the humblest of persons saying that righteousness alone was the criterion of one's superiority over another. He invariably invited people be they slaves, servants or the poorest believers, to partake with him of his scanty meals (Tirmizi, Sunan Tirmizi). Whenever he visited a person he would first greet him and then take his permission to enter the house. He advised the people to follow this etiquette and not to get annoyed if anyone declined to give permission, for it was quite likely the person concerned was busy otherwise and did not mean any disrespect (Ibid). There was no type of household work too low or too undignified for him. Aiysha (ra) has stated, "He always joined in household work and would at times mend his clothes, repair his shoes and sweep the floor.

He would milk, tether, and feed his animals and do the household shopping." (Qazi Iyaz: Shifa; Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Chapter: Kitabul Adab) He would not hesitate to do the menial work of others, particularly of orphans and widows (Nasi, Darmi). Once when there was no male member in the house of the companion Kabab Bin Arat who had gone to the battlefield, he used to go to his house daily and milk his cattle for the inhabitants (Ibn Saad Vol. 6, p 213). ChildrenHe was especially fond of children and used to get into the spirit of childish games in their company. He would have fun with the children who had come back from Abyssinia and tried to speak in Abyssinian with them. It was his practice to give lifts on his camel to children when he returned from journeys (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 2 pg.886).

He would pick up children in his arms, play with them, and kiss them. A companion, recalling his childhood, said, "In my childhood I used to fell dates by throwing stones at palm trees. Somebody took me to the Prophet (pbuh) who advised me to pick up the dates lying on the ground but not to fell them with stones. He then patted me and blessed me." (Abu Dawud) Daily routine On the authority of Ali, Tirmizi has recorded that the Prophet (pbuh) had carefully apportioned his time according to the demands on him for offering worship to Allah public affairs, and personal matters. After the early morning prayers he would remain sitting in the mosque reciting praises of Allah till the sun rose and more people collected.

He would then preach to them. After the sermons were over, he would talk genially with the people, enquire about their welfare and even exchange jokes with them. Taxes and revenues were also disrtibuted at this time (Muslim, Sahih Muslim Tirmizi, Sunan Tirmizi).

He would then offer chaste prayers and go home and get busy with household work (Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi). He would again return to the mosque for the mid-day and afternoon prayers, listen to the problems of the people and give solace and guidance to them. After the afternoon prayers, he would visit each of his wives and, after the evening prayers, his wives would collect at one place and he would have his dinner (Muslim, Sahih Muslim).

After the night prayers, he would recite some suras of the Quran and before going to bed would pray: "O Allah, I die and live with thy name on my lips." On getting up he would say, "All praise to Allah Who has given me life after death and towards Whom is the return." He used to brush his teeth five times a day, before each of the daily prayers. After midnight, he used to get up for the tahajjud prayers which he never missed even once in his life (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari). He was not fastidious about his bed: sometimes he slept on his cot, sometimes on a skin or ordinary mattress, and sometimes on the ground (Zarqani). On friday he used to give sermons after the weekly "Jumma" prayers.

He was not annoyed if anyone interrupted him during the sermons for anything. It is stated that once, while he was delivering his sermon, a bedouin approached him and said, "O messenger of Allah, I am a traveler and am ignorant of my religion." The prophet (pbuh) got down from the pulpit, explained the salient features of Islam to him and then resumed the sermon (Tirmizi, Sunan Tirmizi). On another occasion his grandson Husain, still a child, came tumbling to him while he was delivering a sermon. He descended and took him in his lap and then continued the sermon (Ibid). Trust in Allah (swt) Muhammad (pbuh) preached to the people to trust in Allah (swt).

His whole life was a sublime example of the precept. In the loneliness of Makkah, in the midst of persecution and danger, in adversity and tribulations, and in the thick of enemies in the battles of Uhud and Hunain, complete faith and trust in Allah (swt) appears as the dominant feature in his life. However great the danger that confronted him, he never lost hope and never allowed himself to be unduly agitated. Abu Talib knew the feelings of the Quraish when the Prophet (pbuh) started his mission.

He also knew the lengths to which the Quraish could go, and requested the Prophet (pbuh) to abandon his mission, but the latter calmly replied, "Dear uncle, do not go by my loneliness. Truth will not go unsupported for long. The whole of Arabia and beyond will one day espouse its cause." (Ibn Hisham, Sirat-ur-Rasul.) When the attitude of the Quraish became more threatening, Abu Talib again begged his nephew to renounce his mission but the Prophet's (pbuh) reply was: "O my uncle, if they placed the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, to force me to renounce my work, verily I would not desist therefrom until Allah made manifest His cause, or I perished in the attempt." (Ibid) To another well-wisher, he said, "Allah will not leave me forelorn."

A dejected and oppressed disciple was comforted with the words: "By Allah, the day is near when this faith will reach its pinnacle and none will have to fear anyone except Allah." (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari) It was the same trust in Allah (swt) which emboldened the prophet (pbuh) to say his prayers openly in the haram in the teeth of opposition.

The Quraish were once collected there and were conspiring to put an end to his life when he next entered the haram. His young daughter Fatima, who happened to overhear their talk rushed weeping to her father and told him of the designs of the Quraish. He consoled her, did his ablutions and went to the Kaaba to say prayers. There was only consternation among the Quraish when they saw him (Ahmed, Musnad, Vol. 1, pg. 368). Then leaving his house for Madinah he asked Ali (ra) to sleep on his bed and told him, "Do not worry, no one will be able to do you any harm" (Tabari, Ibn Hisham) Even though the enemies had surrounded the house, he left the house reciting the Quranic verse: "We have set a barricade before them and a barricade behind them and (thus) have covered them so that they see not" (translation of Qur'an 36:9)

Abu Bakr was frightened when pursuers came close to the cavern in which he and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were hiding during their flight, but the Prophet (pbuh) heartened him, "Grieve not. Allah is with us." A guard was kept at the Prophet's house in Madinah because of the danger that surrounded him but he had it withdrawn when the Quranic verse was revealed: "Allah will protect you from the people" (translation of Qur'an 5:67). A man was caught waiting in ambush to assault the Prophet (pbuh) but he was directed to be released with the words, "Even if this man wanted to kill me, he could not." (Ahmed, Musnad, Vol.3 pg. 471) A Jewess from Khaibar had put poison in the Prophet's (pbuh) food.

He spat it out after taking a morsel but a disciple who had his fill died the next day. The Jewess was brought before the prophet (pbuh) who questioned her: "Why did you do this?" "To kill you," was her defiant reply. She was told, "Allah would not have allowed you to do it." (Muslim, Sahih Muslim.) In the battle of Uhud when the rear guard action of the Makkan army had disorganized the Muslim army and had turned the tables, the Prophet (pbuh) stood as firm as a rock even though he had suffered personal injuries.

When Abu Sufiyan taunted the Muslims and shouted "Victory to hubal!" (hubal was one of their idols), the Prophet (pbuh) asked Umar (ra) to shout

back, "Allah is our protector and friend. You have no protector and friend. Allah is Great, Magnificent." (Ibn Hisham, Sirat-Ur-Rasul). Again in the battle of Hunain, when the unexpected assault of the army had swept the Muslim force off its feet and a defeat seemed imminent, the Prophet (pbuh) did not yield ground.

With trust in Allah (swt) he showed such courage that the Muslim army rallied behind him to win a signal victory. JusticeThe Prophet (pbuh) asked people to be just and kind. As the supreme judge and arbiter, as the leader of men, as generalissimo of a rising power, as a reformer and apostle, he had always to deal with men and their affairs. He had often to deal with mutually inimical and warring tribes when showing justice to one carried the danger of antagonizing the other, and yet he never deviated from the path of justice.

In administering justice, he made no distinction between believers and nonbelievers, friends and foes, high and low. From numerous instances reported in the traditions, a few are given below. Sakhar, a chief of a tribe, had helped Muhammad (pbuh) greatly in the seige of Taif, for which he was naturally obliged to him. Soon after, two charges were brought against Sakhar: one by Mughira of illegal confinement of his (Mughira's) aunt and the other by Banu Salim of forcible occupation of his spring by Sakhar. In both cases, he decided against Sakhar and made him undo the wrong. (Abu Dawud, Sunan Dawud, pg.80) Abdullah Bin Sahal, a companion, was deputed to collect rent from Jews of Khaibar. His cousin Mahisa accompanied him but, on reaching Khaibar, they had separated. Abdullah was waylaid and done to death.

Mahisa reported this tragedy to the Prophet (pbuh) but as there were no eye-witnesses to identify the guilty, he did not say anything to the Jews and paid the blood-money out of the state revenues (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari Nasai). A woman of the Makhzoom family with good connections was found guilty of theft. For the prestige of the Quraish, some prominent people including Asama Bin Zaid interceded to save her from punishment. The Prophet (pbuh) refused to condone the crime and expressed displeasure saying, "Many a community ruined itself in the past as they only punished the poor and ignored the offences of the exalted.

By Allah, if Muhammad's (My) daughter Fatima would have committed theft, her hand would have been severed." (Bukhari, Sahh Bukhari, Chapter "Alhadood") The Jews, in spite of their hostility to the Prophet (pbuh), were so impressed by his impartiality and sense of justice that they used to bring their cases to him, and he decided them according to Jewish law. (Abu Dawud, Sunan Dawud) Once, while he was distributing the spoils of war, people flocked around him and one man almost fell upon him.

He pushed the men with a stick causing a slight abrasion. He was so sorry about this that he told the man that he could have his revenge, but the man said, "O messenger of Allah, I forgive you." (Abu Dawud, Kitablu Diyat). In his fatal illness, the Prophet (pbuh) proclaimed in a concourse assembled at his house that if he owed anything to anyone the person concerned could claim it; if he had ever hurt anyone's person, honor or property, he could have his price while he was yet in this world.

A hush fell on the crowd. One man came forward to claim a few dirhams which were paid at once. (Ibn Hisham, Sirat-ur-Rasul) Equality Muhammad (pbuh) asked people to shun notions of racial, family or any other form of superiority based on mundane things and said that righteousness alone was the criterion of one's superiority over another. It has already been shown how he mixed with everyone on equal terms, how he ate with slaves, servants and the poorest on the same sheet (a practice that is still followed in Arabia), how he refused all privileges and worked like any ordinary laborer. Two instances may, however, be quoted here: Once the Prophet (pbuh) visited Saad Bin Abadah.

While returning Saad sent his son Quais with him. The Prophet (pbuh) asked Quais to mount his camel with him. Quais hesitated out of respect but the Prophet (pbuh) insisted: "Either mount the camel or go back." Quais decided to go back. (Abu Dawud, Kitabul Adab) On another occasion he was traveling on his camel over hilly terrain with a disciple, Uqba Bin Aamir. After going some distance, he asked Uqba to ride the camel, but Uqba thought this would be showing disrespect to the Prophet (pbuh). But the Prophet (pbuh) insisted and he had to comply.

The Prophet (pbuh) himself walked on foot as he did not want to put too much load on the animal. (Nasai pg. 803) The prisoners of war of Badr included Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet (pbuh). Some people were prepared to forgo their shares and remit the Prophet's (pbuh) ransom but he declined saying that he could make no distinctions. (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Chapter "Ransoms") During a halt on a journey, the companions apportioned work among themselves for preparing food. The Prophet (pbuh) took upon himself the task of collecting firewood.

His companions pleaded that they would do it and that he need not take the trouble, but he replied, "It is true, but I do not like to attribute any distinction to myself. Allah does not like the man who considers himself superior to his companions." (Zarqani, Vol 4 pg. 306) Kindness to animals The Prophet (pbuh) not only preached to the people to show kindness to each other but also to all living souls. He forbade the practice of cutting tails and manes of horses, of branding animals at any soft spot, and of keeping horses saddled unnecessarily (Muslim, Sahih Muslim). If he saw any animal over-loaded or ill-fed he would pull up the owner and say, "Fear Allah in your treatment of animals." (Abu Dawud, Kitab Jihad).

A companion came to him with the young ones of a bird in his sheet and said that the mother bird had hovered over them all along. He was directed to replace her offspring in the same bush (Mishkat, Abu Dawud) During a journey, somebody picked up some birds eggs. The bird's painful note and fluttering attracted the attention of the Prophet (pbuh), who asked the man to replace the eggs (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari). As his army marched towards Makkah to conquer it, they passed a female dog with puppies.

The Prophet (pbuh) not only gave orders that they should not be disturbed, but posted a man to see that this was done. He stated, "Verily, there is heavenly reward for every act of kindness done to a living animal." Love for the poor The Prophet (pbuh) enjoined upon Muslims to treat the poor kindly and to help them with alms, zakat, and in other ways. He said:

"He is not a perfect muslim who eats his fill and lets his neighbor go hungry." He asked, "Do you love your Creator? Then love your fellow beings first." Monopoly is unlawful in Islam and he preached that "It is difficult for a man laden with riches to climb the steep path that leads to bliss." He did not prohibit or discourage the acquisition of wealth but insisted that it be lawfully acquired by honest means and that a portion of it would go to the poor.

He advised his followers "To give the laborer his wages before his perspiration dried up." He did not encourage beggary either and stated that "Allah is gracious to him who earns his living by his own labor, and that if a man begs to increase his property, Allah will diminish it and whoever has food for the day, it is prohibited for him to beg." To his wife he said, "O Aysha, love the poor and let them come to you and Allah will draw you near to Himself." (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari) One or two instances of the Prophet's (pbuh) concern for the poor may be given here. A Madinan, Ibad Bin Sharjil, was once starving. He entered an orchard and picked some fruit.

The owner of the orchard gave him a sound beating and stripped off his clothes. The poor man appealed to the Prophet (pbuh) who remonstrated the owner thus: "This man was ignorant, you should have dispelled his ignorance; he was hungry, you should have fed him." His clothes were restored to the Madinan and, in addition, some grain was given to him (Abu Dawud, Kitabul Jihad). A debtor, Jabir Bin Abdullah, was being harassed by his creditor as he could not clear his debt owing to the failure of his date crop. The Prophet (pbuh) went with Jabir to the house of the creditor and pleaded with him to give Jabir some more time but the creditor was not prepared to oblige.

The Prophet (pbuh) then went to the oasis and having seen for himself that the crop was really poor, he again approached the creditor with no better result. He then rested for some time and approached the creditor for a third time but the latter was adamant. The Prophet (pbuh) went again to the orchard and asked Jabir to pluck the dates.

As Allah would have it, the collection not only sufficed to clear the dues but left something to spare (Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari). His love for the poor was so deep that he used to pray: "O Allah, keep me poor in my life and at my death and raise me at resurrection among those who are poor." (Nasai, Chapter: Pardon) Abdul Ghani

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