

Al-Nahl

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“By making certain remarks, the Pope has tried to portray a wrong impression of Islam, the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

What was needed was for him to state that some extremist Islamic organizations have adopted certain negative ways, however, the teachings of Islam are contrary to this and that for the peace and security of the world we should work together.”

Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V, ayyadaullah.

About Al-Nahl

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Literary contributions, articles, essays, photographs, etc., for publication in the *Al-Nahl* can be sent to the Editor at his address below.

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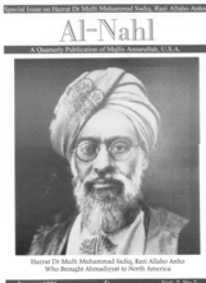
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Address for Contact

Editor, Syed Sajid Ahmad, 148 Eagle St, Fargo ND 58102 (e-mail: ansarishaat@yahoo.com, cell 701 200 7147).



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٧﴾
ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ
فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨﴾

And thy Lord has inspired the bee, *saying*, ‘Make thou houses in the hills and in the trees and in the trellises which they build, ‘Then eat of every *kind of* fruit, and then pursue submissively the paths prescribed by your Lord.’ There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying hues. Therein is a cure for men. Surely, in that is a Sign for a people who reflect. (The Holy Qur’an, 16[Al-Nahl]:69-70)

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Editor:
Syed Sajid Ahmad
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Dr Wajeeh Bajwa
Sadr
Majlis Ansarullah,
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(*May peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him*)

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The Discourses

Sayings of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalām
Presented in English by Naseem Saifi

ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS

Wa artistagh-firoo Rabbakum
summa tooboo ilaihi

“And if you ask for forgiveness
from your Lord and then you turn to
Him.”

You should remember that this Umma has been granted two things: One is to obtain strength and the other is for a practical display of that strength. In order to obtain strength, “Istighfar” has been given to the Muslims, which in other words can be called asking for help (Istimdad and Istianat). The mystics say that just as one gets physical strength through exercise (exercise with dumbbells and other things) so also it can be said that Istighfar is the means of exercise for spiritual strength. It gives strength to the soul and also grants steadfastness to the hearts— whoever wishes to gain strength should be doing Istighfar (i.e. he should be asking for the forgiveness of his sins). Ghafara means to cover up or press down. With Istighfar one tries to cover up or press down the low passions which keep him away from God. Thus Istighfār actually means that one should try to press down (and put an end to) the poisonous matter which attacks the man to ruin him, and thus getting away from what stands between him and his God, he should act upon His Commandments.

It should also be remembered that there are two kinds of matters to be found in human beings: the poisonous matter and the elixir. The poisonous matter is handled by the Satan. When a man shows pride and begins to think that he is somebody very important,

and he does not ask for help from the fountain of elixir, then the poisonous matter overpowers him, but when he humbles himself and begins to realize that he is nobody and of no importance and feels the need for seeking after the help of God, then a fountain is made to flow and his soul begins to melt. This is what Istighfar is, that is, he overpowers the poisonous matter and does so by receiving the power from God.

In short, it means that you should constantly worship God. First you should obey the Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam. Second, you should always ask for help from God.

Of course, first and foremost you should ask for help from God and when you have got it, then you should:

Tooboo ilaihi

Then you should turn to Him.

(Malfoozat, Vol. II, p. 68)

SYMPATHY THROUGH PRAYER

You should remember that sympathy is of three kinds: physical, financial and in the form of prayer. The third kind does not need money or strength to be used, but its beneficence is very extensive. So far as physical sympathy is concerned it can be shown only when one is strong enough to do so, for example, a weak wounded person cannot be helped by someone who is not physically strong. Likewise, unless a man has got money with him, he cannot help a helpless, penniless hungry person. How can such a person show sympathy? But so far as sympathy with prayer is concerned, it neither

requires money nor physical strength. As long as a man is a man (i.e. he knows that he is human being) he can pray for the other and prove to be beneficial to him. The sphere of good that can accrue from this kind of sympathy is very wide and if a person does not make use of this sympathy, he is certainly very unfortunate.

I have said it that physical and financial sympathy has limitations but that is not the case with the prayer. My own way of thinking is that so far as the prayer is concerned, even the enemies should not be excluded from it. The more extensive the prayer is, the greater is the benefit derived by the one who prays. The more a person is niggardly in the matter of his prayers, the farther he gets away from God. The fact is that the man who limits the Bounty of God—which is very extensive—has a very weak faith. One of the great advantages in praying for others is that it prolongs the life. God has promised in the Holy Quran that those who do good to others live longer. He says:

Amma ma yanfa-onnasa fa-
yamkoso fil-arz

The other kinds of sympathy being limited ones, it is the prayer that can be termed as a continuous charity.

It is with the prayer that we can be benefited most. (Malfoozat, Vol. II, 73)

KEY TO GOOD DEEDS

Some people, on seeing a beggar, become peevish and if they have maulviyyat (dry theologianism) in them, they begin to tell the beggar what their religion says about begging. Imposing on him their maulviyyat, they even use harsh words. What a pity, these people do not understand, and in fact it is as if they cannot understand at all. This understanding is given to good-natured and



Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
The Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*, 'alaihissalam
(1835-1908)

pious-hearted people. They do not realize that if the beggar, despite the fact that he is quite healthy has come out to beg, he is committing a sin against himself; but it is not a sin to give him something. The Hadees even tells us this much that if a man comes to you to beg and he is riding a horse, you should give him something. The Holy Quran says:.. wa ammassaa-i-la fala tanhar: you should not scold the beggar. There is no indication here as to what kind of beggar should not be scolded and what kind of beggar may be scolded.

You should remember never to scold a beggar, for doing so sows the seed of an immorality. Good morals demand that one should not hastily get annoyed with the beggar. It is the Satan who wants to keep you away from virtue by making you annoyed with the beggar; he (the Satan) wants to make you the inheritor of evil.

You should ponder over this fact: do one

good deed, and you will find that you are enabled to follow it with another good deed. Likewise, if you do one evil deed, you will follow it with another evil deed. It is just as one thing absorbs another. This process of absorbing one thing by the other is to be found in all the actions of the man; so God has destined it to be. When a man will show kindness to a beggar and will thus make a moral charity, he will be able to do another good deed—and that is that he will be able to give something to the beggar.

Good morals are key to other good deeds and those who do not keep their morals right, ultimately become devoid of good deeds altogether. (Malfoozat, Vol. II, p. 75)

MORALS OF THE HOLY PROPHET

The honor of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, is greater than the honor of all others. It was he who revived the world once again. So far as Arabia is concerned, adultery, drunkenness and warring with one another were their main features. They had shed the blood of the rights of the fellow-beings (i.e. they had put an end to the idea that they owed any duties or rights to others). Sympathy and well-wishing had been wiped out. And it is not only the rights of the fellow beings that were trampled, the rights of God had also been covered up in still a greater darkness. The stones, the plants and the stars had been given the attributes of God the Almighty. Various types of atheism were prevalent. Weak human beings and even their private parts were being worshipped. Were a good-natured person to picture this situation before his eyes, he would find a very dreadful scene of tyranny. It is one side of the human body that is paralyzed, but this paralysis had affected both the sides (of the body of humanity). There was total disorder

in the land. Peace and security were not to be found either on the land or on the sea.

Let us look at the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, in that dark age. It was he who put the two sides of the scale right. He put the rights of the human beings as well as the rights of God, in their proper place. One can realize the excellence of the morals of the Holy Prophet sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, by looking at the dark age in which he lived (and the changes that he brought about). His opponents tortured him and his followers—and this torture was really great—yet when he had the power to do to them whatever he liked, he showed great magnanimity.

No hardship can be thought of which Abū Jahl and his companions did not place in the way of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam. The poor Muslim ladies were tied to the camels and the camels made to run to opposite sides; thus splitting the bodies of those Muslim ladies; their only offence was that they had believed in la ilaha illallah (there is none worthy of worship except Allah). Despite all this, the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, exercised patience and when Mecca was conquered, he forgave all of them by saying: la tasreeba alaikumul yauma. How great is the excellence of these morals; it is not to be met with in any other prophet. Allahumma salli alaa Mohammadin. In short you should have high morals, for, that is the key to virtuous deeds. (Malfoozat Vol. II, p. 79-80)

GOOD OF THIS WORLD

Let nobody think that one should have nothing to do with this world; this is not what I mean. And God also does not forbid the people to acquire worldly gains, rather, Islam restrains its followers from cutting oneself off from the world. This is cowardice. The

wider the relations of the believer with the world, the higher are the ranks that he attains to, for, his target is ‘religion’; the world and its belongings are the servants of religion.

The truth is that the acquisition of the worldly gains should not be the sole aim; the real aim should be the acquisition of religion. One should acquire the worldly gains in a way that they can serve the religion. It is as if a man is traveling from one place to the other; he needs a transport and the provision for the journey. As every one can understand, the target of this person is to reach the destination and not the transport or the provision. One should acquire the gains of the world keeping before him the aim of making them the servant of religion.

God the Almighty has taught us the prayer: Rabbana aatina fiddunya hasanatan wa fil aakhirati hasanatan. Here, it is “this world” that precedes. But what is meant by “this world”. It is hasanatuddunya: that become the cause of hasa-naat in the next world. This prayer makes it quite clear that the good of the next world must be kept in view while acquiring the good of this world. Moreover the words hasanatuddunya draw our attention to all the best means of the acquisition of the good of this world that a believer is expected to use in his worldly affairs. You should acquire the worldly gains through such means as are good in themselves and not the means that put others to hardships; these means should also not bring any shame for you. The acquisition of the worldly gains in this way will definitely become the cause of good in the next world.

(Malfoozat Vol. II, p. 91)

DO NOT SIT HANDS FOLDED

You should remember that he who dedicates his life for the cause of God does

not become slack nor does he sit down hands folded. No. Never. Rather such a person becomes more energetic and cleverer than ever before. Slackness does not touch him in the least.

Amaar bin Khuzaina reports in the Hadees that Hazrat Umar (may God be pleased with him) asked his father what had stopped him from planting trees in his garden. The father replied that it was old age and he felt that he would die soon. Hazrat Umar (may God be pleased with him) told him that he must plant the trees. Then he (Amaar) saw that Hazrat Umar joined hands with his father and planted trees in the land. The Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, always sought refuge of Allah against slackness. I say it to you repeatedly that you should never become slack. God does not say that you should not work for the achievement of the worldly things, rather, He has taught the prayer to ask for the Hasanatud-Dunya (the good of this world). God does not like that anyone should sit down hands folded. He says: Laisa lil insani illa ma sa-aa i.e. the man will not have except what he strives for. The Believer should therefore work hard. But I will say as many times as it is possible to repeat that the acquisition of the worldly things should not become the be all and end all. Religion should be the target and the world should be made to serve it. Quite often the rich people can do things that are out of reach for the poor. In the days of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, he who became the first Khalifa later on, rendered matchless services to the Muslims after joining Islam—he could do so because he was a great trader; he became the friend and the first Khalifa and was honored with the rank of Siddiq.

(Malfoozat Vol. II, p. 92)

From *The Discourses*, Freetown, pp. 60-67.

Our Master

*Master Prophet Muhammad
(May peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)*

—from beginning to prophethood—

Dr. Muhammad Sharif Khan

Background history

A hard test—a great sacrifice

Our narration takes us almost four thousand years back to the city of Damascus, Syria, northwestern Asia (See box below), where lived a righteous and pious man by the name of Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, who was chosen prophet of God. He was assigned with the task to lead the idol worshipers to

the right path of worshipping one God, the Almighty. Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, had frequent communion with God, so he is also known as Khalilullah, “friend of God”. In Hebrew word אברהם means “father of a multitude” or “chief of multitude,” referring to the promise of God, to make him progenitor of innumerable nations to come. His wife Hagar, ‘alaihassalām, (Hajira) was

Syria (السّوريا) : Syrian Arab Republic, is located in the northwestern corner of the continent Asia, bordered by Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea in the west, Turkey in the northwest and north, Iraq in the east and south, and Jordan and Israel in the southwest. It is an ancient country, its history dates back to Stone age, it is also known as the cradle of Civilization and the Gateway to History, as it has added much to the history and development of human civilization. The country is strategically placed and has no natural barriers, it has been overrun by several invaders in history. Moreover, it has been a great trading centre as it lies at the crossroad of ancient trade tracks between Mediterranean and the Eastern countries. The Syrians exported the Alphabet to the West. Damascus, “Al-Sham,” (Arabic: northern territory) is the capital of Syria. Damascus is one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited cities, and its reports date back to

at least 5000 years. Modern Damascus is a standard Middle Eastern city, often referred to as the “pearl of the East.” It has cradled religion from the ancient Semitic Deities to the monotheistic faiths.



daughter of an Egyptian king.

At the time of our narration Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, was almost 86 years of age, and yet had no child, both husband and wife prayed night and day, begging Allah, their Lord, for the birth of a healthy beautiful son. At last their prayers were answered; they were blessed by a beautiful son. Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, named the new born Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, (meaning “God heard my prayers”), the parents were happy and thankful to God for His mercy and kindness.

God put Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, in a hard test, when Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, was yet a few months old, and parents had not finished celebrating their happiness and thankfulness to their Lord, God appeared to him and commanded, “Abraham! Go and leave the child and his mother in the heart of the Arabian Desert.” No doubt, it was a strange and very trying command. The baby was born to Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, in old age, after years of prayers and supplications. They cherished him so much. Leaving him in the stark wilderness of the desert without any protection, at the mercy of hungry wolves and foxes, apparently meant to let him and his mother die in thirst and hunger. Not speaking of the child who was yet few months old, but Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, who was brought up in the comforts of king’s castle, how she could survive in the rigors of a desert with the child? These fears may have crossed Abraham ‘alaihissalām’s mind, but Allah’s love surpassed love of wife and child. Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, started preparing for the long journey to the middle of Arabian Peninsula. He took a goat-skin full of water and a bag of dates and set out to fulfill God’s command. Princess Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, with baby in her lap, followed at his heels.

This holy family of three walked on and on with a caravan for several days, trekking a distance of 1,200 miles across desert’s treeless valleys, passed by high and low sand hills, moving from one sand dune to another. At last Abraham ‘alaihissalām’s family reached the valley where now stands the holy city of Mecca. Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, stopped, surveyed the area around him, until he chose a plain piece of hard firm land. He placed the goat-skin and bag of dates on the ground, caressed the child, tears in his eyes, and turned to go back, leaving behind his bewildered beloved wife and innocent child. Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, in despair cried after him several questions in a row, in woeful voice: “Where you are going, Abraham? In whose care you are leaving us here? Don’t you see, as soon you leave us, wolves and demons will come out of their lairs and dens in nearby hills and tear us apart!”



Prophet Abraham's journey to Mecca

Overwhelmed and choked with grief, Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, neither turned nor replied. In despair Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, cried out again, “Well, if you want to go, go, but just tell me, are you leaving us because God commanded you, or because you are angry with me?”

Now Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, turned his tear washed face, he could not utter a word as grief choked him. He only could lift his finger to the sky, meaning “In Allah’s command!” Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, understood and replied, “Ok, if it is so then go fearlessly, God will not destroy us!”

This was the princess Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, the grandmother of our Holy Master Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Restless mother

As her husband left, several fearful thoughts crossed mind of the princess Hajira (‘alaihassalām), after surveying her surroundings keenly: “How I will be able to make with my child under open scorching sky in the wilderness of the desert? There is no tree to be seen far and wide, under the shade of which we may rest, neither there is a lump of grass around, from which I may shape a hut to save my child from scorching sun.” She repeatedly glanced at the stark dry surrounding hills with tear-filled eyes and fearful heart. She laid down her child, the grandson of the Egyptian king and son of Syrian prophet, on hard stony ground, without a cloth or bedding under, and started thinking: “Now what will happen?”

The water in goat-skin lasted for few days. The child started crying helplessly because of thirst and heat. His tiny lips and tongue were dry. The mother could not bear the sight of helplessly crying child. From where she

could get water to quench thirst of her child, was the big question before her! Fearing that the child will die within few moments, she looked around in utter helplessness and despair. She hurriedly climbed to the top of nearby hill. Perhaps from height she may see some fountain, some shady place, but her quest was useless. Fearing that the unprotected child may have died of thirst or attacked by wild animals, she hurried down, lifted him in her lap to comfort him. Though the child was still alive, but was semi-conscious.

In desperation she ran up the hill on the other side, perhaps there she may see some source of water. She looked around as far as her eyes could see, but nowhere was the sign of water.

She again ran down to have a look at the child. She made seven rounds in utter desperation between the two hills, crying and praying in her way. After every round between the hills she would return to see the child.

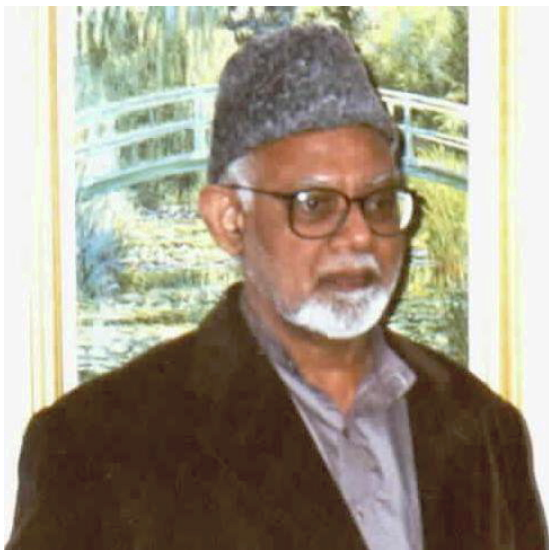
The fountain

After seventh round between the hills, when she returned to the child, she was astonished to find wet soil with glare of water where child’s heels were striking the ground. Joyously and astonishingly she quickly knelt down and started digging with her fingers at the wet earth. Her joy knew no bounds when a fountain of water appeared, water gushed out and started flowing, as she removed the earth. She hurriedly lifted the child and gave him water in the cup of her hand, the helpless child was pacified, and opened his eyes, smiled at his mother. Seeing her child in good condition, she thanked God by throwing herself on the ground, who in His infinite mercy had caused water to gush out in an unexpected barren piece of stony

ground. Water flow was increasing every moment; she hurriedly piled stones and earth around the fountain shaping a trough saying “zam, zam!” (stop, stop!). Soon the trough was filled to its brim.

Water is scarce in Arabia because of desert conditions. Nomad tribes would move about in search of water from place to place, carrying their possessions with them, all the tents and cattle. Wherever they would find water, they would stay, when water would dry out, they would move to other places in search of water. Now that water was available in plenty, Hagar, ‘alaihassalām, felt assured of survival and safety of her son and herself. Soon a nomad tribe by the name Jurham happened to pass that way in search of water. They were astonished and afraid to find a fountain in plain desert and a woman sitting beside it with a child in her lap. The elder of the tribe hesitatingly approached Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, and asked: “Dear Madam! what are you doing in this wilderness all alone, with an innocent child? Who are you, and from where you have

come from? How you are making up here for yourself and child’s life and safety?” Hagar, ‘alaihassalām, was astonished and happy to see a human face after a long time, in the wilderness and replied: “I am an Egyptian, and have come from Syria. My husband Abraham had left us here under the command of God. God the Almighty, in His infinite Mercy has started this fountain for me and my child.” The elder was impressed and requested, “If you kindly madam, allow us to settle around the fountain, in return of getting water we may be a company to you.” Hajira, ‘alaihassalām, was wondering in her heart and thanking God. How quickly events have turned from helplessness to authority by God’s help. She felt reassured and replied authoritatively: “Yes, you can put up here but on one condition. Since the fountain belongs to me, in return you will provide me and my son with needs of our livelihood. When the child will grow up, he will be your chief, because he is not an ordinary child, he is the grandson of Egyptian king and son of Prophet Abraham.” The chief happily



Author: Muhammad Sharif Khan (M. S. Khan in scientific publications). Born 11 August, 1939, dedicated life to serve Islam (waqf) in 1952. M.Sc. Zoology, 1963 (Gold Medal). Ph.D. 1996, Punjab University, Lahore, Pakistan. Lecturer Zoology, Talim-ul-Islam College, Rabwah, September, 1963. Retired Professor of Zoology, 1999. Research interest: Herpetology (amphibians and reptiles) of Pakistan. Publications: Over 250 scientific publications in National and International journals. Books: Three in Urdu, Two in English, one translated in German. New species described: Amphibians: 3; Lizards: 7; Snakes: 7; from Pakistan. E-mail: typhlops99@hotmail.com. URL: <http://muhammadskhan.wildlifeofpakistan.com>

accepted both conditions, and settled there.

It all happened at the site where now the city of Mecca stands, sacred city of Arabs and Muslims all over the world. The miracle fountain is still there as a deep well, known by the name “Zamzam” after the words of Hagar, ‘alaihissalām, “zam, zam,” which she unconsciously uttered in amazement while containing its flow with earth and stones.

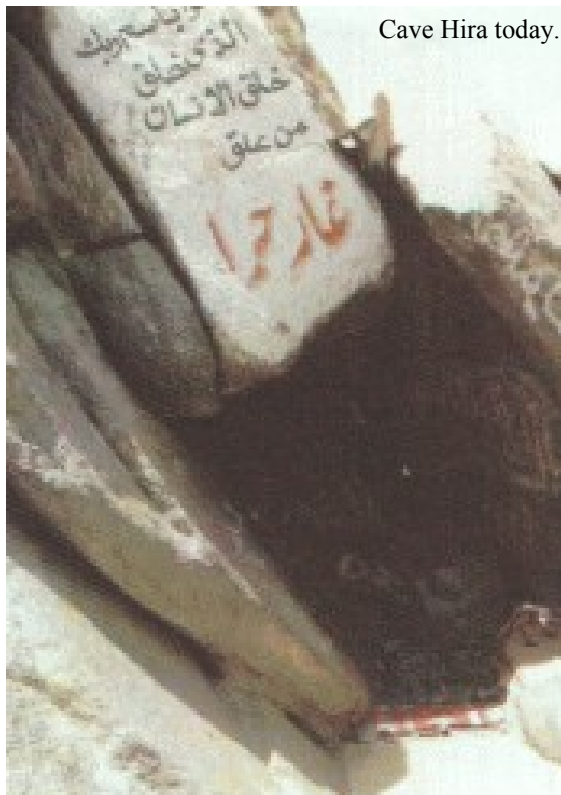
Some events that appear insignificant in the beginning, unfold in astounding results. Take into consideration Hajira, ‘alaihissalām’s great ordeal just described. Her running between the hills apparently was a helpless and desperate act. Now centuries afterward, the seven rounds between the hills are preserved as a religious ritual in Islamic pilgrimage. For centuries, millions of Muslims gather in the holy city of Mecca for pilgrimage, the two hills stand there as Safa and Marwa, seven rounds between them are preserved as pilgrimage ritual (Ref. 1).

Master Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) centuries later, declared his prophethood while standing on one of these hills!

Sacrifice of son

Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, grew into a fine beautiful strong young man, because he was nurtured in natural wild environments of Mecca. God Almighty once again wanted to test faith of father Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, and son Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām,. This time the test was far more swear and harder than before, Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, was ordered in three dreams to slaughter his beloved son Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, in the way of his Lord God!

No body would have ever witnessed such a scene, since the creation of the world, nor sky had, that an old man of eighty readied



Cave Hira today.

himself to cut off the throat of his only son in a sacrifice? One cannot help shudder at such an idea, but Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, was true lover of his God, he readied himself to fulfill the command, he took a knife and set out on a journey to Mecca. On reaching Mecca, he found his son grown into a beautiful fine young man. Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, was jubilant at meeting his father.

Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, took Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, to one side and told him straight forward: “I am ordered by God that I should slaughter you. What is your opinion?”

After all Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, was son of Abraham, ‘alaihissalām. His uncalculated abrupt reply was: “Father, do not hesitate, do as you are commanded, you will find me obedient.”

Father and son went in the jungle, away from people. Father tied the hands of his son, selected an appropriate spot, told his fifteen year old son to lay down on the ground. Just visualize the scene, a 100 year old man is all ready, with a sharp knife in his hand, to slaughter his beautiful son of 15 years, who lays on the ground, hand bounded at his feet. Certainly the earth would have stopped in its rotation, and every thing would have stood still!

Dear reader! Go and leaf through histories of different nations, scattered in libraries all over the world. You will never find record of such an incident happening, since the creation of the world. How possibly a father can slaughter his only beloved son, it was only Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, who was the most obedient servant of his God, and believers in His powers.

Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, placed the knife right at the throat of his son and was just to give a push, when suddenly doors of sky flung open and a majestic voice called out: “My intention is not that you slaughter your son, only I wanted to test your love and obedience toward Me—your God. You have passed the test. Go, I will make you father of nations. You are prepared to sacrifice your son, in return I will multiply your progeny, grains of sand on earth, and stars in the sky could be counted, but your progeny would not. Surely we bestow our kindness on our chosen ones!” (Ref. 2)

On hearing the words of approval from his Lord, Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, climbed down the chest of his son, and instead slaughtered a sheep.

Abraham, ‘alaihissalām’s great sacrifice is still remembered, year after year, since centuries have passed. Muslims all over the world commemorate Abraham,

‘alaihissalām’s great sacrifice by celebrating Eid-ul-Adha or Eidul-Adhiyya (Festival of sacrifices), and slaughter animals. They invoke prayers seeking high place for Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, and his progeny:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ
كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

al·lā·hum·ma ṣal·li ‘a·lā
mu·ḥam·ma·diñw·wa ‘a·lā ā·li
mu·ḥam·ma·din,
ka·mā ṣal·laj·ta ‘a·lā ib·rā·hī·ma
wa ‘a·lā ā·li ib·rā·hī·ma,
in·na·ka ḥa·mī·dum·ma·jīd
O Allah, bless Muhammad and his
people as Thou didst bless Abraham
and his people. Thou art indeed
Praiseworthy, the Exalted.

World’s first mosque

Having proved their steadfastness in the love of their Lord God, Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, and Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, were ordered by God: “Now both of you erect a mosque in Mecca for my worship. I will bless it, people will come drawn to it from east and west.”

Both father and son, started building the house of their Lord from blocks from surrounding granite hills. It was a simple roofless structure, measuring approximately 12 meter long, 10.5 meter wide, and 15 meter high (39 feet long x 34 feet wide x 49 feet high). The single entrance was on the northeastern side, 2.3 meter above the ground. The building had neither doors, windows nor paved floor. The granite building still stands since time immemorial as Ka‘batullah—the house of Allah (present

day structure is modified). People from all over Arabia have been coming to it, for pilgrimage. Muslims from all over the world turn their face towards Ka‘ba, when praying. Pilgrimage to Ka‘ba is retained as fifth pillar of Islam. They flock in millions each year from all over the globe to make a pilgrimage journey to it. This is the Baitullah, the House of Allah. Its sanctity and antiquity is older than history itself.

Sacred town of Mecca is now known all over the world. It is the site where Prophet Abraham, ‘alaihissalam, left his few month old son and his mother, in the wilderness, obeying command of his Lord God!

A wonderful prayer

When Abraham, ‘alaihissalām, and Ishmael, ‘alaihissalām, were raising walls of the House of their Lord, they kept on praying humbly: “O our Lord, our sustainer! Send your messenger among Meccans, who may read on them your commands and teach them words of wisdom to purify them. Our Lord! You have great powers and set the events wisely.” (Ref. 3)

The great historic prayer of sending a messenger among Meccans has been answered with the birth of our Master Prophet Hadrat Muhammad Mustafa (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam), who came in the progeny of father prophet Abraham, ‘alaihissalam, and Ishmael, ‘alaihissalam. The promised prophet read to them words of their God. The world is lit up by the light of his teachings, as father prophet had prayed.

Abraham ‘alaihissalām’s prayers answered

An extraordinary pledge

Quraish were the most honored tribe in

Arabia, and of them Banū Hāshim family was held supreme. ‘Abdul-Muttalib bin Hāshim, head of the Banū Hāshim tribe was acclaimed leader of Meccans, because he was also care-taker of Ka‘ba, in later capacity he was respected all over Arabia.

Abdul-Muttalib once made a strange pledge, that if he had ten sons, and they all grew up in his life time, he will sacrifice one of them in the name of God. It so happened that his wish was fulfilled, all his ten sons grew up in his life time into beautiful healthy young men. While pledging ‘Abdul-Muttalib had not the slightest idea that his wish will be fulfilled. Now when it was fulfilled he was in a fix. ‘Abdul-Muttalib was a man of his words and of strong determination. One day he took his sons with him to Ka‘ba to fulfill his pledge. When lots were drawn it fell to the name of his youngest son ‘Abdullāh, who was ten years of age at that time. He was dearest to his father, because he was beautiful, smart, noble and youngest of his sons. Now that the lot had fallen on ‘Abdullāh’s name, and ‘Abdul-Muttalib had to fulfill it, so in the heart of his heart he was much disturbed.

By the time several Quraishite had gathered in Ka‘ba, when they heard the story, they unanimously said, it is not to be allowed that such a smart young man may die. They suggested to draw lot between ‘Abdullāh and ten camels, if the lot falls on camels, slaughter them instead of ‘Abdullāh. Second time the lot was drawn, it again fell at ‘Abdullāh. Number of camels was raised to 20, 30, ... 60, ... 80, still it went to ‘Abdullāh. At last number of camels was raised to 100. To the joy of ‘Abdul-Muttalib and all present, this time it fell to camels! Anyway to satisfy himself ‘Abdul-Muttalib repeated lot, again it fell on camels, so one

hundred camels were slaughtered instead of ‘Abdullāh.

‘Abdullāh was to father our Master Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

A glorious dream

Zuhrā (Venus) is the shiniest and most beautiful of all the celestial bodies that circle around sun. A Quraishite tribe Banī Zuhrā was named after this planet. The tribe was respected among Quraishites, Wahab Bin ‘Abd Manāf was prominent member of this tribe. He had a noble, well behaved, good tempered daughter, named Āmina. She was married to ‘Abdullāh, the youngest son of ‘Abdul-Muttalib, the chief of the Quraishites.

Abdullāh had to leave for Syria on a business trip within a week of his marriage. On return journey he stopped in Medina and fell severely ill, within few days he died. When the bad news reached Mecca, his wife Āmina was shocked. She would keep on weeping day and night in remembrance of

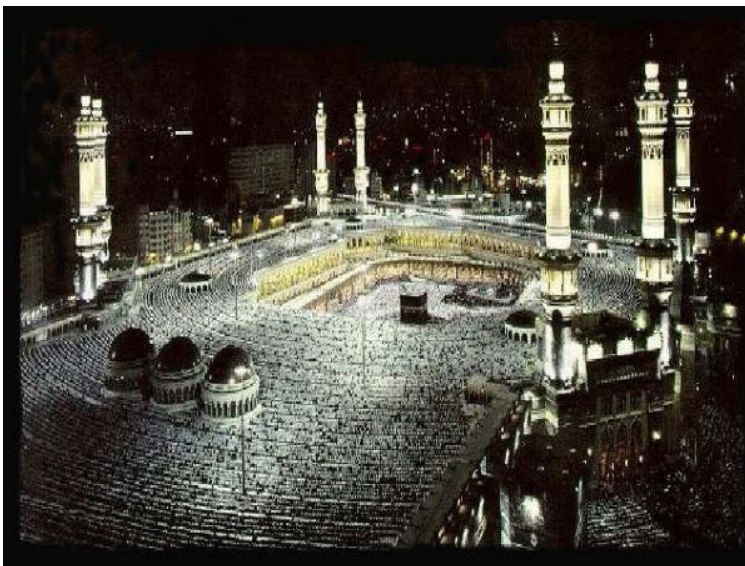
her deceased loving husband.

It was customary in Arabs that widows would marry a second husband but this girl loved her husband so dearly that she decided not to marry again for the rest of her life, and to spend her life in remembrance of her husband.

She would keep weeping, she would not care eating and wearing good clothes, nor she would braid her hairs. She would remain sitting at a place hours on, a picture of sadness and despair. Several months passed, there was no abating in her grief.

One night she dreamt as if whole world were draped in pitch darkness, so much so that nothing could be seen. Suddenly a glittering light emerged from her bosom. It spread and spread all around, covered whole world brightening every nook and corner of it.

Simple innocent girl could not understand the meanings of the dream, however, surely she felt some relief from her grief after the vision.



A night view of the Ka'ba during the annual pilgrimage.

Do you know who was this innocent noble girl? Her name was Āmina, mother to be of our Master Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!

People of the elephant

About seventy days before the birth of Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam, a terrible incident occurred, due to which Mecca could have been destroyed. But God in the heaven took mercy and saved the Meccans, all due to the blessed child Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam, who was to be born among them, in few days’ time.

Yemen is a small country in the south-western corner of Arabian Peninsula, situated on the bank of Red Sea. It was governed by Christian Abyssinian King, across the Red Sea. The king had appointed one of his generals Abraha as governor of Yemen. Abraha never liked Arabs going in thousands to Mecca for pilgrimage. In order to divert their attention from Mecca, he built a magnificent church in capital city Saná, and ordered Arabs to come to the church instead of going far off to Mecca.

Arabs never liked governor’s idea, instead some zealots threw filth in the church. The governor was much annoyed on disgrace of his church. He decided to launch an attack on Mecca to destroy it. He gathered an army of sixty thousand strong, including score of elephants, and set out for Mecca to destroy Ka‘ba. When he reached the suburbs of Mecca, some of ‘Abdul-Muttalib’s camels were grazing in a valley, soldiers rounded them up.

When ‘Abdul-Muttalib came to know that the invaders had captured his camels, he went to meet Abraha himself. Abraha happily welcomed him as chief of Quraish,

thinking that he came to offer to lay down arms, and beg pardon for what had been done to his church. He received ‘Abdul-Muttalib with honor and gave him an honorable seat. After inquiring about his health and wellbeing, he asked him for the purpose of his visit.

Abdul-Muttalib told him that he had come to retrieve camels that his soldiers have caught. Abraha looked at the Arab chieftain in surprise and said: “Well, take your camels, but the impression I had, knowing your name and status, is all vanished by your petty request. You have no fear for your Ka‘ba, for the destruction of which I have brought such a strong army. If all Arabs come to fight my army, none of them will escape. But instead of taking care of Ka‘ba you are after few camels. Such a petty thinking does not suit a Qurashite chieftain!”

Abdul-Muttalib smilingly replied: “I am the owner of the camels, my purpose to visit you is to get my property back. Regarding Ka‘ba, it has its Master, He will take care of it Himself. I need not to fear for it.”

Abraha lost his wits at this simple and straight forward reply, and said: “Well, I will see how your master of Ka‘ba saves it from my hands.”

Abdul-Muttalib rose to leave saying: “Ok, you see and we will also see,” and left.

Next morning Abraha arranged his army and the elephants to attack Ka‘ba. As soon as he proceeded, suddenly thousands of little birds came flying from beyond the hills and covered the sky. Every bird had a pebble in its beak, they volleyed pebbles on the soldiers, as pebbles hit soldiers, they were killed at the spot. In no time whole army of Abraha was crushed.

This historic incident is recorded in Holy Quran in a beautiful abridged form in section

105, entitled Al-Fil (The Elephant):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ
فِي تَضَلُّيلٍ وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ أَتَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ
مِّن سِجِّيلٍ أَفَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ

In the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.

Hast thou not seen how thy Lord
dealt with the People of the
Elephant. Did he not cause their plan
to miscarry? And he sent against
them, swarm of birds, striking them
against stones of clay. And thus
made them like broken straw, eaten
up.

Though Abraha did not get a direct hit
from the birds, he suffered even more terrible
death. He fell to a strange epidemic caused
by the rotting bodies of his soldiers and
elephants. His skin broke down in shreds
causing him terrible pain. Crying and wailing
he suffered a miserable death.

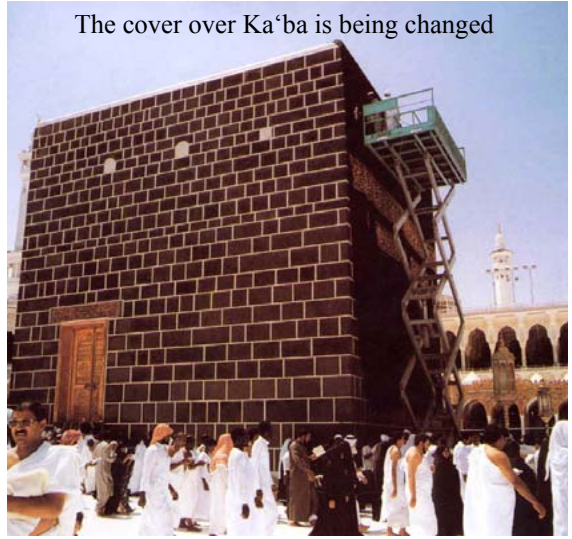
It is a universal truth that God's
punishment comes slowly, and when it
strikes leaves nothing.

Dream unfolds

There was no charm left in the world for a
sorrow stricken woman, as Āmina was, to be
happy. She was widowed after few days of
her marriage. The world was gloomy, it was
just as if she was living in a prison, no source
of joy, no happiness. Until God in heaven
took mercy on her, in a way that no body had
ever been blessed before, nor any body will
be blessed till doomsday. Her vision, of light
from her bosom, bore the great tidings that
she will bear a son, destined to become
spiritual leader of all mankind, whose
teachings will lighten up the whole world.

On one fateful Monday morning in the
month of August in the year A.D. 570, to

The cover over Ka'ba is being changed



mother's joy, a beautiful child was born to
her. The child was beautiful as if it was a
piece of bright moon. She found in him all
the happiness of life. He reminded her of her
deceased husband. When child's grandfather,
'Abdul-Muttalib, was informed of the birth,
he could not hide tears in his eyes, as it
reminded him of his dead son. He came
home and took the child in his lap, Āmina
told him of her dream of light coming out of
her bosom and radiating all over the world.
The happy grandfather told the young
mother: "This child is the explanation of that
dream." He named his grandson
"Muhammad" (the most praised one),
sallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam.

The child grew as spiritual leader and
redeemer of human kind. With the light of
his teachings, darkness of godlessness
dissipated and whole world lit up with the
light of one God!

People's surprise

Now 'Abdul-Muttalib had grown quite
old, throughout his long life he had not seen
such a beautiful child. The child lying in his

lap appeared as if it was an angel resting. ‘Abdul-Muttalib carried the child jubilantly to the Ka‘ba to offer prayers for his long life and good future.

Several Quraishite nobles were sitting gossiping in the Ka‘ba. They were astonished to see the beauty of the child, they admired and congratulated their chief on the birth of his beautiful grandson. They asked for the name of the child. ‘Abdul-Muttalib replied “Muhammad.” They stared at each other in surprise, since they had never heard such a name before. Someone took courage to ask: “Our respected chief! Why you have named your grandson by such a strange name? You should have named him after some idol.” ‘Abdul-Muttalib smiled: “It is my ardent desire that my son be praised all over the world. He may bear every good quality and goodness, so to be praised by every one. This is why I have named him “Muhammad.” His mother also had a vision which indicated that he will grow into a great respectable person.”

No one can boast that his desire will be fulfilled, but ‘Abdul-Muttalib’s desire was fulfilled true to its words. Just look at the world, no man has ever been praised in a way as our Master Prophet Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam, has been and is being praised. Fifteen centuries have passed, not a single day has passed when he has not been praised in every part of the world. In heaven God and angels, and Muslims all over the world, in every country, continuously keep on invoking blessings of God on him. His traditions and sayings have been collected in several volumes, translated in several languages. His sayings have been used as guidance in every sphere of life, and acted upon, true to word and sprit.

In short no guide, reformer, leader has ever been praised as much as our Master Prophet

(May peace of Allah be upon him).

Nursing an orphan

It was customary among Arabs, that after every six month women from surrounding villages would visit Mecca, to take infant children from noble families, in their care, to suckle and rear them in pure village environments. They would keep them till age of 4-5 years. In return parents would pay well for their nursing services. The children so raised were healthy and sharp witted.

Women from Banū Sa‘d tribe were one of those carrying out this job. As usual that year when women visited Mecca, all babies from wealthy families were taken. No body bothered to take orphan child of mother Āmina, since an orphan child was considered inauspicious among Arabs, moreover windowed mother was not expected to pay good remuneration for nursing service.

Nurse Halīma belonged to poor Banū Sa‘d tribe. No mother was prepared to entrust her child in her care. She was looking enviously at those nurses who were taking babies from wealthy families. Similarly mother Āmina was waiting for a nurse to take her child, but no one came. At last when Halīma failed to get a child from a wealthy family, she with the consent of her husband Hāris took Āmina’s baby, without any promise of return or reward. Thinking anything is better than nothing.

However, the child proved a source of blessings for Halīma’s family. The days of deprivation of family turned to bounty, poverty to riches and satisfaction. Family’s weak lazy she-camel became quick and healthy, soon none of the camels in the tribe equaled it in speed and health. The goats belonging to the family started giving more milk than those of the rest of the tribe. The

family was overall blessed because of the presence of the blessed child.

A Source of blessings

The little child Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was being nursed in the lap of Halīma, who would look at him in joy and kindness, since his arrival the house was full of blessings. Two years passed in a jiffy. It was time to return the child to his mother. Halīma and her husband never wanted that the child should leave their house, since they knew that all blessings they had in their house were due to the presence of the child. However, Halīma according to the custom went to return the child to his mother, after two years in her care.

She carried the child to his mother Āmina and requested her humbly: “Though I have brought back your child, but he has created deep love in my heart, in no way I want to separate him from me. It would be kind of you if you kindly allow me to keep the child with me for a little longer.”

By chance at that time the environmental conditions in Mecca were foul and detrimental to health; moreover, considering Halīma’s insistence, mother Āmina consented, saying, “Well, you have looked after my son so carefully that I cannot refuse your request. Moreover due to prevailing health conditions in Mecca, I do not want the child to stay in city at this time.” Halīma was overjoyed and happily returned to her village with the child.

Courageous little one

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was living with Halīma’s family. When he turned five years, he started accompanying other children around to graze goats in surrounding jungle. They would leave in

morning returning home in the evening.

Once when children were busy in grazing their goats as usual, suddenly a band of dacoits with frightening faces and shining swords in hands, attacked. The sight of dacoits put children in panic and they ran towards the village, except for one child, who was not frightened. He stood silent at his place, it was little Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam).

The dacoits never bothered to notice the presence of a small child. They rounded off the goats. When they were about to go away, the child stepped forward and said in a clear authoritative voice, “The villagers have entrusted their goats to our care. If you want to take them, first go and ask the villagers. If they agree then you can take them with you.”

Dacoits could not help smiling at the tone and simple words of the little child and were about to escape with the goats. When little boy saw that the dacoits had not heeded him, he quickly went forward and blocked the way of the goats.

Seeing the courage of little child, dacoit leader said angrily, “Get out of my way, let us take the goats.” “No, never, first kill me then take the goats. You cannot take the goats while I am alive.” The dacoits looked at each other in astonishment, and were surprised at the boldness of a little weak child!

Head of dacoits went forward and tapped the child on his head with affection and asked, “Whose son you are?” The child replied, “Abdul-Muttalib’s.”

Abdul-Muttalib was known all over Arabia. Hearing child’s reply the dacoit became soft and said, “Son of chief of Quraish should be as bold as you are. I honor your courage, and I am leaving the goats. I see in your face the light which says you will

grow into a personage who would be respected by all Arabs. What is your name?” “Muhammad.” “Muhammad, Muhammad what a strange and endearing name,” dacoit muttered amusingly. He galloped away with his band saying, “Ok, little courageous fellow, peace be with you.”

Strange visitors

Yet a few days had passed of the above incident, another strange thing happened.

As usual, little Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) and other boys were grazing their goats in the wild. Suddenly two men with white faces, dressed in white, appeared from somewhere. Ignoring other boys, they caught little Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam), laid him down on ground. They cut it open his chest with a sharp big knife, took out his heart, cut opened it and threw away something from it. Then they placed the heart in a large dish and washed it with crystal clear water, until heart shined like a pearl. They placed the heart back in the chest and closed it, and went away.

Halīma’s son ‘Abdullāh and other children stood bound to ground in astonishment witnessing the incident happening. They were terrified and out of their wits, trembling with fear they ran into the village. They told Halīma that some thing terrible has happened to Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “Today when we were grazing our goats with Muhammad among us, suddenly two noble looking men appeared out of the pass between the mountains. They came straight to us. They were wearing magnificent gowns, had beautiful majestic faces adorned with flowing beards. By their clothes and appearances we thought them to be noble people, but they proved cruel butchers. They

caught Muhammad, and with a long knife opened his belly. Seeing this we ran terrified lest they catch us and do the same with us. We do not know what happened to Muhammad afterward.”

Halīma was stunned on hearing the terrifying account. In desperation she felt as if earth was slipping from under her feet. She ran staggering to the site of the incident. She saw little Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) safe and sound standing all alone in the wilderness. Halīma ran to clasp the boy in her lap and kissed his forehead saying, “My son, my son, what happened?” Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) gave her the same account, Halīma looked around for any sign of blood, neither the ground was wet, nor there were foot prints. Moreover, some thing that was stated to had been thrown out of the heart of the child was not to be seen anywhere. There was no wound mark on child’s chest, no spilled blood. Naturally she concluded it was some thing unnatural which happened to the child. The idea terrified her. She thought if some thing happens to the child how she will face his mother and her tribe?

She hurried home and told her husband, “I am much terrified by the incident; I do not understand what happened to Muhammad. Though he is all right, there is no evidence to prove the story told by the children. Anyhow, I do not find the situation satisfactory. It is better that we take Muhammad to his mother as quickly as possible. Though his separation will be heavy on us, but if we loose the child, then what will happen to us?”

Hāris replied: “Yes, I agree with you. We should take him now to leave him in the custody of his mother safe and sound.”

Halīma and her husband hurried to the town with Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa

sallam), and handed him over to his mother. Mother Āmina asked her why she has brought him so suddenly. Halīma replied: “Some terrible things have been happening to Muhammad. It appears as if he is under some evil spell.”

Mother Āmina smiled and said: “Do not think like this. My child will not be lost. He will grow into a great magnificent man. I dreamt strange dreams at the time of his birth.”

Farewell mother!

Now Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) started living with his mother in Mecca. She loved her son more than any other mother could love her child. Yet she had not forgotten sudden demise of her husband, child’s father. Whenever Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) talked to her, he reminded her of his father, and she slipped in sorrow.

Until time came when she could not bear separation of her husband any more, and decided to visit Madīna to offer prayer at the grave of her dear husband. Perhaps there she may find some solace from her grief. She took Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) with her and set out for Madīna with a caravan. She stayed there for a month with her relatives. She would regularly visit grave of her husband, she would spend as much time as possible at the side of the grave.

At last she set out for Mecca with a caravan. When they reached village Abwā` in the way, Āmina suddenly fell seriously ill. Soon all hopes for her survival were lost. In the last moments of her life, she looked at her child in great dismay. The grief stricken little one was standing close by her. His departing mother signed him to come closer, he ran and clasped her. Tears flowed from mother’s and

son’s eyes. It was really shocking to think that she was leaving her only beloved son, all alone in a desert, away from relatives in Mecca. How a child of six will survive in a fearsome desert valley? How the child will feel her separation? These thoughts grieved her to the core of her heart, but death has no such considerations for a king, a bagger, a mother or a child. After few moments, Āmina breathed her last, leaving her dear son all alone for ever in the wilderness of the world, among strangers.

A boy of six is well capable of feeling his losses and recognizes his loved ones. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) stood dazed with grief close to his mother’s dead body. Tears flowed from his eyes, he sobbed helpless with grief. There was no familiar face around to comfort him. Who will take care of me? What can I do now, all alone, no mother, no father? Where will I go? Naturally these questions were grieving little one’s mind. Father died before his birth, now mom had left at six. This was the childhood of my Master Prophet Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam)!

Mother Āmina was buried in the wilderness in an unknown grave, and the orphan was delivered in the custodianship of his grief stricken grandfather ‘Abdul-Muttalib in Mecca.

Death of grandfather

Abdul-Muttalib loved his orphaned grandson more than all of his sons, he would keep him close to himself all the time. ‘Abdul-Muttalib, as chief of Quraish, had a majestic personality. He would sit at a place of prominence in Ka‘ba, at a special rug laid for him. No body dared to occupy that place or sit beside him, but his loving grandson would sit with him fearlessly. On one or two

occasions someone tried to prevent the child from sitting beside ‘Abdul-Muttalib, but ‘Abdul-Muttalib allowed his grandson to sit beside him on the special rug.

Alas! the child had little time to enjoy the compassion and love of his loving grandfather. Two years had hardly passed in the custody of his grandfather, the grandfather fell ill, and soon was at his death bed. When he felt that his last time had come, naturally he was worried about the welfare of his grandson, who was hardly of eight years of age. He decided to entrust him in the custody of one of his sons. He called his sons together. He told Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “My last time has arrived, I am worried about your future. Here are your uncles sitting before you. Go to one with whom you would like to live after me.” The little boy with tearful eyes reluctantly looked at the faces of his uncles, went forward and stopped before Abū Tālib. Abū Tālib caressed the child and took him in his lap.

Abdul-Muttalib addressed Abū Tālib: “Abū Tālib! I entrust this child in your care, with expectations that you will keep and nurture him as a keepsake of your demised brother and me. Hope you will treat him with kindness, he had not seen his father, and had enjoyed blessings of his mother for a short time. By enduring repeated sufferings his heart has become tender. Promise that you will treat him with love and compassion more than any of your sons.” Abū Tālib readily promised to take full care of the child.

At that occasion Abū Lahab, one of the uncles, was first to express his extreme desire to take his nephew in his custody, because he loved him intensely. So much so, he freed the slave woman who first conveyed the news of

birth of his nephew. Afterward when the same nephew announced his prophethood, same loving uncle proved to be his worst enemy.

Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s prayer

Now Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) lived with his uncle Abū Tālib, who loved him more than his own sons. He would keep the boy with him, taking all care to make him happy, he tried that Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) would not be offended in any way. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was a sophisticated, well behaved boy, with fine habits, some time purity and straightforwardness of the boy would put Abū Tālib in surprise. As Abū Tālib came to know more of Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s fine habits, he became more and more endeared to him, and started respecting his nephew.

Once there was great famine in Mecca, because there was no rain for a long time. Meccans were in great distress, they knew not what to do. Until one day Abū Tālib said to his nephew, “People are very much disturbed because of lack of rain. Yours is innocent heart and your tongue is pure. I see your life distinct from other’s. Take people of the town with you in the jungle and pray for rain.”

Our Master lead the nobles of Mecca to the jungle, and lifted his hands in prayer. Soon, miraculously, it rained intensely, as if the angel of rain was waiting for the signal from Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s invoking mercy of God. Famine conditions were changed to prosperity and abundance in few days. From that time people of Mecca knew that a special child was living with them.

An innocent wish

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was hardly nine or ten years of age when he would daily go to graze household goats in the company of another boy of his age. They would take their animals to graze in valleys outside Mecca, away from the hustle and bustle of the town where in every house people would gather daily to drink and enjoy musical, poetical, story telling, singing and dance concerts. Young and old would enjoy these gatherings, they would drink and wile away time in amusement, gossip and luxury. In the evening when children would return from field, they would hear people talking about interesting events of the day, appreciating and criticizing the artists and repeating interesting parts of their presentations. Naturally like other boys of his age, Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was impressed by these accounts. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) once decided to attend such a gathering, to see himself what happened there.

One day when Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) and his companion were tending their goats, Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) told his friend that he had desired to attend such a gathering in the city for some time. He requested his friend if he would take care of his goats in his absence, in return he would tend his goats allowing him to go in the town next day. As Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) entered the city he saw people gathered in a house. He asked somebody what was going on there; he was told that preparations of a marriage party were being made. Unintentionally Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) entered the house, rug was spread at the floor and guests were waiting

for the bridegroom to come. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) sat on the rug and soon went into deep sleep. When Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) woke up it was almost evening, and the sun was setting down beyond the hills. He hurried back to the grazing ground. So Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was saved from participating in a luxurious gathering. Similarly at another occasion Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) wanted to join an amusement gathering and was saved. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) gradually developed natural abhorrence against such gatherings.

Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s first journey

Traditionally Quraishites were traders, each year their trading caravans would leave for Iraq, Palestine and China. They had trading relations with several other countries too. In foreign markets they would sell their commodities and buy commodities needed back in the home markets.

Quraishites were respected all over Arabia, because they were custodians of Ka‘ba. Their trading caravans would travel across Arabia without any fear of being looted on the way. Otherwise there was prevailing lawlessness all over Arabia: roaming parties of dacoits, thieves and looters, swept across Arabian desert—they would not spare anybody. They would kill and injure if they are prevented from looting. If anybody fought back, he was unhesitatingly looted and killed. But Quraishites would travel fearlessly throughout Arabia, across valleys, deserts, villages and cities, no body would dare to hinder them. Their caravans would go laden with commodities for trading in other countries, and return laden with commodities

to Mecca. They would come and go safely. This freedom of unhindered movement at a time of lawlessness and looting was a matter of high priority only for Quraishites (Ref. 4).

Once when Abū Tālib was preparing to leave for Syria on a trading enterprise. The caravan was being prepared, packs of commodities were being loaded and tied on camels. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) silently observed hustle and bustle going on around him. Though Abū Tālib loved his ten year old nephew so dearly that he never wanted to part from him, but in view of long hazardous journey to Syria, he did not want to put his nephew in hardships of the arduous long journey. Instead he preferred to leave him home in care of his uncles. At the time of departure, when Abū Tālib was about to ride his camel, his loving nephew came forward and held camel’s bridle and said with tearful eyes, “Uncle, are you going away? In whose care are you leaving me behind?” Abū Tālib felt the depth and meaning of his nephew’s simple words. He climbed down his camel, caressed his nephew and said, “No my son, do not weep, I can’t see you distressed. Well, come with me.” He seated Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) in front of him on his camel, and both left for Syria. It was the first long journey of our master with his loving uncle Abū Tālib.

A helping pact

When satanic forces of oppression, injustice, injury, tyranny, violence, extortion and suppression saturate a society, suppressed forces of goodness and fairness are stirred up. As a part of natural checks and balance, the goodness in human nature is awakened. Taking a deep yawn goodness staggers to stand to block the way of

injustice, tyranny and oppression in society. So happened several time in Arabian corrupt society.

Some young concerned men gathered to agree on a pact to reform the society. They took oath of solidarity that they will strive to stop all wrong doings, acts of suppression, injustice, tyranny, violence and extortion, in the society. They resolved to work together to eradicate these evils from society, by persuasion and kindness, if needed they will use force to banish miscreants out of Mecca. By chance a part of the names of most of the signatories was Faḍl (فضل) so the pact is known in history as Ḥilful-Fuḍūl (حلف الفضول), Covenant/Alliance of Faḍls. The alliance included most of the leaders of the clans. The poor and destitute started hoping that now their conditions will turn to good, and they will be relieved from oppression and demolition.

But their hopes were soon dashed to ground. Morality of Arabs had deteriorated to such an extent that the alliance proved not more than a bubble of water. Soon every thing was forgotten and lost for ever. Later several attempts were made to revive the allegiance, but all went futile. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was one of the signatories of the alliance of Faḍls. He remembered his promise throughout his life and remained dedicated to his promise. He helped poor and oppressed, all alone by himself. He would serve needy with his time and money. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) had thousands of his followers who would sacrifice their lives at his command. As history tells us his dedicated followers helped and supported the poor, they never sided with bad intended rich and kings rather they stood with weak and helped, and took care of the needy and poor.

The most honest and trustworthy

As Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) grew in age, he also advanced in goodness and dedication towards humanity. No body had ever seen him indulging in bad acts, neither heard him telling a lie. He was always fair and polite in his dealings. As time passed his truthfulness and honesty was known all over Mecca. People called him “Sādiq” (the truthful) and “Amīn” (the reliable, the trustworthy). Everybody, big or small, would honor him because of his honesty and fair dealing. He was helpful to everybody, cared for the needy, was the only hope for the poor.

He took trade as his profession, as was the tradition of his family. Since he had no money to invest, he shared business with others. He traveled to Syria, Basra, and Yemen with trading caravans carrying and bringing back commodities to these distant lands. Whosoever shared business with him, never complained about his dealings. Nobody ever doubted his truthfulness and credibility.

Once a man by the name of ‘Abdullāh, wanted to have a business deal with him. While negotiating he remembered some thing important, telling Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) to wait, he promised to return soon to conclude the agreement. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) waited, ‘Abdullāh forgot to return. By chance ‘Abdullāh happened to passed that way after three days, he found Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) standing there waiting for him at the same spot where he left him. He apologized for the trouble he caused to our master by saying: “O Muhammad, excuse me, I completely forgot to return.” Our master politely told him that

he kept him waiting there for three days.

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was designated by people as Sādiq and Amīn, right from his young age. It is irrefutable proof of the truthfulness of his claim when he announced his prophethood: “I have spent a considerable period of my life among you, tell me if I ever lied or deceived you, or if you have ever objected to my conduct and chastity. Now when I have grown old, how all of a sudden I have started lying about God. It is a simple thing why you don’t think over it?”

Obviously if he was not truthful and trustworthy, why they called him “truthful” and “trustworthy?”

A noble wealthy lady

Khadīja al-Kubrā (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) was a noble wealthy woman living in Mecca. She belonged to a highly respected family. Her father Khuwailid ibn Asad, of Banū Asad tribe of Banū Hāshim, was respected all over Mecca. No body equaled Khadīja (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) in wealth in whole of the Arabia. She was a renowned business woman. She would send trading caravans to all known business centers in Egypt, Syria, Yemen and other cities by hiring people.

When she heard about the honesty and fair dealing in business of young Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam), she called for him, she was his distant cousin. She expressed her wish to send him with her merchandise to Syria, and promised to pay him twice of the usual remuneration. She promised to send a slave with him to serve him during the journey. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) accepted the deal and set out for Syria with trading commodities, accompanied by the servant named Maisara.

When the caravan reached Basra, a town in southern Syria. The commodities were quickly sold out at considerably high prophet. So there was now no reason to continue to Syria. The caravan returned to Mecca. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) gave full account of the expenditure and earned money to the satisfaction of the lady. Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) inquired from Maisara how journey went by, and how Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) treated him in the way. Maisara replied, “Muhammad certainly is a strange man, he was polite and sweet in his talking and dealings, his moral was high, he was truthful and trustworthy. I have never seen a person like him throughout my life. He treated me like his brother. Though I was supposed to serve him, instead, he served me. He is not a man, rather an incarnation of an angel.”

Marriage

Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) was wealthy as well as a lady of high thinking. Because of her good deeds, chastity and fair dealings she was known all over Mecca as “Tahira” (the pure one). She was twice widowed, she resolved not to marry again, though because of her high character, and endearing habits several prominent respected dignitaries among Meccan asked for her hand, but every time she refused. Young Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s capabilities, nobleness and fair conduct, and reports of his high morals from her slave Maisara, put her in thinking of him. She decided to offer her hand to Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) through her trustworthy slave woman Nafeesa.

Nafeesa met Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam). Conversation between the two advanced as follow:

Nafeesa: “Young man! In your age one becomes father of several children. But you are still not wed. What is your plan about your marriage?”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “Please Ma’am, I am a poor man, I have little income. Obviously no one will accept my hand for his daughter. If, in anyway, I marry, how will I meet expenses of a household when I am hardly able to support myself?”

Nafeesa: “I don’t think it a valid excuse. If you marry a wealthy woman, you may not have money problem?”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) smilingly replied: “Why would a wealthy man accept my hand for his daughter? It is customary among wealthy people that they give hand of their daughters to boys from wealthy families.”

Nafeesa replied: “But if some wealthy woman wishes to marry you, then?”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) surprising asked: “Which wealthy woman would wish to marry a poor man like me?”

Nafeesa: “My mistress Khadīja wishes to marry you. She sent me with the proposal, if you accept?”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “What can I say in this matter? I will talk about it to my uncle before saying anything since I am living with him. After all he is also my guardian.”

Nafeesa: “Until you yourself agree to the proposal, asking about it from your uncle is useless.”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “No, I do not mean that. If my uncle likes this match, I will agree to it”.

Nafeesa: “Ok, then talk to your uncle. I will come some other time to know what you have decided.”

After that Nafeesa left, Muhammad

(sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) told his uncle Abū Tālib about Khadīja radiyallāhu ‘anhā’s offer. Abū Tālib’s answer was: “If Khadīja so wishes, accept it. After all Khadīja is no stranger to our family, she is your cousin.”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) consulted his other uncles also. They all agreed that the offer was very suitable and good.

Next evening Nafeesa returned: “Have you asked from your uncle?”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “Yes, I told him, he is willing.”

Nafeesa happily replied: “It is very good! Now this august marriage should not be delayed anymore. It should soon take place. A noble task should not be put off.”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam): “Well, I will talk to my uncle regarding this. What he would like to do, I will let you know.”

Within few days all marriage preparations were made. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) accompanied by his uncles and other Quraish dignitaries visited Khadīja, radiyallāhu ‘anhā’s house. Abū Tālib lead the marriage ceremony, it took place in a solemn simple manner.

Marriage between Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) and Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) is an excellent example of purity and good will. At the time of marriage Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) was 40 years of age, and her husband Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was of 25 years. She never thought that by marrying a poor young man she had degraded her family among her tribe. Her only consideration of her choice was high moral conduct of her husband. While on the other hand Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) never had in his mind that he was younger than the lady he was marrying. His

decision of marring was her chastity and good fame and conduct. Their mutual understanding and happiness made this marriage august and very fruitful.

A devoted wife

Now that they were married, Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) had a chance to observe her husband closely. She found in him a noble, kind and a man of high moral character. She thought herself to be the luckiest woman in the world. Knowing high qualities of her husband, she devoted herself in the service of her highly esteemed husband. She could not find a weakness or a flaw in his noble character.

She was the richest woman in Mecca, she gave her husband all that she had in her possession, telling him it was all his, he could spend it as he wished. Had young Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) been lustful and a man of luxurious enjoyment, or had married Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) for her riches, it was appropriate time to squander away the riches in dancing and drinking parties, and wearing costly clothes. He could have raised an army of slaves and servants devoted in his personal service. Instead he spent the riches to help poor, needy, orphans, sick, widows and feeding guests. No needy was ever turned away from his door, he would clothe the clotheless, he would feed hungry and destitute, he would pay dues of poor debtors, ransom to free slaves from their cruel masters. He himself would wear modest clothes, eat simple food, neither did he like to be served by servants, nor did he live in pomp and show.

He was especially very kind towards Meccans, he would help every body irrespective of clan or creed. He would solve

problems by lending sincere advice, extinguish fire of quarrels between opposing parties. In short he was an angel of love, compassion, an embodiment of love and goodness. He never turned away a needy from his door without fulfilling his or her need. To him oppressed and downtrodden would turn, he would uplift and give them hope.

Four corners of cloth sheet

Once there was unusually heavy rain in Mecca, walls of Ka‘ba were damaged, and were near collapse. Ka‘ba was held sacred by Quraish and all Arabs. They decided to demolish the damaged building, and rebuild with stronger foundations and walls. So the Ka‘ba was rebuilt, everybody took part in its reconstruction. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was also one of the partakers. After completion of the construction work, question of placement of Al-Hajar-ul-Aswad (Black Stone) arose. Since every tribe revered the stone, each wanted to have honor of placing the stone at its original site. No tribe was prepared to relieve their right in the favor of the other; swords were nearly drawn out. Elders wanted to settle the matter by negotiations, but all efforts were useless. There was stand off for several days. At last it was decided that the person who would be the first to enter the Ka‘ba early next morning, his decision will be acceptable to all. Next morning Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was the first person to enter Ka‘ba. Seeing him everybody cried in joy: “It is Muhammad, he is trustworthy. We all will honor his decision.” Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) stepped forward, took off sheet of cloth from his shoulders, spread it out on the ground, and placed the stone in its middle. Then he called

the chieftains of every tribe to come forward and hold the sheet from its corners, and carry the stone to the place where it was to be placed. On reaching the spot, Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) lifted the stone and put it at its place.

So the stand off of several days was resolved amicably because of presence of mind and foresight of young Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam). Otherwise the problem could have ignited a war between tribes resulting in wide spread blood shed.

Faithful slave and kind master

It was the period of general lawlessness and restlessness all over Arabia, and then known world. Child traffickers were at large, moving with caravans, from place to place, picking up unattended kids and selling them into slavery in distant lands. The anarchical lawless conditions were due to the political instability and chaos created by Iranian Sassanid, Roman Byzantine and African Abyssinian Empires. They were always in state of war with each other. Rival soldiers would raid each other’s territories, would commit atrocities against helpless civilians, looting homes, and rounding up women, children and cattle. The trading caravans were most vulnerable if not protected by an army of fighters.

Hāris was a noble Christian, living in Yemen in the south. His son Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) was a handsome young boy of eight year of age, he was endeared to his father because of his loveable habits. Once when Hāris was traveling with his family, they were attacked by a group of bandits who rounded up children and took them away. The abducted children were sold in slavery in the trading center of ‘Ukāz. By chance Khadija radiyallāhu ‘anhā’s nephew

Hakīm Bin Hizām was visiting ‘Ukāz market at that time. Out of the lot he bought four boys, one of them was Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu), son of Hāris. Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) impressed Hakīm by his innocence and sharp wits. Once when Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) was visiting her nephew’s home, Hakīm told her about the slave boys that he had bought. He wanted to present one of them to her. He invited her to pick up one, Khadīja (radiyallāhu ‘anhā) picked Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu), and brought him home. She found him good mannered and civilized. She presented him to her husband as a gift. Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) was now Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s slave.

Separation from his son put Zaid radiyallāhu ‘anhu’s father Hāris in deep grief, he was almost mad. He would weep for days and nights, remembering his lost son. He would go out asking every one whom he met, if he has seen his son? Day by day his mental condition worsened. Years went by; he had no news of his beloved son. Suddenly a ray of hope sparkled. People returning from Mecca after performing pilgrimage told Hāris a great news that they had seen and met his son Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) in Mecca. He is a slave of a nobleman named Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam), the grandson of Quraish chieftain ‘Abdul-Muttalib. Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) was happy and comfortable with his master, who is a noble and kind hearted person, he is known as trustworthy and truthful in his dealings. He took care of Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu), as if he were his own son. They suggested if Hāris would visit Mecca and request Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) to return Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) to him, they were certain Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) would happily do so.

The news that his son Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) was in Mecca ignited a hope in the grief stricken heart of Hāris. He took a large sum of money, set forth for Mecca in the company of his brother. He met Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) and related to him the story of kidnapping of his beloved son Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu). He told Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) how dismayed and sorrowful he was since the loss of his son. He implored him to let Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) go with him. He offered a large sum of money in ransom. The moving story of Zaid radiyallāhu ‘anhu’s father, put Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) in thoughts. Actually Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) had started liking Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) because of his loveable habits, he loved him as if he was his own son. He did not want to be separated from him. On the other hand he never wished to keep Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) forcefully away from his aggrieved parents against his will. He was worried what to say to the grieving father. At last Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) had a suggestion: “Well, let Zaid decide himself what he wants, to stay with me or go with you. If Zaid decides to go with you, I will happily allow him to do so, demanding no money as ransom. But if he wishes to stay with me, you have to agree to his decision. If he stays with me I assure you I will take every care of him, as if he is my own son. I will protect him from every harm as long as I live.” Zaid radiyallāhu ‘anhu’s father and uncle happily agreed to this proposal, since they were confident Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) will decide to go with them.

As this was happening, Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) returned home from playing. When he entered the house, his master called him:

“Zaid, come here!” Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) turned back, he was stunned to find his father and uncle in front of him. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) asked him if he recognized them. Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) replied: “Yes, this is my father and that is my uncle.” Saying this Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) ran to hug his father who lovingly clasped him to his chest. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) told Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu): “They have come to take you with them. Do you want to go, or live with me?” Father and uncle looked at Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) expectantly. But to their amazement, Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) replied: “I will stay with you, I do not want to go home, never.” Hāris said amazingly: “Zaid, are you in your senses? You are preferring slavery over freedom, I deplore your understanding.” Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) caught Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) by his hand and lead him into Ka‘ba, followed by Zaid radiyallāhu ‘anhu’s father and uncle. In Ka‘ba several Quraish chieftains were gossiping. Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam, went forward and addressed them: “You, who are sitting here at this time, bear witness that today I free Zaid (radiyallāhu ‘anhu) and declare him my son. He will inherit me and I will inherit him.” The father and uncle who were standing spellbound, could never believe that somebody would leave his parents and boast on slavery of a stranger. They were amazed that a master can treat his slave in such kindness and benevolence! With heavy heart but satisfied about the safety of their son, they turned back to Yemen.

Idol worshipers in house of God

Prophet Abraham (‘alaihissalām) and Ishmael (‘alaihissalām) built Ka‘ba

specifically for the worship of their Lord God. For long time Ka‘ba remained seat of worship of one God. As time passed Arabs lost sight of truth, and started descending in darkness of ignorance. When we trace back history of idol worship, we wonder at the low ebb of their thinking. How mentally vulnerable and baseless they were at that time! Owing to the evil influence of the heathen Amalekites, living in southern Syria, they fell into idolatry and paganism. How it happened:

‘Amr bin Luhayy of Jauzā tribe, was quite a resourceful man because he was a wealthy man and caretaker of Ka‘ba. Once he fell seriously ill of a skin disease, despite treatment of every kind he was not cured. He was told of a fountain in Muāb village, southern Syria. If he would take bath in that fountain, he would surely be cured. ‘Amr visited the place and was cured. During his stay in Muāb village, he found Amalekite people worshiping stony figures and prostrating before them.

The scene was new to ‘Amr, he asked what were they doing? What was that before which they were prostrating? Villagers wondered at ‘Amr’s ignorance, and told him that those figures were very useful things. They fulfill their desires and needs. Though apparently they are stones, actually they have great powers. When rain is needed they cause rain, when sun is needed they take away clouds. They protect them against enemies, and help friends. They comfort to make them happy, cure them of their ills and help them pay their debts. Whatever one wishes from them they fulfill it.

‘Amr was impressed by the narration of attractive attributes of the clumsily carved figures, and the account of their magical powers. ‘Amr was such a simpleton that out

of his foolishness he could not control to say: “I wonder how much you are enjoying. If you kindly give me one of them, I will take it with me to my country. Though it will not be a loss to you from parting from one of them, but it will make things easy for us.” So he was given a stony figure named Hubal. ‘Amr reverently brought it to Mecca, and fixed it on the roof of the Ka‘ba. He advertised magical powers of his new find by going door to door asking people to worship it instead of God.

The man was influential, and had been helping everybody by lending money, most of the Meccans were under his influence. They accepted his call and started worshiping the figure at the roof. As time passed, they started carving figures of their own from stone, wood, mud and from every thing that they could put their hands on, like dates, etc. They deposited their idols in Ka‘ba. In short time Ka‘ba became depository of idols. Their number increased to 360, as time passed. Perhaps there was no other greater idol worshiping centre with such a large concentration of idols in the whole world.

It is how after passage of time Abraham ‘alaihissalām’s children lost sight of their duty towards their one God and indulged in worshiping score of idols. Slowly all social vices stemmed from idolatry. Obviously human mind cannot accept to fear a figure whom man carves himself, gives it a shape of his own choice! Steadily they became fearless and started committing all conceivable crimes, emerging as worst inhabitants on earth.

Ka‘ba was also revered as a religious center throughout Arabia. Through pilgrims, slowly and steadily, idolatry spread in whole of Arabia. After some time every tribe, every family, every house, every person had his

own god. Whenever some body would go on a journey, he would take three stones with him to make fireplace for cooking meals, afterward one of the stones was put in front to prostrate before it. Others will pick a stone in the way and make it a god, some will carry their god in pockets, pulling it out at the time of worship.

Restlessness in the world

The Arabs, descendents of Prophet Abraham (‘alaihissalām) through Ishmael (‘alaihissalām), with the passage of time, forgot sanctity and importance of Ka‘ba, rather made it a depository of several hundred different shaped gods, and consequently started harboring every conceivable vice in their society and culture. They despised to learn, read and write, and abhorred literate persons. They became totally wild, losing civic and civil values, became barbaric, savage and mischievous. They could do anything in the name of honor. They would kill their daughters in cold blood to preserve false family honor. We have already read much about their vices, and need not to recount details. It is sufficient to sum up by saying that Arabs at that time had all the vices one can conceive of, had transgressed all bounds of wickedness. Intertribal and personal disputes resulted in years long wars, involving score of tribes, would consume thousands of innocent men, women and children. Wars would continue for years even when cause of the dispute was forgotten.

Outside Arabian Peninsula there was restlessness and anarchy everywhere, no peace and tranquility. Fire worship was the religion in neighboring Iran, people were habitual luxury mongers, draped in every type of adultery and sin. While the Indian

subcontinent was fixed in strong clutches of countless gods and nature worship. Every animal, tree mountain, river had fallen in the line of countless gods. Indians considered whole world unclean, except India. The cast system divided people in low and high grades. The low cast “Chudars” were considered born from the feet of god, lived in most degraded conditions, below animals. The Brahamans claimed to have godly powers and considered highest, claimed to have born from the head of god!

Lawless ruffians were on the loose, they would roam about far and wide, looting and ruthlessly killing people. They would round up people and cattle, and sell them. Mostly they were uncivilized observing no rule and regulation.

The Chinese were nature worshipers, would worship natural phenomenon. Rest of Asia was a “dark continent,” peopled by uncivilized, clans living in jungles like animals. They would not observe any law and regulation.

Of Europe, only Greek and Roman empires were prominent, they were proud of their civilizations, and were idol worshippers. Remains of these civilizations are still preserved in dilapidated magnificent buildings and stone carvings. While rest of the European continent was rampaged by ruffians and looters who were in charge every where. Bands of these furious bandits would attack each other, looting, plundering villages and killing ruthlessly, rounding up children and women selling them as slaves. They were uncivilized cave dwellers, used human skulls as vessels to drink wine from.

Egypt, on the other hand, was the only African country with some indication of civilization, but was ruled by idol worshippers. Kings were worshiped as gods.

Egyptians built magnificent temples in honor of their gods. Bodies of kings were mummified, riches were buried with them. The pyramids that stand in the Egyptian desert, are sufficient to indicate the might of the kings and magnificence of there burial places.

To sum up, the era of which we are talking about was a dark era of human civilization as regards to recognition of God the Almighty, the Sustainer of the world. Darkness of ignorance was ranging throughout the known world. Before the advent of the Master Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam), believers in God’s supreme powers, eternity, oneness without any partner, were almost non existent, except for few recluse ones who had no voice. They alone prayed for the coming of the promised one. When darkness of ignorance thickened and became limitless engulfing the whole world, transgressing all limits, their prayers were heard. God, the real God, Creator and Sustainer of the world and all that it includes, wished that world come out of the depths of the sea of darkness. Refreshing winds of His kindness started blowing ahead of the rain of mercy, benevolence and kindness. Smoldering hellish fire of ignorance and apathy evaporated in no time. The light of knowledge lit up the world. Glittering face of God started to become visible in the haze. The few noble souls, from throughout the world, who had been praying for centuries to get a glimpse of the promised one, threw themselves in prostration to thank God for His mercy and kindness. They were the luckiest persons who witnessed the advent of the promised one, for whom Father Prophet Abraham (‘alaihissalām) and his son Ishmael (‘alaihissalām) prayed, and Jesus (‘alaihissalām) the son of Mary

(‘alaihassalām) prophesized!

Declaration of prophethood

Now our narration has reached the time when the advent of our Master Prophet was nearing to be announced. At the time world had been saturated by sins of every conceivable kind. Cities, towns, and villages were restless. There was no solace in the wilderness of deserts, jungles, fertile and barren valleys. There was no place left for the old, young, women, children, or sick to escape. At last time of the fulfillment of the prayers of prophets and pious people—whom were left on the right path of their Lord—arrived. Tears shed in prayers at last invoked kindness and mercy of God in heaven to shower blessings on earth. Wind of kindness and mercy of God started blowing to sweep away poisonous fumes of infidelity and oppression that had been killing nobility and compassion for a long, long time. Enough wrong had happened with the humanity. The darkness of ignorance, hate and oppression was now about to be swept away by heavenly light. The world drenched in filthy sins, would now emerge clean. Satanic and devilish powers were going to evaporate and be destroyed. God’s kingdom was going to be established on the earth as it is established in heaven. The world full of oppression, injustice, disobedience and rebellion, was going now to be filled with justice, fair play, faith, and confidence. Water of divine mercy, which had waited for appropriate time, was ready to rain on dead and barren soil.

Advent of master spiritual guide, world’s leader and master of both worlds, is now about to be announced. Glorious, majestic face of Lord God is about to shine and cleanse the world of the scourge of idolatry and faithlessness. The world is going to be

established on firm foundations of righteousness, belief in one God, knowledge and wisdom.

Yes, There was flicker of light in the horizon... !

The holy cave

By now for the last forty years, Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) had been witnessing anarchy, lawlessness and restlessness that ranged all around him in Arabia and elsewhere. He had traveled to Syria and other places. Everywhere conditions were the same. His was the only pure and noble heart in Mecca, who was sorrowful at excesses and crimes that were being committed. He wanted to do some thing so that people may desist from doing satanic deeds, and start living a clean and pure godly life, for the relief of poor. He prayed and asked for guidance, from where it will come? From idols? No, his conscious does not support the idea. Then from where he could get the guidance. There were no Christians around who may impress him; neither Jews were of a standard to help. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was restless, his pure heart writhed and quivered as he could not find a way to correct the prevailing wrongs in the society. He felt dejected and restless to continue living among human shaped blood thirsty wolves.

Mount Hira is situated about three miles from Mecca. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) would occasionally retire for days there in a cave. He would sit in deep contemplation and prayer. He would take food for several days and sit alone in the calmness of the cave in deep thoughts, seeking help from Allah, his God. He strived to find ways to change moral conditions of

his nation. Some time, helpful and only sympathizer, wife Khadīja (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā), will join him in prayer. Together they would pray and weep asking for guidance from their Lord God. They would remain for hours in deep meditation.

This practice went on for some time. There was no abating in their anxiety and grief. However, Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) started to have true visions, which were soon fulfilled.

It was starting of communion of Master Prophet with Allah, the Almighty! A flickering of light in the horizon!

The messenger angel

On one fateful day when Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was praying, as usual, all alone in the cave, a sudden burst of bright light almost blinded him. As he looked up, he saw a bright figure sitting on a magnificent seat hanging between earth and sky. The figure looked huge and magnificent. It was the **Holy Ghost**, angel Gabriel, who brought first revelation from God to him in response to his meditations and supplications.

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was surprised at the sight of the angel Gabriel. The angel came down from his magnificent seat, and stood in front of Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam). Rays from the shining face of the angel lightened up the surroundings in the cave.

The angel said: “Muhammad, read!”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) replies anxiously: “I cannot read.”

The angel stepped forward and caught Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) by his shoulders and hugged him tightly. Letting him go, said: “Now read.”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam)

replied: “I cannot read.”

The holy spirit moved forward, again hugged him. Letting him go, said: “Now read.”

Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam’s reply was the same as twice before.

At this, God-sent angel caught him for the third time. Hugged him tightly, releasing him, said, “Now read,” and Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) started repeating after him:

[96:2] “Proclaim thou in the name of thy Lord Who created,

[96:3] Created man from a clot of blood.

[96:4] Proclaim! and thy Lord is the Most Bounteous;

[96:5] Who taught by the pen,

[96:6] Taught man what he knew not.”

As soon as Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) finished repeating words, the angel suddenly disappeared.

It was the first revelation of Allah the Almighty received by our Master Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The first gust of heavenly fresh air!

Consoling wife

What happened in the cave to Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was an astonishing experience. Because of anxiety, repeated hugging by the angel, and mysterious words, unexpected shuddering, supernatural vision, he could not understand what had happened to him. Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was drenched in perspiration. He could not think anything except that he quickly climbed down the hill and hurried home.

When his loving wife saw anxiety on the face of her loving husband, she was confused. She greeted him by saying, “What

has happened? Are you alright?” Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was trembling all over because of the impact of the vision. His heart was throbbing fast. He replied: “Cover me with a cloth, put a cloth on me!” Khadīja (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) took off sheet of cloth from her body and put it on her husband. She sat beside messaging him.

Soon the trembling condition soothed down and Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) was calm. Khadīja (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) asked, “What happened? Why are you so disturbed? Your heartbeat is still fast? Please, tell me quickly, what happened? I am feeling uneasy to see your condition.” Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) replied, “Khadīja! What I have seen, and endured, perhaps you will not believe.” Khadīja (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) insisted: “Why I will not believe? I have believed in every thing you have told me.”

Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) recounted, “As I was sitting, praying in the cave, suddenly a light sparkled before my eyes. When I saw upwards, I saw a sparkling figure hanging between the sky and the earth. As I looked in surprise, the figure came down, and it thrice hugged me tightly and taught me a few words which I still remember. Then it suddenly disappeared, and there was all darkness in the cave, I feared for my life.”

Khadīja (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) said, “No, no, don’t think like this. God will not destroy you. You are compassionate to people, and you are true to your word and are truthful, helping strangers. You are holding up all the true and high virtues which are lost from the world. You whole heartedly care for the guests, and you are helpful to people in every thing good. How God will ever destroy a noble person like you? Do not be anxious.



Masjid Nabawi today

The vision which you had today, certainly is very strange, but there is no cause of concern. I will take you to meet my cousin Warāqa bin Naufal. He is a knowledgeable person, and well versed in revealed books. He will surely satisfy you, and tell what all this means. Do not be disturbed, eat some food and drink. Rest for some time, then we will go to meet Warāqa.”

A strange prediction

A glow in the horizon indicates that the flight of the darkness of the night is nearing, and world is about to be lit up by sun. Similarly, before the dawn of the prophethood, indicators appeared that the dark era of idol and element worshipers is going to end. Of the multitude of idol worshippers, few sensible persons realized the absurdity of giving godly status to pieces of rock. They turned to Christianity because it was revealed monotheistic religion of the time. Zaid bin ‘Amr, Qis bin Sa‘ida, Uthman bin Huwairith and Warāqa bin Naufal were well known of them. Warāqa was a scholar of Torah, Psalms of David and the Gospels and knew interpretations of these books. He was also well versed in the forecasts of the past messengers of God. Because of his knowledge, Warāqa was respected among

Quraishites. Khadija (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā) took Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) to him, and sought his help. Warāqa heard the story attentively, and asked Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) to tell him the words which he was taught.

When Warāqa heard the verses, he said, “Muhammad, you are the luckiest person of your time. I congratulate you on your prophethood. The luminous body that you saw certainly was the same angel that appeared to Moses. The words he taught you, I swear by God, are the words from God’s mouth. If I am alive that day when your people will banish you from your land, I would certainly help you. Would that I may live to that day, though I have no hope of getting that long life, because I have now grown very old, and am getting very weak, my hands and legs are tired, I can’t see well. Perhaps I may die within six months or a year.”

Astonished on what Warāqa had just said, Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam) asked in amazement: “Why my people will banish me? I have never done wrong to anybody. I am well wisher and helpful to everybody. Everybody is happy with me. I have no enemy in Mecca. I can’t understand why my people will banish me from my land? No, it can’t happen, will never happen. What wrong have I done to my people that they will banish me from my land?”

The old scholar smiled and said, “Holy prophet designate! Now you will not understand what I have told you. But it so happens that whenever a person says like what you have said, people turn against him. He is severely tortured, as a last resort they banish him and his followers from their homes. Well, may God protect and help you, and save you from ill will of your enemies.”

Now the time had come for the fulfillment of the prayers of Abraham (‘alaihiṣṣalām) and Ishmael (‘alaihiṣṣalām).

Warāqa bin Naufal was the first person to acknowledge prophethood of our Master Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!)

Acknowledgment

The author wishes to acknowledge that he has taken basic ideas for the present work from the books, Life of Muhammad, and Hamāra Āqā.

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1.

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ
الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ
بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾

[2:159] Surely, Al-Safa and Al-Marwah are among the Signs of Allah. It is, therefore no sin for him who is on Pilgrimage to the House, or performs Umrah, to go around the two. And whoso does good beyond what is

obligatory, surely then, Allah is Appreciative of good deeds, and All-Knowing.

2.

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَبْنَؤُا إِنِّي أَرَى فِي
السَّمَاءِ آتِيًا أَذْبَحُكَ فَأَنْظُرُ مَاذَا تَرَى قَالَ
يَأْتِ أَفْعَلُ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَجِدْ لِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ
مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

[37:103] And when he was old enough to run along with him, he said, ‘O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I offer thee in sacrifice. So consider what thou thinkest of it!’ He replied, ‘O my father, do as thou art commanded; thou wilt find me, if Allah please, steadfast in my faith.’

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّاهُ لِلْحَبِيبِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

[37:104] And when they both submitted to the will of God, and Abraham had thrown him down on his forehead,

قَدْ صَدَقْتَ الرَّؤْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

[37:106] ‘Thou hast, indeed, fulfilled the dream.’ Thus, indeed, do We reward those who do good.

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

[37:109] And We left for him a good name among the succeeding generations.

3.

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ
رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٣٨﴾

[2:128] And remember the time when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the house, praying, ‘Our Lord, accept this from us; for thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing;

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً
مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٣٩﴾

[2:129] ‘Our Lord, make us both submissive to Thee and make of our offspring a people submissive to Thee. And show us our ways of worship and turn to us with mercy; for thou art Oft-Returning with compassion, and art Merciful.

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٤٠﴾

[2:130] ‘And, Our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise’.

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿١٤١﴾

[37:110] Peace be upon Abraham!

4.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١٤٢﴾

[106:1] In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

لَا يَلْفُ قُرَيْشٌ

[106:2] Thy Lord destroyed the Owners of the Elephant in order to attach the hearts of the Quraish—

إِنْفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ

[106:3] To make them attached to their journeys in winter and summer.

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ

[106:4] So they should worship the Lord of this House,

الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَأَمَّنَّهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ

[106:5] Who has fed them against hunger, and has given them security against fear.

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IMPORTANT CORRECTION

Chaudhry Bashir Ahmad, retired Director WAPDA, now in Seattle, USA—a long time class fellow of Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih IV, rahimahullāh—points out that the annotation published under Hazoor's picture in Al-Nahal (Vol. 17, No. 1, back cover) is incorrect. Hazoor (Muhammad Sharif Khan)

completed his matriculation in 1944 from Talim-ul-Islam High School, Qadian, India, and then joined Government College, Lahore, to study sciences. He did not study at the Talim-ul-Islam College, Qadian. The published misinformation is regretted.

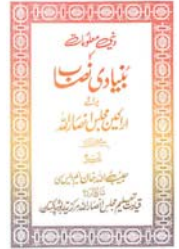
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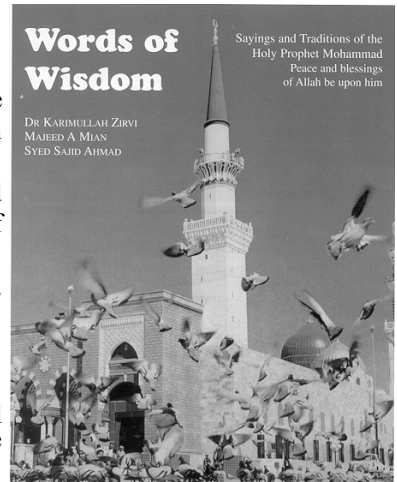
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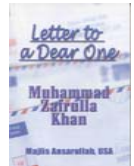
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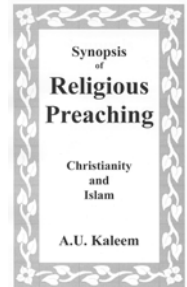
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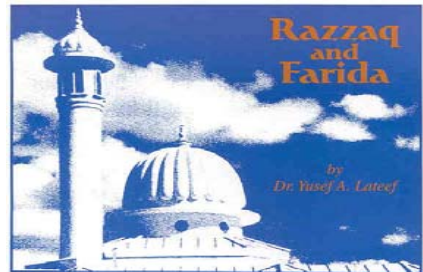
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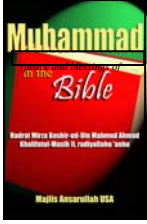


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(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

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Glossary

- abu: father of
aḥādīth احاديث : Plural of ḥadīth.
Aḥmadiyyat احمديت : Muslim sect believing
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad to be the
Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on
him
‘alaihassalām عليها السلام : peace be on her
‘alaihissalām عليه السلام : peace be on him
al-naḥl (pronounced annaḥl): the bee
Āmilah: a committee of workers
Ansār انصار : Helpers. Members of Majlis
Ansarullah.
ayyadahullāhu ta‘ālā binaṣrihil-‘azīz,
ايدده الله تعالى بنصره العزيز
him with His Mighty Help
Chanda: چنده Monetary contribution,
donation.
chanda ijtima: contribution towards ijtima‘
expenses
Hadees: see Hadith
Hadith حديث : Saying of the Holy Prophet
Muhammad, sallallāhu alaihi wa sallam.
Ḥaḍrat, Hazrat: حضرت : His Holiness
Al-Hajar-ul-Aswad: The Black Stone.
Ḥilful-Fuḍūl (حلف الفضول): Covenant/Alliance
of Faḍl. A part of the names of most of the
signatories was Faḍl (فضل).
ḥuḍūr, huzur حضور : Your Honor/Holiness,
His Honor/Holiness
Ijtimā‘, Ijtema اجتماع : Rally.
Ijtimā‘āt اجتماعات : plural of Ijtima.
inshā‘allah, ان شاء الله : God willing.
istighfār: seeking forgiveness from Allah
Jamā‘at جماعت : Community, Organization
Jumu‘ah جمعه : Friday.
Khalīfah: vicegerent
Khalīfatul-Masih خليفة المسيح : Successor to
the Promised Messiah, ‘alaihissalam.
Khalāfat خلافت : Succession
Khalilullah: friend of God
khulafā خلفاء : Plural of khalīfah.
la ilaha illallah: there is none worthy of
worship except Allah.
Majlis مجلس : Society, organization.
Majlis Ansarullāh مجلس انصار الله
(Organization of Helpers of God): The
organization of all Ahmadi men aver 40
years of age.
Malfūzāt ملفوظات : sayings of the Promised
Messiah, ‘alaihissalām.
Masīḥ-i-Mau‘ūd, Masih Mau‘ood:
مسيح موعود : The Promised Messiah (Ḥaḍrat
Mirza Ghulam Aḥmad, ‘alaihissalam)
Maṣjid مسجد : mosque
maulaviyyat: dry theologianism
Muhājir مهاجر : immigrant
Muṣliḥ-i-Mau‘ūd, Musleh Mau‘ood:
مصلح موعود (The Promised Reformer):
Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Maḥmud
Aḥmad (189-1965), Khalīfatul-Masih II,
raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu, who fulfilled the
prophecy of the Promised Messiah, peace
be on him, about the advent of a Reformer.
Nāsir: helper. A member of Majlis
Ansarullah.
raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu: رضى الله عنه : May Allah be
pleased with him.
raḥimahullāh رحمه الله : May Allah have
mercy on him
Ṣadr صدر : President.
sahāba, sahabah: صحابه Companions (of the
Holy Prophet Mohammad, sallallāhu
‘alaihi wasallam, and of the Promised
Messiah, ‘alaihissalam.)
ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam صلى الله عليه وسلم :
peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.
Salāt صلوة : Formal Prayer offered according
to a prescribed procedure.
Shahīd شهيد : Martyr; also, witness
Shurā شورى : advisory council.
Sunnah سنه : practice of the Holy Prophet
Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam.
taqwā تقوى : righteousness
Zakat زكوة : Prescribed alms.

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Ansar Pledge

Ash-hadu allā ilāha illallāhu wahdahū lā sharīka lahū wa ash-hadu anna muhammadan ‘abduhū wa rasūlūh (I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, He is One and has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.)

I solemnly pledge that I shall endeavor throughout my life for the propagation and consolidation of Ahmadiyyat in Islam, and shall stand guard in defense of the institution of Khilafat. I shall not hesitate to offer any sacrifice in this regard. Moreover, I shall exhort my children to always remain dedicated to Khilafat. Inshā'allāh.

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Present day landscape of the area outside Mecca where Holy Prophet Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam, was raised during his childhood.



Al-Nahl

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