

WITH CHILDREN IN MIND

ISLAMIC LESSONS

Book One

by

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Preface

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

In the name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Nahmadul laahal 'aliy yal 'adhim, wa nus'al-lil 'alaa rasuulihil-karim.

(We praise Allaah, the Sublime, the Majestic, and pray for Allaah's Blessings on His noble Messenger.)

The eighteen essays in this booklet first appeared as a series of bi-monthly leaflets published over the years 1415 to 1417 A.H. (June 1994 to May 1997 C.E.).

The series was started with the objective of providing reading matter in Islam for children. In order to reach the target group the leaflets were distributed directly to all Muslim Government-assisted schools and also to the majority of maktabas in the country. Five thousand (5000) copies of each issue were published and distributed courtesy the Tackveeyatul Islamic Association of Trinidad and Tobago Inc.

It was initially intended that six publications would be made over a period of the Islamic year 1415 A.H. (June 1994 to May 1995 C.E.). However, in view of the very positive response from children, parents and teachers, this was extended first for a second year and then for a third. The essays in this booklet contain the eighteen published over the three-year period referred to above.

I must record the assistance given to me by the two persons (who wish to remain unnamed) who reviewed each of the eighteen essays in draft form and made valuable suggestions for their improvement. May *Allaah Ta'ala* grant them both goodly rewards in this world and in the Hereafter.

Finally, I thank *Allaah Subhaanuhu wa Ta'ala* for instilling in me the desire to produce these essays, and for giving me the knowledge, guidance, health and ability to write them. I pray that they contribute in some small measure towards a better understanding of Islam and a deepening of the Faith by those who read them, *Inshaa Allaah*.

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Glossary

<i>A.H.</i>	- After Hijrah (See Hijrah below)
<i>Ahadith</i>	- (sing. <i>Hadith</i>) Sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)
<i>A.S.</i>	- ‘ <i>Alaihis Salaam</i> (Peace be upon him)
<i>C.E.</i>	- Christian Era
<i>Halaal</i>	- Lawful
<i>Haraam</i>	- Unlawful
<i>Hijrah</i>	- The migration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) from Makkah to Madinah. The Muslim calendar commences from that time.
<i>Imaan</i>	- Belief, faith
<i>Imaam</i>	- The person who leads the congregational prayer.
<i>Khaliifaa’</i>	- (pl. <i>Khulafaa’</i>) Initially, the title given to the successors to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). Eventually, the word took on the meaning of the Head of State of a Muslim nation.
<i>Khudaa Haafiz</i>	- Goodbye. Literally, “Allaah is the Protector”
<i>R.A.</i>	- <i>Radhiallaahu ‘Anhu</i> (May Allaah be pleased with him). <i>R.A. - Radhiallaahu ‘Anha</i> (May Allaah be pleased with her). <i>R.A. - Radhiallaahu ‘Anhuma</i> (May Allaah be pleased with both of them, that is any two persons). <i>R.A. - Radhiallaahu ‘Anhum</i> (May Allaah be pleased with them, that is more than two persons).
<i>Nafl</i>	- Optional, voluntary.
<i>S.A.W.</i>	- <i>Sallallaahu ‘Alaihi wa Sallam</i> . May Allaah shower Blessings and Peace on him, that is, the Holy Prophet.
<i>Sunnah</i>	- Sayings and practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Introduction

THE BASIC TEACHINGS OF ISLAM

“Islam” is an Arabic word which literally means “submission”. In religious terminology however it means “submission to the Divine Will and Commands”. One who follows the religion of Islam is called a “Muslim”. The terms “Muhammadanism” and “Muhammadan” are misnomers.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

There are seven cardinal articles of Faith in Islam, namely,

1. Belief in the Oneness of Allaah.
2. Belief in all of Allaah’s angels.
3. Belief in all of Allaah’s revealed books, which are four in number: Taurat (Old Testament), Zaboor (Psalms), Injeel (New Testament) and the Holy Qur’aan.
4. Belief in all of Allaah’s prophets, some of whom are: Adam, Nuuh (Noah), Ibraahiim (Abraham), Ismaa-iil (Ishmael), Yusuf (Joseph), Musa (Moses), Iisaa (Jesus) and Muhammad (peace be on them all).
5. & 6. Belief in the Day of Resurrection and the Day of Judgement: that is, the day on which Allaah will resurrect the dead and each person will be judged according to his or her good or bad actions. Those who have led a righteous life and pleased Allaah will be sent to Heaven, while those who have disobeyed His Commands and displeased Him by committing sins and performing bad actions will be sent to Hell.
7. Belief that the power of doing all actions (good or bad) proceeds from Allaah but each one is responsible for his her actions. (To illustrate, Allaah has given us the ability to speak. However, it is up to each individual to decide whether we will speak the truth or tell lies).

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

There are five fundamental principles of Islam, namely:

1. The declaration of Faith - *Laa ilaaha illallaah Muhammadur Rasoolullaah* (There is no deity worthy of worship but Allaah and Muhammad - S.A.W.) is His final messenger.
2. The observance of the five obligatory prayers at the prescribed times each day.
3. The payment of Zakaat (poor-rate). This is payable, among other things, at the rate of 2½% by all Muslims who have in their possession a certain minimum wealth for over a year. The beneficiaries are the needy, the indigent, the zakaat collectors, those in debt (in certain circumstances), travellers (rich and poor), those who may be in temporary need, and in the way of Allaah.
4. The observance of the fast during the month of Ramadaan. The Islamic fast begins at the break of dawn and ends immediately after sunset. It is compulsory on all Muslims except infants, the insane and invalids. It may be postponed in certain circumstances. (See Chapter Five).
5. The performance of Haj (Pilgrimage to Makkah in Saudi Arabia) at least once in one's lifetime if one is financially and physically capable of doing so and can also leave sufficient means for up-keep of one's family.

THE HOLY QUR'AAN

The Holy Qur'aan is the book of Guidance for Muslims. It is the last revealed book of Allaah and was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) over a period of twenty three years. It was revealed to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) through the Angel Jibra-iil in the Arabic language.

The Holy Qur'aan still exists in its original form and, should all copies be destroyed, it will be still available as it has been memorised by scores of thousand of Muslims. One who knows the Holy Qur'aan by heart is called a *Hafiz* (plural: *Huffaz*).

The Holy Qur'aan contains a complete code for the guidance of mankind in all spheres of life: social, economic, spiritual, physical and political.

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the final Messenger of Allaah. He was born in Makkah, Arabia, in the year 570 C.E. and received the first revelation of the Holy Qur'aan when he was forty years old. He migrated from Makkah to Madinah in the thirteenth year of his prophethood. This migration is called the Hijrah and the Muslim era dates therefrom.

At the time of the Holy Prophet's death in 632 C.E., Islam had been accepted by the whole of the Arabian peninsula and was fast spreading to other countries. The Muslim population today stands at about 1.2 billion. (See Chapters Two, Four, Eight and Nine).

CELEBRATIONS

There are two festivals in Islam, namely Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. In addition, a number of religious occasions are commemorated. (See Chapters Five, Six and Eighteen).

DIET

The Muslim diet excludes the use of certain foods and drinks, for example the flesh of dead animals, animals slaughtered without invoking the name of Allaah, swine, animals strangled to death, carnivorous animals, animals devoured by wild beast, the blood of animals, alcoholic and intoxicating drinks.

DRESS

There is no special dress as such for Muslims. However, Islam lays down certain minimum requirements. In the case of man, the minimum requirement is covering from the navel to just below the knees. One should however follow the norms of the society, have some consideration for others, and follow the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). One should therefore also cover the upper part of one's body and also one's head.

In the case of women, the whole body except the face, hands and feet must be covered.

THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

Muslims follow a lunar calendar, so that the Islamic month may be either 29 or 30 days. There are twelve months in the Islamic year. Thus the Islamic Calendar is approximately 11 days (12 in a leap year) shorter than the solar year. (See Chapter One).

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Chapter One

THE ISLAMIC YEAR

Dear children

Assalaamu Alaikum

السلام عليكم!

The Islamic Calendar

Do you know that the Islamic Year 1415 A.H. began immediately after sunset on Friday 10th June, 1994 C.E.?

Yes. We Muslims have our own calendar which began from the *Hijrah* (migration) of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) to Madinah from Makkah. The Muslim Year is denoted by the letters A.H., which means "after the Hijrah".

We follow a lunar, as opposed to a solar, calendar. Thus a month is either 29 or 30 days. In order to determine the beginning of a month we must look for the new moon immediately after sunset on the 29th day of the current month. If the new moon is seen, it means a new month has begun. If the new moon is not seen after sunset on the 29th day of any month then, in accordance with the *Shariah* (Islamic Law), the month has to complete a full 30 days. There is no need therefore to look for the new moon on the 30th day.

There are twelve months in the Islamic Calendar namely: Muharram, Safar, Rabi-ul-Awwal, Rabi-ul-Akhir, Jamaadi-ul-Awwal, Jamaadi-ul-Akhir, Rajab, Shabaan, Ramadaan, Shawaal, Zil Qada and Zil Haj. Four of these

The Islamic months, unlike the solar months, may not have the same number of days each year but, as stated above, may have either 29 or 30 days. Thus the Islamic year is approximately 11 days (12 in a leap year) shorter than the solar year.

In this way the twelve months rotate over a period of $32\frac{1}{2}$ years through all the seasons: wet and dry in tropical countries; and Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter in Temperate ones. There are obvious advantages to this as for example, the month of Ramadaan would rotate throughout the solar year.

It must be pointed out that in Islam the "day" begins immediately after the sun has set and ends when the sun has set. The Islamic "day" therefore begins when night-fall has begun.

Aashuuraa

One of the most important days in the history of the world falls on the 10th of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic Calendar. This day is commonly referred to as Aashuuraa. Many important events took place on this day over the thousands of years that the world has been in existence. Some of these are given below:

- (i) Allaah created the world.
- (ii) Allaah's first Mercy and Blessings descended from heaven.
- (iii) Allaah created the first man, Hazrat Adam (A.S.), who was also Allaah's first prophet.
- (iv) Prophet Ibraahiim (Abraham) (A.S.) was saved from the fire.
- (v) Allaah caused the Red Sea to be divided so that Prophet Musa (Moses) (A.S.) and the children of Israel could cross it and thus be saved from Pharaoh.
- (vi) Prophet Iisaa (Jesus) (A.S.) was born and he was also taken up to heaven.

- (vii) Imaam Hussain (R.A.), grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), was martyred.

The night of *Aashuura* is one of the sacred nights in Islam and one should try to spend as much of it as possible, if not the whole of it, in extra acts of *ibadaat* (worship) such as *nafl* (optional) salaah, reading the Holy Qur'aan etc. One should also follow the practice of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) by keeping *nafl* fast on the 9th and 10th of Muharram.

The Martyrdom of Imaam Hussain (R.A.)

In order to fully understand the great importance of this very unique and sad event we must first of all know that:

- (a) the title "*Khaliifaa*" (Caliph), which also means Allaah's representative on earth, was given to those persons who were elected to lead the Muslims after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.),
- (b) the *Khaliifaa*', besides being elected to that position, must live a life in accordance with the teachings of our noble religion.

And now for a brief description of the events that led to this tragedy. One Muawiyah, who had been appointed Governor of Syria by Hazrat 'Uthmaan (R.A.), the third *Khaliifaa*', became the fifth *Khaliifaa*' in the year 41 A.H. as a result of a trick. While *Khaliifaa*', he declared that his son Yezid must succeed him when he died. Of course, this was not in keeping with Islamic practice.

Muawiyah ruled for twenty years and upon his death Yezid assumed the reign of leadership because he commanded a large paid army. Yezid was unfit to become *Khaliifaa*' because he indulged in many un-Islamic practices.

Yezid wanted the Muslim population to swear to support him and many did so because they were afraid of him. Not so Imaam Hussain (R.A.), the second of two sons of the fourth *Khaliifaa*' (Hazrat Ali R.A.) and Bibi Faatimah (R.A.), daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). Imaam Hussain (R.A.) was a fearless person, like his deceased father, and always stood for truth and justice. So he refused to accept Yezid as the *Khaliifaa*'.

Yezid knew fully well that if an election was held Imaam Hussain (R.A.) ~~would be elected as ruler of the Muslims only because of his piety. So Ye-~~

zid instructed the Governor of Madinah, where Imaam Hussain (R.A.) was living, to force the Imaam to swear to support him. Imaam Hussain (R.A.) refused to do so and moved to Makkah in order to avoid persecution.

While residing in Makkah Imaam Hussain (R.A.) received messages from many persons in various parts of the Muslim world stating that they wanted him to be the *Khaliifaa*', and the citizens of Kufa in nearby Iraq urged him to come to their city where he would be under their protection.

Thus Imaam Hussain (R.A.) set out for Kufa with a few friends and family members, mostly women and children. After a little over three weeks travelling, and just about three days from Kufa, the group met an army at a place in the desert called Karbala. The commander of the army told Imaam Hussain (R.A.) that he had been sent by the (new) Governor of Kufa to stop him from proceeding to that city. Imaam Hussain (R.A.), although a very brave person and a noted warrior, did not want to fight his own Muslim brothers so he put three proposals to the Commander of the army namely:

- (i) he should be allowed to return to Makkah,
- (ii) or, he should be taken before Yezid,
- (iii) or, he should be allowed to go to another country.

The Commander of the army, however, did not agree to any of these suggestions and insisted that Imaam Hussain (R.A.) must swear allegiance to Yezid. Imaam Hussain (R.A.) refused to do so because Yezid had not only obtained power by un-Islamic means but was also living a life of sin.

The army then attacked Imaam Hussain (R.A.) and his followers. Imagine, thousands of trained soldiers pitted against a few persons. In keeping with the practice of the time there was one-to-one combat at first. But when the Commander of the army saw that many of his best soldiers were being killed this way he ordered his archers to fire from afar at Imaam Hussain's group. They were thus picked off one by one until only the Imaam was left among the men. He too was struck by many arrows. In spite of his many wounds however he made one final attack on the enemy but they were too many for him and he was eventually killed.

Thus did the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammed (S.A.W.) die in battle, refusing to submit to an evil ruler even though it meant losing

his life.

And what is the lesson that we learn from the death of Imaam Hussain (R.A.)? The lesson is this: we must never submit to wrong and we must always stand up for truth and justice even if it means losing our lives.

Muslims in many parts of the world, including our country, gather in the Masjid for the first ten nights of Muharram in order to relate the details of the battle and to pray for the souls of all those pious Muslims who were martyred in it. A few people in our country, however, make what are called tazias and parade the streets to the beating of drums, saying they are re-enacting the battle. This is commonly referred to as "Hosay" and is un-Islamic. We must not therefore go either to view, or take part, in this practice.

May Almighty Allaah pour His Bounties and Protection on us, and also

Khudaa Haafiz

Muharram / Safar 1415 A.H.

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Chapter Two

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.) OUR ROLE MODEL

Dear children

Assalaamu Alaikum

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ!

The term "role model" is one we hear and read of quite often nowadays.

To those who do not fully understand the meaning of the term, we give a layman's definition of it. Briefly, it means a person who one admires in a particular aspect of activity and on whom one accordingly tries to model one's life.

The persons most commonly taken as role models are sportsmen. To give an example, if one aspires to be a cricketer and to be a batting star one would most likely take the best batsman in the world as one's role model. If, on the other hand, one aspires to be a fast bowler one may want to choose the world's fastest bowler as one's role model. In either case, one would not only practise to imitate the strokes of the batsman or the run-up of the bowler, as the case may be, but one would also imitate the walk, speech, dress and hair-style of one's role model.

However, when we examine the lives of some of the famous sportsmen of our time or see them in action, we find that there is much to be desired by

some of their actions. We know that perhaps the best-known footballer in recent years has been banned from the game on two occasions because he took illegal substances. This was obviously done to improve his performance on the playing field. He was, to put it very plainly, cheating.

Most of us looked at the recent football World Cup games and saw live on television many of the well-known players deliberately fouling players from the opposing teams. In at least two instances players suffered fractures because of this.

Surely those who achieve excellence or fame as a result of illegal or dishonest methods should not, and indeed must not, be role models. A role model should be a person who has not only achieved excellence in a particular area of life but, most importantly, be someone whose actions and words in all aspects of his life must be beyond question. Who then should be the role model for us as Muslims? If we think carefully we will arrive at the correct answer very quickly.

Let us think. We know that Almighty Allaah created the world and all in it. We know that Allaah made man His vicegerent or representative on earth. As believers we know that Allaah sent Books of Guidance and Prophets as exemplars in order to show mankind how He intended they should live. We know that Al Qur'aan is the last revealed Book from Allaah and the Holy Prophet Muhammed (S.A.W.) is Allaah's last Messenger. We know that Allaah says in Al Qur'aan:

"There is an excellent exemplar for you in the Apostle of Allaah"
(Ch. 33 v 21).

One does not have to be a wizard or genius, therefore, to come to the conclusion that a Muslim must always be guided by the laws in Al-Qur'aan as exemplified by the sayings and practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). In other words, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is, and must always be, the role model for all Muslims. As a result we must follow whatever he did without question.

Fortunately for us, the sayings and actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) are well recorded. We need therefore to study his life carefully to see how he acted or re-acted under different situations so that we could do likewise under similar circumstances.

We give some examples of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's behaviour on different occasions so that we may learn and follow therefrom.

TRUTHFULNESS

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) never told a lie and always kept whatever promise he made.

As a youth he promised to meet a friend, Abdullah bin-Abu al Haithura, at the corner of a street in Makkah. The friend came at the agreed time and told young Muhammad to wait for him as he would be back shortly. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) waited at that place for three days and nights. On the fourth day the friend was passing by that corner and saw the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). He asked the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) what he was doing there. In reply, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) told him that he had promised to wait till he (the friend) returned and he was keeping that promise. The friend said he was very sorry to have the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) waiting there so long as he had forgotten to return.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) kept this trait for his whole life and always honoured whatever promise he made whether it was to a man or a nation.

HONESTY

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was always honest in his business dealings and never cheated anyone. Once he sold a number of camels to a person. After the person left, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) remembered that one of the camels was lame and immediately went in search of the person. On finding him, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) took back the camel and returned the amount of money the man had paid for it.

LOVE FOR ANIMALS

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) loved animals and said that they should not be killed merely for fun. He also said that when one is about to kill an animal the knife should not be sharpened in front of the animal.

LOVE FOR HIS ENEMIES

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) never bore ill-will against anyone and forgave his worst enemies. Abu Sufyan was the worst enemy of the Muslims and planned the murder of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) many times. Yet when

the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) conquered Makkah and Abu Sufyan was brought before him, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) did not seek revenge but, on the other hand, forgave Abu Sufyan. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) went even further and declared Abu Sufyan's house to be a protected place.

NO WORK TOO MEAN

No work was too mean for the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to perform. He always assisted in the household chores, washed and mended his clothes and milked the sheep. Even after he became Allaah's last Prophet he did not find it beneath his dignity to work as a labourer when the first Masjid was being built, nor did he find it below his station in life to help dig the trenches on the outskirts of Madinah on the occasion of the Battle of Ahzaab.

LOVE FOR CHILDREN

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) loved children a great deal. If he was walking and he met children he would pat them on their heads. If he was riding his camel and saw children along the way he would give some of them a ride on the camel's back. The Holy Prophet's two grandsons, Imaams Hassan and Hussain (R.A.), would jump as children on the Holy Prophet's back when he was in the Sijdah position while he offered the Salaat. He would remain in that position until they got down for fear of their being hurt when he raised up.

SIMPLICITY

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) lived a very simple life. The only furniture in his house, even after he became ruler of all Arabia, were a blanket (on which he slept), a pillow and a pitcher (for keeping water).

The Holy Prophet's dress was also very simple and he never wore any silk clothing.

COURTESY

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was always courteous to everyone. When he shook hands with a person, he would not withdraw his hands until that

person withdrew his. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) gave his full attention to anyone to whom he was speaking. If there were more than one person in his presence he would not whisper in the ear of one or call someone away from the others in order to speak to him. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) never spoke ill of anyone.

CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) would read short suras in the Salaat if there were old or ill people in the congregation. He did this because he did not want to make it difficult for them.

However, when the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) offered Salaat by himself he would spend long hours doing so. Very often his feet would become swollen because of the length of time he stood in Salaat alone.

We can give many other examples of how the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) behaved under other circumstances but space does not permit. We have enough examples from the life of the "Perfect Exemplar" sent by Allaah for us to make a start in adopting him as our "role model". Let us begin with these examples now and ask our Maktab teachers and our parents to tell us more of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) from time to time. Eventually, therefore, by following in the Holy Prophet's footsteps we will become as Allaah intended, that is, His vicegerent or representative on earth, *Inshaa Allaah*.

Khudaa Haafiz

Rabi-ul-Awwal/Rabi-ul-Akhir 1415 A.H.

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8th August (Night)/6th October (Day) 1994

C.E.



Chapter Three

Parents' duties to their children

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum

السلام عليكم!

In the first two issues of this publication we had addressed you directly, in simple language, on certain aspects of our noble religion. Although this paper is intended for children, we are sure that members of our community as a whole would be able to benefit from it.

This issue of our publication, while addressed to parents, is about "YOU", our children, as you will note from the title. Therefore kindly take this paper home, ensure that your parents or guardians read it, and let them explain anything you do not understand. Do not let the matter end there. You must remind your parents or guardians to read this paper at regular intervals so that they may be ever mindful not only of their duties to you, but also of the fact that they will have to account to Allaah Ta'ala for any shortcomings in observing these duties.

NOW TO THE PARENTS

It is an accepted fact that the incidents of crime, violence, drug abuse, immorality and other ills in the society have been increasing rapidly over the

years. The most disturbing aspect of this however is the fact that a substantial number of those involved are youths, many of whom are teenagers.

New prisons are being constructed, more judicial officers are being appointed and the complement of police officers is being increased. Will these measures solve the problem? This is very unlikely because the root causes of the problem (that is, the upbringing of our children from a very early age with moral, spiritual, ethical and civic values) are not being properly addressed.

The question arises as to who is responsible for instilling these qualities in our children, who will eventually grow up into youths, then men and women. Surely this responsibility must lie primarily on the parents. However, many parents try to shift or avoid their responsibilities and say, "That is the job of the teacher."

Let us as parents examine this issue. We bring children into this world and some of us feel all that has to be done is to look after their physical needs and give them a good secular education. In our quest to give our children the best secular training we often find that both parents work and that the child, from very early and during its most formative and impressionable years, is left in the hands of strangers: operators of day care centres and pre-schools. How many of us as parents enquire as to the physical and moral attributes of those persons operating these institutions, or how sure are we that we are allowing the correct persons to train our children in these important years?

Recent research has shown that by the time a child is three years old its character is substantially shaped and that the child is resistant to change by the time he/she is six years old. Burton L. White, the distinguished educational psychologist, writes as follows in his book entitled, "The First Three years of Life":

"Sometimes when I present my views about the importance of the first three years of life, I notice sad looks coming over the faces of parents. Such sadness is sometimes followed by questions, Is it all over at three? Is there nothing I can do to be useful?"

"Answering these questions is rather difficult for us because to some extent, I really believe it is too late after age three".

When our children reach the age of five we make every possible effort and many financial sacrifices to ensure that they obtain a sound secular

education: books, travel arrangements, extra lessons. But what efforts do we make to give them a little, not to mention some, moral and spiritual training?

Many of us Muslim parents fail in this respect and make all sorts of excuses to avoid sending our children to religious classes by saying the child is tired, or the child has too much home-work from school. This is so in spite of the fact that we expect, and get, free Islamic books, free tuition and often free transport.

Then the child grows into a young man or woman, as the case may be. If the young man or woman goes astray or commits acts of violence or is rude and abusive to anyone or indulges in alcoholic drinks or gets addicted to drugs we say that we have given him/her everything and wonder where we went wrong. Yes, indeed! We gave them everything except what was needed most, that is love and spiritual guidance.

Let us now, as Muslim parents, enquire as to our primary responsibility to our children. The object of this life is to serve Allaah for He says in Al Qur'aan:

"I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me."

51:56

How do we serve Allaah? We serve Him by submitting to His Will which, as we see from the following verse of Al Qur'aan, is practising the tenets of Islam:

"The Religion before Allaah is Islam (submission to His Will)."

3:19

Thus parents must ensure that their children have at least a basic Islamic education which would enable them to understand and practise the fundamental principles of Islam. This type of education is "*farz ain*" (compulsory) for every Muslim, and it is of this type of education that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

"Seek knowledge even though it be in China".

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) also said:

"No one is born but upon the (right) constitution, the constitution of Allaah whereon he has constituted men, but his parents make him a Jew, or a Christian, or a Magian : like as the brute beasts bring forth whole

brute beasts, (and then mutilate them). Do ye perceive any mutilated young one among them, until ye yourselves mutilate it? There is no child but is born in this creed until his tongue declares him clear of it." (Bukhari, Muslim).

As parents, Allaah commands us in Al Qur'aan as follows:

"O ye who believe! Protect yourselves and your wives and children from a (spiritual) fire whose fuel (unlike the fuel of physical fire) is human beings (who leads wrong lives) and stones (which have been worshipped as false deities by ancient communities) over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the commands they receive from Allaah but do (precisely) what they are commanded." (66:6)

Dr. Fazlur Rahman Ansari (R.A.) states in his book, "The Qur'aanic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society", that the above verse envisages the following rights of the child and their fulfilment:-

- " 1. establishment of an atmosphere of love and understanding for the child's proper growth;
2. protection against all evils: neglect, cruelty and exploitation;
3. provision of adequate nutrition, proper housing, recreation and medical service;
4. provision of opportunities and facilities for the child's dignity, according to the Qur'aanic code of life;
5. provision of the best available formal education, in keeping with the child's aptitude and capabilities;
6. provision of comprehensive moral education and training;
7. above all, and running through every phase of the child's life, there should be the provision of spiritual education and training of as high an order as possible for making him truly Allaah-fearing which is the most basic and the highest virtue that a Muslim should possess."

Allaah also commands the suckling of the children in the most impressive period of their lives:

"The mothers shall give suck to their off-spring for two whole years, if the father desires to complete the term. But he shall bear the cost of the food and clothing on equitable terms". Al Qur'aan 2:233

Allaah has also given us *duas* in Al Qur'aan which we as parents should make for our children. The following are a few:

"Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offsprings who will be the comfort of our eyes and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous." (25:74)

"and be Thou good unto me in my progeny (O Lord!) (i.e. cause my progeny to be good and accomplished in every way)." 46:15);

"O my Lord! Grant unto me from Thee a progeny that is pure, for Thou art He that heareth prayer."

"Our Lord! Make of us Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will); and of our progeny a people Muslim, bowing to Thy (Will); and show us our places for the celebration of (due) rites; and turn unto us (in Mercy); for Thou art the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful." (2:128)

The following *Ahadith* also give an indication of some of the duties of parents to children:

"No father can give a better gift to his children than good manners." (Tirmidhi)

An Arab of the desert came to the Prophet and (seeing him kissing certain children) said "What! Do ye kiss children which we do not?" The Prophet said, "Have I the power to put into thee the mercy which Allaah has taken away from their heart?" (Bukhari, Muslim)

"A man must salute his wife and children on entering the house." (Tirmidhi)

"No present or gift of a parent, out of all the gifts and presents to a child, is superior to a good liberal education." (Tirmidhi)

"Command your children to pray when they are boys of seven years, and punish them (on refusal) when they have attained the age of ten years, and separate them, one from another, in beds." (Abu Dawud)

"Whoso brings up three daughters and three sisters; or two sisters and two daughters, and give them liberal education, and treats them well, and gives them in marriage, for him is Paradise." (Abu Dawud)

Parents whose children ill-treat them have no one to blame but themselves as the following incident during the life of Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.), the

second *Khaliifaa'*, shows. A man complained to the *Khaliifaa'* that his son had abused and ill-treated him. The *Khaliifaa'* accordingly called the son and enquired of him as to why he had treated his father in such a manner. The son replied that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) had said that a father had three duties towards his children, namely, to give them a good name, to educate them properly, and to cause them to be married. The son continued by saying that his father had failed to fulfil any of these obligations as a result of which he was not aware of his duties towards his father. The *Khaliifaa'* was sympathetic to the son's position and, instead of rebuking the son, as the father had expected, told the father that it was improper for him to lodge a complaint against his son as he had spoiled him by failing to fulfil his duties towards him.

In this is a lesson for all parents.

Finally, if parents wish to consider their obligations to their children from a purely selfish point of view, they should know that children who are given proper Islamic education will be of benefit to them after they have passed away from this world as the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said, among other things, that when:

- (a) A person dies all his actions are cut away from him except the following:
 - (i) Ever-recurring charity (e.g.. constructing a Masjid, schools etc.),
 - (ii) Knowledge from which others derive benefit (compiling religious or moral books), and
 - (iii) Virtuous children praying for the person;
- (b) A teacher teaches a child to say “*Bismillah*”, and the child says that word, then the teacher, the child and the parents will be saved from the punishment of the Fire of Hell.

Khudaa Haafiz

Jamaadi-ul-Awwal/Jamaadi-ul-Akhir 1415 A.H.

Vol. 1 - No. 3

6th Oct. (Night) 3rd Dec. (Day) 1994 C.E.

Chapter Four

The Mir'aj (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Dear children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum

السلام عليكم!

The *Mir'aj* (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the most important event in the life of the Noble Prophet (S.A.W.). It occurred on the night of the 27th Rajab (the seventh month in the Islamic Calendar) in the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had received the first revelation of the Holy Qur'aan from Almighty Allaah, through the Angel Jibra-il.

In order to fully understand the significance of this great and miraculous occasion, we will remind you of three sad events in the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) life which took place the year before. These are as follows:

(1) The death of Abu Talib.

Abu Talib was one of the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) uncles who had taken care of him from the time he was eight years old. Abu Talib was therefore like a father to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

Abu Talib was a prominent and influential person in Makkah and although he did not believe in the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) Mission he gave the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) his full protection. Therefore Abu Talib's death was not only the passing away of a very close relative, but also a protector.

(2) The death of Bibi Khadijah (R.A.)

Bibi Khadijah (R.A.) had been married to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) for twenty five years at the time of her death. She had always been a source of joy, comfort and support to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). We will remember that she had no hesitation whatsoever in believing in her husband when he came home one night and told her that he had received revelation from Almighty Allaah, through the Angel Jibra-iil, and that he was Almighty Allaah's Messenger.

(3) Rejection by the people of Ta'if.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had not been successful in his mission to woo the inhabitants of Ta'if, a city in Arabia, to Islam. The citizens there had not only rejected the message but had caused some of the youths of that city to insult him, throw stones and wound him, and also spill garbage on him. Although he was humiliated and injured, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) did not wish ill for the inhabitants of the city, but rather prayed that they would become Muslims. *Al Hamdulillaah*, this indeed did happen very shortly afterwards.

As a result of the above incidents, the tenth year of the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) mission is called "The Year of Sorrow". It was against these sad events that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was called to the Presence of Allaah, resulting in a turning point in his mission.

NOW TO THE MIR'AAJ.

Almighty Allaah describes the *Mir'aaj* thus in Al Qur'aan:

"Glory to (Allaah) Who did take His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Masjid to the Farthest Masjid whose precincts We did bless, - in order that we might show Him some of our signs: for He is the One Who heareth and seeth all things."

17:1

We will now briefly relate how the *Mir'aaj* took place.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was resting in the early hours of the morning, as he often did, in the compound of the *Holy Ka'aba* which, as we know, is situated in the Holy City of Makkah. The Angel Jibra-iil came and gently awakened him. The Angel then told the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) that Almighty Allaah sent His Greetings to him and was inviting him to visit with Him. The Angel then took out the Holy Prophet's heart from his

chest and washed it with water from the well of Zem Zem. After this was done the Angel Jibra-il filled the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) heart with Faith and Wisdom and then replaced it.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) then made *tawaaq* (circumambulation of the *Ka'aba*). At the invitation of the Angel, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) then mounted an animal called *Buraaq*. (The *Buraaq* is an animal with wings, and is bigger than a donkey but smaller than a mule. When the *Buraaq* takes one step it goes as fast as the eye can see, and it flies faster than lightning.). At the command of the Angel the *Buraaq* flew the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), with the Angel alongside, to *Masjid Al Aqsa* in Jerusalem. Thousands of angels greeted the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) on his arrival at the Masjid and he led all the past prophets (A.S.) in salaah at that place.

This part of the journey is called *Al 'Isra* or The Journey.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), accompanied by the Angel, then ascended to the heavens. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) met Prophet Adam in the first heaven, Prophets Yahya (John) and Iisaa (Jesus) in the second, Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) in the third, Prophet Idris (Enoch) in the fourth, Prophet Haaruun (Aaron) in the fifth, Prophet Musa (Moses) in the sixth and Prophet Ibraa-hiim (Abraham) in the seventh - *peace be on them all*. The Angel stayed at this point as he was not allowed to proceed further. However the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) continued until he reached the Presence of Almighty Allaah. Almighty Allaah refers to this incident thus in Al Qur'aan:

"For indeed he saw him at a second descent, near the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass: near it is the Garden of Abode."
(53:13-15).

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) now continued alone until he reached the Presence of Almighty Allaah. He then addressed Almighty Allaah as follows:

"At-Tahiyyaatu Lillaahi was Salawaatu wat Tayyibaatu"

(All Reverence, All Worship and All Sanctity are for Allaah.)

Almighty Allaah replied as follows:

"As-Salaamu 'Alaika Ayyuhan-nabiyyu wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuhu."

The angels then joined by saying:

"Assalaamu alainaa wa alaa ibaadillaah-is-saaliheen. Ashadu anlaa illaaha illallaahu wa ashadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluh"

(Peace be on us and all the righteous servants of Allaah. I bear witness to the fact that none is deserving of worship except Allaah and also to the fact that Prophet Muhammad is His Servant and Apostle.)

You will no doubt remember that the above salutations form a part of our salaah.

Almighty Allaah then showed and taught the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) many things: past, present and future. It is not possible to go into all these details here but we will tell you of three of the most significant ones. These are as follows:

- (1) Almighty Allaah promised that any person who did not set up partners with Him will be forgiven.
- (2) Almighty Allaah revealed the last few verses of Sura Al Baqara (the Heifer) to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). These contain, among other things, the creed of Islam and a beautiful dua.
- (3) The gift of salaah five times a day was given to all Muslims. Almighty Allaah first ordained salaah fifty times a day, but this was eventually reduced to five times. However, Almighty Allaah, in His Infinite Grace, promised that those who perform salaah five times daily will obtain the same reward as if they had read fifty times.

The Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) visit to Almighty Allaah then ended and, accompanied by the Angel, he returned to the earth.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) related the events of the *'Isra* and the *Mir'aaaj* to the congregation in the masjid after the Fajr salaah. The Muslims believed him but the non-Muslims, on hearing of the event, did not. The non-Muslims questioned the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) in detail about a number of things such as a full description of the *Masjid Al Aqsa* (which he had never visited) and the caravans which were on their way to Makkah. Although he was able to give the minutest details of the Masjid and much information about the caravans (which were verified when the caravans arrived) the non-Muslims still did not believe that he had been called to the Presence of Almighty Allaah and had spoken to Him.

A few of the non-Muslims met Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) shortly after, while he was on his way to meet the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). They told him

in a jocular way that his prophet had gone up to the heavens and had met Almighty Allaah. Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) had no hesitation whatsoever in telling the non-Muslims that if the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said that he had been to the heavens and that he had met Almighty Allaah, then that was true and there was no doubt about the matter. As a result of Hazrat Abu Bakr's (R.A.) complete faith in the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) *Mir'aaaj*, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) started calling him "*As Siddique*", which means "one who attests to the truth".

Our dear children, we are fortunate to be living in a scientific age, one in which heart transplants and travel in space are very common. It is therefore easy for us to understand and believe in the *'Isra* and the *Mir'aaaj* of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). The Muslims in the time of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and for centuries thereafter did not have the knowledge which we have yet they believed in him. This was because, like Hazrat Abu Bakr *As Siddique* (R.A.), they had absolute faith in the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and in the powers of Almighty Allaah.

The anniversary of the *Mir'aaaj* should fall this year on the night of Thursday 29th December, *Inshaa Allaah*. We should therefore try to spend as much of that night as possible in performing extra acts of worship such as reading Al Qur'aan, nafl salaah and in making *Zikrullaah*.

Finally, let us remember that while we may not have the honour and privilege of being called to the Presence of Almighty Allaah, we can achieve nearest to Him, and our own *Mir'aaaj*, by performing our daily salaah regularly.

Khudaa Haafiz

Rajab/Shabaaan 1415 A.H.

Vol. 1 - No. 4

3rd Dec. (night) 1994 C.E./31st Jan (day) 1995 C.E.



Chapter Five

Ramadaan

The Month of
Compulsory
Fasting

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum

السلام عليكم!

The Holy Month of Ramadaan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, should commence on the night of the 31st. of January this year, *Inshaa Allaah*.

As you know, fasting during the month of Ramadaan is the third pillar or fundamental principle of Islam. Muslims must fast during this month in accordance with the command of Almighty Allaah Who has instructed us in Al Qur'aan as follows:

"Ramadaan is the month in which was sent down the Qur'aan, as a guidance for mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So everyone of you who is present at his home during that month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later. Allaah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties. He wants you to complete the prescribed period. And to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance ye shall be grateful."

(Ch. 2 V185).

WHY FAST?

Naturally, you will want to know why Almighty Allaah has commanded us to fast. Well, He gave us the reason in Ch. 2 Verse 183 of Al Qur'aan which reads as follows:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may guard against evil."

You may now want to know how you can "guard against evil" by fasting. You will now see how this is achieved.

You know that you must eat and drink regularly or you will grow weak and eventually pass away. Now, if you can train yourself to keep away from lawful things, such as eating and drinking during the day, then surely, dear children, you can train yourselves to keep away from evil deeds and thoughts. By doing so, you will be pleasing Almighty Allaah and, *Inshaa Allaah*, you will be admitted to Paradise in the Hereafter. Therefore, when you fast you must not only abstain from eating and drinking, but you must also keep away from doing, seeing, hearing and thinking of all those things which Almighty Allaah does not like. For example, you must not speak ill of anyone, you must not harm anyone, and so on.

The following *Ahadith* {sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)} will give you an idea of how you should behave when you are fasting and some of the benefits that can be obtained by so doing:

- (1) "Fasting is a shield, so let the man who fasts not indulge in any foul speech or do any evil, and if anyone fights or quarrels with him or abuses him, he should say: 'I am fasting'."
- (2) "By Him Who holds my soul in His Hand, the breath of the faster (one who is keeping fast) is more pleasant to Allaah than the scent of musk."
- (3) "Every day and night of Ramadaan, Allaah sets free a great number of souls from *Jahannam* (Hell). And for every Muslim during every day and night there is a time when his dua is certainly accepted."
- (4) "Whoever eats on one day of Ramadaan without a valid excuse (acceptable in *Shariah* -Islamic law) shall never be able to repay that day even by fasting the rest of his life."

On one occasion, someone asked the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) what causes the fast to break and he replied: "Telling lies and backbiting."

WHEN TO FAST

The next question, of course, is when do you fast? Or, to put it another way, when does the fast begin and when does it end? Well, the fast begins from the break of dawn, which is about eighty minutes before sunrise, and ends immediately after the sun sets. During that time you cannot eat or

drink anything at all. You cannot take even a little bite of food or a sip of water. Some of you younger children may find it a little difficult to fast for the whole day in the beginning. As with everything else, you must practise before you become perfect. So those of you who are quite young, say five to seven years old, may want to start fasting for only a few hours a day until you get older. You then increase the number of hours every year so that by the time you are nine to ten years you would be able to fast for a full day. Sometimes you may be tempted to hide and take a sip of water or to have a little something to eat, but remember that Almighty Allaah knows and sees everything you do. If you do any of those things, you will break your fast.

REWARDS OF FASTING

Almighty Allaah has promised greater reward for your good deeds during the month of Ramadaan. The following *Ahadith* {sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)} refer:

- (1) "When Ramadaan comes the doors of heaven are opened, and the doors of hell are closed, and the devils are put under chains."
- (2) "In Paradise, there are eight doors of which there is a door named *Rayyan*. None but those who fast will enter it."
- (3) "Whoso prayed at night in it (the month of Ramadaan) with a belief and a wish for a reward from Allaah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven."

In view of the above, you should make every effort to perform extra acts of worship and charity during this Blessed Month. You should go to the Masjid with your parents as often as possible to perform Salaat. You should make extra effort to perform the Isha Salaat in the Masjid, and remain thereafter for the special Salaat called *Taraweeh* which is only performed in the Holy Month of Ramadaan.

As regards charity, you must remember that this has a wide meaning in Islam. For example, if you remove a piece of broken bottle from the ground, that would be a charitable act, because someone may have been injured, perhaps seriously, by stepping on it. Other examples of charitable acts are, of course, visiting the sick and assisting old and disabled persons in various ways.

LAILA-TUL-QADR

Some of you may already know that there is a special night in the month of Ramadaan, that is, the 27th. night. It is called *Laila-tul-Qadr* (meaning the Night of Power or Greatness) because it was on that night over fourteen hundred years ago that the Angel Jibra-iil brought the first revelation of Al Qur'aan to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) from Almighty Allaah. Almighty Allaah speaks of this night in the following words:

"We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night of Power; and what will explain to thee what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand Months. Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by Allaah's permission, on every errand, Peace!... This until the rise of Morn!"

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 92).

And the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

"Whoever stands in prayer and ibadaat on the night of Power with sincere faith and with sincere hope of gaining reward, his previous sins are forgiven."

Because of the greatness of this night, many persons spend the whole of it in prayer and in asking Almighty Allaah's Blessings and Favours. Most of you may be too young to wake up the whole night, but you should at least try to go to the Masjid with your parents on that night and perform some extra acts of *ibadaat* (worship).

SADAQA-TUL-FITR

Sadaqa-tul-Fitr is a special charity which must be paid by those who are better off to those who are not so well off so that the latter may be able to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr. Your Imaam will announce the amount to be paid. Remind your parents that they should pay this charity, if they are liable to do so, preferably before the Eid Salaat.

EID-UL-FITR

The month after Ramadaan is named, as you know, Shawaal. The first day of this month is known as Eid-ul-Fitr, which means "The Festival of the Breaking of the Fast". Eid-ul-Fitr is one of the two major festivals in Islam, the other being Eid-ul-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifice). Eid-ul-Fitr is mainly a day of thanksgiving to Almighty Allaah for allowing us the privilege of benefiting from the blessings that can be obtained from the Blessed Month of Ramadaan. You must therefore go the Masjid to join in the special Eid Salaat and listen to the special *Khutbah* (sermon). The

special Salaat is a way to thank Almighty Allaah for all He has given you and to ask Him to accept your fasts and other acts of devotion.

When the service is finished you must make it your business to remain in the Masjid for a while so that you can embrace as many of your friends as possible and extend Eid greetings to them.

On returning home from the Masjid you will of course continue to celebrate the occasion by visiting family and friends or entertaining them at home.

AFTER EID-UL-FITR

After Eid-ul-Fitr, do you start misbehaving and doing those acts which Almighty Allaah has forbidden? Of course not. If you did so you would not have learnt anything from the fast. Remember, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

"Many a man gets nothing out of his fast except hunger and thirst."
Please do not let this happen to you.

OTHER DAYS OF FASTING

After the month of Ramadaan has ended you can perform voluntary fasts any time during the year, except on the two Eid days and the 11th, 12th and 13th of Zil Hajj. You will learn more about this in due course, *Inshaa Allaah*. In the meantime, however, remember that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said:

"O Allaah, keep me hungry for one day so that I may seek help from Thee and give me food on the following day so that I may be thankful to Thee."

May Almighty Allaah accept our fast and duaas during the Blessed month of Ramadaan.

Ramadaan Kareem

Eid Mubarrak

Khudaa Haafiz

Ramadaan/Shawaal 1415 A.H.

Vol. 1 No. 5

31st. Jan. (night) 30th Apr. (day) 1995 C.E.

Chapter Six

EID-UL-ADHA...

The Festival of the Sacrifice

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) (Abraham) lived a few thousand years ago in the Middle East. His father Azar, like most of the people of that area, worshipped idols.

Young Ibraahiim however, did not worship idols, but rather believed in the Oneness of Almighty Allaah. One day he questioned his father how could he worship idols? His father, however, became very angry and told him never to question his beliefs again.

Therefore young Ibraahiim decided to prove to the idol-worshippers that their idols could not help them. On the occasion of a festival he went early to the temple where the idols were kept and, with an axe, smashed all of them, except the largest one. Having done this he placed the axe around the neck of the remaining idol and left. When the worshippers came into the temple they were very surprised to see all their idols destroyed and suspected that Ibraahiim had done so because he had always told them that they must not worship idols.

The idol worshippers, who were by then very angry, went to look for

young Ibraahiim. When they found him they asked who had broken their idols. His reply was that they should ask the biggest idol. The worshippers knew very well that idols could not speak and felt very certain that it was indeed young Ibraahiim who had committed this act. They accordingly decided to burn him alive. They caught him, started a big fire and threw him into it. But Almighty Allaah protected Ibraahiim while he was in the fire and he was unharmed by it. Almighty Allaah describes this event thus in Al Qur'aan:

"Ibraahiim said: 'Do ye then worship, besides Allaah, things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm?'

"Fie upon you, and upon the things that ye worship besides Allaah! Have ye no sense?'

"They said: 'Burn him and protect your gods, if ye do (anything) at all.'

"We said, 'O Fire! Be thou cool, and (a means of safety) for Ibraahiim."

(Ch. 21 Verses 66-69)

When Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) grew into manhood he married a lady named Sarah. After many years of marriage they did not have any children. So when Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) was about eighty years old he took

Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) loved Ismaa-iil very very much, perhaps more than anything else in this world. When Ismaa-iil was a young child Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) dreamt that Almighty Allaah had commanded him to sacrifice what he loved most. Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) immediately knew that Almighty Allaah meant that he should sacrifice his only son Ismaa-iil, whom he loved so much.

However, as one who had absolute faith in Almighty Allaah, Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) had no hesitation whatsoever in deciding to carry out Almighty Allaah's command. He accordingly told young Ismaa-iil of his dream. Ismaa-iil, who also had firm belief and faith in Almighty Allaah, told his father that he must carry out Almighty Allaah's command and sacrifice him. Ismaa-iil, however, asked his father to tie him up so that he would not be able to move and to blindfold him when the knife was being directed to him. Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) thus tied and blindfolded Ismaa-iil as he had requested and he (Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.)), closing his eyes, plunged the knife into what he thought was his son's heart. When he opened his eyes he found, to his utter surprise and of course happiness, that Almighty

Allaah had replaced his beloved son with a ram which had been reared in heaven for forty years.

Allaah tells of this incident in Al Qur'aan in the following words:

"O my Lord! grant me a righteous (son)!"

"So We gave him the good news of a boy ready to suffer and forbear."

"Then when (the son) reached (the age of) (serious) work with him, he said: 'O my son! I see in a vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: now see what is thy view!'"

The son said: "O my father! Do as thou art commanded: thou wilt find me, if Allaah so wills, one practising Patience and Constancy!"

"So when they had both submitted their wills (to Allaah), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice),

"We called out to him, 'O Ibraahiim! Thou has already fulfilled the vision!' - thus indeed do We reward those who do right."

"For this was obviously a trial-

"And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice:

"And We left (this blessing) for him among generations (to come) in later times:

"Peace and salutation to Ibraahiim." (Ch. 37 Verses 100-109)

This event, as you know, is marked every year on the 10th of Zil Hajj. It is known as *Eid-ul-Adha* and is one of the two festivals in Islam. It coincides with the Hajj and part of the Hajj rites includes sacrificing an animal (in case of a sheep or goat) or taking part in sacrificing an animal (in the case of a cow or camel). If one does not have the means to perform the Hajj and one is in the financial position where one must pay Zakaat, one must also make the animal sacrifice. Those who do not go to Hajj have to go to the masjid to perform two rakaats of *wajib* salaah (*Eid-ul-Adha*) to mark the occasion.

Dear children, you must know however that sacrificing animals is not an end in itself for Almighty Allaah says in Ch. 22 Verse 37 of Al Qur'aan:

"It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allaah: It is your piety that reaches Him: He has thus made them subject to you, that ye may glorify Allaah for His guidance to you."

What Almighty Allaah desires is that you should always obey His Commands. This includes, of course, behaving well and making sacrifices

for others. By behaving well is meant following all the teachings of Islam such as performing your salaah regularly, obeying your parents, not being rude to your parents and elders, speaking the truth always, refraining from taking part in games of chances such as Lotto and Play Whe, taking drugs and so on.

As regards making sacrifices, you will of course say that you do not have money to buy a goat or a sheep so you cannot do this. Well, the animal sacrifice, or *Qurbanee* as it is called, is not compulsory upon children. However, there are other kinds of sacrifices that you can make. For example if you have two sweets and are with a friend you should not eat both of them but should share one with him. If you have a toy and friends come to your home and want to play with it you should not be selfish but must allow them to play with it. These are only two examples of how you can make sacrifices and so gain the pleasure of Almighty Allaah.

Well, dear children, we have come to the end of the Islamic year 1415 A.H. with this issue of "With Children in Mind". May Almighty Allaah continue to guide and protect you and keep you in the path of Islam in the new year and in all the years thereafter.

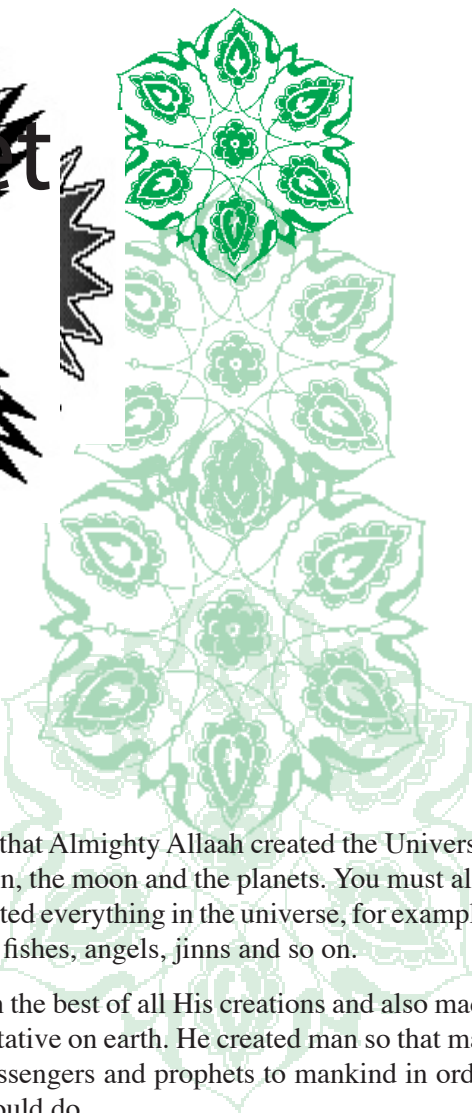
Khudaa Haafiz

Zil Qada/Zil Hajj 1415 A.H.

Vol. 1 - No. 6



Chapter Seven



Dear Children,

Assalaamu Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

You must know, of course, that Almighty Allaah created the Universe, which includes the earth, the sun, the moon and the planets. You must also know that Almighty Allaah created everything in the universe, for example, human beings, plants, animals, fishes, angels, jinns and so on.

Almighty Allaah made man the best of all His creations and also made man His vicegerent or representative on earth. He created man so that man may worship Him. He sent messengers and prophets to mankind in order to show mankind what they should do.

The first man Almighty Allaah created was Adam, and while clay was the main material used, water, fire and air were also used. Then Almighty Allaah breathed His Spirit into Adam and he became alive.

Next Almighty Allaah gave Adam the greatest gift that one could obtain: that of knowledge about everything : the sun, the moon, plants, animals and all else. Almighty Allaah taught Adam not only how everything was made, but also the reason why.

Then Almighty Allaah called the angels and asked them what was the reason for the various creations, but they could not give the reason because He had never taught them. Almighty Allaah then asked Adam the same question and he answered correctly because he had been taught by Almighty Allaah Himself.

So Almighty Allaah commanded the angels to bow down to Adam as a mark of respect because he had more knowledge than them. All of them bowed down except a jinn named Iblis who had accompanied the angels. Almighty Allaah asked Iblis why he had not bowed down as commanded. Iblis replied that he was better than Adam because he was made of fire (as are all jinns) while Adam was only made of clay.

Iblis, who later became known as *Shaitaan* (Satan), was thus disobedient to Almighty Allaah. So Almighty Allaah decided to punish him by banishing him. Before leaving however Iblis sought permission from Almighty Allaah to mislead Adam and his descendants from the Path of Islam. Almighty Allaah granted Iblis' request and told him that he would never be able to mislead anyone who followed His laws faithfully.

Adam became lonely after some time. So Almighty Allaah created a female companion for him called *Hawwa* (Eve) and put them in a beautiful place where they had everything they needed. He told them that they could eat fruits from any of the trees in that beautiful place except from one. However Iblis, who had overheard the conversation, tempted them by telling them that the reason why Almighty Allaah did not want them to eat from that particular tree was that if they did so they would live forever, like the angels.

At first Adam and Hawwa resisted the suggestion from Iblis that they should eat from the forbidden tree, but they eventually did so. They had thus disobeyed Almighty Allaah, their Creator. When they realised their mistake, they were very sorry and started to weep, but it was too late.

As a result of their disobedience, Almighty Allaah decided to punish Adam and Hawwa by sending them to live on earth. He told them that they would eventually die and then return to Him. Almighty Allaah told them further that He would make Adam His first prophet so that he could teach his descendants the difference between right and wrong and that, in order for them to keep on the right Path, He would send other messengers and prophets from time to time to guide them. Finally, Almighty Allaah told them that all those who did not follow the teachings of His prophets and messengers would be punished by being sent in the Hereafter to a place called Hell.

Prophet Adam and Hawwa (peace be on them) were then sent to different places on earth. After sometime Almighty Allaah directed Prophet Adam (A.S.) to go to a place called Bakka (now called Makkah) where he was directed by Almighty Allaah to build the first house of worship on earth for Him. This house of worship is, as you know, called the Holy Ka'aba.

After completing construction of the House of Worship for Almighty Allaah, Prophet Adam (A.S.) went to a nearby place called Arafaat. There he climbed a small mount and prayed to Almighty Allaah for forgiveness. By then Hawwa had already, through the Will of Almighty Allaah, reached the mount. So they met and prayed together, seeking forgiveness from Almighty Allaah. Almighty Allaah, in His Infinite Mercy and Compassion, forgave them for disobeying His command to them not to eat from the forbidden tree.

The mount on which Prophet Adam and Hawwa (peace be on them) prayed for Almighty Allaah's Mercy has since been called *Jabal-i-Rahmah* - the Mount of Mercy - because it was there that Almighty Allaah forgave Prophet Adam and Hawwa (peace be on them) their sins. Persons who perform the Hajj (Pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makkah) follow the practice of Prophet Adam and Hawwa (peace be on them) by going to *Jabal-i-Rahmah* on the 9th of Zil Hajj and offering dua'a (supplication) to Almighty Allaah, seeking forgiveness for all the sins they have committed.

Dear children, the story of Prophet Adam and Hawwa (peace be on them) is beautifully told in Al Qur'aan in the following words:

"Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood?' -Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)? ' He said: 'I know what ye

know not..'

And He taught Adam the names of all things, then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'Tell me the names of these if ye are right.'

They said: 'Glory to Thee: of knowledge we have none, save what Thou hast taught us: in truth it is Thou Who art perfect in knowledge and wisdom.'

He said: 'O Adam! tell them their names.' When he had told them, Allaah said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the heavens and earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal?'

And behold: We said to the angels: 'Bow down to Adam': and they bowed down: not so Iblis: he refused and was haughty: he was of those who reject faith.

We said: 'O Adam! dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden: and eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) ye will; but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression.' Then did Satan make them slip from the (Garden), and get them out of the state of (happiness) in which they had been. We said: 'Get ye down, all (ye people), with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be your dwelling place and your means of livelihood for a time.'

Then learnt Adam from His Lord words of inspiration, and his Lord turned towards him, for He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. We said: 'Get ye down from here: and if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from Me, whosoever follows My Guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who reject faith and belie our signs, they shall be Companions of the Fire; they shall abide therein.' "
(Ch. 2 Verses 30-39)

Dear children, you will remember that Almighty Allaah granted Iblis, who is popularly known as Satan, permission to try and mislead Prophet Adam (A.S.) and his descendants. Satan did in fact mislead Prophet Adam and Hawwa (peace be on them). However, they sought, and obtained, forgiveness from Almighty Allaah. You must remember that Satan is always trying to mislead people, for example, when it is time to go to school or to maktab you may sometimes try to make excuses for not going. That is because Satan is tempting you: he wants to keep you ignorant so that you

cannot know right from wrong. You must therefore always be on the lookout for Satan and reject the evil thoughts and suggestions that he puts in your minds and hearts. In this way you will always be able to follow the teachings of Islam and earn the pleasure of Almighty Allaah both in this world and in the Hereafter. Ameen.

Khudaa Haafiz

Muharram/Safar 1416 A.H.

Vol. 2 No. 1

30th May (night)/28th July (day) 1995



Chapter Eight

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.)

A brief life history

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was born, as you know, on Monday the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal in the year 570 C.E. The celebration of this occasion is known in local Muslim circles as "*Meelad-un-Nabi*".

In Muslim countries, with one or two exceptions, at least one day is given as a public holiday to mark the anniversary of the Holy Prophet's birthday and appropriate celebrations are held. The programme for *Meelad-un-Nabi* functions includes, of course, appropriate lectures on the life of the Noble Prophet (S.A.W.); *hamds* (songs in Praise of Almighty Allaah); *Qaseedas* (songs relating events in the life of the Noble Prophet - S.A.W.); parades; radio and t.v. programmes.

As this publication covers the months of Rabi-ul-Awwal and Rabbi-ul-Akhir, the opportunity will be taken to remind you of some of the important events in the life of Almighty Allaah's last Messenger to mankind who, as you know, is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). These are given below.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad's father was Abdullah and his mother was Bibi Aminah.

Abdullah had died six months before the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was born while he was returning from a business trip and is buried in the city of Madinah.

Both Abdullah and Bibi Aminah were from noble families. In keeping with the practice of the time, the young baby was handed over to a nurse-maid, Bibi Halimah, and taken to her home in the country-side where he was brought up in the healthy environment of the open fields.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), remained in the care of Bibi Halimah for six years, after which he was returned to his mother. Bibi Aminah had always wanted her child to visit the grave of her late husband. Accompanied by her faithful maid Umm Aiman, she took her young child on the arduous trip, only to fall seriously ill and die on the return journey at a place called Al-Abwa, where she is buried.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), was thus an orphan, fatherless and motherless, at the age of only six. He then fell under the care of his paternal grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, but he too passed away after two years. It was then left to the lot of one of the Holy Prophet's uncles, Abu Talib, to take care of him. This Abu Talib did for many years.

Dear children, you would want to know something about the type of life the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) lived. First of all you must know that he never went to school as there were no public schools in those days. Very few persons therefore had the privilege of obtaining an education. As a matter of fact he never learnt to read or write in his whole life, that is why he is sometimes referred to as the Unlettered Prophet. You must also know that he did not indulge in the various vices which were practised by young and old alike at the time. On the contrary he never worshipped idols, lied, cheated, partook of alcoholic drinks and so on. He lived an exemplary life and earned the titles of "*Al-Amin*" (The Trustworthy) and "*As-Sadiq*" (The Truthful) because of this.

As a young man, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) used to accompany his uncle Abu Talib, a trader, on many of his business trips. He eventually started to do business on his own. When he was twenty-four years he was approached by a rich widow, Bibi Khadijah, to transact some business on her behalf. He did so making a handsome profit for her. Bibi Khadijah was so impressed with the Holy Prophet's honesty and business ability that she kept him in her employment. After the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had worked for her for one year she asked him, through a mutual friend, to get married. He agreed, and they were married very shortly after. He was

then twenty-five years old and she forty.

After his marriage to Bibi Khadijah, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) continued to manage her business. However, he began to think more and more about the evil ways and practices of the country and the fact that his countrymen worshipped idols, instead of Almighty Allaah, their Creator. He went quite often to a cave called Hira, which is in the hills near Makkah, so that he could meditate without being disturbed. It was in this cave one night that the Angel Jibra-il brought the first revelation of Al Qur'aan to him from Almighty Allaah. You will recall that this revelation reads as follows;

"Proclaim! (or Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created - created man, out of (a mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught (the use of) the Pen,- taught man that which he knew not". (Al Qur'aan Chapter 96 Verses 1-5)

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) trembled when he received the first revelation and, still trembling, ran home and told Bibi Khadijah of his experience. She comforted him and put him to sleep. Next morning she took the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to meet her cousin Waraqah bin Naufal, a Christian who knew the old and new scriptures very well. Bibi Khadijah explained the Holy Prophet's experience the night before to her cousin and asked his opinion. He replied that the Angel who had come to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was the same one who had been sent to Prophets Musa (Moses) and Iisaa (Jesus) (peace be on them). He went on to say that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) would be driven from his home just as all the previous prophets who had brought messages had been driven from theirs.

Prophethood had now been bestowed by Almighty Allaah on the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) who was then forty years old. He was the final messenger of Almighty Allaah and Al Qur'aan, Almighty Allaah's final message to mankind, was to be revealed to him, through the Angel Jibra-il, over a period of twenty-three years.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) restricted his preaching to his family and close friends for the first three years. After that he started to preach publicly. As was to be expected however, he received a great deal of opposition, and in some cases was subjected to physical abuse, for he was telling the Makkans that they must destroy their idols and worship only Almighty Allaah, Who they could not see. He was also telling them

that they must stop their evil ways, such as killing female babies, lying, stealing, and drinking alcohol.

The most important event in the Holy Prophet's life occurred in the eleventh year after he received the first revelation of Al Qur'aan. This was the *Mirraaj* or Ascension when he was taken to the Presence of Almighty Allaah. While there, Almighty Allaah gave him a number of gifts, the most important of which is Salaat five times a day. Some details of this very important event were given in the *Rajab/Shabaa*n 1415 A.H. issue of this publication. You must make it a duty to read that issue again. (See Chapter Four).

By the thirteenth year after the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had received the first revelation of Al Qur'aan, the vast majority of muslims had migrated to Madinah. In that year Almighty Allaah gave the command to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) that he too should migrate to Madinah. He did so, accompanied by Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.). This event is called the *Hijrah* (migration) and occurred thirteen years after the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) received the first revelation. The Muslim era begins from that date and is denoted by the letters A.H. (after *Hijrah*).

Although the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and his followers had migrated to Madinah, a distance of nearly four hundred miles from Makkah, the Makkans did not leave them in peace, but continued to persecute them. As a result, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and his followers had to fight a number of defensive battles in order to protect themselves. Some of these are well-known, such as Badr, Uhud and Ahzaab (the Trench).

In the sixth year of the *Hijrah*, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and a number of Muslims, longing to see their former homes and to make the pilgrimage, set out for Makkah. When they reached a place call Hudaibiyah they were stopped by the Makkans from proceeding to Makkah. In order to avoid unnecessary fighting and loss of life, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) entered into an agreement with the Makkans which provided for the Muslims to perform the pilgrimage in limited numbers only from the following year.

The agreement, known as the Truce of Hudaibiyah, was broken by the Makkans two years afterwards. As a result the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) led an army which conquered Makkah. Although Makkah was then in the hands of the Muslims the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) returned to Madinah and lived there until his death.

By then people from far and wide had accepted Islam. The Holy

Prophet's mission was then coming to an end. In 10 A.H. he gave his famous Farewell Address at Mount Arafaat during the pilgrimage or Hajj. In it he gave a number of important instructions for Muslims. (The main points in this famous Address will be given in the next issue of this publication.)

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) fell ill on returning to Madinah after the Hajj and he eventually passed away on the 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal, 11 A.H. (8th June, 632 C.E.). He was then sixty-three years old. He was buried in the apartment where he (S.A.W.) passed away. - (*Inna Lil-laahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji-uun*. To Allaah we belong and to Him is our eventual return).

Dear children, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), besides being Almighty Allaah's last messenger, was sent as "an excellent exemplar for mankind to follow". In order that Almighty Allaah should be pleased with you, you must therefore follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). To do so, you must follow the laws of Al Qur'aan and the life pattern of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), who lived in accordance with these laws.

Khudaa Haafiz

Rabi-ul-Awwal/Rabi-ul-Akhir 1416 A.H.

Vol. 2 - No. 2

28th July (night)/25th Sept. (day) 1995 C.E.



Chapter Nine

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.)

Examples from his life

*There is an excellent exemplar for you
in the Apostle of Allaah."*

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 33 Verse 21)

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

You should be familiar with the above verse from Al Qur'aan and will know that "the Apostle of Allaah" referred to is of course the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). What Almighty Allaah is in fact saying in this verse is that all Muslims must model their lives on that of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). In a previous issue of this publication, you were reminded of the fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) must be the role model for all Muslims (Chapter Two). You were also given some examples as to how he behaved under certain circumstances so that you could pattern your lives on his and thus gain the pleasure of Almighty Allaah. Some further examples are now given so that you will be aware as to how he behaved in other circumstances and so continue to model your lives on his.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had absolute faith in Almighty Allaah and never sought help from anyone else. The following is one of the many incidents in his life which shows this reliance on Almighty Allaah alone.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and some companions were returning to Madinah from an expedition when they all decided to take a rest. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) unbuckled his sword, hung it on the branch of a tree, and started to rest under the shade of the tree, away from his companions. A member of an enemy tribe, who was spying on the Muslims, saw the opportunity to kill the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). He sneaked up to the tree, took hold of the Holy Prophet's sword, held the sword over the head of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and asked him who could save him now. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) very calmly replied: "Allaah". The attacker became very frightened upon hearing the Holy Prophet's answer and the sword fell from his hands. The companions of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) came up at the same time. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) then took up the sword from the ground and asked the man who would save him now. The enemy started to tremble thinking that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) would harm or possibly kill him, but the Holy Prophet's response was to tell the man not to fear any punishment. The man was then allowed to go.

HIS LOVE FOR ALMIGHTY ALLAAH

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had a deep love for his Creator and so would spend long hours in prayer. On many nights he prayed into the early morning hours, sometimes standing so long that his feet became swollen. On one occasion he was asked why he had prayed so long when all his sins had already been forgiven. He replied by saying to the questioner: "Should I not be grateful to my Creator?"

HIS SELFLESSNESS

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) never showed favouritism to his family and friends. He would put them in the forefront when it came to facing risks. Moreover, when giving favours or distributing the spoils of war, his family and friends would be given the least, if any at all.

The Holy Prophet's daughter, Bibi Faatimah (R.A.), had to work very hard and had to grind corn with her hands in order to assist in maintaining

the house. On one occasion, she asked her father to give her a servant to help her in her chores. He refused and told her that if, before going to bed, she said *Subhaan Allaah* (Glory be to Allaah) thirty three times, *Alhamdu lillaah* (Praise be to Allaah) thirty three times and *Allaahu Akbar* (Allaah is Great) thirty four times, that would be of more benefit to her than a maid.

HIS LOVE FOR CHILDREN

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) loved children very much. He would go out of his way to meet children when he was walking and pat them on their heads.

Sometimes, when riding, he would stop and give some children a ride. His two grandchildren, Imaams Hassan and Hussain (R.A.), would jump as children on his back when he was in the *Sijdah* position while performing salaah and he would remain in that position until they got down for fear of their being hurt when he raised up.

HIS KINDNESS

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was a very kind person. Once he visited a sick child, and was touched with sorrow. So he placed the child on his lap, then began to cry. When he was asked why he was crying, he replied: "Almighty Allaah shows kindness to those who are kind to others."

The Holy Prophet's kindness was not restricted to human beings but was extended to animals, for they are also Almighty Allaah's creation. Once he saw a camel that had become very tired and weak, because it had not been given sufficient food. He said to the owner: "Fear Almighty Allaah with regard to these animals. Ride them in health and lead them in health."

HIS SIMPLICITY

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) always led a very simple and humble life. He never indulged in luxuries, even when he became ruler of all of Arabia and some of the surrounding countries. He lived in a small mud house, the only furniture being his bed (which was in fact a blanket and a pillow), and a pitcher to hold water. He ate whatever was given to him, wore simple clothes, and would sit at the back of an audience. Once the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) went to see his daughter, Bibi Faatimah (R.A.). On reaching the house he

saw a thin curtain over the front door. He immediately turned around and went elsewhere. On being asked why he did not go into the house he said: "It does not befit a prophet to enter a decorated house."

HIS MANNERS

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "Verily, I have been sent to complete good manners." All his actions exemplified this, as the following examples will show:

1. When he shook hands with a person, he would not withdraw his hands until that person withdrew his.
2. He would give his full attention to anyone to whom he was speaking.
3. If there were more than one person in his presence, he would not whisper in the ear of one or call someone away from the others in order to speak to him.

HIS PERSONALITY

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had a charming personality. He was very modest, and was always soft-spoken. In this connection, Almighty Allaah says in Al Qur'aan:

"It is part of the Mercy of Allaah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allaah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of Moment). Then, when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in Allaah."

HIS HOSPITALITY

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was the perfect host. He would entertain guests as best as his limited means allowed and would often serve them himself. He never discriminated between Muslim and non-Muslim and treated all the same way.

HIS LOVE FOR HIS ENEMIES

Numerous persons abused the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) verbally and physically because of his mission yet he never bore any ill-will or malice against them. One such person was Abu Sufyan, who was the worst enemy of Islam

and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). Abu Sufyan went to any means whatsoever to stop Islam from being taught. He also plotted on many occasions to have the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) murdered. Yet when Makkah was conquered by the Muslims the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) not only forgave Abu Sufyan but also declared his house a safe-haven for anyone who went there.

Dear Children,

The above are some examples from the life of the Last Prophet of Almighty Allaah. Remember, you should always follow him in whatever you do or say, for he was sent by Almighty Allaah as the perfect role model for Muslims to follow in all aspects of their lives.

May Almighty Allaah continue to guide and protect you, help you in your studies, and may you always keep Al Qur'aan and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as your guides.

Ameen.

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S (S.A.W.) FAREWELL ADDRESS

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) gave his famous and instructive Farewell Address on the evening of the 9th of Zil Hajj in the year 10 A.H. at Mount Arafaat during the Hajj (Pilgrimage). As promised in the last issue of this publication, the main points made in that Address are now given. These are as follows:

1. the life and property of all Muslims must be regarded as sacred;
2. everyone will have to appear before Almighty Allaah and answer to Him for his or her actions;
3. husbands and wives have certain rights over each other, and wives must be treated kindly;
4. we should always be careful of Satan, because he wants to prevent us from worshipping Almighty Allaah and following His commands;
5. all Muslims are brothers;
6. no person is superior to another, except in obedience to Almighty Allaah and in piety;

7. he was leaving two things, namely Al Qur'aan and his example, for all mankind to follow and anyone following these will never go astray;
8. we must always worship Almighty Allaah, offer our five daily prayers, pay our zakaat, and fast during the month of Ramadaan;
9. he (Prophet Muhammad-S.A.W.) is Almighty Allaah's last prophet and there will be no prophet or new religion after him;
10. those who were present must convey his message to others and the others who hear the message must convey it to other persons.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) ended his address by turning his face to the heavens and asking the assembly, which numbered 120,000, whether he had conveyed Almighty Allaah's message to them. All present replied that he had done so.

Dear children, the instructions given by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) can go a long way towards solving the problems that face the peoples of the world today. You must therefore understand fully the meaning and importance of all these instructions. If you do not, ask your teacher or parents to explain them to you. Once you understand the Holy Prophet's instructions, you then have a duty to tell others about it. When you have done so, on the Day of Judgement you can stand before Almighty Allaah with the full knowledge that you not only heard and understood the Message, but you too conveyed it to other persons, as indeed you are duty-bound to do.

Khudaa Haafiz

Jamaadi-ul-Awwal/Jamaadi-ul-Akhir 1416 A.H.

Vol. 2/No. 3

25th Sept. (night)/23rd Nov. (day) 1995 C.E.



Chapter Ten

Duty to One's Parents

"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.

"And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say 'My Lord! bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood '."

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 17 Verses 23-24)

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

DUTY TO PARENTS COMES RIGHT AFTER DUTY TO AL-MIGHTY ALLAAH

Almighty Allaah states quite plainly in the above verses of Al Qur'aan that:

1. One's first duty is to worship Him alone,
2. One's second duty is to be kind to one's parents,
3. One must never ever be harsh or rude to one's parents, but must always speak to them in a respectful manner and speak to them with humility, and

4. One must always pray for one's parents.

You may wonder why your duty to your parents is so important. In the following verse of Al Qur'aan Almighty Allaah reminds you, in case you have forgotten, of the great inconvenience and trouble your parents had in bringing you up:

"And we have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents. With trouble did his mother bear him, and with trouble did she bring him up, and the bearing of him and the weaning of him was thirty months"

(Ch. 46 Verse 15)

Dear children, reflect for a few minutes. Remember that your mother carried you in her womb for nine months. Remember that your parents fed, cleansed, clothed and took care of you when you were helpless. Remember that your parents tended you when you were ill. Remember that your parents made great personal and financial sacrifices in order to feed and clothe you and to give you an education. In light of the foregoing you will understand why, after one's duty to Almighty Allaah, comes one's duty to one's parents. You will also understand why the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said, among other things, that:

1. "Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother."
2. "The pleasure of Almighty Allaah is in the pleasure of the father and the displeasure of Almighty Allaah is in the displeasure of the father."
3. "Almighty Allaah pardons any sins which He pleases, except disobedience to parents; and verily He hurries on (the punishment of those who do it) in this life (even) before death."

WHEN PARENTS MUST BE DISOBEYED

However, while Almighty Allaah stresses that you must obey your parents, He also tells you that you must disobey them if they want you to join others in worship with Him. He clearly states this in Chapter 29 Verse 8 of Al Qur'aan which reads as follows:

"We have enjoined on man kindness to parents: but if they (either of them) strive (to force) thee to join with Me (in worship) anything to which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not. Ye have (all) to return to Me, and I will tell you (the truth) of all that ye did."

In such cases, however, one must still continue to be kind to them and

to honour and respect them.

DUTY TO PARENTS IS NEVER-ENDING

Dear children, your duty towards your parents is never-ending. As young children in your parents' home you should hug and kiss them many times a day; you should help in the household chores so that they would not have so much work to do; you should never raise your voice at them or give them 'back-talk'.

When you grow up and become adults you must make it a point to visit your parents regularly, continue to shower them with love and affection, and assist them in whatever way you can. If they are strong and healthy you must still visit them regularly, not only on Father's Day or Mother's Day as some people do. If they are ill, you should not place them in a home for old people but you should try and take care of them yourselves, just as they took care of you when you were helpless. It is also your duty to assist them in meeting their needs if they are unable to do so.

DUTIES WHEN ONE'S PARENTS PASS AWAY

Dear children, you may feel that your duty towards your parents is finished when they pass away. However, that is not so as, when asked by a man from the tribe of Salamah what could be done for his deceased parents, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) replied that one should:

1. Say prayers for them,
2. Ask pardon for them,
3. Make good the promises they made and which they had, for some reason, been unable to keep,
4. Respect the relations by blood,
5. Honour one's parents' friends.

In addition to the above, when one's parents pass away one has obligations to one's uncles and aunts, and also to the friends of one's deceased parents, as the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said:

"The sister of the mother is in the place of the mother", and "Verily, the best of all goodness is that a man show kindness to the people who bore love to his parent after he or she is gone."

The above *Ahadith* (sayings of the Holy Prophet, S.A.W.) very clearly show that:

1. If your mother passes away and you have an aunt or aunts, then you must show that aunt the same love and affection as you showed your mother, and
2. After your parents pass away, you must continue to show love, respect and kindness to all your parents' friends.

In other words, you must visit them regularly, and help them if they need assistance.

LOVE OF THE HOLY PROPHET (S.A.W.) FOR THOSE WHO BROUGHT HIM UP

Dear children, you will remember Bibi Haliimah was the Holy Prophet's nursemaid in his early youth. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) never forgot Bibi Haliimah. After he was returned by Bibi Haliimah to his mother when he was five years, he did not see her for many, many years.

The first time the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) saw Bibi Haliimah after he was returned to his mother was some years after he had been granted prophethood. And how did he happen to meet her? There was a famine in the land and people from the surrounding hills used to come to the city to beg for food. One day the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was walking in the street when he saw an old woman who had a resemblance to Bibi Haliimah. He went up to her and found that it was indeed Bibi Haliimah. He immediately hugged her, expressing happiness at meeting her after so many years.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) then took off his cloak, spread it on the ground, and told Bibi Haliimah to sit on it. He then enquired from her about her family. She informed him of their welfare and stated that she had come, like so many others, in search of food for herself and her family. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) immediately gave Bibi Haliimah supplies of food for herself and her family and wished her well.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) also had a great deal of love and affection for his mother's maid-servant, Barakah Umm Aiman. Barakah was a young Abyssinian captive when she was saved from being sold as a slave-girl by the Holy Prophet's father, Abdullah. She served in Abdullah's house and when he married Bibi Aminah she served as her maid.

Barakah was the first person to hold young Muhammad (S.A.W.) after

he was born. After Abdullah's death she continued to serve as Bibi Aminah's maid. Barakah accompanied Bibi Aminah when she took young Muhammad, then six years old, to Yathrib (Madinah) to visit his father's grave. It was Barakah who dug a grave and buried Bibi Aminah when she fell ill and died on the return journey to Makkah. And it was Barakah who alone took young Muhammad back to Makkah.

You will remember that young Muhammad lived with his grandfather after the death of his mother and that when his grandfather died two years later he went to live with his uncle, Abu Talib. Well, Barakah accompanied young Muhammad both to his grandfather and uncle, and continued to take care of him. And when young Muhammad attained manhood and married Lady Khadijah, Barakah also moved into the household and took care of the Prophet (S.A.W.).

Barakah loved the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) so much that she did not want to get married because she would then have to leave the Prophet's household and live elsewhere. She eventually got married however but came back to live in the prophet's household some years later when her husband passed away. She spent some years in the Holy Prophet's household again before she married for a second time and then left to live with her husband.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had so much love and affection for Barakah that he used to call her "*Ya Ummi*" (O my mother). He would often hug her. When the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) migrated to Madinah he left Barakah in Makkah to perform certain duties. She eventually left Makkah for Madinah after successfully completing her mission. She walked the nearly four hundred miles to Madinah alone and when she arrived there her feet were swollen and her face and body covered with dust. When the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) saw her he hugged her tightly and kissed her, wiped her face and massaged her feet. Such was the love and affection he had for her.

BE EVER MINDFUL OF YOUR DUTIES

Dear children, by now you should understand the great sacrifices your parents made and are still making for you. You must also understand by now the duties you have towards your parents, your aunts and uncles, and your parents' friends. As you have seen from the above, Almighty Allaah places a great deal of importance on your carrying out these duties. If you want to gain the pleasure of Almighty Allaah in this world and in the Hereafter therefore make sure that you follow His commands and the example set

by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in relation to your parents, aunts and uncles, your parents' friends and your guardians.

Khudaa Haafiz

Rajab/Shabaa 1416 A.H.

Vol. 2 No. 4

23rd. Nov. (night) 1995/21st. Jan. (day) 1996 C.E.



Chapter Eleven

Prophet Nuuh (Noah) - (A.S.)

"We sent Noah to his people. He said: 'O my people! Worship Allaah!. Ye have no other God but Him. I fear for you the Punishment of a dreadful Day! ' "

"The leaders of his people said: 'Ah! we see thee evidently wandering (in mind).' He said: 'O my people! no wandering is there in my (mind): on the contrary I am a messenger from the Lord and Cherisher of the Worlds!'"

"I but fulfil towards you the duties of my Lord's mission: sincere is my advice to you, and I know from Allaah something that ye know not.

"Do ye wonder that there hath come to you a message from your Lord, through a man of your own people, to warn you- so that ye may fear Allaah and haply receive His Mercy?"

"But they rejected him, and We delivered him, and those with him in the Ark: but We overwhelmed in the Flood those who rejected Our signs. They were indeed a blind people!"

Al Qur'aan Chapter 7 Verses 59-64)

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

You will remember that Almighty Allaah made Adam (A.S.) a prophet so that he (Adam) would teach his descendants the difference between right and wrong and so they would always follow His commands. Almighty Allaah also told Prophet Adam (A.S.) that He (Allaah), would send messengers from time to time to guide Prophet Adam's descendants and that if they did not follow the teachings of His prophets He would punish them.

Well, Prophet Adam's descendants followed his teaching for many generations. However, as the centuries passed by they started to stray further and further away from these teachings. Many of them who lived in what is now Iraq in the Middle East were among those who strayed away from Prophet Adam's teachings. They first started to make images of holy men, then statues of pious persons, then they started to pray to the statues which had names such as Wadd, Suwa, Yaghuuth, Yaa-uun and Nasr. Eventually they started to worship the statues along with Almighty Allaah. In addition they did many wrong acts such as stealing, cheating, lying and so on.

In keeping with His promise to send prophets from time to time to guide persons who went astray, Almighty Allaah sent Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) as a prophet among his countrymen in order to warn them to change their evil ways, and to advise them that they must only worship Almighty Allaah or else they would be punished. Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) called upon his people day and night, in public and in private, to give up their evil ways and to seek forgiveness from Almighty Allaah for their sins. But the leaders in the country rejected Prophet Nuuh (A.S.), saying:

"We see (in) thee nothing but a man like ourselves: nor do we see that any follow thee but the meanest among us, in judgement immature: nor do we see in you (all) any merit above us: in fact we think you are liars."

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 11 Verse 27)

Only a few persons believed in Prophet Nuuh's message, the vast majority refusing to accept it. Notwithstanding that, he continued to urge them to mend their ways, but they continued refusing. They eventually told him that he had disputed with them for too long, and that he should now bring

the punishment with which he was threatening them. To this he replied:

"Truly, Allaah will bring it on you if He wills ... then, ye will not be able to frustrate it."
(Al Qur'aan Ch. 11 Verse 33)

Then Almighty Allaah told Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) that none of his countrymen would believe him except those who already did so, and that he should construct an Ark under His direction. Almighty Allaah further told Nuuh (A.S.) that he should not seek help for those who sinned, as they would be destroyed in a Flood. In accordance with Almighty Allaah's instructions, Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) immediately started constructing the Ark. Every time the leaders passed, they would laugh at Prophet Nuuh (A.S.). Indeed, they had good reason to do so because there was no river or sea nearby. But Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) had full faith in Almighty Allaah and continued building the Ark. Everytime he was abused he would reply that his and the believers' turn would come to ridicule them, as Almighty Allaah would punish them for their evil ways.

After Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) had finished constructing the Ark, Almighty Allaah caused the rains to fall. He then gave the command to Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) to board the Ark with the few believers, and to take on board two of each species of live animals (a male and a female) required for subsistence. Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) and the few believers did as Almighty Allaah had commanded.

The rain continued falling for weeks and months without stopping. As the waters rose, the Ark started floating on it while those who were not on it started to drown. Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) saw his son near the Ark and urged him to leave the unbelievers and board the Ark. However Prophet Nuuh's son replied that he would not but would seek refuge on top of a mountain. He too was eventually drowned.

Eventually, Almighty Allaah commanded the earth to swallow up the water, and the sky to stop raining. By then all the unbelievers in the country had been drowned, as Almighty Allaah had promised they would be, if they did not change their evil ways.

The Ark landed after some time on Mount Judi and Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) called upon Almighty Allaah thus:

"O my Lord! surely my son is of my family! And Thy promise is true, and Thou art the Justest of Judges."

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 11 Verse 45)

To this Almighty Allaah replied as follows:

"Oh Nuuh! he is not of thy family: for his conduct is unrighteous. So ask not of me that of which thou hath no knowledge! I give thee counsel, lest thou act like the ignorant."

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 11 Verse 46)

Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) then felt remorse for asking of Almighty Allaah that for which he should not have asked and sought forgiveness from his Lord.

Then Almighty Allaah commanded Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) as follows:

"Oh Nuuh! Come down (from the Ark) with Peace from Us, and Blessing on thee and some of the Peoples (Who will spring) from those with thee: but (there will be other) Peoples to whom we shall grant their pleasure (for a time), but in the end will a grievous Penalty reach them from Us."

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 11 Verse 48)

So Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) and those with him on the Ark disembarked. This laid the foundation for a new generation of people in that country who believed in Almighty Allaah only, who associated nothing or no one else with Him, and who completely submitted themselves to His Will.

Dear children, some of the lessons you must learn from the above are as follows:

You must have complete faith in Almighty Allaah. Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) had such faith and built the Ark when he was commanded to do so. He did not question Almighty Allaah's command even though there was no sea for hundreds of miles around. A person without faith would possibly have hesitated to build the Ark, wondering what was the reason for constructing it.

Blood relationship does not count when it comes to the truth. Prophet Nuuh's son was not of the believers and so was drowned with the unbelievers. The fact that his father was Almighty Allaah's prophet and was among the few saved from drowning was of no avail to him.

Good will always prevail over evil. Prophet Nuuh (A.S.) and his few followers were able to survive because they had complete faith and confidence in Almighty Allaah and followed His commands without hesitation and question.

Finally, dear children, you should know that the Ark was discovered by a Russian air pilot on one of the mountain peaks in Armenia just before World War 1. The Ark had been buried in the snow until an earthquake in 1822 C.E. caused it to shift to where it was found.

Khudaa Haafiz

Ramadaan/Shawwal 1416 A.H.

Vol. 2 No. 5

21st. Jan (night)/20th. Mar. (day) 1996 C.E.



1926 - 1996

T.J.A. Seventieth Anniversary

Chapter Twelve

MASJID AL-HARAM

(The Sacred Masjid)

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

How many of you have heard about Masjid al-Haram? Perhaps only a few of you.

Well, Masjid al-Haram, commonly referred to as the Haram Shareef (Sacred Masjid), is the most sacred shrine for Muslims. It is located in Makkah al Mukarramah (the City of Knowledge), Saudi Arabia. The reward for performing salaah in Masjid al-Haram is many, many thousand times that obtained for performing salaah at one's home.

There are only two other sacred shrines in Islam, namely, Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah al Munawwarah (the City of Light), also in Saudi Arabia; and Masjid-ul Aqsa in Jerusalem. Masjid al-Haram is also the foremost of the three masajid for which Muslims may set out on a journey, the second in importance being Masjid Al-Nabawi and the third, Masjid-ul Aqsa.

Masjid al-Haram covers a huge area and includes the following:

THE MATAAF

This is a paved, uncovered area and is the main place for performing

tawaaf (circumambulation of the Holy Ka'aba). Salaat is also read on it.

THE MASJID PROPER

This is on the periphery of the *Mataaf*. It has been extended and renovated from time to time and is now a two-storey building with a flat roof. The masjid can accommodate over half a million worshippers. You should know, however, that during the Hajj season the masjid is unable to accommodate all the pilgrims. Thus at that time scores of thousands of pilgrims are forced to read salaat in the courtyards and in the streets surrounding the masjid. These streets are blocked off from traffic for this purpose during the Hajj season.

HIJR ISMAA-IL

This is a small space in the *Mataaf* near the north western side of the Holy Ka'aba. It is separate from the Holy Ka'aba and marks the places where Hazrat Ismaa-il and his mother Haagar, are buried.

MUQAM-E-IBRAAHIIM (THE STATION OF IBRAAHIIM (A.S.))

This is the stone which Prophet Ibraahiim (Abraham) (A.S.) mounted from time to time while constructing the Holy Ka'aba. The prints of his feet are on this stone, which lies in the *Mataaf*, a few yards from the Holy Ka'aba.

ZAM ZAM HOUSE

This was formerly situated in the *Mataaf* but is now under it, with its roof touching the floor of the *Mataaf*. This building houses outlets for water from the spring known as Zam Zam. This spring has been in existence since the time of Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) and has been a constant source of water for the millions of pilgrims who visit the Holy Ka'aba every year.

THE MASA'A

This is the place between the two small hills Safa and Marwa by the side of the Masjid around the Holy Ka'aba. It was between these two hills, now covered with a two-storey building, that Haagar ran seeking water for

her young babe Ismaa-iil when the well of Zam Zam started gushing forth water. Persons performing the Hajj and Umra have to duplicate Haagar's actions as part of their Hajj rituals.

THE HOLY KA'ABA

The Holy Ka'aba is the first house built for the worship of Almighty Allaah. In this connection, Almighty Allaah says in Chapter 3 Verse 96 of Al Qur'aan:

"The first house of worship appointed for man was that at Bakka (now Makkah): Full of blessing and of guidance for all kinds of beings: in it are signs manifest: (for example) the Station of Ibraahiim; whoever enters it attains security; pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allaah- those who can afford the journey: but if any deny faith, Allaah stands not in need of any of His Creatures."

The Holy Ka'aba is also referred to in Al Qur'aan as *Baitul Atiq*- the Ancient House- (Ch. 22 Verse 29) and *Baitul Ma'mur* -a Home of Frequent Visit- (Ch. 52 Verse 4). It is a near cube-shaped building standing in the near centre of the *Mataaf* and each of it's four corners faces one of the points of the compass.

All Muslims, regardless of what part of the world in which they live, turn in the direction of the Holy Ka'aba when offering salaah (prayer). It must be emphasized that Muslims do not worship the Holy Ka'aba but only face its direction when offering the salaah. One must face somewhere while praying, and facing the Holy Ka'aba symbolises not only the unity of Muslims throughout the world but also the Islamic concept of *Tauhiid* (unity of Almighty Allaah). Those who have been fortunate to read salaah in the Holy Ka'aba must remember the concentric circles of worshippers offering their prayers around it in the *Mataaf*. Extend this, therefore, to Muslims all over the world and envisage the concentric circles of Muslims around the world.

The Holy Ka'aba was originally built by Prophet Adam (A.S.) but this structure was destroyed during the Great Flood during the time of Prophet Nuuh (Noah) (A.S.). Some four thousand five hundred years ago Almighty Allaah instructed Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) to rebuild the structure and directed him where to find the spot. In this connection Almighty Allaah says in Ch. 22 Verse 26 of Al Qur'aan:

"Behold! We gave the site to Ibraahiim, of the (Sacred) House (saying): 'Associate not anything (in worship) with Me; and sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer).'"

Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) accordingly rebuilt the Holy Ka'aba and was assisted by his son Ismaa-iil (A.S.) in this respect. During the course of construction Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) sent Ismaa-iil (A.S.) to get a suitable stone to lay in the eastern corner of the building. Ismaa-iil (A.S.) accordingly proceeded to the nearby hill of Abu Qubays and there met an angel who gave him a stone to take to his father. Of this stone the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said that: "It descended from Paradise whiter than milk, but the sins of the sons of Adam made it black." This stone is called "*Al Hajar Al-Aswad*" (the Black Stone) and is embedded in the eastern corner of the Holy Ka'aba. It is about twelve inches in diameter and is surrounded by a silver border. It is the point from which the *tawaaf* (circumambulation of the Holy Ka'aba) commences.

After the Holy Ka'aba was rebuilt Almighty Allaah instructed Prophet Ibraahiim (A.S.) to institute the Hajj (pilgrimage) in the following words:

"And proclaim the pilgrimage among men: they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways;

"That they may witness the benefits (provided) for them, and celebrate the name of Allaah, through the Days appointed, over the cattle which He has provided for them (for sacrifice); then eat ye thereof and feed the distressed ones in want."

(Al Qur'aan Ch. 22 Verses 27-28)

The Holy Ka'aba has been renovated and restored over the centuries, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was involved in one of these renovations. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was then thirty five years old and Almighty Allaah had not yet conferred prophethood on him.

Many of you will perhaps know the details of this. However, for those who do not, they are now given. The Holy Ka'aba had to be rebuilt because of damage caused by a flood. Persons from the various tribes got together and started to rebuild it. However, when the time came to replace *Al-Hajar Al-Aswad* (the Black Stone) a dispute arose because each tribe wanted to have the unique honour of doing so. After heated arguments an elder, Abu Umayyah bin Mughirah, suggested that the matter should be decided by the

first person to enter the Holy Ka'aba the next morning. Dear children, can you guess who was the first to enter the Holy Ka'aba next morning? That's right! It was Muhammad (S.A.W.). The problem was related to him and he gave a decision which was very wise indeed and satisfied all the tribes, thus averting a possible war. What did he do? He obtained a sheet and placed the stone on it. He then asked the chief of each tribe to hold a part of the sheet and raise it to the required height. When this was done, he lifted the stone and placed it in its position. All were very happy because each tribe had a hand in placing the Sacred Stone in position.

The last major renovations to the Holy Ka'aba were carried out over a two-month period in 1377 A.H. (1956 C.E.). The building, as it stands today, rests on a marble base and measures 40 feet in length, 35 feet in width and 50 feet in height. It is constructed of grey stone, cut from the hills of Makkah. The interior of the building is empty, except for three wooden pillars, which support the roof, and the silver lamps which hang from the roof. Salaat is not usually read inside it. There is only one entrance into the building.

The Holy Ka'aba is draped with a *Kiswah* (apparel), which is made of black silk. A 34 in. (95 cm.) wide belt runs around the bottom of the upper third of the *Kiswah*. Qur'aanic verses are inscribed with gold-coated silver thread on this belt. Certain verses of Al Qur'aan are also inscribed below the belt and on the corners of the *Kiswah*.

Dear children, it should be the wish and prayer of every Muslim that he or she should be afforded the opportunity to perform the Hajj and offer salaah within the precincts of Masjid al-Haram, with the Holy Ka'aba in front of one's eyes. So make *du'a* to Almighty Allaah for this purpose and, *Inshaa Allaah*, He will answer your prayer.

Khudaa Haafiz

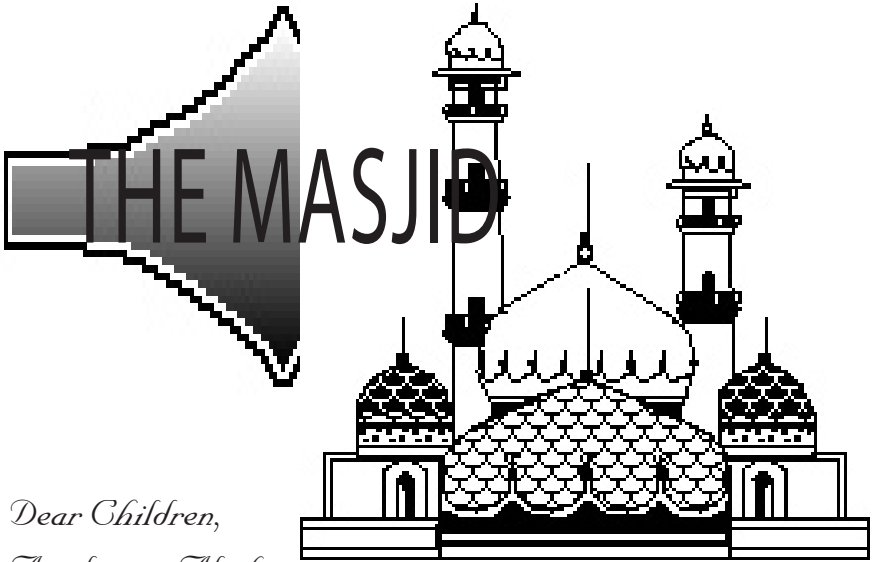
Zil Qada/Zil Hajj 1416 A.H.

Vol. 2 No. 6

Mar. 20 night)/18 May (day) 1996 C.E.



Chapter Thirteen



*Dear Children,
Assalaamu-Alaikum,*

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ !

"To Allaah belong the East and the West: whithersoever ye turn, there is the Presence of Allaah. For Allaah is All-Pervading, All-Knowing."

(Al Qur'aan 2:115)

"The world, the whole of it, is a masjid."

(Holy Prophet Muhammad - S.A.W.)

The masjid, as you know, is the place of prayer and worship for Muslims. Masjid is an Arabic word, the plural form of which is masajid. In non-Muslim countries, the word "mosque" is used instead of "masjid". As Muslims, however, you should use the word masjid as this is more in keeping with Islamic culture.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

You can easily recognise a masjid from the outside of the building as it is distinguished by the following:

1. the dome, or rounded structure, on the roof;
2. at least one minaret (slender turret) on one corner of the roof. It is not unusual to have four minarets, one on each corner of the roof;
3. *the mihraab* (niche or recess) in one wall, which shows the direction to be faced when offering the salaah (prayer).

In addition, it is generally painted white, with green borders.

The inside of the masjid, as you will doubtless know, is free from statues, images, and reproductions of human beings and animals. The walls may have some verses of Al Qur'aan inscribed in the original Arabic language. Next to the *Mihrab* is the *mimbar* or steps on which the *Khateeb* stands when delivering the *Khutbah* (sermon during the *Jumu'a* (Friday) congregational prayer). The *Khateeb* is the name given to the person who delivers the *Khutbah*. The *Khateeb* is usually, but not always, the *Imaam*, that is, the person who leads the congregational prayer. The *muezzin* is the one who gives the *adhaan* (call to prayer).

In Muslim countries, there are many what may be called 'local' masajid in the towns and cities and one large centrally located masjid, called the Jamma Masjid. You will find a 'local' masjid every few blocks, to use a local term, and the people from the surrounding area read their five daily salawat there. However, they all go to the Jamma Masjid for the *Jumu'a* or Friday congregational prayer. While you can offer salaah anywhere, except certain places such as toilets, abattoirs and so on, you obtain more blessing for praying in the 'local' masjid than at home, and more for praying in the Jamma masjid than at a 'local' masjid.

CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

Dear Children, you should know that masjid can only be constructed and maintained by Muslims, for Almighty Allaah says in Al Qur'aan:

"It is not for such as join gods with Allaah, to visit or maintain the mosques of Allaah while they witness against their own souls to infidelity. The works of such bear no fruit: in Fire shall they dwell."

"The mosques of Allaah shall be visited and maintained by such as believe in Allaah and the Last Day, establish regular prayers, and practice regular

charity, and fear none (at all) except Allaah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance." (Ch. 9 Verses 17 - 18)

Those who contribute towards the construction of a masjid benefit greatly, as the following saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) shows:

"The one who builds a masjid only for the sake of winning Allaah's approval will have a dwelling built for him by Allaah in Paradise."

You should also know that once a place had been dedicated for the worship of Almighty Allaah, that is, as a masjid, it must remain so forever. Thus, it is not owned by any individual or organisation and cannot be sold, rented, leased or anything of that nature.

ETIQUETTE ON VISITING MASJID

There are certain rules that you must follow when visiting the masjid. Some of the most important of these are given below:

1. you should be in a state of *wudu*;
2. you should be properly dressed for the purpose of performing salaah, even if you have entered the masjid for another purpose;
3. you should place your right foot first in the masjid, then send blessings on the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), and then say:

"Allaahumm-aftah-lii-abwaaba rahmatika."

("Oh Allaah! Open for me the doors of Thy Mercy.")

4. you should then enter the masjid, and go to the first row, if it is not yet filled. If the first row is filled, then go to the second row, and so on;
5. you must then perform two rakaats *nafl* salaah (*tahiyyat al-masjid*);
6. you should then sit quietly, engaging yourself in reading *tasbeeh*, reading Qur-aan or other acts of *ibadaat* until the time for salaah is announced;
7. you should not be engaged in idle or worldly talk, laughter, fun and so on while in the masjid. However you may discuss religious matters and matters relating to the welfare of the community;
8. you should not pass in front of any one who is reading salaah;
9. you should not run and play in the masjid;

10. you should not carry on any business activities in the masjid;
11. when you leave the masjid, you should step out with the left foot first, saying:

"Allaahumma inni as'aluka min fadlika wa rahmatika."

("Oh Allaah! I beg Thee for Thy Bounty, Grace and Mercy.")

There are also a number of things which one cannot do in a masjid, such as buying and selling. However, space does not allow for these to be detailed.

SPECIAL MASAJID

There are five special masajid about which you should know. A few details of these are given below:

MASJID AL HARAM

Masjid Al Haram is situated in Makkah and is the most sacred shrine for Muslims. It is the foremost of the three masajid for which a Muslim may set out. The last issue of this publication dealt in some detail with this Masjid. You should therefore remind yourself of its contents.

MASJID AL-NABAWI (The Holy Prophet's Masjid)

Masjid Al-Nabawi is one of the three sacred masajid in Islam and also one of the three masajid for which a Muslim may set out.

Masjid Al-Nabawi is situated in Madinah and was the second to be constructed in the history of Islam. It was built by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) shortly after he migrated to that city, which was then called Yathrib. The masjid was built on a parcel of land purchased from the trustee of two orphans, Sahl and Suhail. The money for the land was donated by Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (R.A.). It was constructed from the trunks of date-palm trees, date-palm leaves and mud bricks. The Holy Prophet's quarters were constructed adjoining the masjid and he is buried there. A shed-type structure was built adjoining the masjid (the famous *Suffah*) which served as a centre for teaching Islam during the day and a dormitory during the night.

The masjid has been renovated and reconstructed from time to time. It now includes the Holy Prophet's grave, and those of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (R.A.), who is buried next to him, and also that of the second

Khaliifaa', Hazrat 'Umar Al Faaruq (R.A.). It can accommodate 270,000 worshippers at present.

MASJID-UL-AQSA

Masjid-ul-Aqsa is also called Bait-ul-Muqaddas (the Holy Home) and Al Sakrah (the Rock). It is located in Jerusalem and is the third of the three masajid for which a Muslim may set out. It was built by Prophet Sulaiman (Soloman) (A.S.). This masjid has also been renovated, extended and refurbished over the centuries.

QUBAA MASJID

The first masjid to be constructed in the history of Islam is that at Qubaa, and is called Qubaa Masjid. Qubaa is a suburb of Madinah and is about 3.5 k.m. from the centre of the city. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had stopped there for two weeks while on the *Hijrah* (migration from Makkah to Madinah) and, together with his followers, he constructed a small masjid there during the period. This Masjid has also been renovated and expanded over the centuries. The masjid area now covers 6000 sq. metres.

Qubaa Masjid is referred to as the Masjid of "Piety" (*Taqwa*) and the masjid of the "Power of Islam" (*Quwat ul-Islam*). Almighty Allaah refers to it in the following words:

"There is a small masjid whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of the standing forth for (prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allaah loveth those who make themselves pure."

Ch. 9

Verse 108

MASJID AL QIBLATAIN

Masjid Al Qiblatain is situated in Madinah and is distinguished by the fact that it has two *qiblahs*. At the inception of Islam the *qiblah* for Muslims was Masjid ul-Aqsa in Jerusalem, and Muslims accordingly faced that direction when offering salaah. However, one day in the year 2 A.H. while the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was offering *Zuhr* salaah, he received the following revelation from Almighty Allaah:

"We see thee turning thy face (for guidance) to the heavens: now shall we turn thee to a Qiblah that shall please thee. Turn then thy face in the

direction of the Sacred Masjid: wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction."
(Ch. 2 Verse 144)

Immediately on receiving the above revelation, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) shifted his position to face the direction of the Holy Ka'aba in Makkah in obedience to the command of Almighty Allaah. A second *mihrab* was subsequently built in the direction of the Holy Ka'aba but the first one was left intact. Thus the name Masjid Al Qiblatain: the Masjid of Two Qiblahs.

Masjid Al Qiblatain has also been extended and refurbished from time to time, the present area of the masjid being 3920 sq. metres.

LOCAL MASAJID

There are a little over one hundred masajid in Trinidad and one in Tobago, the first being built shortly after the first Muslim indentured immigrants came here in 1845. It is interesting to note that the Tacarigua masjid, when first constructed in 1865, faced west, instead of east. This was because the Muslims who constructed the masjid had migrated from the sub-continent of India, where the direction of the Holy Ka'aba is west. However, when they found out their error, that is, that they should be facing east, the mistake was corrected. A similar mistake may have been made with some of the very early masajid.

Dear Children, it is very important that you follow the instructions outlined above when you are in the masjid. Therefore learn them fully. And remember, if you see others breaking these instructions, then you have a

Khudaa Haafiz

Muharram/Safar 1417 A.H.

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Chapter Fourteen

BUILDING A HOUSE FOR THE HEREAFTER

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!



You must of course remember that:

1. Almighty Allaah created the universe and everything in it;
2. Almighty Allaah made man His vice-gerent or representative on earth;
3. Almighty Allaah created man in order that man should worship Him;
4. Almighty Allaah sent prophets and books of guidance from time to time so that man would know how to pattern his life and so gain His pleasure;
5. the last book and final guidance sent to man by Almighty Allaah is Al Qur'aan;
6. the last and final prophet sent by Almighty Allaah is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.);
7. if a person lives in accordance with the commands of Almighty Allaah as given in Al Qur'aan and as exemplified by the Holy Prophet Mu-

hammad (S.A.W.), that person will be granted Jannat (Paradise) in the Hereafter;

8. however, if a person fails to live in accordance with Almighty Allaah's commands, that person will be punished in the Hereafter;

You should also know, of course, that:

1. the religion revealed by Almighty Allaah to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is called Islam, which means "submission to the Will of Almighty Allaah",
2. a person who follows the religion of Islam is called a "Muslim", that is, "one who submits to the Will of Almighty Allaah."

There are, as you also know, five fundamental principles or pillars in Islam. To remind you, these are:

1. the Declaration of Faith, that is, to believe that there is no god worthy of worship but Almighty Allaah and that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is His last and final messenger;
2. to perform the compulsory salaah or prayer at the five prescribed times each day;
3. to pay the Zakaat or poor rate if you have a certain amount of money;
4. to fast during the month of Ramadaan, and
5. to perform the Hajj or pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makkah in Saudi Arabia at least once in your lifetime, provided you can afford to do so.

Dear children, the fundamental principles or pillars of Islam comprise the base or foundation upon which a Muslim's life rests. He or she is expected to follow these all the time. However, these are just the first steps to your becoming a Muslim because there are many other commands of the Creator you must also follow in order to make your Imaan (faith) perfect.

Perhaps an illustration of what is meant would be in order. You know that the first step in erecting a house is to have a proper foundation. If the house is going to be built on pillars, then holes must be dug in the earth and the pillars cast into these holes. If this is not done the pillars would keep shifting and would collapse after some time. After ensuring that a proper foundation is prepared, then floor, walls, roof and so on would be put in place, until finally the house is painted. Even after it is painted you would want to have it looking beautiful inside with furniture and ornaments. This is not the end, however, as it must be cleaned regularly and repaired and

repainted from time to time.

The same principle applies with being a Muslim. You begin with the five fundamental principles or pillars as listed above, and then you complete your faith and beautify it by both following all the other injunctions of Al Qur'aan and patterning your life on that of the Noble Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). In order to assist you in this respect, therefore, the following guidances from Al Qur'aan and the *Ahadith* (sayings and practices of the Holy Prophet - S.A.W.) are given:

Relying On Almighty Allaah Only

"And He (Allaah) provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine. And if any one puts his trust in Allaah, sufficient is (Allaah) for him..."

Al Qur'aan 65:3

Duties To Parents

"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say:

"My Lord! bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood."

Al Qur'aan 17:23-

4

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said:

"Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother" and "A father's pleasure is Allaah's pleasure and a father's displeasure is Allaah's displeasure."

Duties to Relatives and Orphans

"Serve Allaah, and join not any partners with Him: and do good to parents, kinfolks, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the Companions by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hand possess...."

Al Qur'aan 4:36

Islamic Brotherhood

"The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers: and fear Allaah, that ye may receive Mercy."
Al Qur'aan 49:10

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

"None of you can be a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

Speaking Loudly

"And be moderate in thy pace and lower thy voice : for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of an ass."
Al Qur'aan 31:19

Speaking the Truth

"Whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned."

Al Qur'aan 6:152

Kindness

"Allaah is kind, and loves kindness." The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)

Keeping Things (In Trust) For Others

"Allaah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due..."
Al Qur'aan 4:58

Justice

"Allaah commands justice, the doing of good..." "Al Qur'aan 16:90

Hard Work

"...Verily never will Allaah change the condition of a people un-

til they change it themselves (with their own souls).
13:11

Al Qur'aan

Forgiveness

"Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; but turn away from the ignorant."

Al Qur'aan

7:199

Generosity

"Those who spend (in charity) of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."

Al Qur'aan 2:274

Fibbing

"And the fifth oath (should be) that they solemnly invoke the curse of Allaah on themselves if they tell a lie."

Al Qur'aan

24:5

"It is great treachery that you tell your brother something he accepts as truth from you, but you are lying."

The Holy Prophet

(S.A.W.)

Haughtiness

"Nor walk on the earth with insolence; for thou canst not rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height."

Al Qur'aan 17:37

"If anyone has got an atom of pride in his heart, he will not enter paradise."

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W)

Stealing

"As for the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands: a punishment by way of example, from Allaah, for their crime: and Allaah is Exalted in Power."

Al Qur'aan

5:41

Squandering

"And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer: but squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.

"Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful." Al Qur'aan 17:26-7

Alcoholic Beverages and Gambling

"O ye who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination-, of Satan's handiwork: eschew such (abomination) that ye may prosper." Al Qur'aan 5:93

Working Together

"And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allaah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves...." Al Qur'aan 3:103

Greetings

"When a courteous greeting is offered you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or (at least) of equal courtesy..." Al Qur'aan 4:86

"When one of you meets his brother, he should say Salaam to him."
The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)

Keeping Promises

"...And fulfill (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)." Al Qur'aan 17:34

Speaking Ill of Others

"O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it.... but fear Allaah, for Allaah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful." Al Qur'aan 49:12

Mocking Others

"O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former); nor let some women laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed: and those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong."

Al

Qur'aan 49:11

Acquiring Knowledge

"O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge."
20:14

Al Qur'aan

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Rabi-ul-Awwal/Rabi-ul-Akhir

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Chapter Fifteen

Two Of The Four Noblest Women

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said;

'The best women in the world are four: Miriam, the Mother of Prophet Jesus (A.S.); Aasiyah, wife of Pharaoh; Khadijah, mother of the Faithful; and Faatimah, daughter of Muhammad.'

Some brief information about two of these ladies is given in this issue.

LADY KHADIJAH AL KUBRAA (THE GREAT) R.A.

Lady Khadijah (R.A.) was born in Makkah in the year 555 C.E. She was a member of the Quraish tribe, (like the Holy Prophet - S.A.W.) which was the ruling class in Makkah. Her father was Khuwalid, a rich merchant, and her mother was Faatimah.

Lady Khadijah (R.A.) was a rich widow with a prosperous business who wanted a reliable person to go to Syria to transact business on her behalf. She made inquiries and young Muhammad was recommended for the job because of his honesty and previous experience. Lady Khadijah (R.A.) employed him and he left with a caravan, accompanied by Maysarah, her

personal representative. You should know that there were no trains and motor vehicles in those days. People mainly walked when travelling and goods were transported on the backs of camels. A caravan would sometimes comprise hundreds of persons and over a thousand camels and would take many months before it returned.

Young Muhammad returned in due course with the caravan and gave an account of his transactions to his employer. Lady Khadijah (R.A.) found that she had made almost twice the profit that had been made by previous agents. This was of course due to young Muhammad's honesty. Lady Khadijah (R.A.) accordingly kept young Muhammad in her employ.

Lady Khadijah (R.A.), besides being the noblest and richest woman in Makkah, was well-refined, very pious and, now approaching forty years of age, still a very attractive lady. Many of the nobles in Makkah had sought to marry her but she had refused all the offers. Now, however, Lady Khadijah (R.A.) had seen in young Muhammad the sterling qualities of the person she would like to marry, if ever she decided to re-marry. For young Muhammad, although poor, was not only handsome, but also did not engage in any of the vices which were common among the vast majority of the Makkans at the time.

Lady Khadijah (R.A.) felt that young Muhammad would make a good husband and father. Through a mutual friend, she expressed her desire to have him marry her. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had also been attracted to Lady Khadijah (R.A.) and was agreeable to the wedding. Arrangements were thus made and the couple was married. The Prophet (S.A.W.) was then twenty-five years old and Lady Khadijah (R.A.) forty.

After the marriage, Lady Khadijah (R.A.) placed the running of her business in her husband's hands and this he did very well. She allowed him to use her wealth freely, and he spent quite a lot of it on buying slaves and freeing them, and also in assisting the poor and the needy. As the years passed by however, he started to retire to the mountains very frequently until he was called to Prophethood while he was meditating in the Cave of Hira. You will recall that he was then forty years old. You will also recall that when he received the first revelation from the Angel Jibra-il he ran home trembling. On relating his experience to his wife, she comforted him and told him that what he had experienced was not a dream. Indeed, so much faith did she have in him that she became the first Muslim.

Dear children, you will recall that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and the early Muslims suffered many persecutions while in Makkah. Lady Khadi-

jah (R.A.) was always at the Holy Prophet's side during these trials and she also suffered immensely. She did not live to see the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) achieve success in his mission as she was called to Almighty Allaah on the tenth of Ramadaan in the tenth year of the Prophet's Mission. She was then sixty-five years. That year, you will recall, is known as The Year of Sorrow because of the deaths of the Holy Prophet's beloved uncle and protector, Abu Talib, and Lady Khadijah (R.A.) .

The Holy Prophet's daughters were overcome by grief at their mother's death as they not only loved her very much, but were also very attached to her. They were consoled however when the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) informed them that the Angel Jibra-il had once told him that he should extend Allaah's Salaams to Lady Khadijah (R.A.) and advise her that Almighty Allaah had prepared a place in Paradise for her.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) never took another wife while Lady Khadijah (R.A.) was alive, although it was the custom in those days for a man to have as many wives as he wanted. His marriage with Lady Khadijah (R.A.) resulted in six children: two boys and four girls. The two boys Qasim and 'Abdullah died while they were still young children. The four girls were: Zainab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum and Faatimah Az-Zahraa (the Resplendent).

LADY FAATIMAH AZ-ZAHRAA (THE RESPLENDENT) R.A.

Lady Faatimah (R.A.) was the fifth child and also youngest daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and Lady Khadijah (R.A.) She was born five years before the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) received the first revelation of Al Qur'aan.

Lady Faatimah's childhood days were difficult ones as, among other things, she saw the entrails of an animal thrown on her father while he was praying in the Ka'aba; she saw her father being strangled in an attempt to kill him; she spent three years with her parents and the other Muslims in exile in a valley outside Makkah; and she witnessed the death of her mother, whom she loved dearly.

Lady Faatimah (R.A.) migrated to Madinah after the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) did so. She was married after the Battle of Badr to Hazrat Ali (R.A.), who was later to become the fourth Khaliifaa' in Islam. She was about nineteen years old at the time and Hazrat Ali (R.A.) twenty-one. The

couple lived a very simple life as Hazrat Ali (R.A.) earned his livelihood by drawing water from wells for people, sometimes carrying it to their homes. Sometimes Hazrat Ali (R.A.) would work so hard at drawing and carrying water that he would suffer from chest pains. Lady Faatimah (R.A.) had to grind corn with her hands for other people in order to assist in meeting the household expenses. Many a time she would grind so much corn that her hands became blistered. Quite often the family would have no food to eat.

Lady Faatimah (R.A.) had five children: Hassan, Hussain, Mohassin, Zainab and Umm Kulthum. Hussain, you may already know, was to become the Imaam Hussain (R.A.) who was eventually martyred at the Battle of Karbala. You would have read in a previous issue of this publication about this famous Battle. You should know also that it was only through Lady Faatimah (R.A.) that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had descendants.

Lady Faatimah (R.A.) resembled her mother physically. She had many of the characteristics of her father as she was kind, simple, well-mannered and a good speaker. She drew closer to her father after the death of her mother and paid so much attention to fulfilling his every need that she was referred to as "*Umm Abi-ha*," which means "the mother of the father." There was great love and affection between the both of them. She made it her duty to see him off whenever he was leaving the home and would look out for his return. He, on the other hand, would stand and greet her whenever she came into his presence.

Lady Faatimah (R.A.), like other Muslim women, assisted in some of the battles by collecting arrows and spears, and by attending to the wounded. She never indulged in idle talk and most of her time was spent in *ibadah* (acts of worship such as performing salaah, reading Al Qur'aan and looking after the poor and needy).

Lady Faatimah (R.A.) was given the title of *Az-Zahraa* - The Resplendent One - as light always seem to radiate from her face. It is said that when she entered the masjid, the *Mihrab* (niche) would reflect the light which radiated from her.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) passed away, as you will remember, on the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal in the year 11 A.H. The death of her father deeply affected Lady Faatimah (R.A.). She was so stricken with grief that she would often be seen crying. It is said that she never smiled afterwards. She eventually passed away some five months after: on the 3rd. of Ramadaan in the same year. She was then only twenty-nine years old. In accordance

with her wish, her body was carried for the Janazah (funeral prayer) in such a manner so that lookers-on could not know whether it was that of a male or a female.

The great love which the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had for Lady Faatimah (R.A.) and the high position she will occupy in the Hereafter are illustrated by the following *Ahadith* (sayings of the Holy Prophet - S.A.W.):

"Whoever pleased Faatimah has indeed pleased Allaah and whoever has caused her to be angry has indeed angered Allaah. Faatimah is a part of me. Whatever pleases her pleases me and whatever angers her angers me."

"She would be the leader of women in Paradise."

ESPECIALLY FOR GIRLS

Dear girls,

The brief life histories of two of the four noblest women in the world as given above will show you how they led exemplary lives in everything they did: as women, as mothers, as wives, as a daughter (in the case of Lady Faatimah - R.A.), as workers in the community, indeed as the ideal Muslim woman. You should try to model your lives on those of these two great women so that you too, *Inshaa Allaah*, may be granted a place in Paradise in the Hereafter.

Khudaa Haafiz

Jamaadi-ul-Awwal/Jamaadi-ul-Akhir 1417 AH-

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Chapter Sixteen



Prophets AYYUUB (JOB) and IISAA (JESUS) *peace be on them*

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

PROPHET AYYUUB (A.S.)

"Commemorate Our Servant Ayyuub. Behold he cried to his Lord:

"The evil One has afflicted me with distress and suffering!

The command was given:

'Strike with thy foot: here is (water) wherein to wash, cool and

refreshing, and (water) to drink.'

"And We gave him (back) his people, and doubled their number, - as a Grace from Ourselves, and a thing for commemoration, for all who have Understanding."

Al Qur'aan Ch. 38 Verses 41/43

You may have heard a person experiencing a lot of difficulties being told by another to have patience "like Job" (pronounced Jobe). Perhaps many of you do not know who Job was. For those of you who do not, and as a reminder to those of you who may, the following article will give you some information on the person referred to as "Job".

There was a Prophet of Almighty Allaah a few thousand years ago named Ayyuub (A.S.). He is called Job in the Bible. Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) was a descendant of Prophet Ibraahim (A.S.) and lived in Palestine, now Israel.

Most of the people in Prophet Ayyuub's community worshipped idols, as they had forgotten about Almighty Allaah. Their chief idol was called Zannus. As a prophet of Almighty Allaah, Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) had to point out to the idol worshippers their faults and urge them to worship Almighty Allaah alone. He met with moderate success in his efforts and was able to convince some of the people to change their ways.

Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) was a very respected person in his community. He was blessed at first with many gifts by Almighty Allaah. He had large tracts of land on which he grew many crops. He had many animals. He had many sons. He enjoyed good health. Many persons in the position of Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) would have forgotten Almighty Allaah because they would have been too busy seeking the pleasures of life with the material things they had. Not so Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.). He prayed to Almighty Allaah regularly, thanking Him for His Bounties.

After some years however tragedy struck Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.). First his crops were destroyed by strong winds. Next all his animals were stolen. Then a house in which many of his sons and grandchildren were assembled collapsed, killing the occupants. Then he became ill. Finally he contracted some strange disease which resulted in sores and ulcers breaking out all over

his body.

Prophet Ayyuub's fellow villagers felt that the disease from which he suffered resulted from the fact that he did not believe in the idols they worshipped. They also felt that they would contract the disease.

So they chased him and his wife from the village. After being chased from his home Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) settled with his wife in a lonely place in a forest. He was so weak that he could not do anything to earn a living. His wife had to go far and wide to try and obtain a little work in order to purchase some food for them to eat. They lived in the open, and their bed was made of ashes spread on the ground.

The disease which affected Prophet Ayyuub's skin lasted for many, many years. It is reported as much as sixteen. In spite of all the problems which he had, Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) never gave up faith in Almighty Allaah. He continued to worship Almighty Allaah alone. Then one day three men who were on their way to Prophet Ayyuub's village met him. These men had accepted the Oneness of Almighty Allaah many years before at the hands of Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.). They had then left the village to seek their fortunes and were now returning home.

When the three travellers saw Prophet Ayyuub's physical condition they began to think like the others, that Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) was an evil man. They also began to have doubts about accepting Almighty Allaah as their sole god and began to think that perhaps they should go back to worshipping idols. Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) realised the thoughts that were passing through the three men's minds. He accordingly prayed to Almighty Allaah who instructed him to go to a certain place, strike it with his foot, and when he saw water gushing forth from the spot, bathe in the water.

Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) went to the spot to which he had been directed by Almighty Allaah and did as he had been commanded. Water miraculously gushed forth from the spot. He then bathed in the water and another miracle occurred. He was cured of his disease immediately. Whatever doubts the three men had about the prophethood of Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) were immediately removed and they remained committed to their belief that Almighty Allaah is alone and has no partner. Thereafter Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) re-

turned to his village and started preaching again. More and more people started to believe in the message of Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.). In addition Almighty Allaah poured His Bounties again on Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.) by [REDACTED] n. The verses of Al Qur'aan quoted at the beginning of this article beautifully describe these events.

Dear children, you will, over the course of your life, experience both good fortune and misfortune. Always be like Prophet Ayyuub (A.S.). When Almighty Allaah blesses you with the good things in life, you must THANK Him for His favours. When He tries you with hardships you must still REMEMBER Him and pray that He relieves you of your difficulties.

Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) is the second to last of the prophets of Almighty Allaah. The last Prophet is of course the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) was sent as a messenger to the Israelites, who had forgotten the teachings of Almighty Allaah and had adopted many evil ways. He was born almost two thousand years ago in a small village in Palestine (now Israel) which was then under the rule of the Romans. His mother was Lady Miriam (R.A.), the Virgin Mary. Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) had no father. Yes! That is correct. He had no father. You may wonder how this was possible. Remember that Almighty Allaah can do anything He wishes. As He says in Chapter 3 Verse 59 of Al Qur'aan:

"The similitude of Iisaa before Allaah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him : 'Be' and he was".

Lady Miriam (R.A.) was a very pious and God-fearing person who, as a young girl, lived in a cell (a small room in a temple). She devoted her time to meditating on Almighty Allaah and praying to Him. Her uncle Zakariah (A.S.) and her cousin Yusuf (Joseph - A.S.) carried food and drink for her. She rarely saw anyone else besides them. One day a strange man appeared in her cell. Lady Miriam (R.A.) became frightened but the man told her he was an angel and that he had been sent by Almighty Allaah to let her

know that she would have the gift of a "holy son". Lady Miriam (R.A.) then asked:

"How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?"

Al Qur'aan

Chapter 19 Verse 20

The angel replied: *"So (it will be): thy Lord saith, 'That is easy for Me: and (We wish) to appoint him as a Sign unto men and a Mercy from us': it is a matter so decreed."*

Al

Qur'aan Chapter 19 Verse 21

Lady Miriam (R.A.) became pregnant following the visit of the angel and in due course had a baby boy named Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.). As she was not married people questioned her about the child. She refused to answer them however and did as instructed by the Angel that is, point to the little baby. To the astonishment of the lookers-on the baby spoke and said:

"I am indeed a servant of Allaah : He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet;

"And He hath made me Blessed wheresoever I be, and hath enjoined Prayer and Charity as long as I live;

"He hath made me kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable;

"So Peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life again."

Al Qur'aan

Chapter 19 Verses 30-33

The baby Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) grew up in course of time to be an adult. When he was about thirty years old he started his prophetic mission. He urged the people to worship Almighty Allaah alone and to stop their evil ways. He also performed many miracles, such as bringing the dead back to life, curing lepers of their illness, and making the blind see. He also foretold the coming of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). As more and more persons started to follow his teachings the priests of the Israelites and the king of the country saw him as a threat to their power and authority. Eventually the priests complained to the king that Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) was a magician and was causing the people to turn against him. The king, who was not an Israelite, agreed with the priests. However he told them that in as much as

Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) was of their faith he should be punished in accordance with their laws.

Word reached Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) that the Israelites had decided to arrest him. He therefore had to continue his work from secret locations. However he was betrayed by one of his close disciples (followers) who disclosed to the authorities where he could be found. The place was raided by soldiers who, in the ensuing confusion, seized

Khudaa Haafiz

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Chapter Seventeen

The Khulafaa' 'ur Raashiduun - The Rightly Guided Caliphs

*"My Companions are like stars. If you follow anyone of them
you will receive guidance."*

- The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

You will recall that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) passed away on the 12th. of *Rabi-ul-Awwal* in the year 11 A.H. You must have surely wondered what was the title given to the persons who were chosen to lead the Muslim community after the Holy Prophet's demise and who some of the earliest leaders were.

To answer the first question, the title given to the early rulers of the Muslims after the death of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was that of *Khalii-faa'* or successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). This is an Arabic word, the plural of which is *Khulafaa'*. The English equivalent is "Caliph".

The first four *Khulafaa'* were Hazrat Abu Bakr As-Siddique, Hazrat 'Umar Al- Faaruuq, Hazrat 'Uthmaan Al-Ghani and Hazrat Ali Asadullaah (may Almighty Allaah be pleased with them). They are called the *Khulafaa' Ur Raashiduun* (the Rightly Guided Caliphs) because of certain *Ahadith* (sayings of the Holy Prophet - S.A.W.)

The *Khulafaa' 'ur Raashiduun* head the list of persons known as "The Blessed Ten." These are the ten persons who were given the good news, in their lifetime, by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), that they would enter Paradise. They were all early followers of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), very pious, simple in their ways, versed in Islam, and always approachable by members of the community. They introduced a number of innovations in Islam that have been followed over the centuries.

Some very brief information about the *Khulafaa' 'ur Raashiduun* is given below.

HAZRAT ABU BAKR As-Siddique (R.A.)

"Abu Bakr (may Allaah be pleased with him) is the best of the human beings save the Prophets." -

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) was about two and one half years younger than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). He was the first adult male, and the third person (after Lady Khadijah (R.A.) and the youth Hazrat Ali (R.A.), to accept Islam. Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) faced many hardships, like the other converts, but these did not deter his faith in the new religion.

Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) was a rich merchant and spent the greater part of his wealth in the way of Islam. It was his money that was used by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to purchase the parcel of land on which the first Masjid was constructed in Madinah.

Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) was given the title "*As-Siddique*" (the Most Truthful and Sincere Person) by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). He was given this title when, on the morning after the Holy Prophet's *Miraj* (Ascension to Heaven), he was told by the enemies of Islam that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had said that he had been to the Heavens and spoke with Almighty Allaah the night before. On hearing this he expressed full confidence in the Holy Prophet's statement although he had not yet met him.

Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) had the distinction, among others, of:

1. being the person who accompanied the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) on the *Hijrah* (migration),
2. being chosen by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to lead the first Hajj by the

Muslims, and

3. being selected by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to lead the salaah when the latter was unable to do so due to illness.

In light of the above, it was not surprising that he was chosen to lead the Muslims on the death of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). He did so for two years and three months, until his death at the age of sixty-three.

Among Hazrat Abu Bakr's major achievements during his term of office was having Al Qur'aan compiled in book form. Instructions to do so were given on the urgings of Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.), and the compilation was performed by Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit (R.A.).

HAZRAT 'UMAR AL-Faaruuq (R.A.)

"Had there been any prophet after me, he would have been 'Umar, the son of al-Khattaab." - The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) succeeded Hazrat Abu Bakr as *Khaliifaa* on the latter's demise. He had accepted Islam in the sixth year of the Holy Prophet's mission. He was then in his late twenties. Prior to his acceptance of Islam, the small Muslim community had to hide and follow their religion. In addition, they were subjected to hostile treatment and harassment by the idol worshippers. Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) himself, who was noted for his quick temper, fighting abilities, and fame as a wrestler, was among those hostile to the Muslims.

However, after accepting Islam, Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) requested the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to go with some Muslims and lead the salaah in the Holy Ka'aba. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) did so without any interference from the idol worshippers as they were afraid of Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.). As a result of this, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) gave Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) the title of "*Al-Faaruuq*", that is "one who distinguishes between right and wrong".

Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) was a rich businessman and spent most of his wealth in the cause of Islam. He lived very simply, and wore patched garments even as *Khaliifaa*. He was very pious and used to weep while reading salaah. He was also an orator, a jurist, a scholar and a theologian.

Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) was very concerned about the welfare of the poor, and used to patrol the city at nights, even while *Khaliifaa*, to enquire about their needs and to give them assistance. He continued to live a very simple

life after being selected *Khaliifaa*'. An example of his simplicity was the occasion when he entered the City of Jerusalem to receive its surrender. On this occasion he had set out from his capital riding a camel and with one attendant. Both took turns in riding the camel. At the time of entering the city the attendant was riding the camel as it was his turn to do so. All thought that the attendant was the *Khaliifaa*' and the *Khaliifaa*' the attendant.

Islam spread greatly during the ten years and six months that Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.) served as *Khaliifaa*'. He passed away at the age of 61.

" 'Uthmaan. ~~_____~~ *_____ has relieved you of all the sins committed by you..* " - The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Hazrat 'Uthmaan (R.A.) was the third *Khaliifaa*'. He was six years younger than the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and was the fourth male to accept Islam. He was one of the few persons among the Muslims who could read and write. Thus he would, with a few others, record the revelations the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) received over the years.

Hazrat 'Uthmaan (R.A.) had his share of difficulties, like all the other early Muslims. He migrated to Abyssinia with the first batch of Muslim migrants and, after spending a few years there, returned to Makkah. After a while, he again migrated, this time to Madinah with the first group of migrants to that city.

Hazrat 'Uthmaan (R.A.) was a very rich merchant and spent generously of his wealth in all good causes both before and after becoming a Muslim. Hence he was referred to as "*Al-Ghani*" (the Generous). Among his many contributions was the donation for the purchase of additional land to extend the masjid at Madinah. He also established the first trust in the history of Islam when he bought a well in Madinah and donated it to the people as they were having difficulty in obtaining water.

One of Hazrat 'Uthmaan's major accomplishments during his period of leadership was to distribute to various parts of the Muslim kingdom copies of Al Qur'aan, as compiled by Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit (R.A.) under the instruction of the first *Khaliifaa*'. This was done in order to avoid any alterations to the revelations as received by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

Hazrat 'Uthmaan (R.A.) was a very quiet soft-spoken person and took pleasure in doing chores around the house. A very pious person, he would think of death very often and weep. He passed away at the age of 82 after leading the Muslim community for twelve years.

HAZRAT ALI Asadullaah (R.A.)

"I am the City of Knowledge and Ali is its Gate."

- The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) had the distinction of being the first youth and the second person to accept Islam. Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was the first cousin of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and, although much younger than the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), was closely attached to him. When he heard of the visit of the Angel Jibra-il to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) in the Cave of Hira, he had no hesitation whatsoever in believing that his cousin had been appointed a Messenger of Almighty Allaah.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) had a great deal of confidence in Hazrat Ali (R.A.). This is seen by the fact that when he was about to migrate to Madinah he left Hazrat Ali (R.A.) on his bed to deceive the Unbelievers and also to distribute to their respective owners the articles which had been left with him in trust.

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was a soldier of note and his bravery in the battlefields earned him the title of "Asadullaah", which means "The Lion of Allaah."

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was a brilliant orator and a noted scholar of Islam. He was also a *Haafiz* of Al Qur'aan and, in addition to knowing when each verse was revealed, could comment on it. He was, in addition, a learned jurist (a person versed in Islamic law) and was appointed by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) as *Qadi* (judge) of the country of Yemen.

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was married to Lady Faatimah (R.A.), one of the daughters of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). The Holy Prophet's progeny is descended from this marriage. Hazrat Ali's two sons, Imaams Hassan and Hussain (R.A.), were martyred, the latter at the Battle of Karbala.

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) earned his living, even while *Khaliifaa'*, by drawing water from wells for people and taking it to their homes or gardens, as required. The family lived a very simple life, and sometimes would have

no food in the house for days.

Hazrat (R.A.) was called back to Almighty Allaah at the age of sixty-three. His *Khilaafaah* (Caliphate) lasted four years and nine months.

Khudaa Haafiz

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Chapter Eighteen

ISLAMIC CELEBRATIONS AND OCCASIONS

Dear Children,

Assalaamu-Alaikum,

السلام عليكم!

As you know, there are two religious celebrations in Islam. These are Eid-ul-Fitr (the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast) and Eid-ul-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifice). In addition to these two religious celebrations, a number of other religious occasions are also observed. Some brief information on the two festivals and some of the religious occasions are given below.

ISLAMIC FESTIVALS

EID-UL-FITR (The Festival of the Breaking of the Fast)

Eid-ul-Fitr, you must surely know, is the festival which marks the end of the month of compulsory fasting: Ramadaan. Eid-ul-Fitr is therefore celebrated on the first day after Ramadaan ends, that is, the first of Shaw-waal.

Eid-ul-Fitr is a day of thanksgiving to Almighty Allaah for affording

you the opportunity to fast during the month of Ramadaan and also to benefit from the very many acts of optional ibaadat (worship) you would have performed during Ramadaan.

You must have a bath early in the morning, put on your best clothes, and accompany your parents and the rest of your family to the masjid in order to offer two special rakaats wajib (obligatory) salaah. Before proceeding to the masjid, however, you should remind your parents that if they have to pay the Sadaqa-tul-Fitr (special poor-rate) they should do so before reading the salaah. The Sadaqa-tul-Fitr is a special charity given by the better-off members of the Muslim community to their less fortunate brothers and sisters to enable them to also celebrate this wonderful occasion.

The special salaah is read in congregation early in the morning after which an appropriate Khutbah is given by the Imaam. After the final du'a is read by the Imaam to mark the end of the morning's proceedings, you must make every effort to greet all your family and friends in the proper Islamic manner and then extend to them "Eid Mubarrak."

The rest of the day is spent in visiting or receiving family and friends, receiving and giving gifts, and of course partaking of the very many delicacies that are made for the occasion.

EID-UL-ADHA (The Festival of The Sacrifice)

Eid-ul-Adha falls on the tenth of Zil Hajj, the last month of the Islamic calendar. It marks the occasion on which Prophet Ibraahiim (Abraham) A.S. made an attempt to sacrifice his then only son, Isma'iil A.S. Prophet Ibrahiim A.S. did so as a result of a dream he had in which Almighty Allaah commanded him to sacrifice what he loved most. However, as you will recall, Almighty Allaah caused young Isma'iil A.S. to be replaced by a ram at the last moment.

This subject was dealt with in a previous issue of this publication: Zil Qada/Zil Hajj 1415 A.H. (Chapter Six). You should therefore refer to it to refresh your memories.



AQIIQAH (Birth Ceremony)

Aqiqah should be performed for a baby on the seventh day. The pur-

pose of the ceremony is to protect the child from illness and evil influences. If it cannot be performed on the seventh day, it should be done as early as possible thereafter.

The procedure for Aqiqah is to slaughter two sheep or goats for a male, or one for a female, and either distribute the meat to relatives, friends and the needy or invite them to partake of a meal in which the meat of the animal(s) is served. (If one cannot afford two sheep or goats for a male, then one will suffice.)

Also on the seventh day:

1. the child's head should be shaved and the weight in gold or silver, or the equivalent thereof, should be given in charity (the baby's hair must be disposed of by burying);
2. the child should be given a proper Islamic name.

AASHUURAA

The 10th of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, is known as *Aashuuraa*. Many important events took place on this date over many thousands of years, and many of these have been related in the first issue of this publication (See Chapter One). However, a few of these are listed to refresh your memory:

1. Almighty Allaah created the world;
2. Almighty Allaah's first Mercy and Blessing descended from the heavens;
3. Prophet Adam A.S. was created;
4. Prophet Iisaa (Jesus - A.S.) was born and also taken up to Heaven;
5. Imaam Hussain (R.A.) was martyred at the Battle of Karbala.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) made it a practice to keep nafl (voluntary) fast on the 9th and 10th of this month so you too should make an effort to follow his example.

MEELAD-UN-NABI (Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad - S.A.W.)

Dear children, you will remember, of course that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was born on the 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal and that he also passed away on that

same date some sixty-three years after. The occasion is taken to educate the community about Islam and to remind them of their duties. This is achieved by organising Meelad functions at which verses of Al Qur'aan are recited and explained, and the Sirah (life of the Holy Prophet - S.A.W.) related in both prose and song forms.

Meelad-un-Nabi functions are held in most parts of the Muslim world. Our country is no exception as it is observed in the vast majority of masajid. Functions are spread over the whole month of Rabi-ul-Awwal in order to facilitate the many persons who wish to attend functions at more than one venue.

The occasion has served, and still continues to serve, as a major means of educating the Muslim community and bringing its members together.

MEERAJ-UN-NABI (Ascension of the Holy Prophet Muhammad - S.A.W.)

The Meeraj-un-Nabi took place on the 27 Rajab, in the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) received the first revelation of Al Qur'aan from Almighty Allaah. On that occasion, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was called to the presence of Almighty Allaah (he did not actually see Him) and was given a number of gifts. The main gift was salaah, which gives us an opportunity to commune with Almighty Allaah at five prescribed times a day. Salaah, as you know, is the second pillar of Islam. (See Chapter Four)

The occasion is celebrated in a manner similar to that of Meelad-un-Nabi, as described immediately above.

LAILA-TUL-QADR (The Night of Power)

Laila-tul-Qadr is one of the five sacred nights in Islam during which a believer's prayer is answered by Almighty Allaah. The four other sacred nights are: the nights of the two Eids, the night of the first of Rajab, and the night of the fifteenth of Shabaan.

Laila-tul-Qadr falls on the 27th of Ramadaan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and the month of compulsory fasting. It is the night on which the first revelation of Al Qur'aan was made to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). Almighty Allaah describes the night thus in Chapter 97 of Al Qur'aan:

"We have indeed revealed this Message in the Night of Power: and what will explain to thee what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by Allaah's permission, on every errand: Peace!...This until the rise of Morn!"

Having regard to the greatness of the night, one should spend the whole of it performing extra acts of salaah, reading Al Qur'aan and making du'a (supplication to Almighty Allaah).

SHAB-E-BARAAT

Shab-e-Baraat falls on the night of the 15th of Shabaan, the eight month of the Islamic calendar. It is also one of the sacred nights in Islam during which a believer's prayer is answered by Almighty Allaah. The whole night should therefore be spent in extra acts of worship. Special du'a (supplication) should also be made on this night for the souls of the deceased, preferably by visits to the cemetery.

Shab-e-Baraat is the night on which, among other things, Almighty Allaah's Mercy descends, Almighty Allaah's Rewards and Sustenance are distributed, lives are lengthened or shortened, Almighty Allaah pardons those who ask for pardon and accepts the repentance of those who repent.

In keeping with the Sunnah (practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad - S.A.W.), one should keep fast on that day.

QUR'AAN QHWANEE/MOULOOD FUNCTIONS

Qur'aan Qhwanee/Moulood functions are held to thank Almighty Allaah for any of a number of reasons; for example, recovery from illness, success in a particular endeavour, passing examinations and so on.

One's family and friends are invited to join in the reciting of Al Qur'aan and in singing Qaseedas. Appropriate messages are also given on various aspects of the religion suitable to the occasion. Refreshments or meals are served at the conclusion of the functions.

These functions are held as the need dictates and serve as an important medium for promoting the religion and fostering love and brotherhood among the community.

Dear children and friends,

This publication has appeared regularly every two months over the three Islamic years: 1415-1417 A.H. When we first conceived the idea of a paper for children, we were a little doubtful as to how it would be received and as to whether it would assist in disseminating Islamic knowledge to the children of our country. However, reports reaching us from time to time and the very many requests made from teachers in Maktab/schools who learnt of the publication, showed that it was serving the purpose for which it was intended. For this we say "*Al-hamdu-lillaah.*"

However, as the saying goes: "All good things must come to an end." So too must this publication, at least for the time being. This issue is therefore the last of the series entitled "With Children in Mind." As we are mindful of our obligation to continue to spread the word of Almighty Allaah, we therefore plan to replace this paper with another, Inshaa Allaah. We kindly request that you make du'a so that this will materialize.

Khudaa Haafiz

Zil Qada/Zil Hajj 1417 A.H.

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