

CHAPTER IV:

Arabic: Lingua Franca of Islamic World and Medieval Ages

Lingua franca literally "Frankish tongue" from Arabic *lughat al-Firanga*; it was an Arabic custom, dating back to the Crusades, of calling all Europeans 'Franks'. Originally a form of communication used in the Levant, a stripped-down Italian peppered with Spanish, French, Greek, Arabic and Turkish words. Then the term became used internationally as the common language of communication e.g. in business and commerce.

Arabic language is the *lingua franca* of Islamic communication; the progress of Arabic language to an international status is closely related to the progress of Islam. Islam is a global message, and the history and spread of Arabic language is corollary to the history and spread of Islam. Before embarking on the Routes of Arabic Influence on English language, it is imperative to know relevant facts about Arab-Islamic history in order to highlight this Arabic-English linguistic cross-fertilization.

Arabs Before and After Islam⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾:

The Arabs were tribes of desert nomads and Bedouins; they were sometimes referred to as locusts of the deserts. They did not have any role to play on the face of the earth; they did not have an identity of their own before Islam. Arabic language too, was marginalized and submerged under the dominant Persian and Roman languages, being representatives of Persian and Roman empires. Similarly, Arabs did not even possess currency of their own; for the currency they used in commerce and trade were the Persian silver Dirhams and the Roman gold Dinars. In the Yemen they were subjugated by either the Persians or the Abyssinians. If they had any government of their own it was under the protection of the Persians. In the north, Syria was subject to the Byzantine rule which was either direct or in the shape of an Arab government under the protection of the Byzantines. Only the heartland of the Arabian Peninsula escaped foreign rule. But this also was in a state of tribalism and division which deprived it of any weight in world power politics. Tribal war could drag on for 40 years or more! but neither individually nor as a group did these tribes count as a power in the eyes of the neighbouring mighty empires. What happened with regard to the "Elephant" aggression by Abyssinian King 570 AD was a correct assessment of the real force of these tribes when faced with a foreign aggressor.

Under Islam the Arabs had, for the first time in history, an international role to play. They also had a powerful state to be reckoned with by the world powers. They possessed a sweeping force that destroyed thrones, conquered empires, and brought down the false, deviating and ignorant leaderships in order to take over the leadership of mankind. But what facilitated these achievements for the Arabs for the first time in their history was that they forgot their Arabism. They forgot their racial urges, fanatic tribalism and their national ties and boundaries. They remembered that they were Muslims, and Muslims only; they felt they are the responsible carriers of Islamic global message. They carried the message of a forceful

and a l-comprehensive faith, which they delivered to humanity with mercy and compassion. They did not uphold any sort of nationalism or factionalism. They were the exponents of a Divine idea which gives mankind a Divine, not earthly, doctrine to be applied as a way of life. They left their homes and families to struggle for the cause of Allah alone. They were not after the establishment of an Arab-empire under which they may live in luxury and conceit. Their aim was not to subjugate other nations to their own rule after freeing them from the rule of the Byzantines or the Persians. It was an aim clearly defined by Rabi'ah ibn Amir, the Muslims' messenger to the Persian commander, when he said in the latter's headquarters: *"Allah ordered us to set out in order to save humanity from the worship of creatures and bring it to the worship of Allah alone, to save it from the narrowness of this life so that it may look forward to the broadness of the life hereafter, and from the oppression of other religions so that it may enjoy the justice of Islam"* ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾.

Then and only then, did the Arabs have an identity, a power and a leadership. But all of these were devoted to Allah alone. They possessed their power and leadership as long as they followed the right path of Islam. But whenever they deviated and followed their narrow nationalistic ideas, and when they substituted for the banner of Islam that of factional bonds, they came under subjugation by other nations. For Allah deserted them whenever they deserted Him; He neglected them as they neglected Him. In the concise words of Umar Ibn Al Khat^{ab} (the 2nd Caliph in Islam) coming from Medina to officially open Jerusalem: *"We Arabs are humiliated, but Allah has empowered us by Islam, so whenever we try to gain power without Islam, Allah puts us down"* ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾.

Hereafter, Arabic language attains an international status: official Persian filing systems in the East and Roman filing systems in the West were all translated to Arabic (called *daw^u'ween*, plural of *di^{wan}* or *divan*). The currency too underwent major changes: all silver and gold currency metallic coins were melted down and new Islamic currency coins were manufactured with Arabic inscriptions of *'La Ilaha Illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah'* (*There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is Messenger of Allah*) (see below).

Arabs, Carriers of the Global Message of Islam⁽³⁾:

Hugh Kennedy in his masterly book *'The Great Arab Conquests – How The Spread of Islam Changed The World We Live In'* wrote: (Islam had a major impact) on human history; the Arab conquests following the death of the Prophet Muhammad in AD 632 changed the face of the world for ever; and shaped the world we all live in today. In the year 600 there were no Muslims. On death of Prophet Muhammad (AD 632), Islam was confined to Arabic-speaking tribesmen living in Arabian Peninsula and the desert margins of Syria and Iraq. No Arabs lived in Egypt or North Africa; Syria and Egypt formed part of the Greek-speaking Christian Byzantine Empire; and Iraq and Iran were ruled by a fire-worshipping Zoroastrian, the Sasanian king of kings. Yet in just a few decades this old world order came to an end: by 641 Arab Muslim armies conquered Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iraq; by 700 all of North Africa; and by 720 Spain, Pakistan and much of Central Asia. Indeed, most of the population of Syria spoke Greek or Aramaic; most of those in Iraq, Persian or Aramaic; in Egypt they spoke Greek or Coptic; in Iran they spoke Pahlavi; in North Africa they spoke Latin, Greek or Berber. None of them were Muslims. In Egypt and North Africa, lands we think of as clearly Islamic, there were no Muslims and effectively no Arabic speakers, and the same was true of Iran and Afghanistan. The scale and the speed of the transformation are astonishing; within a

century of the Prophet's death, all these lands, along with Spain, Portugal, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and southern Pakistan (Sind), were ruled by an Arabic-speaking Muslim elite, and in all of them the local population was beginning to convert to the new religion. The speed of the Muslim conquests is amazing, but there have been other rapid conquests of vast areas in the course of human history which are in a sense comparable. The conquests of Alexander the Great or Genghis Khan immediately come to mind. What makes the Arab Muslim conquests so remarkable is the permanence of the effect they had on the language and religion of the conquered lands. Syria, Iraq, Egypt and North Africa all became Arabic-speaking Muslim countries, and in Iran, although Arabic never replaced the ancient Persian language, Islam became the dominant religion⁽³¹⁾.

Despite Professor Kennedy's excellent analysis of Islam *from outside*, focusing on the objective material explanation to the question of Islamic spread and influence, yet I sincerely wished Dr Kennedy to be a Muslim in order to look at Islam *from inside*, so that he can take Qur'an and Hadith more seriously as the first-hand credible sources of History in order to analyse the frame of mind (that Islam has caused) among the Arab Muslims, leading ultimately to victory. The following chapter therefore, will hopefully throw some light on the intellectual and spiritual background (from a Muslim Arabic perspective) to answer the questions:

- Why Islam swept the world at an unprecedented speed? and
- Why its influence was permanent? and in particular
- Why Islam effect was rather an indelible and unconvertible one – in terms of religion, and in term of its Arabic manifestation that left a linguistic legacy lingering on to the present date?

Why Islam is Needed (4 a, b, c, d) (5 a, b)

Islam came to tell Man about the purpose of his existence; Where did he come from? Why was he created? and Where is he going to (his final destiny)?

Allah (the Arabic name of God) states **the origin of Man**: that it is He Who brought Man from the earth and then settled that Man on the earth in order to live and to construct the earth for a while:

"It is He Who brought you forth from the earth and settled you therein, then ask forgiveness of Him and turn to Him in repentance, certainly, my Lord is (always) Near, Responsive (Ready to answer)."

Verse 11:61 of Surat Hud (The Prophet Hud).

Allah, The Almighty states **the position and function of Man as His Caliph** (vicegerent) on earth: **"And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent (khalifa) on earth.'"**

Verse 2:30 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

Arabic *khalifa* is the origin of English 'Caliph', meaning the deputy of God on earth, thus Man should lead this life on earth and function according to instructions of His maker the God. The word Caliph then became the title by which the rulers of Islamic state are normally known (Abu Bakr, the first Caliph preferred to be called *khalifat rasul Allah*, successor of the

Messenger of Allah). The caliphs also had the more formal title of *Amir al-mu'minin*, Commander of the Faithful (or Prince of Believers).

God the Most High explains that Man was not created without a purpose:

"Did you think that We had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to Us?"

Verse 23:115 of Surat Al-Mu'minin.

(The Believers) Thus in this Universe, everything is created and planned by the Maker Almighty; the chance theory of nature is not only alien to Islam, but totally dumb to call the nature (itself a creation of God) as a creator! He (Allah) further says: "And they say: 'What is there but our life in this world? We shall die and we live, and nothing but Time (Ad-Dahr) can destroy us'. But of that they have no knowledge: they merely conjecture."

Verse 45:24 of Surat Al-Jathiya (Bowing the Knee).

This is the basis of Materialistic theory, but this is not knowledge but conjecture. Why not accept light from Him Who knows all. Indeed, time is in Allah's Hand. The Prophet hadithly comments that Qura'anic verse: "Allah Most High says: 'The son of Adam annoys Me for he abuses Ad-Dahr (Time) though I am Ad-Dahr (Time); in My Hands are all things, and I cause the revolution of day and night'." [Salih Al-Bukhari, Hadith 1776] 'I am ad-Dahr' here means 'I am the Creator of Time, and I manage the affairs of all creation including Time.' Thus, one should not attribute anything whether cheerful or disastrous to Time, for everything is in the Hands of Allah and only He is the Disposer of everything.

Allah explains that the reason for creation of life and death is for testing and trial of Man "He Who created death and life that He may test which of you is best in deeds, and He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving."

Verse 67:2 Of Surat Al-Mulk (Dominion).

But, The Almighty clearly explains the real purpose of life: to worship Him: "And I (Allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone)." Verse 51:56 of Surat Adh-Dhariyat (The Winds that Scatter)

Indeed in Islam, the term **worship** represents the broad-spectrum of life. So far as the life activities are carried out for the sake of God, such activities are considered kinds of worship; thus eating/drinking to enable one to perform his religious duties and prayers, exercising to be fit for pilgrimage, a kind word spoken to help others, a smile to ease tension, removing harm from foot-path, feeding a spouse, and even having sex with his legitimate wife are all different forms of worshipping God. '*Work is a worship*' is famous saying among Muslims and is one of important Islamic values. The believers who worship Allah, will be rewarded the paradise, while the unbelievers will be punished in Hell-fire.

And God the Most High sums Man's life journey by saying: "Verily, it is We Who give life and cause death; and to Us is the final return."

Verse 50:43 of Surat Qaf.

Indeed, the opening surah of the Qur'an (*Fatihah*, composed of 7 verses)⁽⁶⁾ provides the clarity of vision for the Mankind. It sums up the relationship between Man and God; it inspires Man to study the Qur'an, to worship the Lord of the Universe, to seek for guidance from Him alone. Submission to Allah as the One and the Only God is the very foundation of

Islam. Indeed, the primary meaning of the word Islam is '*submission to Allah*' Will. Muslims recite *Fatihah* no less than 17 times in their 5 daily prayers:

"1. In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

2. All Praise to Allah, Lord of the Alamin (the Universe including mankind, jinn and all that exists).

3. The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

4. The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge and Master) of the Day of Judgement.

5. You alone do we worship, and You alone do we ask for help.

6. Guide us to the Straight Way.

7. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger, nor of those who went astray."

Verse 1:1-7 of Surat Al-Fatihah (The Opening.)

Al-Qurtubi mentioned in his interpretation of Quran: 71 important issues in the jurisdiction and in principles of Islam, derived from "Surat Al-Fatihah" (The opening chapter of 7 verses), together with lessons on privileges and meanings of this great Sura, which is rightly called '*the Exsence of the Book*'. Furthermore, the scholar Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyah wrote a book in 3 volumes entitled "*Madarij al-Salikeen li Iyyak Na'budu wa Iyyak Nast'een*" (*Paths of Walkers into 'Thee do we worship and Thine aid we seek'*), indicating the greatness of this chapter of Qur'an

Then The Lord justified the revelation of Qur'an as the final and most protected Scripture (Book), explaining that He had revealed earlier Scriptures (Books) to many of His messengers, but these Books were unfortunately corrupted, and were thus rendered distorted or falsified: "**O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! There has come to you Our Messenger (Muhammad) revealing to you much that you used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary): Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light (Prophet Muhammad) and a Perspicuous Book (this Qur'an).**"

Verse 5:15 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

The Lord described various methods adopted by some of the people of the Book in preventing the access of people to the truth. One is to temper with it, or trick it out in e-slours of falsehood (mixing or clothing truth with falsehood e.g. editing); half-truths are often more dangerous than obvious falsehood. Another is hiding (covering up without revealing a crucial verse), or alternatively to conceal it altogether, such concealment may mean permanent erasure of important verses. Other methods include: distorting verses through distorted reading (thus changing the substance or the text); writing their own chapters (claiming they were revealed by God, when they were not); and/or rejecting part of the book completely. They do all this purely for political and commercial reasons. Those who are jealous of the Prophet of Allah, whom they actually see before them, do not allow his credentials or virtues to be known, or vilify him, or conceal facts which would attract people to him. When people do this of set purpose, against their own light ("**of which you are yourselves witnesses**") (see below), they are descending to the lowest depths of degradation, and they are doing more harm to themselves than to anyone else:

"O people of the Book! Why do you reject the Signs of Allah, of which you are (yourselves) witnesses? O people of the Book! Why do you clothe truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know?.....And verily, among them is a party who distort the Book with their tongues (as they read), so that you may think it is from the Book, but it is not from the Book, and they say: 'This is from Allah', but it is not from Allah; and they speak a lie against Allah while they know it."

Verse 3:70-71 and 78 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

It is narrated by Anas: There was a Christian who embraced Islam and read Surat Al-Baqara (The Cow) and Al-Imran (The Family of Imran), and he used to write (the revelations) for the Prophet. Later on he reverted to Christianity again, and he used to say: 'Muhammad knows nothing but what I have written for him'. Then Allah caused him to die, and the people buried him in the morning they saw that the earth had thrown his body out. They said: 'This is an act of Muhammad and his companions; they dug the grave of our companion and took his body outside it, for he had run away from them.' They dug the grave for him as deep as they could, but in the morning they again saw that the earth had thrown his body out. So they believed that what had befallen him was not done by human beings and had to leave him thrown (on the ground).

[Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol 4, Hadith 814].

"They (some of Children of Israel) change the words from their (right) places and have abandoned a good part of the message that was sent to them, and you (Muhammad) will not cease to discover deceit in them, except a few of them; but forgive them and overlook (their misdeeds), verily Allah loves good-doers".

Verse 5:13 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

"Then do you believe in a part of the Book and reject the rest? But what is the reward for those among you who behave like this but disgrace in this life?- And on the Day of Judgement they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment, for Allah is not unaware of what you do."

Verse 2:85 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

"Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and then say, 'This is from Allah', to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn (thereby)."

Verse 2:79 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

As for Muhammad, The Almighty clearly states that Muhammad is the expected Prophet and Messenger after Jesus, whom Jesus himself gave the glad-tiding of his coming:

"Those to whom We gave the Book (Jews and Christians) recognise him (Muhammad) as they recognise their sons, but verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it (i.e. the qualities of Muhammad which are written in the Torah and Gospel). This is the truth from your Lord, so be you not one of those who doubt."

Verse 2:146-147 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

"And (remember) Jesus, son of Mary said: 'O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving glad-tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad, but

when he (Ahmad i.e. Muhammad) came to them with clear proofs, they said: 'This is plain magic'."

Verse 61:6 of Surat As-Saff (Battle Array).

Indeed, Prophet Muhammad showed clear proofs, for his whole life from beginning to end was one vast miracle. He fought and won against all odds. Without learning from men, he taught the highest wisdom. He melted hearts that were hard, and he strengthened hearts that were tender and required support. In all his sayings and doings, men of discernment could see the working of Allah's hand: yet the ignorant Unbelievers called it all magic! – called that unreal which later became the most solid fact of human history!

The mutual praise between the 2 Prophets: Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them), is further illustrated by Prophet Muhammad's saying: **"Both in this world and in the Hereafter, I am the nearest of all the people to Isa (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary). The Prophets are paternal brothers: their mothers are different, but their religion is one (i.e. Islamic Monotheism)".**

[Hadith 652, Vol 4, Sahih Al-Bukhari].

Narrated by Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

"By Him (Allah) in Whose Hand my soul is, surely, the son of Mary (Jesus) will shortly descend amongst you people (Muslims), and will judge mankind justly by the Law of the Qur'an (as a just ruler), and will break the Cross and kill the pigs and abolish the Jizyah [a tax taken from the people of the Books (Jews and Christians), who are under the protection of a Muslim government. This Jizyah tax will not be accepted by Jesus and all mankind will be required to embrace Islam with no other alternative]. Then there will be abundance of money and nobody will accept charitable gifts".

[Hadith 425, Vol 3, Sahih Al-Bukhari].

Truly Jesus, son of Mary will descend as a leader of the Muslims and it is a severe warning to the Christians who claim to be the followers of Jesus and he will break the cross and kill the pigs, and he will abolish the Jizyah (tax); and all mankind will be required to embrace Islam with no other alternative.

As for the prophecy of Jesus about the coming of Prophet Muhammad, indeed, Ahmad or Muhammad, the Praised One, is almost a translation of the Greek word Periclytos. In the new Testament as it now exist even after the original text has been distorted, clear prophecies indicating the coming of Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad is foretold in the Gospel of John xiv 16, xv 26, xvi 7: the future Comforter cannot be the Holy Spirit as understood by Christians, because the Holy Spirit already was present, helping and guiding Jesus. The word 'Comforter' in the English version is for the Greek word 'Paracletos', which means 'Advocate', 'one called to the help of another, a kind friend', rather than 'Comforter'. However Paracletos is a corrupt reading for Periclytos, and that in their original saying of Jesus there was a prophecy of Prophet Ahmad by name. Even if we read Paraclete, it would apply to the holy Prophet, who is 'a Mercy for all creatures – Verse 21:107' and 'most kind and merciful to the Believers – Verse 9:128'.

Also, in the Old Testament as it now exists, Muhammad is foretold in Deut xviii 18; Psalm 118:22-23, and the rise of Arab nation in Isaiah 42: 1-13 (esp. 11) for Kedar was a son of Isma'il and the name is used for the Arab nation. Further, there were other Gospels that

have perished, but of which traces still remain, which were even more specific in their reference to Muhammad: e.g. the Gospel of St. Barnabas, of which an Italian translation is extant in the State Library at Vienna (It was edited in 1907 with an English translation by Mr. Lonsdale and Laura Ragg).

It may be interesting here to quote Yahya Emerick saying in page 19 of his book (**What Islam is All about?**) published January 2000 by International Book of Islamic Literature:

(The bible is the book the Christians and Jews wrote for themselves. The Protestant Bible has a total of 66 books inside, the Catholic Bible has a total of 73 books inside. One Bible will have chapters and verses another one won't have. Some have words that do not appear in older versions, and when you even compare ancient Bibles, they all have different contents, even in the Greek and Hebrew copies!

The Buddhists have many different holy books and no one is certain who wrote them. The Hindus have numerous books filled with stories of fantastic gods, monsters, war stories and philosophy which is difficult to accept as true.

Only the Qur'an has survived through the centuries unchanged and what's also important is that today people have not lost the ability to read it in its original language.

The language of the Hindu books, Sanskrit, is a dead language. The ancient Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew of the Jews and ancient Christians is no longer spoken the same way today. The Buddhist writings are written in any number of languages and have no connection to any original source documents.

Arabic, however, has been preserved and is studied by Muslims all over the world. Not the slang style Arabic that is spoken by some people in the Middle East, but the pure Arabic of the Qur'an, the *Fus-ha*, or correct Arabic. **So we have the original book and the original language to read it in. No one else can say that. The entire Qur'an was written down in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. It was personally arranged by him, and the Muslims all memorized it in the same order.**

For a brief comparative study between the Bible and Qur'an, the reader may look into:

Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them) in the Bible and the Qur'an,

Appendix II, pages 907-917, in Translation of the meanings The Noble Qur'an in the English Language. By Dr Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali and Dr Muhammad Muhsin Khan. King Fahd Complex For The Printing of The Holy Qur'an, Medina, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1404 H.

Interestingly, the God (Allah) confirms 3 important facts about the people of the Book in His final revealed Scripture, the Qur'an:

- ♦ that the people of the Book know well that Muhammad is the awaited Prophet (despite that some of them are stubborn enough not to show it):

"Those to whom We gave the Book (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad) as they recognize their sons, but verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it [i.e. the qualities of Muhammad which are written in the Torah and the Gospel]."

Verse 2:146 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

- ◆ that the people of the Book know well that the Qur'an is certainly a divine revelation like Torah and Gospel:

"[Say (O Muhammad)] Shall I seek a judge other than Allah while it is He Who has sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) explained in detail, Those to whom We have given the Book (Torah for Jews and Gospel for Christians) know well that it has been sent down from your Lord in truth. Never be then of those who doubt."

Verse 6:114 of Surat Al-An'am (The Cattle).

- ◆ that the people of the Book know well that Islam is the continuation of the old Religion in its renewed final form:

"Certainly, the people who were given the Book (Jews and Christians) know well that, that (Islam symbolized by Qibla in Makkah) is the truth from their Lord, and Allah is not unaware of what they do."

Verse 2:144 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

Hence, The Lord Creator of Mankind gently reminds the people of the Book that they were Muslims by submitting to Him earlier and before the revelation of this Quran:

"Those to whom (Jews and Christians) We gave the Book (Torah and Gospel) before it, - they believe in it (the Qur'an). And when it is recited to them, they say: 'We believe therein in it, verily, it is the truth from our Lord; Indeed even before it we have been from those who submit themselves to Allah in Islam as Muslims [like Abdullah bin Salam (was a Jew then converted to Islam) and Salman Al-Farisi (was a Christian then converted to Islam)]. These will be given their reward twice over, because they were patient and repel evil with good and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them."

Verses 28:52-54 of Surat Al-Qasas (The Narration).

Accordingly, The Lord (Allah) invites the people of the Book to believe in the renewed message of Islam, being the eternal and the only religion of The One and The Only God; He then states that the Prophethood of Muhammad to come out among the Arabs was entirely His Independent Choice and through His Grace:

"O you who believe [in Moses – Jews, and in Jesus – Christians]! Fear Allah, and believe in His Messenger (Muhammad), He will bestow on you a double portion of His Mercy, and He will provide for you a light by which shall walk (straight), and He will forgive you, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. That the people of the Book may know that they have no power whatever over the Grace of Allah, that (His) Grace is (entirely) in His Hand, to bestow it on whomsoever He wills, for Allah is the Lord of Grace abounding."

Verses 57:28-29 of Surat Al-Hudid (Iron).

Furthermore, these 2 glorious Qur'anic verses are most beautifully complemented by the Prophet's Hadith (saying), that Allah's Messenger said:

'Three will get double rewards: (1) any man of the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) believes in his own Prophet and then believes in me (Muhammad), he will (also) get a double reward; And (2) any slave (servant) who fulfils his duty to his Lord (Allah) and to his master will get a double reward; And (3) any man who has a slave-girl

whom he educates properly [teaching her good manners], then manumits her and marries her will (also) get a double reward.

[Sahih of Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Indeed, if Muhammad is a Prophet (and he is certainly the last Prophet), and if Muhammad is the Prophet that followed Jesus (and he really had followed Jesus as foretold by Jesus himself); it is then obligatory to have belief in the Messengership of the Prophet Muhammad: Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger said,

"By Him (Allah) in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, there is none from amongst this present nation [Arabs], the Jews, and the Christians who hears about me and then dies without believing in the Message with which I have been sent (i.e. Islamic Monotheism), but he will be from the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire."

[Sahih Muslim, Sahihah by Albani no. 1129].

In fact, the similarity between Islam and Christianity led a Christian Professor *Richard W. Bulliet* to write his excellent book *"The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization, published by Columbia University Press, New York, 2004"*.

Prophet Muhammad's Letters inviting Kings of the World for Islam:

Indeed, if the God is One, then the Truth or Light must be One, coming from The One God and the Only (Allah). Hence, the God addresses the common terms between Islam and Christianity:

"Say (O Muhammad): 'O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Come to a word that is just (and common) between us and you, that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah, then if they turn away, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'"

Verse 3:64 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Indeed, the last verse was the core of the message of Prophet Muhammad's letter to **Heracbius** (Caesar of Roman Byzantine Empire) (see below).

It is not surprising to note that ALL Christian Rulers responded favourably to Prophet Muhammad's messages carried by his envoys⁽⁸⁾:

1. **The Negus of Abyssinia** (or the Emperor of Abyssinia), a very knowledgeable, pious Christian, and just ruler. In fact, the persecuted Muslims in Makkah were advised by Prophet Muhammad to flee and make their first emigration to Abyssinia where they could worship Allah freely without persecution, because of its just religious ruler. The Negus also agreed to represent the Prophet in his wedding with Um Habibah (Abu Sufyan's daughter) who became a widow (or as claimed by other sources to be abandoned by her husband while in Abyssinia). Shortly after Muhammad concluded a peace treaty of Hudaibiya around AD 628 with Makkah, he send his messages to all world rulers, and the Negus of Abyssinia immediately converted to Islam on the receipt of Muhammad's letter.

2. **Muqawqis**, the Roman governor of Egypt showed great respect, but with no wish to either fight or convert; he sent the Prophet many gifts including Coptic slave girls, Mariyah (with her sister) together with a donkey, a mule, a horse, and Egyptian clothes and gold.
3. **Heraclius (the Byzantine Emperor)**. According to the most authentic historical records, the Roman Empire was defeated in Palestine and much of Asiatic territory was lost in 615 by the Persian Empire: Jerusalem was burnt and pillaged, the Christians were massacred, the churches were burnt, and the Cross on which the Christian believed that Christ had been crucified, was carried away to Persia. The Pagans of Makkah rejoiced at the overthrow of Romans by Persians, while Muslims in Makkah were sad (they were weak at the time) as they considered Romans as people of the book and they (Muslims) grouped themselves with people of the book. The Qur'an miraculously and beautifully foretells that the Romans will soon defeat Persians in *bidhi sinin* (few years, ranging from 7-9): "The Romans have been defeated. In a land close by (Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine), and they, after their defeat, will be victorious. Within few (*bidhi*) years, with Allah is the Command in the Past and in the Future (before the defeat of the Romans by the Persians, and after the defeat of the Persians by the Romans); and on that Day, the Believers (i.e. Muslims) will rejoice (at the victory by Allah to the Romans against the Persians). With the help of Allah. He gives victory to whom He will, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful. (It is) the promise of Allah, never does Allah fail from His promise; but most men know not."

Verse 30:2-6 of Surat Ar-Rum (The Romans).

Indeed, the news of Byzantines' victory over Persians came after 7 years in the battle of *Issus* in 622 (the year Hijrah) and in 624, when Heraclius carried his military campaign into the heart of Persia (the year when Makkan Quraish were beaten off by Muslims at the battle of Badr). Heraclius regained all lost territories, and he celebrated his triumph in Constantinople in March 628. Peace then was made between the 2 Empires on the basis of the *status quo ante*. Heraclius, in pursuance of a vow he had made, went south in the autumn to Emessa (Himis), which was his headquarters and from there he marched on foot to Jerusalem in order to pray in the Holy City and to celebrate his victories, and restore to its place the holy Cross which had been carried away by the Persians and was returned to the Emperor as a condition of peace. Heraclius route was strewn with costly carpets and aromatic herbs were thrown on the carpets, and in Jerusalem (in late AD 628) he got the message from the Holy Prophet Muhammad inviting him to the True Faith as renewed in the living Messenger of the age. Heraclius was perplexed, but took the matter seriously; he met with Arab delegation (happened to visit Jerusalem on a trading mission, led by Abu Sufyan, an Arab Chief and Makkan Aristocrat who was not yet converted to Islam at the time following the peace treaty of Hudaibiya around AD 628 undertaken between Muslims and Makkah Polytheists). Heraclius then initiated a very interesting intellectual inquiry and highly intelligent interview with Abu Sufyan (using mostly closed questionnaire and precise questions, ending with 'Yes' or 'No' answers), Heraclius asked 11 questions and he confirmed that Muhammad is the awaited Prophet.

Narrated by Ibn Abbas: Abu Sufyan narrated to me personally, saying:

"I set out during the truce that had been concluded between me and Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him). While I was in Sham, a letter sent by the Prophet (peace be upon him) was brought to Heraclius. Dihya Al-Kalbi had brought and given it to the governor of Busra, and the latter forwarded it to Heraclius. Heraclius said, 'Is there anyone from the people of this man who claims to be a Prophet?' the people replied, 'Yes,' so, along with some other Quraishi men, I was called and we entered upon Heraclius, and we were seated in front of him. Then he said, 'Who amongst you is the nearest relative to the man who claims to be a Prophet?' I (Abu Sufyan) replied: I am the nearest relative to him from amongst the group.' So they made me sit in front of him and made my companions sit behind me. Then he called upon his translator and said (to him), 'Tell them (i.e. Abu Sufyan's companions) that I am going to ask him (i.e. Abu Sufyan) regarding that man who claims to be a Prophet. So, if he tells me a lie, they should contradict him (instantly).' By Allah, had I not been afraid that my companions would consider me a liar, I would have told lies. Heraclius then said to his translator,

1. 'Ask him: What is his (i.e. the Prophet's) family status amongst you?'

I said, 'He belongs to a noble family amongst us.'

2. Heraclius said, 'Did anybody else (amongst you) ever claim the same (i.e. to be Allah's Prophet) before him?'

I said, 'No'.

2. Heraclius said, 'Was any of his ancestors a king?'

I said, 'No'.

3. He said, 'Do the nobles follow him or the poor people?'

I said, 'It is the poor who follow him.'

4. He said, 'Is the number of his followers increasing or decreasing?'

I said, 'They are increasing.'

5. He said, 'Does anyone renounce his religion (i.e. Islam) after embracing it, being displeased with it?'

I said, 'No'.

6. He said, 'Did you ever accuse him of telling lies, before his saying what he has said?'

I said, 'No'.

8. He said, 'Did he ever betray?'

I said, No, but now we are away from him in this truce and we do not know what he will do in it.' Abu Sufyan added, "By Allah, I was not able to insert in my speech a word (against him) except that.

9. He said, 'Did you fight with him?'

I replied, 'Yes.'

10. He said, 'How was your fighting with him?'

I said, 'The fighting between us was undecided and victory was shared by him and us in turns. He inflicted casualties upon us and we inflict casualties upon him.'

11. Heraclius then asked me, 'What does he order you to do?'

I said, 'He orders us (to offer) prayers and (to pay) Zakat, and to keep good relationship with the kith and kin, and to be chaste.'

Then Heraclius told his translator to tell me (i.e. Abu Sufyan),

- 'I asked you about his family status amongst you, and you told me that he comes from a noble family amongst you. Verily, all Messengers come from the noblest family among their people.
- Then I asked you whether anyone had said this statement before him; and you denied that. Thereupon I thought if somebody had said that statement before him, then I would have said that he was a man copying some sayings said before him.'
- Then I asked you whether any of his ancestors was a king, and you denied that. Thereupon I thought that had one of his forefathers been a king, I would have said that he (i.e. Muhammad peace be upon him) was seeking to rule the kingdom of his forefathers.
- Then I asked you whether you have ever accused him of telling lies before he said what he said, and your reply was in the negative. Thereafter, I took for granted that a man who did not tell a lie about others, could never tell a lie about Allah.
- Then I asked you regarding his followers, whether they were the noble or the poor among the people, and you said that they were only poor (who follow him). In fact, such are the followers of the Messengers.
- Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You claimed that they were increasing, that is the way of true faith till it is complete.
- Then I asked you whether anyone of his followers had renounced his religion (i.e. Islam) after embracing it, being displeased with it, and you denied that. And such is faith when its delight enters the heart and mixes with it completely.
- Then I asked you whether he has ever betrayed anyone; you claimed that he had never betrayed. Indeed, Messengers never betray.
- [Then I asked you whether you had ever fought with him, and you claimed that you had fought with him and the battle between you and him was undecided and the victory was shared by you and him in turns; he inflicted casualties upon you and you inflicted casualties upon him. Such is the case with the Messengers, they are put to trials and the final victory is for them.]
- Then I asked you what does he order you to do, and you claimed that he orders you to worship Allah without associating anything with Him and forbids you to worship idols, and to offer prayers, to be true-teller, and to be chaste'.

[Conclusion] Then Heraclius said, 'if whatever you have said is true, then he is really a Prophet and his kingdom will expand (surely) to what is under my feet. I knew that he (i.e. the Prophet peace be upon him) was going to appear, but I never thought that he would be from amongst you. If I were certain that I can reach him, I would like to meet him and if I were with him, I would wash his feet [for blessing].'

Then Heraclius asked for the letter of Allah's Messenger peace be upon him and read it, wherein was written:

[In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

(This letter is) from Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Heraclius, the sovereign of Byzantine:

Peace be upon him who follows the Right-Path. Now then, I call you to embrace Islam. Embrace Islam and you will be saved (from Allah's punishment); embrace Islam, and Allah will give you a double reward, but if you reject this, you will be responsible for the sins of all the people of your kingdom. (Allah's Statement):

"O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah, then if they turn away, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'" (3:64)

Then Abu Sufyan said, "When he finished reading the letter, voices grew louder near him and there was great hue and cry, and we were ordered to go out." Abu Sufyan added, " while coming out, I said to my companions, 'The matter of Ibn Abu Kabshah (i.e. Muhammad peace be upon him) has become so prominent that even the king of Banu Al-Asfar (i.e. the Romans) is afraid of him.' So I continued to believe that Allah's Messenger peace be upon him would be victorious, till Allah made me embrace Islam."

Az-Zuhri said, "Heraclius then invited all the chiefs of the Byzantine and had them assembled in his house and said, 'O group of Byzantine! Do you wish to have a permanent success and guidance and that your kingdom should remain with you?' (immediately after hearing that), they rushed towards the gate like onagers, but they found them closed. Heraclius then said, 'Bring them back to me.' So he called them and said, 'I just wanted to test the strength of your adherence to your religion. Now I have observed of you that which I like.' Then the people fell in prostration before him and became pleased with him."

[Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 6, Hadith No. 75].

It is said that Heraclius was keen astrologist and he saw the emergence of a circumcised king; when he inquires about it, he was told that only Jews were circumcised, and hence advised to kill them all. But, Heraclius then receives the message of Prophet Muhammad, so Heraclius asked to check whether this Arabic envoy is circumcised; he was also told that Arab do circumcise. Heraclius said ominously that the king of this nation has appeared. Heraclius also sent a letter to Rome inquiring from his friend (his peer in knowledge), who later confirmed that the time of the awaited Prophet has indeed come.

Indeed, Heraclius put Prophet Muhammad's letter in a golden cylinder for blessing and that letter was inherited ever-since by the Roman emperors and kings (yet without telling their Christian subjects!). The mutual respect between Prophet Muhammad and Heraclius was a

special one indeed when contrasted with Chorsoes, the Emperor of Persia (who tore the Prophet Muhammad's letter). After receiving their replies of both Roman and Persian Emperors, Prophet Muhammad said:

"Allah will keep his (Heraclius) kingdom (for a while)" in case of Heraclius, but in the case of Chorsoes: "Allah will tear up his (Chorsoes) kingdom". Subsequent historical events confirmed Muhammad's prophesies when Roman Empire was defeated, indented and downsized to Byzantium (Constantinople) but survived; while Persian Empire was defeated and completely removed from the face of the earth during Umar's Caliphate.

Heraclius, through his 3rd party highly intelligent inquiry, confirmed that Muhammad is the awaited Prophet. Heraclius then entertained the idea of conversion to Islam, and discussed it with his commanders, but they all became agitated and refused; Heraclius was then forced to reject Islam publicly. The apparent grandeur of his empire and the pride of his people prevented him from openly accepting the renewed Message of Allah. Heraclius preferred his worldly Imperial status and accordingly, he remained Christian. And yet he sent a very diplomatic reply letter to Prophet Muhammad saying: *(I am Muslim)* [!!!] with a gift of golden Dinars.

When the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) received Heraclius' reply, he said: "*(He, Heraclius) lied, he is not a Muslim; and he is on Christianity*", and the Prophet distributed the golden Dinars (between his companions). [narrated by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and by Ibn Habbab, as quoted in *Zad al-Ma'ad* by Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawzi'yah, page 45-46. Also see:

Fat'h Al-Bari Sahr'h Sahih Al-Bukhari by Ibn Hajar Al-As'qalani Vol. One, Pages 31-45].

History confirmed Prophet Muhammad's conviction:

- Later events in northern front of Arabian Peninsula involved the murder of 14 out of 15 peaceful Muslim envoys; at the same time another Muslim envoy was murdered by the governor of Busra (Syria), a leader of Ghassan tribe and a Romans' ally. The threat from Roman Syria was clearly intensifying; indeed, the murder of an envoy, who come peacefully bearing a letter, has always been regarded as a gross affront and need to be redressed⁽⁸⁾. Muslims therefore were forced to respond to this challenge, and so it was the first clash between Muslims and outside world at the *battle of Mu'ta* (near Ma'an in Jordan) in September 629, which ended in withdrawal of both Muslim army and Roman army despite the great mismatch between them: 3000 Muslim fighters in the face of 200,000 Roman fighters and allied Arab tribes under the leadership of Heraclius. Despite differences of opinion about the outcome of this battle, reliable sources record that dead Muslims were not more than 12 (but including the 3 brave distinguished consecutive emirs (leaders) of this expedition) until the most experienced general Khalid bin al-Walid took the leadership and after his outstanding fight during which he was said to have killed no less than 500 Romans and 9 swords were broken in his hand. Thereafter and in the military judgement of Khalid, a master of strategy, he exchanged the right wing with the left wing of his army, and swapped the back with the front and arranged a group of fighters in the back pulling date-palm leaves in the desert to raise dust in the horizon giving the impression of coming enforcement. Romans after seeing new faces and mobilization exercises withdrew, and general Khalid too withdrew his Muslim army intact (minus 12 dead). Indeed, one month prior to their arrival at Medina (marching dis ance

between Medina and Mu'ta takes a minimum of one month), the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) had miraculously described to the Muslims in his Medina mosque, the precise eye-witness account of this battle instantaneously and as it happened:

'It is narrated by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) had consoled the death of Zayd, Ja'afar, and Ibn Rawwaha before the news arrived and said: Zayd took the banner and fell, then Ja'afar took it and fell, then Ibn Rawwaha took it and fell – and his (Prophet's) eyes were weeping – until the banner was carried by one of the swords of Allah then Allah gave them victory'

[Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith number 4262].

The companions' army returning from Mu'tah under Khalid's leadership, confirmed the Prophet's vision: things had happened precisely as he had told them, and the 3 companions had been killed while fiercely fighting; that was additional signs of Muhammad's prophethood. Also, when Medina boys shouted at the returning army: *'you are the fleers'*, the Prophet corrected them by saying instead: **'but the great fighters In sha' Allah (by Allah's will)'**. Prophet Muhammad then prepared Khalid to be one of the leaders of Muslims army in their great conquest of Makkah.

- Muhammad received intelligence that some Northern tribes were preparing a full-scale expedition against Medina. He decided to mobilize 300 men under the general command of Amr ibn al-As, who had family ties with some northern tribes; the Prophet asked him to study the situation and let him know about how things stood, and he ordered him to draw up alliances with as many clans as possible. The Prophet then sent him Abu Obaida leading an extra 200 companions (including Abu Bakr and Umar bin al-Khattab) because opposition seemed to be stronger than had anticipated; however, it was not, and the Muslim force (500 fighters) was able to proceed into the Syrian territory, consolidate existing alliances, and establish new ones, which made it possible to secure that hitherto unsafe front. This successful exploratory expedition is named **'That al-Salasil'** after the name of a water pond in land of Jutham.
- Also, when the Romans' governor at Ma'an (an Arab named *Farwah bin Amr al-Juthami*) converted to Islam, the Romans imprisoned him, crucified him and then killed him.
- Furthermore, Heraclius kept close contacts with hypocrite Muslims in Medina through Abu Amir (surnamed Al-Rahib, the monk, but re-named by Prophet as **Abu Amir Al-Fasiq**, the rebellious, the disobedient) who fought against the Muslims in battle of Uhud and later fled from Muslims and took Heraclius' shelter. Heraclius incited hypocrites to build an opposition mosque as an outpost for spying, and that he (Heraclius) is coming with huge Roman army to invade Medina. The hypocrites invited Prophet Muhammad to pray in their mosque, but Gabriel told him not to pray in it. Prophet Muhammad later ordered his followers (Sahaba) to burn it. God Most High records this mosque of harm in Qur'an:

"and there are those who put up a mosque by way of harm and disbelief to disunite the Believers and as an outpost for those who warred against Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) aforetime, they will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good; but Allah bears witness that they are certainly liars."

Verse 9:107 of Surat At-Tawba (Repentance).

- In response to alarming news that the Roman army is preparing to invade Medina; Prophet Muhammad in late August or September 631 mobilized the largest Arab army of 30,000 Muslim fighters on the *expedition of Tabuk* (prepared publicly in a hot season) and marched towards the Byzantine frontier. The Roman army under Heraclius withdrew without fighting, while the Muslim army stayed in Tabuk for 20 days, and after making alliances with Christian tribes (that agreed to pay tribute, in exchange of Muslims' protection from Romans), they left back to Medina.

However, in less than 5 years later (and after death of Prophet Muhammad in AD 632), Heraclius and his huge Roman Byzantine Empire armies witnessed the coming of Islam to their very doorsteps; indeed, they were visited, crushed and defeated decisively by a much smaller Muslim army at the battle of Yarmuk in AD 636; after which they lost all of their occupied East Mediterranean wing of Roman Byzantine Empire to Muslims for ever; thereafter, the Roman Empire became a mere shadow with a small bit of territory round its capital Constantinople (see below).

Qur'an Unique Characteristics^{(1) a, b, c, d) (5 a, b, c)}

Qur'an therefore, became the only beacon of light (the pure truth unadulterated by any falsehood); hence The Almighty's continuous emphasis on the importance of Qur'an:

"No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it; (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise (Allah)."

Verse 41:42 of Surat Fussilat.

"An Arabic Qur'an, without any crookedness (therein) in order that they may guard against Evil."

Verse 39:28 of Surat Az-Zumar (The Groups).

"Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rent asunder by the fear of Allah, such are the parables which We put forward to mankind that they may reflect"

Verse 59:21 of Surat Al-Hushr (The Gathering).

Prophet Muhammad said: "The best among you is he who learned the Qur'an and then taught it".

[Narrated by the 6 ones except Muslim].

The Qur'an as a Book, enjoys a number of characteristics unique to it **alone**, some of which are as follows:

1. Truly, it is the actual Word of Allah; not created but revealed for the benefit of all mankind:

"And this Qur'an is not such as could ever be produced by other than Allah (Lord of the heavens and the earth), but it is a confirmation of (the revelation) which was before it [i.e. the Taurat (Torah), and the Injeel (Gospel)], and a full explanation of the Book (i.e. laws, decreed for mankind) – wherein there is no doubt – from the Lord of the Worlds (Alamin; mankind, jinn, and all that exists)".

Verse 10:37 of Surat Yunus (Jonah).

"Do they not ponder on the Qur'an? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy."

Verse 4:82 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women)

The Almighty confirmed Arabic as the language chosen by Him for revelation:

"And truly, this (the Qur'an) is a revelation from the Lord of the 'Alamin' (mankind, jinn and all that exists), which the trustworthy Ruh [Jibril (Gabriel)] has brought down upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners in the plain Arabic language".

Verse 26:192-195 Surat Ash-Shu'ara (The Poets).

His revelation is brought down through His Archangel Gabriel to Muhammad: "Say (O Muhammad): Ruh-ul-Qudus (Gabriel) has brought it (the Qur'an) down from your Lord with truth, that it may make firm and strengthen those who believe, and as a guidance and glad-tidings to those who have submitted (to Allah as Muslims). And indeed, We know that they (polytheists and pagans) say: 'It is only a human being who teaches him (Muhammad)'. The tongue of the man they refer to is foreign, while this (the Qur'an) is a clear Arabic tongue."

Verse 16:102-103 of Surat An-Nahl (The Bees).

And that Muhammad was chosen and he was known illiterate: "Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Qur'an), nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted".

Verse 29:48 of Surat Al-Ankabut (The Spider).

"Say (O Muhammad): 'If Allah had so willed, I should not have recited it (the Qur'an) to you, nor would He have made it known to you. Verily, I have stayed amongst you a lifetime before this. Have you then no sense?' "

Verse 10:16 of Surat Yunus (Jonah).

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet (who can neither read nor write i.e. Muhammad) whom they find written with them in Torah and Gospel – for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure): he releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. so it is those who believe in him, honour him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him, it is they who will prosper.

Say: 'O men! I am sent unto you all, as the Messenger of Allah, to whom belong the dominion of heavens and the earth: there is no god but He: it is He that gives both life and death, so believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believe in Allah and His Words: follow him that (so) you may be guided."

Verse 7:157-158 of Surat Al-A'raf (The Heights).

Qur'an was indeed the greatest eternal miracle of Prophet Muhammad, that unlike all other prophets, continued after his death to be a magnet of attraction and inspiration to Mankind leading to Islamic conversion of great numbers of people generation after generation, long

after the death of Prophet Muhammad. It is narrated by Abu Huraira that the Prophet Muhammad said:

"There was no Prophet among the Prophets but was given miracles, because of which people had belief, but what I have been given is the Divine Revelation which Allah has revealed to me. So I hope that my followers will be more than those of any other Prophet on the Day of Resurrection."

[Hadith 379 Vol 9, Sahih Al-Bukhari].

Most of Prophet's Companions (Sahaba) eye-witnessed the revelation when the Prophet became motionless and silent (but with his lips moving), and they could all hear a sound like bees' buzzing. Further, many (including Umar ibn Al-Khattab, the 2nd Caliph) saw Gabriel in the form of a man they never saw before. Prophet's miracles are many and they were all eye-witnessed by Companions, for example the water flowing between his hand and/or fingers on many occasions, in the summer season of the hot Arabian deserts; this was once witnessed by 80 companions, and once by all people attending Asr prayer, and once by 300 companions, who all drank and washed themselves for prayer. In Hudaibiya, there was only one well and was dry, so the Prophet sat by the well's edge and started to gargle and then spat in it, and consequently the well was flowing with water (this incident was witnessed by 1400 companions). Also, in a Friday prayer, and after a long hot summer season, a man came begging the Prophet to ask Allah for rain water; the Prophet responded immediately by making Du'a (prayer to Allah) and in few moments rain water was flowing excessively for one week to the extent that next Friday a man came crying out: O Prophet help! we are drawing! Now the Prophet start praying again: (*Allahuuma, Hawalaina wala Alaina*) i.e. begging Allah to keep the rain-water flowing on the surroundings, but not directly on them, consequently, all companions in the Medina mosque (amounting to many thousands in number) eye-witnessed the raining clouds opening up like a huge ring, raining only around the periphery of Medina city.

Furthermore, in Prophet's Tabuk expedition (the largest expedition in Arabian Peninsula), the 30,000 soldiers were starved (to near-famine) due to the little food they carry with them in this long-marching of the desert in the hot summer season, so they asked Prophet permission to slaughter some of their horses and camels, but Umar bin Al-Khattab intervened wondering: how can we face the enemy tomorrow hungry and on feet? He asked the Prophet to collect what remains of their food and to pray to Allah to bless it, the Messenger said: Yes! And he asked for a mat to be laid on the ground and for the remnants of their food to be put on it; he then prayed to Allah asking for blessing and then said: 'take your needs in your containers', the 30,000 Muslim soldiers kept taking and filling up their containers; then they all ate and were filled up, and there was still more food left on the mat. The Prophet laughed and said: 'I testify There is no God but Allah, and I testify that I am the Messenger of Allah. No servant believe in it sincerely and meet Allah, will ever be forbidden from entry into the Gardens (of Allah)' [Related by (Sahih) Muslim and Imam Ahmad]. This incident was indeed eye-witnessed by 30,000 Muslim soldiers of that expedition. Furthermore, The Prophet prophesized (as told by Allah through Gabriel) the future fall and the end of both Persian and Roman Empires at the hands of Muslims! And it was in AD 641, as he prophesized after less than a decade of his death (in AD 632). Furthermore, he specifically foretold that the fall of Constantinople would be exclusively at the hands of an excellent Muslim army led by an excellent Emir;

and it was in AD 1453 as he prophesized after more than 8 centuries by Sultan Muhammad the Conqueror, and his Ottoman army, the most formidable military machine in history (as considered by many historians, such as Gibbon).

2. Qur'an brings a global message to **all creatures**: mankind, jinn, and all that exists in the universe, the heavens, and the earth:

"Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong, i.e. this Qur'an) to His servant (Muhammad) that it may be an admonition to the *Alamin* (all worlds: mankind, jinn, and all that exists)".

Verse 25:1 of Surat Al-Furqan (The Criterion).

Indeed, Moses and Jesus were sent exclusively to Children of Israel:

"And We gave Moses the Book and made it a guidance for Children of Israel".

Verse 17:2 of Surat Al-Isra' (The Journey by Night).

"And (remember) Jesus, son of Mary said: 'O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah (sent) to you.'".

Verse 61:6 of Surat As-Saff (Battle Array).

But on the other hand, Prophet Muhammad was sent to all mankind:

"And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) but as a (Messenger) to all mankind, giving them glad tidings, and warning them (against sin), but most men know not.".

Verse 34:28 of Surat Saba' (Sheba).

Indeed, the global message of Islam extend to all worlds, because the Prophet Muhammad is the seal of the Prophethood:

"And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the all worlds (*Alamin* or all creatures i.e. mankind, jinn, and all that exists)".

Verse 21:107 of Surat Al-Anbiya (The Prophets).

Islam therefore, connects Muslims with their surrounding environment; as creatures of God they have to cooperate with Nature being a creature of God. Thus, the concept of '*Struggle Against Nature*' is alien to Islam. Instead, Allah clearly states '*the subjection of Nature for Man's use*', thus the concept of 'struggle' must be replaced with '*Utilization of Nature*'. The Man being entrusted by God as the Caliph or vicegerent on Earth, is delegated to be in charge of Nature and/or Environment to harness it, to organise it, to manage it, and indeed, to control the Environment in the best possible way. Thus, The Almighty says:

"And He has subjected to you the night and the day, and the sun and the moon; and the stars are subjected by His Command, Surely, in this are proofs for a people who understand.

And whatsoever He has created for you on the earth of varying colours [and qualities from vegetation and fruits (botanical life) and from animals (zoological life)], Verily, in this is a sign for a people who remember.

And He it is Who has subjected the sea (to you), that you eat thereof fresh tender meat (i.e. fish), and that you bring forth out of it ornaments to wear, and you see the

ships ploughing through it, that you may seek (thus) of His Bounty (by transporting the goods from place to place) and that you may be grateful.

And He has affixed into the earth mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you; and rivers and roads, that you may guide yourselves. And landmarks (signposts during the day) and by the stars (during the night), they (mankind) guide themselves."

Verse 16:12-16 of Surat Al-Nahl (The Bees).

Similarly, the concepts of 'Mamma Nature' or 'Act of Nature' are both alien to Islam. How can nature (in itself a collective term for creatures of God; in the Arabic Dictionary by Fairozabadi, the nature is defined as God creations) become upgraded to a creator god? Furthermore, when the nature gets out of Man's control, this is interpreted Islamically, as an 'Act of God' or a 'Divine Retribution' as a partial punishment, inflicted because of the appearance of the 'Evil' in form of sins and disobedience to Allah. The Almighty explains:

"Mischief (Evil) has appeared on land and sea, because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds e.g. arrogance, selfish desires, false teaching), that He (Allah) may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah, and begging His Pardon".

Verse 30:41 of Surat Ar-Rum (The Romans).

Prophet Hadiths also, consolidate this Islamic concept, that the spread of sins is the root cause of the so-called 'natural disasters' and the cause of reduction in the sustenance (i.e. in the blessing of sustenance, not in the origin of sustenance itself, which is unaltered by obedience or disobedience to Allah - according to other Hadiths); whether such sins are committed on the personal level, or on the community level.

On the authority of Thouban, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "A man is deprived of sustenance, because of a sin (he has committed); Allah's verdict (decree) may be reversed by Du'a (invocation of the supplicant calling on Allah); and nothing prolong longevity like piety (obedience to Allah)."

(Narrated by Imam Ahmed).

Ibn Umar said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying:

'If people refrain from paying a Dinar or even a Dirham (become stingy), deal with Riba (usury), follow the cows' tails (busy themselves with worldly materialistic matters only), Allah will afflict them with a tribulation (a trial) that will not be redeemed until they return to their religion (Islam).

(Narrated by Imam Ahmed).

The same Hadith was narrated by Abu Dawod as such:

'If you deal with Riba (usury), follow the cows' tails and contented with agriculture (become busy with worldly materialistic matters only), and abandon Jihad, Allah will make you suffer of humiliation (disgrace) that will not be relieved until you return to your religion (Islam).

(Narrated also by Al-Tabarani, and Ibn Al-Qattan who said it is Sahih -T:ue).

In fact, the spread of sins and mischief is one of main reasons for the fall of civilizations:

Allah, Most High said: (If they (the pagans, non-muslims) had (only) believed in Allah and went on the Right Way (Islam), We should surely have bestowed on them water (rain) in abundance).

Verse 72:16 of Surat Al-Jinn (The Jinn).

Water is the foundation of all civilization in the World for example, The Civilization in Mesopotamia (valley of two rivers: Tigris and Euphrates), Civilization of Nile Valley, and other civilizations in India and China were all founded on banks of rivers.

AbuJullah ibn Umar said, "The Prophet (peace be upon him) came to us, and said:

"O' Muhajirun, (emigrants from Makkah to al-Madinah) you may be afflicted by five things; God forbid that you should live to see them:

1. If fornication should become widespread, you should realise that this has never happened without plague and new diseases befalling the people which their predecessors never suffered.
2. If people should begin to cheat in weighing out goods (mutaffifin), you should realise that this has never happened without drought and famine befalling the people, and their rulers oppressing them.
3. If people should withhold zakat, you should realise that this has never happened without the rain being stopped from falling; and were it not for the animals' sake, it would never rain again.
4. If people should break their covenant with Allah and His Messenger, you should realise that this has never happened without Allah sending an enemy against them to take some of their possessions by force.
5. If the leaders do not govern according to the Book of Allah, you should realise that this has never happened without Allah making them into groups and making them fight one another.'

(narrated by: Ibn Majah, Al-Bazzar, and Al-Baihaqi and mentioned by Al-Munthiri.

3. Qur'an is complete and comprehensive code of life. Thus the schism between life-affairs and religion, or the secularism that separates the Government from the Church of Christianity is totally unknown in Islam. The Almighty says:

"Nothing have We omitted from the Book (i.e. the Qur'an)."

Verse 4:38 of Surat Al-An'am (The Cattle).

'And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims.'"

Verse 16:89 of Surat Al-Nahl (The Bees).

In another place we read:

"The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allah, He has commanded that you worship none but Him; that is the right religion (i.e. Islamic Monotheism), but most men know not."

Verse 12:40 of Surat Yusuf (Prophet Joseph).

And also:

"If any do fail to judge by that Allah has revealed, they are unbelievers..."

If any do fail to judge by that Allah has revealed, they are wrong-doers...

If any do fail to judge by that Allah has revealed, they are rebellious..."

Verse 5:44, 45, 47 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

4. It is a theoretical and a practical Book, not only moralising but also defining specifically the permissible and the forbidden, i.e. Book of actions (Prophet's Companions used to memories each verse of Qur'an, act upon it, then proceed to memories the next verses). The importance of understanding the message of the Qur'an is undeniable, but simply reciting it with the intention of seeking Allah's pleasure and reward is also an act of worship and meritorious in itself. Allah Almighty says:

"So take what the Prophet gives you and refrain from what he prohibits you".

Verse 59:7 of Surat Al-Hashr (The Gathering).

5. Allah has perfected His religion for all mankind with the revelation of this Book. He says:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."

Verse 5:3 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

Thus Prophet Muhammad was the seal of Prophethood and his miracle, i.e. Qur'an encompassed all other Monotheistic Divine messages before. Almighty says:

"Do they seek other than the religion of Allah (the true Islamic Monotheism – worshipping none but Allah alone), while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him shall they all be returned. Say (O Muhammad) 'We believe in Allah, and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes (Asbat, the offspring of the 12 sons of Jacob) and in (the books) given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets, from their Lord: We make no distinction between one and another among them, and to Him (Allah) we have submitted (in Islam). If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (Submission to Allah) never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost."

Verse 3:83-85 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Thus Qur'an guards all the Books revealed before (before any corruption):

"And We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'an) in truth, confirming the Books that came before it and guarding it in safety: so judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires, diverging from the Truth that has come to you,"

Verse 5:48 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

6. Qur'an is Allah's eternal miracle and message revealed to the Prophet Muhammad for all succeeding generations till the day of Judgement. In response to those who doubt: the

authorship of this Qur'an, Allah Almighty has challenged the most articulate Arabs to produce a whole book, ten chapters or even one solitary chapter which can be remotely comparable to the Qur'an. But to this day, no one has succeeded in meeting the challenge of the Almighty. The critics of the Qur'an have been struck dumb by its ineffable eloquence and surpassing beauty. God Most High says:

"Say, if the whole of mankind and jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof; even if they backed up each other with help and support."

Verse 17:88 of Surat Al-Israa (The Journey by Night).

The Almighty also says:

"Or they may say: he forged it. Say: Bring ye then ten chapters forged, like unto it and call (to your aid) whomsoever ye can other than Allah, if ye speak the truth."

Verse 11:13 of Surat Hud (Prophet Hud).

And again:

"Or do they say: he forged it? Say: Bring then a chapter like unto it and call (to your aid) anyone ye can besides Allah, if it be ye speak the truth."

Verse 10:38 of Surat Yunus (Jonah).

When Musailama al-Kath'ab (Musailama, the liar) produced his version of fake Koran, it was easily recognized by Arabs as a man-made joke that can not come from a divine source. He was considered an apostate and was defeated decisively by the Muslim army under leadership of Khalid bin al-Walid; and Musailama, the liar was later killed and beheaded.

Similarly, with the American invasion of Iraq March 2003 and as part of claimed 'democracy' imported to Islamic world, the Americans brought a new Koran labelled 'The True Furqan' released by Al-Mahdy, a member of Project Omega 2000 (written in Arabic and translated into English by an Arab Christian missionary Anis Shorrosh) as a replacement of the Holy Qur'an and as a tool of evangelism, because of Christian missionaries failure and the lack of a breakthrough way to reach the Muslim world through medicine, schools, books, movies and many other methods (as admitted by the publisher). This new Koran was first distributed in Kuwait. It is being described as the eyes of the Shaytan...after being distributed to children of Kuwait in the private English schools!

This fake Koran is 368-page book with 77 suras, e.g. Peace, The Messiah, The Triune God, The Crucifixion, Women, Fasting, and Prayer. Each begins, "In the Name of the Father, the Word, the Holy Spirit, the One and Only True God". It states that Jihad is Haram (forbidden); it goes as far as attacking Allah, The Most High. The purpose of this book is to present the Christian Gospel to Arabs in the prose and poetic style of the classical language of the Arabic Quran (as they claim). The True Furqan was claimed to be written in seven days allegedly inspired by Al-Safee whereas Muhammad (PBUH) received his revelations over 23 years. This must include a lot of computerized copying and pasting; matching and mixing of selected texts from a mishmash of human (not divine) sources.

However, anyone who has read the real thing, the original or the English translation will soon see that this thing does not have the arrangement, the style, the confidence, nor the unique content found in the original. It is a desperate measure to find some way to convert Muslims since a few hundred years of concerted effort have brought so little success. Indeed, this hoax Koran was a man-made joke destined for trash waste-paper basket of history. The related website has soon been attacked by Muslims and non-Muslims alike and the site was taken offline. All Muslim countries reject it: even the government of India has banned the book from entering the country. No: 78/ NT (07-Sep-05): (The Central Government, for the maintenance of security of India, absolutely prohibits import of the book entitled "The True Furqan", subtitled "The 21st Century Quran" published in the United States of America by Omega, 2000 and Wine Press, including any extract therefrom, any reprint or translation thereof or any document reproducing any matter contained therein).

7. It has been revealed to re-establish the sincere worship of Allah alone (*Taw'hid*), without association of any partner with Him:

"This is a Book with verses whereof are perfected (in every sphere of knowledge), and then explained in detail from One (Allah), Who is All-Wise, Well-Acquainted (with all things), (It teaches) that you should worship none but Allah".

Verse 11:1-2 of Surat Hud (Prophet Hud).

"And they have been commanded no more than this: to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true in faith; to establish regular prayer; and to give Zakat; and that is the religion Right and Straight."

Verse 98:5 of Surat Al-Bayyina (The Clear Evidence).

Implications of Tawhid are crucial. One of the implications of Oneness of God is the equality of all mankind before the One and the Only Creator. They are all accountable before Him. Thus, there is no superiority of one race, or inferiority of another [except by piety]; no human superpower is lawfully allowed or empowered to exploit, enslave, or abuse the weaker or the weakest nations, acting as a God, believing their 'Might is Right'. No matter how much power and might Man can amass and wield, there is always God, The Greatest and The Omnipotent; He is the The All-Mighty, The Humiliator and The Empowerer. A further consequence of this equality is the Brotherhood and the oneness of this Muslim Ummah, the one big global family.

Another implication of Oneness of God (Taw'hid) is that God (Allah) is The Absolute Governor of this Universe, The Ruler of the Kingdom, and The King of all kings: hence, He is the only legitimate Law-Giver for the Mankind: **"The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allah, He has commanded that you worship none but Him; that is the right religion (i.e. Islamic Monotheism), but most men know not."**

Verse 12:40 of Surat Yusuf (Prophet Joseph).

Thus, all kings, governments, nations and individuals are accountable to His Majesty in this life and in the life hereafter.

Another implication of Taw'hid is the belief that Allah Alone is The Guarantor of Muslims' Victory (see below). The belief in Divine Destiny (Qadar) whether good or bad is a crucial principle in Islamic Faith. Both of these last 2 believes (Allah' victory and

Allah's pre-destiny) are indeed responsible for the swift spread of Islam by Muslims keen to fight and die for the spread of Allah's global message, and to be extremely happy to do so and to die, in pursuit of this high goal.

8. Because Qur'an contains a complete code which provides for all areas of life (whether spiritual, intellectual, political, social or economic), therefore, it is a code which has no boundaries of time, place, or nation.

"Verily this Qur'an do guide to that which is most right."

Verse 17:9 of Surat Al-Israa (The Journey by Night).

9. Allah Almighty has taken upon Himself the duty of preserving and protecting the Qur'an for ever in its entirety from any change or corruption, as He says:

"We have without doubt, sent down the Message (the Dhikr i.e. the Qur'an); and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)."

Verse 15:9 of Surat Al-Hijr (The Rocky Tract).

So well has Qur'an been preserved, both in memory and in writing, that the Arabic text we have today is identical to the text as it was revealed to the Prophet. Not even a single letter has yielded to corruption during the passage of the centuries. And so it will remain for ever, by the consent of Allah.

10. Being the true eternal Message of Allah, the Qur'an reveals many scientific miracles, and thus merges science with religion. In the Islamic world therefore, the famous scientists and doctors were pious Muslims too; their books always start with praise to Allah (Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that exists) and prayer on the Prophet Muhammad. The European bad dichotomy between scientists and clergymen is alien to Muslims; and the schism between the Science and the Church is totally unknown in the Islamic world. God Most High says:

"Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants are scientists (or those who have knowledge)."

Verse 35:28 of Surat Fatir (The Originator of Creation).

"We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this (Qur'an) is the truth."

Verse 41:53 of Surat Fussilat.

"Say: Are those who know equal to those who know not? It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allah's Signs and Verses)."

Verse 39:9 of Surat Az-Zumr (The Groups).

Indeed, the very first verses revealed on the Prophet Muhammad, orders him (and Muslim) to read and write with pen: "Read! In the Name of Your Lord Who has created (all that exists). Created man, out of a leech-like clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Bountiful. He Who taught (writing with) the pen. Taught man that which he knew not."

Verse 96:1-5 of Surat Al-Alaq (The Leech-like Clot).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) invited the people's attention to this event only with this object in view and asked them to mark it and be a witness to it. But the disbelievers described it as a magical illusion and persisted in their denial. They were reproached in Surah Al-Qamar (The Moon) for their stubbornness.



Artistic Islamic impression of Moon Splitting as one of Muhammad's Miracles

B. British Evidence: Eye-Witnesses (Globally)

The incident relating to King Chakrawati Farmas is documented in an old manuscript in the 'India Office Library', London, which has reference number: Arabic, 2807, 152-173. It is quoted in the book "Muhammad Rasulullah," by M. Hamidullah: (There is a very old tradition in Malabar, South-West Coast of India, that Chakrawati Farmas, one of their kings, had observed the splitting of the moon, the celebrated miracle of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) at Mecca, and learning on inquiry that there was a prediction of the coming of a Messenger of God from Arabia, he appointed his son as regent and set out to meet him. He embraced Islam at the hand of the Prophet, and when returning home, at the direction of the Prophet, died at the port of Zafar, Yemen, where the tomb of the "Indian king" was piously visited for many centuries.)

It is due to this incident about their king, the people of Malabar became the first community in India to accept Islam. Subsequently, they increased their trade with Arabs, as the Arab ships used to pass by their shores on the way to China before the advent of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Before Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Malabar also had a Christian community dating back from the earliest followers of Prophet Jesus ('Isa), pbuh. St. Thomas is believed to have migrated to India and died there. This community remained untouched by later theological developments in Christianity until the arrival of Portuguese traveler Vasco da Gama. When the British were consolidating their stronghold in India, they deployed the largest naval operation (on the shores of India) against the Muslims of Malabar.

C. American NASA Evidence: The fault line and cracking of the moon

Moon split by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, headquartered in Washington, DC with field centers across the country) revealed that "the crust under the

surface easily deforms causing the surface to crack and sink, producing a fault that looks like a straight rill....It's actually a fault line formed from a *moonquake* in the ancient past...." NASA: **The fault line and cracking of the moon** (see below)



Science has confirmed that the moon did indeed crack as Allah Almighty mentioned in the Noble Quran 1500 years ago. There are also ample eye witnesses that saw the moon split in half, which was a Sign of Prophethood proving Prophet Muhammad's Truthfulness from Allah Almighty. Such major event was in fact eye-witnessed by Makkan people and by many others like the king of Malabar, and was recently supported by NASA's crack faulty line of the moon.

Given the depth as well as the sublimity of the Qur'anic text, a faithful translation of it into another language is virtually impossible. The various translations that exist today, however accurate they may be, cannot be designated as the Qur'an, since they can never hope to imitate the diction or the style of the Book of Allah. But as translation is one of the few ways to export the message of the Qur'an to allow those lacking in knowledge of Arabic to share this priceless gift, it becomes a duty for those in a position to fulfil this task. It was by the virtue of this Qur'an supported by the Prophetic Hadith that the Arabic language became *Lingua Franca* from mid 7th - mid 18th centuries, since most (if not all) people at the time, whether converted to Islam or not, were keen to learn Arabic out of necessity in order to perform religious duties; to expand knowledge in various fields; or simply to communicate in business and money dealings.

Description of Allah (God): Oneness of God (Tawhid), Essence of Islamic Monotheism ^{(4a, b, c, d) (5a, b, c)}

Indeed, Islam came to return man to his Creator, Sustainer (Allah, The God) and to make His guidance the only source from which values and standards are to be obtained, as He is the Provider and Originator. The Oneness of God as the only law-giver and ruler, is the most fundamental doctrine in Islam, and hence '*La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah*' (*There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is Messenger of Allah*) is the declaration of submission to God and conversion to Islam. Indeed, the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid), the essence of Islam and the most serious matter of knowledge, is summarized in Surat Al-Ikhlâs which by itself equates to one third of Qur'an (Qur'an contains 3 thirds: one third for *Tawhid*,

one third for religious worshipping duties -*Ibadat*, and one third for the dealings in life - *Mu'ama'at*).

"Say: He is Allah, the One (and the Only), Allah the Self-Sufficient Absolute Master (Whom all creatures need). He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable to Him".

Verse 112:1-4 of Surat Al-Ikhlās or Al-Tawhīd (The Purity of Faith).

"There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer".

Verse 42:11 of Surat Ash-Shūrā (The Consultation).

Allah further described Himself:

"He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can have children when He has no wife? He created all things and He is the All-knower of everything."

Verse 6:101 of Surat Al-An'ām (The Cattle).

Perhaps, Allah describes Himself best in *Ayat-ul-Kursi*, the best Verse of Qur'an:

"Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Ever Living, the Self-subsisting and Supporter of all, no slumber can seize Him nor sleep, to Him belongs all things in the heavens and on earth, Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission? He know what happens before or after or behind them (His creatures), and they will never compass anything of His knowledge except as He wills, His *Kursi* i.e. footstool or chair, which should be distinguished from the 'Arch' (throne)] do extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feel no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Most Great (Supreme)".

Verse 2:255 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

It is said that the *Kursi* compared to the *Arch* is nothing but like a ring thrown out upon open space of the desert. If the *Kursi* extends over the entire universe, then how much greater is the *Arch*; indeed, Allah creator of both the *Kursi* and the *Arch*, is the Most Great.

In Islam, the Qualities (*Sifat*) mentioned in Qur'an of Allah, the Most High, like His Face, Eyes, Hands, Shins (Legs), His Coming, His (*Istawa'*) rising over His Throne and others, or all that Allah's Messenger qualified Him in the true authentic Prophet's Ahadith (narrations) as regards His Qualities like (*Nuzul*) His Descent or His laughing and others, the religious scholars of the Qur'an and the Sunnah believe in these Qualities of Allah and they confirm that these are really His Qualities, without *Ta'wil* (interpreting their meanings into different things) or *Tashbih* (giving resemblance or similarity to any of the creatures) or *Ta'til* (completely ignoring or denying them i.e. there is no Face, or Eyes, or Hands, or Shins for Allah). These Qualities befit only for Allah Alone, and He does not resemble any of (His) creatures. As Allah's Statement (in the Qur'an):

(1) "There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer". (V.42:11).

(2) "There is none co-equal or comparable to Him". (V.112:4).

The Almighty glorified and distinguishes Himself from His creatures (and Man) attributes:

"And they say: 'The Most Gracious (Allah) has begotten a son [or offspring or children (as the Jews say: Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah, and the Christians say that He has

begotten a son (Jesus) and the pagan Arabs say that He has begotten daughters (angels and others)]. Indeed you have put forth a thing most monstrous. Whereby the heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall down in utter ruins. That they attributed a son to The Most Gracious. There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes to the Most Gracious (Allah) as a slave."

Verse 19:88-93 of Surat Maryam (Mary).

The Almighty clarifies the mystery surrounding Jesus by saying:

"Surely, they have disbelieved who say: 'Allah is the Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary), but the Messiah said: 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord' verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode, and for the Zaliman (polytheists and wrong-doers) there are no helpers, Surely, disbelievers are those who said: Allah is the third of the three (in Trinity), but there is no Ilah (god) (none who has the right to be worshiped) but One Ilah (God – Allah), and if they cease not from what they say, verily, a painful torment will befall on the disbelievers among them.....The Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary), was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him, his mother (Mary) was a Siddiqah (a woman of truth); they both used to eat food (as any other human being, while Allah does not eat); look how We make the Ayat (proofs, signs, lesson) clear to them; yet look how they are deluded away (from the truth)".

Verse 5:72-73 and 75 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

"And (behold) when Allah will say: O' Jesus, son of Mary! Did you say to men: 'Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah?' he said: 'Glory to You! Never could I say what I had no right (to say), had I said such a thing, You would surely have known it. You know what is in myself though I do not know what is in yours: truly, You, only You, are the All-Knower of all that is hidden (and unseen)".

Verse 5:116 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread).

It is unfortunate that the Christians overpraised Jesus till they took him as a god besides Allah. It is narrated by Umar (the 2nd Caliph of Islam): I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying: "Do not overpraise me the way the Christians overpraised the son of Mary, for I am only a slave, so call me the slave of Allah and His Messenger."

[Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol 4, Hadith 654].

The Almighty then addressed the people of the Book by saying:

"O people of the Book (Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah aught but the truth. The Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His Word, ('Be!' – and he was) which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit (Ruh) created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messenger, Say not: 'Three' (trinity)! Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allah is (the only) One Ilah (God), glorified is He (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah is All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs. The Messiah disdain not to be a slave of Allah, nor the angels

who are the near (to Allah), and whosoever disdain His worship and is arrogant, He will gather them all together to Himself (to answer).”.

Verse 4:171-172 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

Indeed, in the year of Deputations, 10th of the Hijra (AD 631), a Christian embassy (a 60-member-delegation) from Najran (towards Yemen, about 150 miles north of Sana'a) came into to the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. They were much impressed on hearing this passage of the Qur'an explaining the true position of Christ:

"Verily, the likeness of Isa (Jesus) before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: 'Be!' – and he was.”.

[Verse 3:59 of Surat Al-Imran].

Indeed, if Jesus is born without a human father, Adam was born without either a human father or mother. But ingrained habits and customs prevented them accepting Islam as a body. Hence, Qur'an compliments the above verse by challenging their belief: "(This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt. Then whoever disputes with you concerning him (Jesus) now after (all this) knowledge that has come to you (Jesus being a slave of Allah, and having no share in Divinity), say: (O Muhammad) 'Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves – then let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of Allah upon those who lie.'".

Verse 3:60-61 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Thus, the Holy Prophet, firm in his faith, proposed a *Mubahala*, i.e. a solemn meeting (in a form of contest), in which both sides should summon not only their men, but their women and children, earnestly pray to Allah, and invoke sincerely the curse of Allah on those who should lie. Those who had a pure and sincere faith would not hesitate. The Christians declined, and they entered into tributary relations with the new Muslim State and were dismissed in a spirit of tolerance with a promise of protection from the State in return for tribute. After they declined this challenge (which Qur'an recorded for history), God, The Most High states decisively the situation about Jesus:

"This is the true account [about Jesus]: There is no god except Allah [the One and the Only True God, Who has neither a wife nor a son]; and Allah is indeed The Exalted in Power, The Wise.”.

Verse 3:62 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Nevertheless, one member of this delegation converted to Islam (named *Kawz bin Al'qar'ah*) because when the mule carrying his brother (Abu Harithah bin Alqamah, one of the 3 main leaders of Najran's delegation) tripped on the way from Najran to Medina, an interesting conversation took place between these 2 brothers:

Kawz said: 'May the distant [person] get lost [referring to Prophet Muhammad]'.

His brother leader Abu Haritha replied: '[No] you get lost!'

Kawz asked surprisingly: 'but why brother?'

Abu Harithah replied: 'By Allah, he is the Prophet we have been waiting for'.

Kawz said: 'then what prevent you from [believing] him and you know that [he is a Prophet]?'

Abu Haritha replied: 'because of what those people [the Byzantine Romans] did to us; they honoured us, they provided us [with money, gifts, and services]; and were generous to us; but they were bent on his [Muhammad's] opposition, thus if I do it [convert to Islam], they [the Romans] will take all that you have seen from us'.

Kawz kept that in mind, and soon converted to Islam and he then started telling that converstaion. [Ibn Hisham, Life of Prophet Muhammad, 2nd volume, page 510].

Indeed, God, The Most High questions the illogic of having more than One God for this Universe:

"We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for a (mere) play. Had We intended to take a pastime (i.e. a wife or a son), We could surely have taken it from Us, if We were going to do (that).....Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) alihah (gods) beside Allah, then verily both would have been ruined, glorified is Allah, the Lord of the Throne, (High be He) above all that (evil) they associate with Him!.....And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We revealed to him (saying): La ilaha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)], so worship Me (Alone and none else).....And if any of them should say: 'Verily, I am an ilah (a god) beside Him (Allah)' such a one We should recompense with Hell. Thus We recompense the wrong-doers (Zalimun)."

Verse 21:16-17, 22, 25 and 29 Surat Al-Anbiyaa (The Prophets).

That is why Allah continuously stressed the fact that Jesus is a **human** being:

"Verily, the likeness of Isa (Jesus) before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: 'Be!' – and he was."

Verse 3:59 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Furthermore, the end of the life of Jesus on earth is as much involved in mystery as his birth. But The Almighty God explains what exactly happened to Jesus:

"That they said: 'we killed the Messiah Jesus, the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah'; but they killed him not, nor crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them [the resemblance of Jesus was put over another man (and they killed that man)], and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge; but follow nothing but conjecture, for a surety they killed him not: – Nay, Allah raised him up (with his body and soul) unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, All-Wise. And there is none of the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) but must believe in him (Jesus as only a Messenger of Allah and a human being)

before his death, and on the Day of Judgement he will be a witness against them".

Verse 4:157-159 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

"before his death" has 2 interpretations: 1) before Jesus' death after his descent from the heavens, which means Jesus is still living in body and that he will appear just before the Final Day, after coming of the Mahdi (Imam or the leader of Muslims), when the world will be purified of sin and unbelief. Then there will be his final death before the Day of Judgement, but all will have believed before that final death. 2) Others think that 'his death' is referred to

'one of the people of the Book' i.e. a Jew's or a Christian's death, at the time of the appearance of the Angel of Death when he will realize that Jesus was only a Messenger of Allah and had no share in Divinity. The emphatic form 'must believe' denotes more a question of duty than of fact. The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross, that he died and was buried, that on the 3rd day he rose in the body with his wounds intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This is necessary for the theological doctrine of *'blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins'*, which is rejected by Islam.

But some of the early Christian sects did not believe that Christ was killed on the Cross:

- The Basilidans believed that some one else was substituted for him.
- The Docetae held that Christ never had a real physical or natural body, but only an apparent or phantom body, and that his Crucifixion was only apparent, not real.
- The Marcionite Gospel (about A.D. 138) denied that Jesus was born, and merely said that he appeared in human form.
- The Gospel of St. Barnaba supported the theory of substitution on the Cross.
- The Qur'anic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews, notwithstanding certain apparent circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some of his enemies; that disputations, doubts, and conjectures on such matters are vain; and that he was taken up to Allah.

It was the Roman emperor Constantine who believed in Christianity to provide him a means of greater political and military stability; it is claimed that on the eve of an important battle, he saw a cross in the sky with the words: *'In this sign thou shalt conquer'*. Constantine had placed Christianity on an equal footing with paganism, pagan people of the Roman world began to accept this now-popular Christianity by the hundreds of thousands, bringing with them their pagan customs. He helped Romans to accommodate Christianity, but not in the unique pure message of Christianity. The new Christianity resembled certain elements of Roman belief, particularly the worship of Mithra, protector of the Empire and closely tied to the sun gods: Helios and Apollo. In fact, Mithra or Mithras was the ancient Persian god of light, protector of truth, and enemy of darkness (according to Old Persians), whose worship then became popular in the Roman Empire; Mithraeum (plural Mithrae'a) is grotto (cave) or temple sacred to Mithras, and Mithraicm or Mithraism is the belief in or worship of Mithras. Mithra's birthday on December 25, close to winter solstice, became Jesus' birthday [in fact he was born end of Summer - see under **Christ** in the Dictionary]. Mithra's ascension, correlating to the sun's return to prominence around the spring equinox, became the Christian holiday of Easter. Christians took over a cave-temple dedicated to Mithra in Rome on the Vatican Hill, making it the seat of the Catholic Church. The Mithraic high priest's title, *Pater Patrum*, soon became the title for the bishop of Rome, *Papa* or *Pope*. Later conferences started to debate the identity of Jesus; their prolonged discussions ended in rather confused and somewhat divided conclusions [beyond the scope of this book].

The Almighty stressed the 2nd coming of Jesus in the Last Days before the Resurrection, when he will destroy the false doctrines that pass under his name, and prepare for the universal acceptance of Islam:

"And (Jesus) shall be a Sign for (the coming of) the Hour (of Judgement); therefore have no doubt about the (Hour), but follow Me (Allah): this is a Straight Path (of Islamic Monotheism)."

Verse 43:61 of Surat Az-Zukhruf (The Gold Adornments).

Islam, the Old New Belief and a Comprehensive Code of life (4 a, b, c, d) (5 a, b, c)

Islam is not a religion in the narrow sense of a spiritual doctrine. It is a way of life, thought, word and deed; Faith without action is meaningless. In Islam the term worshipping means the full broad-spectrum of life activities. Faith motivates action, and action brings Faith out into the world, where it can grow and strengthen. Thus Prophet Muhammad said: **Islam has been built on 5 (pillars); testifying that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; performing the prayers; paying the zakat** [*'alms-tax' or 'poor due', it is a tax levied on a man's wealth and distributed among the poor*]; **making the Pilgrimage to the (Sacred) House; fasting in Ramadhan**'.

[Hadith related by Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim].

Islam is the external expression (by saying Shahadah and performing actions), but more importantly is the internal faith (Iman) by heart. Thus Prophet Muhammad says: **"None of [truly] believes until his inclination is in accordance with what I have brought"**.

[An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith].

On the authority of Umar (ibn Al-Khattab, the 2nd Caliph, May Allah be pleased with him)^(1d), who said: One day while we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) there appeared before us a man whose clothes were exceedingly white and whose hair was exceedingly black; no signs of journeying were to be seen on him and none of us knew him. He walked up and sat down by the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). Resting his knees against his and placing the palms of his hands on his thighs, he said: **O Muhammad, tell me about Islam.** The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: **Islam is to testify that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, to perform the prayers, to pay zakat, to fast Ramadhan, and to make the pilgrimage to the House if you are able to do so.** He said: You have spoken rightly, and we were amazed at him asking him and saying that he had spoken rightly. He said: **Then tell me about iman** [*'religious belief' or 'faith'*]. He said: **it is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messenger, and the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof.** He said: You have spoken rightly. He said: **then tell me about ihsan** [*has a special religious significance, and any single rendering of it would be inadequate. Dictionary meanings for ihsan include: right action, goodness, charity, sincerity, and the like. The word root also means 'to master or to be proficient at'*]. He said: **it is to worship Allah as though you are seeing Him, and while you see Him not, yet truly He sees you.** He said: **Then tell me about the Hour** [*i.e. of the Day of Judgement*]. He said: **The one questioned about it**

knows no better than the questioner. He said: Then tell me about its signs. He said: That the slave-girl will give birth to his mistress and that you will see the barefooted, naked, destitute herdsmen competing in constructing lofty buildings. Then he took himself off and I stayed for a time. Then he said: O' Umar, do you know who the questioner was? I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: it was Gabriel, who came to you to teach you your religion.

[Hadith related by Sahih Muslim].

Thus, in a nutshell, Islam is the total submission to God and His guidance; accordingly, *All Prophets were Muslims* from the time of Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Jesus right through to Muhammad, the seal of Prophethood (peace be upon them all).

God Most High documented this important fact: "The Religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will).".

Verse 3:19 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

"And Abraham enjoined upon his sons and so did Jacob; 'Oh my sons! Allah had chosen the Faith for you; then die not except being Muslims (in the state of submission to Allah).'. "

Verse 2:132 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

"When Jesus found unbelief on their part. He said: 'Who will be my helpers to (the work of) Allah? Said the disciples: 'We are Allah's helpers, We believe in Allah, and do thou bear witness that we are Muslims.'."

Verse 3:52 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

"If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (Submission to Allah) never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost"

Verse 3:85 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Indeed, this submission to One God is deeply rooted in the human nature, right from the moment of birth; this is deemed the natural true relationship of Man with God. Thus Allah says: "So set you (O Muhammad) your face towards the religion being upright (hanif), the nature (fitrah) in which Allah has made mankind; no change (there is) in the work (wrought) by Allah: that is the true Religion: but most among mankind know not." Verse 30:30 of Surat Ar-Rum (The Romans) The *Hanif* doctrine of Abraham is to live and die in faith in the One True God; as opposed to Jews who despite teaching Unity, went after false gods, and Christians who invented the Trinity or borrowed it from Paganism: "They say: 'Become Jews or Christians if you would be guided'. Say you: 'Nay! (I would rather) the Religion of Abraham, the true (hanif), and he joined not gods with Allah.'."

Verse 2:135 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

Hanif means 'true belief or believer' as we say: 'the magnetic needle is true to the north'. Those who have been privileged to receive the Truth should never hesitate or swerve, but remain constant, as men who know. Man is therefore, born innocent, pure, true, free, inclined to right and virtue, and endowed with true understanding about his own position in Universe and about Allah's godliness, wisdom, and power. That is his true nature (Fitrah), just as the nature of a lamb is to be gentle and of a horse to be swift. But man is caught in the mesh of

customs, superstitions, false teachings and selfish desires, which then divert him from the true path. Prophet Muhammad complements this Qur'anic Verse: Narrated Abu Hurairah: The Prophet said: 'Every child is born on Al-Fitrah [true faith of Islamic Monotheism (i.e. to worship none but Allah Alone)], but his parents convert him to Judaism or Christianity or Magianism, as an animal gives birth to a perfect baby animal. Do you find it mutilated?'.
 [Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol.2 Hadith 467].

Prophet Muhammad further explains and reiterates this meaning in his Hadith: 'Allah says: "I created my servants *hanafa'* [i.e. true believers (plural of *hanif*)], then satans distracted them from their (true) religion."
 [Sahih Muslim, book 4, Hadith 2197].

The *Oneness of God* is thus manifested by the *oneness of the message*, the eternal Islamic message from the One God and the Only, through His many Prophets from Adam to Muhammad to the successive generations throughout the history of Mankind. Those who believed in this Islamic message (submission to One God) are brothers bonded by their belief and belong to one global family: the *one Islamic Ummah* that extends deep in the history, whether they are the followers of the Prophets: Noah, Abraham, Jacob (and his 12 sons), Moses, Jesus, ending finally in Muhammad, and eventually in the return of Jesus before the Day of Judgement. God Most High says: "The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say), 'We make no distinction between any of His Messengers' – and they say: 'We hear, and we obey', (We seek) Your Forgiveness, our Lord, and to you is the return (of all)". *Verse 2:285 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow)*. Furthermore, God threatens warning from any differentiation between the Messengers, for they are all the Messengers of One God (Allah); to believe in some and to reject others is a clear evidence of disbelief. Hence Allah's saying: "Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers (by believing in Allah and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, 'We believe in some but reject others', and wish to adopt a way in between. They are in truth disbelievers, and We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment."
Verse 4:150-151 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

Thus, Islam has re-connected the past with the present, as much as it has re-connected this life with the life-hereafter.

Islam gave a new concept of values and standards to mankind and showed the way to learn and live these values and standards, it also provided it with a new concept of human relationships. In the world there is only one party of God; all others are parties of Satan and rebellion. "Those who believe fight in the cause of God, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of rebellion. Then fight the allies of Satan; indeed, Satan's strategy is weak."
Verse 4:76 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

For human life, there is only one true system, and that is Islam; all other systems are *Jahiliyyah*. Allah says: "Do they want a judgment of the Days of Ignorance? Yet who is better in judgment than God, for a people having sure faith?".
Verse 5:50 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread with Food).

There is only one law which ought to be followed, and that is the Shar'ah from God; what is other than this is mere caprice. "We have set thee on a way ordained (by God); then follow it, and do not follow the desires of those who have no knowledge."

Verse 45:18 of Surat Al-Juthiyah (The Kneeling).

The truth is one and indivisible; anything different from it is error: "Is anything left besides error, beyond the truth? Then whither do you go?"

Verse 10:32 of Surat Yunus (Jonah).

"So, by they Sustainer, they have not believed until they make you the arbiter of their disputes, and then do not find any grievance against your decision, but submit with full submission."

Verse 4:65 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

Islam also provides a code of life, a comprehensive set of Divine regulations to regulate the life of Man on this earth according to Islamic teachings. This Islamic code regulates not only the personal and spiritual affairs but also the social, economic, and political aspects of the community and the world. Hence moral values and commercial dealings are inseparable from the Islamic belief and daily practice: "Say (O Muhammad): Verily, my Salat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin' (mankind, jinn and all that exists)".

Verse 6:162 of Surat Al-An'am (The Cattle).

"O you who believe! Enter perfectly in Islam (by obeying all the rules and regulations of Islamic religion) and follow not the footsteps of Satau. Verily, he is to you a plain enemy."

Verse 2:208 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

Further, Islam came with this total guidance and decisive teachings. It came to elevate man above, and release him from, the bonds of the earth and soil. All creatures are Allah's creation and all land is Allah's land; thus Islam is a global message and Muslims are not bound by their birth-place nor limited by their national territories. All relationships therefore ought to be based through God, as we came into being through His will and shall return to Him. A blood relation is approved in Islam only through their relationship with the Creator. "O mankind, remain conscious of your Sustainer, Who created you from one soul and created from it its mate, and from the two of them scattered a great many men and women. Remain conscious of God, from Whose authority you make demands, and reverence the wombs which bore."

Verse 4:1 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

When the relationship of the belief is established, whether there be any relationship of blood or not, the Believers become like brothers. God Most High says: "Indeed, the Believers are brothers" (Verse 49:10 of Surat Al-Hujurat or The Dwellings), which is a definition as well as a prescription. The Prophet complements this by his saying: "None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself"

[related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Furthermore, the marriage/family in Islam is a highly revered institution. The monasticism practised in Christianity is not only forbidden but totally unknown in Islam; The

believers to suppress anger, to forgive people, and even to face the bad deeds with good ones, aiming for the great reward of Allah and the greatest reward is specifically kept for the patient Muslims. Allah Most High says:

"Those who spend (in Allah's Cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger and who pardon men; verily, Allah loves Al-Muhsinun (the good-doers)."

Verse 3:134 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Inran).

"The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, or to excuse those who treat them badly) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend."

Verse 41:34 of Surat Fussilat (They are explained in detail).

"Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning."

Verse 39:10 of Surat Az-Zumar (The Groups).

Islam knows no soil, no race, no lineage, no tribe, and no family. It only accepts Islam as a submission to God (Allah) and all relations based on that submission and the land where laws of Shari'ah of God are operational. Thus Islam freed all humanity from the ties of the earth, so that they might soar toward the skies and freed them from the chains of blood relationships (the biological chains) so that they might rise above. While Islam accepts the human nature in committing sins, God's door is always open for all mankind to repent directly to Him without any intermediate; Islam also encouraged all Muslims to forgive their brothers in humanity and in Islam.

It is on the basis of Islam that all blood relations, lineage bonds, and marital relations should be established, but without Islamic belief, all such relations were broken. God Most High says in praise of the Believers: **"You will not find any people who believe in God and the Last Day loving those who fight god and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred. These are the people on whose hearts God has imprinted faith and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein. God will be well-pleased with them and they with Him. They are the party of God; truly the party of God will prosper."**

Verse 58:22 of Surat Al-Mujadilah (The Woman Who Pleads).

We see that the blood relationships between Muhammad (peace be on him) and his uncle 'Abu Lahab' and his cousin 'Amr bin Hisham' (Abu Jahl) were broken and that the Muslim Emigrants from Mecca were fighting against their families and relatives and were in the front lines of Badr's battle, while on the other hand, their relations with the Helpers of Medina became strengthened on the basis of a common faith. They became like brothers, even more than blood relatives. This relationship established a new brotherhood of Muslims in which were included Arabs and non-Arabs. Suhail from Rome and Bilal from Abyssinia and Salman from Persia were all brothers. There was no tribal partisanship among them. The pride of lineage was ended, the voice of nationalism was silenced, and the Messenger of God addressed them:

"Get rid of these partisanships; these are foul things" and "He is not one of us who calls toward partisanship, who fights for partisanship, and who dies for partisanship."

Thus this partisanship (the partisanship of lineage) ended; and this slogan (the slogan of race) died; and this pride (the pride of nationality) vanished; and man's spirit soared to higher horizons, freed from the bondage of flesh and blood and the pride of soil and country. From that day, the Muslim's country has not been a piece of land, but the homeland or abode of Islam (Dar-ul-Islam or "Abode of Islam") - the homeland where faith rules and the Shar'ah of God holds sway, the homeland in which he took refuge and which he defended, and in trying to extend it, he became martyred. Indeed, within this Muslim Umma, it became the dream of many non-Arab speaking Muslims to get married an Arab speaking Muslim, an achievable dream in the abode of Islam, since all share this love of Islam and the love of Arabic language [Also see below under *Ummah*].

Truly, the Prophet Muhammad was not only a mercy to the Mankind, but a mercy to all creatures. He taught that animals rights to be respected: to be spared suffering, to receive the food it needed, and to be treated well. It is narrated by Abu Ya'la Shaddad bin Aus (may Allah be pleased with him that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Verily Allah has prescribed Proficiency (Ihsan) in all things. Thus, if you kill, kill well; and if you slaughter, slaughter well. Let each one of you sharpen his blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters."

[Sahih Muslim].

The Messenger stressed that respect for animals was part of the most essential Islamic teaching; in the sacrifice of animals for food, the Prophet did not merely order Muslims to respect the ritual and say the formula '*Bismillah, Allahu Akhbar*' (in the name of Allah [I begin], God is the Most Great), which made it possible to kill the animal to eat it. He required that the animal be treated in the best manner and spared any needless suffering. One day an individual had immobilized his beast and was sharpening his knife in front of it, the Prophet intervened to say:

"Do you want to make it die twice? Why did not you sharpen your knife before you laid it down?"

Furthermore, the Prophet made the respect of animal rights a part of duties of human beings and should be understood as one of the conditions of their spiritual elevation⁽⁸⁾; Narrated by Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"A woman was punished for a cat she had imprisoned until it died. Because of this cat, she went to hell; she did not give it food or drink while she confined it, nor did she set it free to eat its prey."

[Shahihs Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Conversely, it was narrated by Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: **"A woman prostitute was forgiven (by Allah), she passed by a dog at a site of half-covered well, panting and almost dying of thirst, so she took off her leather shoe and tied it to her necktie, and got for it (the dog) from the water, thus she was forgiven for that."**

[*Shahih Al-Bukhari*].

The Prophet considers 'any good done to living creature gets a reward (from Allah)'; but he severely condemns anyone involved in torturing animals, or for instance using birds suffering for play, or killing birds for mere pleasure: Narrated by Ibn Umar (who passed by boys from Quraysh putting a bird (a hen) as a target for throwing arrows) and he said: 'Who did that? Allah condemns whoever did that, **the Messenger of Allah condemned whoever used a living creature (suffering) for pleasure**".

[*Shahih Al-Bukhari & Muslim*].

He also forbade marking animals on the face: Narrated by Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them), that a donkey marked on its face, passed by the Prophet who said:

'Allah condemned whoever marked it' and in another hadith version:

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) prohibits the beating of the face and marking on the face.

[*Both related by Sahih Muslim*].

Indeed, in respect of animals, there are no less than 8 Suras (chapters) of the Qur'an carrying the names of animals and social insects:

1. Al-Baqarah (The Cow, Surah number 2),
2. Al-An'am (The Cattle, Surah number 6),
3. An-Nahl (The Bees, Surah number 16),
4. An-Naml (The Ants, Surah number 27),
5. Al-Ankabut (The Spider Surah number 29),
6. Al-Alaq (The Leech-like clot, Surah number 96),
7. Al-Adiyat (Those that run i.e. mares or swift camels, Surah number 100) and
8. Al-Fil (The Elephant, Surah number 105).

However, the verses of Qur'an had also mentioned:

Sheep, Goats, Ewes, Oxen, Calf, Monkeys, Pigs, Birds, Hoopoe, Quail (sal'wa), Crow, She-camel, Camel, Ishar (pregnant Camel), Wild Beasts, Canines, Dogs, Wolf, Lions, Locusts, Lice, Frogs, Flies, Mosquitoes, Termites, Da'bbah (moving living creature), Worms, Snakes (Hayyah, female snake; Thu'ban, male snakes), Moth/Butterflies, Steeds, Mules, Donkeys, A'diat (fast-running Horses), Mouriat (Horses lightening the rocky solid earth with its hoofs at night), Mu'ghirat (Horses used for the attack on the enemy), Safnat (standing Horses), Jiyad (good-quality Horses), Water-game, Land-game (trained hurting beasts e.g. hounds, and the birds of prey), Bahirah, Sa'ibah, Wasilah, Hamm (Bahirah is the daughter of Sa'ibah, which is the She-Camel, Wasila is She-Camel or Sheep, Hamm is the He-Camel), Whale (like the one that swallowed 'Jonah'), Whale as a big Fish (like the one mentioned in the story of 'Moses'), the tender meat of the Sea (Fishes), Coral, and Pearls (a natural gem formed by a living organism: mussel or oyster, which coats the irritating foreign object with a substance called nacre, the same material with which it builds its shell: layers of nacre build up to make a pearl).

Moreover, the Prophet's companion who narrated Hadith more than others is called (*Abdul Rahman bin Sakhr*); the Prophet saw a small cat (in Arabic *Hirrah* is a cat, *Huwairah*, a small cat) in his pocket, so the Prophet called him '*Abu Hurairah*' (the one with the small

cat) and he became known by this name (to the extent that many companions forgot his real name

Thus, it was Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) circa AD 610 (early 7th century) who taught that the respect of **animals' rights** was an essential part of Islamic teaching and practice for the first time and **long before the animal rights' movements of 20th century**.

The Arabic language has recruited its huge vocabulary reservoir of beautiful Arabic words in the service of Islam to help laying down the Islamic foundation *inter alia* of **human rights and animal rights**. In addition to animal rights, Islam is the First International System to care about The Environment, making such care a duty of piety closely related to the worship of Allah, The Most High. Hence, Allah says:

(And do not do mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order, and invoke Him with fear and hope. Surely, Allah's Mercy is (ever) near to the good-doers).

Verse 7:56 of Surat Al'Aruf (The Heights).

(And do good as Allah has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land. Verily Allah likes not the mischief-makers (Mufsidun)).

Verse 28:77 of Surat Al-Qasas (The Narration).

Furthermore, The Prophet (peace be upon him) encouraged 'Green Tree-rich Environment':

"Any trees a Muslim may plant, and any seeds he may cultivate from which man or animal, or any other creature, eats, count as an act of benefaction (Sadaqah)".

(Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

"Whoever cultivates land that has been dead, that land becomes his own".

(Narrated by Al-Tirmithi on the authority of Ja'bir).

Islam even directed Man to the importance of 'Environmental Balance', making Muslim an **eco-friendly** through his care about the balance of earth-plants in nature, as created by Allah, because such balance or equilibrium is a scientific necessity, executed precisely and purposefully by Allah's wisdom:

(And the earth We have spread out, and have placed therein firm mountains, and caused to grow therein all kinds of things in due proportion).

Verse 15:19 of Surat Al-Hijr (The Rocky Tract).

(Verily, We have created all things in proportion and measure).

Verse 54:49 of Surat Al-Qamar (The Moon).

Furthermore, Islam advocated 'Environmental Cleanliness':

Allah says: **(Truly, Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly in repentance and loves those who keep themselves pure and clean).**

Verse 2:222 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

(In it are men who love to clean and purified, And Allah loves those who make themselves clean and pure).

Verse 9:108 of Surat Al-Raubah (The Repentance).

Also, The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: **"Cleanliness is equal to half the faith"**.

(Narrated by Muslim).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited and severely warned against **'Environmental Contamination'**, and he said:

"Beware of the three curses: defecation in the [water] supplies, and on the side of the road, and by the shadow [of a tree]".

(Narrated by Abu Dawod, Ibn Majah, Al-Hakim, and Al-Baihaqi).

This above-Hadith is an Islamic statement about **'Environmental Protection'** from the risks to the public health, in addition to the care about beautiful environmental appearance. But this Hadith has also many benefits in **'medical prophylaxis'** against the contamination of water supplies used for drinking, cooking, and washing, in order to prevent transmission of germs through water; and against the contamination of the roads of transport in order to allow for free movement of people and caravans, and to prevent spread of infectious diseases; and against the contamination of the places shadowed by trees, which are stations for rest, eating and to have naps (short sleep) before resuming their long journey.

"You should never pass urine in the stagnant water that doesn't flow, and then take bath (or wash) in it".

(Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

"You should never pass urine in the stagnant water, and then make ablution from it".

(Narrated by Ahmad, Tirmidhi, and Nisa'ee).

"Faith is more than sixty – or more than seventy – parts, the lowest is the removal of harm from the road, and the highest is the declaration of 'La Ilaha Illa Allah' – There is No God But Allah".

(Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

"Whoever harm Muslims on their roads, their curse on him is accepted (by Allah)".

(Narrated by Al-Tabarani).

Islam was even the First to call for **'Preservation of living creatures from Extinction'**, hence Allah tells us about Noah story:

(There came Our Command, and the fountains of the earth gushed forth! We said: 'Embark therein, of each kind Two (male and female), and your family – except those against whom the Word has already gone forth, - and the believers' But only a few believed with him).

Verse 11:40 of Surat Hud (The Prophet Hud).

When the people were hurt and complained about the dogs in Medina (because of barking at night, and dog-bites which may be fatal in rabies). The Prophet (peace be upon him) refused to eradicate them, because they constitute an ummah (community) of animals, and said:

"If the dogs were not a community (ummah, plural umam) among the communities, I would have ordered killing them, so (only) kill the unknown black ones among them".

(Narrated by Abu Dawod, Al-Nisa'ee, Ibn Majah, and Tirmithi).

This is because all other living creatures have their own special social community and identity e.g. ants, bees, dogs, and cats; and hence Allah Most High says:

(There is not a moving living creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book, then to their Lord they (all) shall be gathered).

Verse 6:38 of Surat Al-An'am (The Cattle).

Islam Did Not spread by the Sword ^{(1) (2) (4 a, b, c, d) (5 a, b, c),}

Islam means submission to God, and also means the religion of peace (from the verb *sallama*, to submit, derived *Islam*, *Istislam* meaning submission; but from the same Arabic root, *salama*, *salima*, to be safe and sound, the word *Salam* is derived meaning peace); *Salam* is the saluting in Islam; further, *Salam* is one of the beautiful names of Allah, because He is the source of all peace and security. It was during peace rather than war that Islam spreads and flourishes; for instance, the number of Muslims multiplied many many times after Hudaibiya peace negotiation (Allah called it *Fat'h*, victory) than after any battle. Indeed Muhammad's influence and the attractive religion of Islam, rather than the sword is what make people from as far away as Yemen and Oman to swear allegiance to Muhammad and to be converted to Islam. Muslims are **ordered** to peacefully convey and spread the message of Allah to all mankind (being Allah's creatures) all over the world's known land (being Allah's land). Indeed, most of South East Asia including Indonesia and Malaysia, Brunei, Philippines, and even the Americas (See Chapter 4) as well as all sub-Saharan countries of Africa were all converted to Islam peacefully through Muslim and/or Arab merchants and preachers (mainly Muslims from Yemen-Hadhramout, Morocco and from West Africa mainly from Mali) who practiced Islam with total honesty and apply its principles in their moral and commercial dealings alike. However, Muslims must remain committed to protect Islamic message (*da'wah* or preaching) to reach people of this globe, or it will be incumbent upon Muslims to defend Islamic faith and to fight the aggressors who prevent this Islamic message from reaching people. Muslims never spread by sword or had ever forced non-Muslim enemies into Islam; during fighting none of the churches or synagogues, and none of priests or rabbis had ever been attacked or killed in the land conquered by Islam; similarly none of women, children and elderly were ever attacked.

Thus Islam advocates conversion by conviction. The Holy Qur'an says: **"Invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way"**.

Verse 16:125 of Surat An-Nahl (The Bees).

War was never desirable, but when Muslims were compelled to it because they were attacked or because their survival was threatened, they had to keep strictly to what was needed to fight enemy forces that were armed and/or determined to fight. If the latter wished peace or surrendered, the war must be stopped, according to the Quranic injunction ⁽⁸⁾: **"But if they incline toward peace, do you (also, in the same way) incline toward peace, and trust in Allah, for He is the One that hears and knows (all things)"**.

Verse 8:61 of Surat Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War).

Furthermore, Islam being the religion of Allah, The Creator of all mankind, made Muslims always hope for the conversion (into Islam) of their very enemies, and even to treat them kindly: **"Perhaps Allah will make friendship between you and those whom you hold as enemies, and Allah has power (over all things), and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion nor drove you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity."**

Verse 60:7-8 of Surat Al-Mumtahanah (The Woman to be examined).

But Muslims' hopes extend even further to the aggressive enemies who fought them. Inceel in the battle of Uhud in AD 626, Muslim army was retreated for the first time (some historians considered them defeated) before the army of unbelievers under their 3 genius leaders: Abu Sufyan (an arch-enemy of the Prophet); Khalid bin al-Walid (son of Al-Walid bin al-Mugherah, an arch-enemy of the Prophet; Allah had already condemned al-Walid to hell-fire and documented that in Qur'an); and Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl (son of Abu Jahl, an arch-enemy of the Prophet, Abu Jahl was killed by Muslims in the earlier battle of Badr in AD 625; he too was condemned by Allah to hell-fire and that was documented in Qur'an). The Prophet suffered in the battle of Uhud and he thus supplicated The Almighty to punish them, but Allah denied the Prophet his request, by saying: **"Not for you (O Muhammad, but for Allah) is the decision; whether He turns in mercy to (pardon) them or punishes them; verily, they are wrong-doers."** Verse 3:128 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) One decade later in AD 636 (after Prophet Muhammad's death) in the decisive battle of Yarmuk, the very same leaders were converted to Islam and are now the leaders of Muslim army against the hugely numbered (240,000 Roman soldiers) and militarily superior Byzantine Roman army (that had occupied Eastern Mediterranean Arab land, and kept on invading Arabian Peninsular borders); Khalid bin al-Walid (after his conversion to Islam) became the military General whom the Prophet called (*the unsheathed sword of Allah*); Khalid (Commander-in-Chief) divided his 40,000 Muslim army into 40 *kurdosah* i.e. corps (*plural karadees*) with 1000 fighters for each corps, led by a tough experienced fighter; General Khalid then addressed the Muslim army by saying: **"(after praising Allah) This is a day of Allah's days... Be honest in your Jihad and make your deeds to Allah exclusively; it is a day that has late (crucial) consequences, if we push them today towards their trench, we shall be able to push them (and win), and if defeat us we will never succeed afterward"**. Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl was another military leader who said: **"I fought the Messenger of Allah in many battles? How can I run away from you (Romans) today?"** He then shouted: **'who can pledge with me to fight till death?'** The first to respond was his very uncle Al-Harith bin Hisham [the brother of his father Abu Jahl (Amr bin Hisham), and who also fought against Muslims in Uhud, but now an elite Muslim]; Ikrimah thus formed a **'Death Division'** from 400 Muslims pledging to fight with him till death. As for Abu Sufyan, an 80-years-old Arab elite and Master, acting now as the leader of spiritual direction (similar to the role of the Prophet in battles), who suggested dividing Muslim army into 3 major parts, one in front, followed by the logistics of food and munitions, followed by Khalid mobile division (his excellent plan was adopted); he also formed women division at the back of the army to deter and rebuke any retreating soldiers, Abu Sufyan shouted: **"O Muslims, it comes what you are waiting for and seeing now, and here is the Messenger of Allah and Paradise before you, and the Satan and Hell-fire behind you"**; he then rotates between corps, addressing each corps: **"O'Allah, O'Allah, you are the sanctuary of Arabs and helpers of Islam, they are the sanctuary of Romans [Byzantines] and helpers of shirk (i.e. Polytheism, literally 'association gods with Allah')"**

O'Allah, this is a day of your Days; O'Allah, descend your victory on your ser-vants." Latterly, amid the silence following the fierce fighting on that day, Abu Sufyan (fighting under the banner of his son Yazid) again shouted audibly in the battle field: *O'Allah, accelerate your victory, O'Muslims stay firm, stay firm'*. Also, Abu Sufyan had earlier advised his son Yazid, another military general in command of a major division of Muslim army: *'O my son, be fearful only of Allah, and be patient, you are a distinguished leader to be followed by others, so be the best of all in endurance and in fighting enemy, aiming always for Allah' best reward'*.

Indeed Allah's victory was granted at a high cost; Ikrimah was killed as a martyr together with his uncle Al-Harith and the rest of his 400 'Death Division': Abu Sufyan (in his 80s) fought with one eye, had now lost his 2nd eye and became a blind man for the rest of his life; Khalid however, despite his extensive wounds, has survived.

This vivid example reveals how Allah teaches His Prophet and Muslims to persevere and be patient and never to lose hope even in their hostile pagan enemies; it also reveals the complete transformation and the radical change that Islam and the Prophet have caused among such unbelievers, who later all converted to Islam, to become not only as good Muslims but dedicated and devout Muslim martyrs⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾.

Interestingly, and during the battle of Yarmuk, the Roman general **Jurjah** came out (on his horse) and requested general **Khalid** (who in turn came out riding his horse); they then entered in an intellectual dialogue in which Jurjah enquired why was Khalid called 'the sword of Allah', Khalid replied: "God sent us his Prophet, who summoned us, but we avoided him and kept well away from him. Then some of us believed him and followed him, whereas others distanced themselves from him and called him a liar. I was among those who called him a liar, shunned him and fought him. Then God gripped our hearts and our forelocks, guiding us to him so that we followed him. The Prophet said to me 'You are a sword among the swords of God which God has drawn against the polytheists', and he prayed for victory for me. Thus I was named the Sword of Allah, because I am now the most hostile of Muslims to the polytheists". [Pages 76-77 great Arab conquests] General Jurjah then asked Khalid: What do you preach (invite people to)? Khalid replied: "to **Shahadah**, testifying that *'there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is His servan' and Messenger'*, and to accept what had been revealed to him by Allah, the Most High". Jurjah asked: and what if someone didn't accept (your invitation)? Khalid said: "then tribute and we will protect them". 'and what if he didn't give it (the tribute)' asked Jurjah, Khalid said: "we then warn him about war and we fight him". Jurjah then enquired: what is position of the one who accepts (your invitation to Islam) and enters into this affair (Islam), Khalid replied: "his position will be equal to ours, according to what Allah has ordered us, our nobles and commons, our first and lasts (are equal before Allah)". Jurjah then questioned: 'and whoever enters today will be rewarded just like you?' Khalid replied: "Yes and better". Jurjah asked: 'how come, when you have preceded him', Khalid replied: "we accepted this affair (Islam) by force; and we gave him the pledge while he was alive between us; news of heaven come to him and he tell us about the book (Qur'an) and reveal to us the signs (miracles of Prophethood); the one who saw what we have seen, and heard what we have heard is obliged to submit (become a Muslim) and to give the pledge. But you didn't see what we saw, and didn't hear what we heard of the wonders (miracles) and evidences, so whoever of you enter this affair (becomes a Muslim) truthfully and with intention is (surely) better

than us". Jurjah asked: by Allah did you tell me the truth and didn't cheat me? Khalid said: "(I swear by Allah I told the truth and Allah is the supervising patron of what you have enquired about". Jurjah then turned his shield and went with Khalid and asked: teach me Islam' So Khalid took him to his camp and poured a bag of water and prayed with him two *Rak'ats* (i.e. two units of prayer, singular *Rak'ah*, consist of one standing, one bowing and 2 prostrations). The Romans were furious at Jurjah's conversion to Islam. Thereafter, Jurjah fought as a Muslim with Khalid against the Byzantines for many hours until the sun-set, when he was injured fatally and died as a Muslim and he didn't pray to God except these 2 Rak'ahs with Khalid⁽²⁾.

Arabs were indeed the substance and the exemplary leaders of Islam. The waging of war in Islam is an exceptional situation, and is enjoined (out of necessity) against certain categories, such as^(5, 6): (1) those who attack a Muslim country; (2) those who prevent the global message of Islam to be preached and to be reached by peaceful means; and (3) the apostates (renegades).

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

Verse 22:39-40 of Surat Al-Hajj (The Pilgrimage).

Muslims' demands during war were simple. All fighting non-muslim enemies were given one of 3 consecutive options: an honest invitation to become Muslims, (if not, then) to pay a tribute in exchange of protection (*jiz'ya*), (if not, then) Muslims are forced to fight them in a decisive battle. If this 3-options principle is violated, then the tribute is revoked and/or the land conquered must be withdrawn from^{(1) (2)}:

- Indeed prior to the decisive battle of Yarmuk on 636 AD (15 Hijri) between Muslims and Romans, Muslim armies took tributes from Christian inhabitants of cities and then decided to retreat tactically from these cities in preparation for the decisive battle (of Yarmuk) with the news of massively incoming and re-grouping Roman armies, so the military general leader Abu Obaidah (before Khalid's arrival) ordered *Hubab bin Mas'lamah* to re-pay them back their tribute as they could not protect them (in case they lose the coming final battle). This was totally unprecedented, and all Christian inhabitants wished Muslims a return after a victory over the Roman armies of the Byzantine Empire, who used to tax them heavily and to treat them badly and would never ever repaid them their taxes.
- Conversely, when Samarqand was conquered suddenly by *Qutaibah bin Muslim al-Bahili* by the sheer Muslim military force on 87 Hijri, the defeated (and displaced) people of Samarqand later complained to Caliph Umar bin AbdulAzziz (through his governor/wali Sulaiman bin Abi al-Surri) in 99 Hijri, that they were never given the 3 choices before they were over-run and their city was taken, i.e. they were not invited to Islam before fighting, the Caliph set a court which judged their case. The Judge (*Jumal' bin Hadhir*) gave his verdict in favour of Samarqand's people. Therefore all Muslim Armies were

ordered by the Judge to dismantle their camps and to leave the city of Samarqand, and to re-engage in fresh negotiation with such people on the 3-options principle. Samarqand's people (who never witnessed such a great Justice), decided unanimously to accept Islam as their own choice, with an agreement that negated the need for a new war.

- Furthermore, in 100 Hijri, Caliph Umar bin AbdulAzziz removed his governor on Khorasan (*Al-Jarrah bin Abdullah Al-Hakami*, after one year and 5 months of governorship), because he took a tribute from the converts to Islam, claiming they only became Muslims in order to avoid paying tributes (in protest, those converts reverted back to their first religion and paid the tribute); Umar replaced him and said: '*Allah sent Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a preacher and not a tax-collector!*'

Thus in fact, the defence of Islam is what led to Global spread of Islam (or Jihad in the cause of Allah) and later led to the expansion of Islamic world. As Montgomery Watt put it in page 7 of his book 'The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe'; (This last assertion does not mean that the religion of Islam spread by the sword. In Arabia, indeed, pagan idol-worshipping tribes who became the object of Jihad were given a choice between Islam and the sword. There was a different treatment, however, for Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians and others reckoned to be monotheists. Their religions were held to be sister religions to Islam, though it was alleged that the contemporary adherents of each had departed from its original purity. Nevertheless, they were still monotheists, and could be accepted by Muslims as allies of a sort. In the countries outside Arabia first invaded by Arabs most of the inhabitants were taken to be monotheists. The aim of the Jihad then became not the conversion of these populations but their submission to Muslim rule with the status of protected persons; collectively they were *ahl adh-dhimma*, and the individual was a *dhimmi*...they had internal autonomy under their religious head, such as patriarch or rabbi. A poll-tax (*jiz'ya*) had to be paid to the Muslim governor for each individual in the group...sometimes they were less severely taxed than under the previous rulers [Romans and Persians], and it was a matter of honour for the Islamic state to protect them effectively. In general the situation of the protected groups was not unpleasant, but there were some disadvantages. They were not allowed to bear arms or marry Muslim women, and they were usually excluded from the highest offices of the state).

However *dhimmi* literally means relating to conscience, or the really cared for. Furthermore, each Muslim must pay Zakat to the governor too; payment of Zakat is obligatory as it is one of the 5 pillars of Islam, and is a certain fixed proportion of the wealth (2.5%) and of every kind of property liable to Zakat. The Muslim's Zakat contributor may well exceed the Jiz'ya (poll-tax) contribution of a dhimmi. Nevertheless, the dhimmi might feel he was a second-class citizen; this explains the mass conversions from Christianity to Islam. In fact, some contemporary Muslim scholars believe that if a Christian or a Jew feel about his dhimmi status (in a Muslim State), then the title 'dhimmi' may be replaced by 'citizen' in exchange of sharing his Muslim co-citizens in the protection of the Muslim State (See below Prophet Muhammad 'Covenant of Citizenship' in Medina).

Once the military barriers are broken down and the psychological fear/threat barrier is lifted, and the Islamic message (Da'wah, or preaching) is allowed to reach the people, then the people are entirely Free to believe. God Most High says:

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error".

Verse 2:256 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

"If they charge you with falsehood, say: 'For me are my deeds and for you are your deeds' You are free from responsibility for what I do, and I for what you do' ".

Verse 10:41 of Surat Yunus (Jonah).

"Say, 'The Truth is from your Lord' Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it) ' ".

Verse 18:29 of Surat Al-Kahf (The Cave).

"To you (kafirs or non-believers) be your Way (Religion), and to me mine".

Verse 109:6 of Surat Al-Kafirun (Those who reject Faith).

Indeed, the concept of 'Religious Tolerance' is a purely Original Islamic invention and was practiced by Muslims all over Islamic World (Caliphate) and throughout Islamic history; many of the Caliphs took non-Muslim doctors as their private Court Physicians, without forcing or coercing them into Islam.

Such concept of 'Religious Tolerance' is historically connected with Muhammad himself. When the resistance of the Makkan pagans becomes more intense, the people of Medina (or *Yathrib*) sent an embassy to Muhammad, offering to make him their leader. Muhammad (after taking the pledge from them) accepted and left with his followers on the emigration, or *hijra*, in AD 622; this crucial event marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar.

Thus the Medinese pagans converted to Islam and the first Islamic State was born; Muhammad was now a political leader as well as a religious leader. The Qur'an like the Torah is among other things a code of conduct and a code of laws; in neither there is a distinction between 'religious' and 'secular' laws. Muhammad guaranteed religious freedom to Medina's Jews in his '**Covenant of Citizenship**' which represents a foundation stone in State citizenship (irrespective of creed, ethnicity, and racial diversity) and the First milestone of religious tolerance in the world history as embodied in this embryonic Islamic State in the Arabian Peninsula. The covenant also states that Medina citizens should they wish to protect this Islamic State militarily against (the invasion by) Makkan polytheist pagans (of Quraysh), they will then be allowed a share of the war booties' distribution accordingly; but the covenant made it an '*obligatory duty*' on all Medina citizens to defend Medina against external invasion and *Not* to aid or shelter the enemy (or enemies) of this Islamic State. [See Ibn Hisham, *Life of Prophet Muhammad*, 2nd volume, 452-454 for details of **Covenant of Citizenship**]

The Qur'an affirmed that the Torah and Gospels were divinely inspired scriptures that had been revealed by God through his prophets. While pagans were to be forced to convert, Jews and Christians, as People of the Book (*ahl al-kitab*), were assured the right to worship. The Qur'an expresses reverence for the main figures of the Jewish and Christian traditions: Moses, David, the Virgin Mary, Jesus, and others. It enjoins respect for some of the main elements in Old Testament law: to refrain from pork, practice circumcision, and so on.

Many passages in the Qur'an emphasize the common heritage of these faiths, all related to that of the original *hanif*, Abraham (i.e. the monotheist belief of Abraham). The Qur'an lambastes Christians and Jews who claim that only members of their sect will be admitted to Heavens. The Qur'an makes no such exclusivist claims for Muslims: good Christians and Jews will have their place in Heavens as well:

"Be courteous when you argue with the People of the Book, except with those among them who do evil. Say: 'We believe in that which is revealed to us and which was revealed to you, Our God and your God is one. To Him we surrender ourselves.'"

Verse 29:46 of Surat Al-Ankabut (The Spider).

Following the military conquest of Syria, Muslim armies conquered Palestine peacefully; the man in charge of Jerusalem was patriarch Sophranus (a Greek churchman who considered the appearance of the Arabs a sign of God's anger at the sins of the Christian people. Sophranus insisted that he would surrender the city only to the caliph Umar himself; accordingly caliph Umar bin al-Khattab came in 637 or 638. Umar's agreement that follows represents a major landmark in the history of mankind, and the first cornerstone of religious tolerance in the outside world of Arabian Peninsula, and indeed a great beginning of sound Islamic-Christian relations (inspired by Prophet Muhammad's Covenant of Citizenship). The text of Umar's agreement is as follows:

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. This is the assurance of safety [aman] which the servant of Allah Umar, the Commander of the Faithful, has given to the people of Jerusalem. He has given them an assurance of safety for themselves, for their property, their churches, their crosses, the sick and healthy of the city and for all the rituals which belong to their religion. Their churches will not be inhabited by Muslims and will not be destroyed. Neither they, nor the land, on which they stand, nor their cross, nor their property will be damaged. They will not be forcibly converted. No Jew will live with them in Jerusalem [this prohibition had been a feature of Roman law; and suggests that the Christian negotiators had played a strong hand in excluding Jews as a precondition to the peaceful surrender of the city]. The people of Jerusalem must pay the taxes (jiz'ya) like the people of other cities and must expel the Romans [Byzantines] and the robbers. Those of the people of Jerusalem, who want to leave with the Romans [Byzantines], take their property and abandon their churches and crosses will be safe until they reach their place of refuge. The villagers [ahl al-ardh, who had taken refuge in the city at the time of the conquest] may remain in the city if they wish but must pay taxes like the citizens. Those who wish may go with the Romans [Byzantines] and those who wish may return to their families. Nothing is to be taken from them before their harvest is reaped. If they pay their taxes according to their obligations, then the conditions laid out in this letter are under the covenant of God, are *dhimmat* [the responsibility] of His Prophet, of the caliphs and of the faithful.

The following witnessed this [agreement]: Khalid bin al-Walid, Amr bin al-As and Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufyan [the future caliph]. Written and presented 15 Hijri".

After Umar's agreement in Jerusalem and after Islamic conquests of Syria and Egypt, the relationship between Muslims and Christians in the Middle East was said to be superior to the relationship between Christians and fellow Christians in Europe. Indeed, despite mass conversions to Islam, the remaining Christians and Jews of the Islamic World used to distinguish themselves from the European Christians and Jews as the Oriental people of the Book; thus both oriental Christians and Jews along with Muslims were the target of massacres committed by the European Crusaders in medieval ages (see chapter 4).

Indeed, when Muslims ruled Iberian Peninsula (now Spain and Portugal) for nearly 8 centuries, Jews, Christians and Muslims all lived together in total harmony, something so

unique in Europe that compelled authors such as Maria Rosa Menocal (2002 by Back Bay Books- Time Warner Book Group) to write a book entitled *'the Ornament of the World – How Muslims, Jews, and Christians created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain'*. Muslim rule in Islamic World and particularly in Spain did not only allow for tolerating and accommodating others, but for Jews and Christians proliferation and excellence in poetry, art, architecture, medicine and science in general; the coexistence between Muslims, Jews, and Christian inhabitants (termed *convivencia* by Spanish historians) led The Jewish Museum in New York in 1992 to produce a volume about this peaceful and productive co-existence (under Muslim rule from AD 711 to AD 1492), entitled *'Convivencia – Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain'* [Editors Vivian B Mann, Thomas F Glick, and Jerrilynn D Dodds, published by George Braziller]. It was the so-called Spanish Reconquest and the Roman Catholic Papacy that were responsible for introducing the darkest and the most savage and intolerable Inquisition Tribunals (based on religious discrimination), totally unparalleled and unknown in the history of Mankind (see below).

It deed, the Jewish holocaust had only been committed in Europe: the Muslim World was as always, the only sanctuary in the world for Jews fleeing along with others, from the European persecution.

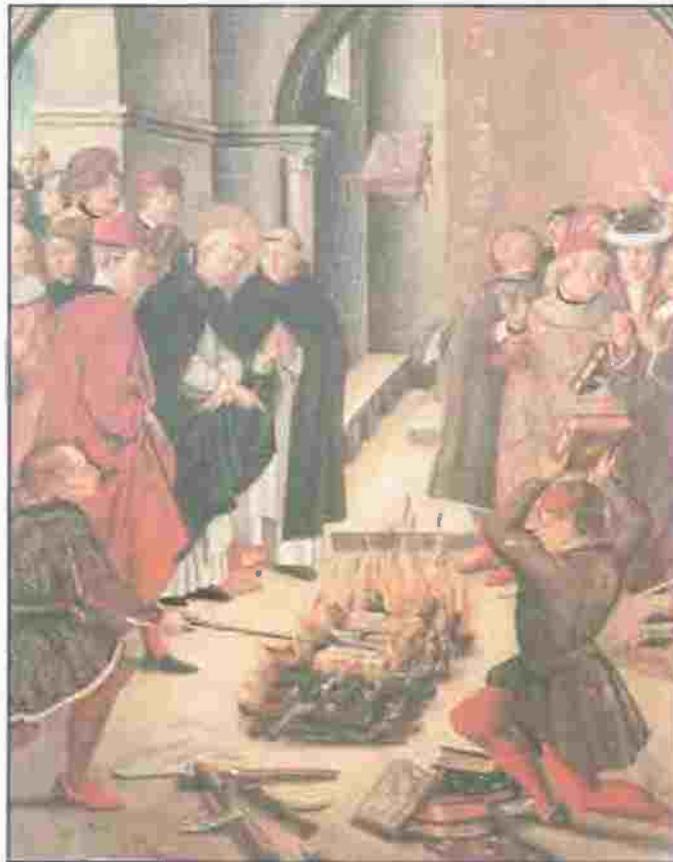
Despite Spanish Royal promises (under Oath) to apply the terms attached to the surrender treaty of Granada (25 November 1491) and despite the 67 terms of capitulation (1492) guaranteeing the rights of the *Moors* (Muslims, or Muslims and Jews), King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were secretly bent on breaking their covenant agreement. Granada kingdom was put under the Castilian authority rule of a Castilian governor, and the inhabitants according to the Treaty were initially allowed to retain their Muslim religion, their laws and judges, language and dress, the enjoyment of their property, and were given a guarantee that taxes would not exceed those they had paid to their Moorish sovereigns.

These terms, were observed as long as Hernando de Talavera was the archbishop of Granada (1493-1507); he communicated with Muslims and Jews using Arabic translators while attempting to learn the language himself, and founded a school to train Christian preachers to serve what he hoped would be growing Arabic speaking flock. But Isabella appointed Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros of Toledo to be sent to join the archbishop and accelerate Christian conversion in Granada. Cisneros toured Granada in 1499 (who then became the future inquisitor general), and he then eschewed Talavera's patient dialogue-based ministry, preferring a confrontational approach of pressured mass conversions. Lest any of Granada's Moors misunderstand the message, Cisneros had copies of the Qur'an immolated in great public bonfires.

As their holy books smoldered, so did Muslim resentment. Under pressure, mass conversions then took place. This pressure, and the public burning of Islamic religious books, finally made the Moors revolt. Goaded by Cisneros and others, Ferdinand and Isabella summarily voided Muslim rights under the decade-old surrender treaty, issuing a new edict requiring Muslims and Jews in Granada and Castile to convert or be exiled.

The expulsion from the kingdom of Granada, of all Muslims over the age of 14 who did not accept baptism (12 February 1502) amounts to nearly 3 millions. They were not allowed to go to North Africa: they could only go to Egypt or leave Castile by her frontier with Biscay. The new converts, known as the *Moriscos*, came automatically under the loving care of the Inquisition. By a later decree of Charles V (1525) they were forbidden to use *Arab names, or to*

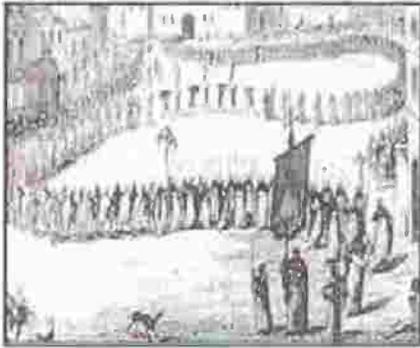
wear jewellery with Arabic designs; only crosses and Christian images were allowed. They were forbidden to make marriage contacts in accordance with their ancient laws. In 1556 the enforced use of Castilian was decreed, *the Arab language being banned under very severe penalties.* This and other,



Spanish Inquisition burning of prohibited books according to lists of indexes published in Spain and updated in 1551, 1559, 1583, 1612, 1632, and 1640. The Indexes included a wide range of books with special attention to books written in Arabic language e.g. copies of Qur'an, Muslim and Jewish books written in Arabic, as well as the vernacular translations of the Bible. "*One country, one ruler, one faith*" became the mandate of Tomas de Torquemada, an advisor to Isabel who became the first General Inquisitor.

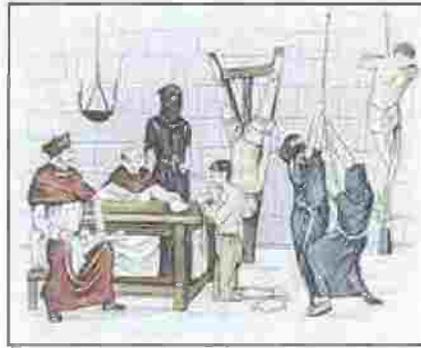
Spanish Inquisition: showing 16 rare pictures:

1.



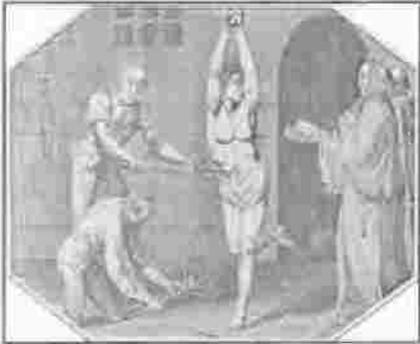
Astro du Fe - Inquisition victims being led to their doom in procession. After the "act of faith," the victims were burned to death.

2.



The Holy Inquisition - Torture Chamber.

3.



Ripping the flesh: Two old priests delighted in the tearing and ripping of the flesh. Catholic Church learned that a Man could live while skinned alive until the skin is peeled down to the waist. Often, the rippers were heated to red hot and used on women's breasts and in the genitalia of both sexes.

4.



Hanging victims upside down while being tortured during a tribunal (Dominicans and Jesuits staffed the cruel and bloody inquisitions).

5.



The Wheel, a nude victim, was stretched out, lying face downward, with arms and legs spread, and tied to stakes or iron rings. The victim would be tied to the wheel, and then swung across fire or metal spike below to burn or rip victim's flesh.

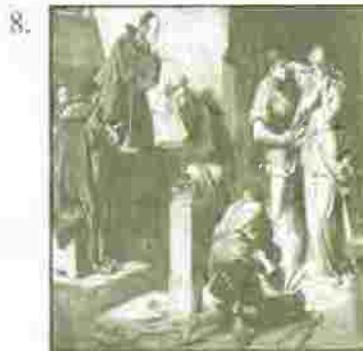
6.



Drowning: a gurney (stretcher) "specially designed" to tilt backwards at an angle to maximize the water entering the prisoner's nose and mouth, intensifying the sense of choking -- and to be lifted upright quickly in the event that a prisoner stopped breathing.



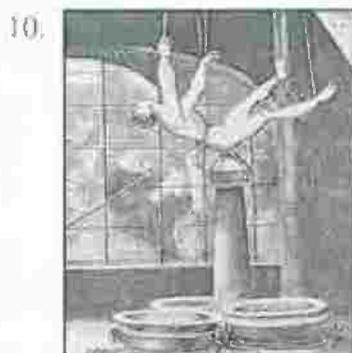
Hanging/ Backsliding "nude converts" during Inquisition to elicit "confessions" from "heretics"



Sexual assault of a woman brought before the Inquisition



The Iron Torture Chair was studded with spikes; the victim was strapped in nude and a fire was lit beneath the chair. Heavy objects were also be used. They were placed upon the victim to increase the pain of the spikes. Blows with mallets were also inflicted. Often, flesh rippers or breast ripping pincers, could be used jointly (See Breast Rippers on the right).



Julius Cradle: The victim was pulled up by a rope or chain and then lowered to the sharp object. Wealthy people sitting and watching as if watching an opera! Viewing this poor man slowly die as he rotated on this very sharp point. The man is suspended with these many ropes so he can be rotated on that exceedingly sharp point striking into his arms or sticking into female organ!



The Rack: the victim is placed horizontally, nude on the ladder or rack. Ropes were used to bind the arms and legs like a tourniquet, while some mechanical device, usually a crank or turning wheel, tightens the ropes, stretching the victim's body until the joints are dislocated. Such torture was known as being "broken on the rack," "racked," or "stretched on the rack." This was considered by the Church to be "one of the milder forms of torture".



The Brodequin or Crushing Boots (English Brodekin) were used to crush the legs by tightening the device by hand, or using a mallet for knocking in the wedges to smash the bones until the bone marrow spurted out.

13.



The Iron Maiden: is a fiendish device. It's an upright sarcophagus with spikes on the inner surfaces. Double doors open on the front (with 8 spikes protruded from one door, and 13 from the other). Once the victim was inside, the doors were closed. There, the strategically placed spikes would pierce several vital organs. However, they were relatively short spikes, so the wounds wouldn't be instantly fatal. Instead, the victim would linger and bleed to death over several hours. Two additional spikes could be positioned specifically to penetrate the eye.

14.



Skull crusher is self-explanatory.

15.



Earning the feet: by applying oil, lard and grease to the feet before roasting them over a fire. A screen was used to control or increase the pain as exposure to the fire was applied on and off for maximum suffering. Some victims were forced to wear large leather or metal boots into which boiling water or molten lead was poured.

16.



Burning at the stake was the last step of fatal torture by fire. Heratic's Fork: was often used to silence the victim on the way to the burning stake, so they could not reveal what had occurred in the torture chamber or defend themselves in any way.

harsh later measures precipitated the new revolt of 1571, the dispersal of the Moors over the Castilian countries (before their final expulsion from Spain in 1609/1610). Although Spanish historians and the Papacy do not admit more than few thousands killed in their Inquisitional tribunals, however, many believe that Millions were killed in the course of religious intolerance represented by the brutal Spanish Inquisition Tribunals.

The descendents of those Granadan and Castilian Muslims forcibly converted to Christianity in the early 1500s remained as stubbornly (though clandestinely) committed to their former faith and customs as the poet had predicted: **"it was the fear of death and of burning that caused us to convert...we accept neither our change of religion nor what they say on the subject of the Trinity"**. Arabic language remained a living language in Granada a century after its Muslim inhabitants were forcibly converted. **By 1609**, Spain's monarchs expelled recalcitrant Moriscos from Spain starting that same year. It became unacceptable not only to be a converted Muslim or Jew, but it also forbidden to be a descendant of a Muslim or Jewish family.

In the aftermath of catastrophic events of World Trade Centres (at Twin Towers – New York) (11/9/2001) and that of Madrid commuter (March 2004), Chris Lowney, a successful Managing Director of JP Morgan & Co. (extending on three continents) wrote in his excellent book entitled: **"A vanished World – Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain"** [published by Oxford University Press in 2006] ⁽⁷⁾: (Though Muslims, Christians, and Jews all worship the same God revealed to Abraham, that common bond paled in their eyes before the differences dividing the three faiths. These 3 monotheistic religions share not only a lineage back to Abraham [Jews, Christians, and Muslims share the blood of Abraham through their leading prophets: Moses, Jesus (are both from the progeny of Abraham's wife Sarah), and Muhammad (a direct descendent of Ishmael from Abraham's wife Hagar)] but also the ritual practice of pilgrimage. Long before ninth-century Christians first journeyed to *Santiago de Compostela* [see below], devout Muslims were traveling to *Mecca* for the Hajj and devout Jews to *Jerusalem* for Pilgrimage... In all 3 faiths, the pilgrim's journey metaphorically embodies deeper human yearnings. Only a tiny handful will be privileged to know in an earthly lifetime whether our irreconcilable dogmatic differences, once illuminated under the pure light of perfect Truth, will somehow be reconciled by some logic we Muslims, Christians, and Jews cannot humanly comprehend. Until then, we apparently suffer the tyranny of those brutally incompatible facts: either Jesus is the Messiah or Jesus is not; either Muhammad is the Prophet, or Muhammad is not)⁽⁷⁾. (The opening scene of the New Testament Acts of the Apostles relates a startling occurrence. The risen Jesus gathers his disciples, and "as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight". Before ascending, Jesus imparts this final instruction: **"You shall be my witness ... to the end of the earth"**.

The apostle James, Santiago in Spanish, took the instruction literally. His purported remains are today venerated in the small Spanish town bearing his name, *Santiago de Compostela* [*Compostela* means 'field of stars' in reference to burial site].



Santiago de Compostela in Spain (burial site of St James, one of Jesus' disciples)

It lies a few dozen miles from the end of the earth: the burial place is said to be discovered between 818-842 and his shrine immediately became a pilgrimage attraction.

[However] the tensions that tore medieval Spain were mirrored in the schizophrenic image of her chosen patron, *Santiago* (St. James). James was –and is– never far off in the Spanish imagination.

A thousand-year-old route of pilgrimage snakes across northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela, by tradition the resting place of James's earthly remains and, after Rome, Europe's most important pilgrimage site. Spain's churches everywhere enshrine James's image in altar pieces, paintings, and sculptures.

One discomfiting depiction occasionally appears in churches along the pilgrim route:

James bestride a horse, his muscular right arm swinging a sword down upon a turbaned, darker-skinned figure cowering beneath the rearing steed's hooves. The iconography is a clear today as it must have been to 13th century pilgrim: this is

Santiago Matamoros, St. James the Killer of Moors (i.e. Muslims), patron of crusading Reconquest.

James the Muslim Killer embodies one strand of this story:

religiously grounded hatred that shredded medieval Spain and still haunts humanity. Yet, instead of this violent killer-apostle, a statue of a more serene St. James stands sentinel at the great cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. *Santiago Peregrino* (St. James the Pilgrim) wields no sword, bearing only by the great law of charity:

Love neighbours as self, a command revered by Muslims, Christians, and Jews alike. [Thus] James the Muslim Killer finds alter ego in James the Pilgrim; while the former inspires the fateful frenzy of war, the latter engenders the reconciliation and concord that proceed from love of neighbor.

But] with the 1492 extermination of Muslim rule in Spain, St. James the Moor Killer had seemingly outlived his militant usefulness and could have been retired in favour of St. James the Pilgrim.



Three pictures depicting 'Santiago Matamoros' i.e. St. James, the Killer of Moors (i.e. Muslims), he is considered the patron of crusading Reconquest of Spain.



St. James the Pilgrim (wields no sword)

But Santiago the militant was drafted to combat a new enemy [the New World Americans]; its reminders still resonate in South American atlases, from the benignly named Santiago, Chile, to the more sinister-sounding Mexican town of Matamoros (Muslim Killer). Thanks in part to Inca gold, Spain entered what historians typically call her Golden Age. The age was golden in one obvious respect, as precious metals lifted from New World colonies gilded Spain's altars and financed her European conflicts. Yet, in other respects, the Golden Age label is at a minimum incomplete. For this was at least the *third* Golden Age Spain had enjoyed. *Spain's Islamic Golden Age* had blessed Europe with new models of architecture, mathematics, ceramics, agriculture, philosophy, medicine, and astronomy, to name a few disciplines among many. Spain's Jewish Golden Age [not independently, but during Islamic Spain] had nurtured Europe's most prosperous, accomplished, and largest Jewish population, and through Maimonides and Moses de Leon bequeathed masterworks that still fundamentally influence Jewish thought and worship. The enduring contributions of medieval Spain's Muslims and Jews reveal an unfortunate gap in Spain's third Golden Age. Cleansed of non-Christians and striving for homogeneity, Spain's encounter with alien cultures now occurred

almost exclusively beyond Iberia's borders, most notably in her New World colonies. And what she extracted from that Golden Age encounter with other civilizations was for the most part only, well, gold. Tourists to Spain are everywhere reminded how profoundly Spain once benefited from her encounter with Islamic civilization, from Cordoba's cathedral rising from the roots of her dizzyingly arcaded great mosque, to the Almohad minaret that dominates Seville's skyline as its cathedral bell tower, even to Moorish churches in northern provinces never ruled by Muslim Spain. Visitors to the Inca remains at Machu Picchu can't help but note that Inca architects might have made an equally profound contribution to Spanish masonry and construction technology. But the Spain of this (*third*) Golden Age was no longer forced to encounter and absorb the gifts of foreign civilizations on her own home soil and perhaps had lost the knack of doing so elsewhere. **Still, if the foreign cultures no longer blessed Spain, those exiled from Spain blessed their adopted homelands**⁽⁷⁾.

As for Islam, whenever a non-Muslim converts to Islam, Islam demolishes all the previous evil deeds, and so do migration (for Allah's sake), and Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah). Even the criminal record will immediately be pardoned on the moment of declaration of *Shahadah* i.e. '*La Ilaha Illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah*' (*There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is Messenger of Allah*), on the basis of Prophet Muhammad's statement: '*Islam casts out the (pre-Islamic) past*'. i.e. he or she will be new-born or re-born as a sinless Muslim. Furthermore, those who, after their Islamic belief, translate their belief into good deeds will be rewarded a double reward from Allah (God): **"Except those who repent and believe (in Islamic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds; for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."**

Verse 25:70 of Surat Al-Furqan (The Criterion).

For instance, *Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl*, the Muslim hero at the Battle of Yarmuk, was the son of Abu Jahl, an arch-enemy of the Prophet (Abu Jahl was killed in the battle of Badr between Muslims and Makkan polytheist pagans -see above); Ikrimah was like his father, a great enemy of Islam and Muslims. Following the conquest of Makkah in AD 630, the Prophet allowed the death of only 6 Makkan pagans even if they took refuge by Ka'bah itself, because of their fierce animosity to Islam (one of them was Ikrimah). Ikrimah then rode the (Red) Sea fleeing to cross over to Ethiopia, but (as they proceeded), a heavy stormy wind overtake on their boat, and huge waves came to them from all sides, and they thought that they are encircled therein. The people of the boat said to one another: '*None can save you except Allah (the Only True God of the heavens and earth). So invoke (call upon) Him (Allah) (by making your Faith pure for Him Alone and none else) to deliver you safe (from drowning)*'. Ikrimah said to himself: '*By Allah, if none can benefit in the sea except Allah (Alone), then no doubt, none can benefit over the land except Allah (Alone). O Allah! I promise You that should You deliver me safe from this, I will go and put my hands in the hands of (Prophet) Muhammad and surely I will find him full of pity, kindness and mercy*'. So they were delivered safe (by Allah), and returned to their sea-shore and came out of the sea. Ikrimah then proceeded to Allah's Messenger, Muhammad, (narrated his story), embraced Islam (just as he promised Allah), and became a perfect Muslim. In a Hadith narrated by Umm Salamah (one of Prophet's wives) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: **"I saw an offshoot of Abu Jahl [who is in Hell in Paradise]"** and when Ikrimah embraced Islam, the Prophet said: **"O Umm Salamah, that is it [Prophet's vision]"**.

As for the Muslims committing sins, the repentance is equally simple. The Lord Allah says:

“O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise).”

Verse 66:8 of Surat-At-Tahrim (The Prohibition).

For *Tawba* or **repentance** to be accepted and if the sin is between the slave and Allah (unrelated to human being), then Islamic repentance requires 3 combined conditions:

1. **to stop doing that sin** (immediately – in the present time)
2. **to be remorseful about doing that sin** (in the past)
3. **to decide never to do it again** (future promise)

If one of these conditions is missing then the repentance is incomplete.

However if the sin committed is in relation to a human being, then the conditions for repentance include the above 3 plus:

4. **to free himself from that person's obligation**, e.g. stolen property to be returned; allegation of slander to be withdrawn or to be forgiven by the other party.

Indeed, the real religious tolerance has never been practiced before or after Islam anywhere in the world. Thus people (under no compulsion or duress) loved Islamic simplicity and its easily applied principles; and lively expression in Freedom of belief, Justice, Equality and Islamic Brotherhood implemented in real practice and not mere theory; consecutively they were converted into Islam. They then loved Arabs and Arabic language as the medium of Islamic spread and Islamic communication. Arabic language became an important necessity for performing religious duties (such as the 5 daily prayers and du'a, asking God Allah for blessing and progress), and a 'lingua franca' in all spheres of life, for Islam itself is a comprehensive code of life. Indeed, the term 'Jihad' must never be taken out of context or misunderstood in the view of this clear noble Islamic concept; Jihad is the maximum effort exerted against prohibited desires of the Self struggling always to please God (*Major Jihad*) (See word **Jihad** in the Dictionary); further, Jihad is not a struggle on basis of national pride, material gain, or territorial expansion.

Also, God has defined victory as guiding people into submission to God, i.e. converting them to the true religion of Islam. In other word victory is for God Allah and not for the benefit of one of the fighting parties. God Most High says: **“When God's help and victory comes, and you see people entering into God's religion in multitudes, then celebrate the praises of your Lord and ask His forgiveness. Indeed, He is the Acceptor of Repentance.”**

Verse 110:1-3 of Surat-An-Nasr (The Help).

The victory is achieved under the banner of faith, and under no other banners; the striving (or Jihad) is purely for the sake of God, for the success of His religion and His law, for the protection of Dar-ul-Islam, the particulars of which we have described above, and for no other purpose. It is not for earthly material gains, nor for the spoils or for fame, nor for the honor of the country or nation, nor for the mere protection of one's family except when supporting

them against religious persecution. Abu Musa relates: *"The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about one, who fights for material gains, another for bravery (and fame), and another for distinction, which one of these is in the cause of God? The Prophet replied, "Only he is for the cause of God who fights so that the word of God may remain supreme.".* (Narrated by Al-Bukhari).

The honor of martyrdom is achieved only when one is fighting in the cause of God (as the only noble cause worth fighting for), and if one is killed for any other purpose, this honor will not be attained. Since all lands are Allah's land, and since all the humans, all this Universe, and all that exist are Allah's creation, that is why Muslims do not like to refer to the Islamic territorial expansion as Empire like the earthly Persian and Roman Empires; instead it refers to it as Caliphate for it is the land where the Caliph is the servant of God and where the (Divine) rules of Islamic Shari'ah is dominant and operational, and the ruler is governing with laws stipulated by God Allah. Similarly, Muslims refers to their winning in battle fighting as *naṣr* (Arabic for victory or triumph) or *fat'h* (has no English equivalent, but 'conquering in terms of opening the land for Allah's message to reach its people' is the nearest in English) and not as conquering in terms of defeating others, or occupying other people's land, for their victory was in the cause of Allah and the land is His and hence, there is no winner-loser equation here, but it is winner-winner equation (all are winners because it is victory for Allah and His cause).

Therefore, the *fatherland* or *motherland* is that place where the Islamic faith, the Islamic way of life and the Shari'ah of God is dominant; only this meaning of 'motherland' is worth of the human being. Similarly, 'nationality' meaning should be based on the belief and a way of life, and only this belonging is worth of man's dignity. Classification according to family and tribe and nation, and race and color and country are residues of the primitive state of man; these *jahili* groupings belong to a period when man's spiritual values were at a low stage. The Prophet (peace be on him) has called them "foul things" against which man's spirit should revolt.

Thus Islam is God's comprehensive and complete religion and the definitive code of life since eternity; hence Islam is for all mankind and not for any particular nation, race, or culture. God Most High confirmed this fact, stating the purpose of human ethnic diversity as a pleasure of peaceful introduction to each other, and emphasizing that God-fearing is the best of all people: "O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another; verily, the most honourable of you with God (Allah) is the believer who is most pious; verily, God (Allah) is All-Knowing, Well-Acquainted (with all things)".

Verse 49:13 of Surat Al-Hujurat (The Dwellings).

When the Jews claimed to be the chosen people of God, on the basis of their race and nationality, and their lineage to Abraham, The God Most High rectified their claim and declared that in every period, in every race and in every nation, there is only one criterion: that of faith. "And they say: 'Be Jews, or Christians; then you will be guided'. Say: 'Not so; the way (the religion) of Abraham, the true in faith; and he was not among the polytheists.' Say: 'We believe in Allah, and what has come down to us, and what has come down to Abraham, Ismail and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes (of Israelites), and what was given to Moses and Jesus and to other Prophets by their Sustainer. We do not make any distinction among them, and we have submitted to Him. If then they believe as

you have believed, they are guided; but if they turn away, then indeed they are stubborn. Then God suffices for you, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. The baptism of God and who can baptize better than God? And we worship Him alone."

Verse 2: 135-138 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

The Lord declares that the people who are really chosen by Him are the Submitting (Muslim) Ummah or community (i.e. His obedient servants) which has gathered under God's banner without regard to differences of races, nations, colors and countries. "You are the best of people raised for the good of mankind, enjoining what is right (good) and forbidding what is wrong (evil) and believing in Allah."

Verse 3:110 of Surat Al-Imran, The Family of Imran).

"Thus We have made you (true Muslims), a just (and best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be witness over you."

Verse 2:143 of Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim (Islamic Monotheist – to worship none but Allah alone) and he joined not gods with Allah. Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Abraham are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad), and those who have believed (Muslims), and Allah is the Protector of the believers."

Verse 3:67-68 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

During the global spread of Islam (whether by peace and/or by force imposed on Muslims), the concept of One Umma, Ummah, Ummat was born, strengthened, and indeed was first introduced by Islam into this world as the **One big global family inhabiting One global village (or country)**. Thus the Almighty says:

"Truly, this Ummah of yours is one Ummah, and I am your Lord (and Cherisher); therefore worship Me (Alone).

Verse 21:92 of Surat Al-Anbiya' (The Prophets).

Ummah is best translated here as Brotherhood; since 'community', 'race', 'nation', and 'people' are words which import other ideas but do not quite correspond to 'Ummah'. 'Religion' and 'Way of Life' are derived meanings, which could be used in other passages, but are less appropriate here. Thus it denotes people of very different temperaments and virtues, widely different in time, race, language, surroundings, history, and work to be performed, but forming the closest brotherhood as being men and women united in the highest service of Allah; they pre-figure the final and perfected Brotherhood of Islam. This one Ummah benefits the One God; indeed a single Ummah is a manifestation of a single God. Muslims: Arabs and non-Arabs, men and women, old and young, whether from East or West, became one Ummah bonded by Islam or submission to One God. Further this Ummah extends deep in the history since creation of Adam, till the day of Judgement. The economy of the Ummah is based on an entirely self-sufficient system inspired by Qur'anic and Prophet Muhammad's teachings (this is beyond the scope of this book focused on 'Adventures of Arabic Language'). Muslims therefore, felt they were entrusted and predestined by Allah to carry his global message and to be an active part of the history of Mankind which needs to be re-directed and guided back to its true path and course. Indeed, Islam equipped its believers with Allah's comprehensive

interpretation of history, life, mankind, and universe; it expanded their horizons and understanding on a global level.

Within the first generation of such Muslim Brotherhood, there were Abu Bakr from Arabia, Bilal from Abyssinia, Suhaib from Roman Syria, Salman from Persia, and they were all brothers in faith. The generations which followed them were similar. Nationalism here is the belief, homeland here is the "Abode of Islam" (Dar-ul-Islam), the ruler here is God, and the constitution here is the Qur'an. Indeed, there is no Islamic culture as such, but diversity of cultures of Muslim nations because **Islam is the filter of cultures**, maintaining what is good and leaving what is bad from each culture: thus Islam is unifying nations with Islamic brotherhood bonds that revolve around the One law-giving God. This noble concept of homeland, of nationality, and of relationship was imprinted in the hearts of Muslim Preachers and Fighters in the true cause of God. They fought to remove all influences of *Juhiliyyah* (pre-Islamic era of ignorance). All these facts have been documented by God Most High in one verse, in which He has placed them in one side of the balance and the Islamic belief and its responsibilities in the other side, and invites people to choose: "Say: if your fathers and your sons and your brothers and your spouses and your relatives, and the wealth which you have acquired, and the commerce in which you fear decline, and the homes in which you take delight are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His cause then wait until God brings His judgment; and God does not guide the rebellious people."

Verse 9:24 of Surat At-Tawha (Repentance).

Allah, The Guarantor of Believers' Victory ^{(A a, b, c, d) (S a, b, c),}

It is a human nature to follow the strongest: Muslims' deep belief that Allah is the Absolute All-Mighty, Omnipotent, and Most Powerful than any creature or human superpower makes them put their full trust in Allah (God), The Most High, The One and The Only:

"And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful."

Verse 26:217 of Surat Ash-Shu'ura' (The Poets).

"And put your trust (O Muhammad) in the Ever Living One Who dies not."

Verse 25:58 of Surat Al-Furqan (The Criterion).

"Say: 'O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and take the Kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is the good, Verily, You are Able to do all things.'"

Verse 3:26 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Indeed, they knew if they were empowered by the Lord, they must abide by His Laws. They learn to be humble obedient servants of God; and that was reflected in their very names, such as Abdullah, AbdulRahman (servant of Allah). [In Islamic history as in recent history too, ominous names had ended in disasters: e.g. the ship 'Titanic' (called invincible and unsinkable) sank on its first sea voyage! The space-shuttle 'Challenger' (challenging God!) had exploded seconds after its launch!]

God Most High explains His way (law) on the fate of civilizations when ruled by unbelieving tyrants: "How many of gardens and springs that they (Pharaoh's people) left behind. And green crops (fields) and goodly places. And comforts of life where they used to take delight! Thus (it was)! And We made other people inherit them (i.e. We made the Children of Israel to inherit the kingdom of Egypt). And the heavens and the earth wept not for them, nor were they given a respite."

Verse 44:25-29 of Surat Ad-Dukhan (The Smoke).

Thus Prophet Muhammad and his 2nd Caliph Umar used to reiterate this very verse 44:25-29 after each victory, after dislodging the enemies of Allah, and re-instating Allah-obiding Muslims as the new inheritors of the land (the land of Allah), being entrusted to implement His Laws on His land.

Furthermore, Muslim's greatest belief in Allah led to the belief in His destiny (*Qadar* i.e. Decree of ordainments). If man proposes, then God disposes (duties are our, but consequences are God's). Thus they understood that they must work hard to exert their maximum effort and prepare themselves the best way they can, but then they have to leave the results (whether apparently good or bad) entirely in the hands of Allah, for He is the All-Knowing:

"Say: 'Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Maula (Lord, Helper and Protector), and in Allah let the believers put their trust. Say: 'Do you wait for us (anything) except one of the two best things (martyrdom or victory)? While we wait for you either that Allah will afflict you with a punishment from Himself, or at our hands, so wait, we too are waiting with you' "

Verse 9:51-52 of Surat At-Tawba (Repentance).

"You killed them not, but Allah killed them, and you (Muhammad) threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw."

Verse 8:17 of Surat Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War).

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz) before We bring it into existence. Verily that is easy for Allah. In order that you may not grieve at the things that you fail to get, nor rejoice over that which has been given to you, and Allah likes not every prideful boaster."

Verse 57:22-23 of Surat Al-Hadid (Iron).

This belief brought psychological happiness, even when the Muslims were killed while defending their religion.

Furthermore, Allah states that He had already written the death for each soul on a specific date and time, and if that time has not come, then that soul will live on, even if it is faced with the gravest dangers it may ever encounter:

"Nay can a soul die except by Allah's leave, the term being fixed as by writing; if any do desire a reward in this life, We shall give it to him; and if any do desire a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give it to him, and swiftly shall We reward those that (serve us with) gratitude."

Verse 3:145 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

This fact gave Muslims with the psychological relief during the death of the dearest and nearest relatives, and provided them with utmost courage during their encounter with the enemy at battles and wars.

It is narrated by Ibn Abbas^(ra): Once I was behind the Prophet (peace be upon him) [riding behind him on the same mount] and he said to me: " O boy, I will teach you few words:

- Be mindful of Allah [worship Him (Alone), remember Him always, obey His Orders], He will protect you [from every evil and take care of you in all the spheres of life].
- Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him in front of you [He will respond to your requests].
- If you ask, ask Allah;
- If you seek help, seek help from Allah.
- Know that if all the people (the Nation) get together in order to benefit you with something, they will not be able to benefit you in anything except what Allah has decreed (prescribed) for you. And if they all get together in order to harm you with something, they will not be able to harm you in anything except what Allah has decreed (prescribed) for you. The pens have been lifted [i.e. stopped writings Divine (Allah's) Preordainments and destiny]. And (the ink over) papers (Book of Decrees) have dried."

related by Sahih At-Tirmidhi, who said it was a good and sound Hadith]

[However, in a version other than that of At-Tirmidhi, it reads:]

- "Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him before you.
- Get to know Allah in prosperity and He will know you in adversity.
- Know that what has passed you by was not going to befall you, and that what has befallen you was not going to pass you by.
- And know that victory comes with patience, relief with affliction, and ease with hardship."

However, Islam was and is the eternal message of God Allah, and so far as the Muslims obey Allah and his Prophet, they were assured by God of the final victory and spread of Islamic global message. Indeed, the unprecedented speed of Islamic spread was totally unorthodox phenomenon and in no way classical in terms of their unexplained power and their inferior number that could never match their enemy's power and number. Muslim conquests were far from being the outpouring of an unruly horde of nomads; the campaigns were directed by a small group of able and determined men⁽³⁾, Emperor Ching (who united China), Alexander the Great (who conquered Europe and Asia), Gengiz Khan (who conquered China and Asia), Hanibaal, Napoleon Bonapert, Adolf Hitler have all sweeping victories, but on their death, the system they put was dismantled and their empire was demised and broken down into fragments. Islam is singled out in its unique permanent spread; wherever it moves, quite often it is the native people of the very enemy who pave the way for the coming of Muslims as the *liberators* of mankind and *carriers* of the highest moral/human values, in particular *Islamic Justice*. Thus the Almighty confirms:

"It is He Who had sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to cause it to prevail over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it)".

Verse 9:33 of Surat Al-Tawba (Repentance).

"Before (this We wrote in the Psalms (Zabur: all revealed Holy Books, or the Book of Psalms of David) after the Message (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz – the book that is in heavens with Allah): 'My servants the righteous, shall inherit the earth.'".

Verse 21:105 of Surat Al-Anbiyaa (The Prophets).

"Truly, Allah defends those who believe".

Verse 22:38 of Surat Al-Hajj (The Pilgrimage).

"Already has Our Word been passed before (this) to Our Servants, the Messengers (sent by us). That they verily would be made triumphant. And that Our forces! They verily would be the victors."

Verse 37:171-173 of Surat Al-Saffat (Those Ranged in Ranks).

"Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) in this world's life and on the Day when the witness will stand forth, (i.e. Day of Resurrection)."

Verse 40:51 of Surat Ghafir (The Forgiver).

"Allah has decreed: 'Verily, it is I and My Messengers who shall be victorious'. Verily, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty."

Verse 58:21 of Surat Al-Mujadilah (The Woman Who Pleads).

The laws of Jihad in the war are exactly similar to those enforced by military discipline. Meet the enemy after due preparation and planning. Once in combat, carry it through: there is no room for second thoughts: Death or Victory should be the motto of every soldier, but with 2 exceptions:

- *reculer pour mieux sauter*, to go back in order to jump forward, or to deceive the enemy by a feint;
- if an individual or group of soldiers, by the course of the battle, isolated from own force, he/or they can fall back in order to fight the battle. Thus Allah says:

"if any do turn his back to them on such a day – unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own)- he draws on himself the wrath of Allah, and his abode is Hell, an evil refuge (indeed)!"

Verse 8:16 of Surat Al-Anfal (the Spoils of War).

Obedient dedicated Muslims then will be granted victory through Allah's Help. Badr and Uhud are the two sign-posts in Islam. In the battle of Badr, no more than 300 Muslims, ill-armed fought and won a decisive victory against 1000 unbelievers coming from Makkah; while in battle of Uhud was a great testing time for the young Muslim community, when 700 Muslims fought 3000 unbelievers coming from Makkah; Thus, the number of angels, a 1000 at Badr and 3000 (up to 5000) at Uhud, is equal to the strength of the enemy.

"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you 'I will help you with a thousand of the angels, ranks on ranks'."

Verse 8:9 of Surat Al-Anfal (the Spoils of War).

"(Remember) when you (Muhammad) said to the believers, 'Is it not enough for you that your Lord (Allah) should help you with three thousand angels sent down? Yes, if you hold on to patience and piety, and the enemy comes rushing at you; your Lord will help you with five thousands angels, clearly marked.'"

Verse 3:124-125 of Surat Al-Imran, The Family of Imran).

Indeed, the battle of Uhud was an initial victory but the 50 Muslim archers, in disobedience of their orders, left their posts at the strategic mountain to join in the pursuit and share in the booty (There was also treachery on part of 300 'Hypocrites' led by Abdullah bin Ubai, who deserted, leaving 700 out of initial 1000 Muslim Fighters). Allah documented the disobedience and impatience on part of the 50 Muslim Archers (out of their greed) and which ended in double loss: 1) they were baulked of the booty they had run after, 2) their own lives and the lives of the whole Muslim army were in danger and many lives were actually lost from their ranks; thus Allah The Most High says:

"Allah did indeed fulfil His promise to you when we with His permission were about to annihilate your enemy –until you flinched and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed it after He brought you in sight (of the Victory) which you covet, among you are some that hanker after this world and some that desire the Hereafter, then did He diver you from your foes in order to test you, but He forgave you: for Allah is full of grace to those who believe".

Verse 3:152 of Surat Al-Imran (The Family of Imran).

Also Allah's help with the five thousands angels was conditional on Muslims' patience which they did not hold on to; thus such batch of angels did not come down; nevertheless, it was with help of Allah that Medina was saved, but an important lesson in faith, constancy, firmness, perseverance, and steadfastness was learnt by the Muslims.

However, during later conquests of Prophet Muhammad, Muslims were very observant of their obedience to the Messenger of Allah, and they had won each and every subsequent encounter. Indeed, the Prophet says:

"I was triumphed (with help of Allah against my enemies) by a preceding terror at a one-month marching distance".

[Sahih Al-Bukhari].

During Islamic (defensive) wars against the unbelievers, Islamic highest moral values and attitudes were translated into practice. The order of Abu Bakr (the Caliph of Messenger of Allah) to Osama's expedition in AD 632 constitutes the First International Law on Conducts of War Ethics, long before Geneva Convention. Abu Bakr addressed the army of Osama bin Zayd (reminding them of Prophet's teachings concerning war ethics when dealing with their enemies)⁽¹⁾:

"O, people, stand (and listen) I instruct you with 10 (important teachings), so memorize them:

- Do not betray (what you are entrusted to do),
- Do not steal [from the booty of the war before distribution (ghulul)],
- Do not break your covenants,

- Do not mutilate (or dismember enemy's dead bodies after they have been killed),
- Do not kill a young child, nor an old man, nor a woman [unless she fights],
- Do not cut down a date-palm tree nor set it on fire, and Do not cut down a fruitful tree,
- Do not kill livestock except when you are compelled to eat them (no slaughter of a sheep, or a cow, or a camel except for a meal),
- You will pass by people who dedicated themselves in the temples, then leave them alone and what they dedicated themselves for (their faith) (i.e. hermits living in monasteries serving God in seclusion – so do not kill them and don not destroy their monasteries),
- You will come to people who will present you with various kinds of dishes, and if you eat some of these dishes, then mention the name of Allah on them,
- You will meet people who tied the middle of their heads with bands, then hit them with swords.

March in the name of Allah...

[*Tarikh al-Tabari, Vol 2 (1-35 Hijri)*].

Similarly, the 2nd Caliph Umar bin Al-Khattab's secret formula for victory was embodied in his address to Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas sent to Iraq in AD 636 [prior to their victory at Qadisiya, the decisive battle that undermined the Persian Empire]⁽¹⁾:

"I order you and your accompanying soldiers:

- to be fearful of Allah at all times, for the fear of Allah is the best ammunition against the enemy and the strongest armaments in the war;
- and I order you and those with you to be cautious from disobedience (of Allah) more than you are from your enemy, since the (Muslim) army's sins are more frightening than their enemy. The Muslims are (helped by Allah to be) victorious only because of their enemy's disobedience of Allah. And without that (enemy's sins), we could not have strength, since neither our number is like theirs nor our ammunition is like theirs. If we were equal in committing sins, they will have the advantage over us with their (numerical and material) power, and if we are not victorious by our (spiritual/moral) superiority, we could never defeat them with our power.
- You must know that during your march, your behaviour are closely monitored by Allah's angels who know what you do, so (observe your behaviour and) be ashamed of them.
- Don't disobey Allah, while you are marching in Allah's cause.
- Never say 'our enemy is worse than us, so we will not overrun by them even if we did wrong', perhaps (good) people were overrun by bad people, just like unbelieving Magus who overrun Children of Israel when they committed bad deeds that Allah had forbidden, so Magus swiftly overrun their land and it was a fulfilled promise.

- Ask Allah's help over yourselves, the same way you ask Him for victory over your enemy.

Ask Allah the same for us and for you...

" [Tarikh al-Tabari, Vol 2 (1-35 Hijri)].

It was well-known to historians that no army of unbelievers could stand long before the Muslim army that contains **Prophet's Companions** (in Arabic *Sahaba* or *Ashab* with singular *Sahabi*, a person who met the Prophet, believed in him, and died a Muslim, while *tabi'i* plural *tabi'unn*, is a Muslim who met a Companion). After the Prophet Muhammad, no one was blessed and privileged in status as his companions, the most fearful of Allah, and the best reminder of the Messenger of Allah (after his death). That is why the Prophet says: "There comes a time, a group of people go on an expedition, and there will be the question:

- Is there here among you anyone who accompanies the Prophet? and comes the reply: Yes, and so, the victory is granted (by Allah);
- then comes a time and there will be the question: Is there among you anyone who accompanies the companions of the Prophet? and comes the reply: Yes, and so, the victory is granted (by Allah);
- then comes a time and there will be the question: Is there among you anyone who accompanies the companions of the companions of the Prophet? And comes the reply: Yes, and so, the victory is granted (by Allah)."

[Sahih Al-Bukhari].

In Yarmuk battle, there were 1000 Prophet's Companions, 100 of whom had attended battle of Badr (who are considered the top best of all Companions, a treasure of blessed people and a reminder of the Prophet Muhammad). That is why, when Caliph Abu Bakr had formerly ordered his general Khalid bin al-Walid (prior to Yarmuk) to divide his army into 2 halves: one half to continue under Khalid leadership himself, and to let Muthanna bin Harithah lead the other half of the army in a military expedition to Iraq. General Khalid kept most of the Prophet's Companions to himself. Muthana refused to go on without having half of his ration of the Prophet's companions, he said: 'by Allah, I will only accept Abu Bakr whole order by accompanying half of the companion or part of the half, by Allah I only hope victory by them, so how can you take them from me! Then Khalid (was forced) to give him the near-half of Prophet's companions to keep Muthana happy.

Indeed after the Yarmuk crushing defeat of the Roman Empire armies, they retreated to Antioch, where they met with **Heraclius** who was totally astonished and asked why his army was defeated in spite that they were not matched in number nor in material superiority, a Roman elder replied: '*because they (Muslims) pray at night and fast during the day; and they respect their covenants, they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong, and rule by Justice; and because we drink wine, commit adultery, do the wrong, break the covenant, become angry and do each other injustice, and enjoin the bad and forbid what is right by God and we corrupt the earth*'. Indeed, the Arab Christian spying for the Roman army, used to gather information secretly about the Muslim camp, came back with this message: '*I found them worshippers by the night, and knights by the day, I swear that if their king's son steals they will cut his hand, or if he commits adultery they will*

stone him'. Here is where Heraclius made farewell to Syria as widely reported: **he** was quoted to say: *'Peace be upon you, O Syria. This is the farewell after which there will be no return.'*

Allah guaranteed His help and victory to the obedient Muslims. Indeed, when the Muslims admired 2 Arab leaders: the legendary military General Khalid bin al-Walid, and General Muthanna bin Harithah, thinking that Islamic victories were exclusively due to the genius leadership, the 2nd Caliph Umar Ibn Al-Khattab was so assured of Allah's victory (irrespective of who is the leader), that he decided to change them both (replacing Muthanna with Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, and Khalid with Abu Obaidah) and when he did, the Islamic military victories continued as before but under different leaders. The Caliph Umar had thus made his point to all Muslims; he then wrote to all Muslim military posts: *'I did not remove Khalid out of hatred or a betrayal (on his part), but the people were infatuated (and obsessed) by him so I wanted them to know that Allah is the maker (of victories)'*⁽²⁾. Indeed, when the Caliph Umar visited Jerusalem, his military commander general Khalid came to welcome him, and here Caliph Umar told Khalid a poetic saying:

*you did, none could do your doing
but what people do, is Allah's doing*⁽²⁾

Interestingly, Muslim commanders were appointed and dismissed on the Caliph's order and there is no example in the literature of a commander rebelling against his authority or defying his orders; this is in marked contrast with both the Roman and Sasanian empires, which were at different times effectively disabled by the rebellions of generals and governors against their rulers⁽³⁾. This fact testifies that Muslims were honestly fighting for Allah's sake (and his Paradise), not for any personal gain, nor for name and fame.

(Caliph Umar II (717-20) is said⁽¹⁰⁾ to have sent... a letter to Byzantine Emperor Leo III. The letter attribute to Umar (in the version that has come down to us) seems in fact to have been written by a Muslim writer of the 9th century. It provides a good example of Muslim polemical views of Christianity as they had by then developed. The author argues that the Christians have falsified their scriptures; that Jesus had never claimed to be God, but rather a messenger sent by God who had foretold the coming of Muhammad; that Jesus taught monotheism and not Trinitarianism. For all these arguments, he cites biblical proof texts (with varying levels of accuracy). He attacks the cult of relics and the cult of the cross and images. He gives a brief defense of Muslim doctrine against Christian arguments and then concludes by invoking the miraculous spread of Islam:

In this way, with him in whom we trust, and in whom we believe, we went off, barefoot, naked, without equipment, strength, weapons or provisions, to fight against the largest empires, the most evidently powerful nations whose rule over other people was the most ruthless, that is to say: Persia and Byzantium.

We marched against them with our small number, and our weak resources. And God enables us to triumph over them and to take possession of their territories. He allowed us to settle down in their lands and houses, gave us their riches, when we had no other might or power than the Religion of Truth, thanks to God's power, mercy and help. From then on, He never ceased to grant us His favours, overwhelming us night and day again and again until we reached our present state which we receive from His generosity, His overwhelming grace and His power.....

As for us, we find in God's Revelation to our Prophet that He Himself said: "He it is who has sent His messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth to make it prevail over all religion." (Koran 9:33).

Islam's meteoric rise indeed seemed miraculous: a handful of warriors from the desert subduing the richest and most populous parts of the world's most powerful empires. Surely God favoured Islam and wished new subjects to convert. Most of them will (gradually, over several generations) conclude that this is so; most will convert to Islam. Those who refuse to convert, who choose to remain Christian, must answer the formidable question: Why has God permitted the stunning successes of Islam?⁽¹⁰⁾ **The Justice in Islamic World was legendary and unparalleled anywhere in the world and in fact unheard of in the history of Mankind⁽¹²⁾.** The following incidents represent 3 interesting examples (just to name few out of many):

- ◆ After the conquest of Makkah and when a Makhzumi woman (Banu Makhzum perhaps the 2nd famous tribe after Banu Hashim in Makkah) admitted theft (she used to repeatedly borrow goods from people and then denied it), and the evidence was conclusive, her case was brought to Prophet Muhammad who ruled by Allah's judgement that her right hand to be cut off (from the wrist joint). Quraysh felt its tribal name and fame would be tarnished and undermined; they therefore asked Osama ibn Zayd (the beloved adopted son of the Prophet) to talk on their behalf and request the Prophet to reduce the punishment. The Messenger of Allah replied angrily **"Do you intercede in one of Allah's punishments (or orders or limits)?"** The Prophet then stood (in the mosque) and addressed the people by saying:

"What had verily destroyed the nations before you, was that when their noble had stolen, they left him, and when their weak had stolen they punished him; [but] I swear by Allah that if Fatima [the beloved] daughter of Muhammad had stolen, I would have cut her hand."

[Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

After cutting her right hand, she asked the Prophet whether she can repent, the Prophet replied: **"Yes, you are today without a sin, like the day you were born"**. Indeed, this lady repented well and then got married. Allah, The Most High documented that in Qur'an:

"As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands: a retribution for their deed and exemplary punishment from Allah, and Allah is Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom. But if the thief repent after his crime, and amend his conduct, Allah will pardon him; for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful."

Verses 5:38-39 of Surat Al-Ma'idah (The Table Spread with Food).

Apparently in the age of Jesus, thieves were crucified (Matt. Xxvii. 38); the pre-Islamic Arabs were too used to cutting off the hand of the thief. In Islam, however, theft cannot be punished by cutting off the hand **unless (1) the stolen property is well protected** e.g. in a safe; **(2) the thief is not in need**, thus theft during starvation, or by needy servants, no penalty is implemented; and **(3) The value of stolen property** should be equal to the price of a shield in those days (equivalent to quarter of a golden); Canon Law jurists are not unanimous as to the today value of the property stolen leading to penalty of the cutting off the hand. The majority hold that petty thefts are exempt from this punishment; there are many more exemptions too. Islamic punishment therefore is used as deterrent to others. It is said that during many centuries

of Islamic Rule, the recorded number of cut hands can be finger-counted (i.e. the number is few)!

This incident truly, illustrates that the unified standard of law applicable to all people without differentiation and irrespective of status, nobility, wealth, race, or relationship was indeed the greatest and the newest value of the Islamic Justice brought to the Mankind. The Prophet here also, gives the interpretation of history by clearly explaining that One of the most important causes of the decline and fall of civilizations is **the adoption of double legal standard**, when the law is applicable to one set of people and not applicable to others because of their riches, name, fame, race, and governmental position. In Islamic world there was no one above the law; and the law was applicable to all (the Heads of State were subjected to trials – like others – in courts of Justice, where the Judges and the Jurisdiction were entirely independent of the State).

- ♦ When Ta'ima ibn Ubairaq (a nominally Ansar Muslim, but really a hypocrite, given to all sorts of wicked deeds) was suspected of having stolen a set of armour kept inside a perforated sac of flour, because of a track of flour through the sac hole, leading to his house. When the trial became hot, he took the oath by Allah that he did not do it; he then planted the stolen property (with a leading track of flour) into the house of a Jew (named Zayd ibn al-Samin), where it was found (to use the Jew as a scapegoat to frame him up in a theft he didn't commit). Zayd, the Jew denied the charge and claimed it was Ta'ima who pushed that property to him. Ta'ima's Muslim tribe and Muslims sympathise with Ta'ima on account of his nominal profession of Islam. The case was brought to the Prophet Muhammad, who later acquitted the Jew according to the strict principle of Justice, as 'guided by Allah'. Attempts were made to manipulate the Prophet, to prejudice him, and deceive him into using his authority to favour Ta'ima, the Muslim against the Jew. When Ta'ima realised that his punishment was imminent he fled Medina and turned apostate (in Makkah, Ta'ima also tried to steel and was expelled from Makkah to Sham, where he had stolen property and was chased and killed). The Qur'an recorded this event beautifully as it happened, and documented how Allah, The Most High established the Justice through His revelation to the Prophet in order to defend the innocence of a Jew against the wickedness of Ta'ima (the nominal Muslim):

"We have sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book (Qur'an) in truth that you might judge between people by that which Allah has shown you (taught you through Divine Revelation), so be not an advocate for the treacherous (those who betray trust). And seek the Forgiveness of Allah; certainly, Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. And argue not on behalf of those who deceive themselves. Verily, Allah does not like anyone who is a betrayer, sinner. They may hide (their crimes) from the people, but they cannot hide (them) from Allah; for He is with them (by his knowledge), when they plot by night, in words that He does not approve, and Allah ever encompasses all that they do."

Verse 4:105-108 of Surat An-Nisa' (The Women).

- ♦ When the son of Amr ibn Al-'As (the Egypt *Wali* or Governor) whip lashed an Egyptian Coptic citizen (because he won and succeeded him in a horse race); that Coptic (knowing of Islamic Justice) traveled all the way from Egypt to Medina to complain in person to the Caliph, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab against the son of Amr ibn Al-'As. The Caliph Umar ordered his *Wali* of Egypt to come immediately to Medina with his son. When Amr ibn

Al-'As attended Medina with his son, Umar (the Caliph) ordered the Egyptian Coptic citizen to whiplash back the son of Amr ibn Al-'As, and he then said: should you wish to hit his father too, we will not prevent you (acknowledging that if it was not for his father, the son will never behave like that; the Coptic was satisfied with hitting the son only); then the just Caliph Umar Ibn Al-Khattab said his famous saying (which became a doctrine or canon in the Islamic government, in administration, and running of peoples affairs in general):

'Since when you have enslaved people, when they were born by their mothers Free?'

Indeed, with the rare exception of Iberian Peninsula (i.e. Portugal and Spain), wherever Muslims reached and settled, the people converted **permanently** to Islam, and the Arabic language was to follow Islam as its lingua franca in that new part of Islamic world. Truly, the civilization is like a human being, always standing on 2 legs: The *Material power* (the Hi-Tec - Science) and the *Moral power* (humanitarian values - Religion); Islamic civilization, while did not have the best Hi-Tec to start with, it endeavoured very hard to possess it (inspired by Islamic teachings) to match its opponents (the unbelievers), but the Islamic Humanitarian and Moral values as inspired by God and materialized in practice by the human Prophet Muhammad and his follower Muslims, gave the world and mankind what they have always required (but failed to acquire or missed to attain) of vital values like justice, equality, and brotherhood. Islam changed the old World Order for ever, converting the World into a global village (united by their faith in One God; and living in peace with God, with themselves, and with the others) for the first time in the history of mankind. It is said that 'True implementation of Islam always guarantees 2 things: happiness of Man (even during ailments and suffering) **plus** Allah's blessings in Man's life (prosperity in this life and reward in the life Hereafter)'.

Reciprocal Link between Islam and Arabic Language⁽⁶⁾

To illustrate the reciprocal impact between Islam and Arabic language, one can focus at the concept of Tawhid, that Allah is the One and The Only God (worthy of worship and obedience as the Law-Giver), the Arabic Qur'an and Hadith attributed 99 beautiful glorious names for Allah. The Almighty Allah says: "The most beautiful names belong to Allah: So call on Him by them."

Verse 7:180 of Surat Al-A'raf (The Heights).

It is also narrated by Abu Huraira that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: 'Allah has ninety-nine Names, i.e. one-hundred minus one; and whoever believes in their meanings and acts accordingly, will enter Paradise; and Allah is Witr (One) and loves 'the 'Witr' (odd numbers).

(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol 8, Hadith 419).

The 99 Beautiful Glorious Names of Allah (Allah is the original name of God) in Qur'an and Hadith are: Allah, *la ilaha illa Huwa* (no god has the right to be worshipped but He):

1. The Compassionate, The Most Gracious (al-Rahman)
2. The Merciful (al-Rahim)
3. The King/Sovereign (al-Malik)
4. The Holy (al-Quddus)

5. The Source of Peace and security, The One Free from all defects (al-Salam)
6. The Giver of Faith (al-Mu'min)
7. The Watcher over His creatures (al-Muhaiman)
8. The All-Mighty (al-'Aziz)
9. The Compeller (al-Jabbar)
10. The Supreme, The Majestic (al-Mutakabbir)
11. The Creator, The Maker (al-khaliq)
12. The Originator, The Inventor (of all things) (al-Bari')
13. The Fashioner (al-Musawwir)
14. The Great Forgiver (al-Ghaffar)
15. The Irresistibly Supreme, The Dominant (al-Qahhar)
16. The Bestower (al-Wahhab or al-Mu'ti)
17. The Provider (al-Razzaq)
18. The Opener, the Reliever (al-Fattah)
19. The All-Knowing (al-'Alim)
20. The Restrainer, The Withholder (al-Qabidh)
21. The Extender (al-Basit)
22. The Humbler (al-Khafidh)
23. The Exalter (al-Rafi')
24. The Empowerer (al-Mu'izz)
25. The Humiliator (al-Mutkull)
26. The All-Hearing, The Hearer (al-Sami')
27. The All-Seeing (al-Basir)
28. The Judge (al-Hakam)
29. The Just (al-'Adl)
30. The Kindly One (al-Latif)
31. The Well-Acquainted (with all things) (al-Khabir)
32. The Clement, The Forbearing (al-Halim)
33. The Mighty, The Most Great, the Supreme (al-'Adhim, al-'Azim)
34. The Forgiving (al-Ghafur)
35. The Grateful, The Appreciative (al-Shakur)
36. The High, The Sublime (al-'Aliyy)
37. The Great (al-Kabir)

38. The Preserver (al-Hafidh)
39. The Protector, The Guardian, The Feeder, The Sustainer (al- Muqit)
40. The Reckoner (al-Hasib)
41. The Sublime One (al-Jalil)
42. The Most Generous, The Bountiful (al-Karim): or The Kind and Generous despite creatures' sins, and without asking them anything in return (al-Muhsin)
43. The Watcher, The Watchful (al-Raqib)
44. The Responsive, The Hearer (al-Mujib)
45. The Infinite, The All-Embracing (al-Wasi')
46. The All-Wise (al-Hakim)
47. The Loving One (al-Wadud)
48. The Glorious (al-Majid)
49. The Resurrector (al-Ba'ith)
50. The Witness (al-Shahid)
51. The True (al-Haqq)
52. The Advocate (al-Wakil)
53. The Most Strong (al-Qawiyy)
54. The Firm (al-Matin)
55. The Patron (al-Waliyy)
56. The Praiseworthy (al-Hamid)
57. The Numberer, The Counter (al-Muhsi)
58. The Commencer (al-Mubdi)
59. The Restorer (al-Mu'id)
60. The Giver of Life (al- Muhyi)
61. The One Who Gives Death (al-Mumit)
62. The Ever-Living One, The Eternal (al-Hayy)
63. The Self-Subsisting, The Supporter of all (al-Qayyum)
64. The Perceiver (al-Wajid)
65. The Honourable (al-Majid)
66. The One (al-Wahid)
67. The Unique One, The One and The Only (al-Ahad)
68. The Self-Sufficient Master (He neither eats nor drinks) whom all creatures need, The Absolute (al-Samad)

69. The Powerful (al-Qadir)
70. The All-Capable, The Omnipotent (al-Muqtadir)
71. The Giver (al-Muqaddim)
72. The Retarder (al-Mu'akhkhir)
73. The First (al-Awwal)
74. The Last (al-Akhir)
75. The Manifest (al-Dhahir)
76. The Hidden (al-Batin)
77. The Governor (al-Wali)
78. The High Exalted (al-Muta'ali)
79. The Righteous (al-Barr)
80. The Relenting (al-Tawwab)
81. The Avenger (al-Muntaqim)
82. The Forgiver (al-'Afuww)
83. The Compassionate (al-Ra'uf)
84. The Ruler of the Kingdom (Malik al-Mulk)
85. The Lord of Majesty and Bounty (Dhu'l-Jalal wa'l-Ikran)
86. The Equitable (al-Muqsit)
87. The Gatherer, The Collector (al-Jami')
88. The Self-Sufficient (al-Ghani)
89. The Enricher (al-Mughni)
90. The Withholder (al-Mani')
91. The Propitious (al-Nafi')
92. The Distresser (al-Dharr)
93. The Light (al-Nur)
94. The Guide (al-Hadi)
95. The Originator of the heavens and the earth, The Perfectionist (al-Badi',
or Badi'al-samawat wa al-ardh)
96. The Everlasting, The Eternal (al-Baqi)
97. The Heir, The inheritor (al-Warith)
98. The Guide to the Right Path (al-Rashid)
99. The Patient (al-Sabur)

Such 99 Arabic descriptive names for Allah, The One, are not only an enrichment of Arabic language (by the Qur'an and by the Prophet's Hadith), but a confirmation that No other language medium is rich enough (like Arabic) to correctly contain and reflect the exact meaning to describe God The Most High with this precise descriptive rich vocabulary. Accordingly, the Arabic language attains the most sacrosanct position in the eyes of all believers, and hence Islam and Arabic language became totally inseparable. Hence, Arabic is oftenly termed as 'the Islamic language' or 'the language of Islam'. It can also be called 'the language of peace and unity'

Arabic: The Language of New Culture of Islamic World⁽⁹⁾:

Arabic language was the medium and *lingua franca* of Islamic World out of religious necessity as well as business, trade, and scientific activities.

The Great Arab/Muslim Conquests in the 7th and 8th centuries produced 2 momentous and enduring effects. The more immediate and dramatic was the creation of a new world state in the Mediterranean Basin and the Near East (later referred to as the Islamic World). The second effect, less rapid and tumultuous but no less important, was the development of a new world culture within this state. Islam as a filter of cultures, that filtered the cultures of the subjugated people, and merged them with the Islamic comprehensive interpretation of God, history, life, mankind, and universe; since Islam envisioned itself as an all-embracing framework of human life, no activity of the individual or community was alien to it, hence Muslims utilized (within the framework of Islamically-filtered culture) the classical literature; Hellenistic way of thinking, Byzantine institutions, Roman administrative law, Syriac scholarship, and Persian art. Within this new Islamic State or World (the Caliphate) the diverse cultures and societies of the ancient world were shaken out of their regionalism and forced into new constructive and fruitful interaction. This results in a new world culture, with major components already at hand from the varied life and traditions of the people in the lands they overran, thus this distinctive rich culture was formed 'in situ', unlike the imposition of a foreign culture by invasion, nor the same process that carried Western civilization to the East during the period of European Colonialism.

Furthermore, the Arab conquerors themselves quickly responded to contact with the civilizations they overrun; once the initial absorption in conquest was relaxed, they "sat as pupils at the feet of the people they subdued – and what acquisitive pupils they proved to be," as Phillip K. Hitti has observed. Before the end of the first Arab dynasty, that of the Umayyads, classical works were being translated into Arabic, impressive buildings inspired by classical designs were being built, and Arab scholarship in literature and science began to flourish. By the time the Arabs lost their preeminence in rule, non-Arab materials had been established in the life and thought of the Islamic community. This development of a distinctly Islamic culture reached full stride about the time that the Arab leadership of the Islamic World State (wrongly called Empire) began to wane (with the rise of Abbaside dynasty in AD 750). The impact of both the conquest and the culture has deeply influenced the shape of modern time. In particular, this new Islamically filtered global culture within the Islamic State or World has soon resulted in an equally distinctive and richly hued civilization that characterized the Muslim World, giving identity and character to the new world order that resulted from the conquests of Islam as it spreads among alien people.

Closely related to the influence of an inclusive Caliphate (Empire) and an exclusive faith was a further contribution of Arabs to the rise of a new culture – their language. How inextricably Arabic permeated the development of Muslim culture is shown by the fact that the system that finally evolved is still referred to as 'Arab civilization' and 'Arabic thought' despite the fact that many of its great cultural achievements did not take place under Arab auspices. Non-Arabs and even non-Muslims made important contributions, but they made them in the Arabic language, whatever their ethnic community.

As it had been emphasized earlier, Islam as a vehicle for Arabic was preponderant. The Qur'an, source of all belief and piety, was Arabic and could not be translated literally into any other tongue (but the meanings of Qur'an can be translated). Ritual prayers and public worship were in Arabic. Exegesis of the Qur'an called forth some of the first Arab scholarship, and the fact that God had chosen Arabic as the language of revelation made the study of its grammar and usage a religious duty. In short, no one could become a Muslim without some understanding of the Arabic language.

As for Arabic language, Professor John S. Badeau explained in *(The Genius of Arab Civilization – Source of Renaissance)*⁽⁹⁾:

(Yet it was more than conquest and religion that raised Arabic to its preeminent place in Muslim culture. Despite its original character as a desert tongue, Arabic displayed a remarkable potential as a medium of sophisticated and complex communication. It had the strongly marked structure of Semitic languages, in which the parts of speech are closely and clearly related. It could create new words out of existing verbal forms, and its ability to compress shades of meaning into a single dramatic expression made it a vivid and exact language. Elaborated by its grammarians and stimulated by the challenge of new horizons, it became a superb tool for thought and scholarship. Had it lacked an inherent quality of greatness, even the pressure of conquest and the benediction of religion would not have given Arabic its commanding position in the far-flung, multilingual Muslim World. The effects on culture of the dominance of Arabic were profound and enduring. Arabic provided the inclusive medium of communication that translated the political intermixture of diverse peoples into a commonly shared culture. As Latin did in medieval Europe and as English did in British India, Arabic in the new state over-arched local languages and literature to create a new and universal intellectual realm where Persian philosophers, Arab theologians [*Fuqaha'* plural of *Faqih*], Jewish and Christian physicians, and Indian mathematicians could only speak a common language but also have a sense of sharing in common intellectual order. Moreover, the use of Arabic and adoption of its alphabet by non-Arab Muslim languages formed a kind of cultural frontier that demarked the Muslim World from other civilizations. The same linguistic frontier turned the Muslim people themselves away from their own past culture and gave them a sense of identity and an awareness of their difference from other people. Arabic language was an inter-relatedness of 'medium and message'. The highly distinctive qualities of Arabic, the richness and content of its vocabulary, its particular mode of expressing an idea, and its propensity for meter and rhyme – all placed an imprint on scholarly productions and scholarly minds and hence on the 'flavour' of Islamic intellectual World. Thus the unique character of medieval Muslim culture is partly due to the fact that it did its work in Arabic. Like the contribution of Islam, the penetrating influence of language ensured the Arabness of the medieval world far beyond the period of Arab political rule)¹⁹.

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