

Chapter Five

THE SEERAH (LIFE STORY) OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was born in the year AD 571, in Macca in Arabia. He was an orphan at birth since his father died before Muhammad was born , and at age 4 he also lost his mother. He was born to a noble family in the tribe of Qoraish. He is a descendant of prophet Abraham. He became a Shepard and later on a merchant. At age 40 he received God's Divine revelation from the Angel Gabriel. The first verses of the Qur'an were then revealed:

﴿ أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴾

Proclaim! (or Read!) In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created,

Al-Alaq 96 : 1

﴿ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴾

Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood:

Al-Alaq 96 : 2

﴿ أَقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴾

Proclaim! and thy Lord is Most Bountiful,

Al-Alaq 96 : 3

﴿ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴾

He Who taught (the use of) the Pen,
Al-Alaq 96 : 4

﴿ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴾

Taught man that which he knew not.
Al-Alaq 96 : 5

We learn from these early verses:

- The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of knowledge and understanding
- God blessed mankind and the greatest blessing is the ability to reason
- God is our Creator and He guides us
- There are many things that we as human beings do not know. Perhaps this refers to Divine revelation and its value in guiding our life

We will discuss the following concepts:

- 1- Why did the Qoraish resist and fight Muhammad and his message?
- 2- Marriage to Khdeeja
- 3- Events before the Hijra :Isra'a and Miraj (Night journey and ascension to the heavens)
- 4- What is the meaning of Hijra (immigration)
- 5- The Muslim society in Medina
- 6- What does Muhammad (PBUH) represent to Muslims?

The Quraish resistance to Muhammad (PBUH)

Muhammad was born and grew up in Macca. He was well known as As-Sadiq (the truthful) and Al-Ameen (The trustworthy). After he received God's revelation and was ordered to warn his people he gathered them and asked them: (If I told you there is an enemy behind this mountain about to attack would you believe me?) . They answered: Yes for we know that you always tell the truth. He said: (I

am a messenger from God warning you of a grave punishment if you disobey God). As Soon as he told them of his mission and that they must change their ways of idol worship, they left him and began to question his judgment, called him names and disputed his claim and fought him. So why did Quraish resist? There are several reasons and we will discuss few of them.

Quraish was considered the guardians of the Haram (sacred house) in Macca. Macca was considered a holy city, revered and considered a sanctuary and a safe haven. In the Ka Ba, built by prophets Abraham and Ishma'il hundreds of idols were introduced and the pure religion of Abraham became corrupted over the years. The Quraish benefited from the steady stream of pilgrims coming to Macca to worship these idols. The Qur'an reminds the people of Macca of God's blessings as He made their city a safe place:

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيَتَخَطَّفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ
وَبِعِزَّةِ اللَّهِ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

Do they not then see that We have made a Sanctuary secure, and that men are being snatched away from all around them. Then, do they believe in that which is vain, and reject the Grace of Allah!

Al-Ankabut 29 : 67

And :

﴿ وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ ءَامِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ
بِأَنْعَمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

Allah sets forth a Parable: a city enjoying security and quiet, abundantly supplied with sustenance from every place: yet was it ungrateful for the favors of Allah: so Allah made it taste of hunger and terror (in extremes) (closing in on it) like a garment (from every side), because of the (evil) which (its people) wrought.

An-Nahl 16 : 112

﴿ وَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴾

And there came to them a Messenger from among themselves, but they falsely rejected him; so the Wrath seized them even in the midst of their iniquities.

An-Nahl 16 : 113

And :

﴿ أَجْعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

Do ye make the giving of drink to pilgrims, or the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque, equal to (the pious service of) those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive with might and main in the cause of Allah? They are not comparable in the sight of Allah: and Allah guides not those who do wrong.

At-Tawba 9 : 19

Another reason for such fierce resistance is the fear that Quraish may loose its respect and position of leadership among the Arab tribes. It depended for its wealth also on trading. The Qur'an explains their fear and reminds them that it is God who blessed them and provided for them :

﴿ وَقَالُوا إِن نَّتَّبِعِ الْهُدَى مَعَكَ نُنْخِطَفَ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا

نُجْبَىٰ إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِنْ لَدُنَّا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

They say: "If we were to follow the guidance with thee, we should be snatched away from our land." Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary, to which are brought as tribute fruits of all kinds, a provision from Ourselves? But most of them understand not.

Al-Qasas 28 : 57

Another reason for resisting Muhammad's call for social change is that those in power do not want to see their power and influence questioned or diminished. They were against any change that threatened their authority. The Qur'an explains:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾

Never did We send a Warner to a population, but the wealthy ones among them said: "We believe not in the (Message) with which ye have been sent."

SA Ba 34 : 34

﴿ وَقَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

They said: "We have more in wealth and in sons, and we cannot be punished."

Sa Ba 34 : 35

The Qur'an answers that it is not money or power that matters, unless such blessing is used properly. On the contrary, if we abuse our power we will be severely punished :

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَئِكَنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

Say; "Verily my Lord enlarges and restricts the Provision to whom He pleases, but most men understand not."

Sa Ba 34 : 36

﴿ وَمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ بِالَّتِي تُقَرِّبُكُمْ عِندَنَا زُلْفَىٰ إِلَّا مَن ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا

فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَزَاءُ الضَّعْفِ بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَهُمْ فِي الْغُرُفَاتِ ءَامِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾

It is not your wealth nor your sons that will bring you nearer to Us in degree: but only those who believe and work righteousness, these are the ones for whom there is a multiplied Reward for their deeds, while secure they (reside) in the dwellings on high!

Sa Ba 34 : 37

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ فِي ءَايَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾

Those who strive against Our Signs, to frustrate them, will be given over into Punishment.

SA Ba 34 : 38

People do not want to change their ways, and what they are accustomed to. Tradition sometimes is confused with religion. The Qur'an explores this concept:

﴿ بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

Nay! they say: "We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we do guide ourselves by their footsteps."

Az-Zukhruff 43 : 22

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا

عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

Just in the same way, whenever We sent a Warner before thee to any people, the wealthy ones among them said: "We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we will certainly follow in their footsteps."

Az-Zukhruff 43 : 23

﴿ قَالِ أُولَٰئِكَ جِئْتُكُمْ بِأَهْدَىٰ مِمَّا وَجَدْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ آبَاءكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ

كٰفِرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

He said: "What! even if I brought you better guidance than that which ye found your fathers following?" They said: "For us, we deny that ye (prophets) are sent (on a mission at all)."

Az-Zukhruff 43 : 24

The leaders of Quraish also questioned why was God's revelation sent to Muhammad? Why not another person! The Qur'an answers that God is the one to decide and He knows best where to put His trust:

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نَزَلَ هَٰذَا الْقُرْءَانُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

Also, they say: "Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some leading man in either of the two (chief) cities?"

Az-Zukhruff 43 : 31

﴿ أَهْمٌ يَقْسُمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ ۗ لَخُنٌ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَرَفَعْنَا

بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجٰتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُم بَعْضًا سَخِرِيًّا ۗ وَرَحِمْتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا

تَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

Is it they who would portion out the Mercy of thy Lord? It is We Who portion out between them their livelihood in the life of this world: and We raise some of them above others in ranks, so that some may command work from others. But the Mercy of thy Lord is better than the (wealth) which they amass.

Az-Zukhruff 43 : 32

And :

﴿ وَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّىٰ نُؤْتَىٰ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ ۗ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ ۗ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾

When there comes to them a Sign (from Allah), they say: "We shall not believe until we receive one (exactly) like those received by Allah's Messengers." Allah knoweth best where (and how) to carry out His mission. Soon will the wicked be overtaken by humiliation before Allah, and a severe punishment, for all their plots.

Al-An'am 6 : 124

This resistance and rejection from Quraish took several forms and passed through several stages. Initially they tried to ignore Muhammad. Then they called him names and accused him of being a magician, a poet, a sorcerer or a mad possessed person. They followed him and warned other tribes and visitors of his danger and stated that they are his own clan but do not believe in him or his message. The Qur'an describes these accusations:

﴿ فَذَكِّرْ ۗ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴾

Therefore proclaim thou the praises (of thy Lord): for by the Grace of thy Lord, thou art no (vulgar) soothsayer, nor art thou one possessed.

At-Tur 52 : 29

﴿ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرْتِصُ بِهِ ۗ رَبِّبِ الْمُنُونِ ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾

Or do they say: "A Poet! we await for him some calamity (hatched) by Time!"

At-Tur 52 : 30

And :

﴿ إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴾

That this is verily the word of an honored Messenger;

Al-Haqqa 69 : 40

﴿ وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

It is not the word of a poet: little it is ye believe!

Al-Haqqa 69 : 41

﴿ وَلَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

Nor is it the word of a soothsayer: little admonition it is ye receive.

Al-Haqqa 69 : 42

﴿ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

(This is) a Message sent down from the Lord of the Worlds.

Al-Haqqa 69 : 43

They knew Muhammad to be honest and truthful, but they feared that change means an end to their way of life and the society they lived in and enjoyed. So their attacks became more harsh and severe. Not only did the Quraish verbally abuse Muhammad, but they tried to kill him. His followers were subjected to torture and abuse. Some died under torture, but refused to give up their new faith and belief. God in the Qur'an consoles His prophet that they are resisting God's message and that previous messengers were subjected to the same abuse but they bore their rejection with patient perseverance till God's help reached them:

﴿ قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِعَايَاتِ

اللَّهِ سَجَّحُونَ ﴾

We know indeed the grief which their words do cause thee: it is not thee they reject: it is the Signs of Allah, which the wicked contemn.

Al-Ana'm 6 : 33

﴿ وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأَوْدُوا حَتَّىٰ أَتَاهُمْ نَصْرُنَا وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِن نَّبِيِّ الْأُمْسَلِينَ ﴾

Rejected were the Messengers before thee: with patience and constancy they bore their rejection and their wrongs, until Our aid did reach them: there is none that can alter the Words (and Decrees) of Allah. Already hast thou received some account of those Messengers.

Al-Ana'm 6 : 34

We learn from the prophet's Seerah at this period the following lessons:

- 1- Those calling for social justice and inviting others to God will face great resistance and their message will be distorted, and they will be accused and face abuse and rejection
- 2- Patient perseverance, determination and commitment should be our weapon for we are inviting to the truth.
- 3- The leaders in the community will resist and fight any social change or threat to their power and authority
- 4- It is important to support and strengthen those who believe and understand the difficulty they face. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was told in the Qur'an to keep company with those who believe and call on their Lord, and not be deceived with power or glory:

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ۗ ﴾

And keep thy soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face; and let not thine eyes pass beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter of this Life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds.

Al-Kahf 18 : 28

He was warned not to expel those who are poor or of low social class, in favor of the rich or powerful. Rather he should console them and promise them God's forgiveness and mercy:

﴿ وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Send not away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face. In naught art thou accountable for them, and in naught are they accountable for thee, that thou should turn them away, and thus be (one) of the unjust.

Al-Ana'm 6 : 52

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا ۗ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

Thus did We try some of them by comparison with others that they should say: "Is it these then that Allah hath favored from amongst us?" Doth not Allah know best those who are grateful?

Al-Ana'm 6 : 53

﴿ وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۖ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

When those come to thee who believe in Our Signs, say: "Peace be on you; your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy: verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (his conduct), lo! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

Al-Ana'm 6 : 54

Similar advice was given before to Prophet Nuh (Noah) that he should not expel those who are weak or poor or of low social class, as the leaders among his people have requested:

﴿ قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَأَتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَالُونَ ﴾

They said: "Shall we believe in thee when it is the meanest that follow thee?"

Ash-Shura'a 26 : 111

﴿ قَالَ وَمَا عَلَّمِي مِمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

He said: "And what do I know as to what they do?"

Ash-Shura'a 26 : 112

﴿ إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَيَّ رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ ﴾

"Their account is only with my Lord, if ye could (but) understand.

Ash-Shura'a 26 : 113

﴿ وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"I am not one to drive away those who believe.

Ash-Shura'a 26 : 114

5- During those long and hard years in Macca Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the early Muslims faced rejection, persecution and abuse. Their response was patient perseverance and the Qur'an came down giving them strength, comfort and peace. It related the struggle of previous prophets and those who believed with them and that God ultimately gives victory to His servants:

﴿ وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُنْتِجُ بِهِءَ فُؤَادِكَ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ

﴿ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

All that We relate to thee of the stories of the Messengers, with it We make firm thy heart: in them there cometh to thee the Truth, as well as an exhortation and a message of remembrance to those who believe.

Hud 11 : 120

﴿ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ أَعْمَلُوا عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنَّا عَمِلُونَ ﴾

Say to those who do not believe: "Do whatever ye can: we shall do our part;

Hud 11 : 121

﴿ وَأَنْتَظِرُوا إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾ ﴾

"And wait ye! we too shall wait."

Hud 11 : 122

﴿ وَ لِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ وَمَا

رَبُّكَ بِغَفِيلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

To Allah do belong the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him goeth back every affair (for decision): then worship Him, and put thy trust in Him: and thy Lord is not unmindful of aught that ye do.

Hud 11 : 123

﴿ فَهَلْ يَنْتَظِرُونَ إِلَّا مِثْلَ أَيَّامِ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قُلْ فَانْتَظِرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ

مِنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ ﴾

Do they then expect (anything) but (what happened in) the days of the men who passed away before them? Say: "Wait ye then: for I, too, will wait with you."

Yunus 10 : 102

﴿ ثُمَّ نُجِى رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كَذَلِكَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نُنَجِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾

In the end We deliver Our Messengers and those who believe: thus is it fitting on Our part that We should deliver those who believe!

Yunus 10 : 103

﴿ إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ ﴿١٠٣﴾ ﴾

We will, without doubt, help Our Messengers and those who believe, (both) in this world's life and on the Day when the Witnesses will stand forth,

Ghafir 40 : 51

Marriage to Khadeeja

Khadeeja was a wealthy widow and a merchant involved in trade. She owed caravans and employed Muhammad (PBUH) to help her run her business. She found him to be honest and truthful and wished to marry him. She was 40 years old, and he was only 25 years old at the time this marriage occurred.

Khadeeja bore for Muhammad 4 daughters and 2 sons. The two sons died in infancy. His daughters died in his life time except for the youngest daughter Fatima who died shortly after Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) died. He was married to Khadeeja for 25 years, and she was his only wife during these 25 years despite the custom of the Arabs of having many wives at that time.

When Divine revelation came to prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the cave of Hira'a and he saw the Angel of revelation in his true form with wings, he returned home frightened, and told his wife "Cover me". After he related to her what he saw, she comforted him and told him that he was a good man of noble character and righteous behavior, and that God would not harm him or humiliate him, for he feeds the hungry, hosts the traveler, comes to the aid of the weak and needy, and is honest and truthful in his dealings. She believed in him and was the first human being to accept Islam. Because of her kindness and love to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and that she provided for him a tranquil and happy home, God sent His Angel Jibreel to give her the glad tidings in her life of a home in heaven made of pearls.

It is noteworthy that God's Prophet (PBUH) was employed by a woman. This shows that women used to own and conduct business at that time. It also shows that Islam respects the rights of women and that they were free and not oppressed.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) always loved his first wife and had fond memories of their life together. He honored her relatives and friends. Whenever her name was mentioned after she died, he always said something good about her and spoke of glowing terms relating that

she believed in him and helped him at a time when others were against him and did not believe in him.

Events before The Hijra (Immigration) to Madina

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stayed in Macca for 13 years, after he received God's revelation inviting to Allah. Few people believed in him. Late in this period his uncle Abou Talib who supported him and protected him died. Also his wife Kheeeja died. He lost two of his best supporters during a critical time in his Da'wa (preaching and inviting others to God).

He went to Ta'if to enlist the support of its leaders, but they laughed at him and incited mobs to throw stones at him. He was bleeding and retired to the wall of a garden and prayed to Allah:

(O Allah to You I complain of my helplessness and my lack of resources and my insignificance before mankind. You are the most merciful of the merciful. You are the Lord of the helpless and the weak, and You are my Lord! Unto whose hands do You abandon me? Into the hands of someone distant and unrelated who frowns on me, or to an enemy for me to worry about? Your protection is more ample for me. I seek protection in the light of Your countenance, which illuminates the heavens and dispels the darkness, and which controls all affairs in this world as well as the Hereafter. May it never be that I incur Your wrath, or that You should inflict Your anger on me. I will appeal to You until I am acceptable to You. There is no power and no resource except Yours alone)

Allah sent His Angel to inform His prophet that He heard his prayer, and that if Muhammad wished the Angel will destroy both Macca and Ta'if. Muhammad (PBUH) said: (No, I hope that Allah will bring from their offspring those who will worship Allah alone). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is teaching us not to seek personal revenge or punishment for those who oppose us or harm us. Rather, he prayed and hoped for a day when their offspring would worship Allah and serve Him with devotion. The Qur'an stresses this noble character of forgiveness and of reaching out to others:

﴿ وَجَزَاؤُا سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا ۗ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الظَّالِمِينَ ۝﴾

The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loves not those who do wrong.

Ash-Shura' 42 : 40

We also learn from the Prophet's Dua' that in our moments of weakness we should turn to God seeking His help and mercy, and realize that our prayers are heard. No one can help us and deliver us from our difficulty like Allah:

﴿ وَإِن يَمَسِّنِكَ اللَّهُ بَصُرٍ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلاَّ هُوَ ۗ وَإِن يَمَسِّنِكَ بَحْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝﴾

"If Allah touch thee with affliction, none can remove it but He; if He touch thee with happiness, He hath power over all things."

AlAna'm 6 : 17

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ۝﴾

And your Lord says: "Call on Me; I will answer your (Prayer): but those who are too arrogant to serve Me will surely find themselves in Hell, in humiliation!"

Ghafir 40 : 60

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۗ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۗ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ۝﴾

When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me: let them also, with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me: that they may walk in the right way.

Al-Baqara 2 : 186

Isra'a (night journey from Macca to Jerusalem) and Miraj (ascension to the heavens)

This miracle occurred one year before Hijra to Madinah. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was taken on a night journey from the sacred mosque in Macca to the farthest mosque in Jerusalem as the Qur'an describes:

﴿ سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِن آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴾

Glory to (Allah) Who did take His servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose precincts We did bless, in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the One Who heareth and seeth (all things).

Al-Isra'a 17 : 1

From Jerusalem the Prophet (PBUH) and the Angel Jibreel ascended through the Heavens and met with other prophets who greeted him and approved of his prophet hood. He was then lifted to the highest place in Heaven, Sidrat Al-Muntaha (the remotest of the Lote trees) where he saw Al-Bait Al-Ma'mour (the much frequented house) where the Angels make pilgrimage. The Prophet (PBUH) was then presented to Allah and Allah inspired to him what He wanted to inspire. It was at this time that the five daily prayers were ordained on Muslims. This ascension is described in the Qur'an:

﴿ مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَى ﴾

The (Prophet's) (mind and) heart in no way falsified that which he saw.

An-Najm 53 : 11

﴿ أَفْتَمَرُونَهُ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَى ﴾

Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he saw?

An-Najm 53 : 12

﴿ وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَى ﴾

For indeed he saw him at a second descent,

An-Najm 53 : 13

﴿عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى﴾

Near the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass:

An-Najm 53 : 14

﴿عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَى﴾

Near it is the Garden of Abode.

An-Najm 53 : 15

﴿إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَى﴾

Behold, the Lote-tree was shrouded (in mystery unspeakable!)

An-Najm 53 : 16

﴿مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَى﴾

(His) sight never swerved, nor did it go wrong!

An-Najm 53 : 17

﴿لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَى﴾

For truly did he see, of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest!

An-Najm 53 : 18

The wisdom of Isra'a & Miraj

1- Allah wanted to strengthen the heart of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and to show him the wonders of the Heavens. The rejection that the Prophet (PBUH) experienced in Macca and Tai'f is contrasted with the majesty and power of Allah, and how much God cares for and loves His prophet. This journey allowed Muhammad (PBUH) to put things in prospective, fill his heart with peace and renew his desire and commitment to continue his mission.

Some may question that this journey ever occurred. At that time travel was difficult and to go from Macca to Jerusalem took several months. So obviously the people in Macca were astonished to learn about Isra'a and could not believe it. Nowadays we know that this journey can be taken in 1-2 hours by plane.

This journey and the ascension to the heavens were a private showing for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Some Muslims did not believe it, but

since it is documented in the Qur'an and is detailed in Bokhari we should accept it, after all such a journey is easy for Allah.

2- Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) met with other prophets in heaven. They greeted him and approved of his prophet hood. They were confirming the pledge that they gave to God to believe in Muhammad (PBUH):

﴿ وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ ۚ قَالَ أَأَقْرَضْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي ۗ قَالُوا أَقْرَضْنَا ۚ قَالَ فَاسْهَدُوا ۚ وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

Behold! Allah took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: "I give you a Book and Wisdom; then comes to you a Messenger, confirming what is with you; do you believe him and render him help." Allah said: "Do ye agree, and take this my Covenant as binding on you?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses."

Al-Imran 3 : 81

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) came to complete the message of previous messengers. He is the last messenger of Allah, and the Qur'an inspired to him is God's last Divine revelation to mankind. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explained the relationship between himself and previous messengers as follows:

(My example and the example of other prophets before me is like a man who built a house. He built it well and made it beautiful except for one area that was missing. People came to admire the building but said: "If only this piece is not missing". I am this piece that was missing, and I am the last of the prophets) Bokhari & Muslim.

As Muslims we believe in the message that Allah's prophets brought from their Lord, and we accept all of Allah's prophets. These prophets emphasized the same message: namely that it is the duty of Man to worship and serve God. There is no contradiction in the message that any of the prophets brought from God. It is a continuous process of guidance and enlightenment to mankind, as each prophet completes and complements the message of the prophets that came before him.

- 3- The journey from Macca to Jerusalem illustrates the bond between all religions. Jerusalem represents Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Jesus, while Macca represents Abraham and Muhammad who is a descendant of Abraham. Since Islam is God's religion that He has chosen for mankind, Muslims are the guardians of all religions and are charged with safeguarding the freedom and liberties of everyone, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.
- 4- The five daily prayers were ordained at this time. During prayer we move towards Allah similar to the ascension of prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to the heavens. We become close to God, ready to receive His guidance and mercy.

Hijra (Immigration to Madina)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), after he received God's divine revelation at age 40, stayed in Macca for 13 years inviting people to God. Few believed in him as God's messenger or in his message. The situation became worse after both his uncle and wife died and he lost their support. Qoraish resistance intensified and Muhammad (PBUH) and his family and clan had to retreat to the hills outside Macca as they were boycotted by Qoraish. It was a very difficult time indeed both for prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and for the Muslims.

An Arab delegation came from Yathrib to visit Macca and to meet with Muhammad (PBUH). There were two major Arab tribes in Yathrib competing and fighting each other, and there were three Jewish tribes. The delegation hoped Muhammad may be able to settle their differences and stop the fighting. A second delegation came and a pledge or agreement was reached in which the people from Yathrib pledged their support and protection to Muhammad if he came to their city. Muhammad (PBUH) sent some of his companions to teach the people in Yathrib the Qur'an and Islam. Islam spread rapidly in Yathrib. Muslims found a base and Muslims who were oppressed in Macca began to immigrate to their new found home. The prophet (PBUH) and Abou Bakr, his closest and most trusted friend and advisor were the last to leave Macca. He was forced to leave his home and where he was born and to go a new place. But it was the will of Allah. Yathrib now became the city of Allah's prophet or shortly "Madina".

There are several lessons that we can learn from this Hijra

- 1- If we are unable to practice our religion freely in one place, we must immigrate and move to another place where we are safe and not oppressed. If we do not do that we are then sinful as the Qur'an describes:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّيْتَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضَ اللَّهِ وَسِعَةً فَهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا قَالُوا لَيْكَ مَاوَلَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴾

When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what (plight) were ye?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed were we in the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?" Such men will find their abode in Hell, what an evil refuge!

An-Nesa'a 4 : 97

The earth is spacious and we can move from one place to another:

﴿ يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اِنَّ اَرْضِيْ وَاسِعَةٌ فَاٰتُوْنِيْ فَاَعْبُدُوْنِيْ ﴾

O My servants who believe! truly, spacious is My Earth: therefore serve ye Me, (and Me alone)!

Al-Ankabut 29 : 56

﴿ قُلْ يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمْ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰحْسَنُوْا فِيْ هٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَّاَرْضُ اللّٰهِ وَاسِعَةٌ اِنَّمَا يُؤْتِي الصّٰدِقِيْنَ اَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

Say: "O ye My servants who believe! fear your Lord. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world. Spacious is Allah's earth! those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!"

Az-Zmar 39 : 10

- 2- It is difficult to leave one's home and family, but we must if it means obeying Allah and safeguarding our convictions. The wider meaning of Hijra is to migrate or avoid that which is wrong and which God

has made unlawful and forbidden. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(The Muslim is the person who others fear no harm from his tongue or hand; and the believer is the person who leaves and avoids what Allah has made forbidden) Bokhari.

- 3- Allah's prophets set the example for they did leave their home and immigrate to a new place when it became obvious that their own people were not listening to them or responding to God's call. Prophet Noah was told by God to build the arc and not worry about his people and their rejection:

﴿ وَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ أَنَّهُ لَنْ يُؤْمِنَ مِن قَوْمِكَ إِلَّا مَن قَدْ ءَامَنَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴾

It was revealed to Noah! "None of thy People will believe except those who have believed already! so grieve no longer over their (evil) deeds.

Hud 11 : 36

﴿ وَأَصْنَعِ الْفُلَكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴾

"But construct an Ark under Our eyes and Our inspiration, and address Me no (further) on behalf of those who are in sin: for they are about to be overwhelmed (in the Flood)."

HUD 11 : 37

Prophet Abraham also immigrated from Iraq to Palestine:

﴿ فَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَسْفَلِينَ ﴾

(This failing), they then sought a stratagem against him, but We made them the ones most humiliated!

As-Saffa 3 : 98

﴿ وَقَالَ إِنِّي ذَاهِبٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ ﴾

He said: "I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me!"

As-Saffat 37 :99

﴿ فَمَنْ لَهُ لُوطٌ وَقَالَ إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾

But Lut had faith in him: he said: "I will leave home for the sake of my Lord: for He is Exalted in Might, and Wise."

Al-Ankab 29 : 26

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ لُوطًا إِلَىٰ الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

But We delivered him and (his nephew) Lut (and directed them) to the land which We have blessed for the nations.

Al-Anbia'a 21 : 71

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) immigrated from Macca:

﴿ إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا ۗ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ ۗ وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

If ye help not (your Leader), (it is no matter): for Allah did indeed help him, when the Unbelievers drove him out: he had no more than one companion: they two were in the Cave, and he said to his companion, "Have no fear for Allah is with us": then Allah sent down His peace upon him, and strengthened him with forces which ye saw not, and humbled to the depths the word of the Unbelievers. But the word of Allah is exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.

At-Tawba 9 : 40

How did prophet Muhammad (PBUH) solve the problems in Madina?

There were several pressing issues in Madinah that required immediate attention, and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his wisdom set to approach and solve these problems:

- 1- The feud and war among the two contending Arab tribes in Madinah.

- 2- The Jews controlled the economic life of Madinah and were apprehensive about their freedom and concerned about the new force threatening their influence
- 3- The massive immigration from Macca placed enormous strain on the economic and social fabric of society
- 4- The threat of Quraish persists.
- 5- Muslims must learn their religion and Da'wa must continue

Muslim brotherhood

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) established a bond between Muslims, so that one Muslim from Madinah would take another Muslim from Macca as his brother. He would help him and support him, till he is able to be self-sufficient. This new approach shifted and relieved the economic strain from the state to individuals, and strengthened the bond of faith and love among the Muslims. They were no longer Ansar (original residents in Madina who helped their brothers coming to their city) and Muhajereen (immigrants from Macca seeking shelter and freedom), they were brothers one to another, united in their faith and belief to God and in their obedience to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as God's messenger and now the head of the Muslim state. History tells us of many examples of self-denial as Muslims preferred their brothers over themselves. This attitude transformed the community as they became one unit pursuing one dream and living their faith.

The Qur'an praises the character and behavior of both the Ansar and Muhajereen and how they serve as models for all people of faith:

﴿ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَرِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴾

(Some part is due) to the indigent Muhajirs, those who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure, and aiding Allah and His Messenger: such are indeed the sincere ones;

Al-Hashr 59 : 8

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْحَ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

But those who, before them, had homes (in Medina) and had adopted the Faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot). And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls; they are the ones that achieve prosperity.

Al-Hashr 59 : 9

The Mosque is the focal point of activity

Muslims gathered in the mosque five times each day to pray and to know one another. They addressed important issues, solved problems and planned for the future. Their leader and source of inspiration was Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They looked at him as God's messenger therefore they obeyed his orders with no hesitation. He also was their example to follow in his character and behavior. He gave them courage and hope and the Qur'an came down guiding their footsteps and renewing their faith. All major decisions started from the mosque.

If one of the Muslims did not attend the prayers, he was missed and others would look for him and find out if he needed help. The poor and needy got immediate help and a sense of belonging permeated the whole community. The Qur'an describes Muslims as one brotherhood and stresses their obligation of solving their disputes promising God's mercy :

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴾

The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that ye may receive Mercy.

Al-Hujerat 49 : 10

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stressed this close relationship and bond when he said:

(The example of the believers in their kindness, love and mercy towards each other is that of one body, when one organ in that body gets sick, the rest of the body feels for it by exhibiting fever and staying awake at night)
Bokhari & Muslim

What we learn today is that our mosques and Islamic centers should be alive with activity, and should be a place where Muslims come to make friends and know one another and help each other. Prayer is an important activity and is obligatory on Muslims, but the bond and relationship that develops from attending the mosque regularly is as important as the five daily prayers. It is not how fancy the place is, but how active it is, and has it fostered closeness and love among its members, and do they talk to each other and plan ahead for the benefit and future of their community.

Pact of non-aggression and cooperation between Muslims and Jews

This agreement safeguarded the rights of both Muslims and Jews to live in peace, to work together and cooperate, and to protect the Muslim state against its enemies. The properties and possessions of the Jews were safeguarded and they were able to practice their religion freely and were not forced to accept Islam against their will. Justice is provided for all and no one is wronged regardless of his faith. Each person is to contribute to the safety and welfare of the state and be subject to the law of the state, which is headed by Muhammad (PBUH).

The Jewish position

Initially the three Jewish tribes living in Madinah cooperated and respected the terms of the pact that they signed. But they were not faithful and began to plot against the Muslim state. They cast doubt on the authenticity of the Qur'an and worked with the hypocrites in Madinah to disunite the Muslims:

﴿ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

Ye People of the Book! why do ye clothe Truth with falsehood, and conceal the Truth, while ye have knowledge?

Al-Imran 3 : 71

﴿ وَقَالَتْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ءَامِنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَجَهُ
النَّهَارِ وَآكْفُرُوا ءَاخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

A section of the People of the Book say: "Believe in the morning what is revealed to the Believers, but reject it at the end of the day; perchance they may (themselves) turn back;

Al-Imran 3 : 72

﴿ وَلَا تَتُومِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ قُلْ إِنْ الْهَدَىٰ اللَّهُ إِلَىٰ هَدًىٰ أَن يُوتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا
أُوتِيْتُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنْ أَلْفُضَّلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ ﴾

"And believe no one unless he follows your religion." Say: "True guidance is the guidance of Allah; (fear ye) lest a revelation be sent to someone (else) like unto that which was sent unto you? Or that those (receiving such revelation) should engage you in argument before your Lord?" Say: "All bounties are in the hand of Allah: He granteth them to whom He pleaseth: and Allah careth for all, and He knoweth all things."

Al-Imran 3 : 73

Then they plotted with Muslim enemies like the unbelievers in Quraish encouraging them to fight the Muslims and promised to support them. Finally they declared their hatred and fought the Muslims.

Comments about the position of some Muslims regarding the Jews

Some Muslims read the Qur'an and look at some Qur'anic verses that criticize the behavior of the Jews at the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and reach the conclusion that Islam and the Muslims are anti-Jewish. They fail to understand the historical circumstances and the struggle of the Muslims and the Muslim state in Madinah and they take the Qur'anic verses out of context. Islam and the Qur'an are not against the Jews or the Jewish religion or any other religion, since true Judaism came from Allah, the One and Only God. The teachings of Moses are similar to the teachings of Muhammad (PBUH).

﴿ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ نَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيِّينَ الَّذِينَ أُسْلِمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالرَّبَّانِيُونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا
النَّاسَ وَآخِشُوا وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

It was We who revealed the Law (to Moses): therein was guidance and light. By its standard have been judged the Jews, by the Prophets who bowed (as in Islam) to Allah's Will, by the Rabbis and the Doctors of Law: for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto: therefore fear not men, but fear Me, and sell not My Signs for a miserable price. If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) Unbelievers.

Al-Maeda 5 : 44

The Qur'an tells us to treat everyone with kindness and justice unless they are open enemies. The Qur'an also tells us that no person carries the burden of another person:

﴿ مَنْ أَهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ ضَلَّٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۗ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ
أُخْرَىٰ ۗ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ﴿٥٥﴾

Who receiveth guidance, receiveth it for his own benefit: who goeth astray doth so to his own loss: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another: nor would We visit with Our Wrath until We had sent a Messenger (to give warning).

Al-Isra'a 17 : 15

In other words, current day Jews share no blame for any wrong-doing their forefathers may have done. We treat each person according to his behavior and not based on his ancestry or religious faith. The Qur'an praises the children of Israel because at one time they were the best of people for they were righteous and patiently persevered:

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَا صَبَرُوا ۗ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

And We appointed, from among them, Leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, so long as they persevered with patience and continued to have faith in Our Signs.

As-Sajda 32 : 24

﴿ وَتُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُّوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ

الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed on the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs,

Al-Qasas 28 : 5

It is only when the Jews rejected the messengers of God and left the teachings of Moses and broke their covenant did God become angry with them:

﴿ فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً ۖ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ

مَوَاضِعِهِ ۗ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلُعُ عَلَى حَايِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

مِنْهُمْ ۗ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

But because of their breach of their Covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard: they change the words from their (right) places and forget a good part of the Message that was sent them, nor wilt thou cease to find them - barring a few - ever bent on (new) deceits: but forgive them, and overlook (their misdeeds): for Allah loveth those who are kind.

Al-Maeda 5 : 13

﴿ لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۚ

ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ ﴾

Curses were pronounced on those among the Children of Israel who rejected Faith, by the tongue of David and of Jesus, the son of Mary, because they disobeyed and persisted in Excesses.

Al-Maeda 5 : 78

Many Muslims fail to understand these concepts because they do not read the Qur'an carefully, or study its verses and reflect on its concepts. Many Muslims get their guidance from religious leaders or politicians who may have another motive. Also the opinion of many Muslims is influenced by the situation in Palestine and Israel. Many Muslims as well have not come in contact with Jews and do not know that many Jews are hard working, honest people who only want peace and justice for themselves and for others. It is only through human contact and interaction that we shed our prejudices and bias and we treat other people as human beings, not different from us with hopes and fears similar to our own.

What does Muhammad (PBUH) represent to Muslims?

- 1- Muhammad (PBUH) is God's messenger and prophet
- 2- Muhammad (PBUH) is an example to follow in his character and behavior
- 3- Muslims do not worship Muhammad (PBUH). Muslims worship the One and Only God
- 4- Muhammad is human, he was born and he died. As a human being he has likes and dislikes. He may have made minor errors in judgment, but God corrects His prophet's conclusion if it is not accurate
- 5- We cannot understand nor live our life as Muslims unless we follow the Sunnah (tradition) of prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Muhammad (PBUH) as God's messenger

The Qur'an was inspired to prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and he was ordered to deliver God's message:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾

O Apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission. And Allah will defend thee from men (who mean mischief). For Allah guideth not those who reject Faith.

Al-Maeda 67

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also explained the Qur'an

﴿ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ ۗ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

(We sent them) with Clear Signs and Scriptures and We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought.

An-Nahl 16 : 44

Muslims are obligated to obey Muhammad (PBUH) as God's messenger

﴿ إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۗ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾

The answer of the Believers, when summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that he may judge between them, is no other than this: they say, "We hear and we obey": it is such as these that will attain felicity.

An-Nur 24 : 51

Obeying God's messenger is a criterion of belief and shows how much we love God and are willing to follow His orders

﴿ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴾

But no, by thy Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they make thee judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction.

An-Nesa'a 4 : 65

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴾

O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination.

An-Nesa'a 4 : 59

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

Say: "If ye do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

Al-Imran 3 : 31

Muhammad (PBUH) is an example to follow in his character and behavior

God praised the character and morals of prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

﴿ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character.
Al-Qalam 68 -4

God also told us to follow the example of His Prophet:

﴿ لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ
اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of Allah.

Al-Ahzab 33 : 21

We will discuss some of the Prophet's characteristics: His kindness and gentle nature

It is the mercy of Allah that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was kind and gentle in nature, not harsh or severe. His companions loved him and were close to him:

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

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

Al-Imran 3 : 159

His caring and desire to guide to the way of Allah

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) cared deeply about his people and wanted them to be guided to the truth. He was distressed by their rejection because he did not want them to suffer God's punishment:

﴿ لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that ye should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful.

At-Tawba 9 : 128

His truthfulness, integrity and trustworthiness

Before he became a prophet, the people of Macca knew Muhammad as a person who never lied, kept his promises and was trustworthy. Though they did not believe in him as God's messenger, they trusted him and kept their valuables with him for safe-keeping.

Prophet Muhammad warned Muslims against hypocrisy and said: (The signs of a hypocrite are three: If he talks, he lies; if he promises, he does not keep his promise; and when he is trusted, he is not faithful to his trust) Bokhari & Muslim.

His humility

He never elevated himself above his companions and did not become arrogant. He sat with them, listened to them and sought their counsel. He said: (Do not glorify me like the Christians glorified Jesus the son of Mary, but say "God's messenger and servant ")

His tolerance and ability to forgive

He harbored no ill feelings in his heart for any one, and was patient and tolerant. He did not get angry or seek revenge, rather he was able to overlook the mistakes of others and to forgive them:

﴿ خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴾

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

Al-Araf 7: 199

His sound judgment and wisdom

God revealed to him rules and laws and trusted his judgment. Rarely, did God have to correct the judgment of His Prophet. How he devised a plan to solve the problems in Madinah, and how he dealt with the hypocrites is a testimony to his wisdom and keen judgment. He knew that the hypocrites did not believe and wanted to cause division and spread rumors.

He said : (I will not kill them, and let be said that Muhammad is killing His companions)

His eloquence and ability to communicate

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used clear words and short sentences and was logical and to the point. Every one understood him. He often repeated his words to make sure the listener understood. Examples of some of his sayings are the following:

(A strong person is not the one who is strong physically, but he is the one who is able to control his anger) Termedhi

This saying illustrates the importance of self-discipline and of controlling our anger.

(Fear Allah and be conscious of Him at all times; follow a bad deed with a good deed, it will wipe it out; and live with others exhibiting good and noble character) Abou Dawood

If we understand that we are accountable to God, we will watch our behavior and avoid sin or doing wrong. If we make mistakes we then must hasten to do good, for our good deeds will cancel our bad deeds. Everyone loves a person who has a noble character.

(May Allah have mercy on His servant, who when he talks says something good, and he therefore gains. If he has nothing good to say, he keeps quiet and is therefore safe) Muslim

We learn to control our tongues and speak only when we have something good to say.

His patience, perseverance, determination and commitment

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exhibited patience throughout his life. He lost his parents as a child. All his children, except Fatima predeceased him. He taught us to say when faced with adversity: (We belong to Allah, and to Him we shall return. O Allah help me in my loss and provide for me better than what I lost) The prophet (PBUH) said: If you say this Du'a , Allah will respond to you).

The prophet was rejected and abused in Macca and they called him names. He continued inviting to God for 13 years and never wavered or deviated from his mission.

He was able to control his desires and was not concerned with the material things in life. The Qur'an told us to place our priorities correctly and not be too preoccupied with the glitter of this worldly life:

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ۗ ﴾

And keep thy soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face; and let not thine eyes pass beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter of this Life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds.

Al-Kahf 18 : 28

His justice

He was just in all his affairs, even with his enemies. He did not favor the rich over the poor, or a noble man over a common man. He said: (You come to me to judge between you. Some of you may be more eloquent and more effective in presenting his case. If I judge in favor

of someone and he has wronged his brother, then what he gets is only a piece of Hell Fire) Bokhari

He warned against injustice and said:

(Protect yourselves from the prayer of those you wronged, for such a prayer is carried over the clouds and the gates of Heaven are opened to it, and Allah says: "With My might I will come to your aid, if not now, then after a while) Bokhari & Muslim

His worship

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was devoted to Allah and worshipped frequently. He used to stand up in prayer for hours at night. He found peace and comfort in prayer. Allah described the prayer of His messenger:

﴿ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢١٧﴾ ﴾

And put thy trust on the Exalted in Might, the Merciful,
Ash-Shura'a 26 : 217

﴿ الَّذِي يَرِنُّكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٢١٨﴾ ﴾

Who seeth thee standing forth (in prayer),
Ash-Shura'a 26 : 218

﴿ وَتَقَلُّبُكَ فِي السَّجْدِينَ ﴿٢١٩﴾ ﴾

And thy movements among those who prostrate themselves.
Ash-Shura'a 26 : 219

﴿ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٢٠﴾ ﴾

For it is He Who heareth and knoweth all things.
Ash-Shura'a 26 : 220

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) taught us to pray not only the obligatory prayers, but to offer additional optional prayers. He also stressed the importance of night prayers.

He used to turn to God frequently seeking His forgiveness. He said:

(By Allah, I seek Allah's forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance, every day 70 times) Bokhari

Comment on the Prophet's character

Some people possess one or more of these noble characters. What is unusual and extremely rare is to find a person who embodies all of these characteristics. To be kind, forgiving, caring, patient, committed, yet at the same time wise, eloquent, decisive, effective, just and a visionary. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was the best that a human being could hope for or aspire to. He was taught by God to be an example for all mankind. A leader can learn from his example in how he led a nation. A teacher can learn from his example how he taught and groomed many to become the leaders for generations to come. A father and a husband can learn from his example how to behave with his family, how to care for them, love them and give his family direction, goal and a sense of responsibility. A common man can learn humility, patience and sincerity. A scholar can learn critical thinking, wisdom and humility. A charitable person can learn the beauty of giving and sharing. A worshiper can learn devotion, total submission and dedication to God.

As we study the life story of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) we learn from his character, behavior and stand on issues, and how he tackled and solved problems. Muhammad (PBUH) is dead, but his teachings and his example are alive and continue to inspire generations after generation. That is why God described him as a mercy to the worlds:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures.

Al-Anbia'a 21 : 107

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