

Volume 4, Issue 1
Reviving Islam Issue 2006

The rise, fall and revival of Islam

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Verily, man is in loss. Except those who believe, do righteous deeds, recommend one another to the truth and recommend one another to patience.

(Surat Al-Asr)

Three simple verses: light on the tongue, but have a magnitude of meaning behind them. So meaningful that Imam Shafei once said that, "If surat Al-Asr was the only thing revealed by Allah to Muhammad (S), this surah by itself would have been enough". What is it then about this surah that urged one of Islam's greatest scholars to use it as proof that Muhammad (S) was a Prophet for all of humanity and for all future generations to come?

Allah (Swt) begins this blessed surah by swearing an oath by time. Time- a precious commodity where Allah (Swt) says in the holy Quran, "You (O Muhammad) are only a warner for those who fear it (the Day of Judgment). The day they see it, (it will be) as if they had not lived (in this world) except an afternoon or a morning" (Quran 79: 45-46).

In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, where the dollar talks above everything else, we seem to forget this. We treat time as if it is limitless, prioritising worldly and materialistic things ahead of everything else. So how should we approach the issue of time? The Prophet (S) was narrated as saying, "Be in this world as if you were a traveller". A traveller who is in transit waiting for their next flight. A flight that will end with us meeting our Lord on the Day of Judgment.

We are all waiting in this period of transit. So how can we prepare for our meeting with our Lord without being 'in loss,' as Allah (Swt) describes us in the above surah? The Prophet (S) once said "Grab five things before five others: your youth before your decrepitude, your health before your illness, your wealth before your poverty, your leisure before your work, and your life before your death." This Hadith is a direct call on all of us to invest our time as early as possible when conditions are favourable, i.e., in our youth, when in good health, with our wealth and time before being handicapped by impediments, such as old age, sickness or poverty.

The Prophet (S) also said "On the Day of Resurrection, the feet of the son of Adam will not move away till he is questioned about four matters: how he spent his lifetime, how he spent his youth; from where he acquired his wealth and how he spent it, and what he did with his knowledge." What we do with our time, how we obtain and spend our wealth are all seen as a test to the believer. We should never delay the doing of good deeds. No matter how small we think they are, no matter how insignificant they may seem, they could hold the keys to paradise!

Allah (Swt) says, "Do people think that they will be left alone because they say "We believe" and not be tested (Quran 29:2)." The answer is no, a believer will be tested with the greatest of hardship to prove their belief in Allah. Allah (Swt) also says, "But when there

comes the greatest catastrophe (the Day of Judgment) - the day when man shall remember what he strove for. And hellfire shall be made apparent in full view for (every) one who sees. Then for him who transgressed all bounds, and preferred the life of this world (by following his evil desires and lusts). Verily, his abode will be hellfire. But as for him who feared standing before his lord, and restrained himself from impure, evil desires and lusts. Verily, paradise will be his abode" (Quran 79:34-41). Time, O' my brothers is a precious resource. Time, O' my sisters, is a resource which we will be questioned about on that day.

Welcome to another issue of The Message magazine. An issue dedicated towards looking at Islam through the ages, shedding light on lessons we could learn from our present generation and from those before us. So go ahead and dive into our latest issue of The Message magazine. On a final note, I encourage all our readers to use their time wisely because one day, like sands through the hourglass, our time will also run out.

Your brother in Islam
Mohammed Adra
Editor



From Al-Nu'man ibn Bashir, who said: "We were sitting in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (S), and Bashir was a man who did not speak much, so Abu Tha'labah Al-Khashnee came and said: 'O Bashir bin Sa'd, have you memorised the words of the Messenger of Allah (S) regarding the rulers?' Huthayfah replied, 'I have memorised his words'. So Abu Tha'labah sat down and Huthayfah said, 'The Messenger of Allah (S) said, **"Prophethood will be amongst you until Allah (swt) Wills. Then He (swt) will remove it when He Wills. Then there will be a Khilafah on the method of Prophethood, it will stay until Allah Wills..."**"

As is common knowledge to all Muslims, the Islamic nation was the uppermost nation in the world for centuries, characterised by its great achievements in the arts, science, politics and culture. The *Khilafah* (Islamic State) continued to be the greatest and most able state on earth for a period of twelve centuries, proving the success of its Islamic intellectual leadership in applying its creed and principles.

With a success unparalleled in history, the question which invariably arises is what went wrong? The condition of the Muslim *Ummah* in the last century has been deplorable, how did it reach such a low from such a high?

The simple answer to the decline of the Muslims is their movement away from the correct practice and implementation of Islam as demonstrated by the beloved of Allah (S). However, there is notable difference in Muslims simply moving away from the correct practice of Islam, whether as individuals or as a State, and foreign forces effectively attacking Islam and the

due to a number of factors. The *Umayyads* started an undesirable trend of contracting the leadership by force. This practice urged ambitious men who wanted to come to power to use force rather than to rely on *bay'a* (allegiance). From that time on, every *khalifah* started to nominate his successor following which the people would deliberate with him regarding their allegiance. This encouraged political factions to use force as a means to attain power. The *Abassids* seized Persia and Iraq as a starting point from which they would move in order to control the entire Islamic state and win authority for *Banu Hashim*. In the same manner and for a similar end, the *Fatimids* captured Egypt. These two historic events turned the *Khilafah* to be hereditary and dynastic.

Then it will be removed. Then there will be hereditary rule until Allah Wills...

These events created a shock halting the conquests. Independent states began to exist within the *Khilafah*, a thing prohibited in Islam. Another problem was the newly growing power of the provincial governors (*wulaf*). Under Umar al-Farooq (*ra*) the governors would shiver even contemplating any move away from the Holy Book and the Sunnah. In contrast, the *Abassids* did not move a hair when Abd al-Rahman Al-Dakhil ruled Spain independently. He eventually exercised sole power when Andalus should have been operating as a province of the *Khilafah*. The ultimate result was disastrous; Spain was left on its own when Ferdinand attacked in the 15th century and brought destruction and misery to the once illuminated Andalus.

Having failed with distorting the *ahadith* of the Messenger (S), the enemies of Islam living amongst the *Ummah* turned to the Arabic language knowing it to be the life-blood of the proper understand-

The Demise of the Khilafah

Lead

Muslims to render them weak and impotent, whether as a political endeavor or out of sheer enmity. No nation stabs itself to bring about its end. The end is brought about by others, even if the initial cause emanates from one's own action, or inaction.

The demise of the *Khilafah* is no different. The Muslims moved away from Islam and the *kafir* enemies seized that opportunity. In the end, the Muslims were so intellectually declined, so away from Islam that the *kuffar* simply had to buy out certain traitors from amongst the *Ummah* to deal her the final blow with which they removed Islam from the public domain.

Our journey begins a little while after the tribulations that occurred between the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (S) whom (may Allah be pleased with all of them) dealt with them to the best of their knowledge and ability. Ali's (*ra*) reign as *Khalifah* ended with the *Khilafah* in the strongest of positions. Its borders stretched to lands the Arabs had never known existed. Its military power was unmatched. Its people loving their Islam and striving to live by it. Its scholars of the highest rank, preserving and transmitting the sacred knowledge. It was not long after this time that the hypocrites and those who harboured hatred for Islam, living amongst the Muslims, began their unholy endeavor. They first turned to the *ahadith* of the Messenger (S), circulating fabrications of false practices contradicting Islam. These distortions were used with the intention of driving the Muslims away from Islam by adopting the rules in them as though they were authentic. But the aware amongst the Muslims noticed these heretics and failed with their conspiracy. The great scholars and transmitters of *hadith* got to work to compile and painstakingly grade the *ahadith*. The authentic traditions were memorised and their transmission was limited to a chain of transmitters known as the *isnad*.

Around the same time, certain elements of the *Shari'ah* (Islamic Law) began to be misapplied

ing of Islam, and tried to set it apart from the *deen*. At first they failed because the Muslims held tightly to the Quran, Sunnah and Arabic. The conquered people were brought the light in the shape of the Book of Allah and the example of his Messenger (S). Arabic was widely taught and people became well-versed in Arabic, some mastering it better than the Arabs. Their care for Arabic was great because it is an essential part of Islam and one of the necessary conditions for *ijtihad*.

But this utmost care for Arabic disappeared after the 6th century Hijri when the governors of the Islamic State knew little Arabic. During this period too a fatal blow hit the *Ummah* in the closing of the doors of *ijtihad*. In fact, it was impossible for those who ignored Arabic to derive rulings on any matter that arose. As Arabic was isolated from Islam, the Muslims' understanding of their *deen* was confused and their practice of its *ahkam* weakened.

Andalus was in the West. In the East, the governors were given broad authority over their provinces to such an extent that stirred their feeling for independent rule. They became independent in internal administration, and the *Khalifah* accepted this fact and was satisfied as long as they went on swearing allegiance to his central office, praising him on public platforms, minting money in his name, and sending him land taxes. The State began to decline slowly until the *Uthmanis* (Ottomans) came in the 13th century CE and gained power in most of the Muslim World. They cared for the power of the Sultan, the organisation of the army, and the splendor of the regime. The fact that they brushed in triumph into the surrounding lands is true, but it is equally true that they neglected the Arabic language and displayed little concern for Islam. Here the judicial and intellectual standards of the state ran into difficulty and decline. The weakness went unnoticed at that time because the State was at the highest point of its glory and at the peak of its military strength.

The *Uthmani Khilafah* did not recognise its weakness because it compared its jurisprudence, thought and civilisation with Europe's, at a time when Europe was blindly struggling in the gloom of

ignorance. This limited perspective made it believe that its decline too was its victory over Europe. The capture of the Balkans, an event which cast horror into all the European States, gave rise to the 'Eastern Question'. In reality the State was weak. The only elements allowing it to stand on its feet were the strength of the Muslims' belief, the specific teachings they had about life (though still vague in their minds) and the presence of an Islamic system in practice- despite its misapplication. It was only a matter of time before the State's internal weakness would come to the fore. From the very beginning, the *Uthmani Khilafah* was founded on the ruins of an Islamic order which was misapplied and on confused concepts, both Islamic and foreign.

When the 17th century CE began, the balance of power between the Islamic State and the European states changed as the fruits of the European Renaissance (ironically having its seeds sown in Muslim Spain) began to bear, as did the Muslims' intellectual passivity and misapplication of Islam. Eventually material progress brought by the Industrial revolution caused the European world to outweigh the Islamic world quite noticeably, with it changing the meaning of the 'Eastern Question' from one of the imminent encounter of Islamic danger by Europe to the problem of maintaining the 'Ottoman Empire' as it was because European states differed over it according to their interest, not being able to decide into whose hands the corpse of the 'sick man' should go.

Education declined, books were kept on the shelves, few thinkers appeared, and the desire for research and exploration diminished. Knowledge was not sought or practiced because it was not encouraged by the State. Scholars, minus the more perceptive minority, demanded knowledge as an intellectual luxury. Therefore, the Muslims of that era understood Islam as being merely a spiritual order rather than as a politico-judicial system that deals with all aspects of life. Still worse is the fact

inherent in the Islamic world despite its weakness and decline. Nevertheless, all these rebellious attempts failed at last, and the West began to write the epitaph of the *Uthmani Khilafah*.

The British encouraged nationalistic movements inside the Muslim lands. They pushed the Balkans for revolution since 1804, urged Greece to revolt against the *Uthmani Khilafah* since 1820. In addition, they secretly encouraged partisan movements between Muslims themselves on the one hand, and between Turks and Arabs on the other. They encouraged nationalistic movements and aided in the formation of political parties working against the State. This brought confusion, unrest and external threats. As WWI approached, the West found the suitable chance for the invasion of the Muslim World and the capture of its remaining lands.

Then it will be removed. Then there will be a rule of oppression until Allah Wills...

Before we conclude, a note of caution is in order. One should not take away from the above history that the time of the *Khilafah* was a bad time. On the contrary, it was the best of times for the Muslims. This article is written purely to describe its decline. If we were to write about its glory and achievements, the entire *Message* magazine would not suffice.

Rather what one should take away is that if the Muslims are to return to their past glories, the only way is for them to wholeheartedly adopt and practice Islam, as individuals and as a collective, in the manner shown by the Messenger of Allah (S). Allah is not unjust to his



that the Industrial Revolution did not urge the *Uthmani Khilafah* to halt its disintegration. This is because the Muslims were unable to differentiate between science, culture and civilisation and so they stood puzzled, knowing not whether to adopt or renounce them.

The West succeeded in the propagation of this slogan until it was held by the public in general and the intellectuals in particular. The result was obvious. In view of the actual contradiction between Western and Islamic ideology, the Muslims were kept away from Islam and brought close to Western thought. But they were so confused that they could not understand the Western ideology, whilst they were also remote from comprehending the idea of Islam. This confusion made them neglect inventions, science and industry. Holding a set of contradictory ideas, the state and its people were unable to even adopt the means of material progress. The state weakened further.

Eventually, the West started to cut after part of the now impotent *Uthmani Khilafah*. Russia under the reign the Catherine in 1762-1796 CE fought the *Uthmanis*, defeated them and took some of their lands in Central Asia. In July 1798 Napoleon attacked Egypt and seized it. In February of the next year, he launched conquest against the Southern part of Syria and seized Gaza, Ramala, Jaffa, and stopped at the fortress of Acre. In 1801 his expedition failed so he returned to Egypt and then to France but his attacks nevertheless affected the essence of the *Uthmani Khilafah* that was consequently violently shaken by various European states.

The French occupied Algeria in 1830, Tunisia in 1881 and Morocco in 1912. The British had already colonised India long before and taken away its Islamic sovereignty. In 1882 they also captured Egypt and later Sudan.

The Western campaign against the Islamic world became intense everywhere until it felt exposed to the final blow and accepted any condition in order to halt this Western advance or at least decrease the weight of its nightmare. Resistance movements arose in every place, pointing to the vitality

servants. The misery and decline that touched the Muslims was the fruit of their labour. They moved away from the understanding and practice of Islam of the Companions. The *Khilafah* was divided. *Ijtihad* was stifled. Islamic concepts were corrupted by foreign religions and ideologies. *Jihad* was no longer thought of as an integral part of *da'wah* to Islam. Nationalism infiltrated the Ummah. And so on. All of these constitute diversions from Islam. It is the role of the Ummah now to reverse the tide by correcting their understanding and practice of Islam and regaining its divinely ordained role as a Witness unto mankind.

Back to our history then... The *Uthmani Khilafah* entered the 'Great War' that ended with its demise. The victorious Allies wasted no time in dividing the Islamic World among themselves as war booty and nothing of it remained except the Turkish Lands. The latter remained under the Allies mercy until 1921 when it was able to become independent after Mustafa Kemal guaranteed the abolition of the *Khilafah* and the dissolution of Islamic rule. In return, the Allies agreed to drive the Greeks away from Thrace and themselves to evacuate Constantinople and the whole of Turkey. Kemal declared his interest in Turkey's independence as a Turkish nation. He gave his loyalty to Turkey rather than to Islam and went on to formally abolish the *Khilafah* on the 3rd of March 1924.

Then it will be removed. Then there will be a Khilafah on the path of Prophethood"
Then he was silent." (Musnad Imam Ahmad)

Usman Badar

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60 Seconds with Sheikh Yahya

Most Frequently Asked Questions

Question 1

Can I touch the Quran for reading purposes without wudu?

Answer

Majority of the scholars say that someone can not touch the Quran while they do not have wudu. They refer their evidence to the hadith of the Prophet (S) in a letter he sent to the people of Yemen. He said: **"No one is to touch the Qur'an except one who is purified."**

Question 2

To what time are you allowed to pray Isha; at midnight or until Fajr?

Answer

Some scholars say that Isha ends by midnight, other scholars say it ends by the entrance of Fajr. It all goes back to the hadith of Jibreel when he came and taught the Prophet the timing for prayer.

Question 3

Under Shariah, can a woman divorce her husband?

Answer

Shariah has given the husband the authority of divorce without resorting to anyone. The wife also has the authority of divorce but she must resort to a Muslim judge or cleric before she proceeds with it. In that case, the Muslim judge will look into the case and see if she has a legitimate excuse. He will proceed with the divorce on the behalf of the wife even if the husband refuses.

Question 4

What rights do an engaged man and woman have to one another? What halal things can they do?

Answer

Engagement in Islam does not change the relational status of the female to the male nor the status of the male to the female. It does not make what's Halal, Haram or what's Haram, Halal. In other words, they are still considered to be strangers to one another and can not see or speak to each other in enclosed areas. The only time they can do this is in the presence of a mahram (guardian). They are not permitted to even go out together alone, until the marriage contract takes place.

Question 5

Which Sunnah act would you recommend us to do?

Answer

The greatest Sunnah in Islam is the portrayal of good manners, which our Prophet (S) came with and called for.

Manners is the key to all good. Allah (Swt) described the Prophet in the Quran, "And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character" (68:4). He was also described as being a walking Quran—something we should all strive to achieve.

Question 6

What advice would you give to the Muslim youth?

Answer

The advice that I would give to the Muslim youth at this current time is to turn to their religion- Islam. The religion that Allah had chosen for them, and to grab tight onto the Sunnah of the Prophet (S), and to be proud of their identity as a Muslim and as a follower of Muhammad (S).

Do you have a question?

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THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

Within 100 years of Muhammad's death, Islam swept through most of the Middle East, North Africa and India. So we ask ourselves...

How did we lose Spain?

At the end of the Eighth Century, Spain was the most populous cultured and industrious land of all Europe, and remained so for centuries. Its trade with the outside world was unrivaled, and in this time of economic expansion, the Jews, who had been virtually eliminated from the peninsula in the seventh century by the Christians, grew once more in numbers and flourished.

Andalus, how it was called, flourished not only in economic terms but it also was known to be

accepted the Muslims as the rulers of the country were allowed to retain their possessions and their beliefs and religious practices.

The Muslims moved first with an army of 30,000 into Spain in 711 C.E. under command of Tarik bin Ziyad. They took power from the Visigoths who had taken over from the Romans. In 715 they had already crossed the Pyrenees and controlled an area of 4 million people. Within only seven years, four fifths of



one of the great centers of learning, science, architecture, poetry and arts. This was at a time when much of Europe was in a "Dark Age". It was largely through al-Andalus that the knowledge held by the Muslims would be passed on to Europe and start the European "Renaissance" or rebirth.

A great tolerance of the Jews and Christians by the Muslims characterized the centuries of Islam in Spain. All the Jews and Christians who

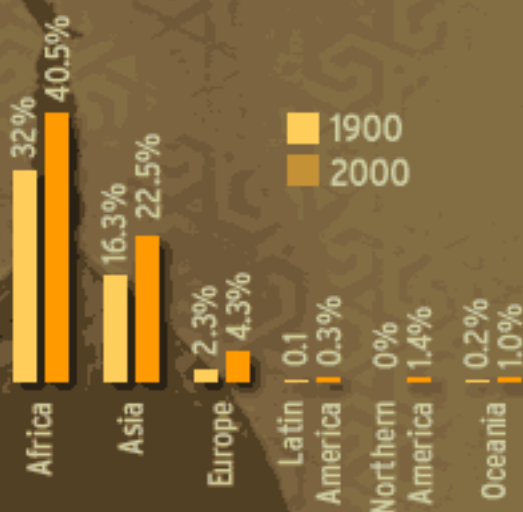
the peninsula had been conquered and the Islamic caliphate was established. In 733, the Christian army stopped the Muslims from going further into Europe.

Especially from the beginning of the 9th Century the Christians entered Islam in masses. At the same time, the Muslims were also doing "futuh" (conquests) in the Sindh area, which is now Pakistan. This means that in less than 150 years, Islam expanded from a small move-

Muslims In The World

ISLAM ON THE RISE

(as a percentage of regional population)



MAJOR MUSLIM POPULATIONS



ment of a handful of desert inhabitants to the greatest power of the world.

This success could only happen, because these people practiced their religion like they were supposed to. Their intention, while doing Jihad, was primarily to spread the word of Islam and not to gain properties and war booties. Wherever they came, they established a system based on justice which replaced the dictatorships and monarchies present at this time.

The people were free to choose Islam or to keep their own faith. They only needed to pay a special tax which exempted them from the military service. Many of them embraced Islam merely because they observed the good behaviour and character of their conquerors.

From the tenth century on, the capital of the caliphate Andalus was Cordoba with a population of 600,000. It later developed into a city with 200,000 buildings, 1500 mosques and nearly 1000 public bathhouses. There were more than half a million manuscripts stored in its libraries. The center of the city had a canalization system and at night the plastered streets even had

light.

In short, this city had an infrastructure not to be found in any other European city. Christian kings even sent their children to study in Andalus because of the excellent universities. Arabic was the main world language.

Nowadays it is reversed. Many cities in Muslim countries are entire slums, far away from having an infrastructure and the population is suffering from poverty, war, diseases and bad education.

The Muslim caliphate in Spain fell in 1492 when Granada was conquered by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. These were the same rulers who gave Christopher Columbus three ships to initiate the colonization, genocide and slave trade in America.

The remaining Muslims and Jews at that point had three options. First: To keep their religion but to leave the country. Second: to convert to Christianity. Third: to be killed!

It is easy to analyze, why the Muslims, after eight centuries, lost Western Europe to the Christians. It

was because they did not practice Islam like they were supposed to. With all the prosperity came decadence. Andalus became divided into many emirates fighting amongst each other. Sometimes they even took the Catholic militias as helpers against their own people!

Out of the Andalus experience we can learn a lot of things. We Muslims have to realize that Allah, the Most High, helps us, if we help Him in His cause. This means that if the Muslims practice their religion, then success is programmed, not only in the next life, but also in this one.

The Muslims lost Andalus, the Balkans, India and a lot more due to their own lost sense of purpose. There was no big resistance when colonialism destroyed the Muslim unity, which put secular regimes into power to divide and govern the Muslim lands. Ultimately, we find ourselves in the divided clutter around the world with no true sense of leadership.

Reference:

An edited excerpt from:

www.islamweb.net



In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah, the one who teaches the human race about their own selves throughout history simply by presenting to them the life of previous nations in the most accurate and authentic means.

And may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon His slave and final Messenger Muhammad, the shining sun and guidance to anyone wishing to rise from the physical creation of the mammal species, to the heights of giants in the sight of the Angels and the Lord of the Universe in this life and on the Day of Recompense.

Salaahuddeen the great Sultan, may Allah shower you with his Mercy. You were a simple man who made a profound contribution to this nation and a forthright chaste character who cleansed your people from the mess of corruption. This is what we know of you and Allah knows you better. On behalf of Islam, the Muslims and AlQuds, we thank and salute you. May Allah reward you with the best reward that Allah would reward a General on behalf of his people and a Leader on behalf of his followers and students.

Salaahuddeen was an intelligent general, a compassionate ruler, a wise judge, a caring custodian and a wonderful companion. He loved the religion more than himself, his generosity made him a poor man, yet this never stopped him from giving. He was a remarkable being and his vivid memory lingers in the hearts of both Muslims and Non-Muslims alike. The recent 'Kingdom of Heaven' makes a fair attempt to paint an authentic picture of such a man but still falls very short. To live until the fresh age of 56 and still achieve so much, for that alone he deserves a great deal of credit and esteem. Indeed, he was a great warrior but what follows is a clear focus on the nature and

personality of Salaahuddeen.

Each individual Muslim can learn so much from the history of this being. An example of what becomes of those who depend on Allah and do righteous deeds. An illustration of the bounties Allah places on his selected slaves when they carry out what is best for this religion and its followers.

Despite the wealth he accumulated during his lifetime, the sum of money he left behind at his time of death was too little to be given to charity as his private charities had absorbed everything. Of all the battles he fought and the booty he had acquired, he left behind only 47 silver coins and one gold coin. He had little interest in gaining wealth because he had no use for it. He was too busy caring for the affairs of the state to worry about personal prosperity. For example, Salaahuddeen always wanted to go to Hajj. He intended to perform it every year especially in the final year of his life. He had finally made his up mind and cleared his affairs, making time for the Pilgrimage. He gave the orders for the necessary preparations to be made and provisions were collected for the journey. All was ready to go when he decided to postpone the pilgrimage for the following year. One of the main reasons was lack of money sufficient to cover his personal expenses.

He emphasized that a position of leadership is not to collect wealth and enjoy power. Rather, it entails the ability to be a strong role model and encourage positive social affairs. Of all the facets of leadership, his concern was not with the perks of such a responsibility, but to perfect the responsibility before Allah.

His relationship with the Quran was of the highest order. He loved to hear the Quran so much so, that he would never cease to find occasions to hear it. He would request the man guarding his tent to recite as much of the Quran as he could. Whenever he spoke in public, he encouraged recitation of the Quran before he spoke. He once passed a young boy who was reading the Quran with a beautiful voice and he was so impressed that he invited the young boy to share his very own food with him. He also granted the father several baskets of produce from his garden as a token of appreciation for his upbringing. Salaahuddeen also encouraged education in his community and from his wealth he would reward his people. This is evidence that he gained a sense of satisfaction in seeing the power of knowledge grow.

Despite such leadership and power, nothing ever distracted him from the source of all power. He always made time for the Book of Allah despite controlling the armies of the believers.

He also had a beautiful relationship with the Hadith of the Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him). Whenever one of the Muhaditheen (Scholars of Hadith) came to his court, he would personally greet them. Out of respect for the revelation of Allah and the words of His Messenger, he would order his children and slaves to attend and would ask them to listen to the Hadith. If any of the Muhaditheen were of the type that did not like to visit sultans and were unwilling to come to Salaahuddeen, he would gracefully and enthusiastically meet them and see them himself wherever they stayed. Never did he view himself as someone who had authority to subdue knowledge or

Salahuddeen's Jerusalem

By Muhammad Khodr

command its people. Whatever his position, he certainly didn't see himself as someone above the religion. Instead he saw himself empowered *through* the religion, a mere servant of the scholars and bound in all his senses by the verses of Allah and the traditions of His Messenger.

His trust in Allah and his refuge in him when solutions ran dry are nothing short of the teachings of his beloved Messenger. He took to the Sunnah of the Messenger in finding solutions for his troubles and what follows is an example of this.

People (including deputies, representatives and delegates) would come to visit him and if he didn't have enough funds in his treasury to give as presents to them, he would sell one of his farms to the public treasury (bait almaal) and use the money to distribute amongst them and treat his guests in the way a believer should.

His motto with regards to wealth was a Hadith that he had memorized, which said: *"It may be that there is someone in the world who esteems money of as little value as the dust of the earth..."* He always gave more than expected and never did he utter the words 'we have already given to him' or 'how many more times do we have to give you?'

Not surprisingly, people seized every opportunity to take money from him. For instance, a man once claimed that one of the slaves of Salaahuddeen was originally owned by him and that he had entrusted this slave with much of his wealth. He claimed that when this slave died, the Sultan took all of this wealth and added it to his account of possessions. This man presented his case against the Sultan in court, insisting that this wealth be returned to him as he was the rightful owner.

The matter saw 8 witnesses come forward to testify that the Sultan had in fact bought this slave in Cairo while in the company of these

8 witnesses. The man was proven to be a liar and was consequently confounded and speechless in the face of this open and shut case. Salaahuddeen was later informed that the man only sought this mischief so that he may obtain mercy at his hands and that it would not be fitting to let him part disappointed.

Upon hearing this information, the Sultan uttered: "Aha! That is quite another matter!" Instead of punishing this perpetrator for this fabrication and accusation against the Sultan, Salaahuddeen felt in no way the need to seek revenge and teach this man anything other than manners and kind treatment. Instead he ordered that he be given a robe of honor and a sum of money that would suffice him, his family and cover his expenses and debts. Clearly, the Sultan's generosity had no limits. We can learn so much from the preferred resolution illustrated by someone of the stature, authority and power of Salaahuddeen.

Sometimes, the level of greed demonstrated by people was so high that account-keepers would often feel ashamed of people's repeated requests. Still, knowing how kind-hearted he was, they would never approach him in fear that they would upset him. On one account, the number of horses he had given away in the plain of Acre mounted up to 10, 000!!

His gallantry as a General and commander of the Army of the believers was impeccable. He was the bravest amongst the brave, distinguished by the energy in his soul and vigor in his character. So often he has taken his position immediately before a large body of enemy soldiers who were increasing with every moment. Yet he did not flinch. He only grew stronger and more courageous with time. On one occasion whilst in the middle of two armies, he ordered that a Hadith be read aloud to him while he remained on horseback. This was the type of man he was. His body may have been physically tangible, but his heart rested calmly with the Allah.

He once traveled through aggressive seas which violently rocked his vessel. During his

frightening ordeal, Salaahuddeen turned to his associate and said: "Would you like me to tell you something?" "Very much" replied the associate. "Well," he said with a sincere heart full of the love for Allah, "when by the will of Allah not a Frank is still left on this Coast, I mean to divide my territories and to charge my successors with my last commands then having taken leave of them, I will sail on this sea to its Islands in pursuit of them until there shall not remain upon the face of this earth one unbeliever in Allah or I will die in the attempt..." This statement illustrates the astonishing zeal he had for this religion and his incredible love for Allah.

Later he continued his conversation saying: "I ask you, what is the most glorious of deaths?" His associate replied 'Why, to die in the way of Allah of course.' The Sultan concluded the conversation by saying: "Then, I strive for the door of the most glorious of deaths."

What did all this power mean to Salaahuddeen? How did all this fame and glory impact him? How much did the greed and selfishness of others around him affect his character? Not at all.

This is Salaahuddeen the man, albeit in a brief article. It was a wonderful idea for *The Message* crew to have thought of such a topic. There is so much to learn from the pride of our ancestors. There is so much for us to pick up from these giants. It is they who carried Islam over to us until this day and it is men like these who will continue to carry the light of Islam.

Such inspirational individuals took the light that was presented to them by Allah and implemented the lessons which were preserved for them by their beloved prophet. In the face of adversity, people like Salaahuddeen never ceased to remember Allah and only ever went about using the correct means to develop a love for Islam. You and I can possess very powerful tools to successfully create the same impact they did, which doesn't cost a cent! It can easily be executed through your words and compassion for others.

ALL EYES ARE ON YOU



Sheikh's Corner

All praise is due to Allah (Swt), and we seek His forgiveness and mercy to grant us the highest ranks in Paradise.

This edition of *The Message Magazine* discusses the downfall of Islam after its fruitful and glorious time when the Khilafa was at its peak. There are also articles in the magazine which clearly point out that the only way for us to wake up to ourselves is to return to our religion (Deen) and to make our daily lives revolve around Islam. These words are indeed spot-on and accurate; however I intend to focus on something more specific that we all need to give our undivided attention to. What is it you ask?

It is something all Muslims do every single day of our lives: something that has become robotic and habitual, which in actual fact has lost its real essence and purpose. It is something we take for granted every day, and it is the first thing that we will be questioned about on the Day of Judgement. You might have guessed it by now, or if you haven't, then it indeed proves how robotic this action has become for you. It is Salaat (prayer).

Allah's beloved (S) warned us about our Salaat. If it is good and complete, then the rest of our actions will follow accordingly. However, if our prayers are insincere and therefore incomplete, then the rest of our deeds become insignificant. Many will say that they have heard this hadith many times before, but how many of us take it seriously, as if our lives depend on it? In reality, our lives and futures DO depend on it, more so than we realise. We need to invest more time and effort into our prayers, and identify the real purpose as to why we pray. By focusing correctly on our prayers, we will be able to minimise most distractions that many people complain of. Otherwise, we can keep on treating Salaat as a robotic act until it is too late.

On a similar note, it becomes worthwhile to ask: how many people pray fajr on time? This is something that many people lack which needs to be taken

very seriously. Fajr is a part of the major pillar in Islam. If it is not prayed on time, then our faith in Allah is seriously questionable. It isn't any wonder we are currently experiencing this unstable climate. If we can't even focus for a few minutes on our prayers and offer them correctly, how do we expect to do the enormous task of uniting the Ummah together as it once was? It is understood that the Muslims will rise together again, but only once the numbers at the Masjid increase for fajr prayer.

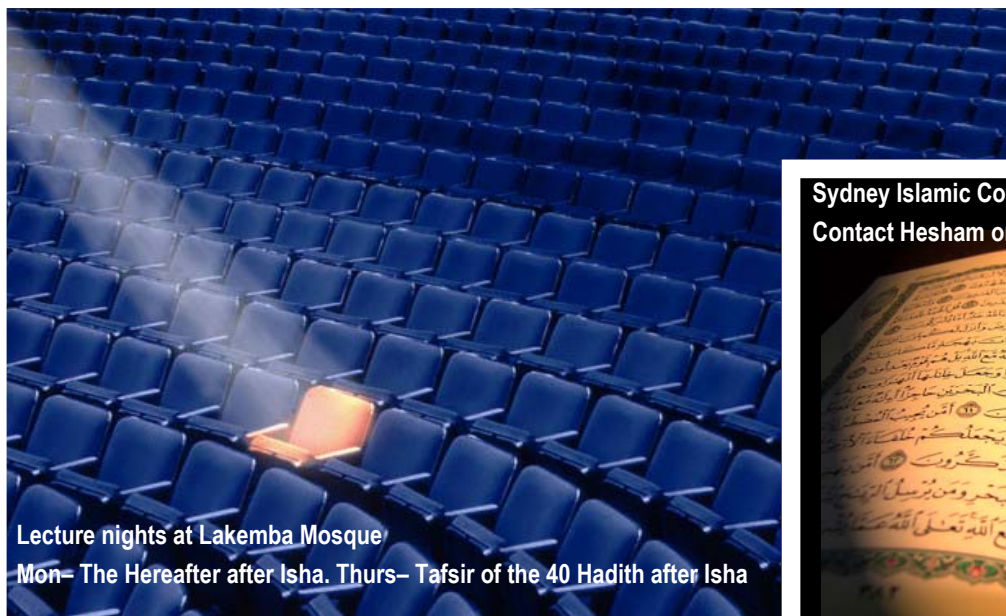
In brief, the moral of the topic in this issue is to show each Muslim that the only way we can strengthen the Muslims, is to first look within ourselves and correct our own errors. A common Australian saying is to "look at your own backyard." This refers to cleaning up the mess that's in your immediate environment before jumping on board to save the rest of the world, and it definitely applies to the message we are sending across this issue. By surrounding yourself amongst righteous people, you will become a better Muslim, since you will be influenced by good actions in your environment. Attach your heart to the Masjid, and make your core beliefs rock-solid, because every believer needs to be reminded that they are not perfect and that each of us has errors which need to be rectified. If every person perfected their Salaat, then another milestone would be set in Islamic history. Remember that Allah will not change the condition of the Ummah until we change the condition in ourselves.

Please refer to the article titled "Reflecting on our Salaat" on page 14 for further tips on how to rectify our Salaat.

By the Grace of Allah (Swt), I pray that Allah allows us all to perfect our Salaat so that we may solidify our belief in Allah and His religion, which would make us a strong and stable Ummah.

Wassalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu.

Your brother in Islam
Sheikh Shady Al-Suleiman



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REFLECTING ON OUR SALAAT: NEW HORIZONS AWAIT

What do you think about in your prayers? Do you think about the greatness of Allah (Swt), about the creation of the heavens and the earth, or the many blessings Allah (Swt) has provided us with? If so, maybe you should move on to the next article in our magazine. However, how many of us can honestly say that they can stop reading here?

For too many of us, our lives seem to be travelling a million miles an hour and so when we hear that call to prayer we often find it difficult to slow down our thoughts (even for the mere five minutes it takes to complete a salaah) and allow ourselves to be fully absorbed by the prayer.

The importance of the prayer in Islam cannot be understated. It is the first pillar of Islam that the Prophet (S) mentioned after mentioning the testimony of faith, by which one becomes a Muslim.

The importance of prayer is demonstrated in many of the Prophet's statements. For example, the Prophet (S) said,

"The first matter that the

slave will be brought to account for on the Day of Judgment is the prayer. If it is sound, then the rest of his deeds will be sound. And if it is bad, then the rest of his deeds will be bad." [Recorded by al-Tabarani].

However amongst our community of Musalleen (those who perform Salah) we find some hazy actions that need to be brought back into focus.

- Some do not concentrate on what they are saying.
- Some speed when they pray
- Some wander with their gaze during Salah,
- The number of raka'at performed is constantly forgotten.
- For some, the Dunya hugs their hearts during Salah and clouds their minds.
- Sometimes, before the Imam says Allahu Akbar, some in the congregation are already in the next prostration.

How to Concentrate in Salah

From the Sunnah, the Prophet (S) taught the following:

1. Come early for Salah and prepare yourself to concentrate. Repeat the Adhan to yourself with the Mu'adhdhin, and - after the adhan - say the

prescribed supplication. Between the Adhan and Iqamah make dua'. Do Wudu properly, cleanse your mouth, and wear your finest clothes.

2. Aim to get the entire reward of your Salah. Abu Bakr ibn 'Iyaash said, "I saw Ha-beeb ibn Thabit in Sujood. If you saw him you would think he was dead (by how long he held his Sujood)."

3. Contemplate the aayaat and adhkaar being recited during the prayer.

Think about the meanings of the verses that you are reciting. Isn't it disheartening that someone may perform Salah for decades, day after day, and he/she still does not know what they are saying? The Qur'aan was revealed to be pondered over! Allah revealed: "(This is) a Book (the Qur'aan) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember." [Saad 38:29].

4. Pray in congregation. Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta'aala commands:

"And perform Salah, give Zakah, and bow with those that

bow." (2:43)

5. Never miss your Nafl Salah, especially those that the Prophet (S) used to pray constantly, including: Witr and the sunnah of Fajr.

6. Do not speed up your Salah. Take your time and do not allow your Salah to become the most invaluable action of your day.

Ibn Wahb said, "I saw Ath-Thowree at the Ka'bah. After Maghrib, he got up to pray and then prostrated. He did not come out of that prostration until the Adhan for Isha' was given."

7. Know that Allah responds to your prayer.

The Prophet (S) said: "Allah, the Blessed and Exalted has said: 'I have divided the prayer between Myself and My slave, into two halves, and My slave shall have what he has asked for.'" When the slave says 'Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds,' Allah says, 'My slave has praised Me.' When the slave says, 'The Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy,' Allah says, 'My slave has extolled me.' When the slave says, 'Master of the Day of Judgment,' Allah says, 'My slave has glorified me.' When the slave says, 'It is You alone we worship and it is You alone we ask for help,' Allah says, 'This is between Me and My slave, and My slave shall have what he asked

for.' When the slave says, 'Guide us to the Straight Path, the path of those whom You have favoured, not the path of those who receive Your anger, nor of those who go astray,' Allah says, 'All these are for My slave, and My slave shall have what he asked for.'" (Saheeh Muslim, Kitaab al-Salaah, Baab wujoob qiraa'at al-Faatihah fi kulli rak'ah).

8. Pray with a barrier (sutrah) in front of you and pray close to it. Another thing that will help one to have khushoo' is paying attention to the matter of having a sutrah and praying close to it, because this will restrict your field of vision, protect you from the Shaytaan and keep people from passing in front of you, which causes a distraction and reduces the reward of the prayer.

9. Seeking Refuge in Allah from the Shaytaan.

10. Pray as if you were told that after Salah, you would be going back to Allah.

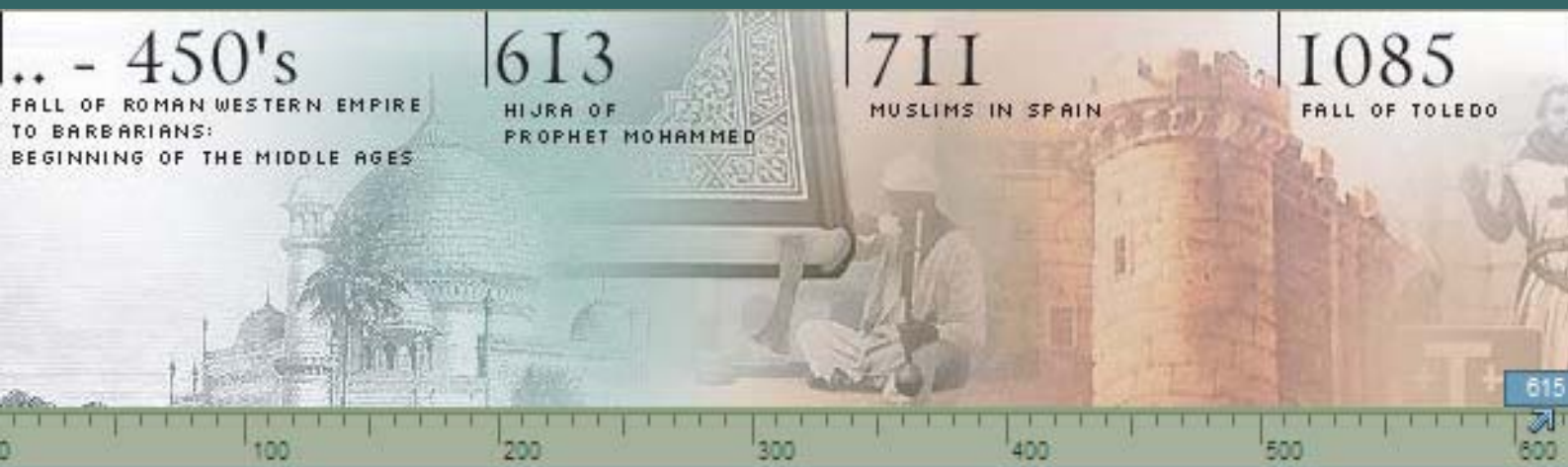
Abu Bakr Al-Muzanee said, "If you want your Salah to benefit you, then say, 'I shall die after this Salah!'"

Reference:

An edited excerpt from:
<http://www.khutbah.com>



CENTURIES OF FO



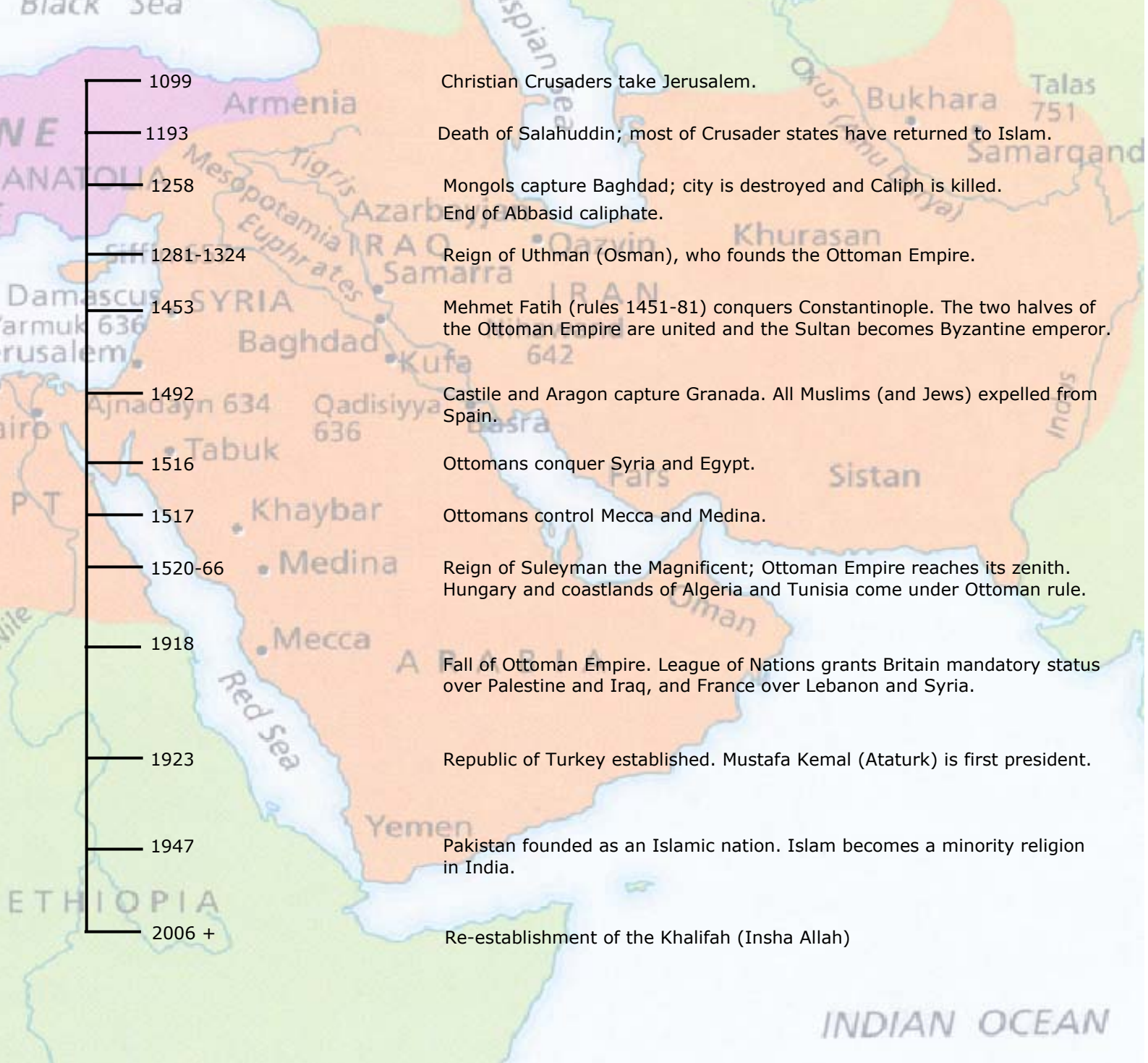
By 634, Islam had taken over the entire Arabian peninsula. Within 100 years, the borders of the Islamic empire had expanded to the borders of China and the Atlantic Ocean.



FORGOTTEN HISTORY



years of Muhammad's death, it had reached the Atlantic in one direction and China in the other.



FINDING THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

The way many Muslims are acting nowadays leave one with the impression that the Messenger of God (S) left us with no guidance! They elevate their minds, feelings, fleeting desires, and whims over the guidance that Rasulallah left us with. "Verily the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (S) and the worst of matters are the newly invented matters, for every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the hell-fire". These are the words that we constantly hear in our khutbahs and the speeches we "listen" to. Why is it, then, that we fail to remember this at times when our emotions get high and we feel all charged up? The best of guidance during times of ease is still the best of guidance in times of hardship. The source is still the same: the Quran, the Sunnah and the way of the Rightly Guided Predecessors. Do people think that the Messenger of God (S) would tell us how to go to the bathroom, how to eat and drink, how to sleep, how to have relations with our spouses, but he wouldn't tell us how to deal with situations like the one's we are facing?

The Messenger of Allah (S) did indeed warn us about times like these just like he warned us against the greatest fitnah, al-masih ad-dajjal (Anti-Christ). So why is it that people think it is up to them to brainstorm and come up with the solutions to the Ummah's problems? This is how the Ummah is acting and responding to the trials and afflictions that Allah is trying us with. Everything becomes open to ijtihad and to personal reasoning, so much so that everyone is left to come up with their own diagnosis of the problem and their own solution as to how to bring back the glory to the Ummah of Muhammad. But, it is not our minds and our intellects, filled with the various corruptions and deviations of today's society that will lead us to the answer. So the question now is what will? Allah and his Messenger (S) did warn us about times like these and told us what do to in times of calamity.

"Never will Allah change the condition of a people, until they change themselves." [Sooratur-Ra'd 13:11]

"Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe,"

and will not be tested" [Suratul- Ankaboot 29:2]

It is clear from the Speech of Allah and the words uttered on the tongue of our beloved Messenger (S) that the Ummah will go through times like these where our brothers are getting killed, our sisters are getting raped, our children are being orphaned, and when Al-Aqsa Al-Mubaarak has been taken from us. But who is to blame according to Allah and his Messenger? It is not the Christians, not the Jews, not Israel, not America, not the Freemasons, or our leaders only. **IT IS US!** or, better put, ME AND YOU. The Quran constantly confirms that Allah wrongs nobody, but it is the people who wrong themselves. The reason we are being oppressed is because we have become deficient in our Deen.

If we don't make the effort to change ourselves, meaning purifying our souls, and making our Deen sincerely for Allah's sake alone, our condition will NOT CHANGE. The Prophet (S) told us the reason for our weakness (wahn); specifically, it is love of the world and hatred for death. Allah tells us that he will not remove the humiliation until we return back to our religion, not until we turn back to struggling for Allah's sake. It is

the Deen as a complete system of life that we must whole-heartedly return to. The Messenger of Allah didn't say that we would gain back the glory to the Ummah by blowing ourselves up, by taking part in terrorism, or to simply remove our leaders and replace them with other ones. We must realise that we have over us those who we deserve, and that we deserve the conditions we are in. If we realise that Allah has told us that Riba is worse than having intercourse with our own mothers multiple times in public, then we should understand the seriousness of our situation and see why it is that our brothers are being killed and why our sisters are being raped.

Some will claim that "you can't just be a hermit in a masjid and not do anything". Subhaanallah! The way some people talk, you would think that the Ummah has been good for so long now and Allah has not given us victory. They talk as though we have been meeting all of our obligations to Allah, as though we have been staying away from what he forbade us from, and as though we are doing all types of righteous actions in excess, like praying tahajjud every night. They talk as if there are no graves in the Muslim world to which thousands of Muslims flock to commit shirk. No doubt, we will have to do our part, but we must understand that things are out of balance right now. We probably wouldn't be in our situation if we were doing what we are supposed to be doing. As for the people who put their trust in Allah and only ask him for aid, it may be that the dua of a sincere slave of God is more powerful than the begging and yelling of millions of protesters at some rally. Their dua in witr is probably more deadly than bullets, missiles, and bombs.

But, surely humans were created in haste and no one will heed the message and be patient except Allah's pious chosen slaves, who are usually seen as strangers in the Ummah, just as Muslims are seen as strangers in the world. Allah's Messenger (S) mentioned in his saying, **"Islam started as something strange and will return as something strange as it began, so Toobaa (a tree in Paradise) is for the Strangers."** May Allah make us from amongst the blessed strangers.

By Ali Bin Masood

Reference: <http://www.hidayaonline.com>



A FINAL WORD FROM THE PROPHET...

This issue of the Message Magazine has explored how Islam, from its humble beginnings, exceeded all other faiths and religions - how it once dominated the fields of science, mathematics, education and medicine, to where we find ourselves today.

What better way to conclude this issue of 'The Message' then by letting the Prophet (S) have the final say on this issue's theme of 'reviving Islam.' The following sermon was delivered on the Ninth Day of Dhul-Hijjah, 10 A.H. in the 'Uranah valley of Mount Arafat' in Mecca. It was to be the Prophet's last sermon before his death. In it contained advice for all future generations to come... Us!!!

After praising and thanking Allah the Prophet (S) said:

"O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that he will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived. Your capital is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah has judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas ibn 'Abd'al Muttalib [the Prophet's uncle] be waived.

Every right arising out of homicide in pre-Islamic days is henceforth waived and the first such right that I waive is that arising from the murder of Rabiah ibn al Harithibn.

O People, the disbelievers indulge in tampering with the calendar in order to make permissible that which Allah forbade, and to forbid that which Allah has made permissible. With Allah the months are twelve in number. Four of them are holy, three of these are successive and one occurs singly between the months of Jumada and Shaban.

Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope of that he will be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste. O People, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a white - except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not therefore do injustice to yourselves. Remember one day you will meet Allah and answer your deeds. So beware: do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People, no prophet or apostle will come after me, and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand my words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the **Qur'an** and my **Sunnah** and if you follow these you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O Allah, that I have conveyed Your message to Your people."

Reference:

An edited excerpt from: <http://www.soundvision.com>



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2. Spikes in dinosaurs tail

3. Legs from flying dinosaur

4. Arm from other right dinosaur

5. Spots missing from right dinosaur

6. Volcano smoke going other direction

7. Rock missing from ground

8. Segment missing from palm tree trunk

9. Leaf missing from palm tree

10. Sun moved in sky

1. Left hand plant changed

2. Spikes in dinosaurs tail

3. Legs from flying dinosaur

4. Arm from other right dinosaur

5. Spots missing from right dinosaur

6. Volcano smoke going other direction

7. Rock missing from ground

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