



Islamic Studies

Syllabus For HSC

(9013 / 12)

Paper 1

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Table of Content

<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Pages</u>
<u>Paper 12 Section A</u>	
Pre Islamic Arabia	3
Life Of Prophet Muhammad (s)	10
4 Rightly Guided Caliphs	35
<u>Paper 12 Section B</u>	
Qur'anic Topics	43
Surah	47
<u>Paper 12 Section C</u>	
Pillars Of Islam	68
Articles Of Faith	75
Id	77
Jihaad	79
Marriage Funeral	81
<u>Paper 12 Section D</u>	
Shari'ah	85

Pre-Islamic Arabia

Known as the age of Jahiliyyah, Ayyam ul Jahiliyyah, the darkest period of history, pre Islamic arabia is the period ranging after the elevation of prophet Isa (as) to the heaven till the spreading of Islam by the prophet Muhammad (s) at the age of 40. It was a period where the people were deeply rooted in all kinds of sins as they were not interested to follow the divine books revealed centuries back. It was a period where there was the need of the coming a messenger in the name of Hazrat (or Hadrat – Eminence and high personality) Muhammad (s)

Social Conditions Of Pre Islamic Arabia

Describe the social conditions of the Arabs during the Age of Ignorance.

Pre Islamic Arabia was the period before the coming of Islam in Arabia. It was also named as Jahiliyyah period and the Arabs were deeply rooted in sins and immoralities. It is also important to say that they had some qualities as well.

The **first** point is that the social structure within the nomadic life of the Arabs in the desert placed great importance to loyalty within the clan or the tribe. The leader was respected. The individuals could not survive in the desert and as such the well-being of group and tribe was paramount. There were the acceptable social norms which revolved around what was acceptable to the group. Something may be accepted in a group and the same thing may not in another group. **Secondly**, due to these differences there was constant warfare between tribes for revenge and superiority and that went on for generations. There was no sense of national identity and there was inter-tribal feuds and vendetta. **Thirdly**, the leader or Shaikh was chosen on the egalitarian system. The shaikh took care of the weaker members of the tribe. His social standing depended on his justice and on raids to capture camels, cattle or goods of neighbouring tribes. **Fourthly**, the nomadic Arabs evolved a chivalric code (muruwah) giving meaning to their lives within the clan or tribe. This would mean glorifying courage, patience, endurance, hospitality and generosity. They would be being generous with the little they had and that was very important. **Fifthly**, there were also the settlers in towns like in Mecca and Ta'if. They followed commercial ethos to survive, though they still maintained the tribal allegiances. The main chiefs were the city dwellers.

Sixthly, there were common vices of drinking and gambling more prevalent here and that led to debt. In this way usury was common. **Seventhly**, men were considered as the supreme leaders. They could decide on whatever they wanted as long as women didn't interfere. Men treated their women as commodities known as chattels to pay debts. There were unchecked polygamy and polyandry and they were rampant. **Eighthly**, women and girls had no status and no human or legal right in their family lives and in the society. It was the men who would decide. The men would prefer to have male offspring as the latter would grow to be fighters and would have the chance to become a leader. As such there was female infanticide. **Ninthly**, there were many sins like prostitution, adultery, fornication, theft, highway robbery and kidnapping among others. However, the settlers in towns of Mecca followed commercial ethos to survive and made agreements with the Bedouins not to attack the trade caravans especially during season of fairs. **Tenthly**, there was the relation of slaves and masters. The lives of the slaves depended on the masters. They were ill-treated by the bad masters. They had no right in the society and were bought and sold at will.

1. Explain the significance of the change in social conditions with the coming of Islam.
2. How did the prophet change them?

After the coming of the prophet (s.a.w) among the Arabs and the ashab, there was a slow but inevitable change in the acceptance of Islam in all aspects of life. **Firstly**, the Arabs were used to tribal equality in many spheres of their life and this equality characterised the life of the Prophet and the spirit of early Muslims. This led to the idea of brotherhood in Madina and towards the whole Muslim community and hence there was more cohesion. **Secondly**, the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) gave importance to all individuals regardless of who they were or in which tribes they are or which lineage. What was important is to be a Muslim in the Ummah of the prophet (s.a.w). **Thirdly**, the religion of Islam incorporated the ideals of courage, patience, endurance which became universal loyalties to Allah and other Muslims. **Fourthly**, in cases of retribution individualism was fostered and the relatives of a dead man could punish only his murderer not any member of tribe which had previously resulted in prolonged inter-tribal warfare. **Fifthly**, the institution of marriage was taken seriously. The consent of the woman was vital. The prophet introduced the contract which must be made and the dowry was to be given. Men were limited to only four wives in marriage.

Sixthly, thus women in general and wives in particular got status. They were respected and had a voice. They were free to voice out their opinions and they had a say in the society. **Seventhly**, women were allowed to divorce and were given rights of inheritance from their fathers and their husbands. **Eighthly**, Education became obligatory on everyone and educating girls was commended by the Prophet as a way to Paradise. **Ninthly**, the system of usury was forbidden to prevent monetary exploitation of the weak. It was a tool of oppression and a means to unjustly take others' money. As such the institution of zakat was made a pillar of Islam. It was obligatory and the prophet encouraged to charity. **Tenthly**, vices of drinking, gambling and prostitution were banned. Many thieves became custodians of money through the prophet. The long prevalent slavery was discouraged and there was reward from Allah for freeing of slaves. As many slaves were freed by the ashab like Hazrat Abu Bakr.

Economic Conditions Of Pre Islamic Arabia

Describe the economic system in Arabia before Islam.

Pre Islamic Arabia also known as the Jahiliyyah period lasted for approximately 6 centuries from the elevation of prophet Isa till the spreading of Islam by the last prophet Muhammad (s.a.w). During that time the Arabs were divided into the city and the desert dwellers. The following will elaborate on the economy of the Arabs of that time.

During that period the economy was divided into different aspects like agriculture, industries, markets, trade and different ways of funds. **Firstly**, on the agricultural sector, the land of Macca was not fertile and only dates were able to be cultivated. They were thus used locally by the local people. However, the land of Madina and Ta'if was so much fertile that products like dates, grapes, barley, wheat, rice as such were cultivated. The produce was so beneficial that they were used both locally and for export. It is worth noted that the people of Ta'if were experts in transplantation. **Secondly**, the city of Ta'if was known as the industrial city where skins of dead animals like oxen, sheep, goats, camels and many others were transported there for treatment in various tanneries and then in industries for the production of bags, shoes, belts, luxuries and fantasies. They were thus sent to the different parts of the country and to different other countries as exported goods. **Thirdly**, there were three kinds of markets in the main cities of Hijaz. The "common" market was used by each and every one. All Arabs had access therein and there was no discrimination. The "slave" market was meant for the buying and selling of slaves and was occupied by the middle class and rich people. Access to such market was possible only if one was able to buy or sell slaves. The poor people were excluded. The "aristocrat" market was meant

only for the rich where only luxuries were sold. Goods and services of high qualities were sold and offered there. All these markets were owned by the rich people of Macca but their employees or workers were from the middle or low class. They would work hard for only a little share of the profit.

Fourthly, the rich Arabs would engage in business with different countries. They would trade with China for luxuries, Africa for crafts, Syria for carpet and India for spices. In return they would sell their dates, leather products, agricultural products and slaves to these countries. They would either engage in barter and monetary systems. The Bedouins would follow the same track if ever they had the means to do so. All these business trades would take place in caravans. The Arabs would also engage in the business of idols. They knew that during the month of Dhul Hijjah there would be many pilgrims who would come for the pilgrimage. They would carve different models of the 360 idols present in and around the sanctuary of the Ka'bah. They would deal in such business. **Fifthly**, there were different ways the Arabs would fund their business and become richer and richer. Levies were imposed on anyone, such as travellers, foreigners and caravans for entering, staying and leaving the city of Macca. Another levy would be paid for catering for their animals and belongings. Bribes were common among them for "progress". Any desire for favouritism would lead to bribes. High rate of interest was imposed on the borrowers. The lenders were mainly the chiefs of Macca or the Jews. Each year it would increase by one hundred per cent and at the end of the third year, beginning the fourth year, the properties of the borrower would become the properties of the lender, including wife and children.

To what extent did the economic system change when people became Muslim?

With the coming of Islam, many aspects from the economic field changed. The **first point** is that the prophet introduced the concept of halal and haram business. Profit made by the Muslims should be reasonable not to burden the clients and also not to incur loss. The percentage of profit should be regularly checked. At the same time he emphasised on controlled consumption with moderation. A **second point** was concerning the quality and weightage of products where the pre Islamic Arabs would indulge in plundering the clients with no good service. Cheating and dishonesty were discouraged. A **third point** was that the prophet crushed down all kinds of bribes, interest and illicit gains to bring income to the country. Interest was declared haram to both the takers and the givers. A **fourth point** can be the introduction of Zakaat, fitr, ushr and sadaqa among others as means to fund the Bait ul Maal (the public treasury) which would be used for the development of the city and the welfare of the people. The standard of living of the people was important for the prophet. A **fifth point** may be that the prophet encouraged the cultivation of different products by all members of his community. In that way, the Muslims would not be subjected to monopolies of any product. That was done to the Muslim individual's ability. That was why many Muslims were farmers or cultivators. Money was not spent for any useless purposes. In that the prophet introduced the system of wise spending as the Quran advised us to spend in His way but at to have a control over it.

Another aspect was that the prophet eliminated all kinds of illicit or favoured markets. The aristocrat and slaves markets were banned and everyone was able to go in any market they would like. The prophet had a committee for to control the price of traders to avoid injustice and high price. A **seventh point** would be the introduction of regular check or surprised check by chosen members from the people. However, all the governors would meet the prophet at the end of each year to discuss the progress of their economic system with development and at the same time the problems encountered. **Another point** was that the prophet would allow tract of land to be cultivated like the one given to Wail bin Hajr. It can be done either by the owner or by another one on the basis of crop sharing. This encouraged people to become autonomous and launching their own business and trade. It can be also through lending of money without interest. A **ninth point** is that the prophet introduced a system of social security. The Islamic concept of social security originates from verses of the Qur'an and the Ahadith which enjoin upon the believers of Islam to help their poor and needy brothers-in-faith who are unable to fulfil their basic human needs. Every person living in the Islamic state is entitled to these basic needs. The poor would be helped by the state on monthly basis with the basic needs. As such there would be lesser lower classes

and a reduction of thieves with an increase in the standard of living. A **tenth point** would be that the Islamic system of economics set by the prophet restricted the accumulation and keeping of luxury items and advised the Muslims to lead a simple life, not an extravagant one. Muslims should not be tempted with this luxuries world. It is based on the concept that every human being has the right to equal financial and social needs and these rights were protected by the prophet.

Religious Conditions Of Pre Islamic Arabia

Outline the religious beliefs and practices of the Arabs before Islam.

The period of pre Islamic Arabia was before the coming of the prophet of Islam with his spreading of Islam. During that period the Arabs were pagans with different beliefs and practices. The following paragraphs will help us to understand more their beliefs and practices.

Firstly, the Arabs were idol worshippers and they would pray to their different gods such as Laat, Uzza, Manat as goddesses and Hubal as their chief god. They would also pray Na'ilah, Waad and Isaaf. **Secondly**, they would pay verbal homage to a supreme God known as Allah. As it is said in the Qur'an that they knew about Allah but they took other gods as intercessors. **Thirdly**, they would worship things of nature like stones, trees, stars, sun and moon. If ever they noticed that a rock or stone was more shining or attractive than what they were using, they would exchange it. Thus the new one would be considered as a god. **Fourthly**, they would believe in angels as daughters of Allah and they would worship them alongside with spirits of their ancestors. They would have their own personal deity at home. **Fifthly**, there were also the Christians who believed in prophet Isa as being god or son of god with his book as Injeel, the Jews who believed in prophet Musah with his book as Tawraat and the Zoroastrians, also called the Magians who believed in one uncreated god as Ahura Mazda without monasticism worshipping fire with their book known as Avesta. There was also the religion of Hanif who followed the prophet Ibrahim with his Suhuf and Allah as God. They were awaiting the prophet Muhammad to come. **Sixthly**, they were superstitious and they believed in soothsayers, astrologers, divination through arrows but they didn't believe in accountability in the afterlife.

During the pre Islamic period, Macca was the religious centre ever since the Arab history began. It was dated since the time of the prophet Adam (as). The centre of Macca being the Ka'bah was the vital part of worship with over 360 idols inside and all around in its sanctuary. A **first religious practice** would be that they would perform circumambulation of the Ka'bah in state of nudity with the hands clapping and singing. **Another practice** was that they would observe the rites of pilgrimage and they would stay at 'Arafat. They would dedicate their time to verbal homage to their gods and would try to be honest and sinless people. A **third practice** was through animal sacrifices. They would sacrifice cats, dogs, rats, monkeys, sheep and goats among others to satisfy their gods or to be protected from punishment from their gods. A **forth practice** would be in the form of human sacrifices. Young virgin girls would be sacrificed specially during the short periods of eclipse. The blood of the poor girls would be poured over the altar of their gods. They thought that this action would help them. A **fifth practice** could be from the Christians and the Jews who would join in their churches and temples reading the Injeel and the Tawraat respectively. They would join in the feasts of day of assumptions, all saints' day and baptism for the Christians and the day of Sabbath, the Passover and the day of atonement for the jews. A **sixth practice** would be from the Zoroastrian who placed great emphasis on purity and not defiling any of the elements of Ahura Mazda's creation. For that reason, traditionally, neither burial nor cremation was practiced by Zoroastrians. Instead, dead bodies were taken to a Tower of Silence and laid out under the sun, where vultures devoured them. Zoroastrian's places of worship are called Fire Temples. In them an eternal flame is kept burning with sandalwood and frankincense. The first fire to be lit upon an altar is said to have been brought down from heaven by Zoroaster with a rod. The Hanif used to take bath as

means of purification and would perform the tawaf of the ka'bah, the sa'i of mounts Safa and Marwa and the stop (wuquf) at 'Arafat in a modest and moral way with cloth on.

Which of these beliefs and practices did the Prophet Muhammad adapt and include in Islam?

With the coming of the prophet of Islam there had been many changes on the religious beliefs and practices. **Firstly**, the Prophet Muhammad corrected the idea of monotheism that is to worship only one God, Allah. Pre Islamic Arabs were polytheists and idol worshippers. The prophet changed this belief. **Secondly**, the prophet instilled in them the belief in Allah, angels as His creatures, His books, His messengers, the day of Judgement and destiny. Before that they didn't believe in destiny and a day of judgement as day of accountability. They said that there was no afterlife. **Thirdly**, the prophet told people about reward of Paradise for good deeds like almsgiving, prayers and reward of Hell for morally depraved actions like female infanticide. They didn't believe in Jannah or Jahannam. **Fourthly**, the prophet made them realise that belief in the worship of spirits of the ancestors, considering them as intermediates, would never help them. Allah says that the gods that they worshipped would never help them. **Fifthly**, while they would believe in superstitious, soothsayers, astrologers and divination through arrows, the prophet explained to them that they didn't have the knowledge to know the future as the future lies in the hands of Allah. Astrologers don't have exact science.

Among the various religious practices, the prophet reinstated the Ka'bah as the symbolic house of Allah by getting rid of all idols. It was before that a place where shirk and superstitions were practiced. A **second** religious practice was the restoration of the circumambulation of the Ka'bah as it was during the time of prophet Ibrahim. This included Arafat and Mina in pilgrimage. The wear of the Ihram was obligatory. Before Islam it was done in the state of nudity. **Thirdly**, the idea of sacrifices was corrected. While the Arabs used to perform human sacrifices, the prophet gave respect, honour and sacredness to life. According to Islam saving the life of a person is like saving the whole of humanity. **Fourthly**, the idea of considering things of nature as gods and of exchanging from time to time was replaced by Trust in Allah. The Arabs no more brought with them 3 stones on journeys and craving idols for buying and selling business. **Fifthly**, the idea of cells for the priest and their places of cult with statues of their gods as means of encouraging towards worship were replaced by the mosque and Qur'anic texts or scriptures for inspiration.

The prophet made links with Judaism and Christianity as they shared the same prophets and he reiterated Islam was a continuation of the same Message from Allah. Other religions were given the chance to join that reform.

Describe the importance of Mecca to the Arabs before Islam.

Above all, since the time of prophet Adam the Ka'bah existed and attracted pilgrims from all over Arabia. It was a place of worship and business. **Secondly**, there were idols like Lat, Uzza, Manat and others in the sanctuary but that sanctuary of Allah was known as the biggest in the region with 360 idols in and around the Ka'bah. **Thirdly**, it was important as it was controlled by different tribes, but now by Quraish and more precisely by the Prophet's tribe. That was a prestigious instance to hold and have the key of the Ka'bah. **Fourthly**, Macca was important and popular due to the history behind the water Zamzam and with it also. After all water in the desert was vital and the settlement was based around the water source called Zamzam. **Fifthly**, Macca was important as a trading city. As agriculture was impossible, hence everyone involved in commerce through different markets for the poor, better off and the rich. It was situated on crossroads of trade routes, from Yemen to Syria, and Abyssinia to Iraq. Many traders carrying incense (frankincense), spices, ivory etc. Meccans also became traders themselves, travelling far and wide.

Sixthly, Macca was important as the leading Meccans were shrewd financiers. That made Macca the leading financial centre. They were the richest people in the area and could buy any service. Macca had rich idol worshippers and Hanif. **Seventhly**, Macca was a peaceful and secured area as the Quraish were not interested in constant tribal warfare. They remained neutral in conflicts. They thus developed 'haram' with 20 mile radius of Ka'bah where violence was forbidden. There were pacts made with tribes not to attack caravans during season of trade fairs. **Eighthly**, the Ka'bah within Macca was the symbol of glory and status. The one being its custodian and the ones living in its vicinity was praised and honoured. The symbolic and spiritual benefits were important. The sanctity of Ka'bah and pilgrimage to Mecca was essential to survival of Quraish. **Ninthly**, Macca was important for the Arabs as many prophets of the existing religions once in their lives went through Macca to spread Islam. It is also said that there are 70000 prophets who are buried in the sanctuary of the Ka'bah. **Tenthly**, Macca was situated in an isolated area. The isolation of Mecca gave the Arabs control of their own activities where there was no outside power was interested in them. As such the Quraish ruled the country.

Tribal And Political Conditions Of Pre Islamic Arabia

Describe the structure of the tribal system in Arabia before Islam.

The period of pre Islamic Arabia lasted for approximately 6 centuries from the elevation of prophet Isa till the spreading of Islam by the last prophet Muhammad (s.a.w). During that time the Arabs were divided into the city and the desert dwellers. The following will elaborate on the tribal system.

As mentioned, the Bedouin Arabs lived as nomads in tribal groups. In fact a group of families made a clan and a group of clans made a tribe. There were many tribes at that time and each had its own rules and regulations. What could be prohibited in one tribe could be well allowed in another tribe. **Secondly**, due to the varieties of tribes with different concepts, they were constantly at war with each other over scarce resources. These fights would last for generations in a more dramatic and drastic way. Only a few small settled communities such as in Mecca and Ta'if relied on trade and religion where the caving of idols became a business. **Thirdly**, these tribes were formed on basis of blood and kinship. This evolved into a tribal chivalric code of honour known as "muruwah". This gave meaning to their lives and encouraged towards courage, avenging wrongs, patience, endurance, hospitality and generosity above all. **Fourthly**, the shaikh (chief or leader) was selected by council of elders as best person for job, regardless of parentage or privilege though his tribe should be famous. He should be known through his intellect, maturity, courage, authority, administration, fluency in language and business. **Fifthly**, the shaikh was ultimate authority controlling over his people and administrative affairs. He was also to protect the tribe. The shaikh was the judge in disputes and he was to distribute possessions and goods equally. He also took care of weaker members.

Sixthly, the sense of patriotism was strictly tribal. Everything was subordinate to the interest of the group not to say that they neglected the individuality of a person. **Seventhly**, pre Islamic Arabs were known for their poetry and their poets sang glories of the tribe, of their heroes of war, of their leaders but rarely of their gods. There were poem competitions held at the Ukaz or Ukaiz market on annual basis. The winner would be given much wealth and status in the society. He would be considered as a leader. **Eighthly**, each member was fully protected and only the shaikh/tribe could ensure personal survival in difficult times where there was no room for individualism. Each tribe had to avenge the death of a single member, hence feuds went on for generations. It was a cycle of violence. **Ninthly**, there was so much competition among these tribes that the balance of power depended on raids to capture camels, cattle or goods; turnover of wealth and fortune was part of tribal existence. Only the strong would survive and the weak were exploited, hence position of women and female babies at risk. The **tenth point** was that the Bedouins would join together in a meeting in order to take decisions for the benefit of the people. They

would protect their interest but if ever a member got married with another member of another tribe, then both would be rejected from the 2 tribes.

To what extent did tribal attitudes change when people became Muslim?

With the coming of Islam, many aspects from different fields changed. The **first point** is that tribal loyalties remained strong but overshadowed by ideals of Islam. They were loyal to their fallible leaders but now they were loyal to Allah and His prophet (s.a.w). It was slow but inevitable as the message of equality in Islam spread and Muslims grew in number. The **second point** is that Islam incorporated the best of muruwah but extended it to include all Muslims rather than just tribe. Each member was to endeavour himself to a moral code of conduct and patriotism with the idea of helping his neighbour. The **third aspect** was that the Arabs were used to tribal egalitarianism in selection of shaikh where weaknesses could be found specially when it came to choosing a leader based on his reputation. The idea of selection or rather election characterised the life of the Prophet and the spirit of early Muslims but with divine help. The **fourth point** was that Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) gave importance to all individuals regardless of who they were or what were their tribe or lineage. Being a member of ummah became more important than tribal membership. The idea of being in a Jama'ah and congregation was more important. The **fifth point** was seen in the idea of Allah being the Judge. The Arabs had the notion of vendetta where there would be inter tribal wars lasting for over generations. The prophet stopped it and brought their faith and fate in the hands of Allah.

A **sixth idea** can be seen in poems being written. The Arabs used to have poems competition annually as a custom among tribes. Some poems were banned but others for the praise of Allah and His prophet were allowed and encouraged. **Another aspect** which was changed by the prophet was in marriage. There was no intertribal marriage. The prophet stopped that practice and allowed marriage between any male and female Muslim member of his community. **Eighthly**, though the Bedouins were perseverant, patient and hard working people, many of the tribes were engaged in looting the cultivation of the city dwellers. The prophet encouraged them with the perseverance but prohibited them from looting. He rather encouraged them to earn a halal living. **Ninthly**, the Bedouins of the tribes would engage in rearing of sheep and goats among others and would deal in the business of buying and selling or barter system. The prophet continued the practice but with a sense of equity, justice, fairness and halal dealing. **Tenthly**, the tribes would deal in polytheism and idol worshipping. They would have different gods for different purposes. The prophet changed their situations to adopting monotheism that is the worshipping of only one god, Allah.

There had been many adapted and adopted concepts as well as many changes through the coming of the prophet within a tribal system. These were done as blessings for the whole of Mankind, Muslims and non Muslims.

Life Of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w)

Life Before Prophethood

Year 570 CE – 610 CE

Write an outline of the life of the Prophet Muhammad up to the time of the first revelation.

The holy prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) was born in Mecca in the year 570 CE on the 12th of Rabi'ul Awwal in the Year of the Elephant. His father who was named Abdullah died 6 months before the birth of the prophet. He was thus a posthumous child. His mother Amina later on died when he was 6 years old.

At the birth of the prophet, he was nursed by a foster mother Halimah Sa'diyyah in the desert at a place known as Juraanah. There was the famous incident of the opening of his chest by angel Jibril (as). He spent 4 years there and when he was brought back to his mother there was a period of drought. Halimah wanted to keep the child with her for another 2 years. So at the age of 6 he returned to his mother Amina at Macca. He had grown so much and was so loved by his mother that they were to Madinah (known as Yasrib beforehand) accompanied by Umm Aiman. He visited the families of his mother, the grave of his father and learned how to swim in a pool there. After one month, on their way back to Macca, his mother died at Al Abwa. He was carried by Umm Aiman all the way till Macca.

He was thus brought up by his grandfather Abdul Muttalib till the age of 8 or 9 and after his death the prophet was taken in charge by his uncle Abu Talib who was a merchant. He would accompany his uncle on his journeys abroad for business and would help as a little shepherd. In the year 580 CE when he was 10 years of age, there was the Harb-al-Fijar (the sacrilegious war during sacred months) which lasted for 10 years till 590 CE. He would participate in helping the wounded, those thirsty and would pick up all arrows to give to his uncle on the battle field. At the age of 12 he went on a journey to Syria with Abu Talib and met a Christian monk Bahira who prophesied that he would become a prophet of Allah. They then returned to Macca.

From the age of 12 till 20 he led a life of shepherd and he obtained business experience. He created Half-ul-Fuzul at the age of 15 to help the poor as he was disgusted by the society. He loved life of solitude for reflection and pondering on Allah. Due to his great business fame and ability, he received a business Proposal from Bibi Khadijah (r.a) in the year 595 at the age of 25. Maysarah accompanied him to Syria to discover his secrets. It was a fruitful business with much profit. During one night Khadijah dreamed of moon entering her room. She was unaware of the meaning. She went to Waraqa bin Naufal – a Hanif and her cousin. Bibi Khadijah sent a marriage proposal and the prophet (s.a.w) accepted. It was a successful marriage with 4 daughters (Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum and Faatima) and 2 sons (Qasim and Abdullah). In the year 605 the valley of Ka'bah was flooded by rain and the Arabs rebuilt the Ka'bah. The holy prophet (s.a.w) solved the problem of the placement of the black stone. He was disgusted with Life of Arabs and he retreated times and often in the desert and the cave of Hira. It was then that one night during the month of Ramadhan, Hazrat Jibril (as) brought the first five verses of Surah Al 'Alaq. When Hazrat Jibril (as) came to him, he was in his original form with wings and he asked the prophet (s.a.w) to read. But the prophet (s.a.w) replied that he was not among the readers. Hazrat Jibril asked him a second time but with the same answer. The third time Hazrat Jibril seized him and asked him to "Read in the name of your Lord who created. Created Insaan from a clot of blood. Read and your Lord is the most bountiful. Who taught with the pen. Taught Man that which he knew not."

Explain why he was given the title of As Swadiq (the Truthful) and Al Amin (the Trustworthy).

The prophet (s.a.w) was known for As Swadiq, the Truthful for many reasons. He had never lied in his life since his childhood. That was proved on the mount of Safa when people accepted him as such. He never accused anyone making false allegation or defamation. He was always Just towards the poor

and the low class doing everything to help them. He was always consistent in decision based on justice. He was always genuine towards people without any hidden agenda. He would always be honest towards them. He was always right to the point irrespective of rich influence. He never engaged in sins and any frivolity of the society. He would always be far from these things. He was known to be virtuous and pious and at the same time thoughtful towards others. He worked to promote justice and peace.

The holy prophet (s.a.w) was known as Al Ameen, the trustworthy for different reasons. The simple fact that at the time of business and pilgrimage people entrusted their belongings to him proved that they had trust in him. They entrusted business contract to him. All his clients of both local and abroad had full trust in him and would always like to buy and trade with him. He would never engage in bribes and interest and for his own morality he would never engage in conspiracies and kidnappings. Hazrat Bibi Khadijah employed him for a business trip and later on got married to him and that was a sign that he was pure and trustworthy as Bibi Khadijah though had many proposals didn't accept anyone of them except that of the prophet. He was so much trusted that he was considered as the arbiter in the dispute of placing the stone. He never got involved in highway robbery, theft or any kind of crime. He worked to promote justice and peace as part of the treaty called Half ul Fuzul.

Problems Faced In Macca

Life Of Muhammad – Wahy – Revelation

Year 610 CE

Outline the Prophet's first experience of revelation.

The holy prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) was the last of prophets sent to guide Mankind. There was a period of his life when he was disgusted of the society and he wanted to evade that environment. He thus started to retire himself in the cave of Hira and in the desert.

So one day as he used to spend time meditating especially during month of Ramadan on topics like Allah and the hereafter the first wahy was sent upon him. At that moment he was in cave of Hira, in the hill called Jabal Nur. The event was recorded as Hazrat Jibril [Gabriel] appeared to him in his real form with wings to bestow revelation upon him. He would hear his name everywhere till he saw Hazrat Jibril. The latter told the prophet to utter 'Recite/or Read'. The response from the Prophet was 'I am not a reciter' (مَا أَنَا بِقَارِئٍ) (swahih muslim 160, Swahih Bukhariy 3). Hazrat Jibril did the same again but with the same answer from the prophet (s.a.w). However, on the third time the angel squeezed him and said 'Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clot of blood. Recite and your Lord is Most Bountiful, He who has taught by the pen, taught man what he knew not'.

These were the first 5 verses of surah 96 Al Alaq which were revealed upon him. The Prophet was so shocked as it was the first time that he had such experience that he fled the cave. However, he was destined to be a prophet. So, wherever he looked he saw the angel and would hear a voice saying: 'O Muhammad, you are the Messenger of God and I am Jibril'. He got home shaking with fear and asked his wife Hazrat Bibi Khadijah to cover him. He told her what did happen and the latter reassured him that he was a good person and no harm would touch him. Hazrat Bibi Khadijah went to tell her cousin Waraqah bin Nawfal who was learned in the scriptures. He reassured the prophet and told him that 'Muhammad is the prophet of his people...'. That was the beginning of 23 years of Wahy.

The Prophet's first public proclamation at Safa;

At the age of 40, the holy prophet (s.a.w) was given the first wahy by Allah through the angel Jibril (as). It was the first 5 verses of surah al 'Alaq. He spread this message throughout his closest relatives and friends. It was only after 3 years that revelation was received by the Prophet to make the message of Islam public. This is mentioned in the Qur'an as to 'Declare openly to them what thou are commanded and turn away from the pagans' [15:94]. Following the order of Allah, the prophet moved to the mount Safa and called out to people of Mecca to assemble. He therefore addressed his family and all those present there. He started by asking them if he told them of an army coming behind the hill to attack Macca would they believe him. All of them replied that they trusted him as he had never lied. Thereafter he told them of Allah being One and they should believe in Him and he would be witness for them on the last day. The Meccans had never known him to lie [As Sadiq and Al Amin] but still they did not believe in him. Abu Lahab [his uncle] condemned him saying and questioning him as 'Did you call us for this?'. All turned away in anger saying he had gone mad. However to console the prophet verses were revealed later on through the surah Al Masad where Allah condemned Abu Lahab.

This address of the prophet (s.a.w) was important At the outset due to the fact that he was a prophet obeying the order of Allah. He addressed people in obedience to Allah's command and it was done now in the open. Whether people would accept the message or not the prophet had done his duty. Moreover, this was a clear public statement of the fundamental beliefs of Islam delivered to the Quraish. At the outset, the Quraish were idol worshippers and polytheist people. The message was targeted towards the core belief of the Maccan and it dealt with monotheism, the worshipping of one god alone. Furthermore, since the time of Hazrat Isa (as), the Islamic message was not made openly. With this order from Allah, the prophet took his message to a wider audience including both his relatives, families, friends, neighbours and strangers. Fourthly, this was the first step made by the prophet (s.a.w) towards the Maccan and as such it was the first stage of his rejection by these people. This means that the task entrusted by Allah to the prophet would not be an easy job where there would be rejections as well as persecutions upon his own body and those following him. Furthermore, this refusal was an indication that the prophet should not lose hope and later on it was seen that Islam became attractive where there were both those who converted to Islam and those who continued their persecutions.

Why did the Prophet's early revelations cause the Meccans to oppose him?

The holy prophet (s.a.w) went to the foot of mount Safa to declare his prophethood to the people of Macca but there had been oppositions for different reasons. At the outset, the Meccan society was class-conscious and was polarised between powerful rich and weak. Quraish thought only of themselves and the fact of abandoning the muruwah values didn't like what they heard from the Prophet. In addition, though Meccans had respected Muhammad as al Amin till now; he was an ordinary man not credited with any miracles like those of Musah (as) or Jesus. The Quraish could not believe a prophet would come from lowly stock. They wanted someone more superior. Moreover, the message of Islam [monotheism] and its teachings went completely against religion of their forefathers. Accepting the prophet (s.a.w) would mean rejecting all their values, concepts and ideologies.

Furthermore, the revelations that Prophet Muhammad was conveying from Allah were of equality (no advantage of being rich), of justice and a 'day of reckoning' [Day of Judgement], when all would be faced with their worldly actions and be accountable. That state displeased the Quraish. Additionally, the Quraish had the prestigious position of being the custodians of the Ka'ba with all its idols. That brought them a good economic position for Meccans to be in. However, the message of Islam was of [an invisible] Allah. They had never seen Allah and were adamant in their religions and faith. The Quraish felt their way of life and importance threatened by growing number of Muslims and as such they

persecuted the Muslims. Another viewpoint was that the Quraish were offended by the action of prostrating for prayer done by Muslims. They didn't like to see Muslims in prayers. Prayer and revelations gave strength to Muslims, many of whom were the weak in society [e.g. women] and slaves.

Life Of Muhammad (s.a.w) – Persecutions

Year 614 CE onwards

Describe the opposition faced by Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims in Mecca after his call to prophethood.

At the age of 40 when the prophet started to spread Islam, there was practically no one to accept him. The Quraish thought that he would stop but they should give him some time. However, when the prophet would not stop, the Quraish were angry at preaching by Prophet Muhammad. They decided then to harass, jeer and insult him at every opportunity. People used to say that he was a man 'possessed'. The wife of Abu Lahab used to throw thorns and dirt on him and in his way and the Quraish tried to choke him while he was praying. He was called a liar at the Safa gathering. In order to show their anger, Abu Lahab forced his 2 sons to divorce their wives, the Prophet's daughters. But there was nothing to be done. The Quraish couldn't do more because of the protection of his uncle Abu Talib.

The Quraish sent Abu Talib to convince the prophet to stop but instead he told his uncle that he would never abandon his religion. He offered him bribes of wealth, power and marriage to stop him preaching. The Quraish went up to torturing the weaker Muslims who had no social standing e.g. Bilal. They also killed others like Harith and Sumayya. There are other ashab like Usman bin Affan who was beaten by his uncle for becoming a Muslim. There was social and economic boycott on the Prophet's clan (Banu Hashim) for 3 years in Shib Abu Talib. The life of Muslims became unbearable, and as such some migrated to Abyssinia. But eventually the Quraish planned to kill the Prophet (s.a.w).

What were the reasons for this opposition from the Quraish?

There were many reasons why the Quraish persecuted the prophet (s.a.w). At the outset, it must be noted that the Quraish were the custodians of the Ka'ba and if they would accept Islam that would mean that they would lose the Ka'ba. They would not take advantage of all the facilities obtained there. Moreover, they thought that if their religion collapsed, their wealth would disappear and for them it was impossible to live without luxuries. They knew that wealth and money meant a lot for their luxurious lives. Added to the above point, they were not prepared to believe in accountability on the Day of Judgement or an afterlife. They were deeply rooted in their religion and that of their forefathers. Another point, they did not recognise Allah as One. For them the God of the prophet (s.a.w) is alien to them and they did not want to leave theirs. Changing of god was something sacred and impossible. Additionally, they thought the Prophet was claiming leadership over them. That was their misconception as the prophet was not interested in this worldly affair and luxuries.

Sixthly, the Quraish thought much about their importance and prestige would disappear with the acceptance of the prophet (s.a.w). The society was class-conscious and was not prepared to lose their position. Worldly status was important to them. Another aspect, the Prophet called for equality and brotherhood and this would mean that the early converts who were slaves and people from humble backgrounds would be on the same footing. They were not ready to accept that change. Moreover, the Prophet preached a code of conduct which was based on morality and where all social vices of adultery, drinking, polygamy among others were declared evil. However, these contributed in their revenue. The Quraish did not want to change their ways. Furthermore, they brought excuses not to accept the prophet. They said that a prophet would be an angel who could perform miracles but not a human. In fact they did not want to be under the control of anyone except under their own whims and caprices. After all they found it difficult to believe a prophet would be a poor person and an orphan. In addition, there was a

feeling of anger and fright when more people were becoming Muslim. They were afraid of losing their position, status, wealth etc... and did not want any more people to accept Islam. As such there were both physical and psychological persecutions.

What lessons do Muslims learn from Prophet Muhammad's behaviour and attitude during those times of difficulty?

Throughout the whole Maccan phase where there were persecutions and oppositions, the prophet and the Muslims behaved in the most honourable way. At the outset, the Prophet bore all the physical persecutions without ever retaliating whether in words or actions. For example there is the story of the woman who threw rubbish on him regularly. In that, Muslims need to remember to be patient and courageous but not to retaliate when provoked. Moreover, the prophet was no more than the beloved of Allah. He knew Allah more than anyone and had complete faith in Him. So, he depended on Allah and his faith was unshakable. In return, Muslims should have a strong faith despite what people around them say or do. It must be accompanied by patience. A third way was that he gave his message calmly and peacefully to whoever listened despite all verbal abuse. He also prayed that Allah guide them if he couldn't convince them. Muslims need to remember this as the best way to invite people to Islam and to turn away if they don't want to listen. Another point, the Prophet felt the pain that other Muslims were suffering and as such suggested that they migrate to Abyssinia and re-locate to Medina. The lesson here is Muslims need to be aware of the suffering faced by others [in all situations] and help in whatever way they can. Another viewpoint, the people of Mecca respected him as a person even before he spoke about Islam. He was known as Al Amin and As Swadiq. Muslims need to remember to be good role models and be good towards all people regardless of their religious beliefs.

Year 615 CE – 616 CE

The migration of Muslims to Abyssinia

Through the mission of the prophet (s.a.w) there had been persecutions and oppositions every day. It was a very difficult period and moment for both the prophet and the Muslims following him. Among the Muslims there were those weak, poor or old ones who were not able to bear these persecutions any more. So in the 5th year of prophethood the prophet advised Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia where there was a just and kind king known as Negus (Najashi). As such by the month of Rajab 11 Men and 4 Women (1st Group) moved to Abyssinia. In that group there were Uthman and his wife Ruqayya [the Prophet's daughter]. The Quraish followed them to influence Negus to send them back to Macca. On the Muslims side, Ja'far bin Abu Talib (cousin of Muhammad) acted as spokesman. Negus wanted to hear from the Muslims and he summoned them to elaborate on the teachings of Islam. Ja'far thus read Surah Maryam which the King had seen to be the Truth. He thus allowed the Muslims to stay. By the year 616, a group of 80 – 83 persons (2nd Group) went to Abyssinia for the same reason.

The move to Abyssinia was undertaken by the Muslims as At the outset due to the persecutions, oppositions and cruelties inflicted on Muslims by the Meccans. The situation was becoming unbearable and there was the need to migrate. Secondly, the prophet sent them there to Abyssinia where he felt that the Christian ruler [Negus] would be sympathetic. This would allow the Muslims to put Islam into practice and to have a more peaceful life without the fright of being persecuted. In addition, through this event, when Negus was moved by the situation and the message found in Surah Maryam he realised that Muslims worshipped the same God as he did and thus there was a similarity between Islam and Christianity. Furthermore, it was a blow to the Quraish as their request was rejected by the king Negus. In fact their mission to extradite Muslims failed and the Muslims were allowed to live in peace and to practice their religion in Abyssinia as long as they desired. Moreover, this situation where Negus allowed the Muslims to stay and live in peace in Abyssinia showed the total dedication of Negus to the Muslims and at the same time the dedication of early Muslims to practice Islam. These early Muslims were willing to leave everything in order to be able to practice their faith in peace.

Year 617 CE – 620 CE

Write an account of the boycott of the Banu Hashim

During the Maccan phase, the Quraish were upset about growing number of Muslims and felt that radical measures were needed to stop the advance of Muslims. There was the meeting of the Shaikh of the city of Macca and at last a covenant was signed by 40 Quraish hung inside Ka'ba banishing Banu Hashim from Macca. As the news was heard, the Quraish were ready to drive the Muslims away from the city. However, Abu Talib supported his nephew and as such his clan (Muttalib) was also included. The purpose of this boycott was to make sure that the Prophet would be moving himself from religious life of the Meccans and as such he could not benefit from any religious or economic field. Nevertheless, there were 2 clans (Hashim and Muttalib) which allowed the Prophet to continue preaching. The rules were that there should not be any contact between the prophet and any one of the Quraish where there could well be dealings to be made. At the same time there would no marriage, trade etc. As such, both clans moved to an area owned by Abu Talib [Shib Abi Talib] in Mecca valley where relatives covertly brought food to them though it was not allowed but still there were great sufferings. This social boycott lasted more than three years and during these years they would eat and drink from stems of cactus. Those who were unable to support these sufferings passed away. However this was unpopular with some Quraish who had ties of kinship. Then the boycott was removed. At the end of that social boycott the two supports of the prophet passed away. They were Abu Twalib and Bibi khadijah. That year was known as the year of sorrow.

Year 620 CE

Write an account of the Prophet's visit to Ta'if.

Since the spreading of Islam not so many has been converted to Islam. With death of Khadijah and Abu Talib all persecutions by Quraish increased. In this he decided to go to Ta'if [Thaqif tribe] with Zayd, his slave and servant but considered as son. That was done with the intention that they would hear his message and agree to protect the Muslims. However the chiefs mocked him and his claim to be a prophet. They laughed at him and called him by different names. They were angry he had rejected their goddess Al-Lat [sanctuary at Ta'if]. He made people chase them out throwing stones and injuring them. The prophet and Zayd did not have the time to spread a single word to the people of Ta'if that the young children were ordered to stone them. It is narrated that the shoes of the prophet were filled with blood. They both took refuge in a garden and prayed for Allah's protection. They also prayed for forgiveness towards people of Ta'if and a prayer that their progeny would become Muslim. It was proven that they converted to Islam after the prophet had conquered Macca. The owners of orchard sent Christian slave boy Addas [from Nineveh, city of Jonah] with grapes. Later on they returned to Macca.

Year 620 CE

Isra wal Mi'raj.

Throughout the mission of the prophet there had been instances where Allah has shown his (the prophet) superiority over other human beings. For example in the 10th year of prophethood on the 27 Rajab 620 CE there had been the Isra wal Mi'raj. It is said that the angel Gabriel [Jibril] came to the prophet on that night and brought him to the Ka'ba where the heart of the prophet was washed with water Zamzam and thus faith and wisdom were poured into it. Then Jibril (as) took the Prophet on Buraq (horse-like winged creature) to Jerusalem where the Masjid al Aqsa is found. After having performed 2 unit of prayer along side with all other prophets, he was taken to the Heaven from 'the farthest mosque' (Al Aqsa) with the help of 'rafa'f' which is a means of transport. He was thus taken through different levels of Heaven and Hell where he visited both of them and acknowledged of their favours and sufferings respectively. On each level he met specific prophets who had preceded him and after which he proceeded to Sidrat ul Muntaha which was the limit of Hazrat Jibril (as). He was not able to accompany

the prophet when the latter continued his way towards Allah. Arriving at a place (where Allah had wished) known in our scope as ‘Laa Makaana’ (No place – as we don’t know where but known by Allah and His Prophet (s)), Allah spoke to him directly. At this stage the five daily prayers [swalaat] were made obligatory for Muslims by Allah. At first it was a number of 50 prayers per day and with the insistence of Hazrat Musah (as) towards the prophet (s.a.w) that number was reduced to 5. After that event, the prophet returned to earth where the Meccans mocked at him about the possibility of the journey but he described in detail a caravan he saw on the way.

The importance of this event can be seen in its mentioning in Qur’an as Allah says ‘Praise be to Him who carried His servant by night from the Sacred mosque to the Farthest mosque whose precincts We have blessed, that We might show him some of our signs’[17:1]. Secondly, the event of Mi’raj shows how the Prophet was blessed by Allah. In fact it is to be noted that it was Allah who invited the prophet and as such it was Allah who wanted to see the prophet (s.a.w). In it the importance of the prophet had been highlighted. Moreover, the stipulation of five daily prayers for Muslims suggests that we too can receive Allah’s grace. The prophet said that the Mi’raj of the Muslims is the Swalaat (prayer). Proximity with Allah is thus attained when we worship Him. Fourthly, when the prophet reached Jerusalem he was the leader of the messengers and prophets sent by Allah since Hazrat Adam (as). Being awaited by all of them and in the company of Hazrat Jibril (as) to perform 2 unit of Swalaat showed how the prophet was important. Furthermore, by this journey Allah gave strength to the Prophet who was sad after the death of his uncle Abu Talib, and Khadijah, his wife. Moreover, it was as a consolation after the rejection he faced in Ta’if.

Year 620 CE – 622 CE

The Pledges of Aqabah.

In the year 620, 6 men from the tribes of Aws and Khazraj met the prophet at ‘Aqabah listened to him and converted to Islam. They returned to Madina to spread Islam with the message and teachings of the prophet (s.a.w). In the year 621 there was the 1st Pledge of ‘Aqabah in the month of Dhul Hajj. 12 men from Yathrib came to accept Islam and took the oath not to commit shirk, adultery, fornication, killing of children, calumny, slander and sins. They promised obedience and faithfulness towards and the holy prophet (s.a.w). Hazrat Mus’ad bin ‘Umair was sent as teacher to Yathrib. The next year (622) there was the 2nd Pledge of ‘Aqabah in the month of Dhul Hajj. 73 men from Yathrib came to accept Islam and to invite the prophet (s.a.w) to Yathrib with full protection. They made the same promise as to live according to Islamic principles. When the Meccans came to know about the support from people of Yathrib they doubled their persecution of Muslims and resulting in all Muslims leaving Mecca except the Prophet, Abu Bakr and Ali. The reason was that Allah has not yet given the prophet the personal order to leave Macca.

The importance of the 2 pledges was that At the outset the holy prophet (s.a.w) concentrated his preaching on strangers who came to Mecca. He took advantage of the presence of foreigners to impart the message of Islam to them. In fact anyone who would listen to him would be delighted resulting in either converting to Islam immediately or later on. Secondly, he took advantage to reform those approaching him both through his Akhlaaq (good manners) and preaching about how to lead a better human life. At the same time advices to abstain from cruelty, falsehood and to be righteous. Additionally, through his endeavour people were keen to spread this message of Islam in Yathrib [Medina] even though the Prophet wasn’t there. This shows that the Madinan people had accepted Islam and they were not forced to do so. Furthermore, the people from Yathrib were looking for an arbitrator to resolve conflict between tribes which endangered prosperity of oasis. The warring parties, tribes, groups or tribes had found in the prophet (s.a.w) a real guide. Furthermore, the people of Madina knowing about what Islam stood for invited Prophet and Muslims to their city to live with them as their leader and they pledged full support to him and his followers. This shows the importance of the prophet’s presence.

Year 623 CE

What events led to the Prophet's migration (Hijrah) to Medina?

Among the various events in the life of the prophet (s.a.w) and the progress of Islam, Hijra can be mentioned. There were some events leading to it as will be discussed below.

During the Maccan phase there were constant persecutions both physical and mental of Prophet. That was extended to the Muslims in general also. There were some Muslims who were not able to bear these persecutions and they were ordered to leave Macca. **Secondly**, the situation went to such extent that names of Sumayyah and Yasir can be mentioned as being the first martyrs of Islam. This atmosphere and feeling of insecurity among the Muslims led them to go to Abyssinia and then Madina. **Added to the second point**, though the prophet was being persecuted he was able to maintain the same trend in his mission. However, his followers were not like him in the sense that they were not prophets and were different from the prophet. So, seeing the sufferings of his companions the prophet encouraged Muslims of Mecca to migrate to Abyssinia to avoid persecutions and then later on to Yathrib (Madina). **In addition**, there was the social boycott of Banu Hashim [Prophet's clan] imposed by the Quraish. The Muslims faced great hardship for three consecutive years however there were exceptions during the holy months when all hostilities ceased. They could then talk to other Arabs and try to invite them to Islam, but it was in vain. The prophet preferred to direct them to Hijra. **Moreover**, after the social boycott the two most important persons in the life of the prophet died. With the death of Khadijah and Abu Talib this weakened his position in Mecca and there were more persecutions by the Quraish. So it was time to leave Macca.

Furthermore, seeing that the Maccans were adamant in their concepts with accompanied insults and beatings, the prophet decided to spread Islam at Ta'if. However, he didn't have the time to elaborate on Islam when the chiefs of Ta'if ordered the children of the city to stone the prophet. The rejection of the people of Ta'if forced him to Hijra. **Added to the above ideas**, during the period of Hajj people from Yathrib had been coming to listen to the Prophet and wanted him to preach them during the fairs of this month. That resulted in the Pledges of Aqabah when he was invited by the people of Yathrib and was promised security for both the Muslims and himself. He had thus the option to move to Yathrib. **Besides**, there was the invitation of the warring tribes of Yathrib. The two tribes, the Aws and the Khazraj, were always in constant fight. They wanted an arbitrator to bring peace in Madina. They had seen the prophet as the one who could be their saviour. The prophet accepted their invitation to Yathrib. **Additionally**, it was difficult for the prophet and the Muslims to spread Islam as at the outset the leaders of Quraish hated him because of the themes of the message of Islam which went against their whole concept. Therefore the assembly of Quraish vowed to kill him and then there was no way out except that of leaving Macca. Last but not least, the prophet was waiting for the direct order for him to move to Madina. As it is known prophets didn't act without the order from Allah. As such when revelation from Allah to leave Mecca was obtained, the prophet left for Madina.

Describe what happened the night the Prophet migrated [made Hijrah] to Medina and the behaviour of the Quraish at this time.

The **situation** of the Muslims at Macca for 10 years since the public preaching at mount Safa was chaotic and filled with persecutions. The Muslims had been ordered by Allah and His prophet (s.a.w) to make the Hijrah but the prophet was waiting for specific order from Allah for him to go. The **Quraish** knew the Prophet had been encouraging Muslims to emigrate to Medina to avoid further persecution. They thus guessed he would leave sometime as well. So they held a meeting at the Council House [dar al Nadwah] and decided to participate jointly in killing the prophet during the night. The **prophet** received a revelation from Allah and was told to leave Mecca. He was made aware of the plot of the Quraish to kill him during that same night. He **went** to inform his friend Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) about the revelation and told him to get ready for the trip. He then returned home for the night to come. In order to ensure his

departure the prophet asked Ali to occupy his bed that night and at the same time he reassured him of Allah's protection. He also asked Ali to return the people's belongings which were left with him for safe keeping the next morning and then to join him at Madina. Ali had faith in the words of the prophet that nothing would happen to him. All that night the Quraish watched the Prophet's house as they were convinced that he was inside and were waiting for the right moment to jump in to kill the prophet. Though the house of the prophet was surrounded, he left it reciting verses from Sura Yaasin [36:9....'And we have put a barrier before them.....so that they cannot see']. As such he was not seen by anyone. He thus went to Abu Bakr's house where two camels and provisions were ready for the journey and they left immediately. Instead of going north towards Medina, they went southwards to fool their pursuers. They took Abdullah bin Uraiqit (non-Muslim Guide) as guide.

Early in the morning the Quraish rushed into the Prophet's house to find Ali asleep in the Prophet's bed. They were shocked and could not understand how the prophet left without being seen. When they asked where the Prophet was, Ali said he didn't know. The Quraish sent search parties to track him while offering a reward of 100 camels. Many of the Quraish wanted the reward and Suraqah bin Malik was among them. The prophet and Abu Bakr reached cave of Thawr. Before entering it Abu Bakr cleaned it and filled in all the holes found in it with his cloth to avoid being seen by the Quraish. In the cave the prophet reassured Abu Bakr 'Have no fear for Allah is with us' [9:40] before resuming journey to Medina. When the search party came to the cave of Thawr they saw the spider's web and the nest of the bird at its entrance. They thus returned without looking inside. They stayed for 3 days and nights. . It was 3 miles away from Macca. After that they continued their way though they were followed by the Quraish. Abu Bakr moved on 4 sides to protect Muhammad (s.a.w). When a price was fixed on the head of the prophet, Suraqah bin Malik was sent to kill the prophet. But for 3 times his horse stumbled in the sand and was released by the du'a of the prophet (s.a.w). He thus accepted Islam and returned to Macca. They reached Quba situated 3 miles from Madina on a Monday. They stayed for 2 weeks where and when they built the Masjid Quba. They left on Friday after Swalaatul Jum'ah. It was the first Mosque of Islam where the first Swalaatul Jumu'ah was performed.

Why was the Hijrah of the Prophet a turning point for the Muslims?

There had been many events in the life of the prophet (s.a.w) which were important. One of them was the Hijrah. At the outset, the Hijrah makes a clear division in story of the Prophet (s.a.w) and Muslims. It symbolises the demarcating line between persecutions and freedom. Muslims were persecuted in Mecca as they lived in a state of helplessness and were not ordered to retaliate but to have patience. However in Madina they were free to put their religion into practice and allowed to defend themselves. Secondly, the Hijrah to Medina was an irrevocable step and was considered as an act of worship when the Qur'an says "migrate when not allowed to practice Islam freely". In the case of the early Muslims, they were not able to worship freely and live according to the law of Islam. Thus for them it was imperative to leave Macca for a better place. The mere fact of making Hijrah is considered as an act of ibaadah as it is an order from Allah in order to apply and live according to Shari'ah. Added to the second point, this move to Madina had changed the position of the prophet from a persecuted person to a praised and loved person. The prophet had been invited to Medina by the people there and by the Aws and the Khazraj tribes. He was badly needed and he thus became the undisputed governor and leader from the first day of his arrival there. This was the opposite of the first day he spread Islam and how he was perceived by the Quraish in Mecca. As such, he was thus able to lay the foundations of a new society or a Muslim state.

In addition, with the Hijrah the prophet was able to change the conditions of his people and community. At Macca he was not able to create a community with a specific place for meeting and for other activities. However, the Muslims were united as one Ummah at one centre at Madina. They were united in faith and the institution of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar was established openly without fright. It was based on a cooperative spirit. As such new surahs were revealed in Medina giving rules for the Muslim community and for the Prophet as the lawgiver and the reformer. At Macca

the guidance from Allah was for individual development in privacy as it was impossible to practice Islam. Moreover, as a custom and practice of past people, the Qiblah of the Muslims was the Masjid al Aqsa. Swalaat was done and directed to that place. However, with the Hijrah the Qiblah was changed to the Masjid ul Haraam in Macca, that is the Ka'bah. This change of Qiblah from Jerusalem to Mecca meant that Muslims had now their own identity and orientation. They no more share the same direction as others like the Jews. They were turning towards God Himself but more specifically the house of Allah, the Ka'bah Shareef.

Why do you think the Prophet was more successful in Medina as compared to the years he lived in Mecca?

There were many reasons why the prophet was more successful in Madina than in Macca. **At the outset**, in Mecca after the Prophet began preaching Islam at the mount Saf the Quraish's hostility increased because the message of Islam was alien to their beliefs and those of their forefathers. **Secondly**, the way of life that the Prophet suggested was also an economic threat to the Meccans and their wealth. The prophet demanded them to quit all their illicit means of enriching themselves. **Added to the second point**, the prophet's attitude towards everyone was that of peace as the teachings of Islam propounded peace and it needed time to be understood by Meccans. However, the Meccans were not ready to quit their customs and traditions. Fighting was like a fun for them. **In addition**, the prophet had his family's clan's protection during the lifetime of his uncle Abu Talib. As such attacks on him were restrained till his death where all chances of success in Mecca were gone. **Moreover**, the attacks on the poor and destitute Muslims became more vicious and they were not able to bear them. This led to many of them migrating to Madina.

However in Medina the prophet had been invited by the warring tribes of Aws and Khazraj to make peace. So at the outset it was a welcoming atmosphere in contrast to the repelling one at Macca. The 2 above mentioned tribes considered the prophet as an arbitrator and a solution to their problems and became the undisputed ruler from first day. Seventhly, the prophet was a man of great vision and his first task was to lay the foundations of a new egalitarian society where everyone had his say in his society. They were living in harmony and that brought peace to the warring tribes. **Added to the seventh point**, he created a society where respect of the rights of others was sacred. Under his leadership everyone was able to practice their religion and worship freely. There were churches and synagogues which were protected by the prophet. At the beginning of the Madinan phase, the prophet told his companions to help the Jews and the Christians in their buildings, but then he disallowed it when they became rebels. There were many treaties made between the Jews and the Muslims; and between Christians and Muslims. In addition, the prophet was a lawgiver and a reformer. He would never refuse to hear and listen to any case or dispute from anyone. When he was called upon he would decide on disputes with the law of Allah and would not side with the Muslims if they were at fault. Moreover, the prophet built his community in such a way that everyone felt the security that prevailed. All residents would defend Medina together in case of attack and that would result in making peace together. That created a situation where all Muslims practiced Islam without fear as they were united as one Ummah with a cooperative spirit.

Life Of Muhammad (s.a.w) – Important Figures In His Life

What was the role and importance of the following figures in the life of Prophet Muhammad?

Khadijah

Hazrat Bibi Khadijah was one of the ladies of Macca who was famous for her piety and morality. In relation to the prophet (s.a.w) she employed him in her service for a business trip to Syria. She was so impressed by the prophet that later on after an interpretation of a dream she got married to him on her own suggestion. She was the first wife of the prophet who did not have any other wives as long as she

was alive. She was the support of the prophet with a loving home and six children. She remained at his side through years of persecution and suffered with him through years of Boycott.

She was important in the life of the prophet as she recognised his qualities of truthfulness and trustworthiness. Her proposal to him for marriage is a sign of knowing the importance of the prophet. The prophet married her despite she was a widow. It was through that marriage which freed the Prophet from financial worries. She was important as she gave him support during times of depression and sadness. She comforted him after the first Revelation and believed in him. She was the first person to accept Islam. The Prophet said 'She was the wife who believed in me when others rejected me. When people refused to believe me, she affirmed my truthfulness. When I stood forsaken, she spent her wealth to lighten the burden of my sorrow'.

Abu Bakr

Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq was the close friend of Prophet Muhammad since childhood and was 2 years younger than the prophet. He used his wealth to free slaves who had become Muslim especially those working with the bad masters. He gave his daughter Aisha's hand in marriage to the Prophet. He paid the price of land for mosque in Medina on Prophet's behalf. He gave all his wealth for the Tabuk expedition and he led prayers during the Prophet's illness.

The prophet's marriage to Aisha cemented their relationship. He was the first adult male to accept Islam. When people said that 'he preaches against idols, he must be mad', Abu Bakr said 'if he says so he must be right'. He would never argue with anyone. He accepted Islam because of total confidence in his friend. He was the first to confirm the truth of Isra wal Mi'raj [the Night Journey]. He was called 'Siddiq' by the Prophet because of this event. He made hijrah with the Prophet to Medina. He was also mentioned in the Qur'an ... 'one of two in the cave...' [9:40] and was the first to lead the pilgrimage. He was under Prophet's instructions to teach people the correct way of doing it.

Halimah Sa'diyyah

Halimah Sa'diyyah was the foster mother of the prophet (s.a.w). She took the Prophet to the desert in a place known as Juraanah and cared for him [as per tradition of the Arabs at that time]. She belonged to the Banu Sa'd, a clan of the Hawazin tribe, known for the purest Arabic dialect they spoke. The Prophet learnt his Arabic language and dialect of the Bedouins from them. It was through the prophet since childhood that the fortunes of Halima's family improved. Among the various things that occurred in the desert at that time was the miracle of the opening of the chest which occurred while he was there with her. However, she returned him to Aminah, his mother, when he was six years of age. The importance and significance of this custom was to learn the best Arabic dialect, to become more robust through the tough atmosphere of the desert, to lead a life of shepherd, to get accustomed to the life of hardship and to get acquainted to the life of tribe.

Bahira

It all started when Abu Talib took the Prophet, aged about 12 at that time, on a trading journey to Syria. It was close to the city of Borsa [in Syria] when a Christian monk called Bahira invited everyone to a feast insisting all should come. The Prophet had been left behind to guard the camels as he was small. However, on the request of Bahira, he was then sent for to join them. While talking with the prophet under a tree, Bahira saw the seal of prophethood on his back in between his shoulders. Some accounts say Bahira had found the announcement of the coming of Muhammad in the original gospels which he possessed. It is also said that there was a cloud or the unusual behaviour of a branch that kept shadowing the Prophet as the caravan came closer and as such Bahira knew about it. Bahira warned Abu Talib not to take his nephew further in case of harm, but to send him back to Mecca and to hide his identity from the Jews. Thus they returned to Macca.

Waraqah bin Nawfal

After receiving the first revelation the Prophet was very frightened. When he got home he told his wife Khadijah what had happened. The latter comforted him and decided to consult her cousin Waraqah bin Nawfal who was a Christian well versed in the scriptures of the Christians and the Jews. Waraqah said this was the same Holy Spirit whom Allah had sent to Musah (as) and he said, 'I swear by Him in whose hand is Waraqah's life, Allah has chosen Muhammad to be the prophet of this people. Bid him be brave of heart'. The Prophet went back to Hira to complete his days there and later on returned to the Ka'ba. There he saw Waraqah who said 'They will call you a liar, persecute you just like they did to others who came with a similar message, they will banish you, fight against you'. It is also said that Waraqah told the prophet that if he lived to see the day he would support the prophet but Waraqah never witnessed the persecutions as he died soon afterwards.

Year 623 CE onwards

1st Year Of Hijri

What guidelines did the Prophet establish for the communal life of Medina?

The prophet (s.a.w) of Islam left Macca for Madina to spread Islam and continue his mission. However, there were many guidelines set by the prophet for his communal life. On entering Medina Prophet said 'Spread peace [salaam], feed the hungry, honour kinship ties, pray while people sleep, you shall enter Paradise in peace'. The first hadith concerns both our private life as in our family relationship, our public life as in feeding the poor, our responsibility as in spreading Islam and our spiritual life as in pray while people sleep. This was meant to regulate the lives of Muslims. **Moreover**, he established a brotherhood between the Muhajiroun from Mecca (emigrants of Macca) and the Ansar [Muslims of Medina] because Muhajiroun were homeless and penniless. He knew that these Muhajiroun had left everything behind and were alien to Madina. **Furthermore**, this nurtured a collective spirit based on sharing and mutual assistance rather than individual competitiveness. In this way each Muslim in Madina was given the responsibility of one Muhajir of Macca. It is said that these Madina Muslims would allow the Muhajiroun to stay in their houses, to share and divide the houses into two halves, to give them a share or the way to business and up to a share / will in their inheritance. **In addition**, there was a mutual assistance agreement between Jews of Medina and Muslims [whether Aws, Khazraj or Muhajiroun] known as the Charter of Medina. It is also known as the sahifah and in it are the rights of both Muslims and Non Muslims. This also signifies justice and dignity for all on a solid legal base. This was done to create a link between the different religions. **Furthermore**, the prophet ensured that the same rights and the same duties were for all. He created a multi-cultural and multi-racial state. There was the freedom of religion and speech. And at the same time there would be respect which led to the Jews and the Muslims would help each other in times of attack.

Besides, the prophet created a community when all relationships would be based on contracts. The prophet advised Muslims to stand by their contracts. As such the Jews felt threatened economically by business-minded Muhajiroun]. **Added to the above ideas**, it was decided that the prophet would be the decision maker and taker. All conflicts or disputes were to be brought to the prophet being the final judge of the Islamic state. That was done to ensure the same treatment and advice given to the whole community. **Added to the above**, he stressed all relations within society to be egalitarian free from outside world. There would be no forcible conversions. He worked with everyone in construction of mosque and participated in the call to prayer [Adhan] which was initiated and still resonates today. The 5 daily prayers set the pace of daily life for Muslims. **Additionally**, the institution of fasting [sawm] became obligatory in the month of Ramadan. The prophet wanted the better off Muslims to feel the suffering of the poor and wanted them to reach salvation. Fasting though was practiced by the prophet on personal basis was now considered as part of Islam. **Last but not least**, Zakaat was made compulsory on the better off people or the rich and the aristocrats. It was to be a 2 ½ % of the wealth or money that we

have. Before the introduction of Zakaat the generous institution of sadaqa was practiced by the prophet and ahab. This was done to help those in need.

Explain the relationship of brotherhood that the Prophet encouraged between the Muslims of Medina [ansar] and the emigrants from Mecca [muhajiroun].

When the prophet (s.a.w) arrived at Madina there had been many changes. Among them one of the most important was the relationship of brotherhood between the Ansar and the Muhajiroun. The Prophet laid obligations on the Muslims of Medina [ansar] to support Muslims who emigrated from Mecca [muhajiroun]. This was known as known as a brotherhood [al muwakhat]. The fact that the muhajiroun had left everything behind in Mecca and had no means of livelihood when they arrived in Medina was important for a support. Accordingly, the prophet had decided that each male emigrant [muhajir] should be paired with Muslim of Medina [ansar] to help him at any possible level according to his means and ability. As such the Ansar would help as to settle down, to lodge and to feed till they could set up their own homes. Some ansar would give one of their houses, businesses or would divorce one of their wives to allow the other muhajiroun to start a new familial life. However, the only exception was the Prophet and his household as he was unwilling to appear to favour any one clan or group. As a result he took Ali as his brother.

The prophet undertook such move as a brotherhood was also a measure to overcome an economic crisis. What is meant here is that the muhajiroun were traders who had to begin from scratch and they needed some support to set up their businesses. A help at the start would be very helpful to them. Moreover a brotherhood was also based on mutual spiritual assistance whereby Muslims from Mecca would teach those in Medina what they already knew about Islam and the Prophet unique kindness and sympathy between Muslims was encouraged. That would tie the links and relationship among the Muslims. Another factor was that it is the teaching of Islam that 'every Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim' and that was to be put to the test and practice. It is also a fact that there is a verse of the Qur'an [8:72] saying 'those who adopted exile and those who gave them asylum and aid' which was revealed to reassure Muslims about their actions. This proved that they had been accepted by Allah.

What were the main features of the Constitution [sahifah] of Medina? [10]

One of the most important contributions of the prophet can be found in the constitution of Madina. The holy prophet made a formal agreement between himself and all of the significant tribes and families of Yathrib [later known as Medina] and those who followed them from Macca in 622. It was known as the Constitution or Charter of Medina. This document was drawn up with the explicit concern of bringing to an end the bitter inter tribal fighting between the clans of the Aws and Khazraj within Medina. As such the old tribal enmities were buried by the prophet. This charter brought about different changes within the city of Madina. As such, it effectively established the first Islamic state, yet this political entity was not governed by Islamic law [shari'ah] but rather by established tribal customs. **Moreover**, it normalized tribal relations within Medina and instituted a number of rights and responsibilities for the Muslim, Jewish and pagan communities bringing them within the fold of one community. **Furthermore**, it guaranteed religious freedom and tolerance to all. There was the possibility to practice all religions without being persecuted. The prophet ensured that both the Muslims and the Non Muslims would have the liberty to practise their religions at will. **In addition**, the prophet established parameters for political alliances e.g. making peace together with outsiders. In the new society built by the prophet, each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. There should be mutual protection, advice and consultation.

In addition, it had been decided that all parties signing the document would defend Madina in case of both interior and exterior attacks. It was haram to fight within Madina and above all to fight against each other within the inhabitants of Madina. As such the prophet established Madina as a sacred place [a haram: barring all violence and weapons] thus ensured the security of the community.

Furthermore, the prophet created a system for granting protection to all individuals, especially the security of women. He ensured that women had their rights to complain and to have their own views. **Besides**, the prophet established a tax system for supporting the community in time of conflict. The bait ul Maal was set up and all kinds of funding were accepted as long as it was halal. The money was used for the community in general. **Another viewpoint**, the prophet instituted a judicial system for resolving disputes among any party. However only when people would differ it would be referred to God and to the Prophet who would be impartial arbiter of disputes between Muslims. In this way his decision would be final. **Added to the above points**, the paying of blood money [for the slaying of an individual] instead of taking another life would be regulated. Accordingly it was done and accepted in specific cases.

Did the Prophet achieve harmony amongst the residents by this document?

When the prophet (s.a.w) arrived at Madina there were many steps that he took in order to ensure peace and security for his followers and anyone in the city. At the outset the constitution came as result of conflict as they were many sections in conflict with each other. However it resulted in harmony between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj. Both tribes were in constant war and they wanted an arbitrator. Moreover, the constitution was not a 'treaty' in the modern sense, but a unilateral proclamation by the Prophet of joining together two religious communities; the Muslims and the Jews. Jews "have their religion and the Muslims have theirs." As such the prophet created a society where there was the freedom of religion. Furthermore, the constitution revealed the Prophet's great diplomatic skills where all citizens were given the freedom to live and work in peace, security and with dignity. They were free to live according to their tribal customs and traditions. Respect was the key word among the inhabitants of Madina. In addition, his great vision empowered communities by giving them local and communal autonomy e.g. they were able to practice their religious rites; manage their affairs, decide on means to earn a living as they choose, punish criminals and many others. They had the liberty to live in Madina with their own concepts. Furthermore, with the constitution of Madina issues of law and order were central to his just society. There was no distinction made between the Muslims and the Non Muslims among the citizens. The conditions were fair and equitable to all. It was a matter of honour to maintain justice.

Life Of Muhammad (s.a.w) – Relation with the Jews.

Explain why the Prophet Muhammad was at first friendly towards the Jews of Medina.

When the prophet (s.a.w) entered Madina there were many parties like the Christians, the Jews, the hanifs and the idol worshippers. With each group the prophet (s.a.w) entered in a truce. As such it was so with the Jews.

The prophet was at **first** very friendly with the Jews of Madina for various reasons. At the outset, the Prophet Muhammad's own conduct of humility, compassion, and faithfulness was towards everyone. The prophet as testified by the Qur'an was sent as a mercy for the all worlds. It was within the prophet to be merciful with all people. **Secondly**, when the prophet entered Madina he was accepted by the whole population as being the leader. There was no leader or guide in the city and as such they had found in the prophet the perfect leader who could take decisions for them in all aspects. **Furthermore**, the friendly attitude of the prophet could be understood also as a step towards a treaty to cement peace and friendship between the two parties. As long as there would be discussion, fight or threat of war there would be no security for the inhabitants. **Moreover**, it was a step taken by the prophet as a means to grant the Jews full freedom to practise their faith, just as Muslims would practise theirs. There was freedom of religion for all inhabitants of Madina. **Furthermore**, the prophet knew that there were many similarities between the two groups. One of them is that both parties were from the same source that is from Allah. Both religions and parties as human beings were from Allah.

In addition, from the fifth point, it can be said that the prophet befriended the Jews as they also believed in and were followers of a revealed book that is the Tawraat from one of the prophets of Allah

that is the prophet Musah (as). **Added to the above**, the prophet (s.a.w) was aware of other similarities with the Jews. The latter would pray towards Jerusalem in the direction of Masjid Al Aqsa and that was also the practice of the Muslims initially before the Ka'bah became the new Qibla (direction). **Besides**, the prophet had always believed by strengthening ties Medina would be secure if any party of the city would be under attack. The strategy of the prophet was that 'United we stand divided we fall'. As long as there was solidarity among the inhabitants it would be very easy to have a control over the population. In this way each group would contribute resources and defend the city. **More to the point**, the prophet wanted to create specific relations based on equality and justice. In a society where these two mentioned qualities are maintained the population will feel better off as from aspects related to human rights and equal opportunity. That what was intended by the prophet. **Last but not least**, the prophet would act as a leader who would deal with any disagreements. Though he had set up specific courts with judges to deal with all cases but those cases where there were real disputes and the prophet was needed, they were referred to the prophet as the best decision maker and taker.

How did the Jewish tribes of Medina react to his authority and why the attitudes of the prophet changed towards them?

At Madina the Prophet was now the ruler and the supreme leader. At the **outset** the Jews wanted the prophet to side with them in order to conquer different places but when the prophet sided with the poor they felt upset. However the Jews felt it was not wise just yet to oppose his authority. Therefore though against themselves they agreed to the Charter [sahifah] which was based on friendship, cooperation, mutual respect, equality and justice. If that was not done they would have been outside the constitution of Madina and that would have been against them. **Secondly**, the Prophet came as a peacemaker to Medina to settle disputes among the Aws and the Khazraj and he was eager to win the confidence of the Jews who were mentioned in the Qur'an as people with a book [ahl-e-Kitab]. He would visit the homes of their rabbis, prayed towards Jerusalem and fasted on Yom Kippur known as the day of Ashurah for the Muslims. The Jews were rich and thus influential people in Medina having the monopoly of commerce and finance. With the new law, that is the Shari'ah, being applied some of the Jews became unhappy because the prohibition of usury [riba] affected their financial standing.

Moreover, by the passing of time slowly the position of Jews deteriorated in Medina. The Banu Qurayzah, Banu Nadir and Banu Qaynuqa allied themselves with pagan Arabs under leadership of Abdullah ibn Ubayy and Abdullah bin Saba to conspire against the prophet and the Muslims. They were the inside spies of the Quraish. It went to the extent that some Jews accepted Islam but others paid lip service only and were known as the hypocrites. Their leaders were Abdullah ibn Ubayy and Abdullah bin Saba. **Another point** is that the Jews would never say that they were not aware of who was the prophet. Despite having known the prophet and his message they were not prepared to accept a non-Jewish prophet as leader. That would be a blow to their ancestors as they hoped that the last prophet would be from the Israelites but the prophet was from the Ismailites. As time passed by it became increasingly difficult for the Jews to reconcile their feeling of ethnic and religious superiority with their subordinate position in front of the Prophet who was descended from Ismail son of Hajrah.

In **addition** such their behaviours changed for the worst. In the Islamic history it would be noted that the Jews conspired against the prophet through Abdullah ibn Ubayy and Abdullah bin Saba in the battles of Badr, Uhud, Trench and many others. They were the ones to desert the prophet taking with them 300 men from the land of Uhud. It was these Jews led by Abdullah ibn Ubayy and Abdullah bin Saba who made an ally with different parties like the Christians, the Quraish and the different tribes of Macca among others in the battle of Khandaq. **Added to the above**, it was these Jews who wanted to poison the prophet or to crush him under a wall through two respective occasions. **Added to the above ideas**, it was these same Jews who decided to construct a mosque known as Masjid un Dwiraar as mentioned in the Qur'an to criticise Allah, His prophet and the Muslims and to plot against them. **Besides**, these Jews through different ways had tried their level best to persecute and oppose the prophet and the Muslims after having known that the prophet would not side with them. It is to be noted that their

attitudes changed though it is mentioned by many Muslim scholars that well before the birth and coming of the prophet the Jews were awaiting for him at Madina known beforehand as Yathrib.

Year 624 CE

2nd Year Of Hijri

Fasting

Zakaat

Change of Qiblah

Battle Of Badr

Describe the events immediately leading up to the Battle of Badr.

Among the important events of the life of the prophet (s.a.w) was the Battle of Badr. It was the first battle fought by the Muslims in Madina and the first order from Allah with permission to fight. There were many events leading to the Battle of Badr.

At the outset, the Quraish were displeased with people of Madina for giving shelter to the Prophet through the two pledges of 'Aqabah. They didn't accept the fact that the prophet had been invited there at Madina and would obtain the help of its inhabitants. They thus asked the people of Madina to hand over Prophet but they refused. Moreover, the Meccans were jealous of the growing power of the Prophet in Madina. They were also jealous of his growing influence and alliances with tribes nearby. They didn't want to see the truth. Furthermore, the Meccans were looking for an excuse to attack Medina. As it was stated, war was like a fun for them. There was no problem of getting into a fight with any other group. It was in their customs and traditions of tribal life. In addition, as such it did occur in the 2nd year of Hijri (in the year 624 AD). There was a Meccan caravan returning from Syria and headed by Abu Sufyan with all the provisions for his business and his personal belongings. Furthermore, the prophet sent Abdullah bin Jahsh with a few men to spy on the caravans going to Macca. He sent a letter to be opened arriving at Nakhlah but Abdullah did not open and read the letter. With his 11 men they were eager to attack the caravan of Abu Sufyan to make up for wealth and property left behind in Mecca. That triggered the battle afterwards.

Additionally, there was the right time for revelation to be sent to the Prophet as to 'fight in the way of Allah those who fight you ... (2:192). For 10 years the prophet and the Muslims were persecuted and bore their sufferings with patience but now it was great time to wage war against the persecutors. Besides, Abu Sufyan, the leader of the caravan was on alert. He thought that his caravan would be attacked and immediately sent a message through Damdam to Macca. Arriving in Macca Damdam entered the Haram, cut the nose of his camel, turned its saddle, tore his shirt and invented lies that the caravan was being looted and Abu Sufyan was dead. The Quraish decided to attack the Muslims with 1000 strong army led by Abu Jahl. Meanwhile Abu Sufyan changed his route, reached Mecca safely but found Meccans getting ready for war. More to the point, it is known that the Quraish wanted any opportunity to fight the Muslims and as such Abu Jahl insisted on a battle wanting to finish the Muslims once and for all. They didn't want the spread and progress of Islam anywhere in Arabia. More to the point, when the prophet learned about the escape of a caravan and the approaching of the Quraish army he held a Shura [consultation] to decide on the steps to take. The Muslims were able to gather only a force of 313 men, sixty camels and three horses to march towards Badr. Last but not least, the Battle of Badr took place on 17th of Ramadan in the 2 Hijri, 624 CE. Before the fight the prophet would pray Allah for victory and help. In fact the Muslims fought with courage and there was Allah's help in the presence of 3000 angels rank on rank. [3:13]

Why was the victory at Badr an important turning point for the Muslims?

The battle of Badr was an important turning point for the Muslims in different ways. At the outset it was a decisive victory for the Muslims. That victory was determinant for the destiny of Islam. Moreover, Muslims were fighting for their very existence and for everything they stood for. They fought for their convictions, religions, faith, dignity, honour, survival among others. However the Meccans were fighting for personal gain and out of anger and rebellious concepts. Furthermore, the little force of the Muslims destroyed most of the huge and well trained Meccan army. That situation created must confidence in their physical power. The Muslims were ill equipped but determined to face the Quraish and to defend the cause of Islam. In addition, the victory of Badr inspired the Muslims with hope and they felt that Allah was on their side. This can be proven by the revelation where Allah says that ‘Allah strengthens His aid to whom He pleases..’ (3:12). Furthermore, though there were 70 Quraish taken as prisoners of war, they were treated with exemplary kindness and magnanimity. As a result many people accepted Islam. They had seen in Islam the real code of conduct framed by the love of Allah, His prophet and brotherhood.

Additionally it can be rightly said that the victory of Badr consolidated the power of the Prophet. It did never happen that the Quraish were defeated as they were known as the power of the Arab peninsula. As a result the tribes around Madina formed alliances with Muslims. Besides, seeing the outcome of the battle of Badr the hypocrites in Madina became more careful about antagonising the Muslims. They started thinking twice before attacking the prophet both physically and psychologically. It was a loss of prestige for Meccans in the area. More to the point, it was a sign of power as from that time it could be well said that it was the start of a new era where the Muslims were able to defend themselves and could be considered as the rising power of Madina and later on proven as the power of Arabia. More to the point, with the victory of the 313 poor, weak and ill equipped Muslims in front of the rich, powerful and well trained Quraish it was a blow to the reputation of the Quraish in the sight of the Roman and Persian empires. Last but not least, it can be seen in history of Islam that the Battle of Badr was the first step towards the independence of the Muslim community. As from that time it closed the door of persecutions and oppositions from the side of the Quraish. It opened the door of peace and security of Muslims in Madina.

Year 625 CE

3rd Year Of Hijri

Battle Of Uhud

Describe the events of the Battle of Uhud.

Among the most important battles led by the prophet of Islam and the Muslims during the Madinan phase is the battle of Uhud.

At the outset, this battle was a revenge and remake of the battle of Badr. It occurred in the 3rd year of Hijri. The Quraish wanted to avenge their death at Badr. Their leaders like Abu Jahl and their relatives died and they were grieved. Secondly, the defeat of Badr was a serious blow in the sight of the Roman and Persian empires. The Quraish was known as the Arab force among the 3 great forces of that time. They wanted to regain their honour and dignity in the eyes of the world. Moreover, they wanted another occasion to fight the Muslims and to finish off with the prophet (s.a.w). They were totally against the Islamic concepts and they would do anything at any cost to eliminate that creed. Fighting was a custom and fun for them. Added to the point, as such the Meccan army of approximately 3000 soldiers was led by Abu Sufyan one of their leaders. They were fully armed and marched towards Madina to finish off with the Muslims. However they stopped at a place known as Uhud 3 miles from Madina to fight in the open. Furthermore, on the other side the prophet (s.a.w) gathered his army of 1000 men after a shurah

(consultation) and marched towards Uhud. On their way the leader of the hypocrites Abdullah bin Ubayy deserted the army of the prophet followed by 300 of his (Abdullah bin Ubayy) men. The Muslims were limited to 700 men.

In addition, before the battle the prophet (s.a.w) asked for the help of Allah and he placed 50 archers on the unsafe place at mount Uhud to protect the rear of the Muslims. They were ordered not to move until new orders were given. Besides, the prophet placed his army in ranks and when the battle began the Muslims gained upper hand and the Meccans retreated. Out of the 50 archers 43 left their posts guarding the rear, disobeyed the Prophet's and joined the main army to fight the Quraish and to collect the booty of war. The 7 remaining urged them to stay but they disobeyed. Another key point, Khalid bin Walid who was still in the Quraish side at that time observed the fight from far and was waiting with his 100 horsemen to enter the battlefield. Seeing the error of the 43 archers he made the round of the hill and attacked the 7 archers from the exposed rear. All the 7 died. The Muslims were surrounded by Quraish and those fleeing from the battle field made a comeback. Next, the prophet was injured and fainted to the ground. The Quraish spread a rumour that the prophet died. Many Muslims abandoned the fight and they were thus at the mercy of the Quraish. There were heavy Muslim losses such as Prophet's uncle Hamza. There was chaos and confusion. Last but not least after the prophet had obtained his first aid, he came back and the Muslims rallied round him but it was a bit too late. 70 Muslims lost their lives and the Meccans left the battlefield with a feeling of victory though they did not follow up the victory by eliminating the prophet (s.a.w). However the Quraish mutilated bodies of many Muslims such as Hamzah.

Was Uhud a defeat for the Muslims? Give your reasons.

The results and outcome of the fight are to be analysed critically to be appreciated. At the outset, if one considers the military tactics only, though Muslims had shown themselves almost equal to Meccans despite numerical superiority, it was a defeat. With the deserting of the posts of the 43 archers, their reasoning and tactics failed. Secondly, if we consider the fact that the Muslims had regrouped themselves and mustering their forces around the prophet in spent three days in the open challenging Meccans to return to battle though it was to no avail, we can say it was not a defeat. Moreover, if we consider the valuable lessons learned by the companions to remain united and disciplined through the psychological impact of defeat, we can say that this is a victory. The Muslims learned about the obedience that one must have towards the prophet. Disobedience towards the prophet will lead to one's own failure. Added to the point, when we consider the fact that though the prophet was injured and had fainted, the Muslims were killed and many were mutilated, that defeat was a testing time for the Muslims and that brought greater faith in the hearts in the companions. Their faith in Allah and His Nabi (s.a.w) increased.

Furthermore, if we consider the fact that though the Meccans overjoyed having won after the defeat at Badr but failed to take advantage of their victory it was not a defeat. The Meccans realised that the Muslims were a power to reckon with and they couldn't defeat them alone. In addition, when the Muslims felt vulnerable they became aware of which tribes were on their side and which among them were the hypocrites who became openly hostile. As such the prophet therefore prepared himself for rebuilding the lost prestige in the eyes of desert tribes led by Abdullah bin Saba and Abdullah bin Ubayy. Besides, when we consider the fact that nothing occurs without the order of Allah, we can say that the battle of Uhud can be a source of inspiration to many people from different perspective. It showed the tactics of protecting the rear of an army through the 50 archers, the patience of Khalid bin Walid waiting to enter the battlefield at the right moment, the plot and rumour of the unbelievers, the determination to protect the prophet and mustering around him and the sacrifice of the lives of the Ashab for the love of the prophet (s.a.w) and Islam. It was thus a victory for the Muslims.

Year 627 CE

5th Year Of Hijri

Battle Of Khandaq

Give an account of the events leading up to the battle of the Trench [Khandaq] and what happened during the battle.

In the 5th year of Hijri there was one of the most important events in the Madinan life of the prophet (s.a.w) of Islam. That was the battle of Trench known also as Khandaq.

Right from the start the Quraish wanted to eliminate the prophet (s.a.w) and the Muslims. They were against the spreading and progress of Islam and wanted to halt Islam. Secondly, the Quraish wanted to avenge their death and defeat at the battle of Badr and its remake at Uhud. They were ready to launch and take opportunity through any event for revenge. Moreover, the Quraish wanted to make another name as they lost their fame, dignity and honour through the battles of Badr and Uhud. They seemed it important in the eyes of the people and the armies of Rome and Persia. Furthermore, the Quraish planned a full scale attack to crush Muslims led by Abu Sufyan. As such many tribes and groups like the Quraish, the Khawarij, the tribes of Jews and Christians and the exiled tribes from Madina joined together to make a Confederate to fight the Muslims. They were 10000 men marching towards Madina. Furthermore, the Prophet's uncle Abbas [in Mecca] secretly sent him a warning message and the Muslims had ten days to work out strategy. When a Majlis Shurah was conducted, Salman al Farsi suggested a trench to be dug around Madina in the exposed area of the north, wide and deep to avoid horses jumping over. In addition, everyone worked digging, reciting poems, singing, laughing, sharing work, including the Prophet. The earth from the ditch was used to build escarpment shielding Medina and used as a vantage point. The crops in the oasis were cut to store food.

Equally important, the Confederates arrived and were surprised to see a trench as it was a strategy unknown to Arabs. The only solution thus was to make a siege upon Madina. It was a test of endurance for Confederates as they were running out of food and also grazing for horses, and for Muslims they were subjected to many small attacks from many fronts so they had to be vigilant. Another vital point, through this battle it also brought out insincerity and infidelity of tribes and individuals. There were double dealing and hypocrisy like from the tribe of Banu Qurayzah. As such the Prophet (s.a.w) suggested Nuaym ibn Masud to stir up further discord amongst the Confederates. Another aspect the Arabs were not used to protracted (prolonged) war. The siege on Madina had lasted for approximately 25 days and that was the first time they were faced with such situation. They designed all plans to go through the trench dug by the Muslims but it was in vain. Last but not least, when the Muslims were not able to get rid of the Quraish as they were besieging Madina, Allah came to their rescue by sending strong bitter winds and cold making the Confederates break their camps and return to Mecca. The Confederates returned without having fought and that was for real as well as a symbolic defeat where the Muslims were recognised as the rising power of the peninsula.

Explain the significance of this victory for the Muslims.

Each victory of the prophet on the battle field had its own significance. For the battle of trench, **at the outset** the Muslim community was united under the same cause to face the Meccan force. They made one Ummah including the Prophet himself, the Muslims, the women and the children all helped to prepare for siege. **Secondly**, it was a very important victory in unity. All those who signed the treaty and constitution of Madina including the different sections of Madina though the Muslims had not been able to involve any of their traditional allies because of the shortage of time were united. **Moreover**, the Meccan forces and their allies were vastly superior in number and they were well equipped to finish off with the Muslims. They had been preparing for a long time to face the prophet (s.a.w). However, the

outcome of the battle was that they returned without victory to Macca. **Furthermore**, the whole defence scheme set up by the prophet and the Muslims within Medina was done in ten days with great enthusiasm and endeavour though it was a small work force. The importance here was focussed on following the Prophet's commands and that led the Muslims victorious. **Furthermore**, the Muslims were open minded to all new ideas put across to them such as the trench. It was an idea of Salma Farsi. This means that the prophet wanted to give the chance to his Ashab to design new techniques of fighting and defensive measures. Islam is a religion where there is no superiority or inferiority.

In addition, due to the vision of Salma Farsi and his experience, the tactic of a defensive trench used and put in place around the unsafe side of the city of Madina rendered all the Meccan cavalry useless. They were not able to use their horses as means to launch their attacks. **Equally important**, this new strategy employed in a battle situation means that the Meccans were unable to cope with this new situation never seen before by the Quraish though the best Arab's army. They were demoralised and didn't know how to proceed to undo the strategy used by the Muslim. **Another vital point**, the siege was a test of endurance for the Muslims who were aware that they were faced to extermination, panic and fear as said in the Qur'an (33:10) with prospect of a threatening death ahead. At the same time their supplies were getting low and it was a very difficult moment for them. **Another aspect**, the siege was also the climax of trial and suffering in the life of the Prophet. For the past two battles like Badr and Uhud which were brief the Muslims could control the war but for this battle it was a different situation where the outcome was uncertain and well as the duration. **Last but not least**, the help of Allah was paramount as said in the Qur'an (3:22-24) as the Almighty sent a 'wind' [33:9-11] which had the situation changed overnight. In this way and after the battle, there was the recognition of the hypocrites within Medina like the tribe of Banu Qurayzah. This episode ended the friendly relations between Jews and Muslims as mentioned in the Qur'an (3:119).

Year 628 CE

6th Year Of Hijri

Treaty Of Hudaibiyyah

What led to the signing of the Treaty between the Prophet and the Meccans at Hudaibiyyah?

During the 23 years of spreading of Islam by the prophet (s.a.w) there had been many important events and one of them which is worth noting is the treaty of Hudaibiyyah.

It was in the 6th year of Hijri at Madina when the Prophet (s.a.w) had a dream in which he saw himself visiting the Ka'bah and making its Tawaaf in the company of his Ashab. The next morning he called his companions and shared that marvellous dream. His companions thought that it was a revelation to perform the Umrah and they stood by the house of the prophet (s.a.w) ready to go. Secondly, when the prophet (s.a.w) was aware of their desire, he told them to prepare for the trip to Macca. The prophet (s.a.w) was accompanied by 1400 Muslims who marched to Macca. They had their luggage and they wore their ihram. Moreover, the Quraish heard of the approach of the Muslims and they were very concerned about large numbers of Muslims. As such they were prepared to resist any kind of entry by force. They were still opposed to the Muslims. Furthermore, however the prophet had no intention of fighting the Quraish as he was coming for worshipping Allah not to conquer Macca. He thus encamped at a place outside Macca known as Hudaibiyyah. Furthermore, in order to be diplomatic he sent Uthman to negotiate with Meccans. However, when the messenger delayed too much at Macca there was a rumour of his death and the Muslims at Hudaibiyyah were much concerned.

In addition, as such the Muslims took the solemn oath known as Bay'at ul Ridwaan through the hands of the prophet and the approval of Allah under a tree at Hudaibiyyah to avenge the death of Uthman. That pledge was a sincere one and Allah witnessed it in the Qur'an by saying "Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree" (48: 18). Finally Uthman returned and the Muslims were relieved. Next, the Quraish came to negotiate with the Muslims and they concluded a treaty with the Muslims. That treaty was not appreciated by the Muslims as it was pro-Quraish. Many Ashab like Ali and Umar objected but the prophet in his wisdom accepted it. More to the point, among the terms, no Meccan people would be allowed to go to Madina and if that was the case, it would be the responsibility of the prophet to return him / her to Macca. But if a Muslim would enter Macca he would not be allowed to return to Madina. Another point, the Muslims would not be allowed to perform Umrah that year but would be allowed three days the next year (7th Hijri) for the Umrah. However, they should enter Macca unarmed. Last but not least, there would be a peace treaty for a period of 10 years during which the Muslims would be allowed to spread Islam. Any group or tribe desiring to join either the Quraish or the Prophet would be allowed to do so without any influence or menace.

Why was the Treaty important? What is the significance of the treaty of Hudaibiyyah?

The importance of that treaty can be examined through different angles. At the outset, the Prophet was farsighted in signing the Treaty. No doubt that he had a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the change in Arabia. One day or the other they would be the power of Arabia. There was the time for war like in Badr where the Muslims fought to preserve their values and now it was time for peace even if it meant loss of face that some Muslims felt in signing the treaty. Secondly, the treaty gave time to Muslims to consolidate their position in Arabia. The city of Madina became a centre for Islam with its Islamic environment. As such the prophet took the opportunity to send letters to the neighbouring monarchs and to different countries to accept Islam like Egypt, Oman and Bahrain. Moreover, the Prophet had gained in propaganda war. He had shown his ability as a diplomatic leader knowing when to bring a peace treaty. By making peace with the Quraish he had gained access to Macca and Ka'bah. As such it was possible for the Muslims to come for Umrah the following year (7th) where the Maccans vacated the city for 3 days. However they watched the Muslims from far and were impressed by their behaviour.

Furthermore, by entering into a ten year peace treaty it was obvious that the Meccans now considered the Prophet as equal in power or else they would never have accepted to deal with the Muslims. The Meccans became neutral in the struggle between the Prophet on one side and the Jews and some tribes on the other. They no more interfered with the Jewish matter. Furthermore, the treaty in the long run was beneficial for Islam and the Muslims as well. In the Qur'an Allah revealed 'Verily We have granted thee a manifest victory' (48:1). As such more people accepted Islam as from that time than in preceding six years. Among those who accepted Islam was Khalid bin Walid and Amr bin Aas. In addition, as the Meccan converts couldn't go to Madina under Treaty, they settled in hills on road to Syria. That situation was a threatening one for the Meccan caravans and it was not good for their trade. Therefore the Meccans were increasingly doubtful about the Treaty. That led to the conquest of Mecca from the killings of men of Banu Khuza'a from men of Banu Bakr who allied with the Quraish.

Year 629 CE

7th Year Of Hijri

Conquest of Macca

What were the events leading to the conquest of Macca?

In the 8th year of Hijri, there was an important event known as the conquest of Macca. It was paramount in the history of Islam due to its importance. However there were many events which led to it and there was the whole history of how Macca was conquered.

In the 6th year of Hijri, there was the treaty of Hudaibiyyah in which the Banu Bakr allied with the Quraish and Banu Khuza'a allied with the Muslims. However, in the 7th Hijri Banu Bakr attacked and killed men of Banu Khuza'a. That was the first event that is the killing of men of Banu Khuza'a, leading to the conquest of Macca. Next, Banu Khuza'a came to the prophet (s.a.w) and asked for his help. The prophet (s.a.w) had no choice than leading to Macca. Additionally, after the prophet (s.a.w) had sent the three proposals (to pay blood money to the family of the dead people, to break alliance with Banu Bakr or to declare the treaty of Hudaibiyyah null and void) the Quraish accepted the third one and thus launching hostility again and the prophet (s.a.w) decided to march towards Macca. Added to the above, though the attempt of Abu Sufyan to renew the treaty with the prophet (s.a.w), it was too late. The 10000 men of the Muslim army were already determined to fight the Quraish and to take over Macca. Furthermore, it was an opportunity for the Muslims to enter Macca, to end with the Quraish and to stop once for all the persistent hostilities, persecutions and oppositions of the Quraish. It was a perfect reason to attack their enemies.

As such, the holy Prophet (s.a.w) grouped his men with the help of his allied tribes and it was the first time in history that he had 10000 soldiers. It was the biggest army of the Muslims at that time. They left madina and the army stayed at Marr-uz-Zahran, located ten miles northwest of Macca. The prophet (s.a.w) ordered every man to light a fire so as to make the Maccans know and estimate the size of the army. That was done to avoid the Quraish of blind attack. Abu Sufyan was surprised by the discipline of the Muslims and he alerted the Quraish not to enter into conflict with the Muslims. The next day the Muslims decided to march towards the city. There were four entry routes through passes in the hills. These were from the north-west, the south-west, the south, and the north-east. The prophet (s.a.w) divided his army into four groups. The tactic used here was to enter Macca all at once and on all sides reciting the Talbiyyah aloud and targeting the Ka'bah. This would dismay the enemies and no one would be able to stop the Muslim advance. However there was only a small skirmish occurred with Khalid bin Walid's forces but was quickly under Muslim control. Twelve Quraish and two Muslims died.

In that month of Ramadhan the Muslims entered peacefully with humility. The prophet (s.a.w) made a public announcement that no one would be hurt if they stayed home or in the house of Abu Sufyan or in the sanctuary of the Ka'bah. The prophet (s.a.w) then proceeded round Ka'bah saying 'Allahu Akbar' and smashed all the 360 idols. It was during that conquest that the verse "say Truth has come, falsehood has vanished, no doubt falsehood is bound to disappear" was revealed. The prophet (s.a.w) went at the door of the Ka'bah and issued a general amnesty by the wordings 'go your way in peace and freedom, for you are the free ones' except for four bitterest enemies of Islam who were judged by their own tribes. Hazrat Bilal was thus asked to ascend the roof of the Ka'ba and to call the adhaan. Muslims performed the swalaat ul Zohr and then the prophet (s.a.w) went to mount Safa and invited people of Macca to pledge their loyalty. He stayed in Macca around 15 days teaching Meccans about Islam and also sent other Muslims to different parts of the city inviting people to Islam.

Why was this conquest important for the Prophet?

The conquest of Macca was important both for the Muslims and the Muslim community for various reasons. At the outset, there was the return of the Muslims to their homeland. The prophet (s.a.w) has always loved and wished to come back to the holy Ka'bah with his own people the Quraish. Next, when the prophet (s.a.w) smashed the 360 idols and cleaned the Ka'bah and its sanctuary this was a final victory for the Muslims and the signal of a new order was going to be in place and that was Islam. Additionally, the prophet through that conquest restored the Ka'bah to its original state and spiritual heritage of all Muslims. He gave Macca its sanctuary as the supreme House of Allah built by Hazrat Adam (as) but reconstructed by Hazrat Ibrahim (as). Added to the above, with that conquest the prophet (s.a.w) abolished all claims of privilege, pride of ancestry or racial superiority that may exist. The Quraish were no more superior but instead now on equal footing with the rest of Mankind. That brought equality in the community. Furthermore, with that unparalleled conquest in history the prophet (s.a.w) has given

Mankind a lesson of compassion and magnanimity especially with the modesty he displayed on entering Macca showing everyone he was in no mood for revenge or killing and Islam is a religion of peace.

Furthermore, after this event other those tribes who were uncertain about their loyalties towards the holy prophet (s.a.w) or were afraid to accept Islam due to the authority of the Quraish which was no more till now allied themselves to the Prophet (s.a.w). Moreover, with the main threat accepting Islam, the Quraish were no more the enemies of Islam. That situation brought about stability and security in the now newly established Islamic society. Besides, it came the time for the prophet (s.a.w) of Islam to be recognised as the sole and supreme leader of Macca, Madina, Ta'if and the leader of so many surrounding tribes. Another key point, with the conquest of Macca the prophet (s.a.w) eliminated all illicit dealings like taxes which were paid when entering, staying and leaving Macca. Business of idols also was abandoned. Last but not least, with the conquest of Macca the prophet (s.a.w) eliminated all threats of anyone coming to attack Macca and the Ka'bah and today we are benefitting it through our visits to its sanctuary.

The conquest of Macca by the prophet (s.a.w) of Islam is unseen in the history of human conquest and battle. It was done through legitimate reasons in the best way with the best consequences.

Year 632 CE

10th Year Of Hijri

Farewell Address

Describe the main teachings contained in the Prophet's farewell address.

Among the various events of the life of the prophet (s.a.w) the last address is very important for the Muslims. This concerns all generations to come as it contains essential elements and teachings that must be put into practice. However it will be seen that many Muslims are not fully aware of the teachings of this farewell address.

During the last period of the life of the prophet (s.a.w) in the 10th year of Hijri, the health of the prophet was failing and at the same time his son Ibrahim passed away. He was fully conscious that he was approaching the end of his life and as such he decided to lead the pilgrimage on Hajj as this was the last pillar of Islam not yet accomplished by him. He thus went with all his family and many hajjis accompanied him. He led the Muslims through all rituals though the Arabs already knew about them. However, with the presence of the prophet it was with new significance. Finally when he arrived at 'Arafat, he gave his farewell address at Mount of Mercy (Jabal ar-Rahmah). He gathered his Ashab amounting to 124000 followers. There were many different main teachings in his address. At the outset, the prophet talked concerning trust and accountability. Whatever we have has been entrusted to us by Allah and we will be accountable for each one of our property, how we obtain them and how we use them. We can't take the property or wealth of others. This is haraam. As second point, there is the financial obligation. It is our responsibility to take care of our family with everything halal and lawful. How much money we have must be halal. Moreover, there is the concept of interest. The latter has been declared haram and whether it be giving or taking of interest. Fourthly, it is the responsibility of the husband to take care of the wife. He must meet her needs and beating is haram. Wife must be treated with due respect and no harm must be inflicted upon them.

Furthermore, the prophet warned us about satan who is the accursed and declared opened enemy of all Muslims. He is our arch enemy and we must always be on our guard. In addition, the prophet put much emphasis on the relationship that must be shared among brothers as all Muslims are brothers of faith. This is what brings unity and solidarity in a community. More to the point, the prophet stressed on the fact that there is no difference between a rich and a poor and between an Arab and a non Arab. Everyone is equal

in the sight of Allah except in piety and submission. Besides, the prophet spoke about the primary sources of Shari'ah that is the Qur'an and the Sunnah. If we stick to both of them we will never be led astray. Next, the prophet talked concerning the five pillars of Islam which are Fard on all Muslims. Success lies through them. Last but not least, the prophet established the relationship between the employer and the employee. There must neither have persecutions or disrespect from each side. Honesty and respect must prevail. Another important teaching is that the prophet Muhammad will be the last prophet and no one will be after him. Anyone coming after him and ascertaining that he is a prophet, then this is a liar. The last point concerns our responsibility to spread Islam. It is our duty to let Islam and make it enter the ears and house of each people. At the end he asked thrice of those gathered 'O people have I faithfully delivered my message to you?' and they replied 'yes'. He raised his forefinger towards the heaven saying 'O Allah, bear witness'. Later on there was the last revelation received few hours later on 9 Dhul Hijjah 10 H, 'This day I have perfected your religion for you'.

In what ways do Muslims put these teachings into practice? / How significant was the farewell address he gave during his pilgrimage?

These main teachings were given to mankind to put into practice. They are supposed to be of great value for us. At the outset, they are very significant as they are the framework of one's success in this world and the next. It was the last address, sermon and advice of the prophet. The prophet had shown a way to the Muslim life and a total breaking away from previously held customs and traditions of the time of Jahiliyyah. However, it is still disappointing that we can see many of our brothers and sisters who have chosen the path of this materialistic world rather than the one presented by the prophet. As second point, it was significant as he established equality in a society where there had been none. He propounded that all were equal in the sight of Allah regardless of race, colour, social class or gender because all human beings descended from Adam and the only distinguishing factor was God consciousness (Taqwa). Nonetheless there is still much difference among Muslims let it be in Mauritius itself between the ordinary Muslim and the Mehman and the Sourti. Moreover, the address was important as the prophet declared sanctity of human life and property, to abandon blood feuds, vendettas and exploitation and he made usury unlawful. In this context we can say that Muslims in Mauritius know about the sanctity of human life.

Fourthly, it was important as he renewed and he reiterated the essentials of Islam to be followed and what is sacred and he reminded Muslims that everyone will be answerable to Allah directly on the Day of Judgement. Though we know what is more important than others, some people still think that they will live on earth for eternity as they don't care for accountability of the last day. Furthermore, he renewed the importance of family life, mutual rights and obligations stressed in a marriage, women were to be treated kindly and with compassion. But we can see in Mauritius that still women are being ill-treated and in certain firqa women are not given their rights like to work. In addition, he wanted to remind Muslims they were united by faith and fraternity and to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah (traditions). This topic can be praised worthy as Muslims follow their respective Firqa. More to the point, by this time the Prophet had radically changed the political and spiritual landscape of Arabia. His words still resonate in hearts of Muslims as the Prophet asked those present to 'convey this message to those who are absent'. Besides, he wanted to create in the heart of mankind love and respect between the employer and the employee. In a way it is under control but however there are still cases where the employer will end in a lonely state. Next, the address is important as the prophet wanted to create a demarcation line between those who accept the prophet as the last prophet. Anyone refusing to accept the prophet as the last prophet is not a real Muslim. Still we have in Mauritius a group known as the Quraniyyoun which was easily taken under control. Last but not least, the prophet wanted to stress on education especially Islamic education but what can be seen is a partially negligence of the Muslims.

The farewell address must be well remembered as it contains the essential framework of the Muslims. It is important for us for all spheres of life.

Life Of Muhammad (s.a.w) – As the final Messenger

According to the Qur'an and the Hadith of the prophet (s.a.w) there will not be any prophet after the prophet of Islam. That was confirmed also by past prophets. The following verses and narrations will enlighten us. Allah says in the Qur'an: "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of the Prophets; and Allah has full knowledge of all things." (33:40)

Prophet Ibrahim prayed for his coming: "Our Lord! And raise up in their midst a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them your Verses, and shall teach them the Scripture, and the Wisdom and shall purify them. Surely, You are the Mighty, the Wise." (2:129)

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "The Israelis used to be ruled and guided by prophets: Whenever a prophet died, another would take over his place. There will be no prophet after me, but there will be Caliphs who will increase in number." The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What do you order us (to do)?" He said, "Obey the one who will be given the pledge of allegiance first. Fulfil their (i.e. the Caliphs) rights, for Allah will ask them about (any shortcoming) in ruling those Allah has put under their guardianship." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Volume 4, Book 56, Number 661)

Narrated Jubair bin Mutim: Allah's Apostle said, "I have five names: I am Muhammad and Ahmad; I am Al-Mahi through whom Allah will eliminate infidelity; I am Al-Hashir who will be the first to be resurrected, the people being resurrected thereafter; and I am also Al-'Aqib (i.e. There will be no prophet after me)." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Volume 4, Book 56, Number 732)

4 Rightly Guided Caliphs

Caliph Abu Bakr (ra)

Why was the relationship between the Prophet and Abu Bakr special?

Among the various friends of the prophet (s.a.w) there have been some who were so close to him that their names are forever mentioned in the history of Islam. One of these names is Abu Bakr (ra). The following paragraphs will elaborate on his life and the relationship between the prophet and himself.

Abu Bakr was from a simple family of the Quraish people. He was two years and three months younger than the holy prophet (s.a.w). He had a common ancestor with the prophet in Murra. He received no formal education but he was known for his experience and high level of intellect and wisdom. Both the prophet and himself were friends from childhood and they were both traders. After the Prophet married Khadijah they lived in the same neighbourhood in Mecca and often met each other. When the Prophet proclaimed Islam, Abu Bakr was the first one to have recognised this as the truth and became the first adult male to become Muslim and declare it openly. It was due to Abu Bakr's persuasion that many of his friends became Muslim such as Uthman bin Affan, Talha, Zubayr, Abdur Rahman bin A'waf, Saad bin Abi Waqqas and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. Abu Bakr gave all of his wealth for the cause of Islam and bought the freedom of many slaves in Mecca who had become Muslim. An example can be Bilal. When the prophet spread Islam the Muslims were persecuted.

Abu Bakr also suffered persecution in Mecca along with the Prophet and other Muslims. The prophet gave him the title of the Testifier of the Truth (as Siddiq) due to his immediate belief in the Night Journey known as Isra wal Mi'raj. The Prophet and Abu Bakr migrated (made Hijrah) to Madina together. Allah mentioned this event in the Qur'an saying "when the unbelievers drove them out, they two were in the cave ...". This verse is an indication of the importance of Abu Bakr though not mentioned by name in the verse. In order to consolidate that relationship Abu Bakr wanted the prophet to get married to his daughter. Then the Prophet married Aisha. Another event showing how Abu Bakr was esteemed by the prophet was when he was asked by the Prophet to lead the first Hajj. The prophet didn't take part but the delegation was under the control of Abu Bakr. When the prophet was in his last months, he allowed Abu Bakr the leadership of swalaat. When the Prophet was ill he said that "I have paid back everyone's debts, but my debt to Abu Bakr will be paid by Allah on Day of Judgement".

Describe how Abu Bakr was elected as Caliph.

After the death of the prophet there was no one as leader to take over the khilafat. The prophet did not nominate a successor and there was confusion. The situation was chaotic and Abu Bakr had to calm people down after Prophet died saying that "if you worship Muhammad know that he is dead. If you worship Allah, know He will never die...". At this the situation changed for the best and the Ansar gathered to discuss the appointment of a successor. There were some prominent companions like Abu Bakr, Umar, and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. The Ansar wanted a Caliph from amongst them and the Muhajiroun wanted one from them. As it was the custom, Abu Bakr said that the Arabs would like an "Amir" from the Quraish. The Ansar suggested one from each group, but this will create problems with 2 leaders at the same place and time. Umar objected as this would create confusion. Abu Ubaidah said "O Ansar, you were the first to uphold Islam. Do not be the first also to sow the seed of dissention in it". The Ansar agreed remembering that the Prophet was a Quraish from the noble tribe of the Quraish and from Banu Hashim.

As such, Abu Bakr proposed the names of Umar and Abu Ubaidah to be considered as future caliph. However, in the presence of Abu Bakr, no one present at that time wanted to become the caliph instead of the friend of the prophet. There were many reasons for that hesitation. Among these reasons we can say that Abu Bakr held unusual honour of being the one who migrated with the Prophet, he was also asked by the Prophet to lead the prayers when he was ill and he was the best friend of the prophet. As such, Umar held the hand of Abu Bakr reminding everyone that he was mentioned in the Qur'an as being the second in the cave of Thawr and the one having the title of As Swadiq. The companions remembered the Prophet saying 'I have paid back everyone's debts, but my debt to Abu Bakr will be paid by Allah on Day of Judgement'. That was enough as convincing points for Abu Bakr to be accepted by the public. Umar took his hand and the oath of loyalty to Abu Bakr and all those present followed the footsteps of Umar. The next day others pledged their loyalty in the mosque of Medina.

The first caliph thus delivered his unforgettable speech and said that "I have been elected as your Ameer, although I am not better than you. Help me, if I am in the right; set me right if I am in the wrong; obey me as long as I obey Allah and His prophet; when I disobey Him and His prophet, then obey me not". That was the opening speech of Abu Bakr. It is a sign of the continuity of the democratic society set by the prophet and a society based on the words of Allah and His prophet. Abu Bakr didn't want to become caliph but as the Islamic state is a system based on democracy, he was thus chosen by the prominent companions present there and by the public as the one most suitable to continue the work of the last prophet of Islam.

What were the main achievements of Abu Bakr?

Once at the head of the state, he dedicated his time for the smooth running of the society. **Firstly**, he created and founded a truly democratic state where each of his people was authorised to have their say in the society. They had the liberty to choose their own leader and at the same time there was freedom of speech and religion. **Next**, he created and reinforced the Majlis Shura for a better consultation with his companions. He increased the number of the members of the Majlis from 7 to 11. **In addition**, in order to have a better control over his state, he divided Arabia into provinces – each one with officers to work. They would then meet during the month of Hajj in order to discuss the problems or / and achievements of the respective provinces. **Fourthly**, he established Military cantonments and a reserve force for his army and for better security. His security would extend to all members of his Ummah under his flag. He conquered and reinforced different countries like Bahrain, Oman, Mahrah, Yemen, Hadramuth, eastern and western Iraq, Hira, Damascus, Syria, Basrah and Ajnadein. **Moreover** many tribes converted to Islam due to the way his armies would deal with them. That was because of the advice of the caliph. Before setting his armies to different missions and countries he would always advise them not to raise arms against women, children, old persons, priests and even on trees. **In addition**, he observed the Rights of both Muslims and non-Muslims ensuring freedom and security for all his people. All those living in the Islamic state were subjected to have the same rights and have the liberty to complain. He was kind with all his fellowmen and also with the unbelievers. **More to the point**, he was the first one to undertake the work of Preservation of the Qur'an for the benefit of his Ummah especially for future generations. As such he appointed Zaid bin Thabit who was a hafiz of the Qur'an to collect all Qur'anic verses in circulation from all those who had in their possessions at least one verse. **Eighthly**, he emphasized much on the idea and concept of morality and self-respect among his people. His society was known for the high degree of morality and spirituality. It was the period of the blessed Ashab and then the Tabi'in.

However, there had been some problems that were dealt by Abu Bakr and that could be considered as among his achievements. Before the death of the prophet (s.a.w), the latter had assigned Usamah bin Zaid for an expedition to Syria. The army had not the time to leave Madina when the prophet (s.a.w) passed away. Now, many people thought that it would be better not to send any army outside Madina for its security. Some proposed to assign a more experienced commander for the expedition due to his young age and being the son of a slave. However, Abu Bakr adhered by the decision of the prophet (s.a.w). Later after several months, Usamah returned victoriously. **A second important fact** is that after

the death of the prophet (s.a.w) many persons rose and pretended to be prophets. Among them there was Aswad Ansi from the tribe of Ansi in Yemen. He was known as the Veiled Prophet for his ugliness. Another one was Tulaiha from north Arabia who claimed prophethood during the time of the prophet (s.a.w). He was known as the Liar. When Khalid bin Walid attacked him at Buzaka, he fled to Syria. When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, he converted to Islam. Another false prophet was Musailima / Musailama – belonging to Banu Hanifa tribe. He wanted to imitate the prophet and reduced the number of namaz, he abolished zakaat and sawm. He Legalised drinking and adultery and composed sentences and pretended them to be Wahy. He was known as Musalima the Liar. He was killed by Khalid bin Walid. A false prophetess rose in the name of Sajjah – a Christian woman belonging to Tamim Tribe. She got married to Musailima to reinforce their army. When Iraq was conquered, she converted to Islam. **A third problem** was the refusal to pay Zakaat by some tribes such as Banu Asad, Banu Ghatafan, Banu Abbas, Banu Murrah. The caliph despatched an army of eleven battalions to face and crush all problems. In less than one year there was calm and security in the Islamic dominion.

Abu Bakr would never allow anyone to go against the Ummah or the Islamic Law. He would instead make it a must that the Law of Allah and His prophet would be established and enforced. At the same time he would respect the rights of all individuals muslims and non muslims.

Caliph Umar (ra)

Describe the events that led up to Umar becoming a Muslim.

Among the Ashab of the holy prophet (s.a.w), Hazrat Umar was one of the bravest. He was known for his sincerity in his work, his high personality and his bravery. There had been many crucial events where his presence had been of utmost importance. He was born from a Merchant family and he developed the sharp idea of a successful businessman. His Father was Khattab and his Mother was Khatmah. According to history he was 12/13 years younger than the prophet (s.a.w) and they shared a common Ancestor in Ka'ab. He received both Formal and informal education making him suitable and apt for reading and writing Arabic Language. He was very Learned, Intelligent and studious to the extent that no one was able to challenge him in educational field. He was a successful trader as well as a wise and loyal friend. He was admired for his sharp mind, his dedication to his work, his loyalty towards his relatives, his eagerness towards his religion and for his bravery.

He was among the polytheists and the idol worshippers but Allah had planned otherwise. He opposed the Muslims because he believed in the gods of the Kaaba amounted to 360 idols. He was aware of the mission of the prophet and he felt strongly about killing him to end all problems arising in Mecca and to avoid any risk of conversion. So, in the year 616 (in the 6th year of the prophet's mission) he set out with his sword. On his way he met and told a clansman known as Nu'aym bin Abdullah where he was going and about his objective. The clansman said to him that "By God, you have deceived yourself, O Umar! Do you think that Banu Abd Manaf would let you run around alive once you kill Muhammad? Your sister is a Muslim now. Why don't you return to your own house and set it straight?" In a furious mood, he angrily returned to his sister's house. Arriving there he saw one of the companions, Khabbab, spreading Islam to his sister and his brother in law. He was moreover angry when he noticed that Fatima, his sister hid a few pages of Qur'an she was reading. The pagans used to call that rubbish reading. Her sister knew about his character and what he could do if these pages would fall into his hands. She didn't want to give the paper on her brother's request. In the meantime Khabbab slipped away. Umar began hitting Sa'id, his brother in law and when Fatima wanted to interfere and to defend her husband, she got hit by Umar. She received a slap in the face and she was bleeding. The sight of blood stopped Umar and the latter was very sorry as he loved his sister so much that he never harmed her. It was not done

intentionally. He was a bit calm and he was sorry. He asked to read the pages but still Fatima did not trust him. Fatima wanted him to wash himself before touching and handling these pages.

As such Umar returned home, took off his sword and washed himself, then came to his sister. Fatima then hand over the pages to him. He was reading surah Ta Ha and he was so impressed by these words. Umar's eyes filled with hot tears and asked "Is this what we were against? The One who has spoken these words needs to be worshipped." He then left and went towards the prophet (s.a.w). During that period the Muslims would gather in the house of a companion known as Arqam ibn Abil Arqam to say their congregational prayers. They were just beginning to assemble, when one of them, looking out the window, saw Umar approaching the house with a drawn sword. In a state of considerable alarm, he told other members of the congregation what he saw. Presumably, they too were alarmed. But Hamza, the uncle of the prophet who six months earlier converted to Islam was also present in the house of Arqam, reassured them, and said that if Umar was coming with good intentions, then it was all right but if not, then he (Hamza) would run him (Umar) through with his (Umar's) own sword. When he knocked the door the prophet asked the companions to let him in but they were ready for anything to happen. The prophet asked him why he had come. Umar faced the prophet with humility and joy and said, "O Messenger of God, I have come for no reason except to say I believe in God and his Messenger". Prophet Muhammad was overcome with joy and cried out that God was Great! Within days, Umar lead a procession of Muslims to the house of God where they prayed openly. It was on this occasion that Prophet Muhammad gave him the nickname Al Farooq – the criterion. It denotes one who is able to distinguish truth from falsehood. Islam was strengthened with Umar, his fierce hatred melted into a love that knew no bound. His life and his death were now for the sake of God and his Messenger. That was unexpected and everyone rejoiced saying Allahu Akbar. According to hadith the prophet was praying Allah to strengthen Islam through Umar.

Assess the main achievements of his Caliphate.

There had been many different achievements in the caliphate of Umar. He was a very successful leader as he continued the principles of the prophet and Hazrat Abu Bakr with an iron fist. He was not the one to tolerate any unislamic aspects and immoralities in his society. He continued with the Majlis shurah with 11 members for decision making. He divided his caliphate into provinces and districts under different governors. He had regular checks on them. They would in return report to him during the period of Hajj on annual basis. He established office of judge (qadi) independent of provincial governor. He was the one who created the Hijri calendar. He contributed in the expansion of cultivated lands and new tax (ushr) was levied on produce of land. He established the finance department known as diwan of those entitled to state pensions for helping in wars. There were different sources of revenue such as Jizya (poll tax), zakaat, kharaj (spoils of war), Fay (income from crown lands) and ushr (1/10 of produce). All these were meant for funding the Baitul Maal (public treasury). In order to have a better control on the territories his armies were forbidden to buy land in conquered territories. He settled his army in new planned towns such as Kufa and Basra and these were accessible when there was the need to fight. He had a well-disciplined army and considered the welfare of soldiers, both Muslims and non-Muslims.

He standardised the Military division, Police department and the Educational department. To have a better control over his population, he had regular census. In order to ensure the spreading of Islam, teachers were sent throughout country to teach how to read the Qur'an and other Islamic fields. He constructed mosques, schools, roads and outposts for travellers. He gave individuals the right to question him or / and all officials and complain. This was a means of a strong democratic government. He checked weights and measures and prevented profiteering and hoarding. He dedicated great deal of time to religious affairs and he spiritualised the whole state. Some of his personal example could be seen in the fact that he was clear in thought, deeds, fair, pious and upright. Moreover, Hazrat Umar was a successful military commander. He was victorious in the Battle of Namarraq against Sassanians (Persians), in the Battle of Buwaib, against Sassanians again, in the battle of Qadisiya in 14 AH and finally broke strength of Sassanians. He was victorious in the Battle of Yarmuk 15AH against the Romans and at the Battle of

Nahawand in 21AH. There was the fall of Jerusalem into Muslim hands in 16AH and the conquest of Egypt in 17AH.

There are other achievements of Hazrat Umar such as the establishment of Public Treasury, the establishments of courts of Justice and appointment of Judges, the establishment of Postal service, the survey and assessment of lands, the public census, the punishment of those who practice Monopoly by exile to different lands, the establishment of and use of Jails, the building of Canals and Bridges, the use of the Whip, the establishment of Public Rest Areas, hostels and *Wudu* (Ablution) Stations, the use of secret reports and specially designated emissaries to provide first reports as what is really going on in different provinces, the salary for Imams, *Muadhin* (Callers to prayer), teachers and public lectures, the stipends for the poor among the Jews and Christians who lived in conquered lands, the punishment for drunkenness, written satires and lampoons, the establishment of Guilds for certain trades, the prohibition of the mention of women's names in poetry, the holding of *tarawih* (Ramadan night prayers) in congregation, the providing of lighting in the Mosques at night, the persuading of Abu Bakr to collect the Qur'an in one book, the establishment of Military bases at strategic points in the different provinces, the personally making nightly rounds to check on the condition of the people first hand, the formulation of the Principal of *Qiyas* (Analogical Reasoning.) for determining rulings on newly encountered matters in *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence.), the establishment of a more exact system of calculation of the inheritance, the limiting the relationship between Muslims and Non-Muslims, the establishing a stable for the lost camels, the state intervention to control the price of merchandise and the enlargement the *al-Haram* (the Sacred Mosque) at Mecca.

Caliph Uthman (ra)

Describe the achievements of Uthman as Caliph.

Caliph Uthman was the son of the father Affan and the mother Arwa. He was born in Macca in the 6th year of elephant and he was 5 years younger than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w). They were related through the common ancestor Abd Manaf. As from his formal education, he was able to read and write Arabic language. He was much learned, intelligent, wise (wisdom) and studious. In addition he was a successful trader and was always polite with his customers and business partners. Well before his conversion to Islam, he was a pious man. He never indulged in polytheism and idol worshipping. He was among the Hanif.

He embraced Islam at the demand of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra). He was a very tender hearted person. He would cater for the needy, destitute, low class and the poor. He would always come to the help of the persecuted. After the death of Umar, he became caliph and his reign lasted for 12 years (645-656 CE) and his empire greatly enlarged in the initial five or six years of rule. He enlarged both mosques in the cities of Mecca and Medina to suit the needs of the growing number of Muslims. **Secondly**, he embarked on the digging of wells for the convenience of both the people of Hijaz and the travellers. He also improved existing water courses to prevent flood. **Next**, he built large naval fleet and consolidated his army and through years he conquered places like Crete, Cyprus and Rhodes. He also sent his army to Egypt against Romans 646. **Moreover**, he sent Mu'awiyah as the governor of Syria into Asia minor and Khurasan to conquer and consolidate the countries and the state of the Islamic religion and creed. **Fifthly** there were many military expeditions to north Africa and Tripoli was conquered. There were also quelled revolts in Armenia and Azerbaijan where the Muslim armies crushed all revolts.

A six point is that, the caliph engaged in the standardisation of the Qur'an which was already compiled, but differences in recitation of Qur'an were noticed in far areas. Uthman was told about the situation and he took the mushaf from Hafsa (the Prophet's wife). **Another point** is to ensure the authenticity of the Qur'an, he instructed Zaid bin Thabit as the head of the project. Zaid made a public announcement that anyone having any verse should come forward to participate in this endeavour. **Another point is that**

compilation was also checked from the memories of other companions who were huffaz of the Qur'an. After this step Zaid was instructed to make new copies of Qur'an and other new copies were made and sent to all corners of Muslim empire. **Ninthly** in order to ensure that the old copies would not be in circulation, Uthman ordered his men to collect and burn all the old circulating copies of the whole Islamic empire. As such the old copies were destroyed. **Tenthly** the move of Uthman to standardise the Qur'an was to ensure that today we have the real and authentic Qur'an sent by Allah upon the prophet (s.a.w) of Islam. The Qur'an we read now is the same one from the time of Uthman.

Why do you think problems arose during his Caliphate?

There were many problems during the time of Uthman due to specific reasons. When he came to power, he wanted to make some changes in the posts of his government. He wanted to place his trusted men for a better control and to crush all problems. He did never want to give any favour to any member of his family, but instead, he was accused of appointing inefficient relatives as governors and he was so weak at commanding his people. He was also accused of his wrong and bad administrative measures of replacing already existing governors and that he did not check his newly appointed officers. He was charged of all the problems emerging in his dominion. He was accused of being too tender hearted towards those breaching the Shari'ah. He took lesser decisions against them. The greatest accusation was that he burned down the words and message of Allah – the Qur'an. Some of the rebellious persons accused him of corruption and upsurging the right of his people and money from the Bait-ul-Maal. All these accusations came from the Khawarij.

As such, **firstly**, Uthman's mild disposition was in severe contrast to Umar's reputation of being strong and the defeated Persians and Romans presumed that Uthman was not be able to hold empire together and that resulted in revolts in outlying areas. **Secondly**, due to large empire and the passing of time there was only few alive as role models who remembered the Prophet (s.a.w) personally and the high ideals of Islam. Many Muslims converts had lived with other values (not as honest and generous) which were difficult to change. They were led by their own customs. Uthman was unable to take strong decisions against all these kinds of corruptions. **Thirdly**, there was the question of the position of governors given to family members by Uthman (Umayyads). That situation revived the old rivalry between the Ummayad and the Hashemites again. That renewed the already existing enemies especially when more wealth was coming in from conquered territories. There was an urge to take over power. **Fourthly**, Uthman himself was too gentle towards his men, governors and people. Some advisors took advantage of his age and weakness. In this Abdullah bin Saba was the main ring leader of dissenting voices leading to exploiting the situation. **Fifthly**, there were many critics about him concerning the burning of the copies of the Qur'an after new compilations and standardisations of the Qur'an left to Hafsa were made. Uthman felt that differing versions of the Qur'an would cause conflict in his community and for later nations in later centuries.

Caliph 'Ali

Describe the relationship between the Prophet and Ali in the years after the first revelation.

He was the son of Abu Talib and as mother Faatima. He was a descendant of Hashim, cousin and in-law of Holy Prophet (s.a.w). He was 30 years younger than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w). Due to his surroundings, he obtained formal education by which he was able to read and write. He was learned, intelligent and studious. He learned the Qur'an by heart and was pious well before his acceptance of Islam. He had a good guide in the person of the holy prophet (s.a.w).

Both the prophet (s.a.w) and Hazrat Ali (ra) were very close. Ali was brought up in the Prophet's household since childhood. He had been acquainted with the life style and family members of the prophet. It is to be noted that when the prophet (s.a.w) spread Islam, Hazrat Ali was the first child to

accept Islam and when the Prophet was instructed to 'warn thy nearest kin' (26:214) Ali said 'I will be your helper'. In fact he listened and learned from the Prophet. It can be well said that the prophet was his direct teacher. During the whole mission of the prophet, Ali would always be by his side to spread Islam or to support the prophet and his family in so many different ways. Years passing by reaching the days before the Hijra to Madina, everyone waited for that right moment. Ali and Abu Bakr stayed behind in Mecca with the Prophet before the Hijra. Ali had risked his own life by sleeping in the Prophet's bed on the night of hijra for the Khawarij planned to burst into the house of the prophet to kill him in his bed. This was decided as such as Ali had a specific mission to perform that is to return things kept with the Prophet for safekeeping to their right owners. Later on when it became the time in Madina for brotherhood the Prophet declared Ali to be his brother.

He was so close to the prophet that he was married to Fatima, the Prophet's daughter. However, there was no show off out of this marriage. Ali and his family lived a frugal (economical) and simple life, just like the Prophet's family. He worked as a labourer with Prophet and engaged in building the mosque in Medina. He was the father of the famous Hasan and Husain, the Prophet's beloved grandchildren known so much in history for their piety and firmness on deen. As he was literate, he was a scribe of the Prophet and for the treaty of Hudaibiyah he was the main scribe. He was made standard bearer for the Muslims and he honoured his responsibility. He participated in the battles of the prophet and was a great warrior in all of them during the Prophet's lifetime. It is praiseworthy to mention here that there is the Ghadir Khumm episode where the prophet took the hand of Ali, raised it in the air and declared: 'For whomever I am the authority and guide Ali is also his guide and authority. Oh God! Be friendly with the friends of Ali and be enemy of his enemies. Whoever helps him, help him, and whoever leaves him, leave him.' This is to show how Ali was honoured by the prophet. Finally, it is known that Ali, along with others, washed the Prophet's body and buried him.

To what extent was Ali successful during his Caliphate?

After the death of the prophet (s.a.w) there were 3 caliphs before Hazrat Ali in the name of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. All the 3 did their best at their own level to be a good leader. However with events led by the Khawarij and after the assassination of Uthman, there were 3 days where there was no leader as caliph. When the Khawarij gave an ultimatum of 24 hours then Ali was chosen by the public. Muslims held Ali in high esteem due to being the son in law of the Prophet (s.a.w). He was born in the family of the prophet and he knew the message and practice of the Prophet better than most of the people of that time and he was revered for his knowledge of the Qur'an and the Shari'ah. He was then appointed as Caliph at assassination of Uthman where there was chaos in Madina. He maintained the Shari'ah and he was successful in doing so. **Secondly**, he faced challenges to his rule right from the start of his short Caliphate which lasted for 5 years. The opponents wanted him to find Uthman's murderer immediately but it was in vain. Ali's priority was the consolidation and the reorganisation of his Caliphate first. He dismissed some provincial governors and appointed new ones and that was an unpopular move. There were as such oppositions from Mu'awiyah, the governor of Syria who was related to Uthman and who accused Ali of siding with the rebels at time of Uthman's death. This was considered as unsuccessful.

Thirdly, with the desire to find the murderers of Uthman Aisha, Talha and Zubayr went north to get support in their quest. This resulted in battle of the Camel (Jamal) in against Ali. That was the first civil war in Islam between two muslims' armies. However Ali was successful in this move. Though there was fighting but it was in the favour of the caliph. **Fourthly**, Ali shifted the Islamic capital to Kufa where he would have more support there and it was closer to Syria which was Mu'awiyah's base and that gave him an opportunity to fight him. However, the armies were reluctant to fight Mu'awiyah at Siffin and that led to an arbitration agreed upon. Some soldiers from Ali's army (the Kharijites) opted out of arbitration and Mu'awiyah became Caliph in Damascus (Syria). Ali had no choice than to step down though he remained Caliph but he lost Syria. As such he was unsuccessful. **Fifthly**, Ali fought Kharijites at Nahrawan and won this battle. However this was the third war between Muslims. Ali then wanted his army to fight Mu'awiyah in Syria but his soldiers didn't agree. Following this the Kharijites planned the assassination

of Ali, Mu'awiyah and Amr but only Ali was martyred while praying. Ali was a radical and an idealist person but he was not prepared to play the dirty game of politics. He was thus unsuccessful in uniting the Muslims politically which resulted in Sunni/Shi'a split.

Qur'anic Topics

Describe what you know about the structure of the Qur'an.

The Holy Qur'an is the undisputed word of Allah. There is no doubt on that. All prophets who came were given their own guidance according to their time and circumstances. The revelations that were given to our last prophet (s.a.w) were over a period of 23 years at Macca and Madina.

Throughout these years the revelations were dictated by the prophet (s.a.w) to his scribes. Accordingly, these records were then crosschecked by the Prophet himself. Whenever and wherever there would be corrections and changes the prophet would give directives and he would instruct his scribes where revealed verses were to be placed. By the time the Prophet died at the age of 63, Muslims had many complete records of the Qur'an but not in the standard text and format as we have today. Later it was then compiled into a standard and complete copy during Abu Bakr's Caliphate. It was in the same order as authorised by the Prophet. It was thus checked by the companions and other huffaz of that time. The Qur'an begins with al Faatiha [the Opening] also known as the Basmallah. It is generally followed by the longest surah till the shortest one and each surah is divided into verses [ayah or sign]. Sometimes at the beginning or at the end of the Qur'an there are the rules of Tajweed and at the end there is the Du'a of Khatam ul Qur'an and at the same time the table of content.

The Holy Qur'an was then divided into 30 parts [juz, sipara] and each part was further subdivided into four parts (quarters). It was arranged in 114 surah [chapters] of unequal length. Among them surah Baqara is the longest and surah Kawthar is the shortest. Each surah [except one that is surah Tawba] begins 'in the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful'. There are 7 Manzil, 540 Ruku' and 6666 verses. On the right top of the Qur'anic page is the Juz (sipara) number, on the left if the surah number, on the right of the surah before the Basmallah is the number of verses in the surah, on the left is the number of Ruku' in it and in the middle is the chronological order of which the surah was revealed. The heart of the Qur'an is Surah Yaaseen, its mother is surah al Faatiha, for protection are the surah Ikhlāas, Falaq and Naas, for Tawheed its surah Ikhlāas, for gratitude its surah ar Rahman and so many others. Each surah has its specificities. These surah were given names relating to dominant content e.g. surah Maryam and sometimes the reasons for the names allocated to different chapters are only known by Allah and His prophet (s.a.w). It must be noted that the arrangement of surah is not in chronological order in which they were revealed. Such surah was designated as that was revealed in Mecca or Medina.

Describe what you know about the contents of the Qur'an.

The Holy Qur'an was sent as a book of guidance to guide Mankind on the right path. As it is said that there is no mistake in it and no one can bring another one similar to that of the Qur'an. It is unique also through its content and theme.

The Qur'an being the words of Allah, all the beliefs of Islam are found in it. There are many themes discussed in it. One example can be found in such as belief in the One Allah and His attributes especially of Him as the Compassionate [Ar-Rahman] and the Merciful [Ar-Rahim]. The whole concept of articles of faith is mentioned throughout the whole of the Qur'an. There is the mention of angels like Jibril, Mikail, Izrail, Izrafil, the witnessing angels (Sayyaahoun) among others. There is also the mention of the revealed books brought by messengers [rasool] of Allah such as Abraham [Ibrahim], Jesus [Isa], Moses [Musa] and David [Daoud]. We have the Suhuf, Tawraat, Zabour, Injeel and the Qur'an. There is also the mention of the stories of some (25) prophets [nabi] such as Adam, Noah [Nuh], Joseph [Yusuf] and Solomon [Sulaiman] to name a few. Above all of these prophets there is the mention of prophet

Muhammad [3:144] who in various places has been blessed by Allah like in ‘No doubt we have given you al Kawthar’.

However we have other kinds of verses dealing with warnings about Satan [Shaitan, Iblis] as being the obvious and declared enemy of Mankind and tempting human beings all the way till their return to Allah. There are also warnings about the hard accountability on the Day of Judgement where our records will be presented in front of us for judgement. There are also the different aspects of the rights of Allah that have been made compulsory like the mention of prayer [salat] [2:43], that of zakat [purifying wealth by giving a fixed portion annually], that of fasting during the month of Ramadan [2:183-184] and that of Hajj [22:31]. There is also verses dealing with the family life like the marital relationships [most of Sura 4], the relationships between parents and children, duties of children, adoption and the laws of inheritance [4:11-13]. There are also verses related to the prohibitions of some foods and alcohol [2:172-173], the prohibitions of lending money for profit [riba], the prohibition of gambling. Laws related to criminal law, murder and theft were also revealed added to the secrets of the scientific knowledge e.g. Sura Alaq [96:1-5].

Describe the way the Qur'an was compiled under the early Caliphs

The Holy Qur'an as we have today has been through different stages before its completion. Its compilation was made as from the time of the prophet (s.a.w) till the time of early caliphs like Abu Bakr and Uthman.

Among the Ashab, there had been many scribes like Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali who dedicated their lives in the service of Islam. They were some of the notable scribes who would jot down whatever the prophet (s.a.w) was saying. In that way the Ashab were able to keep the Qur'an intact and in addition to that the prophet would encourage the Ashab to memorize the verses by heart. However during Abu Bakr's Caliphate many of those who had memorised the Qur'an that is the huffaz died in the Battle of Yamama. According to some it was a number of 70 and according to others it was 700. Whatever the number Hazrat Umar feared the Qur'an may be lost and as such suggested to Abu Bakr to compile it into a book format. When Umar approached Abu Bakr the latter was reluctant to undertake the work as it had not been done in Prophet's lifetime. Nevertheless he agreed at last as it will benefit the whole Ummah. Abu Bakr then persuaded Zaid bin Thabit who was also a scribe to do the work. His work consisted of collecting the words written on pieces of bones, leathers, papyrus and palm leaves. He also collected from those who 'preserved in the hearts of men' the verses of the Qur'an. After the work had been done, copies of the Qur'an had been made and spread throughout the Islamic World. When Abu Bakr passed away Umar had possession of these and passed it to the daughter of Umar Hafsa who was at the same time the wife of the Prophet (s.a.w) and it was known as Mushaf Hafsa.

During the Caliphate of Uthman it was noted that Qur'an was being read/recited in different dialects. As such there was fighting among the Syrians and the Yemenites. In order to calm the situation and avoid further problem though the Muslim empire was being expanded Uthman had copies of Qur'an collected. Zaid bin Thabit was again assisted by three other Ashab to look over the text of the circulating Qur'an and to be compared to Mushaf Hafsa for accuracy. Hazrat Uthman decided to burn the circulating copies of the Qur'an. The idea behind that was to bring uniformity among the readings of the Muslims and to standardise the text of Allah. Hazrat Uthman used the dialect of the Quraish which is found in the Qur'an compiled by Hazrat Abu Bakr and left to Hazrat Hafsa (ra). Hazrat Uthman ordered copies to be made and they were sent to various cities of the Islamic empire. To make sure that the work is done, other versions were burnt. Another step in the completeness of the Qur'an due to the increasing converts to Islam and the difficulties to read the Qur'an by the non-Arab and Arab children, Mu'awiyah bin Sufyan during the Umayyad dynasty introduced the syntactical marks like fatha, kasra, dwamma, soukoun, tanween, madd among others. Then there came the final step due to the problem of differentiating between the alphabets of the Arabic language, Abdul Malik bin Marwan, another Umayyad Caliph

introduced dots above and below the Arabic alphabets. As such the Qur'an came to us as it was left completed since that period.

What role did Zayd bin Thabit play in the collection of the Qur'an?

During the khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra) the latter employed Hazrat Zayd bin Thabit as the main responsible for the collection of the Qur'an in one book form. Zayd bin Thabit was a hafiz and the well known scribe of the Prophet (s.a.w) in Medina. **Moreover**, it is said that he was a witness to the Prophet's recitation in the presence of Hazrat Jibril (as) during the Prophet's last Ramadan. As such he was aware of the order of what the surah should be in the Qur'an. **Furthermore**, Zayd bin Thabit was asked by Abu Bakr to compile the revealed verses of the Qur'an though he was hesitant. Abu Bakr knew that Zayd bin Thabit was the right man for that job. **Added to the above**, Zayd bin Thabit said that 'By Allah, if he [Abu Bakr] had ordered me to shift one of the mountains from its place, it would not have been harder for me than what he had ordered me concerning the collection of the Qur'an'. That shows how much reliable he was. **Then** he eventually reconciled to the wisdom of the undertaking and agreed to head the Committee though Hazrat Umar and other companions were part of this committee. It was accepted out of respect for Abu Bakr and the greatness of the mission.

Added to the above, Zayd and Umar sat at the entrance of the Prophet's mosque in Medina collecting all written verses which were attested by two witnesses [known as the Law of Witness methodology which gave it reliability and authoritativeness]. No verse was accepted at first instance. All of them needed verification. **More to the point**, the panel of Swahaba led by Zayd began locating written Qur'anic verses from parchments made of animal skins, scapula that is shoulder bone, leafstalks of date palms and from the memories of men. It was a painstaking task and it required great insight from great men in Islam. **Eighthly**, these were compared with oral recitation from well known Qur'an reciters [qurra] for correctness and consistency. This extraordinary effort resulted in all surah and verses duly arranged in the conventions of script and spellings current in Medina. Hazrat Zayd bin Thabit thus became one of the foremost authorities on the Qur'an. **Ninthly**, these suhuf were given to Abu Bakr for safe keeping, then to Umar and later in the custody of Hafsa bint Umar Farooq, the wife of the prophet. Hazrat Umar once addressed the Muslims and said 'O people, whoever wants to ask about the Qur'an, let him go to Zayd bin Thabit'. **Last but not least**, during Uthman's caliphate the need was felt to make correct copies of the Qur'an. Zayd bin Thabit was called upon once again to head a committee with other companions to prepare copies of the Qur'an from the suhuf kept by Hazrat Hafsa (ra). This was the greatest role played by Zayd bin Thabit (ra).

Why do you think it was important to make this collection?

The collection of the Qur'an during the time and after the demise of the prophet (s.a.w) was a great importance. **First of all**, the Prophet (and many huffaz) had died and therefore there were few remaining who were left to consult about Allah's message. As such if the revelations were not compiled there may have been conflicting versions which would not be good for Islam. In this way there would have been the possibility of falsification and innovation. **Secondly**, the Qur'an is a miracle for the Muslims. It tells us about things we cannot know of otherwise such as topics on Allah, His signs and attributes, the past (stories of earlier prophets) the present and the future (the Day of Judgement, Paradise and Hell). Therefore it was vital that the revelations had to be recorded. This was meant for future generations. **Moreover**, the Qur'an gives infallible guidance to Muslims on how to conduct their lives. It is the foundation of Islam as it guides us about Hajj, Ramadan, Zakaat and worship among others. However, if it was not compiled it would be irreplaceable and it would not have been the divine book. **Furthermore**, the early Muslims were men of vision. They knew the message of the Qur'an was for all people in the world not just the Arabs. The Muslim empire was expanding, more people becoming Muslim. It was therefore vital to compile revelations so that the message could be preserved and conveyed till the last day. **Added to the above**, Allah tells us the Qur'an is for 'those who think'.

Therefore early Muslims realised that a written version was imperative so that individual Muslims could read it and take Allah's message to heart. The Qur'an was thus not meant only to read but to study and to ponder upon.

Why is the Qur'an important to Muslims?

The Qur'an is important in so many different ways. **At the outset**, it is the words of Allah and as such it is from a source of Divine knowledge. Whatever if from Allah is considered as sacred. So by the mere fact that it is from Allah, it is important for the Muslims as the Qur'an directs Muslims to 'Obey Allah and His Messenger' [3:32]. **Moreover**, the Qur'an was revealed to announce to us about things we cannot know of otherwise. This world and the next are so full of secrets that some of them are unveiled through the Qur'an and serves as a criterion [furqaan] by which to discern truth from falsehood [25:1]. **Furthermore** there are topics such as Allah, His signs and attributes, the past (stories of earlier prophets), the present and the future (the Day of Judgement, Paradise and Hell) which are mentioned in the Qur'an. Without their mentioning we would not have been able to know about what is expected from Allah. **Another aspect** is that the Qur'an guides us about the Hajj, Ramadan, Zakat, and worship leading us to the knowledge of the foundation of Islam. It is the guidance well awaited by the Muslims. **Fifthly**, it addresses the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), Muslims, as well as everyone in the world. It is a book needed by each and everyone and no one is deprived from its guidance. It is meant for both Muslims and non Muslims.

Added to the above, it is a complete code of life for Muslims. The Qur'an is meant to be followed and as such it provides the best code of conduct for the Muslims. It is an invitation to guidance on all aspects of life. **Furthermore**, it is also important as therein are verses used in worship. Without the verses there is no swalaat. The Qur'an is the source where verses of Allah can be derived from. It indicates also the completion of the cycle of revelation. **Eighthly**, the Qur'an forms the foundation of a just society. Abiding by the rules and regulations of the Qur'an will render a Muslim society a Spiritual society. It acts as a means to build up the society on the foundation of morality. **Moreover**, the Qur'an is used as a base for legal thinking that is the Islamic Law - the Shari'ah. All basic rules and regulations are found primarily in the Qur'an and these authorities can't be falsified. The Qur'an is a book of Law meant for all generations. **Last but not least**, Allah through the Qur'an expects us to think and reflect on His verses [12:108] and to use our reason [40:67]. The first revelation was the command to 'Read' implying the whole concept of education and as such Allah Himself says he will protect the Qur'an with its teachings and it will remain unchanged for eternity [15:9].

Surah Faatiha (1)

What are the main teachings of Surah Faatiha?

The Holy Qur'an was revealed upon the prophet (s.a.w) as a means of guidance as Allah says that "it is a guidance for those who have Taqwa". All the chapters have their own lesson and teachings just like surah Faatiha, the first surah of the Qur'an.

The surah has been revealed in Macca and according to some it the Basmallah is not included in the surah but according to others it is. It is the first surah that has been revealed in one whole. It is a surah that has never been revealed before to any prophet except the last prophet of Islam (s.a.w). It has different names as Ruqya, Shifa and Umm Kitaab among others. **The first verse** is the Basmallah that is "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful". In that verse it is a clear indication that we must always start whatever we do in the name of Allah. All actions of our lives must be done with the name of Allah. There is an indication of two attributes of Allah in "the Most Gracious" and "The most Merciful". The first "Ar Rahman" signifies that Allah is merciful over all His creatures and creations but the second Ar Rahim signifies that He will be Most Merciful in Akhirah towards those who will really need His forgiveness and help. **The second verse** means "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds". Allah deserves praise not only because He is our Creator, Sustainer, Provider, Helper among others but because He deserves to be praised as such. Hamd (praise) takes place on the tongue and in the heart. It is also evident that we must recognise Allah being the Lord of the Worlds that is the Worlds of angels, mankind, jinns, animals and what we can see and what we can't see. **The third verse** "The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful" allows us to know much more who is Allah through His attributes of Compassion, Glorious and Mercy. Allah's Compassion (rahmah) is paramount as it is for everyone. He is more Mercy (rahim) only for those who believe in Him. **The fourth verse** is "Master of the Day of Judgement". The notion of master brings to our mind that when there is Master and the servants. The Master will be the judge on that day and we will be questionable. He will decide of what to do with us. Only His mercy can come to our help. It is the day the debts will fall due; 'deen' can be debts the debts we owe Allah. Allah will take us to account on this Day and the result will be either Jannah or Jahannam.

The fifth verse of the surah is "You do we worship and Your Help we see". In this we recognise Allah's place and we know we have to worship Him alone. Ibaadah whether it may be Fard, Wajib, Sunnah, Nawafil must be for Allah. It is also an indication that Allah alone can help us and we can seek refuge in Him. There is no polytheism and idol worshipping in Islam. **The sixth verse** states to "Guide us to the Straight Way, the way of those on whom You have bestowed Your blessings not on those on whom there is anger nor on those who go astray. In this we know that guidance is in the hands of Allah. We are asking guidance from Him and our du'a are specific. We ask to show us the road taken by the Nabi'in (prophets), Siddiquin (ashab), Shu'adah (martyr) and swalihin (the righteous). At the same time we are asking help and protection against anyone who had your anger and who went astray like the Jews and the Christians respectively. We are asking for the middle way between too much and too little. Muslims pray Allah to guide them in every walk of life. **Another important fact** is that the Surah is a way for the people to know how to frame a du'a and how to invoke Allah with success. We have to praise Allah first, then we have to ask Him for guidance and lastly we have to ask for protection against any group which obtained the anger of Allah and those who went astray. It is the prayer of the Believer. **Another fact** is that we became acquainted with Allah's characteristics and we acknowledge our weaknesses. Allah is the one to be praised and we are the servants.

Explain why this Surah is regarded as so important?

All verses of the Qur'an are important for the Muslim communities for all generations. As such, surah Faatiha is important for the Muslims in different ways. **Firstly**, the Prophet (s.a.w) called it umm ul

kitaab that is the essence of the Book because it contains the fundamental principles of Islam that is Tawhid (oneness of Allah), Risaalah (messengership of the prophet) and Insaan (Human Being) who are dependent on it. **Secondly**, it is known as the “opener” as it opens up the book. It is also called as surah al hamd that is the surah of praise. Allah has mentioned it in the Qur’an by the “7 oft-repeated verses” which is a perfect prayer for Muslims in public or private. **Thirdly**, there is no rakah in salat is which is correct or complete without reciting the surah. It is one of the earliest revelations received in Mecca and the first one revealed in its entirety. This is at the core of the obligatory and non-obligatory prayers for all Muslims. **Fourthly**, as it begins with ‘bismillah’ it shows that every action a Muslim does must start with Allah’s name. It is said in hadith that if the name of Allah is not taken at the start of a work, then satan will accompany the person in the task. **Fifthly**, this surah is suggestive of a prayer from the supplicant and the guidance in the remaining surahs of the Qur’an is the answer to that prayer. In the surah the last part deals with the du’a or invocation of the believer in quest of guidance from Allah. It can serve as a model to make du’a.

Sixthly, it is a constant reminder and warning of the Day of Judgement and man’s accountability in front of Allah. When Allah affirms that He is the Master or Owner of that day, this means that He will be the One to decide whom He likes to enter paradise. **Seventhly**, it is mentioned in hadith concerning the benefits of its recitation. It is said that if it is recited it can act as a healing (Shifa) or as enlightenment to a difficulty. It can be read and can be blown on the painful part of the body or in water for drinking purposes. However it must be read with Iman. **Eighthly**, it is recited after a person dies to invoke mercy on the soul. The reading of the verses of the Qur’an followed by du’a for anyone alive or dead is considered blessed by the scholars. The blessings found in the verses of the Qur’an are of utmost benefits for Mankind. **Ninthly**, it reminds Muslims that Allah is the Compassionate/Gracious (ar Rahman) and the Merciful (ar Rahim). It is a constant reminder of where we stand in front of Allah. It reminds us of our inferiority in the sight of Allah and how we must be at His service. **Tenthly**, it is also a clear indication that worship is for Allah alone and His help is paramount at any time. As such, it is used to drive away Jinn from a person as a Ruqya and it is used to protect oneself from the influence of Shaitaan. Allah is the One who can help us in such difficulty.

Surah Al Baqarah (2: 1-193)

This surah is considered as the longest surah and according to Hazrat ‘Ali (ra) it englobes all teachings of the Qur’an. There are many topics discussed in that surah and the following are those from verse 1 till 193 according to the syllabus.

(Verses 1 – 20):

These introductory verses declare the Quran to be the Book of Guidance: enunciate the articles of the Faith -- belief in Allah, Prophethood and Life-after-death; divide mankind into three main groups with regard to its acceptance or rejection -- Believers, unbelievers and hypocrites. Allah elaborates on the characteristics of the believers who really believe in Allah, then the unbelievers who openly declare their rejection of Islam and the hypocrites whose hearts and what is therein are concealed. To one they are Muslims to others they are non Muslims ... they are the hypocrites.

Concerning the first verse of the surah, Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas (ra) said: “concerning Allah’s saying, exalted is He, (Alif. Lam. Mim): ‘Alif stands for Allah, Lam for the Archangel Gabriel (Jibril) and Mim for Muhammad. It is also said Alif stands for Allah’s blessings (ala’uh), Lam for His kindness (lutfuh) and Mim for His dominion (mulkuh). It is also said that Alif stands for the beginning of the Name Allah, Lam for the beginning of His Name the Kind (al-Latif) and Mim for the beginning of His Name the Glorious (al-Majid). It is also said that only Allah knows the meaning of these disjointed letters; while some maintain that it is an oath that He made.”

The first verses “(3) Who believe in the unseen, and establish worship, and spend of that We have bestowed upon them, (4) And who believe in that which is revealed unto thee (Muhammad) and that which was revealed before thee, and are certain of the Hereafter, (5) These are on guidance from their Lord. And these are the successful” relate to the characteristics of the real believer.

The other following verses “(6) As for the disbelievers, whether you warn them or you warn them not it is all one for them; they believe not, (7) Allah hath sealed their hearing and their hearts, and on their eyes there is a covering. Theirs will be an awful doom” deal with the characteristics of the unbelievers.

This section continues with the verses “(8) And of mankind are some who say: We believe in Allah and the Last Day, when they believe not, (9) They think to beguile Allah and those who believe, and they beguile none save themselves; but they perceive not, (10) In their hearts is a disease, and Allah increases their disease. A painful doom theirs because they lie. (11) And when it is said unto them: Make not mischief in the earth, they say: We are peacemakers only. (12) Are not they indeed the mischief makers? But they perceive not. (13) And when it is said unto them: Believe as the people believe, they say: Shall we believe as the foolish believe? Are not they indeed the foolish? But they know not. (14) And when they fall in with those who believe, they say: We believe; but when they go apart to their devils they declare: Lo! we are with you; verily we did but mock. (15) Allah (Himself) doth mock them, leaving them to wander blindly on in their contumacy. (16) These are they who purchase error at the price of guidance, so their commerce doth not prosper, neither are they guided. (17) Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindles fire, and when it sheds its light around him Allah takes away their light and leaves them in darkness, where they cannot see, (18) Deaf, dumb and blind; and they return not” deal with the characteristics of the hypocrites. The latter are so difficult to recognise due to their nature that Allah elaborates more on their characteristics.

(Verse 21 – 29):

Allah invites mankind to accept the Guidance voluntarily and to submit to Him, the Lord and the Creator of the Universe, and to believe in the Quran, His Guidance, and in the Life-after-death. It is our responsibility to put the Shari’ah into practice irrespective of the place, time and ideology or feelings towards human beings. There must be no distraction in the hearts of the Muslims and we will be accountable for all our deeds and sayings.

Allah says (21) O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who hath created you and those before you, so that ye may ward off (evil), (22) Who hath appointed the earth a resting-place for you, and the sky a canopy; and causes water to pour down from the sky, thereby producing fruits as food for you. And do not set up rivals to Allah when ye know (better), (23) And if you are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto Our slave (Muhammad), then produce a sura or the like thereof, and call your witnesses beside Allah if ye are truthful.” and at the same time is both showing His favours on Mankind and challenging us to produce a surah as in the Qur’an.

At the same time Allah says (25) And give glad tidings (O Muhammad) unto those who believe and do good works; that theirs are Gardens underneath which rivers flow; as often as they are regaled with food of the fruit thereof, they say: This is what was given us aforetime; and it is given to them in resemblance. There for them are pure companions; there forever they abide. (27). Those who break the covenant of Allah after ratifying it and sever that which Allah ordered to be joined, and (who) make mischief in the earth: Those are they who are the losers” and indicates that as long as we will follow and obey His orders we will be blessed but once we disobeyed Him, then there is only disappointment.

(Verse 30 – 39):

The story of the appointment of Adam as Allah's Vicegerent on Earth, of his life in the Garden, of his falling a prey to the temptations of Satan, of his repentance and its acceptance, has been related to show to mankind (Adam's offspring), that the only right thing for them is to accept and follow the Guidance. This story also shows that the Guidance of Islam is the same that was given to Adam and that it is the original religion of mankind. There is also evidence of Shaitaan (Iblis) being the open and declared enemy.

Allah says “(30) And when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth, they said: wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee? He said: Surely I know that which ye know not, (34) And when We said unto the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they fell prostrate, all save Iblis He demurred through pride, and so became a disbeliever. (35) And We said: O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden, and eat you freely (of the fruits) will; but come not nigh this tree lest ye become wrongdoers. (36) But Satan caused them to deflect there from and expelled them from the (happy) state in which they were; and we said: Fall down, one of you a foe unto the other! There shall be for you on earth a habitation and provision for a tune, (37) Then Adam received from his Lord words (of revelation), and He relented toward him. Lo! He is the Relenting the Merciful.

(Verse 40 – 120):

In this portion invitation to the Guidance has particularly been extended to the children of Israel and their past and present attitude has been criticised to show that the cause of their degradation was their deviation from the Guidance. Allah asks for being worshipped, to observe Sabr, to remember the favours of Allah and to fear His punishment.

Allah says (40) O Children of Israel! Remember My favour wherewith I favoured you, and fulfil your (part of the) covenant, I shall fulfil My (part of the) covenant and fear Me, (41) And believe in that which I reveal, confirming that which ye possess already (of the Scripture), and be not first to disbelieve therein, and part not with My revelations for a trifling price, and keep your duty unto Me, (42) Confound not truth with falsehood, nor knowingly conceal the truth, (43) Establish worship, pay the poor-due, and bow your heads with those who bow (in worship), (44) Enjoin ye righteousness upon mankind while ye yourselves forget (to practise it)? And ye are readers of the Scripture! Have ye then no sense?, (45) Seek help in patience and prayer; and truly it is hard save for the humble-minded, (46) Who know that they will have to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are returning. (49) And (remember) when We did deliver you from Pharaoh's folk, who were afflicting you with dreadful torment, slaying your sons and sparing your women: That was a tremendous trial from your Lord. (51) And when We did appoint for Moses forty nights (of solitude), and then ye chose the calf, when he had gone from you, and were wrongdoers, (53) And when We gave unto Moses the Scripture and the Criterion (of right and wrong), that ye might be led alright. (59) But those who did wrong changed the word which had been told the evil-doers wrath from Heaven for their evil doing. (62) Lo! those who believe (in that which is revealed unto thee, Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabaeans whoever believeth in Allah and the Last Day and doeth right surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve. (67) And when Moses said unto his people: Lo! Allah commandeth you that ye sacrifice a cow, they said: Dost thou make game of us? He answered: Allah forbid that I should be among the foolish! (68) They said: Pray for us unto thy Lord that He make clear to us what (cow) she is. (Moses) answered: Lo! He saith, Verily she is a cow neither with calf nor immature; (she is) between the two conditions; so do that which ye are commanded. (69) They said: Pray for us unto thy Lord that He make clear to us of what colour she is. (Moses) answered: Lo! He saith: Verily she is a yellow cow. Bright is her colour, gladdening beholders.

70. They said: Pray for us unto thy Lord that He make clear to us what (cow) she is. Lo! cows are much alike to us; and lo! if Allah wills, we may be led aright. (71) (Moses) answered: Lo! He saith: Verily she is a cow unyoked; she plougheth not the soil nor watereth the tilth; whole and without mark. They said: Now thou bringest the truth. So they sacrificed her, though almost they did not. (72) And (remember) when ye slew a man and disagreed concerning it and Allah brought forth that which ye were hiding. (81) Nay, but whosoever hath done evil and his sin surroundeth him; such are rightful owners of the Fire; they will abide therein. (82) And those who believe and do good works: such are rightful owners of the Garden. They will abide therein. (83) And (remember) when We made a covenant with the Children of Israel, (saying): Worship none save Allah (only), and be good to parents and to kindred and to orphans and the needy, and speak kindly to mankind; and establish worship and pay the poor due. Then, after that, ye slid back, save a few of you, being averse. (84) And when We made with you a covenant (saying): Shed not the blood of your people nor turn (a party of) your people out of your dwellings. Then ye ratified (Our covenant) and ye were witnesses (thereto). (110) Establish worship, and pay the poor due; and whatever of good ye send before (you) for your souls, ye will find it with Allah. Lo! Allah is Seer of what ye do. (119) Lo! We have sent thee (O Muhammad) with the truth, a bringer of glad tidings and a warner. And thou wilt not be asked about the owners of hell fire.

(Verse 121 – 141):

The Jews have been exhorted to follow Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) who had come with the same Guidance and who was a descendant and follower of Prophet Abraham whom they highly honoured as their ancestor, and professed to follow as a prophet. The story of the building of the Ka'bah by him has been mentioned because it was going to be made the Qiblah of the Muslim Community.

Allah says in verses (122) O Children of Israel! Remember My favour wherewith I favoured you and how I referred you to (all) creatures, (124) And (remember) when his Lord tried Abraham with (His) commands and he fulfilled them, He said: Lo! I have appointed thee a leader for mankind. (Abraham) said: And of my offspring (will there be leaders)? He said: My covenant includes not wrongdoers, (125) And when We made the House (at Mecca) a resort for mankind and a sanctuary, (saying): Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood (to pray). And We imposed a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael, (saying): Purify My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down and prostrate themselves (in worship), (127) And when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the foundations of the House, (Abraham prayed): Our Lord! Accept from us (this duty). Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Nearer, the Knower. (129) Our Lord! And raise up in their midst a messenger from among them who shall recite unto them Thy revelations, and shall instruct them in the Scripture and in wisdom and shall make them grow. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Mighty, Wise, (132) The same did Abraham enjoin upon his sons, and also Jacob, (saying): O my sons! Lo! Allah hath chosen for you the (true) religion; therefore die not save as men who have surrendered (unto Him). (140) Or say ye that Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Do ye know best, or doth Allah? And who is more unjust than he who hides a testimony which he hath received from Allah? Allah is not unaware of what ye do.

(Verse 142 – 152):

In this portion, the declaration of the change of Qiblah from the Temple (Jerusalem) to the Ka'bah (Makkah) has been made as a symbol of the change of leadership from the children of Israel to the Muslim Community, which has also been fore-warned to guard against those transgressions against the Guidance that had led to the deposition of the Jews.

Allah says (144) We have seen the turning of thy face to heaven (for guidance, O Muhammad). And now verily We shall make thee turn (in prayer) toward a Qiblah which is dear to thee. So turn thy face toward the Inviolable Place of Worship, and ye (O Muslims), wheresoever ye may be, turn your faces when ye pray toward it. Lo! Those who have received the Scripture know that (this Revelation) is the Truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do. (148) And each one hath a goal toward which he turneth; so vie with one another in good works. Wheresoever ye may be, Allah will bring you all together. Lo! Allah is Able to do all things. (149) And whencesoever thou comes forth (for prayer, O Muhammad) turn thy face toward the Inviolable Place of Worship. Lo! It is the Truth from thy Lord Allah is not unaware of what ye do. (151) Even as We have sent unto you a messenger from among you, who reciteth unto you Our revelations and causeth you to grow, and teacheth you the Scripture and wisdom, and teacheth you that which ye knew not.' (152) Therefore remember Me, I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and reject not Me.

(Verse 153 – 193):

If we are unbelievers there will surely be the curse of Allah. In this portion practical measures have been prescribed to enable the Muslims to discharge the heavy responsibilities of the leadership that had been entrusted to them for the promulgation of Guidance. Salat, Fast, Zakat, Hajj and Jihad have been prescribed for the moral training of the Ummat.

Allah says (153) O ye who believe! Seek help in steadfastness, and prayer. Lo! Allah is with the steadfast. (154) And call not those who are slain in the way of Allah "dead." Nay, they are living, only ye perceive not. (155) And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast, (156) Who say, when a misfortune striketh them: Lo! we are Allah's and Lo! unto Him we are returning. (157) Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided. (158) Lo! (The mountains) Al-Safa and Al-Marwah are among the indications of Allah. It is therefore no sin for him who is on pilgrimage to the House (of God) or visits it, to go around them (as the pagan custom is). And he who doeth good of his own accord (for him), Lo! Allah is Responsive, Aware. (159) Those who hide the proofs and the guidance which We revealed, after We had made it clear in the Scripture: such are accursed of Allah and accursed of those who have the power to curse. (160) Except such of them as repent and amend and make manifest (the truth). These it is toward whom I relent. I am the Relenting, the Merciful. (161). Lo! Those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers; on them is the curse of Allah and of angels and of men combined. (168) O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and wholesome in the earth, and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Lo! he is an open enemy for you. (173.) He hath forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swine flesh, and that which hath been immolated to (the name of) any other than Allah. But he who is driven by necessity, neither craving nor transgressing, it is no sin for him. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (175) Those are they who purchase error at the price of guidance, and torment at the price of pardon. How constant are they in their strife to reach the Fire! (180) It is prescribed for you, when one of you approacheth death, if he leave wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness. (This is) a duty for all those who ward off (evil). (183) O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it as prescribed for those before you that ye may ward off evil) (184) (Fast) a certain number of days; and (for) him who is sick among you, or on a journey, (the same) number of other days; and for those who can afford it there is a ransom: the feeding of a man in need. But whoso doeth good of his own accord, it is better for him: and that ye fast is better for you if ye did but know, (188) And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity, nor seek bit to gain the hearing of the judges that ye may knowingly devour a portion of the property of others wrongfully. (190) Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loves not, aggressors. (191) And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. (192) But if they desist, then

lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (193) And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrongdoers.

Allah knows best.

Surah Aali 'Imraan (3)

Among the various surah Allah sent to Mankind we have Aali 'Imraan. This surah deals with the family of 'Imran, Hannah, Maryam, Hazrat Zakariyyah and their surroundings. There are many lessons to be derived from that surah.

It relates the story of Hazrat Hannah, the wife of 'Imraan and the mother of Hazrat Maryam (ra) who desired a boy and she would dedicate him to God. Allah says (3:35 – 36): '(Remember) when the wife of Imran said: My Lord I have vowed unto Thee that which is in my belly as a consecrated (offering). Accept it from me. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Hearer, the Knower! And when she was delivered she said: My Lord! Lo! I am delivered of a female. Allah knew best of what she was delivered. The male is not as the female; and Lo! I have named her Mary, and Lo! I crave Thy protection for her and for her offspring from Satan the outcast." Hannah wanted a boy but Allah gave her a girl. Hannah was a very pious woman and she accepted the baby and the wish of Allah. The baby was named Maryam and as it is said in the Qur'an, she who was left under the care of Hazrat Zakariyyah (as). Hannah wanted to dedicate the child to the service of Allah and she kept her words. It was the responsibility of Hazrat Zakariyyah (as) to train her and to bring her 'to the door of Allah' that is on the right path. What can be learned here is that it is the will of Allah and up to Allah to decide what to give and what to take. Allah knows what we don't know. Hannah wanted a boy but instead Allah gave her a girl and in history that girl is known as the pious lady and she is considered as an example for women in general.

By the passing of time it was seen that Maryam grew up to be a very pious woman and dedicated her time in the sanctuary of the mosque that is Masjid al Aqsa. No one knew that she was a girl and she was always covered and in seclusion. Due to her love for Allah and her time dedicated in the path of Allah, Allah says: 'And her Lord accepted her with full acceptance and vouchsafed to her a goodly growth; and made Zakariyyah her guardian. Whenever Zakariyyah went into the sanctuary where she was, he found that she had food. He said: O Mary! Whence cometh unto thee this (food)? She answered: It is from Allah. Allah gives without limit to whom He will.' (3:37). This means that miracles of foodstuff were produced to fulfil the needs of Maryam. Fruits of winter were available during summer and vice versa. What can be deduced here is that miracles are in the hands of Allah. Many people used to think that miracles occur only through the hands of prophets. But here the lessons that we must derive is that miracles can occur through the hands of people other than prophets like the pure servants of Allah. Nothing is impossible for Allah. It is clear that when we spend and dedicate our lives in the path of Allah we will be favoured in all worlds.

Hazrat Zakariyyah (as) was impressed and wanted a son but the couple was barren. But he really wanted a child to be given in the path of Allah. As it is said in the Qur'an, Zakariyyah prayed unto his Lord and said: My Lord! Bestow upon me of Thy bounty goodly offspring. Lo! Thou art the Hearer of Prayer.' Then Allah sent angels calling to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: Allah gives thee glad tidings of (a son whose name is) John (Yahya), (who cometh) to confirm a word from Allah, lordly, chaste, a Prophet of the righteous. However for Hazrat Zakariyyah (as) there was a major problem: he was old and his wife was barren. He complained to Allah and the angels replied that Allah has power over everything and he does what he wants. He then wanted to know how would that be possible and thus the angels told him that 'the token unto thee (shall be) that thou shall not speak unto mankind three days except by signs. Remember thy Lord much, and praise (Him) in the early hours of night and morning.' As such he was ordered to fast for 3 days and then afterwards to have sexual intercourse with his wife. As a

result, Allah gave him Hazrat Yahya (as). What we must deduce here is that invocations that are done in places where miracles occur are accepted by Allah. To be favoured by Allah is not a matter of age or health. It is a matter of the will and wish of Allah.

Another aspect and important event was in the birth of prophet Isa (as). Allah says as from verse 45: ‘(And remember) when the angels said: O Mary! Allah gives thee glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near (unto Allah). He will speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his manhood, and he is of the righteous. She said: My Lord! How can I have a child when no mortal hath touched me? He said: So (it will be). Allah creates what He will. If He decrees a thing, He says unto it only: Be! and it is. And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel. And will make him a messenger unto the children of Israel, (saying): Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave. And I announce unto you what ye eat and what ye store up in your houses. Lo! Herein verily is a portent for you, if ye are believers.’ In these verses there is the mention of the miraculous birth of Hazrat Isa (as) who talked in his cradle and made miracles. Hazrat Isa (as) was born from a mother alone. This is from the wish of Allah as everything is possible. In these verses there is the mention of some miracles of Hazrat Isa (as). Among them is the ability to give life to the dead and the miracle of giving life to a man made bird. The Injeel was given to him and he was ordered to spread Islam towards his people. There is also the will of Allah – He doesn’t need a father for a son or daughter to take birth. He is enough.

In this surah what can be concluded is that the wish of Allah is above all other wishes and above human comprehension. Where there is the will for a baby boy a girl is born and where there is no solution Allah brings the solution with so much ease.

Surah Al Ambiyaa (21: 50 – 112)

This surah deals with the different prophets and their lives. Lessons are derived from their past histories.

Hazrat Ibrahim (as)

Here is the story of Hazrat Ibrahim who was born among the idol worshippers. Since childhood he was disgusted with that society. When he grew up he challenged to crush down the idols. When the polytheists were gone to other services he destroyed all of the idols except one on which he placed his axe. He wanted his people to think but instead he was thrown to the big fire. He had faith in Allah who protected him.

Allah says:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ رُشْدَهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهِ عَالِمِينَ

51. And We verily gave Abraham of old his proper course, and We were Aware of him,

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ

52. When he said unto his father and his folk: What are these images unto which ye pay devotion?

وَتَاللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَامَكُمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ

57. And, by Allah, I shall circumvent your idols after ye have gone away and turned your backs.

قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ

68. They cried: Burn him and stand by your gods, if ye will be doing.

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

69. We said: O fire, be coolness and peace for Abraham.

Hazrat Lut (as)

This is the story of a people who didn't believe in their prophet. Due to their intellect and ability to adjust with different situations with pride they started to commit sins. Allah sent His wrath and His people was destroyed.

وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ

71. And We rescued him and Lot (and brought them) to the land which We have blessed for (all) peoples.

وَلُوطًا آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْخَبَائِثَ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَاسِقِينَ

74. And unto Lot We gave judgment and knowledge, and We delivered him from the community that did abominations. Lo! They were folk of evil, lewd.

Hazrat Ishaq (as) and Hazrat Ya'qub (as)

This is the story of 2 prophets who were on the right track and were blessed by Allah.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ

72. And We bestowed upon him Isaac, and Jacob as a grandson. Each of them We made righteous.

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ

73. And We made them chiefs who guide by Our command, and We inspired in them the doing of good deeds and the right establishment of worship and the giving of alms and they were worshippers of Us (alone).

Hazrat Nuh (as)

This is the story of the boat built by Nuh (as). His people disobeyed him and he asked wrath upon the non-Muslims. Flood came and lasted for 40 days and nights and the boat stopped at Mount Judi. His wife and son who disbelieved did not come in the boat, they were killed. Allah got rid of the disbelievers of his people once for all.

Allah says:

وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

76. And Noah, when he cried of old, We heard his prayer and saved him and his household from the great affliction.

وَنَصَرْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

77. And delivered him from the people who denied Our revelations. Lo! They were folk of evil; therefore did We drown them all.

Hazrat Dawood (as) and Hazrat Sulaiman (as)

This is the story of the father and the son, both prophets. They had their specific characters with their own way of miracles.

Allah says:

وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ

78. And David and Solomon, when they gave judgment concerning the field, when people's sheep had strayed and browsed therein by night; and We were witnesses to their judgment.

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلًّا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

79. And We made Solomon to understand (the case); and unto each of them We gave judgment and knowledge. And We subdued the hills and the birds to hymn (His) praise along with David. We were the doers (thereof).

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَكُمْ لَتُخَصِّنَكُمْ مِنَ بَأْسِكُمْ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ

80. And We taught him the art of making garments (of mail) to protect you in your daring. Are ye then thankful?

وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَالِمِينَ

81. And unto Solomon (We subdued) the wind in its raging. It set by His command toward the land which We had blessed. And of everything We are aware.

وَمِنَ الشَّيَاطِينِ مَنْ يَغُوصُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَافِظِينَ

82. And of the evil ones (subdued We unto him) some who dived (for pearls) for him and did other work, and We were warders unto them.

Hazrat Ayyub (as)

This is the story of the test inflicted upon the prophet Ayyub (as) and his patience and perseverance he showed throughout his life.

Allah says:

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَتَيْ مَسْنِيَ الضُّرِّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

83. And Job, when he cried unto his Lord, (saying): Lo! Adversity afflicts me, and Thou art Most Merciful of all who show mercy.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرٍّ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَابِدِينَ

84. Then We heard his prayer and removed that adversity from which he suffered, and We gave him his household (that he had lost) and the like thereof along with them, a mercy from Our store, and a remembrance for the worshippers.

Hazrat Isma'il (as) and Hazrat Idris (as) and Hazrat Dhul Kifl (as)

They are briefly mentioned in the Qur'an but all of them are the beloved of Allah without defects.

Allah says:

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِّنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

85. And (mention) Ishmael, and Idris, and Dhul-Kifl. All were of the steadfast.

وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

86. And We brought them in unto Our mercy. Lo! They are among the righteous.

Hazrat Dhun Nun (Yunus) (as)

This is the story of Hazrat Yunus (as) known as Dhun Nun. Due to the disbelief of his people, he left them. He embarked a ship from which he was chosen to be thrown overboard. Allah ordered a big fish to swallow him but to let him alive. After 40 days and nights he was freed on the shore of a deserted island. He recovered little by little and returned to his people. He was astonished to see his people accepting now.

Allah says:

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّنْ نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَن لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

87. And (mention) Dhun Nun, when he went off in anger and deemed that We had no power over him, but he cried out in the darkness, saying: There is no God save Thee. Be Thou glorified! I have been a wrong doer.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

88. Then We heard his prayer and saved him from the anguish. Thus We save believers.

Hazrat Zakariyyah (as) and Hazrat Yahya (as)

This is the story of the father and the son, both prophets and dedicated to Deen. A brief sketch of their lives was mentioned above.

وَزَكَرِيَّا إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ

89. And Zachariah, when he cried unto his Lord: My Lord! Leave me not childless, though Thou art the best of inheritors.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ

90. Then We heard his prayer, and bestowed upon him John, and adjusted his wife (to bear a child) for him. Lo! They used to vie one with the other in good deeds, and they cried unto Us in longing and in fear, and were submissive unto Us.

Hazrat Maryam (ra) and Hazrat Isa (as)

The story of the mother and son who has enormous power spreading Islam to the unbelievers and the Israelites.

وَالَّتِي أَحْصَيْنَا فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا وَابْنَهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ

91. And she who was chaste, therefore We breathed into her (something) of Our spirit and made her and her son a token for (all) peoples.

Gog and Magog

The 2 tribes which will emerge before the last day spreading chaos on earth will be then destroyed by Allah.

Allah says:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ

96. Until, when Gog and Magog are let loose, and they hasten out of every mound.

وَاقْتَرَبَ الْوَعْدُ الْحَقُّ فَإِذَا هِيَ شَاخِصَةٌ أَبْصَارُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا قَدْ كُنَّا فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا بَلْ كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

97. And the True Promise draws nigh; then behold them, staring wide (in terror), the eyes of those who disbelieve! (They say): Alas for us! We (lived) in forgetfulness of this. Ah, but we were wrong doers!

Surah Qasas (28)

How do the experiences of the prophet Musah as they are recounted in *Surat al-qasas* (ch 28 of the Qur'an) relate to the experiences of the Prophet Muhammad?

Since the creation of Mankind Allah has sent numerous prophets and messengers to guide His creatures. Among them we have Hazrat Musah (as). Through his life great lessons can be derived and can be traced as similarities with the story of the last prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w).

During the time of Pharaoh in Egypt through a year in which boys were to be slain, the mother of Musah gave birth to Musah (as). It was a time where the soothsayers of Pharaoh have predicted that a boy from Israelites would dethrone him. So he decided to kill all new born from the Israelites. Allah says in surah al Qasas that Pharaoh has made himself great on land and has caused mischief. The mother of Musah (as) was afraid he would be slain, so she nursed him secretly. Allah inspired the mother of Musah saying: "*Suckle him (Musah), but when you fear for him, then cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve. Verily! We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of (Our) Messengers.*" (Ch 28: 2-7 *Quran*). No sooner had the divine revelation finished that she obeyed the sacred and merciful call. She was commanded to make a basket for Musah and threw it into the water. She was aware that Allah was much more merciful to Musah than to her, that He loved him more than her. She instructed her daughter to follow the course of the basket and to report back to her. The basket came to rest at the riverbank, which skirted the king's palace. The palace servants found the basket with the baby and took it to the Pharaoh and his queen. When the queen beheld the lovely infant, Allah instilled in her a strong love for this baby. Pharaoh's wife Aasiyah was very different from Pharaoh. He was a disbeliever; she was a believer. He was cruel; she was merciful.

She was sad because she was infertile and had hoped to have a son. She requested her husband: 'Let me keep the baby and let him be a son to us'. The queen called for some wet nurse but the baby was not ready to accept anyone. Musah's sister was anxious and she told the queen that she knew someone who could feed him. She reunited the mother and the child. (Ch. 28:10-13). Allah had granted Musah (as) good health, strength, knowledge, and wisdom. The weak and oppressed turned to him for protection and justice. One day in the main city, he saw two men fighting. One was an Israelite, who was being beaten by the other, an Egyptian. On seeing Musah, the Israelite begged him for help. Musah became involved in the dispute and, in a state of anger, struck a heavy blow on the Egyptian, who died on the spot. Upon realizing that he had killed a human being, Musah's heart was filled with deep sorrow, and immediately he begged Allah for forgiveness. The next day he saw the same Israelite involved in another fight. Musah went to him and said: "You seem to be a quarrelsome fellow. You have a new quarrel with one person or another each day." Fearing that Musah might strike him, the Israelite warned Musah: "Would you kill me as you killed the wretch yesterday?"

Soon thereafter, a man approached and alerted him: "O Musah, the chiefs have taken counsel against you. You are to be tried and killed. I would advise you to escape." (Ch 28:15-21 *Quran*). Musah left Egypt in a hurry without going to Pharaoh's palace or changing his clothes. Nor was he prepared for travelling. He travelled in the direction of the country of Midian. His only companion in this hot desert was Allah, and his only provision was piety. He travelled for eight nights, hiding during the day. After crossing the main desert, he reached a watering hole outside Midian where shepherds were watering their flocks. He went to the spring, where he saw two young women preventing their sheep from mixing with the others. Musah sensed that the women were in need of help. Forgetting his thirst, he drew nearer to them and asked if he could help them in any way. (Ch 28:22-24 *Quran*). The young ladies returned home earlier than usual, which surprised their father. Musah's gentle behaviour was noticed by the father and his daughters. The kind man invited him to stay with them. The old man proposed him to stay and work

for 8 years or more and in return he could marry one of his daughters. He stayed and became a shepherd and served the old man for more than 8 years. (*Ch 28:25-28 Quran*)

One day after the end of this period, a vague homesickness arose in Musah's heart. He wanted to return to Egypt. He was fast and firm in making his decision, telling his wife: "Tomorrow we shall leave for Egypt." Musah left Midian with his family and travelled through the desert until he reached Mount Sinai. There Musah discovered that he had lost his way. He sought Allah's direction and was shown the right course. At nightfall they reached Mount Tur. Musah noticed a fire in the distance and said to his family: "I shall fetch a firebrand to warm us." As he neared the fire, he heard a sonorous voice calling him: "O Musah, I am Allah, the Lord of the Universe." Musah was bewildered and looked around. He again heard the strange voice. "And what is in your right hand, O Musah?" Shivering, Musah answered: "This is my staff on which I lean, and with which I beat down branches for my sheep, and for which I find other uses." The same voice commanded him: "Throw down your staff!" He did so, and at once the staff became a wriggling snake. Musah turned to run, but the voice again addressed him: "Fear not and grasp it; We shall return it to its former state." The snake changed back into his staff. Next, Allah commanded him to thrust his hand into his robe at the armpit. When he pulled it out, the hand had a brilliant shine. These were the two signs given to Musah.

He wanted his brother Haroon to accompany him and Allah made both prophets. Musah (as) and Haroun (as) went together to Pharaoh and delivered their message. Musah spoke to him about Allah, His mercy and His Paradise and about the obligations of monotheism and His worship. Pharaoh recognized him as the same kid he sheltered. (*Ch 26:16-31 Quran*). Musah (as) wanted to show him his miracle. Musah threw his stick which turned into a serpent. He drew out his hands and they were white. Then there was the contest between Musah and Pharaoh's magicians. Musah's big serpent ate all the snakes of the magicians. (*Ch 20:58-76 Quran*). Pharaoh was angry, called his men and ordered them to build a tower for him to see whether there was another god in heaven. He started persecuting the believers. As a portent of the punishment which Allah would meet out, the Nile did not flood its banks to soak the dry land as it normally did. As a result, crops failed, leading to famine. Then another sign came, the sign of lice, which spread amongst the Egyptians, carrying diseases. A sign of frogs was revealed. The land suddenly filled with frogs. Then the last sign was revealed, the sign of blood. The Nile water was changed into blood. When Musah and his people drank the water, it was, for them, ordinary water. However, if any Egyptian filled his cup with the water, he discovered his cup full of blood. They hurried to Musah as usual, but as soon as everything returned to normal, they turned their backs on Allah.

It appeared that Pharaoh would never believe in Musah's message, nor would he stop the torture of the children of Israel. Allah inspired Musah to conduct his people of Egypt, but only a few of his people believed in his message. Allah commanded Musah to depart and they prepared themselves to leave Egypt. In the darkness of night, Musah led his people towards the Red Sea, and in the morning they reached the beach. By then Pharaoh was aware of their departure, so he mobilized a huge army to pursue them. The impatient children of Israel soon became agitated and Joshua (Yusha), Ibn Nun, exclaimed: "In front of us is this impassable barrier, the sea, and behind us the enemy; surely death cannot be avoided!". Musah replied that he would wait for further guidance from Allah. These words filled them with some hope, but man is always impatient for results: they were willing to surrender themselves back into slavery. At that moment Allah revealed to Musah: "Smite the sea with your staff!" Musah did as he was commanded. A fierce wind blew, the sun shone brightly, and in a flash the sea parted, the crests of the waves standing like mountains on each side. Musah led his people across. As they looked back, they saw Pharaoh and his army approaching, about to take the very path which had been opened for them. Pharaoh and his army had seen the miracle, how the sea had parted, but being the pretender that he was, Pharaoh turned to his men and proclaimed: "Look! The sea has opened at my command so that I may follow those rebels and arrest them!" They rushed across the parted waters, and when they were midway, Allah commanded the sea to return to its former state. Terror-stricken Pharaoh, realizing his end had come, declared out of fear: "I believe that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah in Whom the children of Israel believe, and

I am of those who surrender to Him." But Allah did not accept this declaration from the tyrant, and the waters closed over him, drowning him and his entire army. (*Ch 26:52-68 Quran*) (*Ch 10:90-92 Quran*).

Through the story of Hazrat Musah (as) we can see similarities with the life of the prophet (s.a.w). Topics like their childhood, their call to prophethood, their experience of persecution, their fleeing their homes, their eventual triumph, their experience of being misunderstood, their resolve and commitment to their call will be discussed as such. **Firstly**, it can be well said that both Hazrat Musah (as) and Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w) were brought up in an environment that they had to leave at a certain period of their lives. During the time of Musah there was the need for him to be separated from his mother for survival as Pharaoh had decided to kill all new born. However for the last prophet (s.a.w) he had to leave his mother for 6 years as it was a custom of the pre Islamic Arabs to have their babies suckled by a wet-nurse in the desert. Nevertheless mothers and children were reunited later on. **Secondly**, both the environment in which Musah and the last prophet were born was polytheistic. Their people were polytheists and idol worshippers. They were brought up among the idol worshippers but both never worshipped anything or anyone apart from Allah. Both were monotheist in search of the one God that is Allah. Moreover they were both against the idea of polytheism. **Thirdly**, there came a time where due to the level of degradation and injustice found in their respective societies, they decided to help those in need. Hazrat Musah was alongside with the poor and the destitute and would always help the oppressed. That was the same situation for the prophet (s.a.w) who created an organisation with the help of youngsters and elders through Half ul Fuzul. Their aims were to help those in need and to bring some kinds of justice to those who are oppressed both physically and mentally. **Fourthly**, due to the above situation which developed the situation and environment of persecutions, both prophets were disgusted with their respective societies. On one side we have Pharaoh who used to oppress the people of Israelite and on the other side the rich Jewish and Arabs oppressed the poor. The societies were deeply rooted then in injustice. Leaving the city was the final option. **Fifthly**, attached with the above idea, the society of Musah and that of the last prophet (s.a.w) were deeply rooted in crimes, adultery, fornication, prostitution, bribes, interest, levies, taxes, sins among others. In fact both societies were immoral ones without leaders. Both prophets were thus fed up with these societies and a need to change environment was important.

Sixthly, as both were in these kinds of societies they were in search of Allah or rather we can say that Allah came to them as a rescue. In the case of Hazrat Musah he found Allah on the mount of Tur with the voice coming from the blessed tree with 2 miracles as gifts. On the other side, the prophet was approached by Hazrat Jibril in the cave of Hira with the first five verses of Surah Al 'Alaq as gift from Allah. Both thus were given the Torah and the Qur'an. **Seventhly**, after having the blessing of Allah, both prophets decided to gather their respective people to call them to the religion of Allah. Their messages were the same that is Tawheed was the main theme. They spread the same message with the same good news of Jannah if they were accepted and followed and with the same warnings as Jahannam if they were to be rejected. As history witnessed they were both rejected but accepted only by a few poor destitute people. **Eighthly**, due to persecutions and uncertainties, both prophets had to leave their cities and countries for the Hijrah. As it was impossible to be accepted or the other way being rejected, both prophets left their homeland to Midian and Yathrib (Madina). And what was more surprising was that both were accepted and protected by their new friends and environment. It marked the start of both real spreading of Islam in a much better way with a more peaceful life. **Ninthly**, both prophets were persecuted by their people and by the chiefs of their societies. In the case of Musah it was Pharaoh who was the persecutor with his hosts. On the other side the prophet and the Muslims were persecuted, beaten and ill treated by the chiefs of Macca like Abu Lahab and his friends. Hazrat Musah and his people at one time was chased by the hosts of Pharaoh and it also occurred that the prophet (s.a.w) was chased by the unbelievers at Ta'if, for the Hijrah and in the different battles fought. **Tenthly**, it is good to mention that both prophets at a certain moment had a homesick. As such Hazrat Musah (as) returned to Egypt and Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w) returned to Macca. These were their homelands and they were attached to them. Returning there was a great risk taken by both prophets. They could have been murdered. In fact, when Musah returned to Egypt he was later on chased by the Egyptians and when the prophet entered Macca in the 8th year of Hijrah, the division led by Khalid bin Walid (ra) was attacked.

Both prophets had faith in Allah and they didn't give up in warning the people concerning their ill-founded deeds and the punishment of Allah. Though they were faced with serious problems they were honoured by Allah throughout their lives and their people converted to Islam.

Surah Ad Duha (93)

This surah is a Makki surah revealed to the prophet. According to some Ulama it was revealed after 3 years from the 1st Wahy and it was the second revelation. According to others it is not the second surah but it was revealed to comfort the prophet of his anxieties of either Allah has abandoned him or was angry at him.

Allah says:

وَالضُّحَىٰ

And from his narration on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that he said about the interpretation of Allah's saying (By the morning hours): '(By the morning hours) He says: Allah swears by the whole day

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ

(And by the night when it is stillest) and by the night when it becomes dark,

مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ

(Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee) your Lord has not left you since He inspired you (nor doth He hate thee) since He loved you; this is the reason for Allah's oath, this was revealed after the revelations from Allah stopped for 15 nights because the Prophet (pbuh) forgot to say " if Allah wills " when he promised the idolaters to answer their questions. And because the revelations stopped for this period of time the idolaters said: the Lord of Prophet has forsaken him and He hates him.

وَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ

(And verily the latter portion will be better for thee than the former) He says: the reward of the Hereafter is better for you than the reward of the life of the world.

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ

(And verily thy Lord will give unto thee) in the Hereafter of intercession (so that thou wilt be content) until you are content.

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ

Allah then mentioned His blessings upon the Prophet (pbuh) saying (Did He not find thee) O Muhammad (an orphan) without a father or mother (and protect (thee)) and joined you to your uncle Abu Talib and sufficed you your provision? The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Yes, O Gabriel!"

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ

Gabriel then said: (Did He not find thee) O Muhammad (wandering) among people in error (and direct (thee)) and guided you by means of prophethood? The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Yes, O Gabriel!"

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ

And he also said: (Did He not find thee) O Muhammad (destitute) poor (and enrich (thee)) with the wealth of Khadijah; and it is also said this means: and made you content with that which He gave you? The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Yes, O Gabriel!"

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ

So he also said: (Therefore the orphan oppress not) do not transgress on him nor deride him,

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ

(Therefore the beggar drive not away) nor rebuke,

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ

(Therefore of the bounty of thy Lord) through prophethood and Islam (be thy discourse) speak to people and let them know about it'.

Surah Al Qadr (97)

That surah was revealed concerning the night of destiny known as the Lailat-ul-Qadr. It is a Makki surah and Allah elaborates on the benefits of this night.

Allah says:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ

And from his narration on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that he said regarding the interpretation of Allah's saying (Lo! We revealed it): '(Lo! We revealed it) He says: We sent Gabriel with the entire Qur'an to the scribes of the nether heaven (on the Night of Power) on the night of judgement and decree; it is also said this means: on a night blessed with forgiveness and mercy, and then it was revealed to the Prophet (pbuh) in instalments.

وَمَا أَذْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ

(Ah, what will convey unto thee) O Muhammad-this is said out of glorification of this night-(what the Night of Power is) what the merit of the Night of Power is!

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

He then explained its merit by saying: (The Night of Power is better than a thousand months) He says: works in this night are better than works performed in 1,000 months which do not include such a night.

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ

(The angels and the Spirit) Gabriel with them (descend therein) at the beginning of the Night of Power, (by the permission of their Lord) by the command of their Lord, (with all decrees.

سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطَلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

(That night is) Peace) He says: they greet the greeting of peace those who fast and those who pray, on that day, from among the nation of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) (until the rising of the dawn) He says: its merit and grace lasts until the rise of dawn'.

Surah at Takaathur (102)

That surah was revealed as a warning for those who use to amass their money and wealth and don't spend in the way of Allah. Their punishment will be hell fire. It is a Makki surah.

Allah says:

أَلْهَاكُمْ التَّكَاثُرُ

And from his narration on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that he said about the interpretation of Allah's saying (Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you): '(Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you) He says: bragging about your status and lineage has distracted you

حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ

(Until ye come to the graves) this is because the Banu Sahm and Banu 'Abd Manaf were bragging to each other about which tribe is larger as concerns the number of its population, and found out that the Banu 'Abd Manaf were more numerous. The Banu Sahm said at that point: "We were rooted out by injustice in the pagan era; go and count the living and the dead of our people and the living and the dead of your people". When they did so they found out that the Banu Sahm was more numerous.

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

(Nay) this is a reply and threat to them, (but ye will come to know) what will be done to you in the graves!

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

(Nay, but ye will come to know!) What will be done to you when you die!

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ

(Nay, would that ye knew (now)) what will be done to you on the Day of Judgement (with a sure knowledge!) what you bragged about in the life of the world!

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

(For ye will behold hellfire) on the Day of Judgement.

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوْهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ

(Aye, ye will behold it with sure vision) which cannot be missed on the Day of Judgement.

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

(Then, on that day) on the Day of Judgement, (ye will be asked concerning pleasure) you will be asked about whether you gave thanks for all the bounties you enjoyed, of food, drink, clothing, etc.'

Surah Al Kaafiroun (109)

This surah was revealed in order to crush down all hope of the Quraish in compromising with the holy prophet (s.a.w). They wanted the prophet to follow their religion for one year and then they would follow the prophet for the next year – one year as Muslims and another as polytheists.

Allah says:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ

And from his narration on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that he said regarding the interpretation of Allah's saying (Say: O disbelievers!): '(Say: O disbelievers!) a group of people who derided the Prophet (pbuh) among whom were al-'As Ibn Wa'il al-Sahmi and al-Walid Ibn al-Mughirah, said to the Prophet: "O Muhammad! Surrender to our deity so that we worship the God you worship". And so Allah said addressing his Prophet: Say, O Muhammad, to these deriders, O disbelievers who mock Allah and the Qur'an.

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ

(I worship not that which ye worship) of idols beside Allah;

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ

(Nor worship ye that which I worship) that which I will worship in the future.

وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ

(And I shall not worship that which ye worship) beside Allah.

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَّا أُعْبُدُ

(Nor will ye worship that which I worship) that which I worshipped in the past; it is also said this means: I do not believe in the divinity in which you believe nor will I believe in the divinity which you believe in beside Allah nor will you believe in the divine Oneness of Allah which I believe in.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ

(Unto you your religion) of disbelief and ascribing partners to Allah, (and unto me my religion) Islam and faith in Allah. The verses of fighting then abrogated this and the Prophet (pbuh) did fight them'

Surah Al Ikhlāas (112)

Give the background and main teachings of Sura Ikhlāas.

There are 114 surah in the Holy Qur'an and all of them have been revealed for specific purposes. Each one of them contains teachings and lessons for Mankind to be put into practice. As such Surah Ikhlāas is very useful for Mankind.

Surah Al Ikhlāas has been revealed to the last prophet of Islam (s.a.w) and it is one of the earliest Meccan Surahs. According to the scholars of Islam, the surah was revealed as a response to the unbelievers. According to Ibn Abbas, the people of Quraysh asked the Prophet (pbuh): "O Muhammad! Describe for us your Lord; is He made of gold or silver?" And so Allah revealed this surah to describe His attributes and traits, saying: say to Quraysh, O Muhammad: He is Allah, the One, He has no son or partner." The surah proclaims the fundamental Muslims belief that is Tawhid. It is the describing of Allah as the Eternal. The words Absolute, Primary Cause (as Samad), have been used in a unique way to this passage. The Prophet described this Sura as one third of the Qur'an as it speaks on Allah being one third of the Qur'anic passages. The surah was revealed as a reply to the questions set by the Quraish about the ancestry of Allah. It also rejected the prevailing polytheism of the Quraish and shirk is a grave sin in Islam. This Sura rejects the belief that Allah has a son.

There are many teachings in such surah. **Firstly**, when Allah orders us to say that Allah is One, it explains the essence of Allah as Unique. No one can be like Him. He is One in Being, in Attributes, in Action and in Worship. It is also an indication that the name of the Lord of the prophet and our Lord is Allah. **Secondly**, when Allah is saying that "Allah is Eternal", this means that He is without beginning and without end. There is no entrance and no exit. He was, he is and will always be. His eternity is absolute. Nothing can change or alter Him. He is not affected by time and space. He does not eat and drink like we do and He is eternally with and near His servants. **Thirdly**, when Allah says that "He begets not" this means that He can't be compared to women and He has no heir, no son, no daughter, no descendant, no offspring and no one to inherit what He has. **Fourthly**, when He says that "And He is not begotten" this means that He has neither father nor mother or any ancestors. He did not inherit this whole world from anyone. He has everything at His disposal. **Fifthly**, when Allah says that "None is unto like

Him”, this means that in all domains He is superior and no one will dare challenge it. Allah is unique, there is nothing that could be compared to Him in any way

What does Surah Ikhlas tell us about Muslim belief in Allah?

Surah Al Ikhlas is mainly on the topic and theme of Allah. This surah tells us about how we as Muslims must believe in Allah. **Firstly**, the prophet (s.a.w) said that if someone recites surah Ikhlas once, he will have the blessings of reading one third of the Qur’an. This is so because one third of the Qur’an deals with the theme Allah. If one third of the Qur’an deals with Allah and it has been compressed in only 4 lines of Surah Ikhlas, this means that the essence of Allah is beyond the range of our limited comprehension. This surah is understood as the essence of the Qur’an. This surah has identify that Allah is unique in attribute, action, being and worship through the words like “Ahad” meaning that He has no equal in attribute, “Swamad” meaning that He has recourse to Himself for anything in action, “He begets not nor is He begotten” meaning that His being is unique and the notion of “No one is like Him” means no one deserves worship and praise as a Lord. **Secondly**, this surah explains the whole concept of Tawhid that is the Unity of Allah. The Lord is the Only Being worthy of worship compared to the polytheists of Macca. The idea of the surah is to negate anyone and anything as partner with Allah. Muslims must know that Ibaadah is only meant to Him. All our Takbir, Qiyam, Tilaawat, Ruku’, Sajdah, Jalsa and Qa’dah are only for Allah. He is the only One deserved to be adored as our Master and Lord.

Thirdly, it is said in that surah that Allah is Eternal. By this it refers to Allah as without a beginning or an end. Allah is not limited by time or space. He will never grow old. He is not taken up by stress, illness, hunger, thirst, laziness and many of our characteristics. All persons and things are the ones dependent on Him. He are the ones to need Him. He is dependent on no one. Our own Ibaadah will cause Him any good. He doesn’t need us. But we need Him. **Fourthly**, Muslims must not think of Allah as having a son or a father. Our Lord is deprived of ancestors and descendants. He has not inherit anything from anyone and He doesn’t have heir or heirs to share His wealth as the concepts of pre Islamic Arabs. The whole concepts of to have babies or to be babies or to be parents or to be children are not applied to Allah. He is above any of these critics. **Fifthly**, Allah is Unique and no one is equal or similar or comparable to Him. We won’t be able to imagine or sketch how Allah is, what He is doing, where He is, how He looks like or be able to do what He does or to be what He is. Allah is above all aspects of our miserable life and above what we may think. No one can dare saying that he is like Allah. This will tantamount to sins. When it is said that no one is like Him, this also refers that Allah can’t have a bodily shape of any human part as some people advocate. As such, the surah tells and gives us a good lesson of how we must believe in Allah.

5 Pillars Of Islam

Shahaadah

What is meant by the first pillar of Islam, the Declaration of Faith (kalimah) ?

Shahaadah is from the verb shadida meaning to witness. According to Islamic terminology Shahaadah means to witness, to know or to believe without any doubt that there is no god except Allah (la ilaaha illallah) and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah (Muhammadur rasoolullah).

Firstly, the Kalimah (Laa ilaaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasoulullah) is the basic essence of Islam. Everything resides in these words. Our whole existence is based on Allah and our guidance is through His prophet. **Secondly**, it is also known as the kalimah tayyabah meaning purity. As such when a person utters these words he is bound to become purified from disbelief and he enters the fold of Islam. **Thirdly**, it is also said that the whole Qur'an is an explanation of this one statement, meaning that if we want to know what is meant by Tawheed in the first part of the Kalimah and what is implied by Risaalah in the second part, then we just have to study the Qur'an elaborating on Allah, prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) and mankind. **Fourthly**, when we utter these words of faith, we accept Allah with all His words from His book known as the Holy Qur'an and we must accept the holy prophet (s.a.w) with all his teachings from his hadith (sayings) and sunnah (deeds). **Fifthly**, by this declaration of faith we are engaging ourselves to bear witness to the truth it conveys and it must be with total submission and sincerity. We can't be firm believers of this Kalimah and at the same time not sincere to it.

Sixthly, the first part of this kalimah is the belief in the Oneness of Allah that is tawhid which is the fundamental teaching of Islam. By believing in Allah this implies to believe in His uniqueness in being, attributes and action. No one can equal Him or be better than Him. **Seventhly**, the second part deals with the Risalah of the holy Prophet (s.a.w) and this is vital to accept him. Accepting the prophet as Allah's prophet implies accepting his uniqueness also through him as being the best and the last of prophets, the universal prophet with the universal book as Qur'an and as a mercy for all worlds. **Eighthly**, this kalimah describes the relationship between Allah the Creator and the created. When we say that there is no god except Allah this means among others that there is no Creator other than Allah. He is our Creator, Lord, Cherisher and Sustainer among other of His qualities. **Ninthly**, it symbolises an active statement which is repeated by Muslims many times in formal worship that is Swalaat in the position of Qa'dah before the prayer ends and it is present in the call to prayer (adhan) five times daily. **Tenthly**, all Muslims need to profess this belief while acting and living their lives in accordance with its requirements. It will not serve its purpose if we don't act upon it.

In fact a true Muslim is one who is completely aware of the meaning of the kalimah and proclaims it with sincerity and devotion. According to the prophet (s.a.w) it serves as purifying the heart and brings the soul to a return journey to Allah in the best way.

Swalaat

What are the requirements for Swalaat or describe how Muslims perform the ritual of preparing for prayer?

The second pillar of Islam is Swalaat. Also known as prayer or namaz, swalaat is obligatory on all Muslims throughout their life time. There is no place or instance where swalaat can be abandoned. We have been gifted by Allah with five daily swalaat such as Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. Moreover they are divided into Fard, Wajib, Sunnah and Nafil. However, to perform swalaat there are many conditions that must be considered.

Firstly, for someone to perform swalaat and for swalaat to be fard on him, he must be a Muslim who has already attained the age of puberty. A non Muslim is not allowed to enter the mosque and it is not a sin for someone who has not attained the age of puberty to miss swalaat. **Secondly**, the place to perform the swalaat must be clean and tidy. Cleanliness is an essential part of faith (Iman). **Thirdly**, the clothes used by the Muslims must be clean and not covered or imprinted with any impurity as Allah addresses to the children of Adam (as) in the Qur'an to look to our adornment at every place of worship. We must be appropriately dressed and our private parts must be well covered. **Fourthly**, in order to perform swalaat a Muslim must perform his ablution washing his hands, mouth, nose, face, arms, head and feet. However, in the absence of water, the symbolic washing known as tayyammum must be done. **Fifthly**, the Muslim must face the Qiblah which is the direction towards the Ka'bah. If another direction is taken voluntarily then the swalaat will not be accepted.

Sixthly, the person performing swalaat must be sane of mind and not lunatic. He must be able to concentrate on whatever he is saying and doing through swalaat. **Seventhly**, swalaat can't be performed in advance. We must wait for the appropriate time and for the prayer call that is the adhan. **Eighthly**, when is iqamah that is the announcement for the swalaat to be done in jama'ah that is congregation, the Muslim must be ready in a standing position, in a straightened line and standing close by the side of his brother in Islam. **Ninthly**, the Muslim must be ready physically and mentally to follow the Imam that is the leader of the prayer at any cost. He will not be allowed to start the prayer before the Imam or to do any action before the Imam in course of the swalaat or to end the prayer before the Imam. He must be prepared to follow the Imam. **Tenthly**, when standing in swalaat the Muslim must know and declare the intention to pray and to perform such and such swalaat. Niyat that is intention is important.

How do Muslims perform daily prayers (swalaat)?

Swalaat is one of the five pillars of Islam and it is obligatory on all Muslims. It is fard on us to perform the five daily prayers such as Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. However, there are steps that must be respected when performing swalaat.

Firstly, the Muslim must have his ritual purification known as tahaarat (purity) divided into wudu and Ghusal and in the absence of water the Tayyammum is done. Alongside with purity, his cloth must be clean and deprived of any impurity and it must be covering his private parts. **Secondly**, it is allowed to pray anywhere as long as it is clean because the earth of Allah is wide as it is told in the Qur'an. Once the place is spotted, the Muslims must face the direction of the Ka'bah as Qiblah before the swalaat. **Thirdly**, the Muslim must be aware of the intention of what swalaat he will offer. **Fourthly**, the Muslim must pronounce the Takbir by saying Allahou Akbar at the beginning of the prayer. For men, both hands will be lifted till both thumbs touch the lobes of the ears. For women the hands will be elevated till the shoulders. **Fifthly**, there is the position of the Qiyam where Thana, surah Faatiha and other verses are recited. For men the right hand must be tied over the left hand supporting it below the navel. For women, both hands are tied on the breast.

Sixthly, there is the rukuh where we praise Allah. For men, they must bend till the back makes a 90 degree with the leg. However, for women, as soon as their hands are placed on their knees, they stopped bending. **Seventh**, there is the sajdah where the toes, knees, the hands, the nose and the forehead touch the ground. For men the elbows are spread apart and their hips are upraised. However, for women, the elbows are squeezed to the sides of their bodies and the hips are levelled to the thighs. **Eighthly**, there is the Jalsa and the Qa'dah where verses from hadith are recited. For men, the right foot is elevated on the toes and the left foot is turned to the right side. But for women both feet are turned to the right. **Ninthly**, there is the salaam which is composed of turning the head to the right and then to the left to complete the swalaat. Both men and women act likewise. **Tenthly**, there is the du'a (personal invocation) which can be said the Muslims. According to the prophet (s.a.w) the du'a after the swalaat is accepted by Allah.

Why prayer (salat) is considered the foundation of religion? What is its importance / significance?

There are different reasons why prayer is considered the foundation of religion. **Firstly**, being the second pillar of Islam, Muslims believe that they will be questioned about this on the Day of Judgement. Both the quality and sincerity of ibaadah will be asked. **Secondly**, it is an institution which gives a structure to the day enabling Muslims to remember Allah. It marks the whole day with spiritual stamp and blessings from Allah. **Thirdly**, it is important to Muslims as the prophet (s.a.w) said that Prayer is the key to Paradise. It aims at encouraging the Muslims to strive harder. **Fourthly**, it is an occasion given by Allah to Mankind to thank Allah for all His blessings and favours as it provides inner peace and comfort to the soul. **Fifthly**, it strengthens our belief and relationship with Allah as it is direct communication with Him purifying the heart and gives spiritual strength to become a better person.

Sixthly, the congregational prayers strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among Muslims. There is a sense of solidarity and it also increases awareness of the plight of less fortunate Muslims and a desire to help. **Seventhly**, Allah reminds Muslims to do more and to strive harder in order to cultivate true piety in the love of Allah through Swalaat. **Eighthly**, it cultivates a sense of belonging to a specific community under a common Imam as leader. It thus serves its purpose. **Ninthly**, it creates a sense of discipline in the habits of Muslims. We are bound to five daily prayers which are performed at specific time. They are not done as per our wish but through the wish of Allah. **Tenthly**, when we perform swalaat we approach Allah to such an extent that we obtain the beauty of the Swalih (the pious) and the Swabir (the patient). Allah will love us and we will be blessed in this world, Qabr and Akhirah.

How far is the mosque (Masjid) a focal point in the lives of Muslim?

In Islam the mosque is the symbol of Islamic architecture. It is not a mere building but it is a focal point in the lives of Muslims through different ways. **Firstly**, it is a space provided for the congregational Friday (jum'ah) prayers and individual prayer which can be offered at any time. **Secondly**, the mosque is vital for both men and women, though predominantly men, to perform the five daily swalaat in congregation. **Thirdly**, the mosque is also used twice a year for both 'id that is 'id-ul-fitr and 'id-ul-adha. **Fourthly**, the mosque through its loudspeaker and its minaret is a means to notify Muslims concerning the various daily times for prayer. **Fifthly**, the mosque is used especially for tarawih prayers in the evening where both men and women can attend.

Sixthly, the mosque is used as a place for teaching and learning. Usually a Madrasah is attached to the mosque to teach Qur'an, Hadith, Islamiyat and many other fields. **Seventhly**, the mosque is vital for those who use it as a place of retreat for I'tikaaf during the month of Ramadan. Usually this is applied to men. **Eighthly**, the mosque can be used for both Nikah and Janaza prayers. It is a blessed place where blessings are sent upon mankind. **Ninthly**, the mosque can also be used as a centre for the community whenever there is any topic of discussion or sharing of ideas or organising of any religious or civil programmes. **Tenthly**, the mosque can be used by Muslims to read the Qur'an, Hadith, books of Fiqh, relax, and to sleep between prayers. This can be seen in Macca and Madina where families group with small children.

Sawm

What are the main observances followed by Muslims during the month of Ramadan?

Sawm is another institution found among the five pillars of Islam and has been instituted in the second year of Hijri. It is the keeping of fast for a period of 29 to 30 days during the month of Ramadhan. Before the time of the prophet of Islam (s.a.w), the number of days was 40 for all prophets (as) from Hazrat Adam (as) till the time of Hazrat Isa (as). It is fard in Islam on all Muslims and not abiding to it without any proper reason, renders the Muslims sinners. During that month there are many observances that are followed by the Muslims.

Firstly, it is recommended to all Muslims to wake up early in the morning for the swalaat-ul-Tahajjud and to fast from before dawn (fajr) till sunset during Ramadan. **Secondly**, it is sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) when beginning the fast to eat suhoor (Sehri) and to make the niyat (intention) that the fast is for Allah and done in His obedience. **Thirdly**, as from the time of Fajr where the muslims will be gathered in the mosque for swalaat, it is vital to abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and having sex till the time of sunset. **Fourthly**, as usual it is recommended for a validated fasting to abstain from all evil thoughts, careless chatter, and undesirable actions respectively with our thought, tongue and limbs. **Fifthly**, it is recommended on Muslims to exert their utmost in patience and humility. This will help them to face the evil in this world.

Sixthly, as swalaat is already and always fard on Muslims, the latter are recommended to perform all swalaat on time with jama'ah till the breaking of fast (iftar) at sunset (maghrib) usually with dates and followed by a light meal depending on people taste and habit. **Seventhly**, it is recommended to read the qur'an and much of Darood Shareef especially before maghrib swalaat and then to invoke Allah through sincere du'a. During that month after swalaatul Isha, we have the tarawih prayers which are recommended with the lecture of one part of the Qur'an in each night to complete the whole recitation by the end of the month. **Eighthly**, it is recommended to read the Qur'an individually during this month which is also beneficial and after its completion to at least learn by heart a few verses. **Ninthly**, it is sunnah for some Muslim men to spend the last ten days in I'tikaf in the mosque giving up all worldly occupations for the sake of Allah. **Tenthly**, it is recommended to spend the night of Lailat-ul-qadr in ibaadah. According to the Qur'an this night is worth more than one thousand months.

Give reasons why this month is special? What is the significance / importance of Ramadhan?

The month of Ramadhan is special in various ways. **Firstly**, fasting (sawm) during Ramadan is a pillar of Islam hence it is by itself obligatory on every responsible and fit Muslim. Its importance lies in its being vital to accept to be considered as a complete Muslim with the remaining pillars. **Secondly**, Allah says in the Qur'an that Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind and it acts as a training period for Muslims to apply in the remaining months of a whole year. **Thirdly**, it is special as in this month Allah forgives us and purifies us from our sins and this leads to obedience to Him, and by exercising self control, patience and humility in all matters, fasting gives Muslims a sense of hope in the mercy of Allah. **Fourthly**, this month is special as in it the Muslims increase their study of their faith and the recitation of the Qur'an. It is a way towards the return to Allah or to approach Him nearer. **Fifthly**, this month helps Muslims to unite as a community in acts of worship, especially for last ten days in I'tikaaf and the night of power or destiny known as Lailatul Qadr.

Sixthly, the mere fact of not able to eat and drink for specific hours makes Muslims more aware of the suffering of the poor and needy. This will lead to being more generous during Ramadan ending with the annual zakat to be given to the poor. **Seventhly**, a big part of this month symbolises the celebrating the idea of brotherhood and sharing especially during the breaking of the fast at the time of Iftar. There is sharing of sweets or meals among neighbours or in the mosque. **Eighthly**, it is a month allowing Muslims the opportunity to purify their egos, their hearts and their deeds. It is a spiritual month leading to the elevation of Muslims in the eyes of Allah. **Ninthly**, that month which is headed by abstinence helps Muslims to stop and abstain from common evils such as telling lies, backbiting, quarrelling, eating haraam item, earning through unlawful means and any act which may harm or cause grief to a person. **Tenthly**, it has been proven scientifically that a person who does not eat or reduce eating for a few days on monthly basis will be benefited physically. As such the month of Ramadhan is for both physical and spiritual benefits.

Zakaat

What does Islam teach about Zakaat and who are the people entitled to be recipients of zakat?

Among the various pillars of Islam, Zakaat also known as the poor due is obligatory on Muslims. It has been instituted for the community of our prophet (s.a.w) since the second year of Hijri. Zakaat is the amount of money taken from the better off or the rich and to be given to those in need. Allah says in the Qur'an to spend in His way as in surah 36 verse 47 it is mentioned to spend on others out of what Allah has provided you. Zakaat is taken from different sources like money, gold, silver, mines and land tax. Normally it is 2 ½ % of our money or wealth that is given as Zakaat. If the Nisab; the minimum amount on which zakaat is taken, equals or exceeds 598.40 gm on silver and 85.5 gm on gold, then zakaat must be paid. Zakaat must be taken from mines as 1/5 of the produce and on land tax as 1/10 if the land is watered by a lack or a river or 1/20 if not watered naturally.

There are many people entitled to be recipients of zakaat. **Firstly**, all Muslim poor people who are not able to support themselves or their families are liable to take zakaat. These people are in need of our help to face life. **Secondly**, all new Muslim converts who are not able to settle into their new life are in need of Zakaat money. They need a help to start over their life as they left everything behind them. **Thirdly**, if there is the necessity to pay the ransom of any prisoner of war and to give them their freedom, then zakaat can be taken. It is the responsibility of the Muslim state to safeguard the interest of the people. **Fourthly**, any Muslim in need due to huge amount of debt and who is under persistent pressure can take zakaat. He is still responsible towards his families and has to meet their expenses. **Fifthly**, zakaat can be taken by any Muslim traveller who is in difficulty abroad. It is the responsibility of the Islamic state to ensure the return of the traveller.

Sixthly, Zakaat can be taken by those who are engaged by the state or government to collect zakaat. They are employed by the Muslim ruler. **Seventhly**, zakaat can be given to cover the expenses of Muslims in the service of Allah. They are those who spend their time and energy in inviting others to Islam. **Eighthly**, zakaat can be given to those who beg and those who out of humility don't beg. These people need our help. **Ninthly**, zakaat can be given to those women who lost their husbands or those who divorced but are still in need of money for the survival of their children. **Tenthly**, zakaat can be distributed to madrasah, dar-ul-uloom or any Islamic centre to help the students in their studies and to spread Islam. Allah says in surah 57 verse 7 to spend on others out of that of which He has made you trustees for those of you who have attained faith and who spend freely in Allah's cause Will have a great reward.'

Why is zakat important in Muslim life? What is the significance / importance of Zakaat?

Zakaat is important for Muslims in different ways. **Firstly**, it is a pillar of faith and it is an act of worship. It has been enjoined by Allah in the Qur'an and undertaken by Muslims in the interest of society as a whole. **Secondly**, we are also responsible towards our fellow Muslims and by giving in kind or money to the rightful beneficiaries we are fulfilling our Islamic duties. This will create the sense of sharing and thinking of others. **Thirdly**, when we give zakaat generously, such actions will purify the heart of selfishness and greed and we will be blessed by Allah in doing so. This will remove the love of wealth and money from our heart. **Fourthly**, when we give Zakaat this will minimise the suffering of the needy and the poor members of society. At the same time we will know the worthiness and value of money. **Fifthly**, this will foster goodwill and gratitude in the hearts of the recipients towards the giver and hence this will create unity in the society benefits.

Sixthly, there will be a manifestation of spiritual and humanitarian interactions between individual Muslims and the society he lives in. This will bridge the link between materialism and spirituality. **Seventhly**, when we give zakaat with love from our heart this in fact symbolises our gratitude towards Allah. He is the One who has given us wealth and we in return are being kind towards the poor. **Eighthly**,

giving zakaat will help us to keep a flow of money in the society. The poor will not forever be poor or poorer. This will also lead to the prevention of monopolies in the society. **Ninthly**, giving zakaat will lead to the purification of our money. Once zakaat is paid, our money becomes pure and goes under the assurance of Allah. Indeed we will never be deprived of blessings in our life. **Tenthly**, when we give zakaat the moral degradation of society lowers and ultimately finishes because the frustration of people and their depression lowers down. There will be fewer thieves for instance.

Zakaat has been granted to mankind as a means to purify both our materialistic and spiritual dealings. At the same time it aims at helping those in need and creating a better society.

Hajj

Describe the rites performed during the Hajj. How is the hajj performed?

Hajj is the fifth and last pillar of Islam. It has been given to the prophet (s.a.w) during the Madinan phase and it is obligatory on all Muslims having the means to make it to Macca in Saudi Arabia. The hajj is obligatory on each Muslim and must be accomplished at least once during our lifetime. This institution englobes a few acts of different great personalities of Islam. There are some requirements and steps that are important in Hajj.

Firstly, when performing the Hajj, Muslims must be in the state of purification (wudu/Ghusal) done at boundary (miqat) and must wear the pilgrim dress known as ihram. It is a two pieces of unstitched cloth for men and for women it can be any appropriate dress or jilbab. **Secondly**, each Muslim must know the different stages and what must be read or intended when going through each one of them. As such, the Niyyat or intention for Hajj is done with a two rakat (unit) prayers before entering the boundary of the Haram shareef. **Thirdly**, there is the continuous repetition of the talbiyah loudly ('Here I am O Lord' – Labbaik Allaahoummah Labbaik) when proceeding to Macca. This can be done either individually or in group. **Fourthly**, when entering Macca Muslims must do the tawaf 7 times which is known as tawaf-e-qudoom starting at the corner of hajr aswad (the Black Stone). Then this is followed by the Hastening (sai) of 7 times between the hills of Safa and Marwa and the shaving of the head for men and clipping of the hair for women. **Fifthly**, on the 8th of Dhu'l Hijjah Muslims proceed from Mecca to Mina before noon where they have to pray zuhr, asr, maghrib and Isha swalaat. They spend that night at Mina.

Sixthly, on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah they proceed to Arafah after swalaatul fajr reaching there before Zawaal (zenith). This is the location of Mount of Mercy (Jabal al Rahmah). This is the main day of Hajj and if someone misses that day, he has missed Hajj. On that day, Muslims will combine swalaat zuhr and asr in the manner of the travellers, they will listen to the sermon, they will pray and supplicate for forgiveness and success in this world and the next. This is known as the Standing (wuquf). **Seventhly**, after sunset without performing swalaat maghrib, Muslims proceed to Muzdalifah where they will pray swalaat maghrib and isha together. They will spend the night there praying and gather 49 pebbles for rami, that is the beating of Shaitaan. **Eighthly**, on the 10th of Dhul Hijjah the Muslims will leave Muzdalifah after swalaat fajr returning to Mina to beat the first Shaitaan. Then they will return to Macca to perform the tawaf known as tawaf Ziyarah. The pilgrims will offer the sacrifice, individually or collectively, in memory of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) after which the men will shave their hair and women may clip a small lock of hair and change out of ihram. **Ninthly**, on the same day the pilgrims will return to Mina where they will beat the three Shaitaan on the 11th and 12th of the same month. They may engage in any kind of ibaadah. **Tenthly**, the pilgrims will return from Mina to Mecca to perform tawaf al wida before leaving for home or madina. Muslims will pray at maqam Ibrahim, kiss hajr al aswad, drink water from Zamzam and engage in ibaadah of their choice.

Explain how the Hajj unites the Muslim community. What is the significance / importance of Hajj?

There are different ways how the Hajj unites the Muslim community. **Firstly**, by wearing the 2 pieces of white unstitched cloth worn by all men as their pilgrim dress (ihram) this shows equality before Allah. It symbolises the burial shroud in which all Muslims are wrapped (all are equal before Allah on the Day of Judgement). **Secondly**, all believers forget their outward appearance concentrating on the rites required by Allah. There is no rich no poor no person from rich or poor countries. **Thirdly**, the recitation of the talbiyah ('Here I am O Lord') constantly said by all the pilgrims symbolises unity as it resonates everywhere. **Fourthly**, the tawaf of the Ka'bah is a symbol of unity for Muslims. Everyone is doing the same thing with the same intention to please Allah practically at the same time. **Fifthly**, there is a brotherhood which is created when Muslims come to perform Hajj from all over the world. It englobes people of all countries at the same place and time.

Sixthly, the mere standing at Arafat is the climax of Hajj where all people are equal before Allah. At the time of zawal (zenith) and before swalaat maghrib everyone is standing in the sun for supplication. It will be the same on the day of judgement. **Seventhly**, it symbolises no hierarchy in Islam or during Hajj as beliefs and actions unite the community in feelings of brotherhood and fraternity. **Eighthly**, there is sharing of meat or food and happiness on the day of sacrifice in the remembrance of Hazrat Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son. **Ninthly**, relationships and friendships are created among different people and countries through their meeting during the Hajj period. It is seen that after that period, the pilgrims will keep that relationship. **Tenthly**, the hajj unites Muslims under the same flag of Islam and under the same five pillars of Islam as hajj englobes the fundamental aspects of Islam and of how to be a Muslim.

Discuss the importance of ihram and wuqf.

Among the different elements of Hajj both the ihram and the wuqf are important for the pilgrims. The ihram is the cloth of the pilgrims during the period of hajj. For the men it consists of two unstitched pieces of white cloth. The upper one is known as the rida and the lower one is the izhar. **Firstly**, when someone wears the ihram, it signifies purification of his state. It symbolises purity where ghusl and wudu are important. **Secondly**, wearing the ihram signifies renouncing all the daily habits, wears and vanities. It signifies humility. **Thirdly**, there is an uniformity among all Muslims when performing the hajj. There is no difference. **Fourthly**, this will create a brotherhood and fraternity where pride no more exist when wearing the ihram. **Fifthly**, it reminds Muslims of the cloth covering at burial having the same colour with no trappings or wealth or status as help.

Another important aspect is the Wuqf. The wuqf (standing) of 'Arafat is the climax and is the most vital part of Hajj. **Firstly**, its importance lies in the fact that if we miss the wuqf, well, then there is no hajj. Our hajj is not accepted. Our presence is important. **Secondly**, it is important as when doing the wuqf sincerely, our sins will be forgiven by Allah and it is said that after the hajj we will be considered as the sinless people. **Thirdly**, it is important as it helps us to know the spot where the prophet (s.a.w) pronounced his last address with his last advices. It is also said that he received his last wahy – revelation there. It reminds us of the place and time Hazrat Adam (as) and Bibi Hawa (ra) met and the name came to be as 'Arafat. **Fourthly**, it is really the place where we go through the process of once again recognizing our Lord. We assess our past. We ask for His forgiveness, and resolve to worship only Allah (swt). **Fifthly**, it is not only physical but also spiritual. It must be done with the heart meaning that our hearts also must be present there and concentrating on what we are saying and benefit from the purification of the hearts.

Articles Of Faith

Describe the six Articles of Faith in Islam (Imaan Mufasssil).

A Muslim is not a complete Muslim if there are weaknesses in his belief. We must believe in whatever the prophet (s.a.w) has asked us to believe in. As such, there are six articles of faith and they are to believe in Allah, and His angels, and His books, and his Messengers, and in the Last Day and to believe in divine destiny both good and evil. They are important in our lives.

The first element is Tawhid that is the Oneness of Allah. It is the main principal ingredient of Islam. When we say that we believe in Allah, this means that we must accept his uniqueness in being, attributes, actions and worship. Allah is unique and no one is like unto Him. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all worlds. He is the Master of the Day of Judgement and He will be our Judge. He has no partner and anyone associating anyone or anything to Him is an act of Shirk and it is an unforgivable sin unless the person repents sincerely. By believing in Allah, Muslims must have complete trust and hope in Allah. We must submit to His will and rely on His aid. **The second article** is to believe in Angels who are obedient to Allah and act as His messengers. They are creatures made out of light and possess two, three or four pairs of wings. Allah conveyed his revelations to the Prophet by the angel Jibril (Gabriel). They have no knowledge except what Allah has taught them. They are not endowed with free will and they act as per the will of Allah. They are invisible to ordinary mortals but have appeared in human form too e.g. to Ibrahim foretelling the birth of a son, to Lut (Lot) warning him of impending doom and to the prophet as Dahyah Qalbiy (ra). There are four Archangels, namely Jibril who brought revelations, Izrail who is the angel of death, Israfil who will blow the trumpet on Judgement Day and Mikail who is responsible for nourishment of the body and soul). **The third article** is to believe in Books which are revealed scriptures sent as guidance from Allah to man. There are the Suhuf of Ibrahim, Zaboor of Dawood, Torah of Musah, Injeel of Isa and the Qur'an of the prophet (s.a.w). The message is basically the same that is unity of Allah and His attributes. It enlightens on the belief in the prophets of Allah, concept of rewards and punishments for actions on the Day of Judgement, and belief in the Afterlife. The Qur'an is the only one that remains unchanged for over 1400 years and Allah Himself has promised to safeguard it from corruption and change. It is the last and most comprehensive book and a complete code of life sent by Allah.

The fourth article is to believe in the Messengers sent by Allah to guide mankind through the ages. Among them the names of Adam, Ibrahim, Isma'il, Ishaq, Ya'qoub, Ayyoub, Nuh, Swalih and many others can be cited. They were all mortal and had to taste death. However we also believe that prophets like Idris and Isa will taste death one day. They conveyed His message in the language of the people they were sent to guide. Allah helped and strengthened them against unbelievers. Allah makes no distinction between His Messengers. Among them, Prophet Mohammad was the last messenger and the Seal of the prophets. He was sent for all humanity, just as the Qur'an is guidance for all mankind. **The fifth article** is to believe in Aakhirah. Muslims must believe in the Day of Judgement and in accountability on that day. Everything will be clear and obvious on that day. There will be reward for good actions such as being in Paradise and there will be Hell for bad actions. This life will be everlasting. Muslims believe that this life on earth is a preparation for the next. **The sixth article** of faith is to believe in Qadr. This means that Allah has already created what is best for mankind. He has given human beings freedom of choice and made them responsible for their actions. Following the orders of Allah and the footsteps of the prophet will lead us to the path set by Allah. As such one's qadr or destiny will be rightly guided. Allah's knowledge is limitless and as a result He exhorts us to think, plan and make sound judgements to avoid pitfalls and influence of Shaitaan. Ultimately it is Allah who determines all that happens, for He has complete authority over His creation.

Discuss your understanding of any two of them. (I elaborate on all of the 6 but if you go by the question you will choose only 2)

Belief in the articles of faith has many implications. When we say that we must believe in **Allah**, this implies that we must accept His uniqueness without conditions. When Allah is said to be unique in Being this is to be understood that no one can be like Him in physical body or mental or psychological capacity. We can't think Allah as a body or mass. He is a light. When we say that He is unique in Attribute, this means that no one can possess any of His characteristics as we are the weak servants with lots of weaknesses. A single example of His ability to be eternal is enough to show our weaknesses. When we say that Allah is unique in Actions this means that as He is able to create anything out of nothing with the mere saying of "Be" and the thing is, we are not able to act as such. When we say that Allah is unique in worship this means that worship, 5 daily prayers and Ibaadah are only for Allah. We are the worshippers and He is the object of worship. Belief in **angels** is to be understood that they are the creatures of Allah assigned for different tasks. They are not superior to Allah but are servants of Allah. It must be understood that they are created to praise Allah, to deliver Wahy to messengers, to help the pious people, to say Ameen on our du'a, to help in the creation and maintenance of the world, to help in the distribution of food and drink, to help Mankind in this world and the next and to be witnesses of our deeds. Belief in **Books** is to be understood that they are the words of Allah. They are the sacred books without any mistake of the Creator of the worlds. These books are meant for our guidance and to avoid pitfalls. They are also used as tutorial on who Allah is and why were we sent on earth. They are reminders of the favours and warnings of the punishment of Allah. They are codes of conduct for the believers and means to attain piety and wisdom. They are instruments to tenderise the hearts and means to distinguish between halal and haram or between the right and the wrong path.

Belief in **Messengers** is to be understood as the chosen people of Allah, the friends of Allah, the beloveds of Allah and the vicegerents of Allah. They have been chosen not because of their deeds but because of the love of Allah for them. They have been sent to deliver the messages of Allah, to explain these messages, to purify the hearts of their followers and to be our guides. They were the magnets of blessings from Allah and shields from punishment from Allah. They are a source of knowledge from Allah and any concise and precise details on Allah could be obtained from them. They are not superior to Allah but superior to us. They are infallible people blessed by Allah with assurance of success in the next world. As their titles (messengers) suggest, they are people with messages from Allah and equipped with the ability to perform miracles. Belief in the **Day of Judgement** implies that we must have faith that one day we will be accountable for all our deeds and Allah will be our Judge. It is also to be understood that fear of that day can bring a person to stop committing sins and lead to the right path adhering to the Islamic Law. It is also a means to have the shafa'ah of the prophet, the forgiveness of Allah and the salvation through entering Jannah. It must be understood that it is a very difficult day for those who have not prepared themselves well and for the unbelievers and at the same time a pleasant day where the blessed friends of Allah will have the so long awaited moment of contemplating Allah. Belief in **Qadr** means to believe in what comes from Allah is always good. Whatever state we are in as a test from Allah must be accepted and taken as blessings from Allah. However when an ill comes to us due to our disobedience and breaching of the law of Allah, then either it is a punishment from Allah or again a blessing as it is a means of purification and salvation of our sins. When we have been given the choice to choose between the right and the wrong path, it is that Allah didn't want to impose on us but He wanted to give us the time to come to Him or rather to return to Him. At the end, Allah does not want us to suffer in Qabr or in Aakhirah but to have lives of pious and obedient servants. All good and bad are from Allah depends on the servant's deeds.

'Id ul Fitr And 'Id ul Adha

Explain how the id ul Fitr / Adha is celebrated?

Literally speaking 'id means feast, festival or holiday. Fitr means separation or breaking. As such, 'id-ul Fitr means the feast of the breaking and here it implies the breaking of the fast of the month of Ramadhan, the 9th Islamic month ('id ul adha is the feast of sacrifice during the month of Dhul Hijja). When the holy prophet (s.a.w) entered Madina, there were two days ('id-ul Fitr and 'Id-ul Adha) which were moments of amusement and joy. So the prophet (s.a.w) declared them as feast for Muslims.

Firstly, it starts as from the sighting of the moon on the last day of Ramadhan by Swalaatul Maghrib. According to the prophet (s.a.w) that night is considered as full of blessings and the Swalaat Fajr must be done in Jama'ah. It is recommended to take a bath (Ghusal), wear good (or new) clothes according to the Islamic practice and pay Zakaat if not yet paid. **Secondly**, the Swalaatul 'Id can be offered either in open field or Masjid (depending on population). It is done after sunrise and can't be offered before sunrise. **Thirdly**, there is no Azan and no Iqaamah before the Namaaz 'Id and it is done in 2 Rakaat (units) of Swalaat Waajib with 6 additional Takbeer or 12 according to other schools of thought. **Fourthly**, in the 1st Rakaat there are 3 Takbeer before Qiraat and for the 2nd Rakaat there are 3 Takbeer before Ruku'. According to others there are 6 Takbeer in both Rakaat or there are 7 in the first Rakaat and 5 in the second Rakaat. **Fifthly**, after the Swalaat there is a khutbah which is read for the occasion. The main topic will be on id and how it is important to stay in good terms with relatives and families and also not to forget the poor and destitute.

Sixthly, there is the du'a which can be made in any language. Special mentions are made for the Ummah and the country without forgetting our worldwide brothers. **Seventhly**, (for id ul adha there will be the slaughtering of the animal and the sharing of meat into 3 portions, namely for the family members, the poor and for our own use). There will be will greetings by the Muslims. It is recommended to forget all our quarrels and differences on that day as it is a blessed day in Islam. **Eighthly**, there can be family union or gathering for the feast. This is usually done around a meal for lunch or dinner. At this level it varies from one family to another. **Ninthly**, it is an opportunity for parents and relatives to distribute gifts as a means of happiness. This is to show to our young generations that 'id is our feast not other unislamic concepts. **Tenthly**, amusement can be conducted as long as there must be no show off. No haram eating and drinking is allowed on that day. It is good to note that though it is a feast, our obligatory swalaat must not be neglected.

What is the religious significance of Id-ud-Doha / Id ul Fitr ?

Each feast in Islam has its importance and significance. Id ul Adha being celebrated in the month of Dhul Hijjah is a celebration of the achievement of a Muslim who has completed the rites of Hajj (or one whole month of Ramadhan in Ibaadah). It is a blessed moment in the life of a Muslim accomplishing the 5th pillar of Islam (or the 3rd pillar). **Secondly**, it is also a day of thanksgiving when Muslims offer gratitude to Allah for helping them fulfil their spiritual obligation. It is also extended to our gratitude towards our parents and families. **Thirdly**, it is a day of sacrifice and it reminds us of Ibrahim's sacrifice of his son. He was willing and on the point to sacrifice his son for the pleasure of Allah. (it reminds us of the sufferings of the poor, the hunger and the deprived). At the same time it is a way to sacrifice what we have in terms of meat and money for the poor and needy to receive alms. **Fourthly**, it is a day of festive

remembrance beginning with a collective act of worship glorifying Allah's name followed by utterances of greetings and good wishes and praying for the souls of the deceased. **Fifthly**, it is a means for congregational prayers as occasions of creation of brotherhood where Muslims pray for forgiveness and strength of faith to purify the heart and soul.

Sixthly, it is an occasion given to each one of us contributing in helping the needy, visiting elders and the sick. It enhances the remembrance of over many areas of human life. **Seventhly**, it is a day of peace. When a Muslim establishes peace in his heart by obeying Allah's law and leading a disciplined life he/she is at peace with Allah and the rest of the universe. There must be no fighting. **Eighthly**, it is a day of reward as it is on that day that Allah will reward us for all our sacrifices during the month of Ramadhan (or for pilgrimage). We are blessed by Allah. **Ninthly**, it is a day for change. It is the right moment for anyone to change his attitudes and enter the fold of Islam completely by abstaining from sins. **Tenthly**, it is a day appropriate to think of all the favours our Lord has bestowed upon us. It is important that we realise to what extent He loves us and what are we doing or can do to please Him.

Jihaad In Islam

In this present world there have been so many misconceptions concerning the word Jihad. In fact, the views that some people, especially the non-Muslims, have on the term Jihad in Islam is totally wrong. After all there are different kinds of Jihad.

The Arabic word “*jihad*” comes from the root of the word “*juhd*” which means “effort.” Jihad is the process of “exerting one’s best efforts”, to achieve a particular goal. The word “*jihad*” does not necessarily imply violence or war. Contrary to the common belief that “*jihad*” is considered as “holy war,” Islamic jihad does not refer solely to fighting in the way of Allah. The Qur’anic concept of jihad refers to exerting efforts for the sake of Allah. This effort can be fighting back armed aggression, but can also be resisting evil drives and desires in one’s self. As such there are different types of Jihad, internal as well as external.

At the outset, we have Jihad of the heart/soul; in Arabic: *jihad bin nafs/qalb*. It is referred as “**the greater Jihad**” (*al-jihad al-akbar*). It is one’s inner struggle of good against evil; refraining oneself from the whispers of Shaitan (Satan). This process involves allowing Islam to transform one’s soul to achieving internal peace; and forgoing the hatred and anger. “Jihad is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.” {Quran, Surah 2: Al-Baqarah, Verse 216; Mohsin Translation. Added to the above, we have Jihad by the tongue; in Arabic: *jihad bil lisan*. It is defending Islam and spreading Islam by scholarly lectures, speeches and debates. It often overlaps with Da’awah (invitation to Islam, or spreading the message of Islam). In The Last Sermon, Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) asked the listeners whether he has passed on the message to them; and they confirmed affirmatively. Then the Messenger of Allah ordered all those present today to pass on the same message to those who are not here today; and the last person to hear the message should understand it better than the people here. Thirdly we have Jihad by the pen/knowledge; in Arabic: *jihad bil qalam/ilm*. This form of Jihad involves scholarly research of Islam in aiding the spread and defence of Islam; and publishing written articles in clearing misconceptions and correction lies against Islam. Examples of such Jihad include the research and discovery of scientific evidences, literature miracles and mathematical miracles from the Quran. Messenger of Allah once stated that the ink of a scholar is holier than the blood of a martyr; and one who is reading looks handsome in front of Allah.

Next we have, Jihad by the hand; in Arabic: *jihad bil yad*. This is a Jihad of action rather than words. At certain areas, it overlaps with Zakart (charity) and Hajj (pilgrimage). Some of its examples include giving charity to the poor and needy, performing Hajj or Ummrah, helping those who need help, saving people’s lives, etc. These are more of physical deeds instead of words. “A person whose feet become dust ridden because of [striving] in the way of Allah will never be touched by the flames of Hell” { Sahih Bukhari 2811}. The most beautiful of all Jihad is a perfect Hajj. It involves testing of one’s patience and piety to the apex. The whole period of Hajj, with just one intention and aim, worshiping Allah! Moreover we have Jihad by the sword; in Arabic: *jihad bis saif*. In contrary to Jihad of the heart/soul; this form of Jihad is referred as “**the lesser jihad**” (*al-jihad al-asghar*). Sometimes it is necessary to undertake Jihad by the sword. This would include usage of arsenals and engaging in a combat. This could be simply a bunch of freedom fighters or an organised campaign of army. Jihad by the sword is use of arms to engage into a combat. It is **not** misuse of arms to create violence. There are only two situations were Jihad by the sword is allowed to be undertaken. 1) **For self-defence**. When someone attacks you or when your nation has been attacked. Engaging into combat due to self defence. 2) **Fighting against evil and unjust**. It is also a

sin if a Muslim sees unjust been done, capable of stopping it, yet not doing anything about it. This can include war on drug, war on child labour as well as war on terror! The American administration today seems to be launching a global war on terror, but are they the first to launch the war on terror? The Muslims already announced the war on terror fourteen centuries ago, under the name of Jihad bis saif! There are many rules and limitations when engaging in combat under the title of Jihad. For example, civilians are not to be harmed; trees are not to be cut down; asylum should be granted to surrendering enemy soldiers; etc. “And if anyone of the Mushrikun seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allah, and then escort him to where he can be secure, that is because they are men who know not.” {Quran, Surah 9: At-Taubah, Verse 6; Mohsin Translation}. The above verse states that when an enemy soldier surrenders during a battle, the Muslim soldiers must grant asylum and in addition, escort him to safety! The treatment for prisoners of war is also clearly stated in the Quran. Prisoners of war under Muslim prisons are to eat, drink and dress the same Muslim soldiers eat, drink and dress. And even under the unfortunate event of shortage of food, it is the prisoners who are to eat first before the Muslim soldiers guarding them!

Thus, as we have seen, Jihad is not a violent concept. Jihad is not a declaration of war against other religions. Those who misunderstand the Qur’anic term jihad as armed jihad only have totally failed to notice, among other things, that Jihad is first through our own ego. The term jihad actually refers to the more general concept of exerting efforts in the way of Allah.

Marriage / Nikah In Islam

How is a marriage ceremony conducted?

Among the various religious institutions in Islam there is the Nikah ceremony also known as marriage. It is not a new one as it has been in existence since the creation of Mankind. Though it existed in different forms, the reasons behind its celebration are practically the same. There are steps to be followed when someone wants to get married or when a Nikah is to be validated.

A Muslim marriage is mainly divided into the Nikah and the Walimah. There are various conditions for a Nikah to be accepted in Islam. **Firstly**, there must be the proposal and acceptance. It is imperative that both the bride-to-be and the groom must consent to marry. If any party refuses then there is no Nikah as forced marriage is not valid in Islam. **Secondly**, there must be an Imam to conduct the Nikah. It is Sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) that the father of the girl should conduct the Nikah but in this present world, due to lack of formation it is more practical for the Imam. **Thirdly**, it is recommended upon the Imam to deliver a sermon to elaborate on what the Nikah is, why do we have to get married and specially to remind the couple of their duties towards Allah and towards each other. **Fourthly**, the marriage contract will be done and duly signed by the respective parties. There can be different kinds of conditions and terms. For instance, allowing the girl to work or receiving no permission to have a second wife as long as the first one is alive, can be stipulated. **Fifthly**, each one of the couple will be asked thrice whether they wish to marry. There will be two witnesses who will sign the contract as well. Being a contract it can be terminated by either side if the conditions are not respected.

Sixthly, there must be the dowry which is a gift the groom gives to the bride. It can be any reasonable amount or wealth. **Seventhly**, the du'a and prayers will be said by the Imam for the happiness of the bride and groom. This will lead to all Muslims congratulating the groom. **Eighthly**, there will be the Walima which is the feast given a few days later after the marriage has been consummated. This is a recommended action which is wajib. **Ninthly**, there must be no singing, no dancing, no show off, no wastage and no illicit or immoral activities or happenings during the Nikah or the Walimah. It is allowed, as it is found in the Hadith and Sunnah of the prophet, to beat the Daf. **Tenthly**, in Mauritius we have several instances which are added. For example, a religious ceremony and Qur'anic recital in a gathering known as Mawlood is done before the Nikah as a means to ask du'a for the couple. On the eve of Nikah, there is another ceremony of applying the henna on the hands and feet of the bride. On the day after the Nikah there is a gathering, known as the Chawtari, of the closest relatives around a meal to thank all those who help in the Nikah.

What is the Significance of Marriage in Islam?

The institution of Nikah is very important and significant for the Muslims. **Firstly**, Nikah is significant in itself by the mere fact that it is a command from Allah as saying "marry those among you who are single". So, when getting married we are fulfilling the command of Allah. **Secondly**, Nikah and Walimah are significant as they are Sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) by his saying that "getting married is my sunnah, whoever does not follow my Sunnah is not one of my Ummah". By getting married we are following the Sunnah and Hadith as part of the Islamic Law. **Thirdly**, the importance of Nikah lies in a verse of the Qur'an as "and among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them and He has put love and mercy between your hearts". So the aim of getting married is to live on earth in tranquillity having love and mercy for our partners. **Fourthly**, by getting married this will help us to be free from all kinds of sins especially the sins of the eyes, thought and heart. The prophet (s.a.w) advised us saying "o you young men, whoever is able to marry should marry, for that will help him to lower his gaze and guard his modesty". **Fifthly**, the prophet said that "marriage is half of faith". The Prophet (s.a.w) considered marriage for a Muslim as "half of his religion"

because it may shield him from promiscuity, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and the life which ultimately lead to many other crimes including slander, quarrel, homicide, loss of property and finally the disintegration of the ideal family system on which so much stress has been placed by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w).

Sixthly, it is said in the Qur'an that "Allah has made for you mates of your own nature, and made for you, out of them, sons and daughter and grandchildren, and provided for you sustenance of the best". In this verse it is clear that Nikah is significant for procreation and the creation of families. They will act as blessings and supports for the parents during their old days. **Seventhly**, based on the above verse, it is clear that when we get married, Allah will give us the best of sustenance, that is food and blessings in our daily activities and lives. It is a provision better than that of the beasts. **Eighthly**, Nikah is significant due to the fact that it allows a husband a support in the wife and vice versa. Allah says that "they are clothing for you and you are clothing for them". The word clothing connotes the idea of equality, complementarily and support of both a psychological and physical nature. Both have their roles. **Ninthly**, Nikah is significant in the sense that it helps both the husband and the wife to become more responsible. As long as they were bachelors, the degree of responsibility and comprehensiveness was unstable for most people. Marriage comes as a regulator of our lives. **Tenthly**, the result of Nikah is among others having children. The main aim of having children in the eyes of Allah is to populate the earth with Muslims and to spread the deen of Islam. These children may be well a means to raise the flag of Islam in their own ways. As such the pious children will be the revivers of Islam.

What do you think is meant by the Hadith 'Marriage is half of faith'?

Marriage or Nikah is one of the religious institutions in Islam with great significance. It is important and it regulates different aspects of our lives. According to the prophet (s.a.w) "Marriage is half of faith". This can be explained through the Qur'an and the Hadith.

Firstly, it must be noted that before the spreading of Islam women were badly treated during the pre Islamic Arabia. So when the prophet said that marriage is half of iman, he wanted to propound the view that as long as the pre Islamic Arabs didn't change their attitude towards their wives, their iman and religion would be never complete. He equated it to a religious duty and the value of marriage takes on special meaning when it is connected with faith. **Secondly**, marriage is half of iman when the Qur'an and the Prophet speak of the rights and responsibilities of both husbands and wives towards each other. It deals with role of the husband to treat the wife with kindness, honour, patience, or free her from marital bond honourably without harm as Allah says "But consort with them in kindness". **Thirdly**, by marriage is half of iman, Islam wanted to raise the status of women and at the same time show men their roles as trustees, guardians, protectors of their wives as Allah says "Men are in charge of women". The degree of superiority of men over women as Allah says in the Qur'an "men are a degree above them" is based on the responsibilities of men towards women but not as many may think of. **Fourthly**, when the prophet says that marriage is half of iman it also means that both partners in a marriage are equal as Muslims in the eyes of Allah. There is no difference in between them. The only superiority recognised in Islam and reiterated by the Prophet is that of piety and good deeds as Allah says "Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct". **Fifthly**, by marriage is half of iman this means that both the husband and the wife have to strive to fulfil the other half of faith, to make a good marriage and be 'a comfort to each other'. The Prophet said that 'the best of you is the one who is best towards his wife' encouraging men to change their attitude towards women.

Sixthly, the prophet said that "marriage is half of faith" as it may shield the person from promiscuity, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and the life which ultimately lead to many other crimes including slander, quarrel, homicide, loss of property and finally the disintegration of the ideal family system on which so much stress has been placed by the Prophet (s.a.w). **Seventhly**, when propounding that marriage is half of faith, it signifies that a good marriage strengthens the bonds of brotherhood between two families. There will always be sharing, good relationship and understanding. **Eighthly**,

relationship with the outer world towards other human beings is also part of Iman. As such, marriage is half of iman means it helps both the husband and the wife to become more responsible and intends to lead to more socialisation. Marriage comes as a regulator of our lives. **Ninthly**, when we propound that marriage is half of Iman this means that the core of the family must be based on the religion and faith. As such, parents who are good Muslims and have a caring, stable relationship are able to bring up happy, well-adjusted children able to carry the torch of Islam further. **Tenthly**, by marriage is half of iman means that the institution of marriage can at a certain point ensure Jannah for both the husband and the wife. According to the prophet, if at the death bed of the husband, the latter is satisfied with the wife, the latter will obtain Jannah. The other way also is true that through the wife the husband will be allowed paradise.

Funeral In Islam

Describe the religious rites that are performed when a Muslim dies.

In the life of every Muslim there are various steps which are natural and inevitable. Among them we can see that the sending of Man to earth, the ageing of Man and the death of Man. However, each step we met with specific code of conduct set by Allah and His prophet. Accordingly, there are several steps to be followed at the death of a person in Islam.

Firstly, it is required that when a Muslim is on the point to die and also at the moment of death, the kalimah of Laa ilaaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasoulullah is recited repeatedly continuously. The idea behind that is to give the chance to the dying person to recite the kalimah before his death. **Secondly**, it is recommended to read the holy Qur'an and especially the chapter Surah Yaaseen and surah Mulk during the last moment. **Thirdly**, after the death of the person the body is washed like one when performing ghusl. It must be done in the same way as when someone is alive. **Fourthly**, it is recommended and imperative that the body of a man must be washed by men and the body of a woman must be washed by women. It is unlawful though at that time to see and look at the body of the opposite sex. More often it is the responsibility of the family members. **Fifthly**, the whole washing of the body and everything attached to it must be done with respect and the private parts of both the man and the woman are to be washed without being seen. **Sixthly**, the dead body is then put and enveloped in white unstitched cloth known as kafan. Normally three pieces of cloth are used for men and five are used for women. Only the face is allowed to be visible if mourners want to see the person for a last time.

Seventhly, it is a practice that the Qur'an is read and du'a of forgiveness is asked for the dead. Then the body is carried by men where friends and family jostle to get blessings to have carried the body even on a short distance. Throughout the way the kalimah is constantly recited for blessings and to avoid useless takings. **Eighthly**, the body is then carried to mosque or to an open space near the graveyard for funeral prayers. The men have to stand in rows with the body in front of them. The funeral prayer is said standing where there is no sajdah, no ruku' and no qa'dah. It consists of five Takbeer. The first Takbeer is followed by Thana, the second Takbeer is followed by surah Al Faatiha, the third Takbeer is followed by Darood Ibrahim, the fourth Takbeer is followed by Du'a of Maghfirat and the fifth Takbeer is immediately followed by Salaam. After that the Imam will lead some invocations like "O Allah grant forgiveness to our living and to our dead...". **Ninthly**, then the body is lowered for burial with the face resting in the direction of Macca. The body is laid on its back with wood covering the grave and leaving a vacuum in the grave. Then it is covered with earth. The imam presiding the burial will again ask du'a for the dead. **Tenthly**, returning home the Qur'an is read and generally on the third day a prayer is held and sometimes around the fortieth day friends and relatives come to read the Qur'an again to convey blessings of the reading on the soul of the departed.

What is the significance of death in Islam?

There are various significances of death in Islam. **Firstly**, according to Islam it is recommended to get prepared for death and to make provision for sharing of wealth. Allah says in the Qur'an that "when one of you approaches death, if he leaves wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness". It is done to avoid conflict among relatives. **Secondly**, its importance lies in the fact that it is inevitable and as it is said in the Qur'an that "every soul must taste death" and it is a departure from this world to the next world. **Thirdly**, death signifies the return to Allah the One who has created us and our return is towards Him. Allah says to the soul in the Qur'an as "return to your Lord in content". **Fourthly**, death signifies the start of a new blessed life in the next world. Whatever we have done good in this world will be rewarded as from the moment we are dead. Allah says in the Qur'an that "every soul will taste death. And ye will be paid on the Day of Resurrection only that which ye have fairly earned". **Fifthly**, death also signifies that we will never live forever on earth and that at the same time we are not in control of our lives. At any time death can reach us at any moment and we are thus weak and perishable. This can be proved by the above verses where Allah says that we all will taste death and when Allah says that "everything is perishing except the face of Allah".

Sixthly, death signifies a deep and serious sign to the Muslims that there will be their turn soon to taste death. As such it is an indication that we will be put to the severe test of Qabr with the three questions as who is your Lord?, what is your religion?, and what do you think / say on that person?. Success of these questions lies in leading a real Muslim life on earth. **Seventhly**, for those who have not prepared for the next world and have lived on this earth as irresponsible servants of Allah, death for them signifies pain, suffering and real trial. The prophet said that at the death of these kinds of persons, their souls are afraid to step to the next world as they are afraid of punishment. Allah says that "no doubt they will see it with certainty". **Eighthly**, however for those who have prepared and spent their lives in the obedience of Allah, for them death signifies a relief from this world and the coming of blessing, tranquillity, safety, perfume and mat of paradise and assurance or prelude of what is waiting them in paradise. For these persons Allah says that "there is no fear on them and they are not sad". **Ninthly**, for these kinds of persons death signifies the sight of the Holy Prophet as from the grave and the possibility of the beatific hearing of the voice of Allah giving the good news to them as "sleep as the groom sleeps". **Tenthly**, for these kinds of persons there is the hope of the possibility of the beatific vision of Allah. The real believers are those who long for their death and the meeting with their Lord. For them death signifies the start of the eternal peace and beauty of Aakhirah.

For a Muslim, death must be a moment where he is delighted to meet his Lord in the next world. Aakhirah for the real Muslims is symbolised by the lack of pain, sorrow, hardship, difficulties, suffering and the wait for Jannah. Death can also be painful and grievous for those who have forgotten or abandoned their Lord.

Shari'ah

1. 'The Sunnah of the Prophet is a human implementation of the revealed word of God.' To what extent is this claim accurate?
2. 'Without the Sunnah no one could be a good Muslim.' Explain the meaning of this statement, and say whether you think it is accurate or not.
3. Explain why many Muslims believe that the Qur'an cannot be understood properly without the help of the Sunnah.
4. Define and discuss the importance of the Sunnah, explaining how it differs from the Qur'an.
5. In what main ways have Muslim legal experts made use of the Prophet Muhammad's Sunnah in order to interpret the Qur'an?
6. Explain the importance of the Prophet's Sunnah in legal thinking, and describe how it is used in establishing legal teachings.

Among the different sources of Shari'ah we have the Hadith / Sunnah along side with the Qur'an as the primary sources. When it comes to hadith or sunnah this refers to the sayings, the deeds and the silent approval of the holy prophet (s.a.w). However, as per the Qur'an, nothing is said or uttered from the prophet except what was inspired upon him as "nor does he speak out of his desires, but it is inspired to him". This brings us to say that the hadith / sunnah of the prophet is nothing than the human implementation of the revealed word of the Qur'an but under the guidance of Allah.

Allah says in the Qur'an to obey the prophet in His own words as "he who obeys the messengers, obeys Allah". By this it is our duty to obey the words and to follow the footsteps of the prophet. All the Ashab, the companions of the prophet (s.a.w) and the following generations have understood this in that same sense. Obedience to the prophet (s.a.w) is vital as an order from Allah. It is also said in the Qur'an to "obey Allah and obey the messenger and those who are in authority among you". In this verse it is a clear indication that the words of Allah from the Qur'an must be accepted, that the words and deeds of the prophet (s.a.w) must be followed and that the advices of the scholars among us must be taken into consideration. It can be seen to history that each word and deed of the prophet is law as his wife Hazrat Aisha (ra) said that the prophet is the holy Qur'an walking meaning he is the embodiment of the Qur'an and the practical implementation of the revealed words of Allah.

By the sunnah of the prophet is a human implementation of the revealed words of God is to imply that whatever is found in the Qur'an is put into practice by the prophet. As such the Qur'an is the theoretical part and the Sunnah is the practical part. One complements the other. We can find many examples to clarify that statement. **Firstly**, it is said in the Qur'an to "perform swalaat from the declining of the sun till darkness of night". This is the theoretical words of Allah from the Qur'an. However there is no hint of how to perform swalaat and what to be read therein. The prophet (s.a.w) thus ordered the Ashab and his community to "pray as you see me praying". In this we see how the sunnah is the human implementation of the revealed words of Allah. **Secondly**, it is seen in the Qur'an verses like "fasting has been made obligatory upon you", "spend your wealth for the cause of Allah", "perform the pilgrimage and the visit for Allah" referring to the institutions of Sawm, Zakaat and Hajj. However its practical aspects of how to accomplish them properly with all necessary details can only be found in the sunnah as the human implementation of these revealed verses of Allah.

Thirdly, there is a verse in the Qur'an related to Nikah as "and marry those among you who are single". This is a direct order towards marriage. However there is an only way to know how to put that command into practice. We can see in the Sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w) the whole procedure of Nikah and Walimah and what is needed to complete a fully accepted marriage. As such the Sunnah implements the Qur'an. **Fourthly**, it is said in the Qur'an that "verily you have in the messenger of Allah an excellent example". The implication here is to observe whatever of his movement and do as he did it. This englobes

the moment he woke up early in the morning till the time he woke up for Tahajjud and Fajr. Whatever he engaged in, it is our duty to follow the sunnah of the prophet as in eating, drinking, sleeping, talking, dealing in business and many others. That was the practice of the Ashab as they believed that the prophet was an authority from Allah but in both theoretical and practical ways. The sunnah of the prophet is thus the implementation of the verses of the Qur'an.

Fifthly, Allah says in the Qur'an concerning "the believers are surely brothers; so make peace among your brothers" to act in the best way with our brothers. However, how to deal with the Muslims, how to talk with them, how to befriend them, how to respect them, how to deal with non Muslims, how to lay the foundations of a solid and spiritual society, how to deal with wives and children, how to ensure a smooth running of the family core, how to deal with our neighbours, how to enhance understanding among everyone of the society can only be found in the sunnah of the prophet (s.a.w). Allah says that "we have not sent you except as a mercy for the worlds". Through his deeds and sayings he has proved it true. **Sixthly**, Allah makes it clear in the Qur'an concerning the aim of the prophet (s.a.w) with his hadith and sunnah as "and We have revealed unto thee the Remembrance that thou may explain to mankind that which has been revealed for them". This is a clear indication that the prophet was to explain whatever is found in the Qur'an. Indeed he is thus the real human implementation of the revealed verse of Allah.

In fact, both the Qur'an and the Sunnah have their specific roles to play in our own betterment. The hadith / sunnah of the prophet acts as an explanation of the Qur'an, a supplement to the Qur'an, a practical exemplification of the Qur'anic injunctions, a means of shedding light on the prophet's life and an assessment of the life history of companions. Though we can say that the hadith is the words of the prophet and the sunnah is his sunnah, both are influenced by Allah as He says in the Qur'an as "nor does he speak out of his desires, but it is inspired to him".

1. **How relevant is the *Shari'ah* to Muslim individuals and communities in the modern world?**
2. **It is often said that Islam is a whole way of life. How does the *Shari'ah* affect private and public activities in Islam?**
3. **'The teachings of Islam can be made relevant in new situations.' Explain this statement giving clear examples to illustrate your answer.**
4. **How can the teachings of Islam be made relevant in new situations? Give examples to illustrate your answer.**
5. (a) **What traditional methods are used to relate the Qur'an to changing conditions in society? (12)**
(b) **Giving three examples, discuss how legal experts have actually done this in practice. (8)**
6. **In a rapidly changing world, can the Qur'an continue to form the basis of belief and action in the Muslim community?**
7. **Choosing four examples from your own experience or of people you know, explain how the Qur'an affects and influences Muslims in their day to day living.**
8. **By what means can the fundamental teachings of Islam be made fresh as new situations arise?**
9. **How would you tell someone about the significance of the Qur'an in a Muslim's life?**

Literally the *Shari'ah* is the path towards a watering pond where life is present. But when it comes to the Islamic terminology, it refers to the set of rules and regulations found in the Islamic law. The *shari'ah* has been sent to mankind for its own guidance and as such there are several sources of *Shari'ah* like the Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma', Qiyas and Ijtihad. All of them are essential both for the individual and the community in this present world.

The sources of *Shari'ah* can be divided into the primary and the secondary sources. The primary sources consist of the Qur'an and the Hadith / Sunnah. The holy Qur'an is the book of Allah and according to Imam Suyuti there are 600 verses known as Aayatul Ahkam which deals with Law. Moreover there are verses related to lessons taken from stories of past prophets and past nations, verses

related to the remembrance of Allah and verses related to injunctions of death and life after death which are used to derive Shari'ah. Concerning the Hadith and Sunnah which are the sayings and deeds of the prophet, there are various ways how Shari'ah is derived. There are all the Hadith Qudsiy, the Swahih hadith, the Hasan hadith and the weak hadith of the prophet, ashab, tabi'in and taba'ut tabi'in which are used as bases for Shari'ah from Hadith. The secondary sources consist of Ijma', Qiyas and Ijtihad. Ijma' is the consensus or agreed decision of the 'ulama of the Majlis shurah. Ijma' can be either ijma' al qawl (through words), ijma' al fi'l (through deeds) or ijma' as soukout (through silence). Each one is further divided into al 'azimah that is it is regular and secondly ijma' al rukhsah that is it is not regular and there is difference of opinions. Qiyas is known as the analogy or the analogical deduction. It is the examination of all decisions taken since the time of the prophet till the present day. It can be either Jaliyy which does not need explanation or it can be Khafiy which needs explanation and adjustment. Lastly we have the Ijtihad which is the use of the human intellect based on the other above mentioned sources to arrive at a solution. It is the exerting of the intellect or ability to achieve an objective. As such all of them work together as a whole.

The Shari'ah has always been relevant since the time of the prophet till the last hour to come. In this present era with modernity with its innovations and bringing changes as main challenge for Muslims, Shari'ah is still important. Muslims living in both Islamic or unislamic counties are persistently being faced with challenges that they have to meet and decide upon through the Islamic legal law. We have different examples to illustrate how the shari'ah can be relevant in this present world. **Firstly**, let's take the example of the Hijab which is mentioned in the Qur'an. In this present world where immoralities are rampant and women are in certain regions still subjected to the evil eyes of men, a specific verse from the Qur'an can help them. Allah says "O Prophet tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women that they cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad). This will be more proper, that they should be known as such and not molested". It is clear that one of the ways to prevent evil eyes of men and to be free from molestation is to wear the jilbab. **Secondly**, let's take the example of eating habit which is found in hadith and sunnah of the prophet. In this present day many people are still suffering from obesity due to uncontrolled amount of food followed by chest and stomach problem due to overcharge of the belly and finally wetting (urinating) bed at night. By the grace of Allah we have the solution from the hadith of the prophet whereby if we follow the sunnah of the prophet by sitting on the ground for eating, our belly will be squeezed in such a way that only two thirds can be loaded thus leaving one third free. This is according to sunnah and proven by scientific research. Moreover, this will eliminate both chest and stomach pain and wetting on bed.

Thirdly, let's now take the example of the system of InVitro where the secondary sources of Ijma', Qiyas and Ijtihad are used. In this present time there are many couples who are not able to have children and usually resort to InVitro. However, that method of sperm insemination did never exist during the time of the salaf, that is the first generations. This is a new concept. InVitro can be practised as long as the sperm of the husband is being used but if the sperm is from another donor then it is haram. So before resorting to that practice, the Shari'ah is present to help Muslims. **Fourthly**, let's take the example of transplantation of organs. It is a fact that saving the life of a person is praise worthy in Islam. It is also a fact that some liberal Muslims accept to give their organs after their death. That topic did not occur during the salaf time. However, due to shari'ah and the exercising of the secondary sources, it is disliked to give organs after one's death. The reason behind this is that as it is not allowed to harm the dead body when performing the Ghusal, how it is then allowed to use a scalpel to slit open a Muslim after his death, remove organs and sew the body again. It's a harm to the body. **Fifthly**, let's take the example of halal food and halal gain. In this modern society where we are constantly under pressure of peer groups, we tend to follow them. It is clear that haram food and gain (money) are present and in circulation. It is thus the duty of the Muslims to make it a must to have knowledge of what is halal and haram, what is permissible and not, what is doubtful and what is praiseworthy and disliked. Muslims must at any cost be selective in their food and ways of gaining and obtaining money.

Sixthly, we can have the example of the marriage ceremony. Nowadays there are so many customs and traditions which are included in the marriage ceremony of Muslims. For instance we have the betrothal, the chawtary (an Indian culture) and singing and dancing. It can be seen that there is wastage of resources, food and money. Muslims must know what is fard in Nikah and Walimah and what must be avoided. **Seventhly**, though we are living in a multi cultural society, we must be able to make the distinction between the Muslims and the unbelievers. Their religions are theirs and Muslims have their own faith. We can be friendly on humanitarian basis but when it comes to faith Muslims must be beware of not merging religions and not making concessions. **Eighthly**, as education is vital and important for both male and female, in Mauritius there is intermingling of both sexes on school, college or university compounds. That mixture of boys and girls must to its utmost be avoided. As Muslims there is a code of conduct and morality to be followed. If this is not respected then we are not following the Shari'ah. The latter will help us to avoid pitfalls, flaws or any illicit activities in the society publicly or privately. **Ninthly**, there is a code of conduct to be respected when living among the non Muslims. We must respect them and try our best to live in harmony with them. If we are the minorities, then we must be very cautious in dealing with them. There must be tolerance, patience and no provocation. These will help in establishing the sound community. **Tenthly**, in this present world where materialism is prevailing, the shari'ah comes to spiritualise our private and public lives. It is a fact that this society is being deeply rooted in sins and evil aspects and mentalities. The shari'ah will help Muslims to establish the equilibrium between this material world and the spiritual world.

As can be seen the shari'ah will still be useful for all generations. When Allah has established a set of rules and regulations upon which to adhere, no doubt it will be for success in this world and the next. The shari'ah is not a man made concept but directly from the Divine One. However, it is regretful to say that still some people don't realise the importance of the Shari'ah and they act as per their wish when they must have consulted the law of Allah.

1. **How would you tell someone about the importance of the four bases of the *Shari'ah* and the relationship between them?**
2. (a) **What methods have legal experts traditionally employed to find answers in the authoritative sources of Islam to the questions raised in a constantly changing world? [8]**
 (b) **Give three examples to show how legal experts have actually done this in practice. [12]**

Shari'ah has been defined by many scholars in various ways. However its importance is universal in the Islamic world. The shari'ah is the embodiment of the Divine will in terms of specific teachings whose acceptance and application guarantees man a harmonious life in this world and the Next. As such all the bases of Shari'ah are important and they are linked among themselves.

The Islamic Law – Shari'ah – is divided into four main sources namely the Qur'an, the Hadith, the Ijma' and the Qiyas. The primary sources are the Qur'an and the Sunnah / Hadith and the secondary sources are Ijma' and Qiyas. The Qur'an is the words of Allah and can't be altered at any cost. Shari'ah is derived therein from different injunctions like the Aayatul Ahkaam, verses related to remembrance of past people, remembrance of Allah and remembrance of death and hereafter. The Hadith / Sunnah is the words, deeds and silent approval of the prophet (s.a.w). Shari'ah is derived from it through all hadith Qudsiy, Swahih, Hasan and even Dwa'if. Ijma' is what is known as consensus. It is the agreed opinion of the 'Ulama or scholars of Islam through a Majlis Shurah. Ijma' can exist in different ways like Ijma' al Qawl, Ijma' al Fi'l and Ijma' al Soukout. Each one is sub divided into al 'Azimah and al Rukhsah. Then we have the Qiyas which is the analogy. It is the analogical analysis and comparison of the 'Ulama from the list of Fatwa or Masla since the time of the prophet till the present day. All of the four are important for all Muslims throughout the world for all generations. **Firstly**, due to the fact that Shari'ah is from Allah this gives it high priority of importance. The Qur'an is from Allah and as Allah says that "this is a book ... there is no mistake in it" is enough to realise its importance. It is a Divine book not a manmade book with mortal and fallible concepts. It is sacred. It is a divine source of law from the Creator of Man. **Secondly**, hadith is important due to the fact that it explains verses and topics like swalaat and hajj which

are ordered from the Qur'an but elaborated in Hadith. The words and deeds of the prophet are important as Allah indicates them in the Qur'an as "nor does he speak out of his desires, but it is inspired to him". So Hadith / Sunnah are inspirations from Allah. **Thirdly**, Ijma' and Qiyas which are generated from the Majlis Shurah of the prophet, ashab, tabi'in, taba'ut tabi'in and all scholars are essential in new situations requiring amending of law. Allah says concerning their validity and importance in the Qur'an as "o you who believe, obey Allah and obey the messenger and those who are in authority among you". As can be seen the four bases of Shari'ah have a high degree of importance through the words of Allah Himself. In the above verse, "obey Allah" refers to following the Qur'an, "obey the messenger" refers to following the Sunnah and "those who are in authority among you" refers to Ijma' and Qiyas of the "ulama. They are thus important.

Fourthly, the four bases of Shari'ah are important due to the fact that the Islamic Law is the right path set by Allah and His prophet (s.a.w). Allah says in the Qur'an "then We put thee on the right way of religion, so follow it". The ultimate goal of the shari'ah is to enable Muslims to strike a balance between life in this world and the Next. **Fifthly**, the shari'ah is important as it is a complete code of conduct for all aspects of Mankind. It regulates his religious, moral, spiritual, social, economic, political and intellectual activities. It is a guideline on what to do or not. It touches moral aspects like truthfulness, sincerity, good neighbouring, courage and love. **Sixthly**, the shari'ah is important as it is an element essential to perfect mankind. Man is naturally imperfect. We are fallible with faults, sins, errors, mistakes, flaws and weaknesses. As such, the four bases of shari'ah are important in such a way that they will help us, if put into practice, to avoid all kinds of pitfalls and to try to perfect our characters, moralities, human touch and spirituality. **Seventhly**, shari'ah is important as it is a veritable means of guaranteeing felicity for man. Its application leads to happiness, success and satisfaction in the life of Muslims. It helps us to follow our leader and example in the name of the prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) who is the best example of success. Following the prophet refers to following the shari'ah. **Eighthly**, shari'ah is important in our lives as it is a guide to how to put into practice different institutions like swalaat, sawm, hajj, animal sacrifice and many others like criminal law, family law and international law. It helps us in the steps needed for our Ibaadah and invocations to be accepted by Allah. **Ninthly**, the four bases of shari'ah regulate our lives through the knowledge of halal, haram, sunnah, makruh, Mubah or nawafil. As such we will be able to make the difference between them in topics like eating and drinking halal, engaging in business and relation with human beings Muslims and non Muslims. **Tenthly**, the shari'ah is at the disposal of the Muslims and especially in this modern world where materialism is prevailing, to guide them to the right path. There is a difference between manmade law and Divine law. The former is based on assumptions and philosophies as the latter is based on Allah's view point. Shari'ah helps us to avoid what is temporal and to choose the Eternal.

As we have stated there are the Qur'an, Hadith / Sunnah, Ijma' and Qiyas as sources of Shari'ah. Though they are different institutions with different specificities, they are interlinked. The broad guidelines of the shari'ah are contained in the Qur'an. However, in many cases, details are not given in the scripture. If details were to be given, then the Qur'an would have been voluminous. Moreover, it will be difficult to carry out the injunctions in different times and places. Its voluminous reading may cause harm to people. As such, Hadith / Sunnah comes in play. The role of the prophet as the recipient of the divine revelation went beyond passing the messages to his followers and preaching to them. He served as the practical exemplification of the teachings of the Qur'an. The hadith / Sunnah is the practical way of the Qur'an thus being linked and related to each other. However, after the passing away of the prophet (s.a.w), his followers carried on with the good work he had been doing. With the expansion of Islam to different places, countries, customs, traditions, situations and circumstances, the companions were faced with different and new problems. Some problems could not be traced directly to the Qur'an and Sunnah. Thus the scholars have to come together and take decisions in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Such decisions taken are technically known as Ijma' serving as a third source of Islamic law and thus related to the first ones. Moreover, on many occasions, new problems may crop up which require immediate attention without any opportunity to reach out to other scholars to take a joint decision. The solution here is to compare and contrast the new problems with others similar to them which took place at

the time of the prophet and the succeeding generations till the present day. Such practice is to determine whether the new problems are allowed or not allowed in Islam. This practice is technically known as Qiyas which is the fourth source of Shari'ah creating a relationship with the first three ones. It will be more comprehensible through examples.

Firstly, the practice of Ijma' can be traced back to the days of the ashab as can be seen from the following examples. Allah does not state the type of punishment that should be applied to one who drinks alcohol. But the agreement was reached by the consensus of opinions of the Ashab when Hazrat Ali said: "he who drinks, get drunk, he who gets drunk, raves; he who raves, accuses people falsely; and he who accuses people falsely should be given eighty strokes of cane according to the injunction of the Holy Qur'an. Allah has said: "Those that accuse the innocent women falsely, and they do not bring forth four witnesses, flog them eighty strokes of cane and do not accept their witnesses, they are the wrong doers". **Secondly**, as a technical term, Qiyas is first met with in the letter of Hazrat Umar to Abu Musa Ash'ari. Among other things, the Caliph gave instructions that the Governor should learn the "parallels and precedents" (of legal cases) and then 'weigh up' the cases, deciding what in his judgement would be the most pleasing to God and nearest to the truth". Apparently, the Caliph meant that the Governor should exercise personal reasoning in judging cases which are not provided for in the Qur'an and Sunnah. **Thirdly**, another interesting example of Qiyas is that of Hazrat 'Umar. He asked the prophet whether a kiss during the fast vitiates the fast even though no organism is reached. The prophet posed a question: "Does rinsing ones mouth vitiate the fast?" Umar replied "No, it was alright to do so". So the prophet indicated that the fast is similarly not vitiated by a kiss if it is not accompanied by an orgasm. **Fourthly**, let's take the example of alcohol which is forbidden on the grounds of its being intoxicant. It is Qiyas Jaliyy that other new intoxicants can also be equally forbidden in Islam based on this reason. **Fifthly**, as regards the Qiyas Khafiyy, Allah asks us to give out zakaat. It was the prophet who explained how it should be given out. He said among other things, that one goat must be given out as zakaat on every forty goats. Giving a poor man a goat will do him little or no use. Therefore, we are allowed to sell that goat and give him the money. He would appreciate perhaps the money more than he would appreciate the goat.

Shari'ah is the body of Islamic religious law. It is the legal framework within which the public and private aspects of life are regulated for those living in a legal system based on Islamic principles of jurisprudence and for Muslims living outside the domain. Shari'ah deals with many aspects of day-to-day life including politics, economics, banking, business, contracts, family, sexuality, hygiene and social issues. There are also new topics like organ transplantation, InVitro system, pacemaker for the heart and false legs and arms among others where the four sources of Shari'ah is important and linked together.

1. (a) What use is made of individual endeavour (ijtihad) in legal practice? (12)
- (b) Some legal experts have doubted the value of ijtihad. Explain why. [8]

Among the various sources of Shari'ah there are the Qur'an, the Sunnah, the Ijma', the Qiyas and the Ijtihad. The first two are the primary sources and the last three are the secondary sources. The one of them having more critics is Ijtihad.

The Arabic word for Ijtihad literarily means an effort or an exercise to arrive at one's own judgement. In its widest sense, it means the use of human reasoning in the elaboration and explanation of the Shari'ah – the Islamic Law. It covers a variety of mental process, ranging from the interpretation of texts of the Qur'an and the assessment of the authentic Hadith. Qiyas or analogical reasoning then is a particular form of Ijtihad, the method by which the principles established by the Qur'an, Sunnah and Ijma' are to be extended and applied to the solution of new problems not expressly regulated before. Ijtihad, therefore, is an exercise of one's reasoning to arrive at a logical conclusion on a legal issue done by the Jurist to deduce a conclusion as to the effectiveness of a legal precept in Islam. Imam Shafi'i has supported the idea of Ijtihad by quoting a verse of the Holy Qur'an to substantiate his conviction over the issue. Allah said: "Wherever you go, face the mosque of Haram, and wherever you are, turn your face towards it." Imam Shafi'i maintains that if one does not exercise his intellect, he would not be able to

know where Masjid al-Haram is. Therefore, Allah Himself indirectly encourages us to exercise our reasoning faculty, a great gift to mankind, to derive a logical conclusion on certain matters. However, the Jurists have laid down certain conditions under which Ijtihad must not be exercised. **Firstly**, Ijtihad must not be exercised as to the extent of Allah. It is certain that Allah does exist and any attempt to think on whether He exists or not will lead to disbelief. **Secondly**, Ijtihad must not be exercised as to the truism of the Prophets of Allah who were sent by Allah Himself and any attempt to ponder over the idea of their prophethood is tantamount to disbelief. **Thirdly**, Ijtihad must not be exercised on the authenticity of the Qur'an.

There are also some qualities required of a Mujtahid that is someone making Ijtihad. **Firstly**, before one can be a Mujtahid he has to be knowledgeable about the religion of Islam, the Sunnah, Fiqh and Usul al fiqh. **Secondly**, he must be so very well versed in the study of the Qur'an and that he must know the reason why the verses and chapters of the Qur'an were revealed (asbab al-nuzul). **Thirdly**, he must be well versed in the study of the traditions of the prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), that is, he must know the distinction between authentic Hadith from the spurious Hadith; he must know Hadith Hasan (good Hadith) Hadith Dwa'if (weak Hadith) and so on. **Fourthly**, he must know the principles of Ijma' very well. He must know the Injunctions of Qiyas and the conditions that surround it. The Mujtahid, in addition must possess good character apart from academic excellence. **Fifthly**, he must be a good practising and not nominal Muslim. **Sixthly**, he must be very pious and law abiding to all the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an. **Seventhly**, he must not be influenced by an heretical inclination. **Eighthly**, he must be just, reliable, trustworthy and pure from iniquitous practices. As such, Mujtahid are classified into three broad categories. **Firstly**, Mujtahid fi Tashri'i, that is they were those who did Ijtihad in the matter of Shari'ah. There were the Companions of the Prophet till the third century of Islam. **Secondly**, Mujtahid fi Madhhab, that is they were those who did Ijtihad and later founded schools of Jurisprudence. **Thirdly**, Mujtahid fi Masail, that is the present day Mujtahid who give fatwa or juristic opinions on religious matters. Any form of Ijtihad must have its starting point in the principle of the Qur'an, Sunnah, Ijma' or Qiyas and can't be used to achieve a result which contradicts a rule established by any of these three fundamental sources; whenever a new case or issue presents itself reasoning by Qiyas with an original case covered by the Qur'an, the Sunnah or Ijma' is possible provided the effective (original) cause ('illah) is common to both cases.

As for example, wine is prohibited by the texts, and the 'illah for this prohibition is intoxication. Therefore other intoxicants like spirits, and drugs like hemp and marijuana are prohibited by Ijtihad because they also lead to drunkenness and loss of senses. In this way the prohibition is extended by analogical deduction and reasoning. The majority of the Muslims, including the four major Sunni schools, accept Qiyas and Ijtihad to determine Juristic matters by reasoning on the following basis; namely there should be the original subject and there should be an object of analogy, being a new subject. In the case of prohibition of an intoxicant like gin, the following four cardinal points must exist: wine, gin, intoxicant and prohibition. The following are some other examples of arriving at an Ijtihad through the use of Ijtihad. **Firstly**, in Surah al Jum'ah the Qur'an prohibits the sale transactions after the last call to Jum'ah prayer. The rule is extended by Ijtihad to other kinds of transactions and engagements which distract Muslims from attending the Jum'ah prayer. **Secondly**, it is found in the Sunnah of the Prophet that a killer is deprived from sharing in the inheritance of his victim. This rule is extended to the law of Wasiyyah (bequests) as well.

(b) However, the application of Ijtihad has been doubted by many 'Ulama. The Shi'a believes that Ijtihad is only the prerogative of their Imams who are presumed to be infallible. In the modern times, Muslim scholars like Jamaluddin al-Afghani and his disciple Shaykh Muhammad Abduh tried to justify in the presence of a group of Muslim scholars in Cairo that the importance of reopening the door of Ijtihad was an Islamic response to imperialism prevalent in the Muslim world at that time. Muhammad Abduh, the Afghani's disciple gave fresh interpretation of the principles embodied in the divine revelation as a basis for legal reform. But there are the limitations of Ijtihad. **Firstly**, Ijtihad cannot be made in cases which are covered by the express words of Quran, Hadith or has been determined by Ijma. A jurist cannot

exercise Ijtihad on the basic pillars of Islam like paying of Zakat, Prohibition of murder etc. Ijtihad is permissible only in field where no rule of Injunction from Holy Quran or Sunnah is available. **Secondly**, ijtihad will be faulty at a certain extent if its basic cause lies in either the different opinions regarding the acceptability of a particular text, or the degree to which it is found convincing by someone, or the different degrees of sharpness, intelligence and perspicacity of minds in dealing with the issues and the texts involved. **Thirdly**, ijtihad can lead to deviances when it comes into the hands of those people whose hands are tied up or those who work indirectly or directly under politicians. In such case, the ijtihad will not be based completely on the Qur'an or sunnah or Ijma' or Qiyas but on own personal whims and caprices. **Fourthly**, ijtihad may be doubtful if the decision taken or solution brought has been influenced by the character of a group or Firqa or by not willing to accept the truth from others. In order not to identify with the opponent, these people seem it good to hide the truth and bring wrong judgement. For instance in Swahih al Bukhariy there are 9 hadith in volume 1 book 8 as from hadith 471 which are not translated and it is stated as "it is not translated or impossible to translate". Some people not able to remove them from Swahih al Bukhariy have preferred not to translate these hadith for tampering them and concealing the truth. Their ijtihad on such topic is deviant.

Fifthly, Ijtihad may be deviant if there is an absence of sufficient proof to support the argument or unawareness of the existence of specific elements or data related to the validity or not of the topic. This is due to human fallibility and weaknesses. We are weak and deprived of information. We don't possess the whole of the Islamic Law. **Sixthly**, some 'Ulama propounded the closure of the door of ijtihad as this will be a mean of imposing their views. This will create stagnation of intellectual thought and the establishment of a command system. It must not be like that. **Seventhly**, ijtihad may be faulty in this present world due to the fact that there is the abolishment of caliphate in its true sense and the emergence of the concept of the nation states becomes huge hurdle in the path of this activity. The practice of ijtihad remained the norm rather than the exception during the era of Khulafa-e-Rashideen and the lifetime of the companions of the Prophet (s.a.w). These companions of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) were in a position to interpret and apply the principles of sunnah with the least possible error. Therefore, ijtihad that was performed by the Prophet's companions is not subject to reinterpretation. But unfortunately, few centuries ago the activity of ijtihad had been exploited, which lead the Muslim scholars to a rigid reading of the Quran. This was mainly because of the behaviour of rationalist movement and Muslim caliphs, which became increasingly autocratic, as they began to use their power negatively to fulfil their interests. So, as a result many scholars became to view ijtihad negatively. As for some scholars, closing of gate of ijtihad meant that there is no possibility of establishing of new school of thought and the opening of the door of ijtihad meant to found a new school of law.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w) had given the basic principle only to the Muslims, which are in the Holy Quran and His own example (Sunnah). He had directed the Muslims to use their judgment in working out details according to the changing circumstances and rising exigencies. For this, as the benefit of the whole community lies in the activity of ijtihad, Allah promised a reward to a mujtahid. As there is hadith with reference to this that "when a judge makes ijtihad and reaches a correct conclusion, he receives a double reward; and if his conclusion is incorrect, he still receives a reward".