



The story of **Islam**

FOR YOUNG READERS

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لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH ALONE! WE SEEK
FROM YOU NEITHER REWARD NOR THANKS

(A PART OF THE AYAH 9 OF SURAH AD-DAHR)

About this book

This book is an English translation of a speech delivered by Maulana Syed Abul Aala Maududi on Radio Pakistan on 6th July 1948. It was initially published by Islamic Foundation, UK with the title 'Islam: A Historical Perspective'. To enhance its utilization, iCAN Sama-O-Basr has endeavored to illustrate this book for the children.

Many children, especially those living in the West, do not fully understand the concept of this worldly life and why we choose Islam to be our faith. This book can be a great resource to clarify the answer to this very important question in just a few pages.

THE
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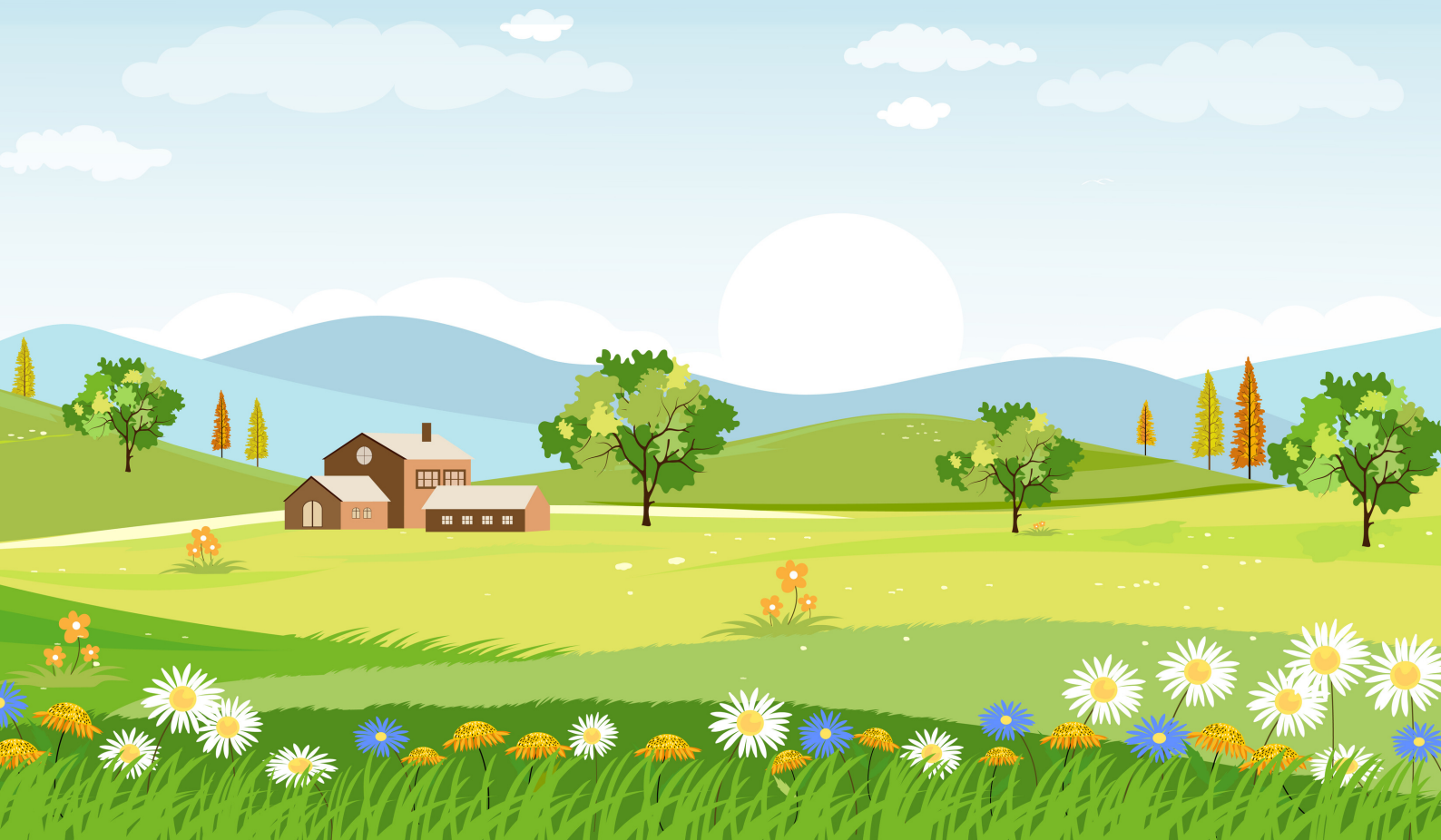


Chapter 1

The world before Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

The beginning of Islam

Islam began when man's career on earth began – more precisely at the time of the creation of man and his descent on earth. Allah swt created Adam and Eve (peace be upon them) and enjoined them to worship Him and live a life of obedience and submission to the Divine will. Allah swt is the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe and of human beings. Man must turn to Him for sustenance and guidance. The very word Islam means 'obedience to God'. In this respect, Islam is man's natural religion—the only natural course is for man to look towards Him for guidance.



The criteria of success and failure

The day Adam and Eve were sent down to earth, Allah swt told them that they [and their children] were His servants on earth, and He was their Master and Creator. He told them and the mankind that the best course for them was to follow His guidance, obey His order, and refrain from what he has prohibited. God said to them that he would be pleased if they submit to Him and in turn He would reward them. If, however, they did not pay heed to His commands, He would be displeased and would punish them.



Ultimate Justice

The beginning of Kufr

Adam and Eve invited their children to follow the Islamic way of life. They and their children and their later generations followed the teachings of Islam as propounded by Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) for quite a long period of time.

It was only later on that certain people began disobeying Allah. Some of them began worshipping other gods of their own making, some of them regarded themselves as gods, while a few others even declared their freedom to do as they pleased—defying God's orders. This is how kufr (disbelief) came into being. Its essence lies in refusal to worship God—pursuing the path of defiance to the Creator.

When kufr (disbelief) began to increase and multiply, it affected the life of society in a number of ways. Exploitation, oppression, viciousness and immorality emerged in different forms. Life became intolerable.



Prophets and Messengers were sent to guide the humanity

Allah then appointed some righteous people to preach the Message of Truth among the wrongdoers, invite them to the Right Path and convert them into God-fearing people who would worship God Alone and fully obey His commands. In short, they were asked to perform a mission—to make people righteous and true Muslims. These noble people entrusted with this great mission were called Prophets or Messengers.

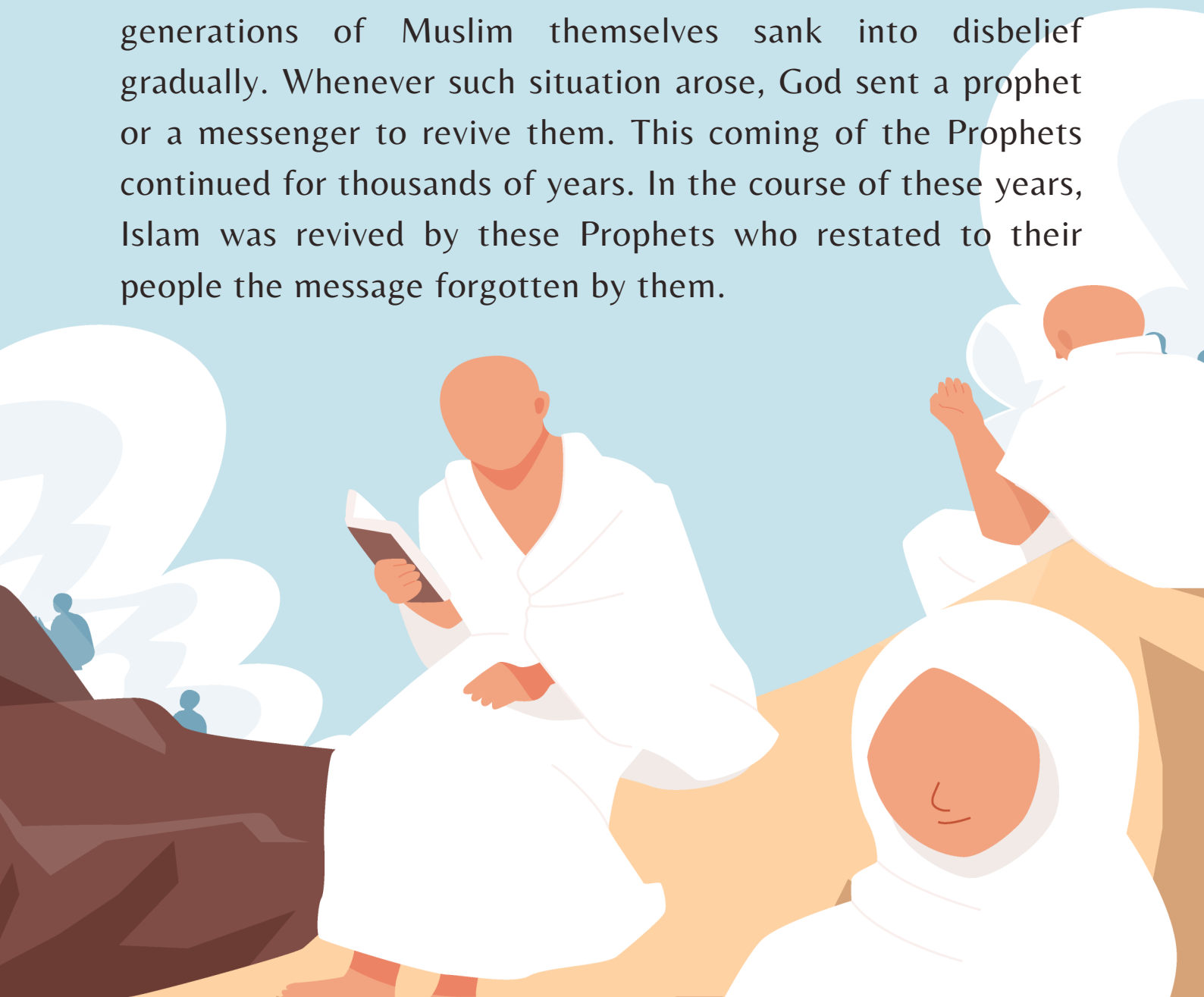
Allah sent these noble men to different nations and countries. All of them were honest, truthful, and people of noble character. All of them preached the same religion—Islam. To mention a few names—Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. All of them were the Prophets of God and thousands of them were, over the centuries, sent into the world to guide mankind.

Prophets and Messengers

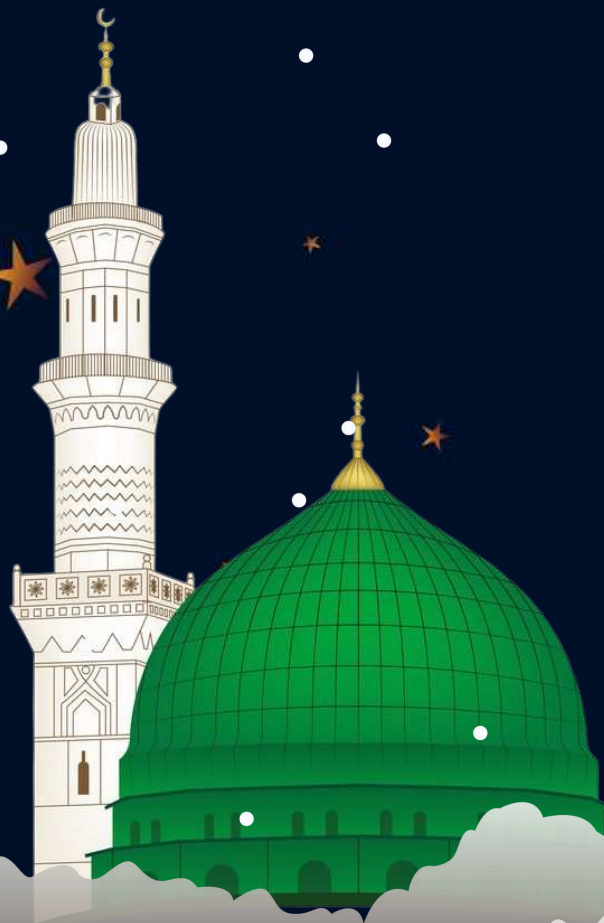


The followers of Prophets and Messengers were called 'Muslims'

In the history of the last few thousand years, one can see the recurrent arrival of Prophets whenever kufr (disbelief) increased and assumed menacing proportions. The Prophets tried to stop the tide of disbelief and invited people towards Islam. Some people adopted the Islamic way of life, but other rejected it. The people who followed the Prophet became Muslims and after learning the higher moral and ethical values from them, they themselves began to preach nobility and goodness. Having forgotten the teachings of Islam, the later generations of Muslim themselves sank into disbelief gradually. Whenever such situation arose, God sent a prophet or a messenger to revive them. This coming of the Prophets continued for thousands of years. In the course of these years, Islam was revived by these Prophets who restated to their people the message forgotten by them.



At the very end of this chain, God sent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who revived Islam in such an outstanding fashion that it still exists today and will continue to exist, inshaAllah, till eternity.



Chapter 2

The Mission of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

The world at the time of his birth

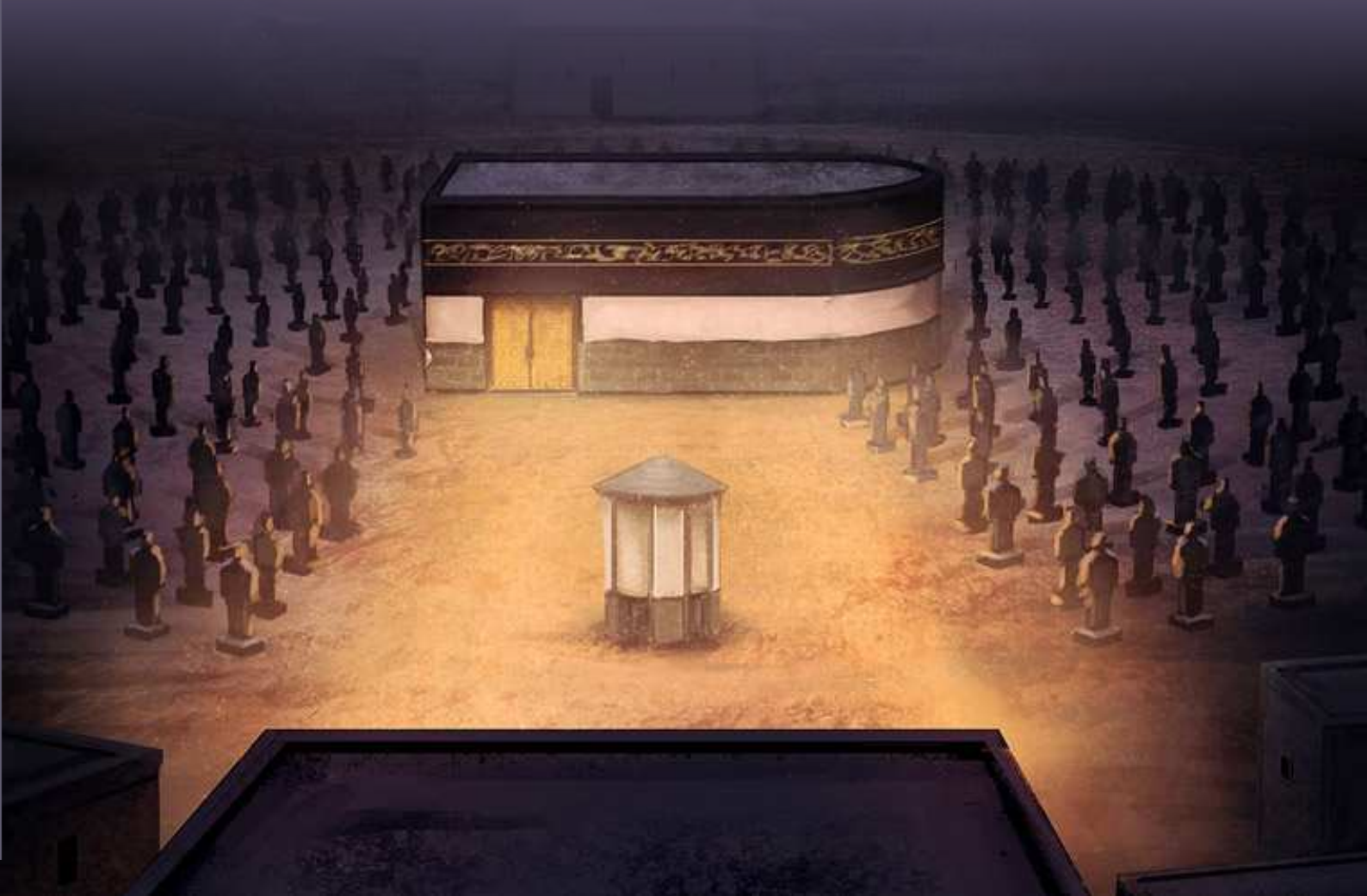
The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born in 571AD in the now famous city of Arabia, called Makkah. Islam neither had any following in Arabia at that time, nor anywhere else in the world. Though the traces of the teachings of the previous prophets and messengers could be found in a few pious people who were trying to worship only one and one true God and live a life of true obedience to Him. The true religion of God, at a broader level, was however lost in a maze of paganism and pantheism.



Arabia was sunk in polythiesm

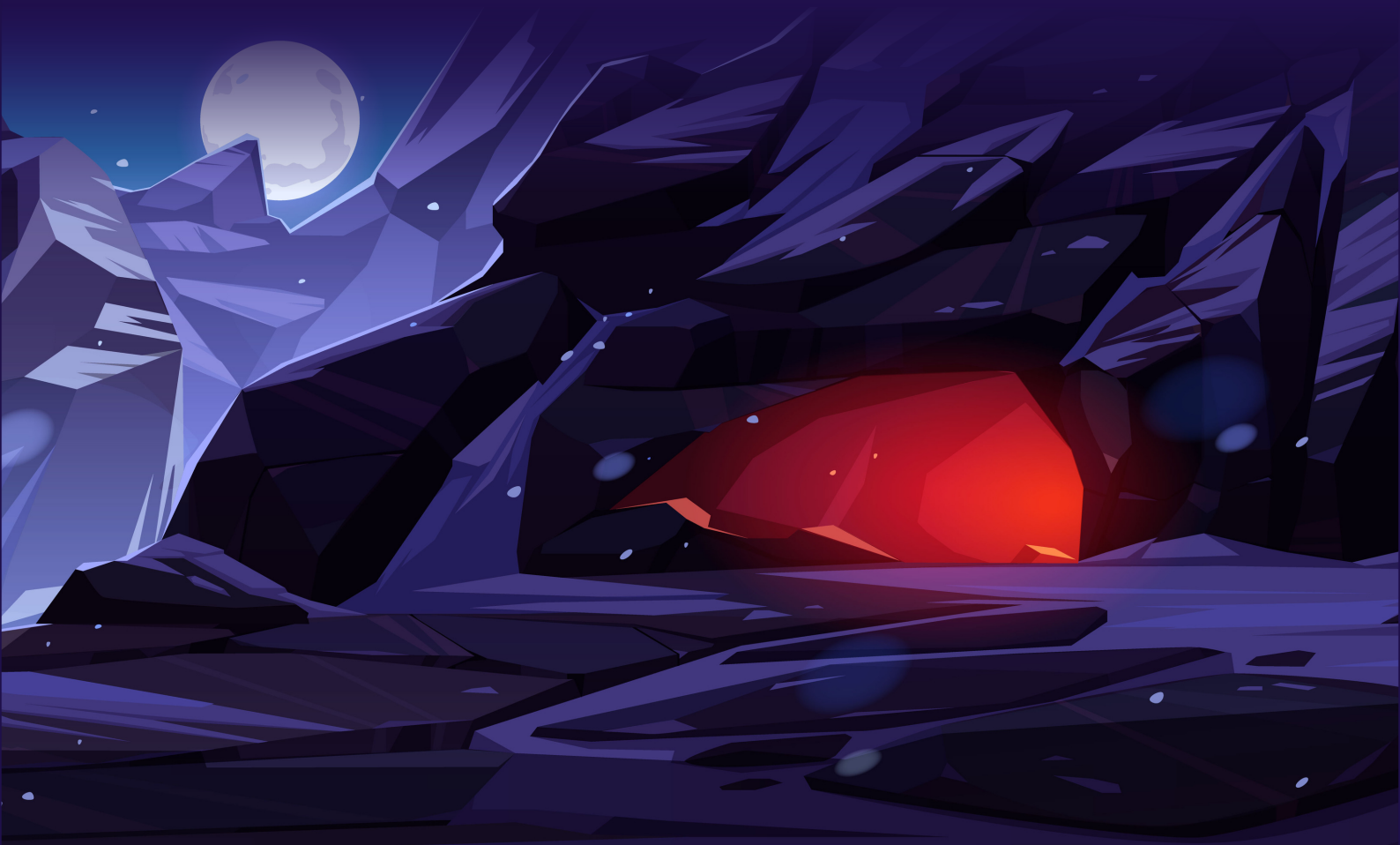
The pure worship of God, unadulterated by shirk (worship of false gods), was nowhere to be found. Moral values had lost their grip and people were indulging in all sorts of lax behaviour and wickedness. Such was the situation in Arabia as also in the whole world at the close of the sixth century when God decided to send Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as His last Messenger.

He spent 40 years of his life as a patient observer in the city of Makkah. Everyone respected him for his noble qualities of head and heart. But they were not aware that this man was destined to become the world's greatest leader.



The Beginning of Prophethood

During the early years of his life, the Prophet ﷺ felt very much grieved to see the gross immorality of the world of his time. There was exploitation of man by man. There was injustice and tyranny. He was grieved and anxious, but was somewhat silent as he, too, was unable to device a remedy for the ailing humanity of the day. [He used to go to the cave of Hira in order to engage in deep reflection and pondering]. At long last, God chose him as His Messenger. When he attained the age of 40, God entrusted him with the mission of spreading Islam, the true religion of God, the religion of peace and justice, by means of the revelations which we now know as the Quran.



The Message of the Prophet ﷺ started to spread

Having been appointed as the Messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ started to communicate God's message to his people in Makkah. He began by inviting them to worship none but God – their sole Creator and Master. People in general opposed him and tried to prevent him from spreading Islam. He, however, continued his work with unflinching determination and dedication. As a result, many honest people gathered round him. They became his staunch supporters. The teachings of the Messenger of God ﷺ spread slowly but surely. They reached outside of his native town, Makkah, to Arabia at large. Those who had a reputation for honesty and moral excellence began to accept the faith while the opposition to them came from many ignorant people and vicious quarters. This continued for 13 years. There was a gradual breaking of new grounds. Islam was gaining a following all over Arabia. This is the one side of the story.



The oppression against the Muslims

On the other hand, the defenders of the old order, people with vested interests and steeped in ignorant customs were hardening their opposition to Islam. Whenever new converts to Islam were presented, they were abused, humiliated, beaten, tortured, expelled, and even put to death. Nevertheless, the Muslims remained firm and steadfast. At last, the Makkan elders devised a plot to assassinate the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in order to nip the Islamic movement in the bud. When affairs reached the pitiful state, God ordered His Messenger ﷺ to leave Makkah and migrate to Madinah.



Migration to Madinah

Having learned that the Prophet ﷺ was planning to migrate from Makkah, its leaders expedited their plans to murder him on his journey outwards. However, their disgraceful conspiracy could not succeed. The Prophet ﷺ arrived at Madinah safe and sound. This is the most famous migration (hijrah) in the history of Islam. The Muslim calendar begins from that day, the years being numbered “After Hijrah” (A.H.).

Madinah, a city 450 km from Makkah was growing as a centre for Islam. A number of people had already been converted to the new faith. Islamic teachings were winning new supporters every day. Leaders of the two major tribes of Madinah had accepted Islam and were ready to sacrifice their lives and property for the cause of Islam. That was the moment when the Prophet ﷺ planned his migration to Madinah.



Stabilization of Muslim state and anxiety of pagans

As soon as the Prophet ﷺ settled in Madinah, the new Muslims started to flock into the city from the four corners of Arabia. This further strengthened the new centre. Islam was no longer a persecuted religion. It was able to obtain a firm foothold and was provided with the historic opportunity to establish an Islamic state and society. This constitutes the most important development of the post-hijrah period. The leaders of Makkah, the defenders of the old order, did not miss the significance of this change. They realized that a new model was being setup which would be a challenge to the way they were running their society. This caused great anxiety among them. They decided to crush this rising force while it was still in infancy. For they believed that it would be easy to crush the Muslims while they were few and far between and lacked a centralized power. Now things were changing. Muslims were concentrating at one place organizing a new society with its own government. The prospects of annihilating such a state, once it was firmly entrenched, looked remote to them.



Attack on the Muslims

The unbelievers feared that if the Muslims were allowed to gain momentum they would become a great power. Consequently they hurried to band themselves together with a view to eradicating the embryonic Islamic government at Madinah. The Makkan leaders lost no time in issuing a massive call to their kith and kin and to all supporters of the old order in neighboring towns and all over Arabia to rally round them to form a force which could crush the Muslims. They formed a band of cavalry which invaded Madinah and its environs time and again with all their military might. They, however, could not defeat the Prophet ﷺ and his loyal supporters. In spite of all efforts on the part of the unbelievers, Islam continued to spread in Arabia. The good, honest folk continued to forsake kufr (disbelief) and come into the fold of Islam.



The whole Arabia embraces Islam

Eventually, Islam gained a crowning success when the Prophet ﷺ entered victoriously into Makkah—once the stronghold of kufr. This all happened within eight years of the establishment of the Islamic State of Madinah. No sooner had Makkah submitted to the Islamic forces than the remaining hostile groups of unbelievers of Arabia began to surrender. Within the next year, the whole of Arabia accepted Islam and the Muslims established a powerful government over an area consisting of some 12,000 square miles!

Arabia had the most singular government of the time and it was established on the principle of the sovereignty of God and vicegerency (Khilafah) of man. The law of the land was Islamic. The administration of the state was in the hands of honest and pious people. The country had no trace of violence, oppression, injustice or immorality. Peace, justice, truth, and honesty reigned supreme everywhere. Many of the people of the country had come to possess the highest moral attributes because they were honest in worshipping God and obeying Him.



The beloved departs

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ changed the entire character of the Arabian life in a short period of only 23 years. He instilled in people a spirit that helped to serve the cause of Islam. They set out with the great mission of spreading Islam throughout the whole world. The Prophet ﷺ passed away at the age of 63 after completing the greatest mission of all time.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَلِّمْ



Chapter 3

The Mission Continues

The companions continue the mission

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ took up the mission of the Prophet ﷺ after his death. They travelled to distant lands to spread the Islamic teachings. They succeeded wherever they went. Obstacles that stood in their way in spreading Islam were all surmounted. Islam became so strong in such a short while that no one dared try to stop its growth. The Muslims got spread from India to Spain. They changed the face of the globe. The entire population of the countries they visited were so much impressed by their good example and noble behaviour that they began to enter quickly into the fold of Islam. Wherever the Muslims went, they took their highest moral attributes with them – so much so that immorality and injustice dissolved in their presence.



They transformed Godless people into God-conscious people and gave them the light of knowledge and strength of character. They changed their way of life so that virtue and goodness could prevail. The entire social climate was reformed and remolded. The hands of the oppressors were held and reign of justice and fair play established. This was the greatest achievement in the history of mankind.



Preservation of the Quran and Sunnah

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ rendered yet another great service to mankind. This consisted in memorising the Qur'an and preserving it in its original form as it was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. They wrote down the Qur'an word for word and did not miss even a mark in its Arabic orthography. Today, we are most fortunate in having the Qur'an exactly as it was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, written and read in the same language and in the same diction as it was written and read in the time of the Prophet—about 1,400 years ago.



Another important aspect of their work was to preserve and communicate to posterity the most detailed account of the Prophet's life, speeches, instructions, commands, morals and behaviour. These accounts by the Prophet's Companions are grouped together under the all-embracing titles of the 'Sunnah' or 'Hadith' (or 'Traditions of the Prophet'). This is the greatest record ever preserved about the life and activities of a man and is a great blessing to every generation. For even after a lapse of 1,400 years after the Prophet's death, people can still see and hear his teachings as the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ saw and heard them during his lifetime. Now anybody can approach hadith literature and find out the Islamic point of view on any subject. He can learn how to become obedient to God and what type of man is liked by God. ✨



The Qur'an and the Hadith are things of greatest importance to a Muslim. With their preservation and security (God has promised to secure and preserve them), Islam is protected for all time to come. In the days before the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (peace be upon him), Islam was forgotten again and again after being revived, owing to lack of the necessary care regarding the preservation and security of the earlier Revealed Books and the details of the lives of their Prophets.



Human corruption in previously sent guidance

This was the reason why, after every Prophet ﷺ, generations following forgot the real teachings and drifted towards a life devoid of good morals and norms of behaviour. [They distorted the original message and practice of the religion and started following the ways that were crafted by people like them]. But Islam, as revived by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is bound to last for ever because the book of Allah and the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ are both secure and preserved in their original purity.



The toolkit for revival - till the day of judgment

The Islamic way of life can be revived and reconstructed again and again with the help of the Quran and traditions if ever, God forbid, the freshness of its true spirit wanes. The world no longer requires any new Prophet to revive Islam to its pristine glory. It is enough to have among us the learned people who know the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ and who are able to apply their teachings to their own lives and stimulate others to adopt and apply them in their lives as well. This is how the stream of Islam will continue to flow, refreshing the eternal thirst of mankind.



اللَّهُمَّ اكْمِلْ لَنَا نُورَ الْإِيمَانِ وَارْحَمْ أَسْفَلَ دَعْوَانَا

O Allah, Complete the light for us, and forgive us.
Indeed You have power over everything.





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