

**AN INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM: AN ORDINARY  
LEVEL TEXTBOOK ON ISLAM**

**SHAIBU ASALI**

© Shaibu Asali  
First edition 2019

**No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.  
Contact the author at 0771928869**

## **Contents**

Foreword.....	4
Chapter One: The distribution of Muslims in Zimbabwe.....	5
Chapter Two: Rituals.....	8
Chapter Three: Religious practitioners.....	20
Chapter Four: Sacred Places.....	25
Chapter Five: The interdependency of families.....	31
Chapter Six: Chronic conditions and disability.....	34
Chapter Seven : Islam and the natural environment.....	37
Chapter Eight: Islam and enterprise .....	40
Chapter Nine: Attire in Islam.....	46
Chapter Ten: Islam and gender.....	50
Chapter Eleven: Islam and conflict management.....	55
References:.....	58

## **Foreword**

This publication is a resource for the Islamic section of the Ordinary Level Family and Religious Studies syllabus. It provides authentic and verified information about Islam from the primary sources and secondary sources of the religion. Hopefully, it will be a valuable book to both students and teachers. It will give the students a good grounding in Islam for further studies at advanced levels.

## **Chapter One**

### **The distribution of Muslims in Zimbabwe**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of this topic, the student should be able to:

- Discuss the historical background of Islam in Zimbabwe
- Identify the areas where Muslims are found in Zimbabwe

#### **How Islam came to Zimbabwe**

Mandivenga (1983) stated that Islam was brought to Zimbabwe by the Arabs who traded with the Mutapa Empire in the 1500s. The Arabs also intermarried with the Shona, and this increased the number of Muslims.

Another factor which helped the establishment of Islam in Zimbabwe was the importation of labourers from Asia to work in the then Rhodesia during the colonial era. The Asians continued to trickle in, and they set up businesses in the country and settled therein. Their marriage and procreation increased the number of Muslims.

Many African Muslims emigrated from Malawi to seek employment and greener pastures in Zimbabwe. This migration was noticeable during the years of the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland from 1953 to 1963. The Malawians sought work in towns, farms and cities. These emigrants included people from the Yao tribe who are predominantly Muslim. The Yao are erroneously referred to as “Machawa” locally.

#### **The population of Muslims in Zimbabwe**

The actual number of Muslims in Zimbabwe is not documented. However, estimates of between 1% to 3% of the total population are often heard. However, some contemporary Zimbabwean Muslim scholars have disputed these estimates because they have been quoted for a very long time. That view seems to hold water because it would be reasonable to assume that Islam is increasing rather than to think that it is stagnant or dwindling. This assertion is supported by the increase in the number of mosques being built, and the people who are learning Islam.

## **The distribution of the Muslims in Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwean Muslims are found in urban centres, farms and mines. A sign of the presence of Muslims in an area is a mosque. This is because Islam is a communal religion, and the mosque is the centre for a number of important Islamic activities. It serves as a venue for prayer, a meeting place, a school, a social area to conduct weddings and funerals, and so on. So, when the number of Muslims in an area increases, they build a mosque which unifies them, and enables them to pray, and carry out different religious duties. So, Harare which has over twenty mosques has the highest number of Muslims in Zimbabwe. This is followed by Bulawayo which has eight mosques or so. Other urban centres also have mosques. Some mines and farms have mosques.

### **Activity**

Visit a nearby mosque with your classmates

## **Questions**

1. How did Islam come to Zimbabwe?
2. Where are the Muslims found in Zimbabwe?
3. Explain the role of migration in bringing Islam to Zimbabwe.

## Chapter Two

### Rituals

#### Objectives

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Describe religious rituals in Islam
- Describe the rites of passage in Islam

#### Definition of rituals

A ritual is a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order. (Oxford Dictionary)

#### Islamic rituals

There are a number of rituals in Islam, and these occur on various occasions. Below are some Islamic rituals:

##### 1) Entry into Islam

Entry into Islam is a simple process. When a person enters into the fold of Islam, he or she has to utter the declaration of faith known as the Shahaadah in Arabic. The statement is: *Ashahadu An Laa ilaalaha illallah wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasuluhu.* (I testify that none is worthy of worship except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger). Before uttering this statement, the person has to understand it, and believe it in his heart. Thereafter, he or she is required to act according to its requirements which include believing in one true God, performing the prescribed acts of worship, and having a good character.

Thereafter, the person is required to take a ritual bath which is known as *ghusl*. The basic form of this bath is to wash the whole body, making sure that it is wet with water. The person will now be ready to perform the different acts of worship in Islam.

A person who is born into the Islamic religion is not required to perform this process. Rather, he or she is taught the rites of the religion as he or she grows up, and thus the attainment of religious knowledge, and its application will be gradual.

## 2) Ritual purity

Ritual purity is very important in Islam. This involves purifying the body through washing it (*ghusl*) or parts of it (*wuthoo*) before certain acts of worship like reciting the Quran, performing prayers, and going around the Ka'bah in Mecca (circumambulation).

*Wuthoo* involves the following steps:

1. Uttering Allah's name before starting the process by saying, "*Bismillah* (In the name of Allah)."
2. Washing the hands up to the wrists three times.
3. Rinsing the mouth three times.
4. Sniffing water into the nose, and ejecting it out three times. This ensures that the nostrils are clean.
5. Washing the entire face three times.
6. Washing the right hand up to the elbow three times, and doing the same for the left hand.
7. Wiping the head with wet hands once. The person starts from the top of the head on the hairline, and then wipes to the back of the neck, and then back to the front.
8. Wiping the inner sides of the ears with the forefingers, and the outer sides with the thumbs.
9. Washing the feet up to the ankles three times. The person starts with the right foot, and then he or she washes the left foot.

The ritual bath (*ghusl*) is compulsory after the following occasions:

1. Ejaculation while asleep like in a wet dream or while awake.
  2. Sexual intercourse
  3. After the end of a woman's menstrual bleeding or post-natal bleeding.
- Ghusl* involves making the whole body wet with water.

### 3) Prayers

Muslims are required to pray five times a day at fixed times. Allah said: “**Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.**” [Quran 4: 103]. Prayer is the second pillar of Islam, and it is an essential component of the religion. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) indicated that prayer is a means for purification from sins. He said: “*What do you think if there was a river by the door of any one of you and he bathed in it five times a day, would there be any trace of dirt left on him?*” They said, “*No trace of dirt would be left on him.*” He said, “*That is like the five daily prayers, by means of which Allah erases sin.*” [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 528]

Prayer is compulsory upon every Muslim who has reached the age of puberty. Bahammam (2012) stated that the age of puberty is attained by any of the following things:

- Being fifteen years of age
- The growing of pubic hair
- The coming out of semen when the person is asleep or awake
- Menstruation

#### **The conditions of prayer**

There are a number that should be made before a person engages in prayer. Some of the conditions of prayer are as follows:

1. Removal of physical and ritual impurity
2. Observing the prescribed dress code for prayer. For men, this is covering the area between the navel and the knees. Women are required to cover the whole body except the face and the hands.
3. Facing the direction of Mecca which is known as the *qiblah*. This was mentioned in the Quran where Allah stated: “**And from wherever you go out (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque (at Makkah).**” [Quran 2: 149]
4. Praying at the fixed times.
5. Sanity; the person who is performing the prayer be mentally sound.

#### **The times for the five compulsory prayers**

1. The Fajr prayer: The time for the first prayer of the day (the Fajr or dawn prayer) starts at daybreak and ends at sunrise.
2. The Zuhr prayer is the second prayer of the day. Its time starts when the sun passes the midpoint in the sky, and it ends when the shade of anything is equal to its length.
3. The third prayer of the day is known as the Asr prayer. It starts when the time of Zuhr prayer ends, and it ends at sunset.
4. Maghrib is the fourth prayer. It starts at sunset and ends when the twilight (red glow) disappears from the sky.
5. The last prayer of the day is Isha. It starts when the twilight disappears from the sky, and it ends at dawn.

#### 4) Fasting

Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. Muslim fast in the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. This month is known as Ramadan. The Quran states: **“O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous”** [Quran 2: 183].

Fasting is an act of worship which involves abstaining from food, drink and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset.

Fasting is compulsory upon every Muslim who has reached the age of puberty, and he or she is sane, healthy, and capable of fasting. Those who are too old and cannot bear the rigours of fasting are exempt. Those who are sick are also exempt from fasting. They make up for the missed days of fasting after Ramadan. Those who are chronically ill are not required to fast. They feed a poor person for each missed day of fasting. A pregnant woman is exempted from fasting if the fasting harms her or her baby. This is also applicable to a breastfeeding woman. Menstruating women and those who are experiencing post-natal bleeding do not fast. However, they should fast the missed days after Ramadan.

Fasting in Ramadan is a virtuous act. The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: *“He who observes fasting during the month of Ramadan with faith while seeking its reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven.”* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 4502]

## **Voluntary fasting**

Besides the compulsory fasting of Ramadan, it is recommended for Muslim to fast on various occasions throughout the year. These fasts include:

1- Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays: The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) would fast on Mondays and Thursdays. [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 745]

2- Fasting for six days in the month of Shawwaal which comes immediately after Ramadan. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever fasts in Ramadan, then follows it up with six days in the month of Shawwaal will obtain the rewards of fasting for an entire year." [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 1164]

3- Fasting on the day of Arafah. This is the ninth day of the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar (Thul Hijjah). On this day, pilgrims who perform hajj (the annual Muslim pilgrimage) gather in the wide open plain of Arafah and engage in different acts of worship like supplicating to Allah. It is recommended for those who do not go to Mecca to fast. There are great rewards in fasting on this day. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was asked about fasting on this day, and he said: "*It atones for this sins committed the preceding year, and the coming year.*" [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 1162]

4- Fasting on the day of Ashura: This is the tenth day of the month of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. It is recommended to fast on this day. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said that fasting on this day expiates the sins committed in the previous year. [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 1162]

## **5- Zakat (obligatory charity)**

Zakat is when Muslims who have surplus wealth give a fixed proportion of it to charity. Zakat is paid once annually. It is the third pillar of Islam. For one to pay Zakat, his wealth must have reached a minimum level which is called *nisab*.

## **Categories of wealth from which Zakat is paid**

Zakat is paid from the following categories of wealth:

- 1) livestock which grazes freely
- 2) agricultural produce
- 3) moveable valuables like gold, silver, and paper money, etc.
- 4) trade items

### **The Zakat recipients**

Zakat is given to various types of people who deserve it. These include the people who are extremely poor, the needy, the people who work in the field of Zakat, and are responsible for collecting and distributing it, the people who cannot repay their debts, the travelers who are far from their countries and require assistance.

### **6-Hajj (pilgrimage)**

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is pilgrimage to Mecca which is compulsory upon healthy Muslims who have the financial resources to travel to Mecca. Hajj starts on the eighth Thul Hijjah and ends on the twelfth or thirteenth of that month. It is a financial and physical act of worship which incorporates many forms of worship.

### **7- The greeting ritual**

Muslims have a standard and universal way of greeting each other. When they meet, they greet each other by saying: “*Assalamu Alaykum* (peace be upon you).” The response to this greeting is: “*Wa alaykum salaam* (may peace be upon you also).” However, this greeting maybe extended, and a person will greet by saying: “*Assalamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi*” (may peace and Allah’s mercy be upon you).” The response will be similar whereby it will be: “*Wa Alaykum salaam wa rahmatullahi* (may peace and Allah’s mercy also be upon you)”. The best form of this greeting is to say: “*Assalamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*” (May peace, Allah’s blessings, and mercy be upon you). The response will be same, and it is: “*Wa Alaykum salaam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*” (May peace, Allah’s mercy and blessings be upon you).

This is greeting is not a mere greeting. Rather, there are rewards associated with it. The person who greets by saying, “*Assalamu alaykum*” gets ten blessings. On the other hand, the person who greets by saying: “*Wa alaykum salaam wa rahmatullahi*” gets twenty blessings. The best who greets with the best form of this greeting and says: “*Wa alaykum*

*salaam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*” gets thirty blessings. The person who responds is rewarded in a similar manner. [Ibn Hibbaan, hadeeth number 493]

Moreover, the Islamic greeting is a means of spreading love, and brotherhood. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*By the One in whose Hand is my soul! You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not (truly) believe until you love one another. Shall I not tell you of something which, if you do it, you will love one another? Spread the greetings of salaam amongst yourselves.*” [Muslim]

## **8- Remembering Allah (Thikr)**

An important ritual in Islam is remembering Allah by praising Him and mentioning His name at various occasions throughout the day. This is known as *thikr* in Arabic. This is a unique act of worship in that it has no limit. Muslims are encouraged to remember Allah frequently. The Quran states: “**O you who have believe, remember Allah with much remembrance.**” [Quran 33: 41] The Prophet (peace be upon him) indicated that *thikr* is one of the most beloved things to Allah. He said: “*The dearest phrases to Allah are four: Subhaana Allah (Hallowed be Allah), Al-Hamdulillah (Praise be to Allah), La ilaha illa-Allah (There is no deity but Allah), Allahu Akbar (Allah is Greater). There is no harm for you in which of them begin with (while remembering Allah).*” [Muslim, hadeeth number 2137]

There are various forms of *thikr* which are mentioned when one wakes up, sleeps, eats, wears new clothes, enters a mosque, gets out of a mosque, and so on. This ensures that a Muslim is constantly aware of the Almighty throughout the day, and he or she is always linked to Him.

In *al-Waabil as-Sayyib*, ibn al-Qayyim mentioned more than seventy benefits for *thikr*. Among them are the following:

- 1- It drives away the devil.
- 2- It pleases Allah.
- 3- It removes worries from the heart and brings joy and happiness to it.
- 4- It strengthens the body and the heart.
- 5- It enables a person to attain the love of Allah.
- 6- It endows a person with proximity to Allah.
- 7- It erases sin.
- 8- It prevents punishments by Allah.
- 9- It is the basis of gratitude.
- 10- Allah provides sustenance easily to a person who remembers Him.

## **9- Slaughtering animals**

In Islam, animals are slaughtered in a specific way which fulfills the conditions that are stipulated by Islamic law. The following conditions must be fulfilled for the slaughter to be considered valid:

- 1- The person who slaughters the animal must be a Muslim, or a Jew or a Christian.
- 2- The tool used for slaughtering the animal must be suitable for the purpose and sharp like a knife. Therefore, it is forbidden to use anything that may kill the animal due to its heavy weight.
- 3- The name of Allah must be pronounced before slaughtering. The person who slaughters says, “*Bismillah* (in the name of Allah.)”
- 4- The cut must sever the trachea, the oesophagus, and the two blood vessels that are on either side of the throat of the animals.

Animals slaughtered in this way are referred to as *halal* (permissible) to eat. If these conditions are not fulfilled, it will not be permissible to eat the animal.

## **10- Supplication**

Supplicating to Allah is an important Islamic ritual. It is a means for a person to attain what he or she wants directly from Allah by supplicating and asking Him of all needs of this world and the Hereafter. Allah has promised to answer the supplications of those who ask Him for fulfillment of their needs. He said: “**And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.**” [Quran 2: 186]

Supplication is the essence of worship. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*Supplication is worship.*” [Sunan Abi Dawood, hadeeth number 1479].

## **11- Repentance**

Repentance is a vital ritual in Islam. It is essential because man is prone to error, and the way to correct that is to repent sincerely to Allah. Repentance involves asking Allah’s

forgiveness for transgressing against His laws. Allah has promised to accept the repentance of those who sincerely repent. He said: **“But whoever repents after his wrongdoing and reforms, indeed, Allah will turn to him in forgiveness. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”** [Quran 5: 39]. The prophet (may Allah be pleased with him) said: *“Indeed, Allah accepts the repentance of a person as long as he has not breathed his last breath.”* [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 3537].

Scholars like an-Nawawi stipulated that the following conditions must be adhered to for repentance to be accepted by Allah:

- Leaving the sin
- Regretting committing the sin
- Resolving not to commit the sin in future
- If the sin involves people’s rights or taking people’s property then that should be returned to the rightful owners.

Repentance is a great act of worship which should be done frequently. Allah loves those who repent frequently. He said: **“O you who have believed, repent to Allah with sincere repentance”** [Quran 66: 8], and He also said: **“Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves”** [Quran 2: 222]

## **Rites of passage**

These are ceremonies which indicate periods of transition in a person’s life. They include things like birth, puberty, marriage, having children and death. They usually involve ritual activities and teachings which divest people of their original roles and usher in new roles for them. (dictionary.com)

### **Birth**

Birth is a manifestation of Allah’s blessings. Through it, the human race continues to exist. Every child whether male or female is important because they are gifts from Allah. He said: **“To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; He creates what he wills. He gives to whom He wills female [children], and He gives to whom He wills males. Or He makes them [both] males and females, and He renders whom He wills barren. Indeed, He is Knowing and Competent.”** [Quran 42: 49-50]

The rite associated with birth in Islam is called the *aqeeqah*. This is the Islamic tradition of sacrificing an animal on the occasion of child’s birth. It is recommended to do this ritual seven days after the child’s birth. The child is also named, and his head of the male is shaved on this occasion, and the equivalent of his the weight of the hair in silver is given away in charity. [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 1519 and 1522].

## Puberty

Attaining the age of puberty is an important transition in the life of a Muslim. This is because when a Muslim attains the age of puberty the Islamic acts of worship and duties become compulsory upon him or her. The person would now be required to pray, fast, go for pilgrimage and so on. It is compulsory for the person to acquire the knowledge so as to be able to perform the duties in the required manner.

Puberty is attained in one of the following ways:

1. Wet dreams
2. Growth of coarse hair in the pubic area
3. Reaching the age of fifteen
4. The onset of menstruation in the case of girls (al-Munajjid)

## Marriage

Marriage is an important issue in the life of a Muslim. Allah created males and females and he decreed that they should love each other and live together as a family. He said: **“And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.”** [Quran 30: 21]

Marriage ensures the continued existence of the human race, and it also allows people to fulfill their natural desires in a wholesome manner. Muslims are encouraged to marry religious women. All the other factors in marriage are important but there is more emphasis on religiousness because that is the basis of marriage. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“A woman is married for four things: her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman, and you will be blessed.”* [al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 5090]

For a Muslim marriage to be concluded, the woman’s guardian (known as the *wali* in Arabic) must consent to it. Thereafter a date is agreed for the marriage ceremony. There must be a minimum of two witnesses at this ceremony. The guardian, the bride and the groom or their representatives should be present. The marriage is conducted by an Islamic scholar or a person who has the knowledge about the Islamic marital rites. On this occasion, the bride is given the bridal gift (known as *mahr* in Arabic) by the bridegroom. The *mahr* is anything of value. It can be either money, property, or a service like teaching the woman the recital of the Quran. If it is in monetary terms or property, then it should be according to the man’s earning capacity. It should not be exorbitant. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Part of the blessings of a woman is the ease of her proposal, and her bridal gift.”* [Ahmad, hadeeth number 24478] The marriage ceremony is followed by a marriage banquet or feast which is known in Islamic circles as the *waleemah*.

Thus the Islamic marriage ceremony is a simple ritual whose aim is to solemnize the marriage according to Islamic Law. It is not an occasion of squandering wealth or showing off.

## **Death**

Death is the end of earthly life. Allah had decreed that everyone will die. He said: “**Every soul will taste death.**” [Quran 3: 185] There are some rituals associated with death in Islam. When a Muslim dies the following should be done:

1. Buying a shroud for the deceased with money from person’s estate. Muslims are not buried in a box. Rather, they are wrapped in shrouds called *kafan*, and buried in them.
2. Washing the deceased. When a Muslim dies his or her body is washed before burial. This is a religious requirement. However, this noble and hygienic duty has been misunderstood by some people who claim that the water that is used to wash the deceased is used to prepare meals which are served at the funeral of the deceased. This is an unfounded rumour with no basis in Islam. No evidence from any Islamic texts supports this allegation. Moreover, such a practice negates common sense and hygiene, and no sane person will do it. Other unfounded rumours are that a hosepipe is put into the mouth of the deceased, or that his or her intestines are washed.
3. Performing the funeral prayer for the deceased. After the deceased is washed a funeral prayer is performed for him. During this prayer, the Muslims ask Allah to forgive the deceased.
4. Burying the deceased. The deceased should be buried as soon as possible. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*Do not postpone three things: prayer when it is time for it, a funeral when it is ready and the marriage of an unmarried woman when a suitable match is found.*” [ibn Maajah, hadeeth number 1486]

## **Questions**

1. Discuss the importance of marriage in Islam.
2. Explain the value of remembering Allah (zikr) in Islam.

3. What rites are associated with death in the Islamic religion?

## **Chapter 3**

### **Religious practitioners**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Identify the religious practitioners in Islam
- Describe the roles religious practitioners in Islam

### **The definition of religious practitioners**

Religious practitioners are people who do special duties in a religion. There are a number of religious practitioners in Islam, and these are as follows:

#### **Mufti**

The mufti is an Islamic scholar who is qualified to issue religious verdicts. The Quran and the Sunnah gave guidelines for all issues. However, some issues which come up from time to time were not specifically addressed by these texts. These are modern issues like human or animal cloning, banking and so on. The rulings for these issues are issued by muftis who infer them, and extract them from the Quran and the Sunnah.

#### **The role of a mufti**

A mufti plays the following roles:

- issuing religious verdicts
- answering religious questions
- guiding the community and advising it on matters pertaining to unity, good behavior and so on
- carrying out research in order to arrive at verdicts
- writing researches and books of verdicts
- In Saudi Arabia, the Grand Mufti usually delivers the sermon on the day of Arafah (the 9<sup>th</sup> day of Zul Hijjah, the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar).

#### **Shaykh alternatively written as Sheikh**

A Shaykh is a religious scholar. This is someone who is well-versed in Islam. Traditionally Shaykhs were trained and qualified by studying under experts in mosques, and institutions of learning. In addition to traditional learning, people are now learning in universities where they study different areas of specialization in Islamic disciplines. After qualification, these people can assume the role of a Shaykh.

## **The roles of a Shaykh**

The following are the roles of a Shaykh:

- Teaching Islam
- Advicing people and counsel them
- Inviting people to the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah
- Prohibiting evil and encourage good
- To be good examples or role models
- Giving *khutbas* (These are sermons which are delivered on Fridays during the afternoon prayer)
- Providing Islamic solutions to modern problems

## **Imaam alternatively spelt as Imam**

The Imaam is the person who leads Muslims in prayer during the five daily prayers. This Imaam must be someone who is well-versed with the rules of prayer. He should have memorized some parts of the Quran or the whole of it because the Quran is recited in prayers. In some prayers it is recited loudly so that those who are praying the Imaam can hear it.

## **The roles of an Imaam**

The Imaam has the following roles:

- Leading the five daily prayers
- Leading the Taraweh prayers in the month of Ramadan (The Taraweh prayer is a prayer consisting of twenty units and it is performed in Ramadan. The Imaams usually complete the recital of the whole Quran during this prayer in Ramadan).
- Teaching Islam
- Leading the community
- Guiding the community

## **Khaṭeab alternatively spelt as Khaṭīb**

The Khaṭeab is the person who delivers the Friday sermon. This sermon is delivered before the afternoon prayer on Friday. This prayer is known as Jumuah in Arabic, and it is an important prayer where the Muslim community gathers in mosques, and listens to words of advice, and reminders about their religion from the Khaṭeabs. The Khaṭeab can be the resident Imaam of a mosque or he can be a totally different person.

## **The duties of a Khateeb**

- delivering the Friday sermon
- choosing an appropriate Islamic topic which addresses issues arising in the community
- leading the Friday prayer
- providing Islamic solutions to the problems of the community

## **Muezzin**

The Muezzin is the person who calls out the azaan (the call to prayer) to inform the Muslims about the time of prayer. The azaan consists of phrases which praise Allah, and these are as follows:

*Allahu Akbar, Allahu akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar;*  
*Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah, Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah;*  
*Ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasulallah, Ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasulallah ;*  
*Hayya 'alas-salah, Hayya 'ala-salah;*  
*Hayya 'alal-falah Hayya 'alal-falah;*  
*Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar;*  
*La ilaha ill-Allah*

Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest  
I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah;  
I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger Allah, I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger Allah;  
Come to prayer, come to prayer;  
Come to prosperity, come to prosperity;  
Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest;  
There is none worthy of worship except Allah

## **The roles of the muezzin**

- Calling out the azaan at the fixed times.
- having specific and particular knowledge about the times of prayer, sunset and sunrise because they are linked to prayer, and if the prayer is performed before its time or after time, it will be invalid.
- being punctual in calling the azaan

## **Questions**

1. Who are the Islamic religious practitioners?
2. Explain the roles of the Islamic religious practitioners.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Sacred places**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able:

- identify sacred places
- describe the importance of sacred places in Islam

There are a number of sacred places in Islam which are important for different reasons. Below is a discussion of the sacred places in Islam and their importance:

### 1. The city of Mecca

Mecca is a city in Saudi Arabia. It is the religious capital of the Muslim world. It is the holiest city in Islam. The city of Mecca is referred to as *al-Haram al-Makki* (the Sacred Precinct of Mecca). Allah decreed that violence, killing and committing sins is prohibited in Mecca. Moreover, anyone who merely intends to do evil in Mecca will be punished. stated: **“Whoever intends [a deed] therein of deviation [in religion] or wrongdoing - We will make him taste of a painful punishment.”** [Quran 22: 25].

Moreover, the trees and grass which grow naturally in Mecca should not be cut. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Allah, not the people, made Mecca a sanctuary, so anybody who has belief in Allah and the Last Day should neither shed blood in it, nor should he cut down its trees.”* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 1832] The Prophet (peace be upon him) further explained that hunting is prohibited in Mecca, and so is picking up lost property except for a person who intends to return it to the owner. He said: *“It is not allowed to uproot its shrubs or to cut its trees, or to chase (or disturb) its game, or to pick up its luqata (fallen things/lost property) except by a person who would announce that (what he has found) publicly.”* Al- ‘Abbaas said, *“O Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him)! Except al-Idhkhir (a kind of grass) (for it is used) by our goldsmiths and for our graves.”* The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said, *‘Except al-Idhkhir.’* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 1833]

The Islamic texts state that Mecca is the land which is most beloved to Allah. It is also the birthplace of Muhammad (peace be upon him), and he loved it very much. With reference to Mecca, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *“How sweet of a land you are and how dear you are to me, and if it were not that my people expelled me from you, I would not have lived in other than you.”* [Transmitted by at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 3926]. He also said, *“By Allah, you are the best land of Allah, and the dearest of the land of Allah to me. By Allah, had I not been expelled from you I would never have left.”* [Transmitted by ibn Maajah, hadeeth number 3108]

Mecca is also the place where Muhammad was given prophethood. The first verses of the Quran were revealed to Prophet Muhammad in the cave of Hira which is close to Mecca. Muhammad started calling people to Islam in Mecca.

## 2. The city of Medina

The city of Medina is the second holiest city in Islam. It is referred to as *al-Haram al-Madani* (the Sacred Precinct of Medina). The sacred area in Medina was mentioned by the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), and he warning against violating Allah' religion in this area and he said: "*Medina is a sacred territory from 'Ayr to Thawr (it is most probably Uhud). He who innovates (an act or practice) or gives protection to an innovator, there is a curse of Allah and that of His angels and that of the whole humanity upon him. Allah will not accept from him (as a recompense) any obligatory act or supererogatory act.*" [Muslim, hadeeth number 1370]

The status of Medina necessitates the prohibition of committing sins in it, or cutting its trees. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "*Medina is a sanctuary from that place to that. Its trees should not be cut and no heresy should be innovated nor any sin should be committed in it, and whoever innovates in it an heresy or commits sins (bad deeds), then he will incur the curse of Allah, the angels, and all the people.*" [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 1867].

The Prophet (peace be upon him) invoked blessings on Medina by supplicating to Allah to bless its inhabitants, produce, and units of measurement. He said: "*O Allah, bless us in our fruits, and bless us in our city, and bless us in our saa' and bless us in our mudd.*" [Saheeh Muslims, hadeeth number 1373] (The *saa'* and *mudd* were units of measurement during the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him).

Medina is significant in Islam because it is the place where Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) migrated to after his persecution in Mecca. He was warmly welcomed there. Thus, he managed to establish the religion there, and the Islamic state. Islam spread from Medina to the rest of the world. Medina became the first major centre of Islamic knowledge.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) encouraged people to stay in Medina and die there. He said: "*Whoever of you can die in Medina let him so because indeed I will indeed intercede for a person who dies in Medina.*" [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 3971].

## 3. The Levant

The Levant is the area around place Palestine, Syria and its environs. This place is considered to be blessed in Islam. This was stated in verses of the Quran and the Sunnah. Allah said: **“Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haraam to al-Masjid al- Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”** [Quran 17: 1]. The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) supplicated to Allah to bless the Levant, and he said: *“Our Allah bless us in our Levant and our Yemen.”* [al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 1037]. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: *“We were with the Messenger of Allah (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) collecting the Quran on pieces of cloth, so the Messenger of Allah (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: ‘Glad tidings be to the Levant.’ We said: ‘Why is that O Messenger of Allah?’ He said: ‘Because the angels of the Most Merciful have spread their wings over it.”* [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 3954]

#### 4. The Kabah

The Kabah is the cube-like building which is at the centre of the Grand Mosque in Mecca. The Ka’bah is the first house to worship Allah to be built on earth. Allah stated: **“Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Makkah - blessed and a guidance for the worlds.”** [Quran 3: 96] The Kabah is also a place of refuge and safety. Whoever enters it is protected from harm. Allah said: *“And whoever enters it shall be safe.”* [Quran 3: 97] Muslims from all over the world face Mecca when they perform prayer. Thus, the Kabah is the spiritual centre of the Muslims.

#### 4. The Grand Mosque of Mecca

The Grand Mosque of Mecca is the most sacred mosque in Islam. Praying in the Grand Mosque is rewarded one hundred thousand times more than praying elsewhere [ibn Maajah, hadeeth number 1406] . The Grand Mosque is where Muslims perform the lesser pilgrimage (‘*umrah*). Allah said: **“And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security. And take, [O believers], from the standing place of Abraham a place of prayer. And We charged Abraham and Ishmael, [saying], ‘Purify My House for those who circumambulate it and those who are staying [there] for worship and those who bow and prostrate [in prayer].’”**

(Quran 2: 125) The Grand Mosque was the first place for congregational prayer on earth. Allah the Exalted said: **“Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Makkah - blessed and a guidance for the worlds.”** [Quran 3: 96]

The Grand Mosque is the largest mosque on earth with a capacity of four million people (The Telegraph, 27 July 2016). The mosque is open twenty-four hours a day with people engaging in various acts of worship like praying, supplicating, circumambulating the Kabah, and remembering Allah.

The well of Zamzam which is a very important well to the Muslims is found inside the Grand Mosque. The water from this well is blessed. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*It is blessed and it is nourishment.*” [Muslim, 4/1922] Another narration state: “*It is a cure for sickness.*” [at-Tayaalisi]

### **The Prophet’s Mosque in Medina**

The Prophet’s Mosque is the second most sacred mosque in Islam. This mosque was built by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) when he came to Medina. He was helped by his companions. Praying in this mosque gets rewarded one thousand more than praying anywhere else. [Ibn Maajah hadeeth number 1405].

The grave of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is in a section of this mosque. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed in this mosque and delivered sermons in there. Al-Munajjid identified the following roles which the mosque had during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

- It was a place to help people and social welfare.
- It provided accommodation for the poor and travelers.
- It housed the sick like in the case of Mu’aath ibn Jabal.
- Marriages were conducted there. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*Announce marriages, and conduct them in the mosques.*” [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 1009]
- Resolving disputes and judging cases.

### **The al-Aqsa mosque**

The al-Aqsa mosque is the third most sacred mosque in Islam. Praying in this mosque gets rewarded five hundred times more than praying elsewhere besides the Grand Mosque and the Prophet’s mosque. [al-Bayhaqi in *as-Sughra*, hadeeth number 1821].

### **The mosques in general**

Mosques are blessed in Islam. They are the places which are most beloved to Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*The parts of land dearest to Allah are its mosques.*” [Muslim, hadeeth number 671] The masjid is held in high regard such that making announcements for lost goods and trading is forbidden inside it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*Whoever hears a man making a lost-and-found announcement in the mosque, let him say: "May Allah not return it to you!" for the mosques were not built for that.*” [Muslim, hadeeth number 568] He also said: “*When you see someone selling or buying in mosque, say: 'May Allah not profit your business.'*” [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 1321] Another hadeeth states: “*The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) prohibited buying and selling in the mosque.*” [Aboo Dawood, hadeeth number 1079]

### **Questions**

1. What are the sacred places in Islam?
2. Discuss the importance of the sacred places in Islam.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The interdependency of families**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Illustrate ways in which Islam encourages families to depend upon each other

## **Ways in which families depend upon each other in Islam**

Islam emphasises on unity and cooperation between people. The basic level of cooperation starts at family level. Thus related or unrelated families have to cooperate and depend on each other. It has been stated that no man is an island and human beings are gregarious (fond of company) by nature.

These teachings were mentioned in the Islamic texts. Islam encourages families to depend upon each other in the following ways:

### **Good neighbourliness**

Good neighbourliness is a religious requirement. Allah criticized people who pray but do not assist people and their neighbours with simple and little things like salt, sugar and water. He said: **“So woe to those who pray. [But] who are heedless of their prayer. Those who make show [of their deeds]. But refuse (to supply) (even) neighbourly needs.”** [Quran 107: 4-7] The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Jibreel (the angel Gabriel) kept recommending treating neighbours with kindness until I thought he would assign a share of inheritance to them”*. [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 6015]

### **Giving each other gifts**

If families give each other gifts from time to time, that will create love, cooperation and goodwill between them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Give each other gifts, you will love each other.”* [al-Adab al-Mufrad by al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 594]

### **Visiting each other**

Visiting each other is the means through which people know about each other, and express their concern for each other. Visiting each other is a rewardable deed in Islam. A hadeeth states: *“A person set out to visit his brother in another town and Allah deputed an Angel to wait for him on his way and when he came to him he said: Where do you intend to go? He said: I intend to go to my brother in this town. He said: Have you done any favour to him (the repayment of which you intend to get)? He said: No, excepting this that I love him for the sake of Allah, the Exalted and Glorious. Thereupon he said: “I am a messenger to you from, Allah: (to inform you) that Allah loves you as you love him (for His sake).”* [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 2567] So visiting each other for the sake of Allah entails love by Allah.

### **Visiting the sick**

Visiting the sick is a means of interdependency. It relieves the sick, and makes them forget their ailments. They are also able to get their needs from the people who visit them. There is great reward in visiting the sick. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Whoever visits*

*a sick person, a caller calls from heaven: ‘May you be happy, may your walking be blessed, and may you occupy a dignified position in Paradise.’* [Ibn Maajah, hadeeth number 1443]

### **Assisting each other in times of calamities**

A family or person who is really useful is the one who helps others at the time of need and calamities. This is where cooperation and interdependency is most vital. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to the people. The most beloved deed to Allah is to make a Muslim happy, or to remove one of his troubles, or to forgive his debt, or to feed his hunger. That I walk with a brother regarding a need is more beloved to me than that I seclude myself in this mosque in Medina for a month. Whoever controls his anger, then Allah will conceal his faults. Whoever suppresses his rage, even though he could fulfill his anger if he wished, then Allah will secure his heart on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever walks with his brother regarding a need until he secures it for him, then Allah Almighty will make his footing firm across the bridge on the day when the footings are shaken.”* [al-Mujam al-Awsat, hadeeth number 6192] The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: *“If anyone relieves a Muslim believer from one of the hardships of this worldly life, Allah will relieve him of one of the hardships of the Day of Resurrection. If anyone makes it easy for the one who is indebted to him (while finding it difficult to repay), Allah will make it easy for him in this worldly life and in the Hereafter.”* [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 2699]

### **Not harming people through bad speech and violence**

Interdependency is enhanced when people have mutual respect for each other and when they have no intentions to harm each other. This is when people talk respectfully to each other and do not engage in violence. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.”* [Ibn Maajah, hadeeth number 2341] He also said: *“A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe”* [al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

### **Exercise 2.1**

1. Discuss the ways in which Islam encourages the inter-dependency of families. [25]

## **Chapter 6**

### **Chronic conditions and disability**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Describe how religious beliefs influence people with chronic conditions
- Identify the perceptions about disability in Islam
- Explain the perceptions about disability in Islam

## Chronic conditions

### The definition of chronic conditions

Chronic conditions are illnesses which persist for a long time or recur constantly. This refers to diseases like diabetes, AIDS and so on.

### Islam's attitude towards chronic conditions

In Islam chronic conditions are viewed as part of Allah's decree. Thus it is Allah who decides who gets afflicted with a chronic disease. Therefore, people afflicted with these conditions should accept them as part of Allah's test. If the person bears these conditions patiently, he or she will get rewarded. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"No fatigue, disease, sorrow, sadness, hurt or distress befalls a Muslim - not even the prick he receives from a thorn - except that Allah expiates some of his sins because of it."* (Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 5641) Moreover, if the person used to regularly do certain acts of worship and fails to perform them because of illness, he or she will be rewarded. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"When a slave of Allah suffers from illness or sets on a journey, he is credited with the equal of whatever good works he used to do when he was healthy or at home."* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 2996]

A Muslim is required to seek treatment when he or she is sick. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"Allah has sent down both the disease and the cure, and He has appointed a cure for every disease, so treat yourselves medically, but use nothing unlawful."* [Sunan Abi Dawood, hadeeth number 3874]

## Disability

The definition of a disability

A disability is described as: "an illness, injury, or condition that makes it difficult for someone to do the things that other people do" [Cambridge dictionary]

### Islam attitude towards disability

Islam regards disability as a test from Allah. A person who patiently bears disability will be rewarded by Allah for his or her patience. Allah said: **"Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account."** [Quran 39: 10] The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"Allah said, 'If I deprive my slave of his two beloved things (i.e., his eyes) and he remains patient, I will let him enter Paradise in compensation for them.'" [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 5653] Aṭaa ibn Abi Rabaah narrated: "Ibn `Abbaas said to me, "Shall I show you a woman of the people of Paradise?" I said, "Yes." He said, "This black lady came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, 'I get attacks of epilepsy and my body becomes uncovered; please invoke Allah for me.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) said*

*(to her), 'If you wish, be patient and you will have (enter) Paradise; and if you wish, I will invoke Allah to cure you.' She said, 'I will remain patient,' and added, 'but I become uncovered, so please invoke Allah for me that I may not become uncovered.' So he invoked Allah for her."* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 5652]

A person who suffers from disability is not marginalized or considered to be deficient. Throughout history, Muslims with disability have attained great positions and status in Islam. During the early days of Islam, there was a blind man who was called 'Abdullah ibn Umm Maktoom. He was the muezzin of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Ibn 'Abbaas became blind in old age. However, he was the best scholar of the discipline of the interpretation of the Quran during his time. Aṭaa ibn Abi Rabaah was one-eyed, palsied, handicapped, flat-nosed, paraplegic. He later became blind. However, he was the Mufti of Mecca and a great scholar. [Ad-Daqq, 2016]

## **Questions**

1. Discuss Islam's perception towards chronic conditions.
2. What is Islam's attitude towards disability.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Islam and the natural environment**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Describe the attitudes of Islam to the natural environment
- Outline the methods of preserving the natural environment in Islam

#### **Definition of the natural environment**

The natural environment is “climate, weather and natural resources that affect human survival and economic activity.” (Business Dictionary)

### **Attitudes of Islam towards the natural environment**

The natural environment is very important in the life of human beings. It benefits us, our children and the future generations. Therefore, the Islamic texts discussed teachings which preserve the environment.

The natural environment is Islamically regarded to be a trust which be taken care of and preserved. Allah said: “**It is He who created for you all that which is one the earth.**” [Quran 2:29] He also said: “**And He has subjected for you the night and day and the sun and the moon, and the stars by His command. Indeed in that are signs for a people who reason.**” [Quran 16: 12]

### **Methods of preserving the natural environment in Islam**

There are a number of ways through which Islamic teachings preserve the environment. These are as follows:

#### **Economic usage of resources**

Our natural environment consists of renewable and non-renewable resources. Both these types of resources should be used in a reasonable manner and not be wasted. Wasting these resources is selfishness and depriving the future generations of them. Allah said: “**And be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess.**” [Quran 6: 141] The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered Muslims to be frugal when using water even if they are making ablution<sup>1</sup> in a river. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) passed by Sa’d when he was performing ablution, and he said: “*What is this extravagance? Sa’d said: “Can there be any extravagance in ablution?” The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Yes, even if you are on the bank of a flowing river.”* [Sunan ibn Maajah, hadeeth number 425]

Wastage of resources shows lack of appreciation for Allah’s favours and ungratefulness. When people are ungrateful, Allah withdraws his blessings. He said: “**If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favour]; but if you are thankless, indeed, My punishment is severe.**” [Quran 14: 7]

#### **Planting crops**

A way of preserving natural resources is by planting crops. Trees contribute to the betterment of the environment by ensuring the availability of oxygen, improving the quality of air, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. A person who plants crops is rewarded by Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*If a Muslim plants a*

---

<sup>1</sup> Washing the parts of the body like the hands, face and feet before prayer. In Arabic, this is known as *wuthoo*.

*tree, or sows a field and men and beasts and birds eat from it, all of that is charity for him.”* [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 1552] Planting crops is so important such that a person must keep on planting them even when the world is about to end. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“If the Final Hour comes while you palm cutting is in your hands and it is possible to plant it before the Hour comes, you should plant it.”* [Ahmad, hadeeth number 12902]

### **Adopting hygienic practices when dealing with the environment**

Islam instructs Muslims to preserve the natural environment by adopting hygienic practices. Unsanitary behaviour spoils the natural resources and prevents benefit from them. In this regard the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade people from urinating in stagnant water. [Saheeh Muslim hadeeth number 425]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also forbade people from urinating on the pathways and in places where people seek shade. This habit is unsanitary and offends people. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Fear two things that bring curses. The companions asked, “What are the two things that bring curses, O Messenger of Allah? He said: “When a person relieves himself in the road where people walk or in the place where they seek shade.”* [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 1552]

### **Questions**

1. Discuss the methods of preserving the natural environment in Islam.
2. Assess the attitude of Islam towards the natural environment.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Islam and enterprise**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Explain the various forms of enterprise
- Describe the positive impact of religion on technology use and enterprise

### **Definition of enterprise**

The word enterprise refers to a number of things including “a project or undertaking, especially one that requires boldness or effort” and “initiative in business.” Therefore, this refers to income generating projects.

### **The forms of enterprise in Islam**

Islam encourages people to earn a decent livelihood, and prohibits them from begging or earning through dishonest means. A person who begs despite being able to earn livelihood will be punished. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*A person who unnecessarily continues to beg will stand before the Almighty Allah [on the day of Judgement] without a shred of flesh on his face.*” [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 1405, and Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 1040] He also said: “*If a person who is afflicted with poverty refers it to the people, his poverty will not be brought to an end, but if he refers it to Allah, Allah will soon give him sufficiency.*” [Sunan Ahmad, hadeeth number 3869, Sunan Abi Dawood, hadeeth number 1645].

There are various forms of earning a livelihood in Islam. These are as follows:

#### **1. Working**

Islam respects all kinds of jobs in any field, trade, industry or service through which a person earns a livelihood. Menial jobs are not looked down upon in Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*It is better for any of you to take a rope and cut some wood (from the forest) and carry it over his back and sell it, to preserve his dignity (as he is earning his own living), rather than ask a person for something and that person may give him or not.*” [al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 1471].

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also encouraged people to adopt professions where they would use their hands and efforts and he said: “*The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked: “What is the best means of earning a livelihood? He said: “A man’s handiwork and every blessed sale.”* [Transmitted by al-Bazaar]

Prophets who were sent by Allah were also involved in decent work in their societies. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that Prophet Zachariah (peace be upon him) was a carpenter.

#### **Animal rearing**

Rearing animals is vital because people need meat as part of their diet from time to time. Moreover, these animals could also be sold. The prophet of Allah were involved in animal rearing. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*Allah did not send a prophet who did not tend sheep.*” [al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 2143]

## **Trade**

Entrepreneurship has been one of the means through which people earn their livelihood from the earliest time. Legitimate business is encouraged in Islam. Khadeejah engaged in business, and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) worked for her and traded in Syria. Earnings through business are considered to be one of the means of livelihood.: *“The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked: “What is the best means of earning a livelihood? He said: “A man’s handiwork and every blessed sale.” [Transmitted by al-Bazaar] Truthful and honest business transactions are blessed by Allah. However, transactions involving lying, cheating and fraud are not blessed, and the people involved in such dealings are punished. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Both parties in a business transaction have a right to annul it so long as they have not separated; and if they tell the truth and make everything clear to each other (i.e., the seller and the buyer speak the truth, the seller with regard to what is purchased, and the buyer with regard to the money) they will be blessed in their transaction, but if they conceal anything and lie, the blessing on their transaction will be eliminated.” [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 2079]*

## **The positive impact of Islam on technology use and enterprise**

Islam encourages the use of technology because it is a religion which encourages education and learning. The first verse revealed in the Quran was “Read.” Therefore, the Muslims always sought to learn new things and they discovered things. Islam had a positive impact on technology use in the following ways:

### **The establishment of universities**

Seeking knowledge is a key component of Islam. A knowledgeable man is honoured and an ignorant person lacks distinction. Muslims were encouraged to be educated. Thus, they sought to attain the highest possible standard of learning. This was facilitated by the establishment of universities. The Zaytunah University in Tunis, and the Azhar University in Cairo were established more than 1,000 years and are the oldest existing universities in the world. They were used as the models for the first European universities, such as Bologna University in Italy, Heidelberg University in Germany, and the Sorbonne University in France. The academic cap and gown which are worn by graduates originated at Azhar University

### **The contribution to science and technology**

#### **Astronomy**

Muslims hold the science of astronomy in high regard. This is because the moon and the sun mark the start and the end of important acts of worship. The sun is used to know the time of the daily prayers. The first prayer must be made before sunrise. The second prayer

is made after the sun has passed the meridian, and the fourth prayer is performed after sunset. The moon is used to know the start of the lunar month which is the basis of the Islamic calendar. Knowing the time that the new crescent is born is vital in Islam because fasting in the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, Ramadan, starts after the new moon is sighted. Similarly, zakat (the poor-due) is paid after the passage of a lunar year which is known by observing the beginning and the end of each month.

Astronomy also enabled the Muslims to determine the precise direction of the Qiblah, the direction of Mecca which all Muslims face in prayer. The Quran made references to astronomy like in the verse which states: “**And it is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all [heavenly bodies] in an orbit are swimming.**” [Qur’an 21: 33].

These references encouraged the early Muslim scholars to study the heavens. They benefited from the earlier works of the Indians, Persians and Greeks. Ptolemy’s manual on astronomy was translated into Arabic. It was originally called *Mathematike Syntaxis* (The Mathematical Arrangement). The name *Almagest* is an Arabic rendition of the Greek word for greatest (*megiste*). It was translated into Arabic around 827 and then from Arabic to Latin in the last half of the 12th century. Subsequently, the Greek text was used widely in Europe. However, the Latin translations from Arabic continued to be used widely. The *Almagest* was translated, studied widely and criticized. Many new stars were discovered by the Arabs as can be seen in their Arabic names like Algol from the Arabic word *al-Ghoul* (the demon), Deneb which was derived from *Thanab ad-Dajaajah* (the tail of the hen), Betelgeuse which was derived from *Ibt al-Jauzaa* (the underarm of Orion), or *Yad al-Jauzaa* (the hand of Orion), Rigel which was derived from *rijl al-jabbaar* (the foot of the great one), and Aldebaran which was derived from the Arabic term *ad-Dabaraan* (the follower).

Other terms of Arabic origin found in astronomy are:

- zenith which resulted as a misreading of the phrase *samt ar-ras* (direction of the head or path above the head), by Medieval Latin scribes during the 14th century.
- nadir: this was derived by the word *nazeer* (counterpart) and this means the direction pointing directly below a particular location.
- azimuth: This was from the Arabic word *as-samt* (the direction). This refers to an angular measurement in a spherical coordinate system.

Muslim astronomers were the first to set up observatories, like the one built at Mugharah by Hulagu Khan, the son of Genghis Khan, in Persia, and they invented instruments such as the quadrant and the astrolabe. This resulted in advances in astronomy and oceanic navigation which helped in the European age of exploration.

## Geography

Muslim scholars studied geography. The Muslims' attention for geography emanated from their religion. The Quran encourages people to travel throughout the earth to see God's signs. Allah states: **“Say: “Travel in the land and see how (Allah) originated creation, and then Allah will bring forth (resurrect) the creation of the Hereafter (i.e. resurrection after death). Verily, Allah is Able to do all things.”** [Quran 29: 20]

Moreover, Muslims are required to have the minimum knowledge of geography which is vital for them to know the direction of the Qiblah so as to perform the five daily prayers while facing the correct direction. Muslims also travelled for trade, to perform pilgrimage (hajj), and to spread their religion through preaching. The great geographical area of the Islamic empire enabled scholars and explorers to compile large amounts of geographical and climatic information from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Famous Muslim geographers who are also known in the West, are Ibn Khaldun and Ibn Batuta, who wrote books on their extensive explorations. In 1166, Al-Idrisi, the well-known Arab and Muslim geographer, cartographer and Egyptologist who served the Sicilian court, drew accurate maps which showed the continents, the mountains, rivers and famous cities. Magellan was able to traverse the Cape of Good Hope with the help of Muslim navigators, and Da Gama and Columbus had Muslim navigators on their ships.

## **Medicine**

One of the objectives of Islam is the preservation of life, and the human body. The body is considered to be a trust which Allah gave a person. Therefore, a person has to look after his or her body well, and avoid eating or drinking harmful things. When a person gets sick, he or she should seek medication. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encouraged people to get treatment when they get sick. He said: *“O worshipers of Allah! Use remedies. For indeed Allah did not make a disease but He made a cure for it' - or - 'a remedy. Except for one disease.' They said: 'O Messenger of Allah, What is it?' He said: “Old age.”* [at-Tirmithi, hadeeth number 2038].

The Islamic teachings motivated Muslim scientists to study medicine and public health care. Muslims began to excel in the area of medicine. Al-Razi, popularly known in the Western world as Rhazes, was a famous physician and scientist.. He also wrote a book on hygiene in hospitals.

Khalaf Abul-Qasim Al-Zahrawi, known in the West as Abulcasis was popular surgeon in the eleventh century. He wrote an encyclopaedia on medicine called *Kitaab at-Tasreef* Ibn Sina better known in the West as Avicenna, was one of the greatest physicians in history. His famous encyclopaedia, *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* (The Canon of Medicine), remained a standard textbook even in Europe, for over 700 years. He also contributed to pharmacology through writing *Kitab al-Shifa'* (The Book of Healing).

Muslims paid great attention to public health. The Muslims used camel caravans as mobile hospitals, which moved from place to place. Every major city in the Islamic world had a number of excellent hospitals, which included teaching hospitals. There were specialist hospitals for various mental and emotional diseases. The Ottomans were particularly known for building hospitals with a high level of hygiene.

### **Islam and enterprise**

Islamic Law regulates trade and enterprise. It encourages documentation of transactions and debts to reduce or avoid disputes. Allah states: “**O you who believe, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down. And let a scribe write [it] between you in justice.**” [Quran 2: 282]

Cheating, deception and lying in business are not permissible. They cause the loss of blessings in a transaction. On the other hand, truthfulness ensures that the sale is blessed. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*The seller and the buyer have the right to keep or return goods as long as they have not parted or till they part; and if both the parties spoke the truth and described the defects and qualities (of the goods), then they would be blessed in their transaction, and if they told lies or hid something, then the blessings of their transaction would be lost.*” [al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 2079]

Trading in impermissible things like alcohol and pork is prohibited. Likewise, Muslims are prohibited from being involved in transactions which involve interest. Allah said: “**Allah has permitted trade and He has forbidden interest.**” [Quran 2: 275]

Islam encourages an entrepreneurial spirit, and handiwork as means of earning a honourable livelihood. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked: “*What is best form of earning? He said: “A man’s earning from the work of his hands, and every blessed sale.*” [Ahmad, hadeeth number 17 265]

### **Questions**

1. Discuss the forms of enterprise in Islam.
2. Evaluate the impact of Islam on technology.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Attire in Islam**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of the chapter, the student should be able to:

- Describe the regalia in Islam

#### **Dressing in Islam**

Clothing is one of Allah's blessings. (Bahammam, 2012) Allah said: "**O children of Adam, We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts and as an adornment for you.**" [Quran 7: 26] Islam provided general guidelines for the dressing of men and women. However, the specific application of these guidelines differs from place to place and country to country. Muslims are encouraged to dress smartly and look presentable. Allah, the Exalted said: "**O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying.**" [Quran 7: 31] The Prophet (peace be upon him) also encouraged people to look smart and wear nice clothes. He ordered people to wear their best clothes for the Friday prayer and he said: "*If anyone takes a bath on Friday, puts on his best clothes, applies a touch of perfume if has any, then goes to congregational prayer (in the mosque), and takes care not to step over people, then prays what Allah has prescribes for him, then keeps silent from the time his Imam comes out until he finishes his prayer, it will atone for his sins during the previous week.*" [Sunan Abi Dawood, hadeeth number 343] It is recommended to wear white clothes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "*Wear your white garments, for they are among your best garments, and shroud your dead in them.*" [Sunan Abi Dawood, hadeeth number 3878]

### **The general guidelines for male dressing**

The basic dressing for men is that they are required to cover the area between the navel and the knee. However, in addition to that, Muslim men in various countries wear the following items of clothing:

#### **The kufi which is also known as the topi**

This is a hat close-fitting brimless hat which can be either cylindrical or round.

#### **The turban**

This is mostly worn by men in the Middle East and North Africa. This is "a square cloth, often embroidered , traditionally worn as headdress by Arab men, either by winding it around the head or by folding it into a triangle, draping it over the head, and securing it with an agal." [The Free Dictionary]

#### **The agal or 'iqaal**

This is a band or series of cords used to hold a keffiyeh (turban) in place on the head. [The Free Dictionary]

#### **The thobe**

This has been described as "An ankle-length, long-sleeved, gown-like garment worn chiefly by men of the Arabian Peninsula." [Your Dictionary]

## The bisht

A bisht or mishlah or abaa is a traditional men's cloak popular in the Arab world.[Arab News] It is a flowing outer cloak worn over a thobe. It usually comes in the colours of black, brown, beige, cream or grey. A bisht is usually worn for prestige on special occasions such as weddings, or festivals such as Eid, or for the Friday noon prayers [Jumua'ah].

## Baju Melayu

This is an outfit which is worn by Malaysian men. It consists of three pieces of clothing. There is a long sleeved shirt, and a trousers. The shirt and the trousers are made of the same material. The third part of this dressing is known as kain samping, and it is a skirt-type adornment which is folded around the waist. [The Star, 17 August 2012]

## The dressing code for women

Women in Islam are required to dress modestly by wearing the *hijaab* which is dressing which covers the whole body except the palms, and the face. So, the woman will be wearing loose clothes on her body, and she will be covering her head with a *khimaar* (scarf). Some women go a step further by covering their faces with a face veil known as *niqab* in Arabic. However, according to the majority of the jurists, the *niqab* is not compulsory. This is based on the verses of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Allah said: **“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent. and to draw their veils all their chests and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands.”** [Qur'an 24:31]. He also said: **“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks all over their bodies That will be better, that they should be known so as not to be annoyed.”** [Qur'an 33: 59] The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“O Asma', when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, it does not suit her that she displays her parts of body except this and this, and he pointed to his face and hands.”* [Sunan Abi Dawud, hadeeth number 4104]

Women from various parts of the Muslim world wear different variations of the Muslim dress based on the guidelines discussed above:

### ***Baju Kurung***

The *baju kurung* is a type of traditional dress that is worn in Malaysia and Indonesia. The word *baju* means clothes, and the word *kurung* means to encase the body of the wearer. This is in line with Islamic teachings. [Hassan, 2016]

“The *baju kurung* is a loose-fitting full-length dress consisting of a skirt and a blouse. The skirt is made from a long cloth with folding on one side. The blouse is collarless, has long sleeves, and extends to between the hips and the knee.”[Sandborg, 1993]

The *baju kurung* is worn along with a *tudung* [headscarf].

### **Shalwar kameez**

This is a traditional combination dress worn by women, in South Asia and Central Asia. However, in some areas this type of dressing is worn by men. *Shalwars* are trousers which are wide at the waist, and they narrow to a cuffed bottom. They are held up by a drawstring or elastic belt, which causes them to become pleated around the waist. The pants are sometimes sewn wide and baggy. However, narrow variations also exist. The *kameez* is a long shirt or tunic. Its side seams are left open below the waist-line (the opening known as the *chaak*, and this gives the wearer greater freedom of movement. The *kameez* is usually designed as a straight and flat shirt. [Stevenson, Angus, Waite, Maurice, 2011]

### **Questions**

1. Discuss the dressing code for Muslim women.
2. Muslim dressing is wide and varied. Discuss

## **Chapter Ten**

### **Islam and gender**

#### **Objectives**

By the end of this chapter, the student should be able to:

- Identify what Islam says on gender
- Explain gender roles in Islam

#### **Definition of gender**

The word gender has been defined as “the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men.” [World Health Organisation]

The term gender was not specifically mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah. However, the roles of men and women were discussed in these two primary sources of evidence in Islam. Therefore, I will discuss these roles at this point.

### **The roles of men**

Men have a number of key roles on earth. Some of them are as follows:

#### **Worshipping Allah**

The major goal of creation is to worship Allah. This was mentioned in the Quran where Allah said: “**And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.**” [Quran 51: 56]

#### **Developing the resources which Allah provided on earth**

Allah created mankind, and favoured them with all the resources to make life easy and bearable so that they may benefit from them, develop them, and use them . He said: “**It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth and sent down rain from the sky and produced thereby some fruits as provision for you and subjected for you the ships to sail through the sea by His command and subjected for you the rivers. And He subjected for you the sun and the moon, continuous [in orbit], and subjected for you the night and the day. And He gave you from all you asked of Him. And if you should count the favor of Allah , you could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.**”[Quran 14: 32-33]

#### **Strengthening family ties**

An important role of men and a vital religious duty is to strengthen family ties. Allah said: “**And Allah has made for you from yourselves mates and has made for you from your mates sons and grandchildren and has provided for you from the good things. Then in falsehood do they believe and in the favor of Allah they disbelieve?**”[Quran 16: 72] Maintaining ties of kinship is a source of blessings and a long life. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “*He who is desirous that his means of sustenance should be expanded for him or his age may be lengthened, should maintain ties of kinship.*” [Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth number 2557]

#### **Providing sustenance, accommodation, and clothing for wives**

Husbands are required to provide sustenance, accommodation, and clothing for their wives. Allah said: **“Upon the father is the mothers' provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable.”** [Quran 2: 233] This responsibility was also mentioned in the hadeeth of Muslim. [Muslim, 8/183]

### **Leading and guiding the family**

The husband is the head of the family. Thus, he is responsible for guiding the family, and showing them the straight path. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“All of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects. The ruler is a guardian of his subjects, the man is a guardian of his family, the woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husband's house and his offspring; and so all of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects.”* [al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

### **The role of women in Islam**

Women play different roles in society, and these roles were discussed in the Islamic texts. Allah devoted a whole chapter which discusses the issues of women, and this is the fourth chapter of the Noble Quran which is called the Chapter of Women. There are a number of roles for women in Islam, and these are as follows:

#### **Motherhood**

Allah honoured women by conferring on them the role of motherhood whereby they conceive, carry foetuses in their wombs and then give birth. This role is necessary for the continuation of the human race. Therefore, Allah instructs people to honour and cherish their mothers because of their pivotal role. Allah states: **“And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination.”** [Quran 31: 14]

### **Nurturing children and giving them good values**

Women play a major role in nurturing children and giving them good values. The bond between the mother and the child is solid, and she is the first teacher of the child. Thus, she has to impart good values to the child so that he or she will be beneficial in society. It is a religious requirement for the mother to care for the children well, and teach them what benefits them in this world and the Hereafter. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“The woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husband's house and his offspring”* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 5188].

### **Consultancy in issues which involve women**

Women may be required to give their expert opinion on issues relating to women, for example, if there is need for evidence in women issues like virginity, rape, and so on, other

women who are experts in those areas can testify. This is because Islam preaches modesty and a woman does not normally expose her body to men (that is, men who are not her husband) unless there is dire necessity like when a woman to examine her cannot be found.

### **Being supportive spouses**

Women have an important role in being supportive spouses. Being a spouse is vital in Islam because when a person gets married, he is deemed to have completed his faith. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Whoever gets married has completed his faith.” [*Mu’jam at-Tabaraani*, 8/335]. Wives should give their husbands moral support, and stand by them as they deal with the challenges of life. They may take a leaf from the life of Khadijah, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who gave him moral support when he faced opposition from the people of Mecca.

### **Giving their views on important issues**

Women are part of the society. Therefore, they give their views and consultancy on important issues. During the sixth year of Hijrah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) went to Mecca with his companions, and they wanted to perform the smaller pilgrimage (*‘umrah*). However, the people of Mecca prevented them from doing that. The situation became tense, but it was diffused by the signing of the Hudaibiyyah pact. Afterwards, the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered his companions to slaughter their animals and shave their heads, and return to Medina. His companions were reluctant to do this. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then informed his wife Umm Salamah about the situation. She advised him not to speak to anyone but to go and slaughter his camel, and his barber so that he would shave his hair. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did this and the people followed his example. So, the advice of Umm Salamah resolved the situation.

### **Enjoining good and forbidding evil**

Muslims strive to have a society which pleases God. This can only happen when people obey Allah, and do not disobey him. This is possible through the role of men and women in advising those who engage in evil deeds to stop doing them, and by encouraging people to do good deeds which please Allah. He said: “**The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong**” [Quran 9: 71].

### **Doing the household chores**

Women do the household chores. However, this role is not limited to women because men can be supportive and help in doing the work of home. In *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, al-Bukhaari transmitted a hadeeth which states: “*Hisham said, ‘I asked ‘Aa’isha, ‘What did the Prophet (peace be upon him) do in his house?’ She replied, ‘He did what one of you would do in his house. He mended sandals and patched garments and sewed.’*” [*al-Adab al-Mufrad*, hadeeth number 540].

### **Questions**

1. Explain the roles of men in Islam.
2. Explain the roles of women in Islam.

## **Chapter Eleven**

### **Islamic and conflict management**

#### **Objectives**

**By the end of this topic, the student should be able to:**

- **Discuss the role of Islam in conflict management**

#### **The meaning of conflict transformation**

Johannes Botes defined conflict transformation as “the process of moving from conflict-habituated systems to peace systems.” So, we can say that the terms refers to the avoidance of conflict, and establishing peace.

### **The role of religion in conflict management**

The Islamic texts have mentioned a number of conflict transformation mechanisms which are as follows:

**1- Signing truces:** In the sixth year after Hijrah, the Muslims wanted to perform the lesser pilgrimage (*‘umrah*) but they were prevented from entering Mecca by the Quraish. The situation became tense because both sides were armed, and were not easily intimidated. However, the situation was saved when the two sided agreed to conclude a treaty which suspended war for ten years. Unfortunately, the truce was broken by the Quraish within two years, but at the time of its signing bloodshed was averted.

**2-Agreements and treaties:** When Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) arrived in Medina, he concluded a treaty with the Jews. His outlook was peaceful, and he did not pursue the politics of war, expulsion, hostility, or the seizure of land and property.

**3-Reconciliation:** When people differ, and reach the point of fighting, further damage can be prevented if they are reconciled, and encouraged to seek a peaceful solution. Allah said: **“And if two parties or groups among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both.”** [Quran 49: 9]

**4-Arbitration:** An important way of maintaining peace and good relations is through arbitration. In this case two people are chosen as arbitrators, and mediate between disagreeing people or warring factors. This can be in the case of individuals like a husband and wife where marital disputes are solved by arbitrators. Allah said: **“And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people. If they both desire reconciliation, Allah will cause it between them. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Acquainted [with all things].”** [Quran 4: 35].

The principle of arbitration is also applicable when two groups of people fight. During the reign of caliph ‘Ali, a war broke out between ‘Ali, and Mu’awiyah and their followers. After lives were lost, the warring factions agreed to appoint arbitrators to seek a peaceful solution. ‘Amr ibn al-‘Aas and Aboo Moosa al-Ash’ari were chosen as the arbitrators.

**5-Forgiveness:** Loss of lives through fighting and war can be prevented by forgiving the wrongdoers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was persecuted in Mecca, and his followers experienced untold suffering. However, when he gained control of Mecca, he addressed the Quraish saying: “O you people of Quraish! What do you think of the treatment that I am about to accord you?” They replied: “O noble brother and son of a noble brother! We except nothing but goodness from you. He said: “I speak to you in the same words as Yusuf (Prophet Joseph) spoke to his brothers. He said: ‘No reproach on you this day,’ go your way, for you are free.” (Mubarakpuri,2002).

Similarly, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in Mecca, he decided to call the people of the surrounding areas to Islam. Thus, he went to Taif, and invited the people to

Islam. However, these people responded rudely, and they harassed the Prophet (peace be upon him). He was saddened, and returned to Mecca. On his way back, the angel Gabriel came and told him that Allah had sent an angel of the mountains who was ready to let the mountains fall on the people of Taif, and crush them as punishment for their hostility. However, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *“No. I hope that Allah will let them beget children who will worship Allah alone, and they will worship none besides Him.”* [Saheeh al-Bukhaari, hadeeth number 3231]. The Prophet’s (peace be upon him) desire materialized because a few years later, the people of Taif became Muslims, and today it is a thriving city populated by Muslims.

**6-Interfaith dialogue:** Interfaith dialogue fosters understanding of the different beliefs of different people. This promotes peaceful coexistence, and acceptance that people differ in their beliefs, languages, and cultures, and that these differences do not mean that people should fight. During the Prophet’s (peace be upon him) early days in Medina, he was visited by the Christians of Najran, and they discussed issues of religion. These discussions were joined by the Jews later on. (Ibn Ishaq, 2010) The Quran calls for dialogue, and peaceful debate and discussion, and it states: **“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.”** [Quran 16: 125].

**7-Education:** Educating people in general empowers them, and broadens their thinking. Religious education focuses on pleasing the Creator, benefiting others, and being a useful and responsible citizen. Teaching people about peace and tolerance will go a long way in ensuring that people live harmoniously, and avoid conflict. Mercy is an essential element in a believer. A merciful person has no time to plot harm and destruction against his fellow men. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Show mercy to people on earth so that Allah who is in heaven will have mercy on you.”* [Sunan Abi Dawood, hadeeth number 4941].

## Questions

1. Discuss the role of Islam in conflict management.

## **References**

An Introduction to the Sciences of the Quraan by Yasir Qadhi.

A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Hadith by Mohammad Hashim Kamali.

The Fundamentals of Tawheed by Bilal Philips.

Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language by Dr Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali and Dr Muhammad Muhsin Khan.

The Translation of the Quran by Saheeh International.

Maqasid Al-Shariah Made Simple (Occasional Paper) by Mohammad Hashim Kamali , Shiraz Khan, et al.

Saheeh al-Bukhaari by Imam Bukhari

Saheeh Muslim by Imam Muslim

Sunan an-Nasaai by an-Nasaai

Sunan Abu Dawood by Aboo Dawood

Jaami at-Tirmithi by at-Tirmithi

Sunan ibn Majah by ibn Majah

Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources by Martin Lings