

MUHAMMAD, *JIHAD*,
and the
UMMA DURING
the
EARLY EXPANSION
of
ISLAM

A HISTORICAL APPROACH
TO REVIVING THE WESTERN
VIEW OF THE ISLAMIC FAITH

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INTRODUCTION

It is impossible to talk about a better future for my country or the religion [of Islam] without addressing today's serious conflicts. As long as they continue, the religion's focus will be on the past, not the future; on division and stagnation, not growth.¹

—His Majesty King Abdullah II, February 3, 2006
Remarks at the Gertrude Castellow Ford Center
University of Mississippi

Muhammad easily stands out as one of the most influential religious figures in history. In fact, some have debatably claimed Muhammad as the most influential of them all, and for good reason.² For he not only acted as founder and promulgator of one of our world's greatest religions, but also was the architect, driving force, and initial leader for a movement that was able spread more rapidly than any other political or religious faction in history.³ In addition, he is recognized as the author or reciter of the Qur'an, Islam's holy scripture, which is considered by Muslims to be the literal word of God as revealed to Muhammad through an archangel. Muhammad is also accredited as being the establisher of Islam's fundamental practices and theology, most of which make up the

¹ Quote taken from a database of King Abdullah's "speeches and interviews" at the Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington D.C., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/jib/speeches/hmkaspeeches.shtml> (accessed March 4, 2006).

² Michael H. Hart, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, rev. ed. (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1992), 3-11.

³ Muslim believers typically reject the claim that Muhammad was the founder of Islam because their religious doctrine states the religion has always existed. In Islam Muhammad's role was only to proclaim God's final message to the world. However, from a historical perspective Muhammad cannot be omitted from his role as founder of the religion. For more on the historical approach to Muhammad see Ibn Warraq, ed. and trans. *The Quest for the Historical Muhammad* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000).

main components of Islam today. Muhammad himself is not praised or considered a God in Islam, but he is revered for his teaching, his closeness to Allah, and his devoutness to the true faith. Finally, it must be mentioned that Muhammad was able to do what so many religious leaders before him had tried and never completely succeed in—a combining of the secular social and political constructs with the influence of religion—in turn creating the ultimate system for expansion. The fact that Muhammad was the most significant figure in Islam is unquestionable, and therefore deserves study. For how can one better understand what Islam should be all about than by returning to the time, place, and figure from which it started? Though this may be true there is another pertinent motive which will drive the purpose of this writing, and that is the current state of the religion itself.

Today Islam is one of the world's greatest religions, encompassing over twenty percent of the total world population (roughly 1.3-1.5 billion of 6.5 billion). Christianity currently claims more adherents globally, but their position as the world's largest religion may be replaced by Islam and its rapid growth rate by the end of the century.⁴

The statistics are impressive, but they're also misleading. Islam is knowingly riddled with terrible conflicts, oppression, terrorism, frustrations, and national and/or international warfare. Daily news reports consistently spit out stories linking Islam to terrorist activities committed by extremist groups such as Al-Qa'ida, and aggressive protests and uprisings appear to be growing evermore present as Islam faces issues with

⁴ Islam is the fastest-growing religion on a global scale. John L. Esposito, "Introduction," in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), ix-xii; Hutson Smith, "Islam," in *Inside Islam: The Faith, the People, and the Conflicts of the World's Fastest-growing Religion*, ed. John Miller and Aaron Kenedi (New York: Marlowe, 2002), 11-26.

global modernity. Moreover, a significant portion of the Muslim population is currently suffering from severe poverty, hunger, malnutrition, AIDS, and other life threatening diseases, and the ignorance of the West continues to see the religion as an ever increasing threat.⁵ As a result, more and more religious leaders, politicians, and scholars, are considering Islam, in some form or another, in a state of crisis.⁶

It would be of little worth to stop here, instead it must be asked why there are such issues and conflicts involved in the religion today, and more importantly, what can be done to address the current crisis so Islam can work towards a more promising and peaceful future?⁷ As can be imagined, there are many avenues that could be taken at this point, many of which urge Islam to take steps away from fundamentalism and towards a more modern, liberal, and democratic existence. Though there is no disagreement, the intentions of this project are in many ways the opposite. Instead of diverging from the fundamental characteristics of Islam, we will study them from their very beginnings, within the deserts of the Arabian Peninsula, and try to demonstrate that the earliest period

⁵ The population of Islam is most dense in the Indian sub-continental regions and Southeast Asia (especially Indonesia and Bangladesh). The second and third largest populations are in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Smith, "Islam," 25; Phillip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 167; Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 113.

⁶ On "the crisis" see Bernard Lewis, *Crisis*; Omid Safi, "Introduction: *The Times They Are A-Changin'* – A Muslim Quest for Justice, Gender Equality and Pluralism," in *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, ed. Omid Safi (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003), 1-32; Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 265.

⁷ It should be noted that this paper is by no means attempting to single out Islam as the only religion dealing with serious issues. Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism (among others), are too struggling on various levels and for variety reasons internationally.

of Islam needs to be understood so that we can better align ourselves with a religion that has at times confused us and possibly under certain circumstances, aggravated us.

Islamic history is both rich and dense. It would be an arduous task to take on a comprehensive biography of the Prophet and his role of bringing Islam into the world in all of its facets. Therefore, this paper has a rather narrow focus. It will remain wrapped up in the argument that Muhammad's ultimate goal was to simply share the religion, and in such a way that allowed as many as possible to choose *islām*.⁸ It is commonly known that Islam was extremely successful even in its earliest years, but that statement is only half true. It was only during Muhammad's last decade of proselytizing that the religion began to receive a large number of converts. Still, by the time Muhammad died, the Islamic community was the largest body in the Arab region.⁹ What somehow has remained unknown by the general populace of the West is exactly how and why the religion became a success in such a short amount of time. Because we are without knowledge of certain subjects in Islam, we have ended up neglecting information that could be very beneficial in our perception of Islam and its situation today.

Muhammad somehow was able to incorporate the culture and traditions that previously existed in the region where Islam was first developed with new transcendent principles and movements that came along with God's final message. The two Muhammadan principles that will be discussed in great detail are the *umma*, or the Muslim community, and *jihad*. The *umma* and *jihad* both played an integral role in early

⁸ Islam is used to define the religion but also means to "submit" to God and to Muhammad as the final prophet of God. Therefore to make *islām* is to make submission. In this context *islām* is typically defined today as peace through submission.

⁹ Within another few decades the community grew large enough that it was in many respects comparable in size and power to the other great empires of the world.

Islam, but not nearly at the same level, or in the way that is commonly known in the West. *Jihad* is pertinent to this study because it is often believed to be the ultimate reason for Muhammad's success. I will argue otherwise. *Jihad* has been misunderstood historically and because of that it is still misunderstood and at times misrepresented. We will see, through historical data, that *jihad* not only revolutionized the world from which it sprang, but also worked in conjunction with Muhammad's overall goal to share Islam peacefully. The *umma*, a radically different principle than *jihad*, was the driving force behind Islam, and the main factor for the religion's success. Muhammad used its ideological powers to bind the various bodies of Muslim believers into one, unified, community by incorporating existing cultural traits with a religious concept that reformed the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. I believe that Muhammad used the *umma* as a vehicle for a non-aggressive consolidation, leading outsiders to Islam and resulting expansion.

To attempt to understand Muhammad and what he set out to do some 1,400 years ago allows us to see Islam (as best we as can) in its most fundamental form. It can also help disprove several shameful fallacies, while at the same time provide information that can assist in the comprehension of the crisis that has caused so much dismay both in and outside the Islamic body in recent years. Details of Muhammad's ambition to spread Islam; a direct presentation and discussion of the *umma* and *jihad* during Muhammad's life; and a much needed connection between the historical data and the current views of Islam will be explained in this manner during the following three chapters.

Chapter one will primarily focus on information pertaining to the world before Islam and Muhammad's earliest years as a prophet. Beginning with his first encounter

with the divine and ending with a review of the Media compact. Claims have been made that Muhammad's motivation, and Islam's true reason for early and rapid success was through Islamic *jihad*, or holy war, and the conquering of the "other." In truth, the world and culture from which Islam sprang was accustomed to warfare and treating the "other" as the enemy. It was actually Muhammad who created the first inclusive, universal religious community and accepted new believers whenever and wherever possible.

Chapter two will focus on the development of *jihad*, its purpose, and its use throughout Muhammadan expansion. This section will also continue to explain how Muhammad took the *umma* and used it as the main tool for the spreading of Islam through a socio-religious process of consolidation.

Chapter three will primarily center on an analysis of the material covered in the previous chapters and how it can be used today. It is here that we shall find that a coherent approach to Islam can better allow us, the average Anglo-Saxon layperson, to effectively ascertain the religion in its current setting and what we can do to assist the religion in its current crisis. For instance, we will try to answer the question, if the *umma* was the single most significant factor in Islam's rapid expansion, and the primary vehicle used by Muhammad to spread Islam, how, then can it be used to assist the religion in the twenty-first century?

TRIBALISM TO UNIVERSALISM THROUGH TRANSCENDENT PRINCIPLES

AN INTRODUCTION TO MUHAMMAD

In 610 C.E. Muhammad ibn [son of] Abdallah, at the age of forty, was visited in the night by the angel Gabriel, or Jibril in Arabic, while praying and contemplating in his favorite cave atop Mount Hira near Mecca during the seventeenth day of the month of Ramadan. We find in the *Sīra*, a collection of Muhammad's biographies, that upon that mountaintop the angel commanded Muhammad to "Iqra'!" which can be interpreted as "Read!" or "Proclaim!" or "Recite!" Muhammad, who was under a terrifying embrace by the angel, replied that he was not one of the prophets of Arabia and therefore unworthy to perform such an act.¹⁰ It was then that Gabriel embraced Muhammad even tighter until, "just as he thought he had reached the end of his endurance, he found the divinely inspired words of a new scripture pouring from his mouth."¹¹ These words, later documented in the ninety-sixth Sūrah [Chapter] of the Qur'an as translated read:

Proclaim (or Read)! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who
created—created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood. Proclaim!
And thy Lord is Most Bountiful—he who taught (the use of) the Pen—

¹⁰ Some scholars believe it was Muhammad's illiteracy that drove him to react to the angel's proclamation, especially if the translation is taken as "Read!" It is also possible that Muhammad thought he was being controlled by an evil spirit. Emory C. Bogle, *Islam: Origin and Belief* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 7; also see 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, "Introduction," in *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'ān*, 10th ed. (Beltsville, MA: amana publications, 1997), 9.

¹¹ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 46.

taught man that which he knew not...Nay, heed him not: but bow down in adoration, and bring thyself the closer (to Allah).¹²

It was on this night that Muhammad's life was changed forever and the newest world religion and imperial power was born.

Remarkably, by the time Muhammad died in 632 C.E., twenty-two years after his first divine experience with Gabriel, virtually all of the inhabitants in the region were followers of the final Prophet's message. Possibly even more remarkable was what occurred within the following century. Islam morphed from its desert cult status into one of the world's most impressive empires, stretching from Spain to present-day Pakistan.¹³ A phenomenon no other religion can claim in such a short amount of time. Today we must ask ourselves what exactly took place to allow a new religion founded in the Arabian Desert to become so successful, and furthermore, how it was able to develop and spread so quickly? The answers to these questions lie within a number of transcendent principles initiated by Muhammad during Islam's initial movement.

The objective of this chapter will be to provide an accurate account of Islam's history in relation to our topic. The first section will focus on the world from which Islam sprang and effects Islam had on that world. Special attention will be paid to the development of a nomadic presence within Arabia and the changes that occurred between

¹² Qur'an 96: 1-5, 19. All Qur'anic quotations are taken from the translation of 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'ān*, 10th ed. (Beltsville, MA: amana publications, 1997), unless otherwise stated. The words quoted here may be known as the first to be recited by Muhammad through the angel Gabriel, but should not be mistaken for the most significant. The main message in the faith are those of the *Shahadah*, which literally means "the Testimony." They are, "I proclaim that there is no God (Allah) but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God." To say this in true belief during one's life is to become a Muslim.

¹³ William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 1.

the Bedouin/tribal and Islamic/universal community structures, as well as the historical context behind the advent of Islam's first transcendent principles. The second section will follow the early expansion of Islam and will study the factors that led to the religion's ability to maintain jurisdiction over its Believers while at the same time keeping to a focused religious purpose. As a result we will find that the socio-religious concepts of *tawhid* and *umma* were the most essential elements to building of Islam's early success.

EARLY HISTORY OF ARABIA

The earliest known data on ancient Arabia is not pertinent to our endeavor and will only be covered in brief. The reason for its inclusion is to simply show that while the region has changed and developed over the centuries, it has always remained a significant gateway or land bridge.

Scholars find the southern most regions of Arabia were the most hospitable and easily accessed and therefore most heavily populated in antiquity. It was this southern arena that served as the center for the Sabeen kingdom, a Semitic people dating as early as the tenth to eighth century B.C.E.¹⁴ Greek sources tell us that sometime within the fourth century B.C.E. Alexander the Great's interest in southern Arabia heightened. It is likely that Alexander sent ships to explore the coast of the Red Sea with intentions to find and control significant trade routes linking the Fertile Crescent with India.¹⁵ Sabā'

¹⁴ Saba is possibly connected with biblical Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-10 and 2 Chronicles 9:1-9). For more on this see Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, 6th ed. (London: Hutchinson, 1950; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 24. Citations are to the Oxford University Press edition.

¹⁵ Lewis, *Arabs in History*, 24; Cleveland, *Modern Middle East*, 7.

fared well for several centuries, giving rise to the Abyssinian Empire in Africa, but eventually the smaller kingdom could not contend with the spreading Christian power and by the fifth century C.E. the kingdom of Sabā' was engulfed into the growing Christian kingdom in Ethiopia.¹⁶

More important to us is the history of western and northern Arabia—the desert arena. This region of the peninsula lacked the resources found farther south causing a more nomadic, clan like presence. These nomads were known primarily as traders, shepherds, and caravaneers, and were able to survive the harsh deserts by traveling to and from the few oases that spotted the landscape.¹⁷ Despite the unfavorable conditions, this arena maintained a healthy trade enterprise and was used as a land cushion between rival empires in the east and west and thus was amidst conflict for much of the Byzantine period.¹⁸

JĀHILIYYAH

Our study begins during the pre-Islamic Era, a period the Muslim deems the *jāhiliyyah*, traditionally known as the age of ignorance.¹⁹ In the late sixth and early

¹⁶ Lewis, *Arabs in History*, 24.

¹⁷ The Bible and various extra-biblical sources make reference to these nomadic tribes sparsely before the Common Era. The first documented nomadic leader, the Nabatean king Haritha, dates to 167 B.C.E. Ibid., 26.

¹⁸ James M. Monson, *Regions on the Run: Introductory Map Studies in the Land of the Bible* (Rockford: Biblical Backgrounds, 1998), 21.

¹⁹ Today Islamic fundamentalists will use *jāhiliyyah* in other ways such as to define a society or group that has (in the view of the accuser) led themselves astray from God. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 54, 201.

seventh centuries C.E. the main competition for control of the Near East was between the western Roman-Byzantine Empire and the eastern Sasanian Empire, centered in Iran.²⁰

The rivalry between the Byzantines and Sasanians was only a continuation of a five hundred year struggle between Rome and Persia.²¹ The Roman-Byzantine state on the eve of Islam encompassed almost every province along the Mediterranean, including Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and sections of Iraq and Anatolia. The militaristically driven Sasanians, centered at Ctesiphon on the Tigris River, controlled current day Iran, Iraq, and sections of central Asia.

In the fourth century the Byzantine Empire, under Constantine, made Christianity the state religion and moved their center of government from Rome farther east. This shift to the Emperor's city of Constantinople (today's Istanbul) caused the Roman influence of the empire to diminish and a Greek, Byzantine Empire to emerge.²² Since that time, conflicts began to develop within the state's movement to convert the kingdom to Greek Orthodox Christianity, eventually leading to a civil war between the empire and its various Christian and Jewish sects. Similarly, the Sasanian's state religion, Zoroastrianism (or Magianism), was losing its attraction among the local population, over time causing a wave of disconnection between the kingdom and its leaders.

²⁰ The smaller kingdoms of Himyar of southern Arabia and Axum in the Horn of Africa played a much smaller role in conflicts during the period and therefore will be omitted from this study. Cleveland, *Modern Middle East*, 4; Fred M. Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate: Political History of the Islamic Empire up to the Mongol Conquest," in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1-61.

²¹ Ibid., 1.

²² Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 7.

Imperial rivalries between the Byzantines and Sasanians developed over land extensions and the control of the “Orient trade” around 540 C.E. leading to war in the years that followed.²³ In 602 C.E. the Sasanians, led by Khusrrau, made conquest capturing Jerusalem and most of Egypt. Twenty years later, the Byzantines, under Heraclius, counteracted the Sasanians offensive by attacking their capital, Ctesiphon.

During this period of intensive warfare, Arabian tribal groups, who lived in the deserted outskirts of the two kingdoms, were hired to control the Arabian buffer zone.²⁴ Management of this area allowed the imperial powers to guard the entrance to their kingdoms, as well as gather information from tribes controlling the major trade routes. Consequently, many of the tribes, such as the Nabateans, were heavily influenced by the politics, religion, economics, and culture of the greater Near East, eventually causing some Arab tribes to acculturate and assimilate to the larger kingdoms at bay.²⁵ Around the mid seventh-century, both the Sasanians and the Byzantines had exhausted their resources militarily and financially, and retreated to deal with internal issues within their own kingdoms.²⁶ As a result the remaining tribes, located in the central and western desert arenas, began another more prominent period of anarchical nomadic existence.

²³ Arabian incense, along with Chinese silk and Indian spices, were the most lucrative goods in Orient commerce.

²⁴ Donner, “Muhammad and the Caliphate,” 3.

²⁵ The Nabateans, an earlier tribe (200 B.C.E.-200 C.E), are the most well known of the acculturated Arab tribes. The only buffer tribes to remain fully intact during the invasion of the Sasanian and Byzantine empires were the tribes of Lakhm (east) and Ghassan (west). These tribes preserved their Arabic language and culture, but took Christianity as their religion. Lewis, *Arabs in History*, 28; Reuven Firestone, *Jihād: The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 25.

²⁶ Cleveland, *Modern Middle East*, 5.

THE RISE OF THE BEDOUIN

The time of transition between the imperial powers led to the rise of Bedouin tribalism. The communal, nomadic living structure of these peoples can be described as follows:

The group is held together externally by the need for self-defense against the hardships and dangers of desert life, internally by the blood-tie of descent in the male line which is the basic social bond. The livelihood of the tribe depends on their flocks and herds and on the raiding the neighboring settled countries and such caravans as still venture to cross Arabia.²⁷

This nomadic, family-based, Bedouin type of existence practically became the sole method for surviving life in deserts of Arabia. As a result, the Bedouin tribal system became the central arrangement for local Arab relations.²⁸ Everything was organized through family and kinship-based tribes. Because Arabia was primarily deserted, the Bedouin had to move continuously to find food for their flocks. Competition for the prime grazing grounds became a typical phenomenon. Consequently, Bedouin men were brought up to be warriors and the brave defenders of their livelihood.²⁹

Other customs were also passed down through the generations. Among the most interesting of these traditions was the practice of animistic worship within the Bedouin community. This practice was related to the pagan, polydaemonic beliefs of the nomadic communities. The religion honored beings that were considered the original inhabitants

²⁷ Lewis, *Arabs in History*, 29.

²⁸ Cleveland, *Modern Middle East*, 6.

²⁹ Bravery was revered in nomadic culture. A certain type of poetic writing called *qasidah*, written rhyming poetic conventions, emerged from the Arabian-Bedouin oral tradition to celebrate a Bedouin's bravery. Surviving written *qasidah* have led scholars to believe that the Arabs had some sort of universal script by the seventh century. Other Arabic inscriptions date even earlier, to the fourth century. Hourani, *Arab Peoples*, 13.

of certain places. The most well known of these Gods were Manat, Uzza, and Allat, and all were subordinates to the highest deity, Allah.³⁰ Each tribe was represented by a God, usually in the form of a stone, and could be found housed in a special tent that moved with the nomadic commune. Because of the religious connection, tribes were most often identified by the God they worshiped, again causing an exclusive, common bond between tribal members.³¹ Muhammad himself was born into the Hashim, a sub-tribe of the Quraysh located in Mecca, the religious and commercial center for western Arabia.

Several key observations can be made from the information found above. First, Islam was born out of a world that was almost solely focused on internal, rather than external affairs. The lull between the east and the west quieted influences from outside the desert arena, creating the ideal environment for a new religion to develop. Those that were affected had been swallowed up by the larger empires and did not see the true nomadic tribes of western Arabia, such as the Quraysh, as a threat to their existence. This is not to say that more popular religions like Christianity and Judaism had little influence on Muhammad and the way in which the religion developed, but rather that the lack of an imperial power within the region allowed Islam to grow in a way that did was certainly unique to the time period. Imperial powers were always quick to extinguish contending groups before they became a threat.

Second, the world from which Islam developed was the world of the Bedouin. Family groups and tribal relations were practically the sole method for existence in the Arabian deserts. Muhammad and the early Islamic cult were originally seen as

³⁰ Lewis, *Arabs in History*, 30.

³¹ Ibid.

disturbance to the tribal and religious systems in Arabia and thus were forced to leave the comforts of Mecca and the Quraysh, the powerful tribe in Arabia.³²

MUHAMMAD AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY

It took two years before Muhammad shared his revelations (or recitations) outside his immediate family.³³ Muhammad knew that he would be ridiculed, mocked, and possibly even killed for professing himself a prophet to the Qurayshites. Still, he tried in the name of Allah the compassionate and the merciful. During his first three years of mission Muhammad spoke his message only in private, which surprisingly led to a sizeable group of Believers, in part because of his ability to focus on making Islam inclusive to all.³⁴

Eventually, the word of Muhammad's ministry leaked out to the leaders of the Quraysh, causing a sort of uprising within the community. Primarily because of certain discrepancies between Muhammad's teaching and the beliefs within Bedouin culture, especially the notion of the Last Judgment, and more importantly, a single deity.³⁵ In

³² Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 9; Hourani, *Arab Peoples*, 15.

³³ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 89.

³⁴ Ibn Shiḥan al-Zuhri, born a generation after the death of Muhammad, is one of Islam's first historiographers. He writes, "The Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) summoned to Islam secretly, and there responded to God whom He would of the young men and weak people so that those who believed in him were numerous, and the unbelieving Quraysh did not criticize what he said. When he passed by them, as they sat in groups, they would point to him, 'There is the youth of the clan of Abd al-Muttalib who speaks things from heaven.'" "Weak" here is meant to describe the weaker tribes within Mecca, not the people themselves. Such writings are included in the *Sīra*. Quoted in Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 103-04.

³⁵ More on this conflict can be found in Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 105-07.

fact, “in the year 616 there was a crisis. Up to this point, Muhammad had made no official mention of the other Arabian deities. Many of the Qurayshites probably assumed that they could go on venerating al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat [the main Bedouin deities] in the traditional way. Muhammad does not appear to have stressed the monotheistic element of his revelation. But eventually he was forced to speak out. When he forbade his converts to worship the *banat al-Llah* [Allah], he discovered that he lost most of his supporters overnight and that the Qur’an was about to split the tribe of Quraysh.”³⁶ As a result, Muhammad’s followers were forced to leave Mecca on a Ban initiated by the majority of the tribal community.³⁷ It may be that Muhammad and the new faith was also looked upon as a threat to the Quraysh’s economic and political aristocrats.³⁸ As Muhammad left his home for Yathrib, an oasis town located 250 miles north of Mecca, he centered his sights on finding a transcendent reality that would allow him to connect the divisions that were now ever-present between the God Muhammad was preaching of and the community he was preaching to.

At first the Muslims made camp on the outskirts of Yathrib. The town was in the midst of civil conflict between the Jews and several distinct Bedouin tribes at the time of

³⁶ Ibid., 107.

³⁷ It is recorded that the early Muslims sought refuge across the sea in Abyssinia. Muhammad left Mecca a year later, with the death of his uncle and protector Abu Talib. Muhammad’s first wife and convert Khadijah also died that same year (619). Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 132; Donner, “Muhammad and the Caliphate,” 8.

³⁸ Muhammad Nazer Ka-ka Khel, “The Rise of Muslim *Umma* at Mecca and Its Integration,” *Hamdard Islamicus Quarterly Journal of the Hamdard National Foundation Pakistan* 5, no. 3 (1982): 59-74.

Muhammad's arrival.³⁹ Muhammad quickly influenced Yathrib as an outsider, partially because he was not a member any of the warring tribes, partially because of his leadership and peacekeeping skills, and finally, because of his appealing prophecies. After a time, the tribes of Yathrib swore to Muhammad's message, in many ways uniting both of the town's tribes together under Islam.⁴⁰ Because the Bedouin tribes had lived among the Jewish monotheists before Muhammad's arrival, it is likely that they were more accepting of his new message and therefore easier to convert.

As Muhammad was welcomed into Yathrib his message became more refined. It is possible that his encounter with the Arabian tribes of Yathrib helped him to discover that the key to sharing Islam would be through the means of a created unity among the believers. Here we encounter *tawhid*, the fundamental principle in Islam. *Tawhid* explains the theory of interpretation within the religion, meaning, how a Muslim is to see God and his or herself as within God's community. In brief, the term defines the Islamic form of monotheism, but it actually is much more than that. *Tawhid* means to proclaim that there is not only one God, but also that there is unity under God, and moreover, that there is unity for all under God. Thus, the opposite of *tawhid* or unity is division or *shirk*. Historically, *shirk* is used in reference to the polydemonic, animistic faith practiced in Bedouin culture, but it can also claim importance when talking about division in another

³⁹ According to *ahadith*, the two major pagan Bedouin tribes in Yathrib upon Muhammad's arrival were the *aus* and *khazraj*. Additionally, there were three Jewish tribes—the *banu qainuka'a*, the *banu nadhir*, and the *banu qurayza*. Hadith no. 1582 as by 'A'ishah, wife of the Holy Prophet. More information on *ahadith* can be found in the following chapter. This saying was taken from the Al Islam *ahadith* database of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Da'wah and Guidance, <http://hadith.al-islam.com/bayan/display.asp?Lang=eng&ID=1582> (accessed March 18, 2006).

⁴⁰ Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 8.

light. Muhammad recognized that there was not only religious *shirk* occurring in Yathrib between the Bedouin, Jews, and Muslims, but also a communal *shrik*. As a result, he began to promote a call for a unified community under Islam. However, it was not *tawhid* alone that allowed Muhammad to gain control of Yathrib. The way in which Muhammad used the concept was equally significant. A peaceful process of consolidation was actually beginning to occur as a result of the Muhammad's institutionalization of the concept of unity through the religion.

At this point, Muhammad had been promoted from the position of a rejected cult proselytizer to the acting authority over Yathrib, which eventually became known as Medina, "the Prophet's city." Muhammad had made progress in bringing together the two tribes of the oasis through *tawhid*, but out of the arrangement came a new kinship based rivalry between the *muhājirūn*, the "Emigrant" Believers, who had followed Muhammad on the *hirja* [migration] from Mecca to Medina, and the *anṣār* tribe. The *anṣār*, also known as the "Helpers," were the original inhabitants of the oasis, now combined as a Medinan supertribe.⁴¹ Plus, Muhammad still had to deal with the Jewish presence that had existed in Medina since its conception. Initially, Muhammad solved the problem by putting both the Emigrants and the Helpers to work on Islam's first place of worship.⁴² However, Muhammad knew that something else was needed to create a formal bond between the two Muslim communities. Thus, a treaty was made between the tribes in the form of a written document, one of the first of its kind in history.

⁴¹ "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 9.

⁴² The mosque of Medina is Islam's oldest mosque and also served as Muhammad's home. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 154.

THE MEDINA CHARTER

In 622, Muhammad initiated the Charter or Constitution of Medina, an official document created to unite the Emigrants and the Helpers in a lasting, single community. In the charter, one can find clauses calling for judicial practice, fund raising; sections centered on how Islam will co-exist with the Jewish tribes of Medina; and most significantly, a treaty or pact between the old and new Muslim Believers.⁴³ The latter will be the primary focus of discussion here.

The document, which was remarkably preserved through the centuries, is able to spell things out quite clearly on its own:

“In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. (1) This is a document from Muhammad the prophet (governing the relations) between the believers and Muslims of Quraysh [Emigrants] and Yathrib [Helpers], and those who followed them and joined them and labored with them. (2) They are one community (umma) to the exclusion of all men.”⁴⁴

Here we must explain in greater detail the importance of the Islamic *umma*. The *umma* can cleanly and simply be defined as the unified body of believers under Islam. But there is something more to the *umma* than just an Arabic word that defines the Muslim community.⁴⁵ It was also the means by which Islam was able to spread and become so

⁴³ The document has been divided into forty-seven separate clauses. The first amendments in the Constitution of Medina are focused on bridging the community through the *umma*, which helps provide support for the belief that the constitution was primarily created for that purpose. For a translated copy of the document, see appendix A. Moshe Gil, “The Constitution of Medina: A Reconsideration,” *Israel Oriental Studies* 4, Tel Aviv University (1974): 44-66.

⁴⁴ A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* — A translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1955), 231-33. Numbering added.

⁴⁵ It is believed that the *umma* was first developed as an Islamic principle in the Charter of Medina. Khel, “The Rise of Muslim *Umma*,” 63.

successful. The genius involved in this act can sometimes be overlooked, so an attempt to make it clearer will be provided here. First, Muhammad realized that a merely spiritual concept of unity would not suffice in the quest to link the two communities. At the point of the charter's conception, Muhammad had made it clear that *tawhid* proclaimed an ideological religious unity; transcending race, language, and color, but the two groups were still separated and needed to be bridged together.⁴⁶ When Muhammad brought the Emigrants, the Helpers, and the Jews together—to sign a pact between them—he was able to claim his seat as the head of Islamic Medina, as well as integrate its various clans.⁴⁷ In other words, Muhammad was able to combine religious interpretation with a socio-political proclamation. Second, Muhammad was able to capture elements of Bedouin culture within the *umma*. As we have learned, nomadic life at the time of Islam's arrival was completely dependent on kinship. It was this sense of tribal reliance that caused most of the problems in Medina. Muhammad knew that the only way to

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ The charter on Jews: “(16) To the Jew who follows us belong help and equality. He shall not be wronged nor shall his enemies be aided...(25) The Jews of the B. ‘Auf are one community with the believers (the Jews have their religion and the Muslims have theirs), their freedmen and their persons except those who behave unjustly and sinfully, for they hurt but themselves and their families...(46) The Jews of al-Aus, their freedmen and themselves have the same standing with the people of this document in purely loyalty from the people of this document. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. He who acquires ought acquire it for himself. God approves of this document...(37) The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and loyalty is a protection against treachery. A man is not liable for his ally's misdeeds. The wronged must be helped.” On Muhammad's role: “(23) Whenever you differ about a matter it must be referred to God and to Muhammad...(42) If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise it must be referred to God and to Muhammad the apostle of God. God accepts what is nearest to piety and goodness in this document.” A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*.

succeed in bridging the dissonance within Medina was to find a way to expand the tribe. The *umma* acted as the means to make it work by shifting of the view of the “other.” The “other” in this scenario and additional scenarios to come will be used to explain how one perceives another in relation to ones own self or to a social group to which the self belongs.⁴⁸ We will find that Muhammad, and his use of *tawhid* and the *umma* caused a major shift in ones perception of his or herself to the “other.” With the incorporation of these transcendent principles ones psychic configuration moved from one side of the spectrum to the other. For instance, those who recognized themselves as excluded, found that they were included, causing them to look at their position as inclusive and others as exclusive. In the same way a tribe that looked at Muhammad and Islam as the enemy morphed their view of the *umma* once they had become an ally. As a result, Muhammad’s foe also became the foe of the newly united tribe. When one submitted to Islam, it too created a change in that individuals view of the “other.” Now they perceived themselves as believing-in and practicing the right religion and “other” as those who had not yet mad *islām*.

In this case Muhammad took Medina Charter and used it to create unity among the separate tribes by expanding the already existing Bedouin tribal system to include the entire religious body. To point was to make a Muslim see themselves not as an adherent belonging to a certain tribe, but as a Believer and member of the complete Islamic *umma*. With this a new, all encompassing kinship system was created between the tribes of

⁴⁸ This particular concept of the “other” has been borrowed from a fantastic anthropological work on American natives and colonialists by Tzvetan Todorov. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

Medina, and the Muslim view of the “other” morphed from the rival Muslims to a larger group that had rejected Islam years before—the Quraysh of Mecca. The charter further exemplifies these points:

“(12)(b) A believer shall not take as an ally the freedman of another Muslim against him...(14) A believer shall not slay a believer for the sake of an unbeliever, nor shall he aid an unbeliever against a believer...(15) God’s protection is one, the least of them may give protection to a stranger on their behalf. Believers are friends one to the other to the exclusion of outsiders...(19) The believers must avenge the blood of one another shed in the way of God...(39) Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document...(43) Quraysh and their helpers shall not be given protection...(44) The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib.”⁴⁹

Finally, it should be noted that Muhammad intended the *umma* to be an inclusive, peace-bearing group focused on the advancement of Islam specifically.⁵⁰ Muhammad himself proclaims this message in multiple Median recitations: “The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that ye may receive mercy (Qur’an 49:10).” “O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into Nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things) (Qur’an 49:13).” Muhammad

⁴⁹ A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*.

⁵⁰ See clause no. 39 and the multiple clauses in on the Jews in footnote no. 38. It is evident in these passages that Muhammad was willing to protect and accept Jews within his community. This *dhimmi* status also includes Christians, Zoroastrians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Sikhs—the “protected subjects” of Islam. “*Dhimmi*s were allowed full religious liberty and were able to organize their community according to their own customal law, but were required to recognize Islamic sovereignty.” Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), 200.

keeps to his message of peace within Islam in the treaty as well, “(13) The God-fearing believers shall be against the rebellious or him who seeks to spread injustice, or sin or animosity, or corruption between believers; the hand of every man shall be against him even if he be a son of one of them.”⁵¹ Additionally, if Muhammad had intentions to rule over Medina alone, territorial limits would have been given in treaty.⁵²

The historical progress between Islam’s commencement and the integration of Arab-Bedouin communities into the *umma* shows us what Muhammad’s intentions were for this new religion of Islam. His development of a spiritual, as well as political and social, belongingness through the principle of *tawhid* and the structure of the *umma*, as we shall see, changed Islam forever.

⁵¹ Also see charter clause no.17 and no. 45a. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*.

⁵² Khel, “The Rise of Muslim *Umma*,” 61.

EXPANSION BY CONSOLIDATAION VS. CONQUEST THROUGH *JIHAD*

A NEW ERA

Muhammad thus far appears to be holding true to his position as a prophet, attempting to share his God driven message of a final, unified religion, even through astringent persecution. Muhammad was pushing for positive, spiritual and social elements that seemed only to benefit those who heard them: oneness with God and community; regularity in prayer; almsgiving and kindness to those less fortunate; decent respect for other religions of the book; modesty towards the opposite sex; humility towards oneself; and a call to fight against evils and actively promote good.⁵³ However, one cannot achieve a thorough study of Muhammad's intentions for Islam or the immediate effects he made on the religion without looking at his role holistically.

The present chapter will focus its attention on the first years of the Muslim Era, beginning in 622 C.E., and the ways in which Islam continued to progress during that period.⁵⁴ Muhammad may have been successful in taking Islam from its small, oppressed state at Mecca to a new, autonomous, religious reality at Medina, but in the

⁵³ Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 7.

⁵⁴ 622 marks the first year of the Islamic dating system, or the Muslim Era (Islamic Era). This particular year is the year in which the Believers made their migration from Mecca to Medina; the first year God's final plan began to seep into history.

years that followed a plethora of new issues began to develop, the central of them being the

maintenance of the *umma*. The Quraysh in Mecca at this point were aghast at Muhammad's progress and were beginning to act against Islam with hostility. It was this clash between the Medinan Muslims and the Meccan Qurayshites that Muhammad would spend the rest of his life addressing.

This chapter will look at how Muhammad dealt with the Quraysh, and also how he was able to succeed in incorporating the inhabitants of Mecca and other areas of western Arabia into the Islamic kingdom. It is during this period that the infamous doctrine of *jihad* was installed into Islam by Muhammad. To get an understanding of the concept, a historical study of Muhammad's use of *jihad*, its connections to the concept of "holy war," its purpose for Islam, and its contribution to Islam's early success will be provided. In the end, we should see that Muhammad's ability to expand the religion was not due to *jihad*, but a continuation of consolidation by morphing the view of the "other."

MECCA AGAINST MEDINA

Scholars often identify the early expansionist period of Islam as a time of "conquest." Using generic terms and definitions, when a group is on conquest they are in the act of attempting to conquer another, and if successful they are, as a result, captivating or overcoming some sort of opposition. Although Islam did conquer other groups during its expansion are we confident that "conquest," as we know it, was Muhammad's main objective, or the leading factor for the religion's advancement? To answer these questions we will have to study the progression of the faith and its community until Muhammad's death in 632.

Muhammad is usually depicted in his biography as a pious, religious, leader turned power hungry army general.⁵⁵ Our goal is to see if this is really the case, and furthermore, if this was the reason Muhammad was successful in spreading Islam. In other words, we will try to answer whether the leading factor in Islam's advancement was through Muhammad's use of the sword or something relatively different.

At Medina, Muhammad incorporated several rather aggressive laws upon the newly developed *umma* in his constitution, such as: avenging "the blood of one another" and the "retaliation" against someone who has been "convicted of killing a believer without good reason."⁵⁶ But given that these laws were made in the early seventh century and that Muhammad was bringing Islam up in the world of the tribal, war based Bedouin culture is there much to criticize here? Multiple states in the U.S.A. still currently hold laws that allow a convicted criminal to be killed when they have committed murder.⁵⁷ So then, what other factors have led academics and laypersons to look upon the Prophet with unfavorable eyes?

After the *umma* had been established, Muhammad continued to share God's message at Medina, but now under a greater opposition. The Quraysh were still the powerhouse in western Arabia, continuing to develop their monopoly over the *hijaz* trading system since Byzantine and Sasanian empires began their retreat.⁵⁸ Because of

⁵⁵ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 164.

⁵⁶ See Medina Charter clauses no. 19 and no. 21 in A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*.

⁵⁷ Of the fifty states, thirty-eight still have the death penalty. Thirty-three of those thirty-eight are still actively executing convicted criminals.

⁵⁸ The *hijaz* defines the mountainous region of western Arabia along the Red Sea.

their commercial dominance, the Quraysh were able to use economic tribal ties to pursue Muhammad.⁵⁹ To stay alive Muhammad and his followers had to literally defend themselves, sometimes by fighting back against the Meccan tribes.⁶⁰ When Muhammad entered Medina, Mecca immediately cut their trade with believers of the new faith, forcing Muhammad to occasionally raid Quraysh caravans to obtain supplies. Raids or *ghazu*, at the time of Muhammad “had long been a sort of national sport in Arabia and an accepted way of making ends meet when times were hard.”⁶¹ The Prophet only allowed raids when they were direly needed, and only the Emigrants, who were already enemies to the Meccans and without stable income, were allowed involvement.⁶² A somewhat reputable choice, all things considered.

Muhammad’s raids were initially conducted without the intention to kill the Quraysh. In fact, warnings were even given away to the caravans before a raid was

⁵⁹ Donner, “Muhammad and the Caliphate,” 10.

⁶⁰ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 168.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁶² The earliest Qu’ranic verses on defending Islam were made shortly after the Emigrants arrival to Medina. It is here that Muhammad gave permission only for the original Believers of Mecca to act against the Quraysh when necessary or warred upon: “To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged—and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid—(they are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right—(for no cause) expect that they say, ‘Our Lord is Allah (Qur’an 22:39-40)...’”. Qur’an 14:37 speaks of a Mecca that lacked agricultural resources, another reason for the Emigrants inability to survive without seeking outside assistance. John L. Esposito, “Ten Things Everyone Needs to Know About Islam,” in *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), http://arabworld.nitle.org/texts.php?module_id=2&reading_id=62&sequence=9 (accessed April 15, 2006); Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 169.

conducted.⁶³ A disputed *hadith* tells of a raid programmed by Muhammad in 624 that involved the killing of a Quraysh tradesman during the sacred month of Rajab, a time when all tribal fighting was forbidden.⁶⁴ Because Islam did not honor all Bedouin traditions, such as Rajab, Muhammad may have thought it acceptable to kill a caravaneer if need be. When the news of the event was ill received at Medina, Muhammad quickly rebuked the raid and rebuffed the collected booty. He then promptly made an exchange for the two merchants that were captured by the Emigrants in the same raid for two Muslim prisoners that were being held in Mecca. This story helps to clarify that the *umma* still maintains its hold as Muhammad's most important priority in Islam. When Muhammad heard that the *umma* was upset that the ancient Bedouin tradition of Rajab was not being followed, he tried his best to keep the Believers from losing their trust in their leader and the new religion. Muhammad's hope was to gather goods from this caravan, but not at the expense of the *umma*'s morale. If this story is true, it marks the beginning of a heated four-year struggle between Mecca and Medina.

At this point, Muhammad reached a pivotal place in his career. He knew the *umma* would fail if he did not defend the faith and fight back against the warring tribes, but how would he do so without losing the elements that encompassed Islam's true message? The last thing Muhammad wanted was to send Believers into battle without an understanding of why it was they were fighting, and to what level it would play in the

⁶³ As a result the early raids of 623 were unsuccessful. W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 5; Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 169.

⁶⁴ The original sources conflict on the story. Ibn Ishaq (d. 768), one of Islam's earliest historians, does not mention a killing or even a raid in his account. Instead the Emigrants were sent to spy on the caravan. Muhammad ibn Umar al-Waqidi, a later historian, writes of an attack and a killing. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 170.

religion. So he created a new principle, *jihad*, which was to be used to keep such unfortunate matters focused on God and Islam's true purpose.

HOLY WAR

Out of the Islamic principles initiated by Muhammad *jihad* is perhaps the most well known and least understood. The purpose at this time is not to make sense of *jihad* as it is or should be seen today, but to attempt to see what it was originally, when Muhammad created and applied it to the existing *umma*. In 624 Muhammad began to realize that the only way Islam was going to be able to continue to expand, and more so, to survive, was if the Believers fought back against the imposing tribes, now fueled by the death of one of their own caravaneers. Warfare and honor through fighting, as we have learned, was a normal part of life in Arabia before and during the seventh century. In the years that followed, Muhammad found himself fighting in historic battles at Badr (624), Uhud (625), and Khandaq (627), leading many in the present day to think that *jihad* dealt primarily with creating a religious justification for war.⁶⁵ As a result, we often hear *jihad* and “holy war” used coterminously today. Jihad, at the time of Muhammad, did in fact deal with “holy war” but not nearly at the level often assumed. The “semantic meaning of the Arabic term *jihad* has no relation to holy war or even to war in general” and literally “means to strive, to exert oneself, to struggle,” or to take

⁶⁵ Muhammad, during his last nine years, has been recorded as participating in some twenty-seven campaigns. He was also involved in the formulation of another fifty-nine others. Raids are included in these numbers. David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 6.

extraordinary pains.⁶⁶ The word derives from the root *jihada*, meaning the exertion of “one’s utmost power, efforts, endeavors, or ability in contending with an object of disapprobation.”⁶⁷ An “object” in Islam’s earliest literature usually was described as aspects of the self, a known enemy, or the devil.⁶⁸ Therefore, it is important to understand that there were, as intended, many forms of *jihad*.

To speak of “holy war” at the time of Muhammad is not to speak of it in ill favor. Muslims were not fighting simply to take over another in these initial battles, but were fighting to keep afloat. This is aligned with the common conception of just war. Additionally, Muhammad was incorporating purpose into these battles, helping to keep the religion aligned, even during warring periods. At Badr, the Believers were said to have numbered half that of the opposing Quraysh.⁶⁹ The details of the battle will only be mentioned here, but that should not discredit the event as one of the landmark events in early Islam. The Quraysh brought up a large force of some 1,000 men to protect a Meccan caravan. Muhammad, who was in dire need of food and supplies, was hoping the caravan would arrive long before the Meccan force allowing the Muslims to retreat and Islam to survive another day. To Muhammad’s misfortune, the Quraysh did not

⁶⁶ Firestone, *Jihad*, 16; Rudolph Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1996), 1.

⁶⁷ Firestone, *Jihad*, 16.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Muhammad had gathered more than three hundred volunteers, seventy of them original Emigrants. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 170.

arrive as planned, and both parties were forced to pursue battle.⁷⁰ At the end of the day the Muslims were victorious. A number of factors may have played a role in the Qurayshite loss: lack of water, the fact that the Meccans had to fight uphill and with the sun in their eyes, or more likely because the Quraysh never thought Muhammad would have battled against such odds.⁷¹ Muhammad is sometimes attributed with recognition for the imposing victory, but in reality his warring tactics probably only played a small role. Muhammad was not a militaristic man; he was a religious man, always consulting other more knowledgeable members of the *umma* before a raid or battle.⁷² It seems most probable that Muhammad's reliance on Allah was what brought victory to the Muslims at Badr.⁷³ Muhammad's decision to meet the Quraysh could have easily brought upon Islam's demise, but it didn't. The Quraysh approached Muhammad with the expectation that the Muslims would flee at the sight of their much larger army. As a result, the Meccans panicked during the battle and fled with some of their men still under Muhammad's custody. In typical Arab-Bedouin war conduct, prisoners of such battles were killed on site, but Muhammad's religiously driven intentions, even under *jihad*, are found to be otherwise:

⁷⁰ Ibn Ishaq writes, "War was kindled and all was marred and the folk held stubbornly on their evil course." Because the Bedouin culture was centered on honor, when both parties met there was only two choices. Fight with dignity, or flee with cowardice. It was typical fashion for Arab Bedouin to begin a battle with single combats. This was done at Badr. Sources say that of the three combats, three Quraysh were killed and one Believer was mortally wounded. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 175.

⁷¹ Ibid., 176.

⁷² "When Muhammad learned that the Quraysh were prepared for his attack, he asked his warriors' advice and was assured..." Firestone, *Jihad*, 112.

⁷³ Also see Qur'an 8:5,6,9.

It has been narrated on the authority of ‘Umar b. al-Khattāb who said: When it was the day on which the Battle of Badr was fought, the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) cast a glance at the infidels, and they were on thousand while his own Companions were three hundred and nineteen....The Muslims that day (i.e. the day of the Battle of Badr) killed seventy persons and captured seventy...The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar (Allah be please with them): What is your opinion about these captives? Abū Bakr said: They are our kith and kin. I think you should release them after getting from them a ransom. This will be a source of strength to us against the infidels. It is quite possible that Allah may guide them to Islam. Then the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: What is your opinion, Ibn Khattab? He said: Messenger of Allah...hand them over to us so that we may cut off their heads...They are leaders and disbelievers and veterans among them. The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) approved the opinion of Abū Bakr. The next day...The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: I weep for what has happened to your companions for taking ransom (from the prisoners). I was shown torture to which they were subjected...⁷⁴

This *hadith* further contributes to a Muhammad that was driven to share Islam, rather than conqueror the enemy. We learn that among those captured were important Quraysh leaders that would probably have benefited Islam best dead. Yet Muhammad opts to do something radical. He releases them on ransom, hoping one day they too will submit to Allah and join the *umma*. It is even said that the prisoners were brought back to Medina and allowed to lodge in the houses of the Believers while negotiations were taking place with Mecca.⁷⁵ Some, in turn, converted to Islam during their time in Medina. With the victory at Badr, Islam and the *umma* now had new confidence and a new, growing

⁷⁴ This *hadith*, no. 4360, coincides with Qur’anic revelation 8:67. *Hadith* are short accounts of Muhammad’s saying or acts. Each *hadith* is preceded by a list of names that transmitted the account, helping with problems of authenticity. The words and deeds of Muhammad, found in *hadith*, are the second greatest source of law and doctrine in Islam. Today the reliability of certain *hadith* among scholars is hotly debated. This saying was taken from Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam*, 14.

⁷⁵ One *hadith* has Muhammad saying: “You must feed them as you feed yourselves, and clothe them as you clothe yourselves, and if you should set them on a hard task, you must help them in it yourselves.” Taken from Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 180.

position within Arabia. However, the Quraysh, now humiliated, were sure to retaliate and with such a force that could expunge Islam once and for all.

During the next year, the Quraysh came very close to doing just that when Muhammad narrowly escaped at the battle of Uhud.⁷⁶ Mecca marched on Medina with some 3,000 men, 3,000 camels, and two hundred horses, and camped upon a hill, Uhud, near the town.⁷⁷ The battle went to the Quraysh—twenty-two Meccans and sixty-five Muslims were killed—but the *umma* was left intact.⁷⁸ Here, the act of a justified holy battle was again in place. Muhammad had to fight in order to defend both the faith and the community. After the defeat Muhammad had to go to great lengths to keep the Muslims believing that God was still present on and off the battlefield.⁷⁹ Besides new revelations, Muhammad introduced polygamy as a way to keep the community together. The *umma* had lost a number of male Muslims from the battle, leaving their wives husbandless. To solve the problem males could take as many as four wives as long as an equitable lifestyle was maintained.⁸⁰

The next major battle, that of Khandaq in 627, was again a justified defensive battle at Medina. This time the Quraysh brought with them an army of 10,000.

⁷⁶ Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 8.

⁷⁷ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 186.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 188.

⁷⁹ Qur'an 3:140-42, 152.

⁸⁰ A discussion of polygamy in Islam deserves a great deal of attention, both from a historical and contemporary standpoint. The reason for including polygamy here is to simply offer an argument for its inclusion into Islam in relation to the protection of the *umma*. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 190.

Muhammad had roughly 3,000 behind the Median walls.⁸¹ It is here that the Jews of Arabia are brought back into our discussion. Up until this point, Muhammad had harbored many of the original Median Jews and accepted them as allies, despite their rejection of Islam. The Qurayshites knew this and attempted to bribe the Qurayzah Jews of Medina, hoping they would open Medina's rear gates so "they could begin their attack by slaughtering the women and children."⁸² When Muhammad heard of the Qurayzah's treachery, he sent one of his chiefs to determine the fate of the unfaithful. It was thus decided upon that after rejecting the option of submission to God, the seven hundred Jewish men were to be killed and the women and children sold into slavery.⁸³ Such a story, if true, is one that is hard to deal with, mirroring horrible acts that have been committed by various religions throughout history. It should be noted that Muhammad did offer the option of submission, and that the decision was made while the Muslims were narrowly escaping total annihilation. These rationalizations are being stated not for the sake of making peace with the act, but to point out that Muhammad made his decision, even in this situation, on defensive grounds. The Qurayzah were a large tribe, and could alone fatally damage the *umma*. Other Jewish tribes remained in Medina and continued to live among the Muslims in peace.⁸⁴ After nearly a month of desert siege, the Quraysh and its allies were forced to return home to recuperate.

⁸¹ Ibid., 203.

⁸² Ibid., 205.

⁸³ Ibid., 207.

⁸⁴ Other arguments like the lack of universal law and the Bedouin's primitive culture were also to blame for the Qurayzah killings. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 207, 209.

“GREATER JIHAD”

Jihad thus far has only been discussed in relation to just, “holy war.” As we have seen this type of *jihad* was commonly used by Muhammad during the early Islamic Era to defend the faith, and keep the *umma* intact by incorporating the transcendent into the purpose of warring. However, to call *jihad* “holy war” is somewhat incorrect because the word is much more than that. Because to Muhammad, *jihad*’s use to justify acts of warring was secondary to its other form(s)—the “greater *jihad*.”

A number of fighters came to the Messenger of Allah, and he said: ‘You have done well in coming from the ‘lesser jihad’ to the ‘greater jihad.’” They said: “What is the ‘greater jihad’?” He said: “For the servant [of God] to fight his passions.”⁸⁵

“Greater *jihad*” entails “*jihad al-nafs*, the struggle against oneself and *djihād al-shaytān*, the struggle against the devil.”⁸⁶ Both of these forms focus solely on the struggle between the self and its ability to be drawn into seduction, incitement, pleasure.⁸⁷ There are also other notions of *jihad* such as the struggle against corruption and the struggle against ignorance.⁸⁸ The “greater jihad” is a spiritual, internal *jihad*.⁸⁹ Muhammad’s point in enacting other forms of *jihad* than just “lesser *jihad*” or “holy war,” which needs to be remembered as the struggle to defend the *umma*, was to keep the Muslim Believers centered on their personal relationship and ultimate submission to Allah. Because to Muhammad and the

⁸⁵ *Hadith* saying no. 373.

⁸⁶ Peters, *Jihad in Classic and Modern Islam*, 116.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁸⁹ A.G. Noorani, *Islam & Jihad: Prejudice Versus Reality* (London: Zed Books, 2002), 46.

religion he promoted, warring was only a necessary evil, used to tame the opposition so even the “enemy” could have the opportunity to accept Islam and join the Muslim body.

MUHAMMAD CALLS FOR PEACE

Despite what some Islamic critics say, Muhammad did not enjoy war. We know because that message was written in a variety of blatant forms into the Qur'an and *hadith*. To Muhammad, the only true war was one based upon self-defense. If war was inevitable, Muhammad always promulgated a swift and committed fight, so it could end as quickly as possible and peace could be restored. As the Quraysh retreated after the stalemate with Medina, it is likely that they returned home knowing full well that a frontal, offensive attack against Muhammad would again fail. The fact that the Quraysh were unable to infiltrate was looked upon as a victory by Medina. Muhammad and Islam were able to survive attacks by the western arena's largest conglomerate, proving their place and position to the rest of Arabia. With the Quraysh back at Mecca, at least for the time being, Muhammad could now spend more time focusing on the *umma*'s expansion, rather than its protection. Up until now, the growth of the *umma* had been rather slow, especially during the years of war. But now Muhammad had the opportunity to continue the consolidation of Islam, as he did initially in Mecca. During 627 and 628, new Bedouin tribes accepted Islam and made the *hijra* to Medina. While other tribes continued to war against the Prophet:

It has been reported from Sulaimān B. Buraid through his father that when the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) appointed anyone as leader of an army or detachment he would especially exhort him to fear Allah and to be good to the Muslims who were with him. He would say:

Fight in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah. Fight against those who disbelieve in Allah. Make a holy war; do not embezzle the spoils; do not break your pledge; and do not mutilate (the dead) bodies; do not kill the children. When you meet your enemies who are polytheists, invite them to three courses of action. If they respond to you, accept it from them and desist from fighting against them. Then invite them to migrate from their lands to the land of the Muhājirs and inform them that, if they do so, they shall have all the privileges and obligations of the Muhājirs. If they refuse to migrate, tell them that they will have the status of Bedouin Muslims and will be subjected to the Commands of Allah like other Muslims, but they will not get any share from the spoils of war of Fai' except when they actually fight with the Muslims (against the disbelievers)...⁹⁰

Muhammad still had the Quraysh to look out for and knowing full well that an offensive attack on Mecca was out of the question, he began to search for other options.

Muhammad dearly wanted the Quraysh to accept Islam and enter the *umma*, after all Mecca was the place where Muhammad has spent most of life. In 628, Muhammad decided to make the annual pilgrimage [*hajj*] to Mecca.⁹¹ The pilgrimage was made without normal warring gear. Each Muslim was dressed in the traditional white robe, some carrying short swords for hunting. Muhammad made it clear that the pilgrimage was going to be made peacefully, he himself said: "I will not carry arms...I had come forth for no other end than to make the Pilgrimage."⁹² Roughly 1,000 Believers followed Muhammad to Mecca. Many of those that remained were the newest members of Medina not yet ready to make such a journey when other Bedouin could easily ambush

⁹⁰ *Hadith* no. 4292 taken from Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam*, 9-11.

⁹¹ "Truly did Allah fulfil the vision for His Messenger: Ye shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah wills, with minds secure, heads shaved, hair cut short, and without fear. For He knew what ye knew not, and He granted, besides this, a speedy victory (Qu'ran 48:27)."

⁹² A tradition from Muhammad ibn Umar al-Waqidi, *Kitab al-Maghazi* 587, quoted from Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 214.

the party. The Quraysh came very close to attacking the Medinans as they approached Mecca, but Muhammad in a most significant act for peace was able to make truce with the Quraysh at Hudaibiya. The truce, allowed the Believers to worship at the religious shrine in return for concessions to Quraysh caravans.⁹³ The pact leaned heavily in favor of the Quraysh and for several reasons. First, Muhammad and the Believers were only allowed entrance to the Ka'aba in years following the truce, this year they would have to return without ever entering Mecca.⁹⁴ Second, Muhammad had to return all Meccan apostates in return for nothing. Muhammad returned from his meeting with the Qurayshites to find the majority of Muslims outraged with the terms.⁹⁵ To settle the *umma* Muhammad called the Muslims to perform the traditional rites of the pilgrimage outside the walls.⁹⁶

While returning to Medina, Muhammad revealed the Sūrah of Victory, claiming that peace is in many ways a victory: “Verily We have granted thee a manifest Victory. That Allah may forgive thee thy faults of the past and those to follow; fulfil His favour to thee; and guide thee on the Straight Way; and that Allah may help thee with powerful help (Qu’ran 48:1-2)...”⁹⁷ Muhammad didn’t want war and degraded himself and his

⁹³ Donner, “Muhammad and the Caliphate,” 10.

⁹⁴ The Ka’aba still exists today and is considered the holiest site in Islam. The use of the shrine in Islam came from an Arab-Bedouin tradition.

⁹⁵ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 222.

⁹⁶ Among other things this included the sacrificing of seventy camels. Muhammad took the first camel and sacrificed it himself. They then shaved their heads following religious tradition.

⁹⁷ It is strongly suggested that one read Sūrah 48 in its entirety.

community to achieve peace.⁹⁸ However, immense victory did come out the treaty with the Quraysh. The treaty showed Arabia that Islam was now on a somewhat equal playing field with the Meccans, and more importantly, allowed Muhammad to focus on the consolidation of the *umma* once more:

No pervious victory in Islam was greater than this. There was nothing but battle when men met; but when there was an armistice and war was abolished and men met in safety and consulted together none talked about Islam intelligently without entering it. In these two years [628-30] double as many or more than double as many entered Islam as ever before.⁹⁹

Some of the first new converts were a large group of Bedouin raiders that now, with Muhammad in truce, could pillage the Qurayshite caravans without competition. The Quraysh at this point had lost a great deal of outside tribal support and were forced to call upon Muhammad for assistance.¹⁰⁰ Muhammad answered by asking the seventy some warriors to Medina. Shortly there after, Muhammad sent word for the reuniting of the Abyssinian Muslims, who had fled during Meccan persecution thirteen years before.¹⁰¹ What happened next could be used to support the claim that Muhammad's methodology for Islam's expansion was not through consolidation, but through conquest. Sometime in late 628 or early 629, Muhammad left Medina with six hundred men and held a siege

⁹⁸ Muhammad who is considered God's apostle was forced to sign the treaty with the Quraysh with his father's name (as was customary in Bedouin culture), which in turn inflamed the Muslim community. The early historian, Ibn Ishaq, recalls this account in *Sīra* no. 748. The treaty with the Quraysh also meant that Muslims could no longer raid Meccan caravans which could cause an economic crisis for the *umma*.

⁹⁹ Ibn Ishaq on the peace treaty at Hdaybiyah, *sīra* no. 747. Quoted from Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 226.

¹⁰⁰ Fred M. Donner, "Muhammad's Political Consolidation in Arabia up to the Conquest of Mecca: A Reassessment." *Muslim World* 69, no. 4 (2004): 229-47.

¹⁰¹ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 232.

against Khaybar for one month. Khaybar had long since been an ally to Mecca. This Jewish settlement assisted in the attack, especially with the persuasion of the Qurayzah, when they moved against the Muslims in at Khandaq.¹⁰² There was no actual battling during the siege of Khaybar besides a few stray arrows and in the end treaty was made between the two parties. Muhammad vowed to protect Khaybar in return for a portion of the Jew's date crop. Political negotiations such as that made at Khaybar were common in the Arabian Deserts, but does this event fit with the argument that Muhammad was trying to consolidate Arabia rather than conquer it? The answer is probably yes and no. Consolidation, as it was originally used at Medina, was a peaceful, religiously oriented process involving the transition of a group's view of the "other." At Khaybar, Muhammad's intentions were obviously more politically, rather than religiously driven. The point of laying siege to Khaybar was not to destroy its inhabitants or to create "holy war," on them, but rather to gain their support. Muhammad wanted to consolidate them into the *umma*, and most of the time on their terms. There was no arrangement that the Jews had to submit to Islam, but that they had the choice and would remain protected either way. After Khaybar joined Muhammad, another Jewish tribe, the Jews of Fadak, accepted similar terms without an encounter. Soon thereafter, Jews from both tribes began to convert to Islam, all willingly.¹⁰³ Muhammad did not want to have other tribes under his now commanding community, as the Quraysh, Byzantines, and all the earlier dominating forces had done. He wanted them to be part of his community, an equal and accepted member of God's *umma*.

¹⁰² Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 10.

¹⁰³ Muhammad married one of the Jews of Fadak. Safiyah, the daughter of one of Muhammad's old enemies, willingly submitted to Islam. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 233.

629 remained a peaceful year. In March Muhammad led 2,600 Believers to Mecca and performed the pilgrimage without problems as was arranged in the Hudaibiyah treaty. But in November of that year the Quraysh broke the treaty. The Quraysh assisted one of their allies (the Bakr tribes) with an attack on one of Muhammad's allies (the Khuza'ah tribe). This event changed everything for the Meccans. With the Quraysh attacking the *umma*, Muhammad called forth an army to defend the faith.¹⁰⁴ What Muhammad didn't know was that the Qurayshite standing in Arabia had dramatically declined since Badr. The tribe was in disarray, and didn't know how to best deal with their new situation. It is said that Abu Sufyan, the Meccan chief at that time, traveled to Medina and failed in his attempt to create another treaty.¹⁰⁵ Possibly because Muhammad had his sights set on an ultimate consolidation at Mecca.

THE GREAT CONSOLIDATION

In January of 630 Muhammad led the *umma* from Medina to Mecca. Before reaching the Qurayshite city, the Meccan, Abu Sufyan, again attempted to make some sort of short term peace treaty with the advancing Believers. This time Muhammad asked the Qurayshite leader if he was prepared to enter the *umma* by making *islām*. Sufyan replied that he could make *islām* to Allah, the single God, but still was troubled

¹⁰⁴ Muhammad massed one of the largest armies (10,000 men) in his career for his encounter with Mecca. This included a large number of Bedouin, new to the *umma* and the alliance of Islam. Ibid., 242.

¹⁰⁵ We do not know if Abu Sufyan spoke with Muhammad in person about creating new terms. One tradition says he didn't and the other claims he asked advice from Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali, Muhammad's top advisors and leaders of the religion following Muhammad's death. In both traditions Sufyan left Medina without a treaty. Ibid., 241.

with Muhammad and his standing as the final prophet. Sufyan had seen the large army making its way towards Mecca and knew that city and its inhabitants were doomed to surrender. Muhammad had granted Sufyan safe passage back to Mecca. Once there, he told the Qurayshites the same message that Muhammad had given him, that all were welcome to join the *umma* and make submission to Allah and the Prophet if they so chose to. Many took to Muhammad's graces and locked themselves in their houses as a sign of their submission.¹⁰⁶ Only a few Quraysh attempted to fight against a small section of Muhammad's army. After realizing their defeat was inevitable, they quickly surrendered. "The rest of the Muslim army entered the city without striking a single blow."¹⁰⁷ Once Muhammad was in the city, several of Muhammad's leaders and even his wives asked him to kill the leaders of the small band of Qurayshites that tried to attack the Believers as they approached the city. Muhammad declined. Instead, he allowed all of the Quraysh to live, even those who did not accept Islam.¹⁰⁸ It was Muhammad's intention, before he even entered the city, to bring a peace between the Quraysh and the *umma*. This peace, however, was not made through a treaty or pact, but rather through one of Muhammad's greatest achievements—a consolidation of the former enemy into God's community. Shortly after entering the city, Muhammad went to the Ka'aba, where both the Quraysh and the Believers had gathered, and proclaimed a message directed to both parties. In his speech he urged the Meccans to join Islam as equals, under the united, egalitarian *umma*. Then he explained that the religion was to remain free of racism, and

¹⁰⁶ We can assume that in this case the submission of the Qurayshites before Muhammad's arrival was more of a physical than spiritual reality. *Ibid.*, 242.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 243.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

tribal hate, reiterating the same Qur'anic verses that brought the tribes of Medina together years before.¹⁰⁹ Some converted to Islam on the spot, while others were more skeptical of the truth behind Muhammad's words. Perhaps they wondered if Muhammad would really offer amnesty after all the Quraysh had done to try to destroy him and the religion he lived for. Muhammad told the Quraysh that to accept Islam was one's own choice, and those that were not yet ready to submit to Allah could remain in Mecca, protected, for as long as they wanted.¹¹⁰ Muhammad wanted to not only bring the Quraysh into the existing body of Believers but also gain support of his old tribe. To do so, he went to great lengths to preserve the pride of the Quraysh, awarding many of their leaders with "important commands and positions of authority."¹¹¹ In fact some of Muhammad's greatest enemies became some of Islam's greatest leaders.¹¹²

Muhammad, in his greatest act of consolidation, had begun to incorporate Mecca and the Quraysh into the Islamic *umma*.¹¹³ Again a morphing of the "other" occurred, and this time very rapidly. The Quraysh enemy almost immediately changed their view of the "other" from the *umma* and Medina, to the massive Hawazin tribe, who had

¹⁰⁹ See Qur'an 49:13.

¹¹⁰ Only ten of Muhammad's greatest enemies were put on a special Black List. Among them were several Qurayshites that had fled after their attack on Muhammad and the Believers as they entered Mecca. Others included those that had personally injured members of Muhammad's family. Several of those men approached Muhammad and asked for forgiveness and in return it was granted to them. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 243-245.

¹¹¹ Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 10.

¹¹² Abu Sufyan and his sons were awarded important positions within Islam. "Eventually his descendents became founders of the Ummayyad dynasty." Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 244.

¹¹³ Donner, "Muhammad's Political Consolidation," 247.

assembled their army with those of Taif, just south of Mecca. Together, the Medinans and the Meccans united to meet the Taif and Hawazin in battle at the valley of Hunayn. Sources say that the Muslims nearly lost the battle, but in a final assault were able to break the enemy and send them in a retreat.¹¹⁴ In recognition for their assistance Muhammad issued the bulk of the booty received from the victory at Hunayn was given the Qurayshites. In this act, a bond between the Qurayshites and Muhammad began to materialize. The two groups only grew more coterminous during the next several years.

Consolidation and expansion continued as tribal delegations approached Muhammad, now back at Medina, with propositions of submission and peace. Many of the tribes that joined the *umma* were sincere in their new belief, but obviously not all. To those who weren't, Muhammad hoped their political submission may overtime bring them to understand Islam and eventually offer their religious surrender to Allah. At the present Muhammad had united some 30,000 men (so they say) under the *umma* through Islam. But Muhammad wanted to continue to spread the belief to other Bedouin tribes and towns near Mecca and Medina, so he designed a campaign focused on the expansion of the *umma* by sharing Islam later that year. Islam's religious appeal through transcendent principles, especially the concept of a unified body; the news of submission at Mecca and defeat at Hunayn; along with the sheer number of Believers on the campaign led many more to join the community during 631.

By this time, Muhammad was in his sixties, an old age for a desert Bedouin, and more so for a tested prophet. He made one last pilgrimage to Mecca, in a final act of

¹¹⁴ After Taif it became blatant to the rest of the western arena that Islam was unstoppable. In 631 Taif finally submitted to Muhammad.

reconciliation with those who had once called him an enemy. He then returned to the city that was the foundation of the *umma* and Islamic belief and died there in his family's arms.¹¹⁵ "By Muhammad's death in 632, his community had expanded—more by religious persuasion and political alliance than by force—to include all of western Arabia, and he had made fruitful contact with some groups in the northern Hijaz, Nejd, eastern Arabia, Oman, and Yemen."¹¹⁶ In the years that followed, Islam continued to spread throughout Arabia and the surrounding regions under the leadership of the four Rightly Guided caliphs, and then a number of Islamic dynasties.¹¹⁷ The success of a unified and spiritually guided *umma*, in conjunction with the decline of the world's largest empires, led to an extremely rapid expanse of *īslam*. Within fifteen years, at the conclusion of Rightly Guided caliphs, most of southern Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, Persia, North Africa, Iran, and the Levant had been absorbed into the Islamic movement.¹¹⁸ Islam had grown exponentially and in much the same way as it had during

¹¹⁵ Armstrong, *Muhammad*. 256.

¹¹⁶ Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate," 10.

¹¹⁷ The caliph [*khalīfa*] in its original form is used was the "representative" of Muhammad and the leader of the *umma* following Muhammad's death. It was Abū Bakr, Muhammad's closest friend, that first instituted the principle of *khalīfa*. Ibn Ishaq writes on the caliph's formation in *Sira* no. 1,017. Abū Bakr led the Muslims after Muhammad's death until his own death in 634. Bakr was succeeded by 'Umar b. al-Khattāb (634-44), 'Uthmān ibn Affan (644-56), and finally 'Alī ibn alī Talib (656-61), Muhammad's cousin and son in law. These men are known as the rightly guided because they new Muhammad personally. For a complete and concise chronology of the Islamic dynasties throughout history see Gerhard Endress, *Islam: An Historical Introduction*, trans. Carole Hillenbrand, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 155-202.

¹¹⁸ Islam Endress, *Islam: An Historical Introduction*, 158.

Muhammad's career by incorporating the religious doctrine of spiritual submission with the consolidating the "other" into the *umma*.

MUHAMMAD, *JIHAD*, AND THE *UMMA* IN THE WORLD TODAY

*We have not yet recognized the goal of Islam. We all talk about the Islamic revolution, (but) ask yourselves, what is the goal of Islam? This group, that group, “they curse one another” (Qur’an 29:25). This one contradicts that one, this one calls that one deviationist. But we have not yet recognized what Islam demands, what Islam is.*¹¹⁹

-Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani’s last sermon, 1979

Thus far we have focused on Muhammad and the roles of the *umma* and *jihad* primarily from a historical perspective. In this final chapter we will take the material once step further and look at Muhammad, expansion, and the transcendent principles in a more modern light through an analysis of how they are being viewed in the West; how they are being used by Believers today; and furthermore, of how they align with the historical data. We will do so first by exploring the life and legacy of the Prophet from the perspective of the West and what that view means for Islam. Then, we will approach *jihad* and its modern understanding in relation to its historical purpose from both an outsider and insider’s perspective. Finally, we will discuss the *umma* in its contemporary setting while addressing its relationship to the first, united community, that was originally instituted by Muhammad through the Charter of Medina in 622. Through this process, it

¹¹⁹ Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani’s last sermon in 1979, in *Majmu’eh-e goftar-e “Peddar Taleqani”* [Collection of Speeches of “Father Talwqani”], (Tehran: Mujahedin-e Khalq-e Iran, 1979), 53. Quote taken from Farish A. Noor, “What is the Victory of Islam? Towards a Different Understanding of the *Ummah* and Political Success in the Contemporary World,” in *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*, ed. Omid Safi, (Oxford: One World, 2003), 320-32.

should be evident that an appropriate understanding of Islamic history can help us, the average Christian Anglo-Saxon layperson, see how the religion should be viewed in the twenty-first century. In the end, these four sequential points should be evident from the presentation and discussion of the research provided in the earlier chapters:

- 1) Today we don't have a very good grasp on who Muhammad was and what he did for Islam.
- 2) We mistakenly think that the success of Islam was essentially the work of the sword.
- 3) We do not make the clear distinction between "Islamic terrorism" and the religion of Islam.
- 4) While violent warfare was an option for Islam. For the Prophet we must recognize that he only wanted to use warring as a necessary evil. In essence, he put great restrictions on war, and was a huge contributor to the just war theory.

THE LEGACY OF THE PROPHET

Muhammad was successful in consolidating western Arabia into one, unified, religious entity during his twenty-two year career as the final Messenger. When he died in 632, his spiritual and prophetic mission, to bring God's book to mankind, was completed. What remained was the religious task of spreading God's revelation until the world accepted it. It may be fair to say that Muhammad's role in founding Islam, during his life, is only as important as his role in the continuation of Islam after his death. Today and throughout Islamic history Muhammad's recitations, sayings, and doings in the historical sources have been the backbone for the religion's development of law, politics, and the caliphate. Because of his relationship with the Almighty and his prophetic mission, Muhammad has been, and still is, looked at as the key representative for how God works in the natural world. He was, in their symbolic view, a Perfect Man who was

able to achieve perfect surrender with God, causing Believers to use him as a guide or illustration for their own lives throughout history. As a result, a great deal of solidarity has (for the most part) existed among Muslims because of their devotion to the Prophet.¹²⁰

Today the world at large may in some places and in some cases honor Muhammad's life in an appropriate manner—spiritually, symbolically, or historically. But the unfortunate truth is that much of what we have been led to believe about the Prophet abounds in stereotypes, fallacies, and criticisms that don't fit with historical fact.

One of the greatest contributors to this problem as we begin to search for a positive dialogue with Islam is that the majority of the West has a very limited knowledge of Islam's early development, and the tasks Muhammad set out achieve. Of the information that is often received today, the bulk of it comes from the media, which almost always incorporates Islam into some sort of current event. This becomes a problem because we end up making judgments without an appropriate understanding of the religion. The point to be made here is simple, we don't know enough about Islam as a whole. Keeping up to date, with Islamic topics, conflicts, and events in the news is helpful, but without grassroots information and a desire to look at the religion holistically, one can end up with an inaccurate comprehension of the religion and its adherents. A truly encompassing approach would include familiarity with Islam historically, theologically, and on a global scale. Through this inclusivity we can better understand Islam and how we as outsiders play a part in its crisis.

¹²⁰ Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 262.

Islam is typically looked at by Westerners in its present form and situation alone. After reading the information provided in the earlier chapters, one should have been able to gain a better understanding of Muhammad and early Islam. The mission now is to continue that learning process in the future. In that way we are attempting to look at Islam as it, at least in part, deserves to be looked at. From a perspective that includes a general appreciation of the Muhammad, the history of Islam, and what the religion was trying to achieve.

DEBATING THE CONQUEST MODEL

During research for this paper I found that popular books and articles focused on the same time period as that being studied here often portrayed Muhammad unfairly, belittling important events and principles that were crucial to the early Islamic movement.¹²¹ These sources will not be addressed specifically; instead certain themes that are arguably untrue will be presented here, the first of them being the stereotype that Muhammad was some sort of conquest based, political, war monger.

As we have learned, the latter part of Muhammad's life, from Medina on, was when the *umma* was instituted and extended. A time commonly identified as the period of Muhammadan "conquest."¹²² It would be a stretch to argue that Muhammad never

¹²¹ Two books that deserve mention on this point is Salman Rushdie's in *The Satanic Verses* (New York: Viking, 1989), and Serge Trifkovic's book, *The Sword of the Prophet: The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam* (Boston: Regina Orthodox Press, 2002). Scholars believe Rushdie created a more fictional than historical portrait of Muhammad in his work. Armstrong, *Muhammad*, 21.

¹²² *Muhammad and the Conquests of Islam*, trans. Virginia Luling and Rosamund Linell (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), written by Francesco Gabrieli, is a good example for a conquest based Muhammad.

made conquest against the other tribes of Arabia, after all we only know as much as the sources say, and even then we cannot call them one hundred percent dependable.

However, from what we do know, it is fair to argue that Muhammad's main intentions were not to conquer Arabia. Instead, Muhammad's goal was to expand Islam through a consolidation of the *umma*. In some respects, one can say that the act of consolidating the "other" and the act of conquering the "other" are similar in early Islamic history, but when viewed in relation to their motives they are not. "Conquering" focuses on subduing the opposition through an act of force, especially by the use of forced warfare.

Muhammad may have taken cities like Mecca against the will of its inhabitants, but he always tried to do so in a way where actual warring was not needed, and with an intention to maintain the opponent's integrity. Muhammad's ultimate hope was to share the religion, offering an open invitation for outsiders to make *islām* and join the *umma*.

The remarkable act of consolidation has been expressed through a number of events in history. Muhammad first used consolidation at Medina by joining the Bedouin tribes to the preexisting Believers. The cycle of consolidation deals mainly with the dual method of transforming the kinship, tribal based mentality of the Bedouin, while at the same time integrating them into a larger community through the use of the unifying religious doctrine, *tawhid*. It was through this combination that Islam was able to expand so quickly and successfully. In this way, groups that were formerly opponents of Islam shifted their allegiance to Islam. After they were joined with the *umma* their view of the "other" transformed too.

In some ways Islam was without enemies. To Muhammad those against Islam still deserved a place within the *umma* and were looked at as having the potential to become allies and members of the Muslim community no matter the prior circumstances. We find this most obvious in Muhammad's greatest act of consolidation at Mecca, where Muhammad accepted his greatest adversaries as allies and equals under God's domain.

REVALUATING *JIHAD*

Many Muslims upon reflection admit that some of the problems being faced by Islam, as we enter into a new millennium, are those that have been of their own making.¹²³ Among the greatest of these issues sits *jihad* and its use as a vehicle for religiously driven violence. Al Qai'da, headed by Usama bin Laden and the Taliban are undoubtedly the most well known of the violent, terror oriented Islamic groups today. Because of their attacks on America in September of 2001, and in other locations since then, the perspective of Islam as a religion of peace has been severely soured in the West.

It is of great importance to understand Islamic terrorism and its relation to the Islamic faith. Al Qai'da and groups like them are unruly terrorists that have strayed far from typical religious doctrine. Such groups are isolated, corrupt cults, and are found to exist in a variety of forms within the world's religions.¹²⁴ Even though a very small minority of Muslims fit into the "terrorist" category, it is these fanatic sects that receive

¹²³ Noor, "Victory of Islam," 322.

¹²⁴ Terrorism does not just occur in Islam. For a complete discussion on global, religiously based terrorists of the world's religions see Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

most of the attention in the West. Bin Ladin may believe that his terrorist activities are justified, but the Islamic faith does not. Every single Islamic state in the world condemned Usama bin Ladin's attacks on 9/11.¹²⁵

Huge issues have resulted from Al Qai'da's spotlight in Western society. The worst of them is that Westerners link Islam with Al Qai'da. It is true that Al Qai'da believes that they are using *jihad* appropriately, and that is a huge problem for Muslims everywhere. The reality is that most Muslims are against terrorist activities and Bin Ladin's use of *jihad*. Terrorists believe that they are keeping a "truer, purer, and more authentic Islam than that currently practiced by the vast majority of Muslims."¹²⁶ But is that really the case? The general consensus in scholarship is no. Radical terrorists often omit or "revoke" some Qur'anic recitations, while keeping others. They also decide for themselves how reliable certain *ahadith* are based upon their own judgment, rather than relying on the early jurists and their methods of authenticity. These radicals also usually make their decisions on these texts dependent on how the material fits with their position on the topic.¹²⁷ In other words, they are selective in their interpretations, which make us see their biases in a light that can hurt the true religion of Islam. In the end, it is probably true that the general layperson knows more about Bin Laden, his beliefs and practices, and the modern, skewed use of *jihad*, than they do about the religion's founder and the true *jihad*.

¹²⁵ Fareed Zakaria, "Why They Hate Us," in *Inside Islam: The Faith, the People, and the Conflicts of the World's Fastest Growing Religion* (New York: Marlowe, 2002), 235-60.

¹²⁶ Lewis, *The Crisis*, 138.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

Muhammad's ideology of *jihad*—to only use warring defensively—was revolutionary for its time. Muhammad literally attempted only to do battle on grounds of defense or the preservation of the Islamic community. He also brought elements of the faith into warring, through *jihad*, helping the Believers to see when acts of violence were in any way justifiable. If they were, war was only to be seen as a necessary evil, to be ceased as soon as it was possible. Muhammad himself proclaimed:

If they withdraw from you, and do not fight you, and offer you peace, then God assigns not any to you against them...Do not say to him who offers you a greeting [salām, which also means peace], "Thou art not a believer," seeking the chance goods of the present life...And if they incline to peace, do thou incline to it; and put thy trust in God (Qur'an 4:90, 94; 8:61).¹²⁸

Muhammad also taught that the most important struggle in life is not with those who are against you, but with yourself and those things that draw you away from God: "That ye believe in Allah and His Messenger, and that ye strive (your utmost) in the Cause of Allah, with your property and your persons: that will be best for you, if ye but knew (Qur'an 61:11)!" Helping us see that Muhammad's main intention for the religion was to share it and expand it by calling for a constant consolidation of the *umma*, and not by the use of the sword. The late 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, translator of one of the most widely used English Qur'anic interpretations in history makes possibly the best attempt to summarize Muhammad's purpose and intentions in an introduction to his translation. One section of it reads:

And so his very virtues and loyalties pointed to offense and conflict, mockery and misrepresentation, hatred and persecution, threats, tortures, and exile for him and his, and martyrdoms, wars, revolutions, and the shaking of the foundations of history and the social order. But Islam meant the willing submission of his will to Allah, the active attainment of

¹²⁸ Taken from Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam*, 112.

Peace through Conflict. And he gave submission, not without effort, even as Moses did before him, and Jesus in the agony of the garden of Gethsemane. For three and twenty years, in patience, conflict, hope, and final triumph, did this Prophet of Allah receive and teach the Message of the Most High. It came, like the fruit of the soul's own yearning, to teach the profound spiritual truths, answer questions, appeal to men in their doubts and fears, help and put heart in them in the moments of trial, and ordain for them laws by which they could live in society lives of purity goodness and peace.¹²⁹

USING THE *UMMA* TODAY

The complete Muslim body is very different than the one found in the deserts of Arabia early in the seventh century. Since the destruction of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I the physical form of the *umma* under the caliphate has been non-existent. At present, we find a separated Islam that has spread out among a number of nation-states. It is this current, divided situation that has, in many respects, caused a great deal of the disconnection within the present religious body. Today groups are calling for a united *umma*, but sometimes with messages that could propel the religion backward instead of forward. Such groups might call for all Muslims to rise up together to face their foes in the West.¹³⁰ Many Islamic scholars believe that such movements only do harm, allowing Muslims to live up to the stereotype that all Believers are “intolerant fanatics” and supporters of “radical movements.”¹³¹ “Caught as Muslims are in this mess that is partly of our [their] own making, the question remains: how do we [they] extricate ourselves [themselves] from this impasse while maintaining our [their]

¹²⁹ ‘Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Alī, “Introduction,” in *The Meaning of the Holy Qur’ān*, 10th ed. (Beltsville, MA: amana publications, 1997), 11-12.

¹³⁰ Noor, “What is the Victory of Islam,” 321.

¹³¹ Ibid.

identity and right to speak about matters that are of pivotal concern for the Muslim community?”¹³² Could it possibly be through a reuniting and reassessment of the community itself?

Muhammad’s use of the *umma* during its earliest period of development allowed the religion to be so overwhelmingly successful for a number of reasons. Among the greatest of them was the *umma*’s ability to bring together such a diverse group of Believers including: Emigrants, Bedouin, converted Christians, and converted Jews. Another important factor was the developed of religious *tawhid* and its notion of a transcendent unity through God. A principle that was to be revered and upheld above all of the Believer’s early struggles. Though we cannot mirror the same *umma* that Muhammad built and led, we can try to make connections between its success for Islam then, and its possibly for success in Islam’s future.

The promotion of a new global *umma* is becoming popular within certain populations of Islam. This push for a revival of Islamic community has taken a variety of forms. Some believe reinstituting the caliphate is the answer, while others believe a movement for Islam’s final victory over the world is necessary.¹³³ The approach that is most appealing to me is one that is focused on the establishment of spiritual *umma*. This approach, led by progressive Muslims all throughout the world, centers on the need to seek a global community so that the religion can be seen and appreciated in its diversity. Scholars believe a spiritual *umma* would help the Islamic body “recognize,

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

accept, and even celebrate the internal differences and plurality within itself” in a similar way to its use by Muhammad long ago.¹³⁴ It is my opinion that even a small portion of the global Islamic body, banded together, to push for a global, spiritual *umma*, could do a great deal of good; because it would aid the West in its hardship of seeing the universality within the religion while also having the opportunity to recognize its diverseness. Besides, such a movement could also help against the mainstream global media and their issues in portraying a correct Islam.

A spiritual, global *umma* could also help the Muslim community “communicate its anger, pain, frustration, and fears to the rest of the world” in a way that reflects “intelligence...honesty...and compassion not just for Muslims, but for all of humanity;”¹³⁵ and not just in a way that demonstrates that the Muslim faith deserves universal recognition, but that the Believers themselves are active in their struggle for a rightful place in this world.¹³⁶ This approach has been deemed by progressive Muslims as an attempt to make an “Islam without borders” [Islam bi a Hudud].¹³⁷ In this section I have used a number of quotes from Muslims, for they are the true members of the *umma* and the true leaders for the religion’s future. Thus, I find it appropriate to close with words from a Believer, in an attempt to show that Muslims themselves are calling for such forms of reformation:

¹³⁴ Ibid., 326.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 331.

¹³⁷ This view rejects a negative approach to the West as well as an exclusive mindset. Ibid.

Universalism [or the notion of *tawhid* through the *umma*], which rests at the heart of Islam and the Islamic message, needs to be reactivated and made an article of faith among Muslims living in the world today. Our concerns for justice, equity, rights, and freedom need to be articulated in the context of a borderless world where our audience is not only ourselves but the world as a whole, both now and in the future. We need to take up, defend, and promote this form of universalism as part of our identity as Muslims. There has come a time when being a Muslim means living not only for oneself but for a multitude of others as well. That time is now.¹³⁸

CONCLUSION

Islam is not going anywhere. The issues at present will only become more prevalent as the religion continues to grow, and as our world becomes increasingly connected globally. So then, there is no better time than now to grasp onto a new, appropriate outlook on Islam. As I have written this paper I have found a great number of my peers, both young and old, leaving conversations, directed at the future of Islam, with a pessimistic and often hopeless attitude. To them, it seems that even if the religion is not evil itself, it still is the entity that breeds the violence, terror, and conflicts that riddle the globe today.¹³⁹ In my opinion it is this type of thinking that has caused, and still is causing a great deal of the dissonance between the Christian and Muslim.

One of our greatest defenses in the West is the claim that it isn't our fault that Islam is in such crisis. I have no interest in arguing this point either way, however, I do believe it important reiterate that Muslims today, upon reflection, often admit that many

¹³⁸ Ibid., 332.

¹³⁹ "The bottom line was simple and clear: Muslims were a hidden menace to the West; they could not be trusted; they should not have been given the same democratic rights as others (on the grounds that they were bound to abuse it); and they have a pathological hatred of the West which cannot be understood, rationalized, or engaged with."¹³⁹ Ibid.

of the problems being faced by their religion, as they enter into a new millennium, are those that have been of their own making.¹⁴⁰ Our job in this day in age is not to sulk or point fingers, but rather to seek to enhance the lives of all peoples of the world, including our own. Hopefully it has been recognized that there is a point to studying the historical material of Islam, and furthermore, that there are critical connections that can be used to help us see the religion in a fair light.

The argument that we, as Westerners need to gain a correct and coherent understanding of Islam is extremely important in our venture to assist Islam and the issues it faces today. I myself a Christian Anglo-Saxon can urge for a reform in our approach to understanding Islam, but I believe it is best to hear it from a Muslim supporter:

The impact of Islam on the future of the American society will depend, to a great extent, on how relevant Islamic principles are to this society. Islamic ideas and ideals need to be articulated in a language that is understood by the masses, and carried out by institutions that can effectively deal with the issues that are relevant to the people. Our goal is to reach the minds and hearts of those who aspire for a better future.¹⁴¹

To one that desires a more promising inter-religious dialogue with the Muslim faith, there comes the duty of getting informed and seeing the religion in a light that reflects its history, its various doctrines, its diversity, and its challenges. As a result we can begin to sift through the stereotypes that are unfairly directed at Islam as a whole and work towards a common, peaceful existence in the future.

¹⁴⁰ Noor, "Victory of Islam," 322.

¹⁴¹ Quote by Dr. Maher Hathout of the Islamic Center of Southern California, one of the most prominent speakers for contemporary American Islam. Taken from Jane I Smith, *Islam in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 177.

APPENDIX A

THE MEDINA CHARTER¹⁴²

622 C.E.

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful.

(1) This is a document from Muhammad the prophet (governing the relations) between the believers and Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib, and those who followed them and joined them and labored with them.

(2) They are one community (umma) to the exclusion of all men.

(3) The Quraysh emigrants according to their present custom shall pay the bloodwit within their number and shall redeem their prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.

(4-8) The B. ‘Auf according to their present custom shall pay the bloodwit they paid in heathenism; every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers. The B. Sa’ida, the B. ‘l-Harith, and the B. Jusham, and the B. al-Najjar likewise.

(9-11) The B. ‘Amr b. ‘Auf, the B. al-Nabit and the B. al-‘Aus likewise.

(12)(a) Believers shall not leave anyone destitute among them by not paying his redemption money or bloodwit in kindness.

(12)(b) A believer shall not take as an ally the freedman of another Muslim against him.

(13) The God-fearing believers shall be against the rebellious or him who seeks to spread injustice, or sin or animosity, or corruption between believers; the hand of every man shall be against him even if he be a son of one of them.

(14) A believer shall not slay a believer for the sake of an unbeliever, nor shall he aid an unbeliever against a believer.

¹⁴² A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* — A translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1955), 231-33. Numbering added.

(15) God's protection is one, the least of them may give protection to a stranger on their behalf. Believers are friends one to the other to the exclusion of outsiders.

(16) To the Jew who follows us belong help and equality. He shall not be wronged nor shall his enemies be aided.

(17) The peace of the believers is indivisible. No separate peace shall be made when believers are fighting in the way of God. Conditions must be fair and equitable to all.

(18) In every foray a rider must take another behind him.

(19) The believers must avenge the blood of one another shed in the way of God.

(20)(a) The God-fearing believers enjoy the best and most upright guidance.

(20)(b) No polytheist shall take the property of person of Quraysh under his protection nor shall he intervene against a believer.

(21) Whoever is convicted of killing a believer without good reason shall be subject to retaliation unless the next of kin is satisfied (with blood-money), and the believers shall be against him as one man, and they are bound to take action against him.

(22) It shall not be lawful to a believer who holds by what is in this document and believes in God and the last day to help an evil-doer or to shelter him. The curse of God and His anger on the day of resurrection will be upon him if he does, and neither repentance nor ransom will be received from him.

(23) Whenever you differ about a matter it must be referred to God and to Muhammad.

(24) The Jews shall contribute to the cost of war so long as they are fighting alongside the believers.

(25) The Jews of the B. 'Auf are one community with the believers (the Jews have their religion and the Muslims have theirs), their freedmen and their persons except those who behave unjustly and sinfully, for they hurt but themselves and their families.

(26-35) The same applies to the Jews of the B. al-Najjar, B. al-Harith, B. Sai ida, B. Jusham, B. al-Aus, B. Tha'laba, and the Jafna, a clan of the Tha'laba and the B. al-Shutayba. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. The freedmen of Tha'laba are as themselves. The close friends of the Jews are as themselves.

(36) None of them shall go out to war save the permission of Muhammad, but he shall not be prevented from taking revenge for a wound. He who slays a man without warning slays himself and his household, unless it be one who has wronged him, for God will accept that.

(37) The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and loyalty is a protection against treachery. A man is not liable for his ally's misdeeds. The wronged must be helped.

(38) The Jews must pay with the believers so long as war lasts.

(39) Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document.

(40) A stranger under protection shall be as his host doing no harm and committing no crime.

(41) A woman shall only be given protection with the consent of her family.

(42) If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise it must be referred to God and to Muhammad the apostle of God. God accepts what is nearest to piety and goodness in this document.

(43) Quraysh and their helpers shall not be given protection.

(44) The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib.

(45)(a) If they are called to make peace and maintain it they must do so; and if they make a similar demand on the Muslims it must be carried out except in the case of a holy war.

(45)(b) Every one shall have his portion from the side to which he belongs.

(46) The Jews of al-Aus, their freedmen and themselves have the same standing with the people of this document in purely loyalty from the people of this document. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. He who acquires ought acquire it for himself. God approves of this document.

(47) This deed will not protect the unjust and the sinner. The man who goes forth to fight and the man who stays at home in the city is safe unless he has been unjust and sinned. God is the protector of the good and God-fearing man and Muhammad is the apostle of God.

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