

Creation

[The "Noor" \(Light\) is created](#)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

When Allah intended to create the creatures, He first created the "Noor" (Light) of Muhammad. Al-Qastalani (in *Al Mawahibu'l-Ladunniyah*, vol. 1, pp. 5, 9, 10) has quoted the Prophet's traditions to this effect as transmitted through Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari and 'Ali (a.s.). The well-known historian al-Mas'udi (in his *Maruju 'dh-dhahab*) quotes a lengthy tradition from 'Ali (a.s.) to the effect that when Allah created, first of all, the Light of Muhammad, He said to it: "You are My chosen one and the Trustee of My Light and Guidance.

It is because of you that I am going to create the earth and the skies, lay down reward and punishment, and bring into being the Garden and the Fire." Then the tradition goes on to speak about the Family of the Prophet, about creation of the angels, of the souls, of the world, of the covenant taken from the souls which combined the belief in the One God with acceptance of Muhammad's Prophethood.

This is why Ibn 'Abbas narrates saying that the Prophet said: "I was Prophet when Adam was between soul and body (i.e. when Adam's creation was in its preliminary stages)" (at-Tabarani, *Al-Mujjam al-Kabir; Al Khasa'is al-Kubra*, vol.1, p.4).

Muhammad's Light adorned the 'Arsh (Throne) of God. When eons later, Adam was created, that Light was put in his forehead. It continued its journey, generation after generation, through numerous prophets and their successors till it came to Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.). From Ibrahim (a.s.), it came to his eldest son, Prophet Isma'il (a.s.).

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) said: "Verily Allah chose Isma'il from the progeny of Ibrahim, and chose Banu Kinanah from the progeny of Isma'il, and chose Quraish from the Banu Kinanah, and chose Banu Hashim from Quraish, and chose me from Banu Hashim." At-Tirmidhi has narrated this tradition from

Wathilah ibn al-Asqa' and has said that this tradition is sahih (correct).

Abul-Fida quotes in his *Tarikh* (History) a tradition wherein the Prophet (s.a.w.w.) says: "Gabriel said to me: 'I looked at the earth from the east to the west, but I did not find anyone superior to Muhammad, and I looked at the Earth from the east to the west but did not find any progeny superior to the progeny of Hashim.'"

The Children of Isma'il (a.s.)

Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) had brought his eldest son Isma'il (a.s.) with his mother Hajirah (Hagar, in Hebrew) from Kan'an to a barren valley which was later known as Mecca. He used to visit them once a year. When Isma'il was old enough to help him, Prophet Ibrahim built the House of Allah known as the Ka'bah.

There was no water in the land when Isma'il and Hajirah were left there. The well of Zamzam miraculously appeared for Isma'il. The tribe of Jurhum, finding the well, sought the permission of Hajirah to settle there. During the annual visit of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.), permission was given to them, and ultimately Isma'il married in the same tribe. He begot twelve sons; the eldest was called Qidar (Cedar, in Hebrew).

The Isma'ilites increased in number, thus fulfilling the promise of Allah to Ibrahim to multiply Isma'il exceedingly. (See Genesis 21:13)

The Isma'ilites, by and by, spread all over Hijaz. They were not organized and consequently had no power. About 200 years before Christ, 'Adnan from the children of Qidar arose to some fame. The genealogy of 'Adnan up to Qidar is not agreed upon. The Arabs have narrated various genealogies. The Prophet (s.a.w.w.), in order to emphasize the Islamic ideology that personal qualities, rather than genealogy, was the criterion of excellence, and with a view not to entangle himself in such unnecessary and useless arguments, ordered the Muslims thus:

"When my genealogy reaches 'Adnan, stop."

In the third century of the Christian Era (CE), there arose a leader named Fahr in that family. He was son of Malik, son of Nadhar, son of Kinanah, son of Khuzaymah, son of Mudrikah, son of Ilyas, son of Madhar, son of Nazar, son of Ma'ad, son of 'Adnan.

Some people think that this Fahr was called Quraish, and that is why his children came to be known as the Quraish.

In the 5th generation after Fahr, in the fifth century of the Christian era, a very powerful personality appeared on the scene. He was Qusayi, son of Kilab, son of Murrah, son of Lu'i, son of Ghalib, son of Fahr.

Many people say that it was not Fahr but Qusayi who was called Quraish. The famous Muslim scholar, Shibli al-Nu'mani, writes: "Qusayi became so famous and achieved such a high prestige that some people say that he was the first man to be called Quraish, as Ibn Abdi Rabbih has written in his book Al-'Iqdu'l-Farid, clearly saying that as Qusayi gathered all the children of Isma'il from far and wide and made them leave the nomadic way of life, settling them around the Ka'bah, he was called Quraish (The Gatherer). Al-Tabari quotes caliph 'Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan as saying that "Qusayi was Quraish, and that nobody was given this name before him."

When Qusayi came of age, a man from the tribe of Khuza'ah named Hulail was the trustee of the Ka'bah. Qusayi married his daughter and, according to Hulail's will, got the trusteeship of the Ka'bah after Hulail. Qusayi established many new institutions:

- He established Dar-un-Nadwah (Assembly House). It was there that discussions were held to settle important matters like war and peace, caravans assembled before going out, and marriages and other ceremonies were conducted.
- He established the system of Siqayah (making arrangements to supply water to the pilgrims during the *haji* days) and Rifadah (to feed them during those days).
- It appears from al-Tabari that this system was followed in Islam up to his time, i.e. 500 years after Qusayi.
- He made arrangements for the pilgrims to stay at Mash'arul-Haram at night and illuminated the valley with lamps, thus making their stay comfortable.
- He rebuilt the Ka'bah and dug the first well at Mecca. Zamzam was filled up long ago and nobody knew of its actual location.

Arab historians unanimously say that he was generous, brave, and sympathetic; his ideas were pure, his thinking clean, and his manners very refined. His word was followed like a religion during his lifetime and even after his death. People used to visit his grave at Hajun (present day Jannatul Ma'alla). No wonder that he was the undisputed chief of the tribe, which owed its strength and power to his leadership. To him had converged all the responsibilities and privileges of the tribe:

- The trustee of the Ka'bah (Hijabah),

- Chairman of Dar-un-Nadwah which he himself had established;
- He fed the pilgrims (Rifadah);
- He arranged to provide them with drinking water (Siqayah); The standard-bearer of Quraish in wartime (Liwa), and
- The commander of the army (Qiyadah).

These were the six privileges, which were looked upon with great respect and before which all of Arabia bowed down. The most wonderful aspect of his life is his selflessness. In all the accounts of his life, there never appears any hint that by being the undisputed leader of the tribe, he had gained anything for his own self.

Qusayi had five sons and a daughter: 'Abduddar was the eldest, then Mughirah (known as 'Abd Munaf). Qusayi loved his eldest son very much, and at the time of his death, he entrusted 'Abduddar with all the six responsibilities mentioned above.

But 'Abduddar was not a very able man, whereas 'Abd Munaf was acknowledged as a wise leader even during the life of his father, and his words were dutifully obeyed by the whole tribe. Because of his nobility and benevolence, he was commonly known as "generous." Thus, it came to pass that 'Abduddar shared all his responsibilities with 'Abd Munaf. And 'Abd Munaf virtually became the paramount chief of the Quraish.

'Abd Munaf had six sons: Hashim, Muttalib, 'Abdush-Shams, and Nawfil were the most famous among them.

There was no trouble while 'Abduddar and 'Abd Munaf were alive. After their death, a dispute started between their children concerning the distribution of the six responsibilities. A war had almost started before it was agreed upon that Siqayah, Rifadah, and Qiyadah should go to the children of 'Abd Munaf, and Liwa' and Hijabah should remain with the children of 'Abduddar, while the chairmanship of Dar-un-Nadwah should be shared by both families.

Hashim

Hashim's name will always shine in the history of Arabia and Islam, not only because he was the great grandfather of the Holy Prophet, but in his own right because of his tremendous achievements.

He may well be compared with any great leader of his time. He was the most generous, the most

prestigious, and the most respected leader of the Quraish. He used to feed the pilgrims during *hajj* with royal open-handedness. But the best testimonial to his benevolence is his title "Hashim" whereby he came to be known. Once, there was a great famine in Mecca. Hashim could not look silently at the sorry plight of the Meccans.

He took all his wealth, went to Syria, purchased flour and dried bread, brought it to Mecca and daily slaughtered his camels for gravy; the bread and the biscuits were broken into the gravy and the whole tribe was invited to partake of it. This continued till the famine was averted and all the lives were saved. It was this extraordinary feat that earned him the name "Hashim," the one who breaks (the bread). Hashim's real name was 'Amr.

Hashim was the founder of the trade caravans of the Quraish. He obtained an edict from the Byzantine emperor, which exempted Quraish from all kinds of duties or taxes when entering or leaving the countries under his domain. He obtained the same concession from the emperor of Ethiopia. Thus, the Quraishites started taking their trade caravans in winter to Yemen (which was under the Ethiopian rule) and in the summer to Syria and beyond up to Ankara (under Byzantine rule).

But the trade routes were not safe; therefore, Hashim visited all the dominant tribes between Yemen and Ankara and entered into agreements with all of them. They agreed that they would not attack the trade caravans of Quraish, and Hashim undertook on behalf of Quraish that their trade caravans would bring all their necessities to their places of abode and would buy and sell at reasonable prices. Thus, in spite of all the looting and plundering that prevailed in Arabia then, the trade caravans of Quraish were always safe.

It is to this achievement of Hashim that Allah refers in the Qur'an, counting it as a great bounty of God upon Quraish:

For the security and safeguard enjoyed by the Quraish, their safety during (their) journeys by winter and by summer, let them worship the Lord of this House no provides them with food against hunger, and with security against fear. (Qur'an, Ch. 106)

There was a pathetically pessimistic tradition in Quraish known as *Ihtifad*. When a poor family could not feed itself, it would go out to the desert and, entering a tent, remain there till death claimed all of its members one by one. They thought that nobody would know of their plight and, by thus starving to death, they would protect their honor.

It was Hashim who persuaded Quraish to actively combat the poverty instead of succumbing to it. His scheme: He joined one rich person with a poor one, provided that their dependents were equal in number. That poor person was to help the rich one during the trade journey. Whatever increase of capital accrued by way of profit would be shared equally by both. Thus, there would be no need for

Ihtifad.

This scheme was wholeheartedly accepted and put in effect by the tribe. This wise suggestion not only removed poverty from the Quraish but also created a feeling of brotherhood and unity among them.

These achievements were enough to justify a very long life. But our wonder knows no bounds when we learn that Hashim. was only 25 years old when death overtook him at Gaza, Palestine, in approximately 488 A.D. His grave is preserved, and Gaza is also called "Ghazzah Hashim," i.e. Hashim's Gaza.

Hashim was very handsome, and because of his looks and prestige, many chiefs and even rulers wanted him to marry their daughters. But he married Salma daughter of 'Amr (from the tribe of 'Adi Bani Najjar) of Yathrib. She was the mother of Shaibatul-Hamd (commonly known as 'Abdul-Muttalib) who was in his infancy when Hashim died.

'Abdul-Muttalib

Hashim had five sons: 'Abdul-Muttalib, Asad, Nadhlah, Saifi and Abu Saifi. But the last three had no children; Asad had only a daughter, Fatima bint Asad, mother of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. Thus, it was only through 'Abdul-Muttalib that the progeny of Hashim survived.

'Abdul-Muttalib was born at Yathrib (later named Medina) in his maternal grandfather's house, and he was only a few months old when Hashim died. After Hashim, his brother Muttalib succeeded him in all the privileges mentioned earlier. After some time, Muttalib went to Yathrib and brought his nephew to Mecca. When Muttalib entered Mecca with his nephew behind him on his camel, some people said: "This is the slave of Muttalib!" Muttalib said: "No! He is my nephew and son of my deceased brother Hashim." But the name stuck, though today few people know that the real name of 'Abdul-Muttalib was Shaibatul-Hamd.

Muttalib loved 'Abdul-Muttalib and looked after him very well. But 'Abdush-Shams and Nawfil were hostile towards him. At the death of Muttalib, 'Abdul-Muttalib succeeded him in the two privileges held by him, i.e. *Siqayah* and *Rifadah*.

In spite of the enmity of his own uncles, his personal virtues and qualities of leadership earned him in later days the title of "Sayyidul Batha" (the Chief of Mecca). He lived to the ripe age of 82. A carpet was spread for him before the Ka'bah and nobody dared to put his foot on it. In later days, this rule was broken only by the orphaned son of 'Abdullah (i.e. the Holy Prophet) who used to sit there and 'Abdul-Muttalib forbade Quraish from interfering with the child because, he told them, "This child of mine is to have a special dignity."

It was 'Abdul-Muttalib who had forbidden his children from using intoxicants. It was he who used to enter the cave of Hira during the month of Ramadan to spend the month in remembrance of Allah and in feeding the poor. Like his father and uncle, he used to feed and provide water for the pilgrims during the *hajj* season. During whole year, even the beasts and birds were fed from his house and, accordingly, he was called "Mut'imut-tayr" (feeder of the birds).

Some of the systems originated by 'Abdul-Muttalib were later adopted in Islam. He was the first person to make Nadhr and fulfill it, to give one fifth (khums) of the treasure in the way of Allah, to forbid prohibited degrees, to cut a thief's hand, to make intoxicants unlawful, to forbid fornication and adultery, to discourage the system of killing the daughters, to discourage the *tawaf* around the Ka'bah without clothes, and to fix the compensation of manslaughter (killing someone by mistake or unintentionally) at 100 camels. Islam adopted all these systems.

It is not possible to give the whole history of 'Abdul-Muttalib in this short chapter, but two important events must be mentioned: the recovery of Zamzam and the attempted attack on the Ka'bah by Abraha, the governor of Ethiopia over Yemen.

Hundreds of years ago, Zamzam was filled up and nobody knew where it was. (It is not the place here to give the details as to how and by whom it was filled up). One day, 'Abdul-Muttalib was sleeping in Hatim of the Ka'bah. Someone told him in a dream to dig the Taybah and get water. He asked where Taybah was, but the vision vanished without any reply. The same vision was repeated the second and the third day, but the names were changed every time.

On the fourth day, he was told to dig Zamzam. 'Abdul-Muttalib asked where Zamzam was. He was told the signs. 'Abdul-Muttalib, with his eldest (and at that time the only) son, Harith, dug the place where Zamzam is today. On the fourth day, the wall of the well appeared, and after some more digging, the water-level was reached.

At this success, 'Abdul-Muttalib cried "Allahu Akbar!" and said: "This is the well of Isma'il!" Quraishites gathered around him and started arguing that since the original well was the property of Isma'il, the recovered well, too, belonged to the whole tribe. 'Abdul-Muttalib rejected their claim, saying that it was given especially to him by Allah. The Quraishites wanted to fight and fill up the well then dig it up again.

At last, they agreed to put their case before the wise woman of the tribe of Sa'd in Syria. Every clan sent one man as its representative. 'Abdul-Muttalib, with his son and a few companions, were in the same caravan. But he had his separate arrangements. In the middle of a desert, the water which 'Abdul-Muttalib had was finished. The whole group was suffering from acute thirst. The leaders of the other party refused to give them any water. They were near their death. 'Abdul-Muttalib advised his group to dig some graves, so that when anybody died, others would bury him. Thus only one person, the last one

to die, would remain unburied. They dug up their own graves. The opposite party was enjoying the scene.

On the second day, 'Abdul-Muttalib exhorted his companions that it was cowardice to succumb to death like that without making a last effort. Thus, he rode his camel, and the camel arose. In doing so, its foot hit the earth and Lo! A stream of cool sweet water appeared! 'Abdul-Muttalib cried "Allahu Akbar!" His companions, too, cried "Allahu Akbar!" They quenched their thirst, filled their water-skins, and then, 'Abdul Muttalib invited the opposite group to fill their water-skins from that fountain. His own companions objected, but he said, "If we do the same as they had done, there would be no difference between us and them."

The whole caravan gathered around that fountain. They drank and filled their water-skins. Then they said: "O 'AbdulMuttalib! By Allah! Allah has decided between you and us. He has given you victory. By Allah, we will never dispute with you about Zamzam. The same Allah who has created this fountain here in this desert for you has given Zamzam to you."

Zamzam became the personal property of 'Abdul-Muttalib. He dug the well deeper. Two deer made of gold, some swords and coats of mail were found buried therein. Again, the Quraish demanded a share in the treasure. Again, 'Abdul-Muttalib refused. At last, the dispute was decided by lot which gave the golden deer to the Ka'bah and the swords and the coats of mail to 'Abdul Muttalib; the Quraish got nothing.

It was then that 'Abdul-Muttalili dedicated one-fifth of his own share to the Ka'bah.

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