

## Introduction



### [Ancient Yemen](#)

Yemen's role in human history, and in particular Arabian history, is especially important as it is known to be one of the oldest civilisations in the Near East.

At the beginning of the Christian age, there stood four regions of settled life with organised power and high culture around Arabia. To the west was the Byzantine Empire; while across the Euphrates River reigned the Sassanian Empire over modern day Iran and Iraq; and to the south lay Ethiopia, an ancient kingdom which adopted the Coptic Church as its official religion. The other was Yemen, in south-west Arabia.

Albert Hourani, in his *A History of the Arab Peoples* states that Yemen was: "A land of fertile mountain valleys and a point for long distance trade. At a certain stage, its small local states had been incorporated in a larger kingdom, which had grown weak when trade declined in the early Christian era but revived later. Yemen had its own language, different from Arabic which was spoken elsewhere in Arabia, and its own religion: a multiplicity of gods were served by priests in temples which were places of pilgrimage, voting offerings and private but not communal prayer, and also centres of great estates."<sup>1</sup>

Life was a balance of desert and steppe; nomadic and sedentary forms of living which often required exchange for the other.

Hourani explains the rare oases of the Arabian Peninsula allowed for regions of cultivation, “Inhabitants spoke various dialects of Arabic and followed different ways of life. Some of them were nomads who pastured camels, sheep or goats by using the scanty water resources of the desert; these have traditionally been known as ‘beduin.’ Some were settled cultivators tending their grain or palm trees in the oases, or traders and craftsmen in small market towns; some combined more than one way of life. Although they were a minority of the population, it was the camel–nomads, mobile and carrying arms, who together with merchant groups in the towns, dominated the cultivators and craftsmen. Their ethos of courage, hospitality, loyalty to family, and pride of ancestry was also dominant. They were not controlled by a stable power of coercion, but were led by chiefs belonging to families around which there gathered more or less lasting groups of supporters, expressing their cohesion and loyalty in the idiom of common ancestry; such groups are usually called tribes.”<sup>2</sup>

He goes on to say, “The religion of pastoralists and cultivators seem to have had no clear shape. Local gods, identified with objects in the sky, were thought to be embodied in stones, trees and other natural things; good and evil spirits were believed to roam the world in the shape of animals; soothsayers claimed to speak with the tongue of some supernatural wisdom. The settled societies ruled by the empires were full of questionings about the meaning of life and the way that it should be lived, expressed in the idioms of the great religions.”<sup>3</sup>

Though these tribal relationships and religious practises remained until the age of Islam, Yemen was regularly exposed to the message of monotheism, and had an intimate relationship with the ancient prophets; some adhered to the call, while others faced divine retribution for their outright spurning and aggression against prophets.

Hadhramawt, a Governorate of Yemen retaining its name since half a millennia before Christ (‘a), for example, was the site of two Prophets – Hud and Salih (‘a) who were sent to their tribes, ʿAd and Thamud.

ʿAd, arrogant and emboldened by their technological advancement at establishing the world’s first several story high abodes, rejected Prophet Hud’s (‘a) call to worship one God. Believing that their lofty buildings could withstand God’s punishment, they challenged Prophet Hud (‘a) to bring a destruction which they could not withstand. God reigned down upon them winds and storms for seven days, levelling all of what they had established in opposition to Him.

**Thamud**, despite watching the levelling of their neighbours, did not learn from what occurred right before them. Rather than depend on technology, they resorted to a stronger defence, nature, to be resolute in the face of winds. Thamud sought refuge by hewing out abodes in mountains, assuming that God could not destroy entire mountainous ranges. This time, a massive earthquake struck, followed by dust storms

which engulfed them.

Their eventual destructions and preservation of their remains as reminders of God's power was well known amongst the Arabs with their stories passed down between the generations.

Hadhrāmawt is identified in the Bible in Genesis 10:26 and 1 Chronicles 1:20, while the 11th chapter of the Qur'an is named after Prophet Hud (‘a); and there are numerous other verses alluding to their story such as in Surah al-Mo'min,

***“O my people! Surely I fear for you the like of what befell the groups. The like of what befell the people of Nuh, ʿAd and Thamud.” (Qur'an, Surah al-Ghafir 40:30–31).***

After Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) (‘a) established the Kaʿbah in Mecca as the symbolism of God's absolute unity, nearby Yathrib became home to Jews and Christians alike who were awaiting their next prophet.

Just as many Jews travelled from Syria to Hijaz, many also settled in Yemen. The Qur'an<sup>4</sup> also mentions this referring to a particular sect, the al-Saduqiyya (Sadducees), as those who held the Prophet ʿUzayr (Ezra) as the son of God.

Yemen's interaction with Mecca and Yathrib thus made for it to be a prime region of religious curiosity, debate, worship, religious paraphernalia often relayed particularly through early revelation, poetry and story-telling.

With its fluid movement of interaction for migration, religion, trade, war and marriage, accessed by the Indian Ocean on one side, northern Arabia on the other, and Africa and Persia further afield, Yemen was also a hub for ancient languages, though the majority of them are no longer extant, like many of its tribes.

Classical Arabic, or fusha, is very much indebted to the Yemeni regional dialects. Formed in the Peninsula from a mixture of Semitic languages in antiquity, regional Yemeni languages developed from the Himyaraic language used in the 1st century B.C., Modern and Old Southern Arabian languages, the vast majority of which are now extinct. Until today, classical Arabic as used specifically by Yemeni tribes is studied in comparison to their northern, Hijazi and Kufi dialects<sup>5</sup>.

Pre-Islamic Yemen was well known for its production of fruits, dates and grains. Its mountainous ranges – peaks, some as high as 4,000 metres above sea level, received heavy rain from the monsoons of the Indian ocean. Though Yemen had no rivers for easy traveling, wells and seasonal streams encouraged irrigation, cultivation, animal rearing and travel.

Yemen, prior to Islam was also known for its beautiful cloths, cloaks<sup>6</sup> and other products, the quality of which was unavailable in other parts of Arabia. Some of these were mentioned by ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (‘a) in a sermon when he spoke about the wonders of creation, and he mentioned the peacock as one of

Allah's (SwT) most beautiful and unique creations, vividly comparing the magnificence of the two saying:

You would imagine its feathers to be sticks made of silver and the wonderful circles and sun-shaped feathers growing thereon to be of pure gold and pieces of green emerald. If you likened them to anything growing on land, you would say that it is a bouquet of flowers collected every spring. If you likened them to cloths, they would be like printed apparels or amazing variegated cloths of Yemen<sup>7</sup>. If you likened them to ornaments then they would be like gems of different colour with studded silver.<sup>8</sup>

He also said:

The peacock walks with vanity and pride, and throws open its tail and wings, and laughs admiring the handsomeness of its dress and the hues of its necklace of gems. But when it casts a glance at its legs it cries out loudly with a voice which indicates its call for help and displays its true grief, because its legs are thin like the legs of Indo-Persian cross-bred cocks. At the end of its shin there is a thin thorn and on the crown of its head there is a bunch of green variegated feathers. Its neck begins in the shape of a goblet and it stretches up to its belly like the hair-dye of Yemen<sup>9</sup> in colour, or like silk cloth put on a polished mirror which looks like it has been covered with a black veil, except that on account of its excessive lustre and extreme brightness it appears that a lush green colour has been mixed with it.<sup>10</sup>

☪Ali ibn Abi Talib's ('a) extensive knowledge about Yemen and its produce was not borne out of his interactions as a nearby Hijazi. Rather Imam ☪Ali ('a) spent several weeks in Yemen, it was he who converted the entire region to Islam in only one day!

Prophet Muhammad (S) had previously sent two delegations, preaching for six months, but neither of them were successful in bringing the curious Yemeni tribes to the religion of Allah (SwT). ☪Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a) went there to collect taxes, teach the religion and offer judgements, many of which were considered extraordinary.

Yemen always remained a source of fondness and support for ☪Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a), who often referred to his experience as an example for others to follow.

In his famous letter to Malik al-Ashtar on how to correctly govern Egypt, he drew on the advice given to him by the Prophet (S), before he embarked and wrote:

The particular thing by which you should purify your religion for Allah should be the fulfilment of those obligations which are especially for Him. Therefore, devote to Allah some of your physical activity during the night and the day, and whatever (worship) you perform for seeking nearness to Allah should be complete, without defect or deficiency, whatsoever physical exertion it may involve. When you lead the prayers for the people, do not scare them away from it (by prolonging it), nor waste it (by making it too short), because among the people there are those who are sick, as well as those who have needs of their own. When the Holy Prophet (S) sent me to Yemen<sup>11</sup> I asked him how to lead the prayers. He advised me, 'Offer prayers like a weak and old person and be kind to the faithful' (so that weak and old

persons may follow your prayers easily and happily).<sup>12</sup>

Yemen long remained a regional support for the family of the Prophet (S) and ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (ʿa), and also for the Ahlul Bayt (ʿa) throughout the shifting times until the present time.

## Modern History Of Yemen

Today however, much of Yemen lies in ruins, and millions of people are living in dire poverty at the hands of a Saudi-lead war of decimation upon it. What was once the location of Islam's greatest single conversion to Islam, has been besieged by a war of ethnic cleansing, collective punishment, the poisoning of water supplies, trade embargos and mass starvation as a political weapon.

In the year 2010 began what came to be known as 'The Arab Spring' in which some 18 Arab and African nations spontaneously initiated civil uprisings. Each nation, independent from the other, sought socio-political changes, ranging from civil reforms to revolution to the overthrow of despot or repressive regimes.

Though beginning in Tunisia, Yemenis witnessed Egypt overthrow dictator Hosni Mubarak; Libya exerted mob justice on Mu'Ammar Ghaddafi; mass demonstrations happened by Bahrainis against a deeply oppressive monarchy, and the same occurred in Saudi Arabia. Arguably the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, and the subsequent arrests of security chiefs charged with their collusion in the killing had another great visual impact on the potential of justice. David Gardner states, "The spectacle of four generals in an Arab country's security services being held over the assassination of a politician was not just unusual – it was unique. It electrified the Arab world, introducing into people's minds the profoundly subversive idea that Arab despots, for long untouchable within a political culture of unbridled power and legal impunity, could be held to account."<sup>13</sup> Yemenis – long oppressed and downtrodden by President Ali ʿAbdullah Saleh sought their own revolution and just government.

Yemen's present circumstances, like much of the Middle East, can be traced to post-World War II independence of the Arab world. Yemen's primary distinguishing feature has always been its relationship with Zaydism, a form of Shi'ism, distinguished from their Ithna-Asheri and Isma'ili counterparts. As early as the 9th century A.D., Yemen was a majority Zaydi region and remained as such even while mainstream Shi'ism declined during the 11th century across the Muslim lands, allowing it to proceed as a hub of Shi'ism. Yemen also remained largely independent during the Ottoman control, with power retained by the Zaydi Imams, only sporadically coming under Caliphate control.

With the demise of the Ottoman Empire came the domination of British and French powers over Arabia, each carving up states at the behest of their mandates. Only parts of the Arabian peninsula remained free from Arab rule including Yemen. Now an independent state, Yemen formally adopted Zaydi Imamate and leadership in its name, while concurrently Abdul al-Aziz al-Sa'ud ascended to monarchical and dictatorial rule in Hijaz, creating its neighbouring Saudi Arabia. Neither state could be

entirely free as British power remained around and in both countries. While Saudi cooperation with Britain grew stronger long with its administrative rule, Yemen's Imamate was not able to extend its rule over the entire region, as some tribal loyalties remained with British rule, eventually causing the division of North and South Yemen.

In 1962 the Zaydi ruler died and his successor was quickly deposed. The Imamate was renamed the Yemen Arab Republic in the North, while the South was known as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The North, a coalition made up of liberals, the army and tribal support joined the Arab League at its inception, while the South joined 22 years later in 1967, a sign of its isolation from other Arab states. Not all accepted the new government, especially those who retained strong support for the Zaydi Imamate. The government sought help from the Egyptian army, while the Zaydi loyalists called on neighbouring Saudi Arabia, to which several years of civil war ensued, with a wider proxy war between the two larger nations being played out. With the defeat of ʿAbd al-Nasir in 1967, Egypt pulled their forces out of Yemen.

Arguably one of the strongest reasons for the modern day political climate was the Arab states' attitudes toward Israeli occupation and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in the 1970's. Arab nationalism and separate interests of competing economic and military power had allowed a new Western power of influence to replace fading British and French influence and that was the United States of America. Seen as protector to the encroaching Russia and the gateway to a capitalist economy, the US demanded political compromise with Israel or at the very least indifference. Those who submitted would receive US support and financing; and those who did not would be considered an enemy. The Arab world split broadly into those two camps with Algeria, Libya, Iraq, the PLO and South Yemen not bowing to US bribery over their stance towards Israel. The first group, the remaining Arab states would soon turn neutralism towards Israel into a generally pro-West national policy.

## [The Revolution To Overthrow Despotism](#)

Yemen's participation in the Arab spring started in January 2011. Saudi Arabia paid particular interest to events in Yemen, not only since Saleh was its ally, but internal unrest at home and a democratic revolution gaining strength in Bahrain could quickly see all three states fall to Shi'i lead movements. Yemeni's – well experienced with the external hand of Saudi repression and influence in their own country, were sympathetic to the plight of the Bahraini and Saudi citizens seeking to overthrow their respective governments, and they voiced their support for the democratic revolutions in the neighbouring countries. Their tacit support for their Arab brothers against despot rulers was not to be forgotten by the monarchs of Saudi Arabia.

Seeing the Middle East being reshaped, demonstrators initially protested against governmental proposals to modify the constitution, unemployment, economic conditions and corruption, with demands soon including Saleh's resignation. Saleh agreed to cede power in exchange for immunity from

prosecutions, but on three separate occasions he backed out of the deal. On the 3rd of June he was injured in an assassination attempt and was evacuated by the Saudi government handing power to his vice president, Mansur al-Hadi, to continue his rule and policies. Despite injury, Saleh returned after three months with Saudi backing to resume control, but with the promise not to run in the upcoming presidential election. The election in the following year saw al-Hadi stand as the only candidate, who 'won' 99.8% of the country's votes.

This only escalated the opposition towards the government; and two main groups of opposition emerged. The first, Ikhwan al-Muslimeen, or The Muslim Brotherhood akin to their Egyptian counterparts, waged an unsuccessful campaign to remove what was a de facto military government. The second, successful in overthrowing the dictatorship, was undertaken by Houthi rebels, known as Ansar-Allah or The Helpers of God. On the 22nd of January 2015, Ansar-Allah stormed the capital Sana'a and removed both of those who were loyal to Saleh and those working directly for the Saudi government.

AnsarAllah had been hostile to the Salehi government since the early 2000's with several insurgencies and peace agreements being kept and broken. In 2009 however, a larger push to remove Saleh began in which the Saudi government militarily intervened with support for the Yemeni regime, quelling the Houthi movement, only to arise again in 2011 as part of the Arab Spring.

On the 21st of March 2015, after rejecting a proposal to split the country into six federal regions, Ansar-Allah took over the government and continued its expedition through the country to also remove al-Hadi, who then subsequently fled the country. On the 25th of March, Saudi Arabia, with a coalition of Arab states, supported by British and American intelligence and armament, began a mass bombing campaign against the Houthi government in order to restore the Saleh/al-Hadi dictatorship.

From the perspective of Ansar-Allah, their aim was to establish an independent government. The threat of Saudi interests was solely the religious and political alignments of the Houthi, being Zaydi Shi'i and rejecting Saudi hegemony in their country. This has been the incentive for the Saudis to crush the Houthi government and since then have carried out a massive bombing campaign against military, civilian and residential targets for more than three years.

## **The Present Day Desperate Situation**

The United Nations and independent aid agencies are unanimous: the bombing campaign and embargos have led to a humanitarian catastrophe. According to many, Yemen is today the world's largest and most urgent human crisis zone with famine, lack of drinking water, working sanitation, a devastated economy and mass inflation.

Two million people are suffering from acute malnutrition. In a joint statement by the World Health Organisation, the UN Children's Fund and the World Food Programme, Yemen presently has "the world's worst cholera outbreak in the midst of the world's largest humanitarian crisis." Bismarck

Swinging, a communication specialist for Unicef Yemen stated, “When you look at the number of children who are starving to death due to malnourishment, and now that is compounded by a cholera outbreak, children are not only being killed directly as a result of the conflict, but more children are at risk and could die from indirect consequences.”

Caroline Anning, senior conflict and humanitarian advocacy adviser for Save the Children stated, “This is an off-the-scale humanitarian crisis, much bigger than what we see in Syria, much bigger than in other parts of the world, and it happens in the background almost, it doesn’t get the same amount of attention.”[14](#)

Alex de Waal, author of the book *Mass Starvation: The History and Future of Famine* states that, “Yemen is the greatest famine atrocity of our lifetimes. The Saudis are deliberately destroying the country’s food-producing infrastructure. The United States and the European countries, if they cared about it enough, have enough leverage to get the Saudis and the Emiratis to stop bombing agricultural, health, and market infrastructure, open the ports, and have a much less restrictive definition about what food is allowed in. They also need to start a peace process. This is not a war that is going to be won in any meaningful sense. It is a political[ly] created famine and it will have to be solved by political[ly] created means.”[15](#)

Each time a treaty starts to be discussed or make positive steps, the Saudi-led bombing campaign targets civilians and vital infrastructure for Yemen so they cannot function healthily. An example among the many is a hospital supported by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the internationally renowned medical aid agency, which was bombed where at least 11 people were killed and 19 were injured in an airstrike. Teresa Sancristóval, MSF desk manager for the Emergency Unit in Yemen said: “This is the fourth attack against an MSF facility in less than 12 months.” Adam Baron, a visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations who was previously based in Yemen said, “When you are seeing a country where your reaction to the hospital is not just shock and horror, but rather a sad shrug, that is a testament to how desperate the situation in Yemen really is right now. You are also seeing the absolute collapse of the health system even in areas that are distant from the war.”[16](#)

Sadly this type of war crime is the norm even with weddings, schools, bridges, clinics, factories and distribution centres which have been hit – adding to the plight of the already devastated country.

It appears that this oppression of Central Arabia upon its Southern neighbour is something that even Prophet Muhammad (S) predicted and warned about. It has been narrated by Bukhari from ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar that Prophet Muhammad (S) said, “O Allah! Bless our Sham (Syria) and our Yemen.” The people said, “Our Najd as well.” The Prophet (S) again said, “O Allah! Bless our Sham and Yemen.” They said again, “Our Najd as well.” On that the Prophet (S) said, “There will appear earthquakes and afflictions, and from there will come out the side of the head of Satan.”[17](#)

It is interesting that the Prophet (S) specifically prayed for the blessings of God to be upon Syria and

Yemen, and not upon the Najdi Arabs – from where the modern Saudi Arabian leadership hail from – at present when both Syria and Yemen have been decimated by Saudi led coalitions.

## The Aims Of This Book

It was in the light of such devastating and urgent circumstances that I decided to write this short book on the conversion of the region of Yemen to Islam at the time of the holy Prophet Muhammad (S) and its experience with the Commander of the Faithful, ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (ʿa) thereafter.

I had long since desired to write a book on the delegation of ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (ʿa) to Yemen. This is because while many Muslims are aware of the events at Ghadir Khumm after the ‘Farewell Pilgrimage’ of the Prophet (S) where he made an announcement about ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (ʿa), they are oblivious to the events that immediately preceded it, that being the conversion of Yemen to Islam.

My focus was planned to study in detail the events that followed the region’s conversion to Islam, particularly the small genre of narrations that describe some of the companions being critical or accusing ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (ʿa) of misconduct while there. These were of interest because of their relationship to the event of Ghadir Khumm and whether the sermon at Ghadir by the Prophet (S) was a response to the apparent accusations of Imam ʿAli (ʿa) or they were said despite them. That is to say, whether these rumours caused the Prophet (S) to announce his friendship with ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (ʿa) as is one historical view, or whether the announcement was the Prophet (S) appointing Imam ʿAli (ʿa) as Caliph after him, as is the other view. As many Muslims may not have known about the events following the conversion of Yemen, the study would have started at the point of ʿAli ibn Abi Talib’s (ʿa) deputation.

In any case, until now I did not have a chance to commence that work, however I have briefly included some of the narrations and points as they are pertinent to the story of Yemen’s conversion to Islam. It was upon the unexpected passing away of my uncle Amirali Lakha, a committed humanitarian, on the 10th of January this year that committed me to writing this book, the reward of which is dedicated to him.

The purpose of this small book is four fold:

1. The primary goal is to raise urgent charitable donations for the humanitarian plight of the oppressed and devastated Yemeni community through the sale of this book.
2. As part of this, there needs to be awareness raised about their plight and the level of destruction that the Saudi led coalition has meted out on what always should have been an internal matter for the Yemeni people to resolve. People across the world, especially the Muslims, have a duty to pressurise their governments into being part of the political solution.
3. This leads to the third aspiration which is to raise awareness about the role of Britain and the United States of America in this ongoing crime against humanity. The fighter jets, bombs, missiles, training and technologies used by Saudi Arabia are mainly from the British, French and US governments, or

contracts that they have signed allowing the industrial military complex to export to them. For every death and disease contracted, for every pain of hunger and emotional trauma brought about by this campaign of quelling the revolution, it is upon the British, French and US government heads as well. Only a few days before writing this, the US Senate shamefully voted to reject a bill that would have halted the nation's military support for Saudi Arabia. Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF's regional director for the Middle East and North Africa said, "Water and sanitation systems have been bombed out of commission by Saudi Arabian airstrikes and they receive direct support from the US military." In addition, "The US – and the UK – backed Saudi-led coalition has bombed civilians and blocked the delivery of life-saving healthcare and medicine. This is a violation of international humanitarian law and indefensible" said David Miliband, president and CEO of the International Rescue Committee. [18](#) At the time of completing the writing (of this book), the Saudi and UAE coalition have begun a war to capture the port city of Hudeidah, crippling the humanitarian aid services of which 80% use the port as a point of entry into the country. This has no doubt exacerbated the already disastrous situation. It is also the duty of the righteous people of Britain and the US, especially Muslims, to do whatever they can to stop their governments or the weapons companies that export mass destructions to Yemen.

4. The fourth purpose of this book is to raise awareness of the important role that Yemen had in the early history of Islam. This small work aims to collect the story of Yemen from its pre-Islamic era with the ancient prophets, to the story of its conversion at the time of the holy Prophet Muhammad (S), the subsequent events that affected its history, and their relation to ﷺ Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a).

Many Muslims, who adore and cherish Imam ﷺ Ali (‘a), are largely unaware of his contribution to Islam in relation to Yemen, and to learn about his achievements there will not only increase our appreciation of his greatness, but also make us realise how devastated he would be to see that the country which he brought to Islam is being decimated the way it is today. Such a pain in his heart should be an inspiration for us to help halt these atrocities from occurring.

In light of this point that ﷺ Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) would be distraught at seeing the suffering of the Yemeni people and its beautiful region being turned into a theatre of war, I offer a final narration to this introduction from ﷺ Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) himself. In regards to the sufferings of the Arab people, he said:

I wished I could have taken the way leading towards (worldly pleasures like) pure honey, fine wheat and silk clothes, but it cannot be that my passions lead me and greed takes me to choosing good meals, while in the Hijaz or in Yamamah there may be people who have no hope of getting bread or who do not have a full meal. Shall I lie with a satiated belly while around me there may be hungry bellies and thirsty livers? Or shall I be as the poet has said:

It is enough for you to have a disease that you lie with your belly full while around you people may be badly yearning for dried leather. [19](#)

Thus, this book is written for the purpose of sale to raise money for the desperate plight of our brothers and sisters in Yemen. All of the money raised will go towards clean water, food and medical aid

supplies.

While we do not wish to limit the donations of the generous people who wish to purchase this book, we do however want to set a minimum. We also want to encourage those who purchase the book, not just to buy it as a charitable donation and then leave it on the shelf to gather dust or be left downloaded on a phone, but rather to benefit from its content, and the phenomenal role that Yemen played in the earliest days of Islam.

The title of this book, 'A Land Most Goodly' is rendered from the title **بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ** – Baldatun Tayyibatun – given to Yemen in the Holy Qur'an.<sup>20</sup> This means that Yemen being adorned with such a title is from Allah (SwT) Himself. Therefore there can be no better way to refer to Yemen, nor a more preferable title to this work reminding the Muslim community about the importance that Yemen has in Islam – by the mention of Allah's (SwT) name for the country.

The philosophy behind the cover was to bring together the devastation of the country by the Saudi led war on it and Yemen's nation colours, red, white and black. The designer notes that the white represents the good and pure land of Yemen and its righteous struggle, whilst the black represents the destructive and calamitous forces encroaching on the pure land. In the national flag, the red would come before the white, however the red has been splashed across mainly the white, denoting the bloodshed caused by the invading, dark side. Faintly in the red, you can see the image of a dismayed and weeping Yemeni child.

My sincerest thanks goes to Sheikh Mahmood Abdullah and Sajida Khatun for proofreading; Zulfikar Hussein for designing the covers; **The Muslim Vibe** ([www.themuslimvibe.com](http://www.themuslimvibe.com) [1]) for their support; **The World Federation Aid** ([www.wfaid.org](http://www.wfaid.org) [2]); **Penny Appeal** ([www.pennyappeal.org](http://www.pennyappeal.org) [3]) and the **Islamic Humanitarian Service** ([www.al-haqq.net](http://www.al-haqq.net) [4]) teams for distributing the funds raised; Sheikh Saleem Bhimji and his wife, Sister Arifa Hudda for their efforts in bringing this project to fruition. Your thanks comes from the Yemeni people and your rewards are with Allah (SwT).

All praise and thanks belong to Allah (SwT). May His blessings be upon all of His prophets and messengers, especially His last Prophet Muhammad (S) and his Progeny ('a).

**Jaffer Ladak**

**Rajab ١٤٣٨/March 2018**

**Karbala al-Muqaddasa**

<sup>1</sup>. Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>. Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>. Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>. Qur'an, Surah al-Tawbah (9), verse 30.

<sup>5</sup>. Zubaydi, Dr. Abd al-Kareem al-, Commentary of Sharh Ibn Aqeel 'Ala Alfiyati Ibn Malik at <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Rkly0B1MA6w> [5] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

<sup>6</sup>. The hadith corpus is replete with narrations about purchasing and using Yemeni cloaks.

7. The Arabic text is as follows:

تَخَالَ قَصَبُهُ مَدَارِيَّ مِنْ فِصَّةٍ، وَمَا أُنبِتَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ عَجِيبِ دَارَاتِهِ وَشُمُوسِهِ خَالِصَ الْعُقَيَّانِ، وَفَلَدَ الزَّبْرَجَدِ. فَإِنْ شَبَّهْتَهُ بِمَا أُنبِتَتِ الْأَرْضُ قُلْتَ: جِنِّي جِنِّي مِنْ زَهْرَةِ كُلِّ رَبِيعٍ، وَإِنْ ضَاهَيْتَهُ بِالْمَلَابِسِ فَهُوَ كَمَوْشِيِّ الْحُلَلِ أَوْ كَمُونِقِ عَصَبِ الْيَمَنِ، وَإِنْ شَاكَلْتَهُ بِالْحَلِيِّ فَهُوَ كَفُصُوصِ ذَاتِ الْأَوَانِ، قَدْ نُطِقَتْ بِاللَّجِينِ الْمُكَلَّلِ .

8. Al-Radhi, Sharif, Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 165

<https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons/sermon-165-allah-...> [6] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

9. The Arabic text is as follows:

يَمْشِي مَشْيَ الْمَرْحِ الْمُخْتَالِ، وَيَتَصَفَّحُ ذَنْبَهُ وَجَنَاحَهُ، فَيُقَهِّقُهُ ضَاحِكًا لِحِمَالِ سِرْبَالِهِ، وَأَصَابِيغِ وَشَاحِهٍ؛ فَإِذَا رَمَى بِبَصَرِهِ إِلَى قَوَائِمِهِ زَقًا مُعُولًا بِصَوْتِ بَكَادٍ يُبِينُ عَنْ اسْتِعَانَتِهِ، وَيَسْهَدُ بِصَادِقِ تَوَجُّعِهِ، لِأَنَّ قَوَائِمَهُ حُمُشٌ كَقَوَائِمِ الدِّيَكَةِ الْخَالِاسِيَّةِ. وَقَدْ تَجَمَّتْ مِنْ طُنُبُوبِ سَاقِهِ صَبِيبَةٌ خَفِيَّةٌ، وَلَهُ فِي مَوْضِعِ الْعُرْفِ قَنْزَعَةٌ خَضْرَاءُ مُوشَاءٌ، وَمَخْرَجٌ عَنْهُ كَالْأَبْرِيقِ، وَمَعْرُزُهَا إِلَى حَبْثِ بَطْنِهِ كَصَبْغِ الْوَسْمَةِ الْيَمَانِيَّةِ، أَوْ كَحَرِيرَةِ مَلْبَسَةِ مِرَاءَ ذَاتِ صَفَالٍ، وَكَأَنَّهُ مُتَلَفِّعٌ بِمِعْجَرٍ، أَسْحَمٌ؛ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ يُخَيَّلُ لِكَثْرَةِ مَائِهِ، وَشِدَّةِ بَرِيقِهِ، أَنَّ الْخَضِرَةَ النَّاضِرَةَ مُتَمَرِّجَةٌ بِهِ

10. Ibid.

11. The Arabic text is as follows:

وَلَيْكُنْ فِي خَاصَّةٍ مَا تُخْلِصُ لَهُ بِهِ دِينَكَ: إِقَامَةُ فَرَائِضِهِ الَّتِي هِيَ لَهُ خَاصَّةٌ، فَأَعْطِ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَدَنِكَ فِي لَيْلِكَ وَنَهَارِكَ، وَوَفِّ مَا تَقَرَّبْتَ بِهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كَامِلًا غَيْرَ مَثْلُومٍ وَلَا مَنْقُوصٍ، بِالْغَا مِنْ بَدَنِكَ مَا بَلَغَ.

وَإِذَا قُمْتَ فِي صَلَاتِكَ لِلنَّاسِ، فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مُنْفَرًا وَلَا مُضَيِّعًا، فَإِنَّ فِي النَّاسِ مَنْ بِهِ الْعِلَّةُ وَلَهُ الْحَاجَةُ. وَقَدْ سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حِينَ «وَجَّهَنِي إِلَى الْيَمَنِ كَيْفَ أُصَلِّي بِهِمْ؟ فَقَالَ: «صَلِّ بِهِمْ كَصَلَاةِ أَصْغَفِهِمْ، وَكُنْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا

12. Al-Radhi, Sharif, Nahj al-Balaghah, letter 53,

<https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-2-letters-and-sayings/lette...> [7] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

13. Hourani, Albert, A History of the Arab Peoples, p. 469 (Originally from Gardner's, Last Chance – The Middle East in the Balance, 2nd ed. (London, 2012) pp. 134–5).

14. <https://amp.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jul/27/childrens-crisis...> [8] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

15. [https://phys.org/news/2018-01-mass-starvation-political-weapon.amp?\\_twi...](https://phys.org/news/2018-01-mass-starvation-political-weapon.amp?_twi...) [9] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

16. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/15/saudi-led-air-strike-yemen...> [10] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

17. Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 2, book 17, number 147.

18. <https://www.mintpressnews.com/in-wake-of-shameful-senate-vote-unicef-iss...> [11] (Last accessed on May 15, 2018).

19. Al-Radhi, Sharif, Nahj al-Balaghah, Letter 45,

<https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-2-letters-and-sayings/lette...> [12] Uthman-ibn-hunayf-al-Ansari (Last accessed on May 15, 2018). The Arabic text is as follows:

وَلَوْ شِئْتُ لَاهْتَدَيْتُ الطَّرِيقَ، إِلَى مُصَفَّى هَذَا الْعَسَلِ، وَلِبَابِ هَذَا الْقَمْحِ، وَنَسَائِحِ هَذَا الْقَرْ، وَلَكِنْ هِيَئَاتِ أَنْ يُغْلِبَنِي هَوَايَ، وَيَقُودَنِي جَشْعِي إِلَى تَخْيِيرِ الْأَطْعِمَةِ وَلَعَلَّ بِالْحِجَازِ أَوْ بِالْيَمَامَةِ مَنْ لَأَطْمَعُ لَهُ فِي الْقُرْصِ، وَلَا عَهْدَ لَهُ بِالشَّبَعِ أَوْ أَيْبِتَ مِبْطَانًا وَحَوْلِي بَطُونٌ عَرْتِي وَأَكْبَادٌ حَرَى، أَوْ أَكُونُ كَمَا قَالَ الْفَائِلُ:

وَحَسْبُكَ دَاءٌ أَنْ تَبَيْتَ بِيْطَنَةَ

وَحَوْلِكَ أَكْبَادٌ تَحْنُ إِلَى الْقَدِّ

20. Qur'an, Surah al-Saba':

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكِنِهِمْ آيَةٌ ۖ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ ۚ كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ ۗ بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ

Certainly there was a sign for Saba in their abode; two gardens on the right and the left; eat of the sustenance of your Lord and give thanks to Him: a land most goodly and a Forgiving Lord! (34: 15).

Image:



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<https://www.al-islam.org/baladatun-tayyibatun-land-most-goodly-jaffer-ali-ladak/introduction>

**Links**

[1] <http://www.themuslimvibe.com>

[2] <http://www.wfaid.org>

[3] <http://www.pennyappeal.org>

[4] <http://www.al-haqq.net>

[5] <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Rkly0B1MA6w>

[6] <https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons/sermon-165-allah-hal-provided-wonderful-creations>

[7] <https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-2-letters-and-sayings/letter-53-order-malik-al-ashtar>

[8] <https://amp.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jul/27/childrens-crisis-yemen-conflict-80-percent-kids-urgent-aid-acute-malnutrition>

[9] [https://phys.org/news/2018-01-mass-starvation-political-weapon.amp?\\_\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://phys.org/news/2018-01-mass-starvation-political-weapon.amp?__twitter_impression=true)

[10] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/15/saudi-led-air-strike-yemen-hospital-kills-at-least-seven>

[11] <https://www.mintpressnews.com/in-wake-of-shameful-senate-vote-unicef-issues-new-cholera-warning-for-yemen/239553/>

[12] <https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-2-letters-and-sayings/letter-45->