

## **TAREEKH SYLLABUS - CLASS 11 (14 YEARS OLD)**

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**My Tareekh teacher is \_\_\_\_\_.**

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## TOPIC 1: THE BANU UMAYYAH - PART 1

### I. Introduction

The Bani Umayyah had been sworn enemies of the Bani Hashim since the time when Hashim, the forefather of our Prophet (S), had succeeded in banishing his evil half-brother Umayyah from Makka.

The Bani Umayyah started tormenting the Prophet (S) immediately he began to spread Islam. Abu Sufyan was their leader. He led the wars of Badr and Uhud against the Muslims. During the battle of Uhud his wife Hind hired an assassin to kill Hamza, the uncle of the Prophet (S). After the murder, she located the body of Hamza, mutilated it, and chewed his liver. The children of this accursed couple were no less evil. After the death of the Prophet (S), Abu Sufyan tried to attain power by encouraging Imam Ali (A) to regain his right to Caliphate by spilling blood. Imam Ali (A), well aware of the hidden intent of Abu Sufyan, rejected his offer.



It was left to those who had stolen the rights of Imam Ali (A), namely Abu Bakr and Umar, to prepare the ground for the Bani Umayyah to come to power. Umar appointed Yazid, son of Abu Sufyan, as governor of Palestine and later, of Syria. When Yazid died, his younger brother, Mu'awiya became the ruler of Syria. Umar further strengthened the power base of the Bani Umayyah by arranging for Uthman to succeed him as Caliph. Uthman made sure that all the key posts in the Muslim empire were in the hands of his Bani Umayyah clan. Since then, the Bani Umayyah became the ultimate power throughout the Muslim lands and began to torture and harass the family and Shia of Imam Ali (A)

### II. The Bani Umayyah Kings

#### 1. Mu'awiya son of Abu Sufyan

When Imam Ali (A) was asked by all the Muslims to become Caliph in 35 A.H., one of the first things he did was to ask Mu'awiya to forego his governorship of Syria and give an account of his actions. Mu'awiya, however, wanted the Caliphate himself, and claimed that he was an independent authority and not under the Muslim state.

This led to the battle of Siffin, which came to an unsatisfactory conclusion in 37 A.H.

After the death of Imam Ali (A), Mu'awiya turned his attention to Imam Hassan (A). Just as his father had done, Imam Hassan (A) wrote to Mu'awiya telling him that the crimes he was committing against innocent Muslims were unacceptable. Imam Hassan (A) asked the Kufans to assist him in battle against Mu'awiya.

However, the Kufans were either bribed or threatened by Mu'awiya, and being very fickle people, they deserted Imam Hassan (A). At the gathering ground of Nukhayla, only 4,000 men turned out to fight and Imam Hassan (A) was forced to return to Kufa disappointed. To save the lives of the few sincere Muslims, Imam Hassan (A) had to sign a treaty with Mu'awiya.

Mu'awiya arranged the murder of Imam Hassan (A). He promised Ju'da binte Ash'ath, a wife of Imam Hassan (A), 100,000 dirhams and the hand of his son Yazid in marriage if she poisoned her husband. The cursed woman carried out the evil task and Imam Hassan (A) breathed his last on 7th Safar 50 A.H.

Muawiya, may Allah's Curse be on him always, finally died in Rajab of 60 A.H.

## **2. Yazid son of Muawiya**

In 60 A.H. this devil declared himself ruler of all Muslims. Yazid was a man of extremely evil habits. He was a drunkard, gambler, womaniser and murderer. He only ruled for 3 years. In the first year he killed Imam Husain (A) and his companions in Karbala and made their women and children prisoners. During the second year he ordered his soldiers to enter Madina and do what they liked. As a result, 1,000 people were killed, including 700 close Companions of the Prophet (S). In addition 1,000 women were assaulted and forced to surrender their dignity to Yazid's men. In the third year, Yazid mounted an attack on the Ka'ba, aiming to destroy it with giant catapults.



Yazid's rule ended with his death in 64 A.H. Before his death, he appointed his son Mu'awiya as his heir.

## **3. Mu'awiya the Second, son of Yazid.**

Mu'awiya the Second was aware of the rights of the family of the Prophet (S) and of the terrible crimes committed by his own father and grandfather. He therefore told Imam Zainul Abideen (A) that he was transferring authority to him. His decision disgusted his mother so much that she told Muawiya, "I wish that I had discharged you as a miscarriage and never given birth to you." To this he replied, "I too, wish that had been the case so that I would not be associated with Yazid, Muawiya and Abu Sufyan." Because of his refusal to continue in the way of his forefathers, Mu'awiya was soon poisoned and died only 4 months after coming to the throne.

## **4. Marwan bin Hakam**

In 64 A.H. the line of kings of the Umayyad dynasty moved from the descendants of Abu Sufyan to those of Marwan. He ruled for only 9 months and during this time he was occupied in war against the group of Abu Sufyan on one hand and Abdullah ibne Zubayr on the other. As a result, he did not get much opportunity to persecute the Shia.

## TOPIC 2: THE BANI UMAYYAH – PART 2

### 5. Abdul Malik bin Marwan

Abdul Malik succeeded his father in 65 A.H. and ruled for 21 years. He became the ruler of Syria while Abdullah ibne Zubayr took over Arabia. Between the two of them they managed to kill the two groups of people who had risen to take revenge for the murder of Imam Husain (A). The "Penitents" led by Shia like Sulayman bin Sard Khuzai'i were killed by Abdul Malik while the group led by Mukhtar was killed by ibne Zubayr. Abdul Malik finally managed to kill ibne Zubayr and take control of the whole Muslim Empire. One of the worst crimes he committed was to turn a blind eye to the activities of his governor, Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Hajjaj was the worst tyrant in the whole history of the Bani Umayyah. He was responsible for the deaths of 120,000 innocent people. He tortured and killed such notable companions of Imam Ali (A) like Qambar, Kumail bin Ziyad and Sa'id bin Jubayr.

### 6. Walid bin Abdul Malik.

In 86 A.H. Walid succeeded his father Abdul Malik. Walid was a cruel tyrant who continued to favour Hajjaj and give him free rein. He dismissed the popular governor in Madina, Umar bin Abdul Aziz and put Khalid bin Abdullah in his place. Khalid was an unbeliever whose mother was a Christian. This man built a church for his mother behind the Ka'ba. He allowed Christians to keep Muslim slaves.

### 7. Sulayman bin Abdul Malik

Walid died in 96 A.H. after ruling for 10 years and was succeeded by his brother Sulayman. Sulayman was a glutton and fond of women.

### 8. Umar bin Abdul Aziz

After the death of Sulayman bin Abdul Malik in 99 A.H., the reins of power were taken up by Umar bin Abdul Aziz. He was the one king in this dynasty whose actions were worthwhile.

One of the greatest deeds of Umar bin Abdul Aziz was that he stopped the abusing of Imam Ali (A) from the pulpits at the time of Friday prayers. Because of the influence of his childhood teachers, he had grown up with love and respect for the Ahlul Bayt (A). Instead of the customary curses, he ordered that the following verse be recited:

***Verily, Allah commands to maintain justice, kindness and proper relations with relatives; and He forbids indecency, sin and rebellion. He gives you advice so that perhaps you will take heed.***

***Nahl, 16:90***

This verse is recited by all the Muslims in their Friday addresses up to today. The other noteworthy action of Umar bin Abdul Aziz was that he returned the garden of Fadak to a descendant of Bibi Fatima (A), who at the time was Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A). This garden had been usurped by Abu Bakr after the death of the Prophet (S).

The favour with which Umar bin Abdul Aziz regarded the Ahlul Bayt (A) and the Shia made him unpopular amongst the Bani Umayyah themselves and led to his poisoning on 25th of Rajab 101 A.H. His grave in Dayr Sam'aan is still visited today.

### **9. Yazid bin Abdul Malik.**

Yazid was the next king and he did his best to overturn all the good actions of his predecessor. Under his rule, the old harsh ways of terrorisation and unfair taxation were revived. Yazid also seized Fadak back. His rule came to an end after 4 years.

### **10. Hisham bin Abdul Malik**

Hisham came to power at a time when the crimes of Bani Umayyah were finally causing widespread resentment. Hisham did not take heed of these feelings, and instead of attempting to reform the evils of his forefathers, he added to the misery of the people. His policies towards the Shia were especially harsh.

During the time of Hisham a revolution was led by Zayd son of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A). 15,000 Shia supported him but they deserted him when the fighting started. At the end Zayd was left with only 300 men and after a brave fight, he was killed. The body of Zayd was treated very badly by Hisham who refused to allow it to be buried and hung it at Kufa.

### **11. Walid bin Yazid bin Abdul Malik.**

Hisham died after ruling for 19 years and was succeeded by Walid. Walid was a shameless and foolish man, and he was fond of a pleasurable life, wasting it on wine, adultery and hunting. He was the first ruler to introduce professional singers into his court. He is famous for having publicly shot arrows at the Qur'an.

To add to this, the Bani Abbas began a campaign to topple the Bani Umayyah. After Walid's death, three more rulers came to power briefly, but they ruled for only a short time before the sun set on this cruel dynasty forever. These rulers were:

### **12. Yazid bin Walid (6 months).**

### **13. Ibrahim bin Walid (4 months).**

### **14. Marwan bin Muhammad bin Marwan (5 years 10 months).**

### **TOPIC 3: THE BANİ ABBAS - PART 1**

#### **I. Introduction**

At the time of the reign of Marwan bin Muhammad, revolts began to take place all over the Muslim Empire. The simultaneous rising of various sections proved too difficult to overcome and Marwan was forced to abandon his throne and flee for his life. He ran from city to city, but everywhere the people turned away from him. Wherever he went, he was relentlessly pursued by the army of the Bani Abbas, who finally killed him in Egypt in 132 A.H. With the death of Marwan the reign of the Bani Umayyah finally came to an end and a bloody chapter of history was closed.

The first people to begin the struggle against the Bani Umayyah were the Shia and the descendants of Imam Ali (A), who were also the first to sacrifice their lives and property in their efforts to overthrow the cruel regime.

The Bani Abbas were descendants of Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet (S). They were quick to capitalise on the general feeling that the Caliphate should be restored to the members of the family of the Prophet (S), the Ahlul Bayt (A). Their slogan was "Ar-Riza min Aale Muhammad". Their slogan meant that they were fighting to restore the rights of the Ahlul Bayt (A) and thus they gained widespread support. Their leader, Saffah, sent his commanders to all the strongholds of the Bani Umayyah to hunt and destroy them. Having subdued most of the followers of the Bani Umayyah, they took over the reins of power and Saffah became the first ruler of the Bani Abbas in 132 A.H.

#### **II The Bani Abbas Kings.**

##### **1. Abul Abbas Saffah.**

Saffah spent the four years of his rule in destroying the last traces of the Bani Umayyah. He captured their friends from far and near and subjected them to torture and persecution. He was determined not to rest until he ensured that any threat from the former ruling family was eliminated. In his paranoia he began to kill even those people whose loyalty he was unsure about. Thus all over the empire people were killed on flimsy excuses. The people now began to realise that these new rulers were no less blood-thirsty than their predecessors.

Abul Abbas was given the title "Saffah" because of having shed excessive blood. He once invited 80 members of the Bani Umayyah family for a meal, saying that he wished to talk about peace. On their arrival, he ordered them to be killed, and carpets were then spread on their half-dead bodies. Saffah then began to have his meal while the people lay dying under the carpets. He declared that he had never enjoyed such a delicious meal.

There is no doubt that the Bani Umayyah deserved to be killed, but this behaviour of Saffah was not justified. It indicated the presence of a criminal and deranged mind no less evil than the Bani Umayyah.

Saffah did not kill or harm any Shia during his rule. This was not due to any love he had for them, because the Bani Abbas proved to be worse enemies of the Shia in later years than Bani Umayyah had ever been.

The reasons he did not touch the Shia were:

1. His attention was concentrated on his real enemies, the Bani Umayyah, and he was determined to annihilate all of them.
2. The Shia had recently fought jointly with the Bani Abbas to topple the Bani Umayyah and had been instrumental in securing his throne.
3. The capital of Saffah was Kufa, where the residents were the followers of Imam Ali (A) and he did not yet possess the strength to fight them.

In any case, during the bloody days of the transition of power from the Bani Umayyah to the Bani Abbas, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) and Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) were left in relative peace.

They took advantage of this opportunity to set up schools to propagate the teachings of Islam according to the Ahlul Bayt (A). As a result we have a wealth of material today on matters of religious law, philosophy, morals and commentary of the Qur'an etc., from that period.

Saffah died in 136 A.H. and was succeeded by his brother Mansoor.

## 2. Mansoor Dawanaqi

Mansoor is considered to have laid the foundations of the Abbaside Dynasty. The descendants of Imam Hassan(A) were dealt with terribly. Mansoor gathered many of them and imprisoned them in chains. He never asked about them again and they perished of starvation.

During the reign of Mansoor, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) advised the Shia to remain silent and obey, because of the deceitful nature of the king. This time was used by the Imam (A) to spread the teachings of Islam to a large number of students.

Mansoor was not satisfied with the silence of the Imam (A) and once remarked,

**"Although I have killed more than a thousand descendants of the daughter of Muhammad, I have not yet killed their leader and chief".**

He finally succeeded in his evil intentions and got the Imam (A) poisoned in 148 A.H. Mansoor killed an untold number of Shia and enjoyed cruelty, inventing different ways to kill people. He struck whips on the eyes of people so they went blind, pulled down houses on the heads of the owners and placed them in walls and buried them alive. He finally died in 158 A.H. after having ruled for 22 years.

## TOPIC 4: THE BANI ABBAS - PART 2

### 3. Mahdi.

After the death of Mansoor, his son Mahdi came to power. He was no less brutal than his father. Mahdi died in 169 A.H. and was succeeded by his brother Haadi.

### 4. Haadi

Haadi only ruled for 15 months, and was a cruel and ill-mannered man. Although Haadi's life was short, he performed enough notorious acts to have his name recorded in the register of the inhuman criminals of the Muslim nation.

### 5. Haroon ar-Rashid

Haadi was succeeded by his brother Haroon ar-Rashid, who ruled from 170 A.H. to 193 A.H. Haroon became the most famous of the Bani Abbas kings, and anecdotes from his life have been recorded in the stories of the "Arabian Nights". He acquired his reputation due to the great advancement of learning, art and culture during his time.

Haroon administered the affairs of the state well and built mosques, schools, hospitals, houses, bridges, roads and canals throughout the empire. Much of the famous architecture of this period was due to the skills of the Bermechids, who served Haroon for 17 years. In the end, their own merits caused their downfall at the hands of the jealous Haroon.

In spite of his contribution towards improving the general standard of life of the Muslims, the policy of Haroon towards the descendants of Imam Ali (A) showed his great hatred for them. His outward appearance was one of a considerate king, while behind the scenes he set about destroying all traces of the descendants of Imam Ali (A).

The Bani Abbas had recently begun to claim that they were nearer relatives of the Prophet (S), because their link was through a male, while the Ahlul Bayt (A) were related through a female.



Haroon also caused the imprisonment of Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A). He transferred him from one prison to another and finally poisoned him through Sindi bin Shahak in Baghdad.

Haroon's rule finally ended after 23 years and he died in Toos after ordering that allegiance be given to his son Amin.



## **6. Amin**

Amin ruled for 4 years during which he was too busy leading a life of pleasure to cause much trouble to the descendants of Imam Ali (A). However, he could not resist the ambitious plans of his younger brother Ma'mun. A war broke out between the two brothers and Amin was killed.

## **7. Ma'mun.**

During the rule of Ma'mun, the Shia faith became firmly rooted in most of the Islamic cities and many of his own ministers were Shia. Ma'mun realised that the former persecution of the Shia had not wiped them out but had instead resulted in the increased determination of the Shia to preserve their faith.

Ma'mun recognised that the Shia were a powerful force and in order to keep them quiet, he deceitfully declared himself to be a Shia. Ma'mun knew that Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) was held in the greatest esteem by the Shia, so he ordered the Imam (A) to come to Baghdad and forced him to accept the position of heir to the throne.

Ma'mun was no less evil than his father, because he ultimately managed to kill Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A). Ma'mun died in 210 A.H., and after him the oath of allegiance was taken for Mu'tasim Billah.

## **8. Mu'tasim Billah**

Mu'tasim ruled for 8 years. He imprisoned Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) but then released him and allowed him to go to Madina. However, a few years later he had him recalled to Baghdad where he got the Imam's (A) wife Ummul Fazl, daughter of Ma'mun, to poison him.

## **9. Wathiq.**

After the death of Mu'tasim, Wathiq came to power and he ruled for 5 years. It has been said that Wathiq honoured the descendants of Imam Ali (A), behaved kindly towards them and gave them wealth. Wathiq died in 232 A.H.

## **10. Mutawakkil.**

After the death of Wathiq the oath of allegiance was given to his brother Mutawakkil who ruled for 14 years. Mutawakkil was a cruel man who became notorious for his free living, immodesty and intoxication. He threw parties of pleasure, drink and vain talk. During the rule of Mutawakkil the state of the Islamic Empire began to deteriorate, as corruption and evil behaviour became widespread.

Mutawakkil did not content himself with torturing those who were alive but also showed disrespect to the dead. He demolished the tomb of Imam Husain (A) and the extension around it, and restrained people from performing Ziyarat. Whoever attempted to do so was either imprisoned or killed.

Mutawakkil was finally killed by his own son Muntasir who could not stand and watch the evil acts of his father. The main reason he killed Mutawakkil was because the man used to abuse Bibi Fatima (A).

The power of the Abbaside Dynasty began to decline after Mutawakkil, who was the last king of any influence. Other factions then rose in the world of Islam, amongst them the Buwayyad, the Hamadani and the Fatimid Dynasties.

As a consequence of this development, the Shia were able to breathe in peace. During these later periods many great Shia scholars were able to contribute to our present day knowledge of Islam.

In all there were 37 kings of Bani Abbas, and their reign lasted till 656 A.H. The kings who ruled after Mutawakkil upto the time of Ghaybat (Concealment) of our 12th Imam (A) are:

**11. Muntasir. Till 247 A.H. (9 months).**

**12. Mustain. Till 252 A.H. (5 years).**

**13. Mu'taz. Till 255 A.H. (3 years).**

Mu'taz caused the death of our 10th Imam (A).

**14. Mu'tadi. Till 256 A.H. (1 year).**

**15. Mu'tamad. Till 279 A.H. (21 years).**

Mu'tamad caused the death of our 11th Imam (A).

**16. Mu'tazid. Till 289 A.H. (10 years).**

## **TOPIC 5: THE CRUSADES PART 1**

### **Introduction**

The Crusades represent a chapter in the history of confrontation between the East and the West. The East came to be dominated by Islam, and Christianity got a foothold in the West. The conflict between the East and the West thus took over a religious colour. During the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth centuries the Muslims dominated the world political stage, and the Christians had to lie low. During this period the Caliphate was a strong centralised state, and the Christians were beaten by the Muslims on all fronts. However, a remarkable change in the balance of power occurred between the Christians and the Muslims in the eleventh century. Around 1000 CE the barbarian Vikings and the Magyars who had been raiding and ravaging Europe were converted to Christianity, and that brought in an era of peace and progress for the West. New towns and markets sprang up, and trade and commerce came to flourish.

### **The Muslim World during The Eleventh Century.**

While the eleventh century marked the rise to power of the Christians, it marked the reverse for the Muslim world. By this time the Abbasid caliphate lost its hold and power and their empire stood fragmented.

In Spain the Ummayyad caliphate collapsed in 1031; and then followed half a century of chaos and anarchy which provided opportunity to the Christian powers of the north to gather strength. Up until the tenth century, the Mediterranean Sea was practically a Muslim lake. By the eleventh century however, the Muslims had lost their naval supremacy in the Mediterranean.

### **Origins of the First Crusade.**

The successes of the Christians in Spain and the Mediterranean encouraged them to open a third front against the Muslims in the East.

The Byzantines who were still seeking revenge for the loss of a greater part of their empire to the Muslims since the rise of Islam, appealed to the Pope for help. At this time there was a lot of conflict between the Church and the State, which had brought misery to a lot of people. As a result, the Pope felt that it was the opportune time to launch the crusading movement against the Muslims in order to divert from the civil conflict between the Pope and the princes in feudal Europe. Therefore in 1095, Pope Urban II proclaimed a crusade and called the Christian world to arms in a bid for power against the Muslims.

It was declared that he who participated in the crusade would get the blessings of the Church, and the full remission of all his sins. The cry rose from every pulpit in the Christian world that the Land should be rescued from the Muslims. The cry was taken up in all parts of Europe, and about one hundred and fifty thousand men, responded to the call.

### **The First Crusade : 1095 - 1099**

With each warrior wearing the cross as a badge, the crusaders marched to Asia Minor. Their first confrontation was with the Seljuk Sultan Qilij, who was defeated. He lost his capital Nicaea, and after annexing this city, the crusaders advanced to Armenia. The Norman Crusaders took the whole of Armenia, where they set up a Christian principality in Edessa. By 1098, Antioch in Northern Syria, had also fallen to the crusaders, and shortly after that, they marched south along the coast and captured the coastal town of Tripoli.

From Tripoli, the crusaders advanced towards Jerusalem. They reached Jerusalem in 1099 and laid siege to the city. The city fell after a month and then the entire Muslim population of over 10000 was killed. Jerusalem was created an independent principality.

### **Consequences of the First Crusade**

The first crusade ended in considerable success for the Christians. The Muslims were not united enough to have put up a strong front against them. There was betrayal among the Muslims as the followers of Hassan Sabah, known as the "Assassins", openly helped the Crusaders.

As a result of the first crusade, the Christians were able to set up five strongholds in the heart of the Muslim world.

## TOPIC 6: THE CRUSADES PART 2

### Political Situation After The First Crusade

After the first crusade, a state of stalemate continued for some fifty years. The Christians had set up five principalities and occupied an area across the Mediterranean coast about fifty miles wide. The rest of the country remained under Muslim control. The Christian powers however, were now beginning to fight among themselves and were unable to forge a united front. As a result, they were not able to extend their conquests. Furthermore, there was no strong power among the Muslims, which could expel the Christians from their principalities

### The Second Crusade: 1144 - 1155

#### Imad-ud-Din Zangi



Towards the middle of the twelfth century, a strong ruler Imad-ud-Din Zangi rose in Mosul. He took up the fight among the Muslims and spearheaded the movement of Jihad against the Christians. In 1144, he invaded Armenia, and after a brief siege, he recovered Edessa.

#### Nur-ud-Din Zangi.

Imad-ud-Din was succeeded by his son Nur-ud Din, who was even more determined to fight for the Muslim cause. After his father's death, Edessa was reconquered by the Christians. As a result, Nur-ud Din led his forces into Armenia and managed to get back Edessa again.

The news of the fall of Edessa was received in Europe with great concern, and Pope Eugene III, proclaimed another crusade. The second crusade was led by Louis VII of France, and Conrad III of Germany. However, a greater part of the forces of Conrad was defeated in Asia Minor, and the forces of Louis were largely destroyed while crossing the Admus River. In a confrontation with the forces of Nur-ud Din Zangi near Antioch, the crusaders suffered a defeat, and as a result, part of the principality of Antioch was occupied by Nur-ud Din Zangi.

## **The Siege of Damscus**

The object of the second crusade was the recapture of Edessa. With the destruction of a greater part of the crusaders army in Asia Minor and their subsequent defeat near Antioch, the crusaders altered their plan, and instead of proceeding to Edessa, they went to Jerusalem instead. After getting reinforcement from Jerusalem, the crusaders decided to invade Damascus as a diversion.

The crusaders laid siege to the city of Damascus. The siege lasted for some time, until the inhabitants of Damscus managed to send a message to Nur-ud-Din Zangi for help. Immediately Nur-ud-Din and his forces advanced towards Damascus. However, upon hearing of this advance, the crusaders quarrelled among themselves, lifted the siege and withdrew from Damascus. Damascus was now back under the control of the Muslims.

## **Consequences of the Second Crusade**

With the occupation of Damascus by Nur-ud -Din Zangi, the balance of power changed in favour of the Muslims. The Christians had hoped that with the occupation of Damascus, they would have a strong base from where they could extend their conquests further inland. They had failed in securing this strategy. On the other hand, with the occupation of Damascus by Nur-ud Din Zangi, a strong Muslim state came to be established next door to the Christian strongholds. The Christian states were disunited and quarrelled among themselves.

## **The Third Crusade: 1187 - 1192**

### **Rise of Salah-ud-Din**

After the second crusade, the situation was calm for a generation. In the seventies of the twelfth century, Salah-ud Din Ayyubi rose to power in Egypt. In 1171, he put an end to the Fatimid rule in Egypt and by 1174, he had captured Damascus.

### **Fall of Jerusalem**



During this time, the principality of Jerusalem faced a lot of trouble. Taking advantage of the chaos in Jerusalem, Salah-ud Din led his forces against the Christians in 1187. He and his forces marched against Jerusalem, where a battle took place at Hittin, overlooking the sea of Galilee. Here the Christian army of 20,000 was destroyed and the city re-conquered by the Muslims.

The fall of Jerusalem was a serious blow to the Christians, and the Pope consequently raised the call for another crusade. Richard of England, Barbaroosa of Germany and Philip of France led the crusaders. Barbaroosa who came by land, was drowned crossing a river. The crusaders under Richard and Philip came by sea. The crusade began with a siege of the port of Accra by crusaders. Accra fell to the crusaders; and thereafter they advanced to Jaffa and Ascalon, which also fell to them. From there, the crusaders under Richard advanced to Jerusalem.



In the battle outside Jerusalem, the crusaders suffered a heavy defeat. As a result, Salah-ud-Din recaptured Jaffa and Ascalon. The crusaders now fell back on Accra, where Richard fell sick and was forced to ask for terms. Peace was eventually concluded in November 1192; the peace was for a period of three years, three months and three days. According to the terms of the treaty the Muslims retained Jerusalem, but the Christians were allowed free access to the city for pilgrimage.

### **Consequences of the Third Crusade**

The third crusade ended in failure for the Christians. The crusade was organised with a view to recovering Jerusalem from the occupation of the Muslims. However, the crusaders could not dislodge the Muslims from Jerusalem. The crusade also cost the crusaders a heavy loss of life. In spite of the hostilities there was a good deal of exchange of courtesies on the two sides. In this crusade, Salah-ud-Din emerged as the hero and the champion of Islam.

## TOPIC 7: EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

During the Middle Ages the Muslims were the leaders of the intellectual world. They were the pioneers in the various fields of knowledge and learning. Later when Europe embarked on its quest for learning, all its knowledge was derived from Islamic sources.

### The Muslims Contribution to Knowledge.

The Muslims made a two fold contribution to knowledge. They preserved all learning of the ancient world in Arabic translation. They also made their own contributions. Islam produced the greatest scientists, the greatest physicians, the greatest philosophers, the greatest geographers and the greatest historians of the middle ages. Examples are, Jabir, Jahiz and Baytar in science; Omar Khayyam and Nasir-ud-Din Tusi in mathematics and astronomy.

In the Middle Ages, the Universities in the Muslim lands were the greatest centres of learning. These Universities, particularly those in Spain were attended by scholars in Europe.

### Geography

The study of Geography began with the Prophet (S) himself. The Holy Qur'an enjoined the believers to travel on the earth and see the signs of Allah. This gave rise to the study of geography. Indeed, in the course of his travels, many of the observations that the Prophet (S) made, had been of considerable geographical interest.



### History

The Holy Qur'an presented a new vision of history. It referred to history as a Sign of Allah, and wanted the faithful to learn from the history of the previous people. Right from the beginning, the Muslims developed a sense of history, and as they grew in power and made history, the discipline came to be developed by them as a science.

### Philosophy

Islam revolutionised human thought and as such there is much in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, which is the source material for philosophy. The Prophet (S) always encouraged the believers to make full use of their intellect in understanding the things around them.



## Science

The Holy Qur'an says:

***[...Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the differences of night and day are signs for men of understanding. (Ale Imran 3: 190)]***



That awakened a spirit of enquiry among the Muslims. Indeed, during the Middle Ages, the Muslims were the leaders of the world in the matter of science. Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, and various scientific inventions, such as the Mariner's compass, the telescope etc., all came from the Muslims.

## Astronomy

Under Islam, Allah was acknowledged as the sovereign of the earth, as well as of the entire universe.

That created among the Muslims an interest in astronomy. The Prophet (S) is credited with the miracle of splitting up the moon in two parts. That created in the Muslims the urge to promote the study of astronomy.



## Medicine

Medicine began with the Prophet (S) himself. Islam enjoined cleanliness, and as such there is much in the Holy Qur'an which forms the basis of hygiene. The Prophet (S) said that to visit the sick was an act of piety. Medical care was thus promoted by the Muslims as a matter of religious obligation.

The Prophet (S) himself had considerable medical knowledge; in fact certain medical teachings are attributed to him which have been collected and annotated in a book entitled al Tibb al Nabawi (The Medicine of the Prophet).



## Mathematics

Islam believed in the Day of Reckoning. Islam encouraged its believers to maintain proper accounts. Islam propounded the doctrine of Tauhid -unity of Allah in the midst of diversity. These factors were responsible for the promotion of mathematics among the Muslims.

$$3+2=5$$

## ISLAM AND TRADE



The Holy Qur'an talked about trade in favourable terms. The Prophet (S) himself was a trader. Indeed, as the Muslim empire grew, the scope for trade increased accordingly. Foreign conquests brought more wealth to the Muslims; a lot of which was invested in trade. As the empire expanded, new cities were set up which consequently became important centres of trade and commerce.

## Commercial Activities of the State

The Islamic states undertook commercial activities on a large scale. Caravan routes were improved; halting places were provided convenient places along the caravan routes; there was free movement of goods within the empire from one region to another; and there were no inland levies. The Muslim cities had very well stocked markets and State regulation ensured stability in prices.



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Muslim countries executed commercial treaties with non-Muslim states, which resulted in the Muslim traders dominating world trade.

An inland route led to Central Asia and China; known as the Silk Route. Another inland route led to Russia. A third route led to Constantinople and then to Eastern Europe. A route led to Afghanistan and then to India. Another route led from Egypt to Sudan. A route from Morocco led to Ghana and other countries of West Africa. From Spain a route led to France and the states of the Danube Valley.

## Communications by Sea

The Mediterranean Sea was surrounded by Muslim countries on three sides, namely Syria, Africa and Spain. The Muslims went as far as China, Korea and Japan.



They established a colony at Canton in China. During the tenth century, an Arab colony sprang up near Bombay in India. The Muslim merchants had colonies on the east coast of Africa and they had commercial contacts with Madagascar and Zanzibar.

## Imports / Exports



In the Middle Ages, the Muslim countries were the leading industrial and manufacturing countries of the world. They made paper, textiles, silk, glassware, carpets, tapestries, handicrafts, leather goods etc. All such goods were exported to the various countries in the east and the west. The Muslim merchants brought silk from China and spices from India. They



imported furs and timber from Europe, as well as slaves. These also came from Central Asia and Africa.

In Muslim society, merchants enjoyed a high social status; they had international contacts and commanded respect in foreign courts. They were also very popular throughout the world for their fair dealings.

## Education

During the Middle Ages, the Muslims were the most advanced people in the world. While in Europe even the Kings could not read or write, in the Muslim countries, the common man could read and write. Educational institutions and libraries were to be found all over the Muslim empire. This thirst for knowledge then spread to the non-Muslim countries, who also began to set up various educational institutions and libraries etc.



## **TOPIC 8: ISLAM AND THE SWORD**

When the Muslims embarked on their spectacular career of conquests, they had to contend against the mighty empires of the Persians and the Byzantines. The sword lay with these empires and not the Arabs, the dwellers of the desert. If the Muslims won the day against the non-Muslims, such victory was as a result of the strength of their faith; not the sword. The people of these countries accepted Islam, of their own free will. The people of these conquered countries were given the option of either accepting Islam or paying a nominal tax and continue with their old religion.

When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, the Christians had the choice to migrate to other Christian territories. They however, chose to remain in Syria. This shows there was no compulsion on them to accept Islam. Similarly after the conquests of Egypt, the Muslims allowed the non-Muslims complete liberty in the profession of their religion. Indeed, the conversions to Islam in the conquered territories of Syria, Egypt and Persia was spread over more than a century. If Islam had spread through the sword, the conversions to Islam should have followed immediately after the conquests.

### **Islam In Spain**

The Muslims ruled over Spain for some several hundred years. If the sword had been used to spread Islam, all the people of Spain would have been converted Muslims; this was not the case. Furthermore, the Muslims were eventually expelled from Spain. Therefore, if they would have used the sword for the spread of Islam, then they would have remained the masters of Spain.

### **Islam In Russia**

The Muslims were the dominant power in Russia for over two hundred years. If they had used the sword to convert the people to Islam, there would be no non-Muslim in Russia today. The very fact that the Muslims lost Russia, shows that no attempt was made to spread Islam through the sword.

### **Islam In Eastern Europe**

The Ottoman Turks were the masters for the eastern part of Europe for more than a century. If the Muslims had employed the sword for the conversion of the people to Islam, there would be no Christians in Eastern Europe today.

### **Islam In The Lands Under The Occupation Of The Non Muslims**

During the course of history, the Muslims had to withdraw from many lands. If Islam had been spread through the sword, the people of such lands, if they would have accepted Islam under any compulsion, would have reverted to their original religions after the withdrawal of the Muslims from such lands. This however, did not happen, which shows that Islam with such converts was a matter of conviction and not a matter of compulsion or force.

### **Conversion Of The Mongols To Islam**

When the Mongols dismantled the Abbaside Caliphate and occupied the Muslim lands, they held the swords over the heads of the Muslims. Although Christianity tried its best to convert the Mongols, they failed and the Mongols accepted Islam. Their original aim had been to destroy Islam; so their conversion to it instead, showed that they accepted it not out of any compulsion, but because they were convinced Islam was a superior faith.

### **Islam In Indonesia And Malaya**

No Muslim power ever led any Muslim force to these lands in South East Asia. Islam was carried to these lands by Muslim traders and preachers.

## TOPIC 9: ISLAM'S ROLE IN HISTORY

The Holy Qur'an is not a book in of history, but many historical events are referred to in it, and we have been required to learn from history. In the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, we are required to pray to Allah to show us the right way - not the way of those on whom His wrath has fallen. There are references to the old nations who deviated and were punished by Allah. We have also been told that the Holy Prophet (S) of Islam is the seal of the prophets and that there would be no more prophets after him. Thus with Islam, mankind has come of age, and that thereafter there would be no need of any further guidance. Indeed, history begins with Islam. All accounts previous to the advent of Islam are mere legends. Islam has made history.

According to Islam the people are required to establish Allah's rule on earth and to act on behalf of Allah in accordance with His commands. As such according to the Islamic point of view, all that happens in history is a manifestation of the Will of God.

Apart from the punishment that is to be awarded in the Hereafter, Allah punishes the people for their sins in this world as well. Allah may punish people through natural calamities such as floods, fires, famines, epidemics, earthquakes etc. He may also choose one set of people to punish another set of people. Allah gives ample opportunity to the people to reform themselves and follow the straight way, but when they persist in following the wrong way, they cannot escape the wrath of Allah.

Many instances in Islamic History show that a higher power is at work to make history. For instance, no one could imagine that the Arabs, the dwellers of the desert, would overthrow the mighty empires of the Persian and the Byzantines. When Baghdad fell, and the Abbaside Caliph was trampled to death under the hoofs of the Mongol horses, no one could ever dream that these people, so hostile to Islam would be converted to Islam. When the Umayyads were the masters of Spain, who could foretell that after eight hundred years of rule, the Muslims were to be expelled from Spain. Who could imagine that the Turks would establish one of the largest empires in history. Indeed there are many events in history which cannot be predicted. Therefore, it is obvious that there is some mysterious power which shapes the course of history; this power is Allah.

The western historian seeks to interpret the events of history according to the law of cause and effect; whereas a Muslim historian is to interpret history according to the will of Allah. Therefore, while secular history is man oriented; Islamic history is God oriented.

## TOPIC 10: PROPHET YUSUF (A) - PART 1

### 1. Introduction

Prophet Yusuf (A) was the son of Prophet Ya'qub (A). In the Bible he is referred to as Joseph son of Jacob. The Holy Qur'an has mentioned his story in a beautiful chapter entitled "Surah Yusuf". Prophet Yusuf (A) had 11 brothers. He was one of the youngest and possessed excellent character and manners. His father loved him dearly.

Prophet Yusuf (A) once dreamt that eleven stars and the sun and moon were prostrating to him. He related the dream to his father. Prophet Ya'qub (A) realised that the dream outlined his son's destiny and greatness and cautioned him not to tell his brothers about the dream.



His brothers were jealous of the favour that he enjoyed in their father's eyes and planned to somehow get rid of him. Whenever they took their goats out for grazing they would ask their father if Yusuf (A) could accompany them. Prophet Ya'qub (A) always refused, saying that the boy was too young. When Prophet Yusuf (A) reached the age of 16, his brothers insisted that he was now old enough to accompany them. With reluctance, their father agreed to let them take him with them.



As soon as they were far enough from home, they began to plot about how to dispose of Prophet Yusuf (A). Then, they came across a dry well. They removed Prophet Yusuf's (A) shirt, and threw him into the well. Ignoring their young brother's pleas, they heartlessly left him to die of hunger. On the way back, they slaughtered a goat and stained Prophet Yusuf's (A) shirt with its blood. They arrived home weeping and told their father that while they were grazing their sheep, a wolf came and ate their brother. He did not believe their story and could do nothing but remain patient and wait for Allah to reunite him with his beloved son.

Meanwhile a caravan of traders passing by the well stopped to draw some water. They were surprised to see Prophet Yusuf (A) come up holding the bucket. They hid him with their merchandise and sold him to some slave traders for a few pieces of silver.

## 2. Prophet Yusuf (A) in Egypt

Thus, Prophet Yusuf (A) arrived in Egypt. At the slave market the buyers were all attracted by him, because he was a very handsome young man. News of this remarkable youth swept through the city. The Aziz (Governor of Egypt and Chief Officer of the King), whose name was Fotifaar, offered a price that none could match. He brought Prophet Yusuf (A) home and told his wife Zuleikha that they would adopt him as their son.

Zuleikha, however, was so taken by Prophet Yusuf's (A) beauty that she sought to have an illegal association with him. A Prophet of Allah could never be part of such an evil deed and Prophet Yusuf (A) backed away from the advances of Zuleikha. As he raced for the door she ripped his shirt from behind. At the door they met the Aziz. On seeing her husband, Zuleikha tried to blame Yusuf (A) by claiming that he had tried to lay a hand on her. Before the Aziz could vent his fury on Prophet Yusuf (A), a baby spoke up from the cradle, and the Holy Qur'an says:

*And a witness from her own household testified, "If his shirt is torn from the front, then she speaks the truth and he is of the liars. And if his shirt is torn from behind, then she lies and he is of the truthful ones.*

*Yusuf, 12:26,27*

The shirt was, of course, torn from behind, and the Aziz was extremely angry with his wife for attempting such an act of indecency. The women of the city heard about Zuleikha's actions and began to gossip and make fun of her. To explain her attraction she decided to let them see Prophet Yusuf (A) themselves.

She called forty of them to the palace for a meal. As soon as they all had a knife to cut some fruit, she called Prophet Yusuf (A) into the room on some excuse. So dazzled were they by his beauty and presence, that they cut their fingers in their distraction and exclaimed, "This is not a human being - he must be an angel!"

Zuleikha was furious with Prophet Yusuf (A) because he had caused her to be ridiculed. In her anger and frustration, she caused him to be imprisoned on false charges of assault.



## TOPIC 11: PROPHET YUSUF (A) - PART 2

### 1. Prophet Yusuf (A) in Prison

Due to continued pressure from his wife Zuleikha, the Aziz of Egypt decided to imprison Prophet Yusuf (A), despite his innocence. The reason he gave was that people would forget the actions of his wife while Prophet Yusuf (A) lay in prison, and her dignity would be restored.

On the same day that Prophet Yusuf (A) was put into prison, two other men were also imprisoned. One used to serve the king wine, while the other was the royal cook. Both men had been accused of trying to poison the king. On the following day, the wine-server said to Prophet Yusuf (A), "I saw in a dream that I was crushing grapes to make wine for the king". The cook said, "I dreamt that I was carrying some bread in a basket on my head and birds were pecking at the bread".



Both men saw that Prophet Yusuf (A) was a noble and pious person and asked him if he could interpret their dreams. Prophet Yusuf (A) took this opportunity to preach the religion of Allah to his prison-mates. He promised to tell them the meaning of their dreams and informed them that this was a special power given to him by Allah. Before he did so, however, he explained to them how senseless it was to believe in various gods and explained to them about the Oneness of Allah and the Day of Resurrection. Finally he said, "O my prison-mates! The man who dreamt that he was crushing grapes will soon be released from here and will go back to his previous post. The second one, who carried the bread on his head in the dream, will be executed and the birds will start to eat his brain."

Prophet Yusuf (A) thought of getting himself released from prison through the wine-server, and told him to remind the king of his innocence when he saw him. The dreams of both men came true just as he had foretold. One of the captives was released while the other was hanged. Unfortunately, the wine-server forgot all that Prophet Yusuf (A) had told him to convey to the king.

## 2. Prophet Yusuf's (A) Release From Prison

The Holy Qur'an says:

*The king dreamt that seven lean cows were eating seven fat ones and that there were seven green ears of corn and seven dry ones. He asked the nobles to tell him the meaning of his dream if they were able to. They replied, "It is a confused dream and we do not know the meaning of such dreams."*

Yusuf, 12:43,44

The king was very concerned about the meaning of his dream and even though his wise men thought over it seriously, they could not make sense of it. The king's dream became a means of the liberation of Prophet Yusuf (A) from prison. As soon as the wine-server heard about the dream he was reminded of his time in prison and remembered the powers of his cell-mate. He also remembered that Prophet Yusuf (A) had asked him to tell the king of his innocence. He approached the king and got his permission to see Prophet Yusuf (A).

Prophet Yusuf (A) interpreted the dream by the power given to him by Allah. He said, "For seven years the crops will yield abundant food-grain for the people of Egypt. After that there will be a famine for seven years during which all the food-grain lying in the storehouses will be finished and people will starve. Therefore, the people should try to grow as much extra grain as possible so that it would stand them in good stead during the time of famine".

On hearing this very reasonable and sensible interpretation of his dream from the wine-server, the king was delighted. He ordered that Prophet Yusuf (A) be brought before him so he could make good use of his wisdom in solving his problems.

Although he had been in the dark dungeon for so long, Prophet Yusuf (A) refused to leave the prison until he proved his innocence. He said to the courtiers, "I will not come out of the prison until the king makes enquiries about my case. Tell the king to ask the wives of the noble men about the time when they cut their fingers on seeing me".

The courtiers passed on this message to the king who called the concerned women to him for an explanation. They all confessed the truth and Zuleikha, the wife of the Aziz, also testified that Prophet Yusuf (A) was innocent of any guilt. Thus, Prophet Yusuf (A) was released from the prison with his dignity and honour restored.

## TOPIC 12: PROPHET YUSUF (A) - PART 3

### 1. Prophet Yusuf (A) in the Royal Court

The Holy Qur'an says:

*The king ordered his men to bring Yusuf before him; he wanted to grant him a high office. The king said to him, "From now on you will be an honoured and trusted person amongst us." Yusuf said, "Put me in charge of the treasuries of the land, I know how to manage them."*

Yusuf, 12:54,55

When the king met Prophet Yusuf (A), he found him to be a wise and broad-minded man. In response to the request of Prophet Yusuf (A) as related in the verse above, the king made him in charge of finance and food and ordered his ministers and officials to treat Prophet Yusuf's (A) commands as his own.

Prophet Yusuf (A) thus became the Aziz of Egypt and began his new duties without delay. He was determined that when the famine arrived, nobody should starve.

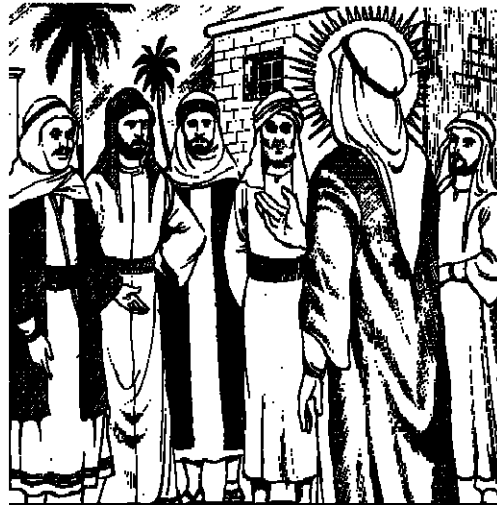
The river Nile flooded its banks regularly to provide fertile soil for the growth of food grain and Prophet Yusuf (A) was aware that the famine would be caused by the decrease of the water in this river. He decided to make a brief tour of Egypt to assess the best locations where intensive cultivation could be carried out. He allocated extra money to the farmers in the most fertile areas of the Nile, so that they would be able to grow the maximum amount of grain. He also ordered the construction of huge storehouses (granaries), capable of storing several hundred tons of the surplus grain.

During the first seven years, he supplied grain to the people according to their minimum needs, and stored the rest in the newly-built granaries. By the time the seven years were over, the granaries were full. The water level of the Nile fell tremendously and the country was hit by a severe drought. However, due to his foresight and planning, the country did not face a shortage of food.

The famine also extended to the lands of Palestine and Kanaan where Prophet Ya'qub (A) lived with his sons. One day he called them and said, "My sons! We are in great distress due to the famine. You may go to the Aziz of Egypt whose reputation as a kind and just person has spread everywhere in the country. Leave Binyameen with me for company so that I may not be lonely." As commanded by their father, the brothers of Prophet Yusuf (A) set off for Egypt to purchase grain and bring it back to Kanaan.

## 2. Prophet Yusuf's (A) Brothers in Egypt

When his brothers arrived in Egypt, Prophet Yusuf (A) was very pleased to see them. They did not recognise him at all, never expecting that he was alive. Prophet Yusuf (A) was disappointed not to see his full brother, Binyameen, and asked his brothers to tell him about themselves. They introduced themselves and told him about their father and mother. Prophet Yusuf (A) was relieved to hear that Prophet Ya'qub (A) was alive, and he welcomed his brothers sincerely. He provided them with enough wheat for their needs and had their money put back in their bags secretly. He also asked them to bring their other brother the next time as proof that they were speaking the truth about their family. The Holy Qur'an narrates this episode in the following words:



*Yusuf's brothers came to him and when they entered his court, he recognised them. They did not know him. And when he gave them the provisions, he said, "Next time, bring me your other brother from your father. As you can see, I give each of you a certain amount of grain, I am a polite host. If you do not bring him, do not come to us for we shall not give you any more grain.*

*Yusuf, 12:58- 60*

On their return home, the brothers related their experiences to their father, praising the generosity and hospitality of Prophet Yusuf (A). When they opened their bags they were delighted to see that their money had been returned. Soon they were out of grain and were impatient to go back to Egypt to get more.

However, they could not go back without Binyameen, so they tried to convince their father to let him come with them. Prophet Ya'qub (A) refused to let them take Binyameen, saying that they would do the same thing with him as they did with Prophet Yusuf (A). After repeated promises the brothers finally convinced him that they would sincerely look after Binyameen, so he let him accompany them to Egypt.

When they reached Egypt, the brothers proceeded to the court of Prophet Yusuf (A) and presented their brother Binyameen to him. Prophet Yusuf (A) was extremely happy to see his younger brother and invited all of them to dine with him. Later he gave them all accommodation at his own house, and asked Binyameen to sleep in his room.

During the night, Prophet Yusuf (A) revealed his identity to Binyameen. He explained how he had been raised from a lowly slave to a position of great power by the Grace of Allah. However, he asked Binyameen not to tell their brothers anything of their conversation.

## TOPIC 13: PROPHET YUSUF (A) - PART 4

### 1. Prophet Yusuf's (A) Plan to Detain Binyameen

After they had received their requirement of wheat, the brothers of Prophet Yusuf (A) began to prepare for their journey home. Meanwhile, according to the command of Allah, Prophet Yusuf (A) put into action a plan to detain his full brother Binyameen. He ordered his men to put a gold cup belonging to the king in Binyameen's baggage. The Holy Qur'an describes the incident in the following words:

*When he (Yusuf) had furnished them with provisions, (someone) placed the (king's) drinking cup in his brother's baggage. Then someone shouted, "People of the caravan, you are most surely thieves."*

*Yusuf, 12:70*

The brothers of Prophet Yusuf (A) had not gone very far when they were stopped and accused of stealing. They denied this, and said that if anyone of them was found guilty of theft, he could be held as a slave by Prophet Yusuf (A). The caravan was searched, and the cup was found in the bag of Binyameen.

When the brothers were brought before Prophet Yusuf (A), he said, "According to your own words, we will now detain Binyameen with us." They replied, "O Aziz of Egypt! Our father is old and weak. You may detain any of us, but not Binyameen." However, Prophet Yusuf (A) said that he could not detain anyone who was not guilty. The brothers had no choice but to leave for Kanaan. The eldest brother, Yahuda, refused to return without Binyameen. He remained behind in Egypt, rather than face his father.

### 2. The Reunion of the family of Prophet Ya'qub (A)

When the brothers returned to Kanaan and told Prophet Ya'qub (A) what had happened, he was heartbroken. He had already lost his eyesight crying for his beloved son Prophet Yusuf (A), and this second loss was almost too much for him to bear. He now recalled the memory of his lost sons and wept.

He asked his sons to immediately return to Egypt to look for both Prophet Yusuf (A) and Binyameen. According to their father's instructions, the brothers came to the Aziz of Egypt for the third time, and pleaded for the release of Binyameen as well as some grain for food.

Prophet Yusuf (A) reminded them of how badly they had treated their brother Yusuf, and caused separation between him and his father. The brothers were amazed to hear their secret from the Aziz, who now spoke in the language of the people of Kanaan. They asked him, "Are you Yusuf?"

He replied, "Yes, I am Yusuf, and this is my brother. Allah has been gracious to me. One who is pious and patient against hardships is always rewarded by Allah for his virtues."

On hearing this, the brothers hung their heads in shame and asked him for his forgiveness. He said, "You need not be frightened of me. Allah may forgive you your sins. Now take my shirt and cover my father's face with it, so that he may regain his lost sight. Then return to me with all your family."

The Holy Qur'an says:

*When the caravan had left the town (from Egypt), their father (in Kanaan) said, "I smell Yusuf's fragrance. I hope you will not think that I am weak in judgement (due to my love for him). They said, "By Allah ! You are still making the same old error. When someone brought him the glad news, Yusuf's shirt was placed on his face and his eyesight was restored. He said, "Did I not tell you that I know about Allah that which you do not know?"*

*Yusuf, 12:94-96*

After getting his eyesight back and hearing the good news of his son, Prophet Ya'qub (A) decided to proceed to Egypt immediately. Prophet Yusuf (A) was delighted to meet them and embraced his father and mother.

As a token of their gratitude to Allah at this reunion, his parents and brothers prostrated themselves on the ground.

Thus Allah made true the dream of Prophet Yusuf (A), when he had seen eleven stars and the sun and the moon in prostration in front of him. After many trials, Allah raised him from the position of a slave to the highest rank in the land.

At the request of his son, Prophet Ya'qub (A) settled in Egypt with his family, and their clan came to be known as the Bani Israa'il.

Prophet Ya'qub (A) lived in Egypt for 17 years and died at the age of 147. Prophet Yusuf (A) breathed his last some years later at the age of 110 years, and his kingdom passed into the hands of rulers whose titles were Fir'aun.

## TOPIC 14: PROPHET YUSUF (A) - PART 5

### Moral Lessons from the Story of Prophet Yusuf (A)

Allah says the following about the story of Prophet Yusuf (A) in the Holy Qur'an:

*We narrate unto you (O Muhammad) the most excellent of the stories (by which) We have revealed unto you this Qur'an; though before this you were of the unaware ones (of its details).*  
Yusuf, 12:3

Indeed, the adventures and experiences of Prophet Yusuf (A), and his conduct throughout his life, provide us with a wealth of lessons and morals. Some things we may learn from his life are:

1. The belief in the presence of Allah makes a man's troubles easier for him to bear, and as long as he keeps himself away from sins despite temptations, he will ultimately be successful. Prophet Yusuf (A) taught us this by his cheerful conduct throughout his enslavement and imprisonment.
2. In all difficulties and hardships one should seek only Allah's protection. Prophet Yusuf (A) showed his faith by seeking refuge from Allah when faced with the evil intentions of Zuleikha. He was thus saved from committing a terrible sin.
3. One should always remain attached to religion and should take every opportunity to persuade others towards the right path. Prophet Yusuf (A) did not forsake his duty even when in the prison, where he preached against idol worship before interpreting the dreams of his cell-mates.
4. Patience in the face of hardship is the best of qualities and results in reward from Allah in this life and the hereafter. Prophet Yusuf (A) remained calm and resigned to the Will of Allah, despite being abandoned in the well by his brothers. He also bore the shame of being sold as a slave patiently. He also accepted his false imprisonment. In return for his forbearance, Allah raised his position till it was the highest in Egypt.
5. It is important to act in such a manner as to preserve your honour and dignity, and these qualities must always be safeguarded. Prophet Yusuf (A) taught us this valuable lesson when he refused to accept his freedom from prison until his innocence was proved to the people. Thus when he was finally released, he knew he could come in front of the people with his head held high and without any blemish on his record.
6. Above all, this story teaches us that we should forgive and forget the past. When Prophet Yusuf's (A) brothers came to him in Egypt, they were in a pitiable condition and would have been helpless against his great power. If he had wished, Prophet Yusuf (A) could have severely punished them for the heartless treatment they had given him. Instead he forgave their errors and treated them well.

## TOPIC 15: THE WISDOM OF LUQMAN

Luqman is not generally believed to be a Prophet, but he was a man who had been specially endowed with wisdom by Allah . He was the nephew of Prophet Ayyub (A) and lived at the time of Prophet Dawood (A). He was an extremely pious man and used to mostly remain silent while he pondered about the nature of life. Sometimes he would come to Prophet Dawood (A) to discuss problems.

One of Luqman's wives and some of his sons were disbelievers and so he preached to them about faith in Allah till they embraced Islam. His words of wisdom were worthy of being quoted in the Holy Qur'an, which says:

*[And indeed We gave to Luqman wisdom, saying, "Be grateful to Allah; for whoever is grateful, verily he is only grateful for his own self; and whoever is ungrateful, (it is to the discredit of his own self) then verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, the Most Praised." And when Luqman said to his son while he counselled him, "O my son! Do not associate anything (in authority) with Allah, for verily associating (anything) with Allah is the greatest sin."*

*And We enjoined man concerning his parents; his mother bears him in weakness upon weakness and his weaning takes two years. Be grateful to Me and unto your parents, (and remember that) unto me is the ultimate return.*

*"O my son! verily if it is even the very weight of the grain of a mustard seed (closed) in (even) a rock, or (be it high) in the heavens or (buried deep) in the earth, Allah will bring it to light; Allah is All-Subtle (Lateef), All-Aware. O my son! Establish prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and be patient against what befalls you; verily this is the task of steadfastness. And do not turn your face to people (in scorn) and do not walk proudly in the earth; verily Allah does not like any self-conceited boaster. And be moderate (modest) and lower your voice; verily the most unpleasant of voices is the braying of the donkeys."*

*Luqman, 31 : 12 - 14, 16 - 19]*

Luqman lived for 1,000 years from the time of Prophet Dawood (A) to that of Prophet Yunus (A). His life and words are a great lesson in Akhlaq (morals) for mankind.