



NEW MUSLIM
ACADEMY

Lessons in Faith, Sacrifice & Community


from the First Generation of Muslims






**“O you enveloped in your cloak! Arise, and warn.”
74: 1-2**


A study of the background of the revelation of these passages can help one understand why the Messenger on this occasion has been addressed this way. As he had been terrified when he had suddenly seen the Angel Gabriel, sitting on a throne between heaven and earth, and had returned hastily home and asked the people of the house to cover him up, Allah addressed him as the one covered. From this fine way of address, the meaning which automatically follows is: O My dear servant, why have you laid down thus enwrapped? You have been put under the burden of a great mission: you must now arise from your solitude to perform this mission with resolution and courage.

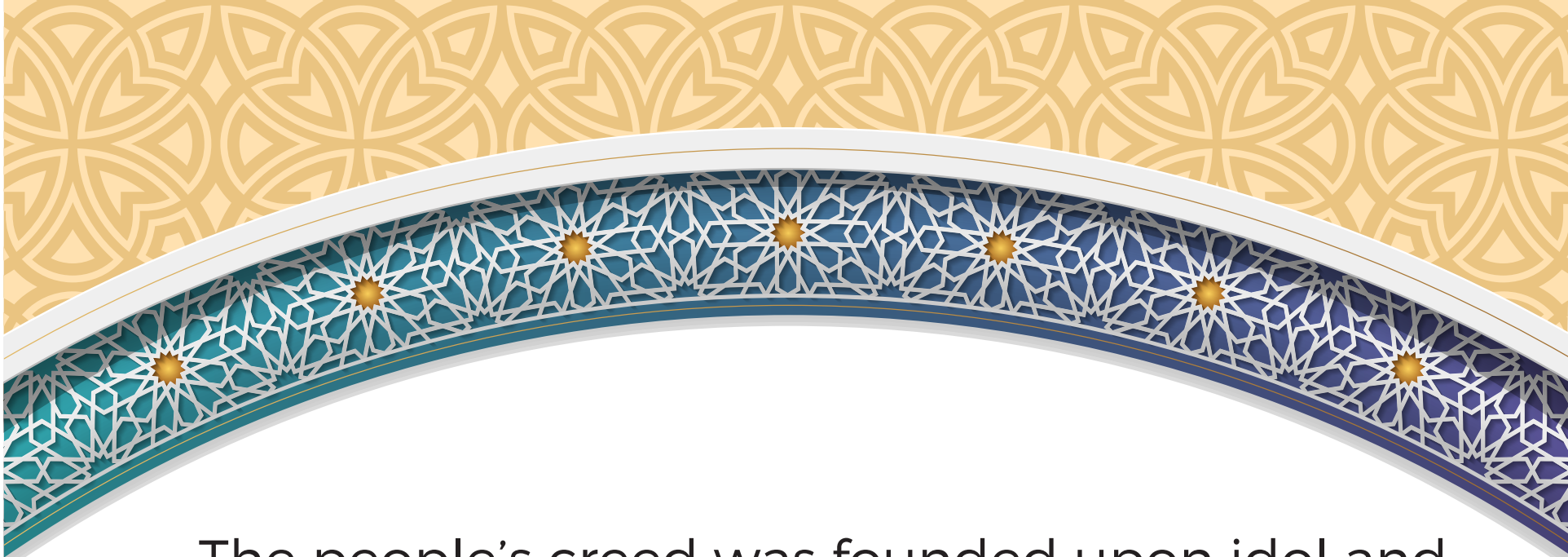




A command of this very nature had been given to Noah while appointing him to the office of Prophethood: “Warn the people of your nation before they are overtaken by a painful torment.” 71:1 The passage means: O you who lay enwrapped, stand up and arouse the people who live in heedlessness around you. Warn them of the fate which would certainly overtake them if they remained involved in the same heedlessness. Warn them that they are not living in a lawless kingdom where they are free to conduct themselves as they like and where they can do wherever they please without any fear or being called to account for it.

After receiving this instruction very early in his ministry, the Messenger of God rose — as he was commanded — to call his people and invite them to the Way of God.

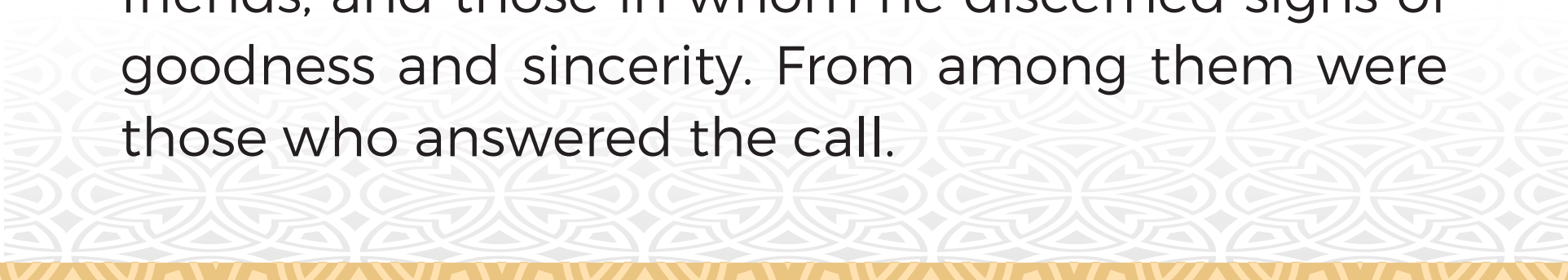





The people's creed was founded upon idol and image worship, their argument being: "We found our forefathers doing so." Their character was marked by dominance and pride, their temperaments by self-glory and tribal dignity. Their laws were whatever their tribal elders decreed, and, in general, their only recourse in resolving disputes when matters grew difficult was the sword.

Yet despite this, they were the recognized custodians of religious leadership throughout the Arabian Peninsula. Mecca was the center of Arab religion, home to the keepers of the Ka'aba and the guardians of the idols revered by all the tribes. To achieve reform in such a setting required supreme wisdom in action, and a resolve unshaken by hardship or opposition.

All of this made the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ begin his mission with careful selection: he spoke only to those he trusted, so that the people of Mecca would not be suddenly provoked in a way that might harm the call or stir them against it. It was most natural that the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ should begin by speaking with those closest to him — his family, his intimate friends, and those in whom he discerned signs of goodness and sincerity. From among them were those who answered the call.







Let us reflect over some of the lessons learned from their conversion to Islam and the methodology the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ utilized in inviting them.

1 We observe that the very first person to whom the Islamic message was directed was his beloved wife, Khadija. She, in turn, was the first to respond to this message and embrace Islam.

This is a tremendous honor: the honor of being the first addressed by the divine call, and the honor of being the first to respond to it. God willed that this noble distinction — the honor of initiation and precedence — belong to a very special woman.

Following this great honor of precedence came another: the honor of supporting the Messenger of God. The first person to support the ministry of Muhammad ﷺ was Khadija when she comforted him, reassured him, and calmed his heart after the momentous experience of meeting the Angel in the Cave.

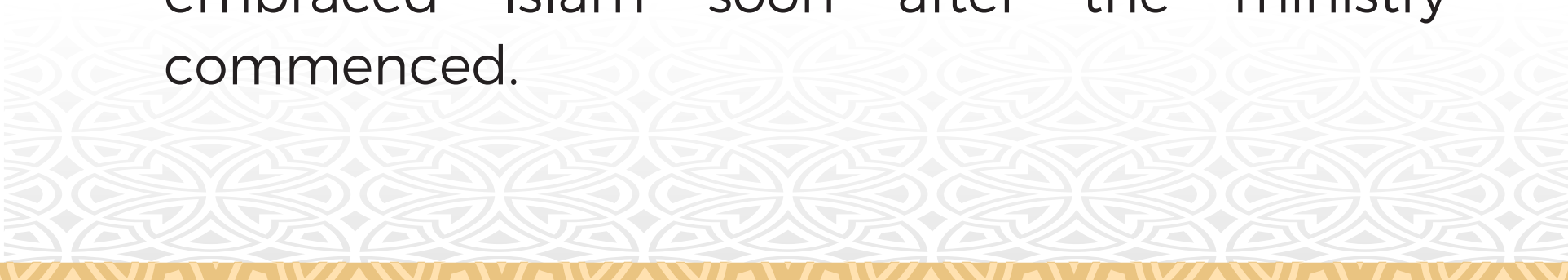





She then took him to her cousin, Waraqa, a learned wise man familiar with previous scriptures, for guidance. This support came in the very first days of the ministry and continued until the passing of this outstanding woman, the first Mother of the Believers.

During that period, the Messenger ﷺ stood alone in the face of a pagan society determined to oppose and harm him. Few accepted his message; and among those who did, many concealed their faith out of fear. But Khadija remained steadfast – strengthening him, dedicating herself and her wealth to his cause, and standing by him unwaveringly.

2 The other early converts were Ali and Zayd. The first being the cousin of Muhammad ﷺ and the son of his uncle Abu Talib. Abu Talib had cared for Muhammad ﷺ after the passing of his parents and grandfather and continued to be his supporter and defender until he passed away. Muhammad ﷺ took Ali as a foster child and raised him in his household. Zayd was a servant that worked for Khadija and was known as the adopted son of Muhammad ﷺ since he did not have any surviving sons. These two young men embraced Islam soon after the ministry commenced.



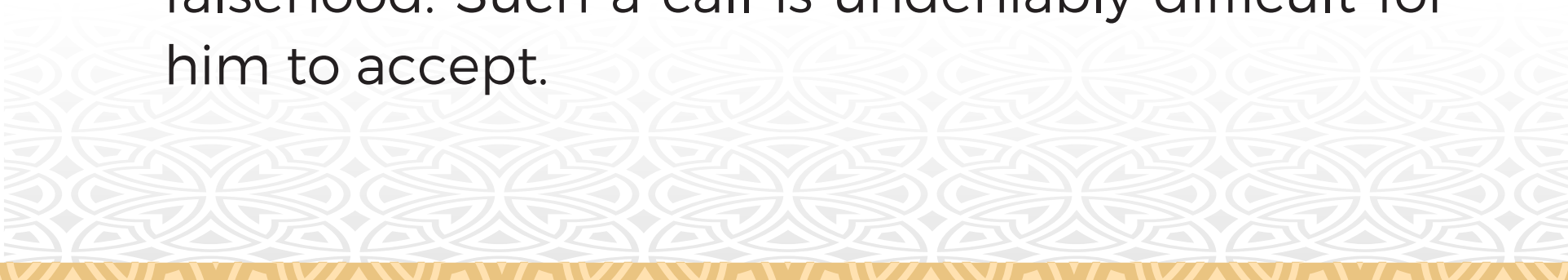



Reflecting on the demographic that followed the Messenger's invitation, we learn that the acceptance of truth comes more swiftly from the young than from the old. Even though the elders may possess more wisdom through life experiences, they are often more obstinate and prouder in nature. This reality is seen in the stories of several of the Messengers of God. "But none believed in Moses except some youth from his people, out of fear of Pharaoh and his chiefs." [10:83]

"Indeed, they were young men who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance." [18:13]

The reason for this is that young people have not yet been bound by long-standing traditions; their hearts and minds have not yet been saturated with idol worship, nor have they spent years frequenting idols for every minor or major concern.

Imagine calling a man who has spent forty or fifty years defending a false cause and striving for it, and then you tell him that all his lifelong struggle and devotion were in vain and falsehood. Such a call is undeniably difficult for him to accept.






But when you call a young person, the task is far easier: Their minds are not yet clouded with deeply ingrained false notions, nor burdened by years of inherited idolatry and superstition. Hence, their acceptance of Islam is easier and more natural than that of others whose hearts have long been occupied by misguided beliefs.

Furthermore, youth by nature are inclined toward what is new. They are open to thinking, reasoning, engaging in dialogue, and embracing change. When young people find something sound, pure, and true, they are often more ready to accept it than are the elders.

This also reinforces that one must expect great challenges and fierce resistance from the elders of society when confronting them with a new call that demolishes the foundations of what they inherited from their forefathers of idolatry and falsehood.

This lesson is highly relevant in our own age: Reforming the youth is generally easier than reforming the old for the elderly, in most cases, have settled their minds upon long-held assumptions — even if they are false customs or harmful habits. Having been raised upon them for many years within their communities, they dislike change and resist even the thought of it.



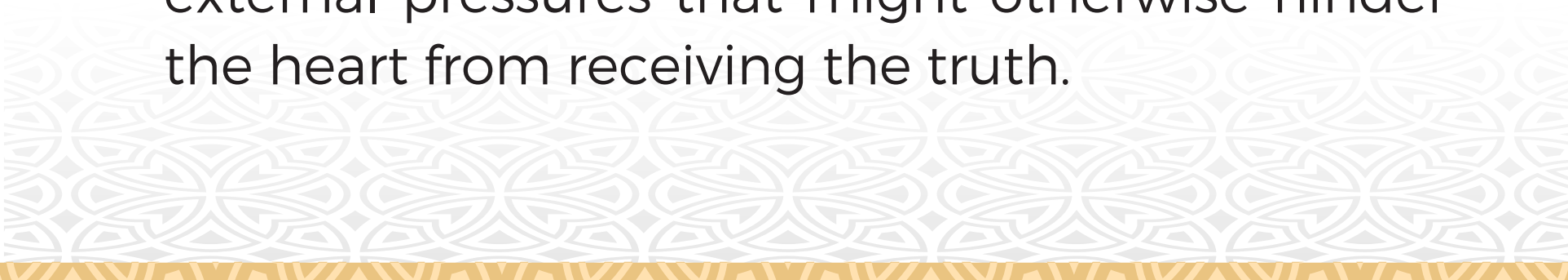



3

Abu Bakr was the first adult male to convert to Islam. His conversion was not only an individual transformation. Although he was but one man, yet he was remarkably active and energetic in inviting others to God. He was the first person after the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ to call others to God, which demonstrates that even a single individual can labor, invite, and achieve great impact. He influenced and brought five of the pioneering converts to support the ministry of Muhammad ﷺ.

This is the essence of individually sharing the message with others — the personal, one-to-one invitation — a form of inviting others to God that many people overlook. The foundation and the beginning of sharing Islam lies in this personal approach. It requires no wealth or elaborate resources; it rests simply on making use of personal encounters — meetings, visits, conversations — in which one person speaks sincerely to another, presenting the message of faith calmly and privately.

Such a setting allows for reflection, dialogue, and exchange, far removed from the distractions and external pressures that might otherwise hinder the heart from receiving the truth.







This individual form of sharing Islam can be carried out by both young and old, men and women alike. It may take place at home, on the road, in front of a shopkeeper, while traveling, at the airport, or even through a phone call or a message. It requires little effort yet brings about tremendous benefit.

4 The reason behind the large number of people who embraced Islam through AbuBakr ,after the divine grace and guidance of God, was his esteemed position among the people of Mecca.

He was a man beloved by his people, pleasant in companionship, generous and noble, a wealthy merchant with wide and strong connections throughout Mecca. He possessed high moral character and was known for his knowledge and understanding.

Moreover, he was regarded as the most knowledgeable among his people concerning genealogies, history, and events, which were areas of learning that were greatly valued among the Arabs of old, who took great pride in their ancestry and tribal lineages. These noble qualities and forms of knowledge aided Abu Bakr immensely in his inviting others to God.



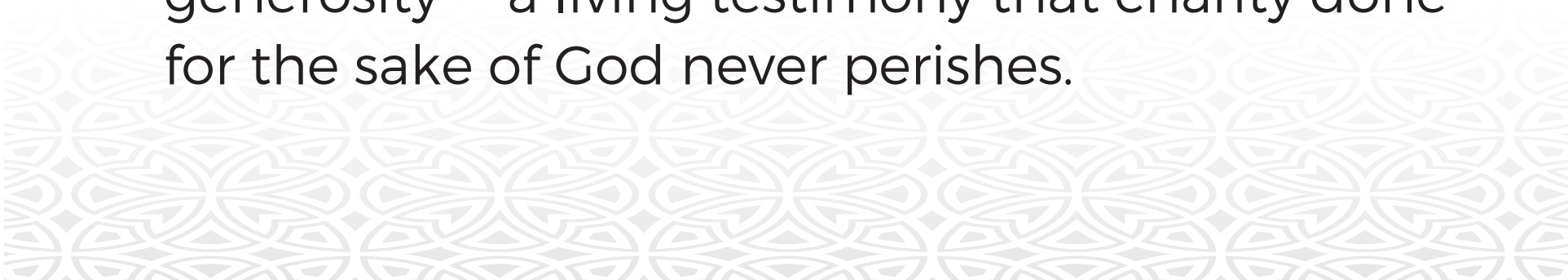


Such qualities — good reputation, noble character, generosity, wisdom, and familiarity with people — are among the many traits that every Muslim can benefit from in his own efforts to invite others to the path of God.

5 An early family of converts was that of Arqam's household. The head of the family donated his house and it became the headquarters of the community while the ministry was still an underground movement. This serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of endowments and charitable contributions — whether they are made in support of the ministry of Islam and the spread of the faith, or directed toward the welfare of needy Muslims through schools, orphanages, hospitals, and similar institutions.

All such charitable works remain an ongoing source of reward for their benefactors.

It is enough of an honor that the House of Arqam still carries his blessed name and is remembered with praise and gratitude more than fourteen centuries after that noble act. People's tongues continue to speak well of him and commend his generosity — a living testimony that charity done for the sake of God never perishes.





6


From the Messenger's ﷺ gathering of his disciples in the House of Arqam, we learn the importance of spiritual and moral cultivation. It is not sufficient in education to rely solely on the reading of texts; rather, such learning must be accompanied by training through action and by the example of good character. This principle is vital in the upbringing of children, students, and seekers of knowledge.

A father must be a righteous example for his children, a preacher a living example for those he calls to faith, and a teacher an exemplary model for students teaching them through deeds, not through words alone.

7

Gathering together for goodness is a blessed activity, and one that fosters mutual support and cooperation in achieving both public and private benefit. A Muslim must have circles of goodness in which he purifies his soul and strengthens his faith. The effect of such righteous gatherings upon the heart — in nurturing righteousness and spiritual growth — is far greater than the effect of texts alone when studied in isolation.

Therefore, a believer should be diligent in attending these gatherings and study circles, so that he may attain from them refined conduct, beneficial knowledge, and divine blessing.






8

The importance of righteous company in a Muslim's life cannot be overstated. Every believer is in need of good company: Companions who will remind him when he forgets, teach him when he is ignorant, and alert him when he becomes heedless.

The Messenger of God ﷺ said: "The example of a righteous companion and an evil companion is like that of the seller of musk and the blacksmith's bellows. The musk seller will either give you some perfume, or you will buy some from him, or you will enjoy a pleasant fragrance from him. But the one who works the bellows will either burn your clothes or you will be exposed to an offensive toxic odor."

For this reason, parents and educators must pay close attention to the companions and friends of their children and students, for a person's character and conduct are deeply shaped by those with whom he sits and spends his time.






9

The importance of unity and mutual connection among Muslims is a matter of great significance, and it becomes even more essential when they live as minorities in non-Muslim lands.

In such circumstances, they bear a special responsibility to maintain regular gatherings and mutual support to cooperate in goodness, to remain steadfast upon the path of guidance, to strengthen the bonds of community, and to preserve the light of faith within their hearts from fading or weakening. When the surrounding majority does not share their belief, and when corruption and moral decay abound, its influence can be profound and far-reaching.

Thus, unity, communication, and mutual encouragement among Muslims become vital safeguards for faith, ensuring that hearts remain firm and that the community endures in righteousness.






10

The importance of consultation in Islam is clearly demonstrated in the early days of the Messenger Muhammad's ﷺ mission.

The House of Arqam, in addition to being a place of learning and worship, was also a council of consultation. There, the Messenger of God ﷺ would consult his disciples regarding new matters that arose in connection with the call to Islam. He sought their opinions and valued their insights, teaching his followers that mutual consultation is a foundational principle in governance, leadership, and collective decision-making.

Thus, from the very beginning, Islam established that success in collective affairs comes not through individual opinion or autocratic command, but through mutual consultation, sincere counsel, wisdom, and cooperation among the believers.





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