

A CONCISE CHILDREN'S
ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
ISLAM

The present reference work is a humble attempt to place before the English-speaking Muslim children a number of basic Islamic teachings and concepts.

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Introduction

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All praise is due to Almighty Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own selves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, there is none to misguide him; and whomever He leads astray, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. May Allah bestow His peace and blessings upon Prophet Muhammad, upon his good and pure family, as well as upon all the noble companions and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgement.

The present reference work is a humble attempt to place before the English-speaking Muslim children a number of basic Islamic teachings and concepts.

It is primarily aimed at children of age ten years and over and presents topics in an easy-to-use alphabetical format. It also covers a wide range of topics and features cross-references which draw attention to related subjects.

Given the fact that some of these Islamic teachings and concepts have been forgotten by many Muslims, and given the fact that some of them have been given wrong definitions or interpretations by some non-Muslims, either deliberately or out of ignorance, an effort has been made here to present these teachings and concepts in their true light and clear picture.

The definitions not only cover a wide range of concepts such as *tawheed*, *tawbah*, *shirk*, *Eemaan* and *Ihsaan*, but also include some of the well-known Prophets and Messengers of Allah, may Allah's peace be upon them all, the significance of certain important occasions such as *Ashuraa* and *Eed*, the benefits of the observance of certain practices and a short biography of the four rightly-guided caliphs who helped shape the destiny of the new faith.

Even though the present reference guide is designed specifically for Muslim children, readers and students of all ages and different faiths who wish to learn more about the world's fastest-growing religion will certainly find it enlightening and highly informative.

The explanations this reference tool provides are for the most part based on the Qur'an and the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*. When the reference is to the surah of the Qur'an, the name of the *surah* is mentioned, followed by its number and then by the number of the verse. Thus, (*Surat Maryam*, 19:11) means the eleventh verse of the nineteenth *surah* of the Qur'an, which is *Surat Maryam*. When the reference is to the *hadeeth*, this is in many cases followed by the narrator/s who reported it, sometimes followed by the category of the *hadeeth* if not reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

In the compilation of the present work, a number of books and web sites have been consulted. Part of it was also the product of translation of a number of texts provided by Brother Abdul Malik Mujahid, Director of Darussalam. A list of the books consulted appears at the end of the encyclopedia.

Special thanks go to a number of people who helped produce the book in its present format, particularly graphics designer Brother Zulfiqar who conscientiously provided all the illustrations and Brother Muhammad Nazeer for patiently revising the text with the utmost patience.

We pray to Allah the Almighty to make this humble effort successful. We also pray to Him to accept it as an effort done for His sake alone and to make it of real benefit to all those who read it, for it is ultimately Allah's acceptance alone that really counts, and success is only by His Will.

“I only intend reform as much as I am able; and my success [in the task] can only come from Allah. In Him I trust, and unto Him I return.” (*Surat Hud*, 11:88)

“Our Lord! In You only do we trust; unto You do we turn in repentance; and to You is our final return.”
(*Surat Al-Mumtahinah*, 60:4)

Al-Arabee Ben Razzouq
Jumaada ath-Thaaniyah, 1428 AH
July 2007

The following are transliterations of some Arabic expressions that appear throughout the encyclopedia, followed by their meanings in English.

Subhaanahu wa ta'aalaa: 

Glorified and Exalted be He. This expression is generally said after mentioning the name of Allah the Almighty. Another common expression is *'Azza wa Jalla*.

Sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam: 

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him. This expression is commonly said whenever the Prophet Muhammad's name is mentioned.

Alaih-issalaam: 

Peace be upon him. This formula is usually said after the name of a prophet or an angel, such as Musa (Moses) or Jibreel, respectively. It is also said after the names of certain pious men mentioned in the Qur'an, such as Al-Khidhr, whose story appears in Surat Al-Kahf, 18:65-82.

Alaih-assalaam: 

Peace be upon her. This is said after the names of certain pious women mentioned in the Qur'an, such as Maryam, the mother of Prophet Isaa, alaih-issalaam.

Radhiy-Allaahu 'anhu: 

May Allah be pleased with him. This is generally used for a male companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) such as Abu Hurairah and Ibn Abbaas.

Radhiy-Allaahu 'anhaa: 

May Allah be pleased with her. This is usually used for a female companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) such as his wives Khadeejah and A'ishah.

Shaikh-ul-Islam:

This title of honour precedes the name of certain learned scholars of Islam particularly those who had attained by their fatwas certain fame or the approval of a large number of Muslim jurists. Ibn Taymiyyah is an example of such learned scholars.

Ibn:

son of. This is a title of respect, an example of which is Omar ibn Al-Khattab, which means Omar, son of Al-Khattab.

Bint:

daughter of. This is a title of respect, an example of which is Hafsa bint Omar, which means Hafsa, daughter of Omar.

Abu:

father of. This is a title of respect, an example of which is the Prophet's companion Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه).

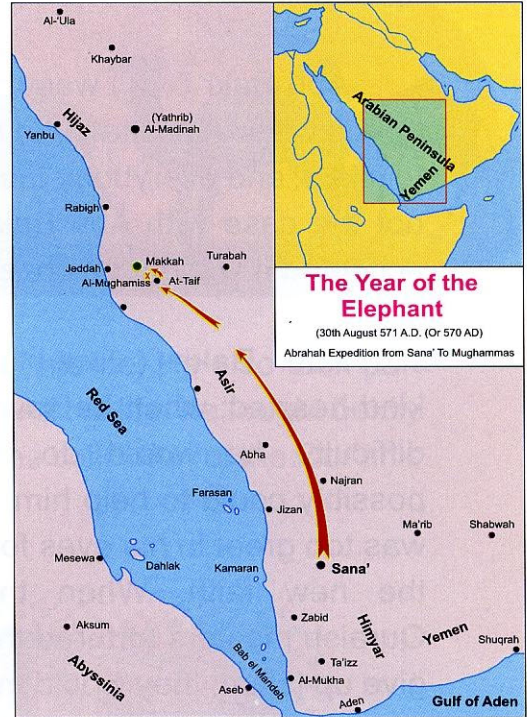
Umm:

mother of. This is a title of respect, an example of which is the Prophet's wife Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها).

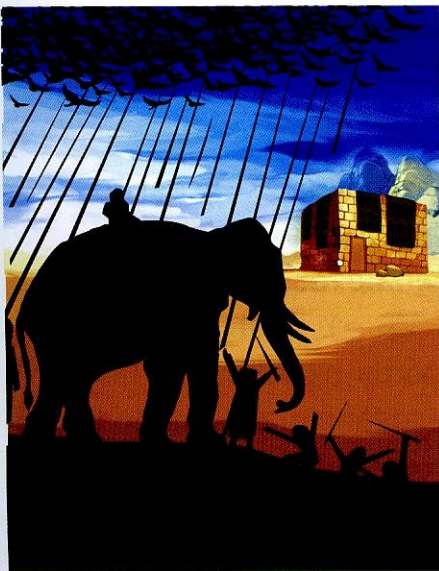
‘Aam Al-feel (The Year of the Elephant) is the year in which Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was born.

Before Islam, the Arabs had no calendar of their own, and so they would name a year after an important incident that occurred during that year, before it or after it. The year in which the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was born is known as the 'Year of the Elephant' because it was the year in which Abrahah Al-Ashram, the Christian ruler of the Abyssinian Kingdom of Yemen, marched upon Makkah with a large army consisting of a huge elephant, with the intention of destroying the Ka'bah so that the Arabs would do pilgrimage to a temple he had built in Yemen instead. The guardians of the Ka'bah offered no defence whatsoever, as the army was too strong for them.

However, Allah (ﷻ) saved His Sacred House and caused Abrahah's evil plan to end in vain. He sent down on him and his army birds carrying stones of baked clay in their beaks and claws with which they pelted them until they were all destroyed.



The Qur'an tells the story of the 'Companions of the Elephant' in Surat Al-Feel, thus: "Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant? Did He not make their plot go astray? And He sent against them birds in flocks, striking them with stones of baked clay; and He made them like eaten straw." (Surat Al-Feel, 105)



Abrahah's army was suddenly overtaken by flocks of birds, striking them with small stones slightly bigger than lentil seeds. When these stones fell on the soldiers, it would dissolve their flesh and burst it into pieces. They all perished in this way. Abrahah fled while his flesh was bursting into pieces but he died on the way back to Yemen.

Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq (ﷺ)

Abu Bakr (ﷺ) was one of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. He was two years younger than the Prophet (ﷺ) and was one of the wealthiest merchants of Makkah who came from a noble family. He was renowned for his good and upright nature. His honesty and truthfulness won him the friendship of young Muhammad (ﷺ) and this companionship, which started in early boyhood, proved lifelong.

Abu Bakr (ﷺ) was the first adult male to accept Islam, and this he did without hesitation. Once the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I called people to Islam, and everybody thought over it, at least for a while. But this was not the case with Abu Bakr; the moment I put Islam before him, he accepted it without any hesitation."

Abu Bakr (ﷺ) was very kind-hearted; when he saw someone in difficulty, he would do whatever he possibly could to help him. No sacrifice was too great in his eyes for the sake of the new faith. When the heartless Quraish masters tortured their slaves to give up Islam, they would make them lie naked, on burning sand, like they did with Bilal ibn Rabaah (ﷺ). Then they would put big rocks on their chests. Abu Bakr (ﷺ) used his wealth to buy many such helpless Muslim slaves from their ruthless masters and set them free for the sake of Allah.

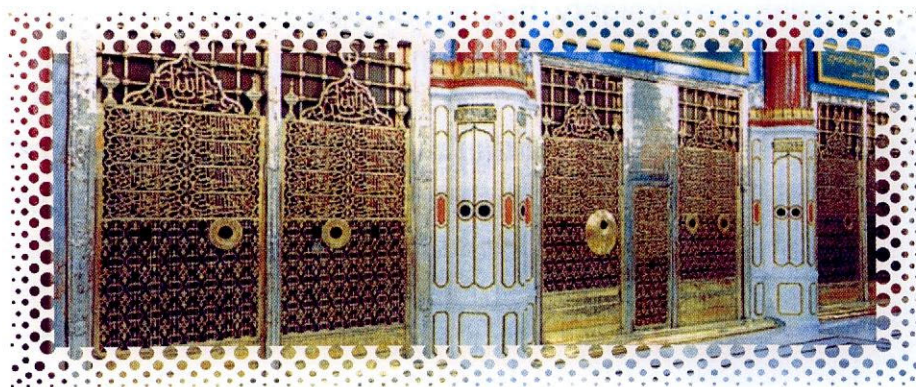
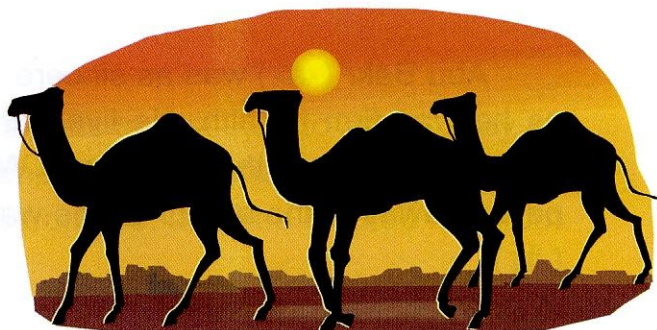


When the Prophet (ﷺ) asked people to help the expedition of Tabuk with whatever they could, Abu Bakr (ﷺ) beat all past charitable records by taking all his money and household articles and heaping them at the Prophet's feet.

The Prophet (ﷺ) called him

As-Siddeeq (the truthful) because when he undertook the night journey to the highest heaven with Angel Jibreel (جبرئيل) and his enemies jeered at him, Abu Bakr (ابوبكر) simply replied when asked about the credibility of this incident, "I would believe anything that the Messenger of Allah (محمد) says."

It was Abu Bakr (ابوبكر) who made all the arrangements for the historic journey to Madeenah in which he accompanied the Prophet (محمد). Of all the companions, Abu Bakr (ابوبكر) had the honour of being with the Prophet (محمد) during the most critical days of his life. He also took part in all the battles that the Prophet (محمد) fought. All his life, he fought boldly under his banner, and under his supervision the collection of the Qur'anic revelations was recorded in the Qur'an.



When the Prophet (محمد) could no longer lead prayers during his last illness, he appointed him for the task.

After the Prophet's death, Muslims elected him the first khaleefah (caliph). His unshakable faith helped Islam keep its foundation intact. He had to fight against those who left Islam and started fighting against Muslims, such as the powerful tribe of Banu Bakr. He also declared war on those who refused to pay the obligatory poor-rate, Zakaat, made an

all-out attack on the impostors, such as the notorious Musailimah the Liar who claimed he was a prophet. Abu Bakr (ﷺ) inflicted a crushing defeat on all of them.



Abu Bakr (ﷺ) was as sincere as he was firm in faith. He lived and worked for Islam to the last breath. When he passed away at the age of 63, he was buried by the side of the Prophet (ﷺ).

The Prophet, (ﷺ) once said about him, "If I were to choose from my Ummah anyone as a khaleel, I would have chosen Abu Bakr, but he is my friend and my companion." (Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

A *khaleel* is someone whose love is mixed with one's soul. He is in fact superior to a friend or a beloved person. The Prophet (ﷺ) had only one *khaleel*, i.e. Allah the Almighty, but he had many friends.

(See As-Sahaabah, Al-Khulafaa' Ar-Raashidoon, Al-Israa and Al-Mi'raaj and Zakaat)