

A decorative geometric pattern in the top left corner, featuring interlocking lines in dark blue and gold, forming star-like shapes. The background is a solid dark blue.

# *The Concept Of* GOD IN ISLAM

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# *The Concept Of* GOD IN ISLAM

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# God, Creation & Natural Laws!

In this booklet we will try to understand the concept of God, creation and natural laws from a Quranic perspective.

## God

Quran refers to God as Allah. This is a universal name for God and does not refer to an exclusively ‘Islamic’ God. Interestingly, this name is related to the Aramaic and Hebrew names for God, “Allaha” and “Elohim”. Therefore, Allah is simply the Arabic name for God which affirms that He is one singular God with no partners or equals. The name Allah cannot be pluralized or limited to a specific gender, which establishes that God is one and that He is unique from everything He creates. Muslims continue to use this original Arabic name for God (Allah) since it perfectly expresses His unique qualities.

God is the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe who created everything for a reason. The Quran explains that He created humankind with a simple purpose – To “Do Ibadah” which means to accept and follow His laws willingly. He sent messengers to guide people in fulfilling this purpose. Some of these messengers include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, peace be upon all of them. They all taught a consistent message about God by affirming His greatness as the Creator and guiding people to Do Ibadah of Him alone. This basic concept has always resonated with people’s natural understanding of God.

Lets now look at the origin of the Arabic word Allah in order to get the perspective of Quran about God.

There is a school of thought that says that Allah is a static word, which has not been derived from any other word, but others say that this word was actually (Al-Ilah) that gradually became (Allah)

Now lets look at this word Ilah.

Ibn Faris writes that it basically means ‘to accept someone’s subjugation\_ . (Aleha), (Ilaiheh), (Yalah), mean to seek some one’s refuge in distress.

(Aaleha) also means to be surprised .

(Aalaha) or (Yaloh): to give refuge to someone in distress , or to take someone under one’s protection . As such means to live in a house peacefully.

Taking all these aspects of the word into account the word (Ilahun) would mean someone whose refuge may be sought in danger , or someone who can be requested to save one from difficulties and the concept of whose loftiness surprises one . There is another opinion which suggests that this word has been extracted from (Laha yaleekeh), which means to be lofty in stature and be hidden from the naked eye.

Some others say that (alah): that person became a slave and (allahahu): he enslaved him . From this come (taleehun) or (ta\_beed) which mean to enslave .

Thus (Ilah) would mean ‘a being whose rules must be accepted and whose laws must be followed and obeyed\_ .

As such, when the Pharoah told Moosa:

26:29 If you accept someone else as your ilah then I will have you imprisoned

Here Ilah means someone who is in power.

In the same manner, it is said:

25:43 Have you wondered about the man who became subservient to his own desires?

Similarly, about God it is said:

43:84 He is the One who is in the heights of the skies as well as the depths of the universe

Or, the one who is the ruler of the skies as well as of this world.

So the word also means ‘the one with power or ‘one who rules’

In the noble Quran, the word Allah has been used to describe the identity of Almighty. Therefore, Allah (the Ilah in the Quran) is that lofty being which is hidden from human eyes, but compared to whose Greatness human intellect and comprehension are quite disabled. He is the One who rules the entire universe and the obedience of whose laws keeps the whole universe in perfect balance and in a perpetual state of benefit for all. Therefore, accepting and following His regulations will keep the mankind in a similar state of perfect balance and in perpetual peace, welfare and comfort.

The Quran is the sum of Allah’s attributes, Allah’s laws, Allah’s orders, Allah’s Tact, Allah’s guidance, etc. All His teachings have a central point which is His Oneness or “Wahdaniya”. That is to announce that nothing except God’s rule is exhibited in the universe.

So far as His composition or form is concerned, that is beyond our grasp because we are all finite and no finite can comprehend the infinite. However, while remaining within the confines of our intellectual and our mental limits, we can have some idea about Him from His 99 attributes. According to the Quran, the correct Belief is that which is according to the requirements in the Quran. Those who believe in God according to their own interpretation are not Believers, as per the Quran. This is a very important point and must be clearly understood. God-worship and virtuous actions is only right, if done according to the Quran and not according to what different people, nations or religions think. This makes perfect sense as only the messengers of God are in a position to tell are exactly what His laws are and what His message is for the mankind-they are the ones whom He chooses to communicate with humans-all other methods would be a presumption at best and chaos at worst. By understanding our creator we can arrive at an appropriate relationship with Him.

# Creation

The word used by Quran for creation is Khalaq.

(khalaq) basically means to measure for making or cutting something, to estimate it.. It means to see whether it is proportionate and balanced, or to model after something, to soften and smooth out something. It also means to create something out of another.

Thus creation or (khalaq) would mean to evaluate something, to create it so that it becomes balanced and proportionate, and it becomes clean and smooth.

In the Quran (bada\_) and (fatar) are used; both mean to bring something into existence from nothingness i.e. to create for the first time, to invent. However the word used for creation (khalaq) would mean to give different shapes and form to elements in order to create things.

The Quran mentions:

16:14 Creation of Man has been done of surfing liquid

55:14 Creation of Man has been done from clay

(khallaq) and (khaaliq) are two great traits of Allah (59:25, 36:81). Therefore, the individuals or nations that have been gifted the quality of takhleeq i.e. discovery and invention will display great creativity for the benefit of mankind. Having children is not creation, but pro-creation. This is a biological function which animals share with man, thus, giving birth is an animal level function. However, man's ability for creativity cannot be shared by animals. The nation which is bereft of creativity is devoid of Allah's quality of Creativeness. It must be noted that creation is not mere duplication, but demands new inventions, Thus, it is said about Allah:

38:1 He keeps adding to His creations according to his Will

Therefore, mankind can only progress if they keep following in the laws of Allah by frequently and perpetually keep inventing and discovering in order to benefit the whole humanity.

Man is created as the most beautiful creature on earth. He is given the power of reasoning and insight. He is created as the vicegerent on earth never to be forsaken by God's words of guidance. This is so lest man should lose his way. What is more, Adam, the father of mankind, has been created in Allah's own image, as declared by the Prophet (pbuh)

(Muslim, Book 040, Hadith No. 6809)

This means that "Adam has been bestowed with life, knowledge, power of hearing, seeing, understanding, but the features of Adam are different from those of Allah, only the names are the same, e.g., Allah has life and knowledge and power of understanding, and Adam also has them, but there is no comparison between the Creator and the created thing. As Allah says in the Qur'an: 'There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer' (al-Shura 42:11).

Allah Almighty says about His creation:

"He Who created the seven heavens one above another: no want of proportion will you see in the Creation of the Most Gracious. So turn your vision again: Do you see any flaw? Again turn your vision a second time: (your) vision will come back to you dull and discomfited, in a state worn out" (al-Mulk 67:3 - 4).

Also: "On the earth are Signs for those of assured Faith; as also in your own selves: will you not then see?" (al-Dhariyat 51:20 - 21).

Thus, everything in the universe has been created beautiful, with purpose and in proportion and measure, both qualitatively and quantitatively (al-Qamar 54:49). The traces of divine wisdom and plan underpin each and every aspect of creation. Only man's ungodly and self-centered tempering



with the existing total artistic setting is able to render things ugly, harmful, evil and obsolete

The order and beauty of the earth, of the vast spaces surrounding it, and of the marvellous bodies that follow regular laws of motion in those enormous spaces in the visible world, they are our tangible and all-encompassing reality. However, we were not to stop just at marvelling at its corporeal manifestations and the aura they generate. By discovering and mulling over the signs readily available in all things around us -- big or small -- which inevitably point to Allah's Oneness, Presence, Authority and Clemency, we were, furthermore, to try to form from these some a priori intuition of the Supreme Beauty and of the vastly greater invisible world.

About the creation beyond our planet the Quran says:

(65:12) Allah it is He Who created seven heavens, and, like them, (seven) earth. His commandment descends among them. (All this is being stated so that you know) that Allah has power over everything, and that Allah encompasses all things in His knowledge.

It means that He has also created several earths as He has created several heavens. "Of the earth" means that just as this earth which is inhabited by man is serving as bed and cradle for the creatures living on it, so has Allah made and set other earths also in the universe, which serve as beds and cradles for the creatures living on them. Moreover, there are clear pointers in the Qur'an to the effect that living creatures are not found only on the earth but also in the heavens. (For instance, see (Surah Ash-Shura: verse 29). In other words the countless stars and planets seen in the sky are not all lying desolate, but like the earth there are many among them which are inhabited. Also of interest is the fact that when the Arabs used the terms seven or seventy they did not mean any fixed number but used these figures to express the sense several. Raghib says that figure seven was also thought to be complete by Arabs as an expression for loads. Lane with reference to

Baizawi has written that the Arabs not only meant seven by saying (sabab) but it is also used to mean several or many.

(sabab) means seventy and (sababun) means seven hundred {M, T, R}. As we sometimes say twenties, fifties, hundreds and do not mean any fixed figure, or as we sometime say 'I have told you a hundred times to put emphasis on it. It does not mean an exact hundred. So there could be several or numerous inhabited places in the vast universe.

Surah Ash-Shura says:

49:29 And one of Allah's signs is that He created the earth and the skies and heavenly bodies and the living things (da-abba) in them. And He is able to collect them according to the law of His will.

The word mentioned in this verse for the inhabitants of the universe is Daabab. The Quran has used this word for all sorts of creatures including crawlers, two legged and four legged (24:45). The plural is (dawaab). In surah Al-Hajj, this word has been used for all living creatures (35:28). Surah An-Nahal says:

16:61 If Allah held people responsible for their crimes immediately, then there would not be a Da-abah (soul) (alive) on this earth.

Here the word (Da-abah) has come for the humans themselves, because due to their wrong doings it is they who must be annihilated, not all other living creatures. But in a broader meaning, it could mean humans and other living beings as well

From among the earliest commentators of Quran is the cousin of Prophet Muhammed pbuh, Ibn Abbas, who had expressed this truth in the period when man was not even prepared to imagine that in the universe there are other habitats also, apart from the earth, where rational creatures live. Even the scientists of today are yet in doubt about this being a reality, let alone

the people living 1500 years ago! That is why Ibn Abbas felt hesitant about whether he should say such a thing before the common people or not, because he feared it might affect their faith. Mujahid says that when he was asked the meaning of this verse, he said: "If I give you the commentary of this verse, you will turn disbelievers, and your disbelief will be that you will deny it. The commentary from Ibn Abbas on this verse is as follows:

"In each of those earths there is a Prophet like your Prophet, an Adam like your Adam, a Noah like your Noah, an Abraham like your Abraham, and a Jesus like your Jesus." This tradition has been related by Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bat and by Ibn Kathir in his Commentary.

Allama Alusi, a great scholar of Quran, in his discussion of it in his commentary writes: "There is neither any intellectual barrier to taking it as correct nor religious. It only means that in every earth there is a creation which turns to its origin just as mankind in our earth turns to Adam (peace be upon him). and in every earth there are individuals, who are distinguished among others just as the Prophets Noah and Abraham (peace be upon them) are distinguished among us. Allama further writes: "The earths may be more than seven, and likewise the heavens also may not be only seven. To rest content with the number seven, which is an indivisible integer, does not necessarily negate the higher numbers." Then, about the distances between one heaven and another, which have been stated as five hundred years or so in some Ahadith. Allama says: "This is not meant to give the exact measurement of the distances, but to express the truth in a manner easily comprehensible to the people."

These verses give a clue as to the presence of creatures on other heavenly bodies. The day is not far off when the inhabitants of earth will be able to contact and intermingle with that of the other planets as mentioned in Quran 49:29. The Quran has clearly stated that whatever is contained in the earth and the skies has been subjugated to man. Therefore, the human effort to reach the heavenly bodies (moon, mars, etc.) is very much in keeping with the teachings of the Quran. Note how the Quranic verses provide clues to universal truths (41:35).

# Natural Laws

Now let us talk about the laws that we see governing the universe around us which we usually term as “Natural Laws”.

The word used by the Quran for such laws is Al Amr

The Quran uses (amr) as against (khalq) or creation in 7:54.

And it has a special meaning to comprehend while its root has to be kept in mind i.e. sign, symbol, leading the way. Ibn Faris says its basic meaning is also ‘to nurture’.

As it has been mentioned under Creation or, (khalq) also means to create new things in new ways.

(khalq) is that stage of birth (or creation) when we can feel or sense those things, but obviously there is a stage before this stage as well. That is when these things are in the process of becoming. This planning stage is about the world of (amar). Or the laws that govern the actual creation and then continue to govern them after creation.

Another important aspect must be noted here. The universe is constituted of various and numerous components such as The space, the galaxies, the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees etc. Then there is an order in the universe according to which these things operate. This law or order is also called Amr.

About the planning process and stage the Quran says:  
2:117 when He decides about planning Amr then He tells the Amar to be and it happens

What this (Amr) is and how it is formulated, we are not able to explain given the knowledge we possess at this time in the history of mankind. Our knowledge is confined to a sensory world only, and these things are beyond their purview. The famous philosopher and thinker Pringle Patterson

acknowledges that it is a shortcoming of the English language that it has only one word for “Takhleeq” and that is creation. Although the physical world’s creation and the meta-physical world’s creation demanded that there should have been two separate words, but no. Quran has done this and used two different words, the words of khalq and Amr, respectively. The other part of (Amr) i.e. the natural laws or God’s order, which is operative in the universe, is before us and we are able to comprehend aspects of it. (in fact, we do know about many scientific facts). But only so far as to know how the law works in certain cases. Why any law is the way it is, we are unable to say. For instance, we know that water flows towards the slope, which is seen as a scientific fact or the law, and we know this, but we cannot explain why this is in place.

The Quran is full of such Amr i.e. the laws of God:

7:54 the sun, the moon, the stars, are all bound in God’s law or follow God’s law

22:65 ships sail on the seas according to His law

The Quran describes how just as in the physical world, everything is governed by a particular law, and every result is subject to a particular order. In the same way, in the social world of humans too, the destruction or the rise and fall of a nation also take place according to a law. This is the ‘law of consequences’ or ‘result of actions’ and this too has been called Amr

8:42 So Allah decided the matter in the way it got settled, so the fallen one fell, and the survivor survived.

Meaning thereby that whosoever has to be destroyed will be destroyed according to a law and whosoever has to live will do so according to the law. This is the law of consequence which takes shape regardless of what we may desire.

Not even a Messenger can make any changes in this law:

3:127 O Messenger, you have no authority in this law

This Amr or law is about human actions and is revealed to Messengers and through them transferred and passed on to the other human beings.

The Quran Details this as:

45:17 We have told them the clearly all about Amr.

65:5 this is Allah's Amr or law which He has revealed to you

Thus Allah's (Amr) or what is commonly known as the "Natural Laws" has three stages.

The first stage is where everything is planned and a law is decided. This stage eludes human comprehension and we are unable and incapable to finding out about this stage. The second niche of God's Amr or natural law is its manifestation in the universe around us. The knowledge about it can be gained through experiment, intellect, observation and insight. The third niche is that which deals with humans. This is granted to Messengers through Wahi (Revelation) and through them to other humans. This revelation has always been the vehicle of communication from the creation of first human, Adam, till the last of Messengers Muhummed pbuh. The same message was conveyed by all messengers including Noah, Abraham, Moses Jesus and finally Muhummed peace be upon all of them.

The last and final of this message was revealed to the last messenger Muhummed and it is preserved in the Quran. The rise and fall of a nation would depend upon the following or rejecting, respectively, of the principles outlined in the Quran by our creator. Every individual or a nation can climb the evolutionary stages of life in accordance with its capacity based on how close he or they stay to the human version of "Natural Laws" laid out for the benefit of humanity in the Quran.

In the first niche, Allah makes and operates the laws as He wishes. In the second niche, He operates the universe according to the laws framed by

Him and all creation in the universe are bound to follow His laws. In the third niche, His laws are handed over to Mankind through Wahi. However, they are given the choice to either choose or to refuse! But whatever path a man chooses will result in certain consequences in accordance with the laws of Allah. Allah's laws or decisions; be they about the universe or about human life, are not subject to any change. This too is God's Amr or Law and decision.

# Conclusion

Thus to sum up the concept of God, Creation and Laws, God has created everything that exists with a perfect purpose and aim. The perfect balance in the universe around us is only possible because of the exquisitely excellent laws that govern this harmony. If humans want to shape their lives and societies into a balanced and beneficial form they have to be in perfect harmony with the rest of the universe; this can only be achieved by being in sync with the laws that govern the rest of the universe-which is unimaginably vast compared to our tiny world. God's word preserved in His last testament; Quran, is the equivalent of the natural laws that we observe in the rest of the observable world around us. A proper understanding of God, His attributes, the application of His laws in the universe and implications of not being in sync with the natural laws will make us realise the importance of establishing a relationship with Him. The quran also invites us to look beyond our earth to find new places wherein there is life and are inhabited by either creatures like our own world or of a different kind.

Quran invites us all to take this journey of identifying our Creator, discovering His magnificent Laws in the Universe and living our lives according to His laws in order to attain the peace, contentment and balance which is the hall mark of all His Amr or natural Laws. The very purpose of sending His message to mankind is to attain better standard of morality which expresses itself in the form of excellent behaviour and attitude.

About the Messenger Muhummed (pbuh), the Quran says:

68:4 And verily you are at a high level of morals

As said earlier, (khalq) means balanced and proportionate. Morals are the distinguishing trait of humanity, and the last Prophet Muhummed was supreme in this. The morals as described by the Quran, which behove a true believer i.e. Momin, are the true morals, and the Messenger (pbuh) is the epitome of those morals, which is the best example for the human race. This example of the excellent behaviour and attitude is preserved and clearly expressed in the verses of the last testament from our Creator-The Quran.

## What Kind of God is He?

The Quran describes the following attributes of God that make it clear to one and all what kind of God he is!

*“O man, what has beguiled you concerning your Lord, the gracious, Who created you, fashioned you, proportioned you, and put you together in whatever form He pleased?” ( 82:6-8)*

That is, “In the first place, the bounty and favour of your caring and loving Sustainer required that you should have acknowledged his bounties and become an obedient servant and should have felt shy of disobeying Him, but you were deluded into thinking that you have become whatever you are by your own effort, and you never thought that you should acknowledge that favour of Him Who gave you life, with all the faculties and capabilities that you, ignorantly, consider to be your own! Secondly, it is your Lord’s bounty and kindness that you can freely do whatever you like in the world and it never so happens that whenever you happen to commit an error, He should punish you with paralysis, or blind your eyes, or cause lightning to strike you. But you took His bountifulness for weakness and were beguiled into thinking that the Kingdom of your God was devoid of consequences and justice.

There is no reasonable ground for anyone of us to be deluded into this thinking pattern as our very own physical existence itself testifies that we did not come into being by our self; our parents also did not create us. Man also did not come about as a result of the elements combining together by themselves accidentally; but a Wise and Powerful God has composed us into this perfect human shape and form. There are other kinds of animals in the world compared with which our excellent form and structure and our superior powers and faculties stand out in sharp contrast. Reason demanded that in view of all this we should have submitted gratefully and should never have chosen the path other than that of our beneficent Sustainer.

We must also know that our Lord and Sustainer is not only Compassionate and Bountiful but Almighty and Omnipotent as well. When an earthquake, cyclone or flood occurs by His Command, all our devices and measures become ineffective. We can further gauge that our creator and Sustainer is not ignorant and foolish but Wise and knowing, and the necessary demand of wisdom and knowledge is that whoever is given intellect should also be held responsible for his acts; whoever is given powers should also be held accountable as to how he used those powers; and whoever is given the choice to do good or evil on his own responsibility, should also be rewarded for his good act and punished for his evil act. All these truths are clearly and plainly known to us; therefore, we cannot say that there exists a reasonable ground for us to be deluded concerning our Lord.

Our own nature is sufficient evidence that the beneficence of the Master should never cause the creation to be careless and ignorant of Him, and be involved in the misunderstanding that he may do whatever he pleases, no one can harm him in any way.



The other verse of the Quran that describes the nature of our creator is the verse 255 of the second Surah of the Quran.

*“God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting by Whom all subsist, there is no god but He. Neither slumber seizes Him, nor sleep; to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Who is there who might intercede with Him save with His leave?”*

*He knows what lies before them and what is hidden from them, whereas they cannot attain to anything of His knowledge save what He wills them to attain. His Dominion overspreads the heavens and the earth, and their upholding wearies Him not. He is All-High, All-Glorious”*

Following are the points clarified in the above verse:

- Irrespective of the number of gods or objects of worship set up by people, the fact remains that godhead in its entirety, belongs exclusively to the Eternal Being, Who is indebted to no one for His existence. In fact, He is not only self-existent, but upon Him rests the entire order of the universe. He alone wields all sovereign authority over His dominion. None shares either His attributes or His power and might, and no one has the same claims against the creatures as He. Hence, if anywhere in the heavens or the earth someone sets up anything or anybody as an object of worship and service (ilah) either instead of or in addition to the One True God this amounts to declaring war on reason, truth intellect and reality.
- The verse further refutes the ideas of those who, in formulating their concepts of God, are inclined to consider God analogous to their own imperfect selves and hence ascribe to God the weaknesses characteristic of human beings. An instance at hand is the famous Biblical statement that God created the heavens and the earth in six days and on the seventh day He rested (see Genesis, chapters 1 and 2).
- To God belongs the heavens and the earth and everything therein. There is no one who shares anything with God in governance either of the heavens or of the earth. Any conceivable being other than God would necessarily be a part of the universe and thus belong to, and be a subject of, God rather than His partner and equal.
- This is a refutation of the ideas of those polytheists who consider either saints, angels or other beings to be so influential with God that if they were adamant in demanding something of Him, their demand would prevail. They are being told that, far from anyone having the power to impose his will on God, none - not even the greatest Prophets and the most highly esteemed angels - will dare utter one word in the majestic court of the Lord unless they are expressly permitted to do so.
- On the basis of the concept of God's unlimited sovereignty and omnipotence it is stressed that no one shares independently in God's governance of the universe, and no one is so powerful with God that his intercession would decisively influence His judgement. It is pointed out that no one, other than God, possesses the knowledge that would enable him to comprehend the order of the universe and the considerations underlying it, so no one can legitimately interfere in its governance. The knowledge of human beings, of jinn, of angels and of all other creatures is limited and imperfect. No one's knowledge embraces all the facts of the universe. If someone did have the right to interfere even in only a part of the universe, and if his suggestions were of

necessity to be put into effect, the entire order of the universe would be disrupted. Creatures are incapable of understanding what is best for them, and do not have the capacity to know how best the universe should be governed. It is God alone who knows everything.

- The Arabic term *kursi* signifies sovereignty, dominion and authority.

The word *Kursi* has been variously interpreted by Muslim scholars. The literal meaning is the throne, it signifies that which one sits on. The main opinions expressed by the scholars are the following:

- That *Kursi* signifies God's knowledge, a view attributed to Ibn 'Abbas;
- That it signifies God's power. The authority which he exercises over whole universe or all that exists and that he creates. This verse is generally known as the 'Verse of the Throne' and it provides in one piece a knowledge of God without parallel.

## A Loving God

Two Characteristics of Loving someone are Mercy & Forgiveness

The Quran mentions:

*{My mercy has encompassed everything.} (7:156)*

For those believers who have wronged themselves, the Qur'an asks them to become repentant, seek God's forgiveness, and make a sincere *tawba* (repentance). It assures them that if they do this, God will forgive them, and exonerate them from their misdeeds.

“Surely God loves those who turn much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves” (2:222)

As such, becoming hopeless of the mercy of God is prohibited. The Quran declares:

“Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God: for God forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (39:53)

God, in His infinite wisdom has made seeking forgiveness easy. If we were not able to seek and obtain God's forgiveness we would indeed be miserable people, full of despair and self-loathing. It is for this reason that there are no transgressions too big or sins too great that God will not forgive. All sins are forgivable and the door to forgiveness is wide open almost until the Day of our death.

*“And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith to your Lord and submit to Him, before the torment comes upon you, then you will not be helped.” (Quran 39:54)*

When God sees the sincere repentance from one of the believers – a person who truly turns to God with both fear and hope – He not only forgives the sin, but He replaces the sins with rewardable good deeds. This is from God's infinite mercy.

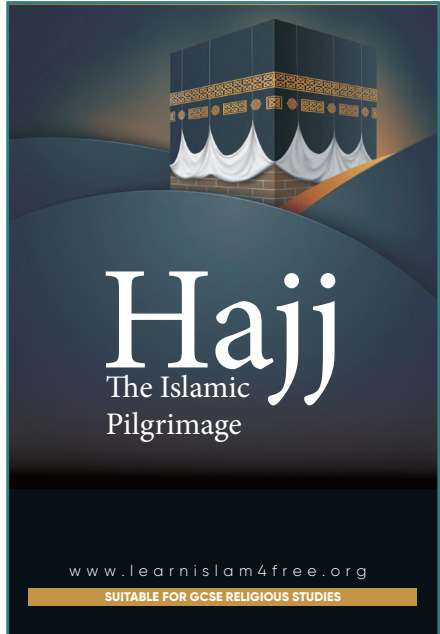
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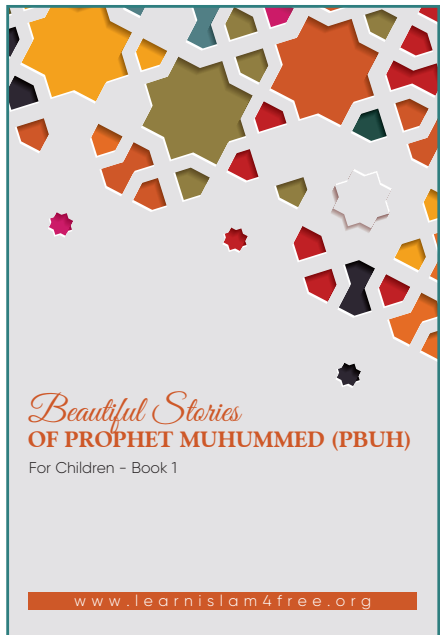
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