



Welcome to our local mosque!

Our local mosque, like mosques all over the world, is a place of congregational worship for Muslims. It is also a hub of community life. We have after-school Arabic and Quran classes, and weekend coaching sessions for English, Mathematics, Science, personal development and other subjects.

A mosque has a pivotal role in the Muslim community. As a place of worship surrounded by homes and businesses, it symbolizes the centrality of Faith in God, amidst all the distractions and the mundane pursuits of daily life.

As you entered, you removed your shoes and passed an ablution area. In Islam Cleanliness is vital, for body, mind and soul. We cannot pray or touch the Holy Quran without having washed ourselves, out of respect and reverence for God. Indeed, to a devout Muslim, our entire life is one long a purification process. We were born pure and free of sins, but as we go through life we pick up bad habits that blemish our moral purity. We must therefore constantly strive to polish and refine our conduct. This lifelong struggle to cultivate good character is what Prophet Muhammad described as the ‘greater *jihad*’ or struggle. The ‘lesser *jihad*’ is military self-defence. More about this later...

When you entered this large prayer hall, you must have noticed that the carpets have not been lined up squarely with the four walls. In fact, it has been offset by about 120 degrees from North. This is not because we had a bad carpet layer! All Muslims must face Makka during prayers. This direction is known as the *Qibla*. It is the directional axis that connects every Muslim at prayer, all over the planet. Even when I pray at home, in my mind’s eye I know that others are praying too, at that same moment, somewhere around the world, and we are all facing in the same direction, even if we cannot see each other. We are also reciting the prayers in the same language, Arabic.



This means that when we travel to any country, we can still pray together even if we cannot speak each other's languages. A Chinese or Russian or Indonesian or Spanish Muslim can enter this mosque right now and lead the prayers, even if he does not speak any English, and we will all follow him and do the prayers correctly. Arabic is the language of our holy book, the Quran, and it is the *lingua franca* of the entire Muslim world.

As we go through the motions of prayer, standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting, we resemble a giant flower opening and closing its petals. You can see this on pictures and films of the Great Mosque in Makka. At every moment in time, someone somewhere on earth is facing Makka in prayer. If we could take an astronaut's view from space and if we could actually see people at prayer, we would see a huge flower the size of planet earth, opening and closing its petals, and slowly moving westwards with the motion of the sun...



More than a million people line up for evening prayers around the Kaaba, in Mecca.

Our relationship with God [Allah]

In Islam, the relationship between God, [Allah in Arabic] and human beings, is like landlord and tenant. Allah is a very generous landlord. He has created the entire universe for our service, and all he asks for rent is that we acknowledge him with gratitude. That's all. We only have to say, thank you, sincerely from our heart. That's the rent. But for some of us, saying thank you to Allah seems to be the most difficult thing to do.

Islam teaches that the universe did not simply appear by some cosmic accident, by some random collision of atoms. All the signs in nature point towards an intelligent Designer. God is the supreme Architect. We are all part of a purposeful creation. Our purpose is to worship God alone, and to follow His plan. At the very beginning, when He created Adam, He also created the souls of every human being that ever was and ever will be. Then God

asked, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ and every single soul answered unanimously, ‘Truly you are our Lord, lest we say on the Day of Judgment, that we were unmindful of this.’

God [Allah in Arabic] is God of the Muslims because they acknowledge his status. But God is also referred to as *Rabb-al-Aalameen* or Lord of all the worlds. He is therefore Lord of all creation, including those who do not acknowledge His existence. He is known by his 99 beautiful names in the Holy Quran. His most oft-repeated names, *Al-Rahman and Al-Raheem*, The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, are invoked every time a Muslim begins an action. “I begin in the name of God, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.” From opening our eyes in the morning, to washing, eating, travelling, working, playing reading prayers or getting back to bed, every act is blessed with the remembrance of God.

Life and death

During our lifetime we accumulate a lot of moral pollution. We get distracted, spiritually, from the Straight Way to God. Our bad thoughts, words and actions have to be constantly improved as we strive for moral excellence. We are God’s trustees. We enjoy all life’s treasures, including our bodies and souls, on loan. Our soul, the ‘breath of God’ [*Ruuh*] in Arabic] occupies our physical body for as long as we are alive, 60, 70, 80 or 90 years. When we die, our bodies return to the earth, whence it came, and our soul must be returned to its rightful owner, in its original unblemished condition. Life on earth is therefore simply a constant series of tests, a preparation for the eternal afterlife.

Islamic beliefs and practices:

The basic teachings of Islam can be summed up in a *Hadith* or Tradition of Prophet Muhammad, illustrated by this incident from his life:

One day, the Prophet Muhammad was in a gathering with his followers, when a man approached them. He was immaculately groomed and without any sign of dust or weariness from travel. His face beamed with an inner radiance. The man sat down in front of the Prophet, took hold of both his hands, looked straight into his eyes, and then he asked,

What is Islam?

The Prophet [peace and blessings on him] replied:

- Islam is to believe that there is only One God without any partner, and that Muhammad is the final Messenger of God.
- To pray the five daily prayers
- To fast during the month of Ramadan
- To pay the poor dues in charity
- and to do the Hajj, the Pilgrimage, at least once in a lifetime.

Then, the man asked,

What is Faith?

And the Prophet replied:

- Faith is to believe in God,
- His angels,
- all His holy books,
- His Prophets [including Abraham, Moses and Jesus],
- in the Day of Judgment, the Day of Accountability.
- and that good and evil come with the permission of God, and in the eternal afterlife.

Finally, the man asked:

What is Excellence?

And again, the Prophet replied:

- Excellence is to worship God as if you can see him in front of you, knowing that even if you cannot see Him, then surely He sees you.

When Prophet Muhammad had finished, this immaculately dressed man said, “You have spoken the truth.” Then he stood up and departed. The Prophet then asked his followers if they know who that man was. They said no, and he said: “That was Archangel Gabriel, and he came to teach you your religion.”

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Muslims do not believe in ‘Original Sin.’ Islam teaches that people are not by nature sinful, but we are forgetful. All Islamic beliefs are therefore structured around a basically good but forgetful creature. The basic tenets are called

The five Pillars of Islam:

1. Divine Unity. This affirms that there is no god but one God, and Prophet Muhammad is His final messenger.
2. Prayer, five times a day, to remind us, forgetful creatures, of our place in the wider scheme of things. It reminds us of our utter helplessness, and total dependence on God.
3. Fasting, to cultivate self-discipline and compassion for others less fortunate.
4. Charity, at least 2.5% of surplus wealth, belongs to the needy. Charity also purifies our wealth, and reminds us we are trustees, not owners, of wealth.
5. Pilgrimage, the Hajj. At least once in a lifetime, those who have the means to do so, must visit Makka, to see the spiritual centre of Islam, and to experience the brotherhood of all mankind. Here Abraham left Hajar and Ismail along his travels. This is where Abraham's sacrifice is remembered. Here in Makka God asked Abraham to build a place of worship. The Kaaba, or Cube, is the first place of worship ever to be built anywhere on planet earth. It's the original mosque, church, temple or synagogue, if you like. No other sacred building existed before it. Abraham built the first place of worship to One God, here in Makka. Here on the plain of Arafat, on the Mount of Mercy, Jabal Rahma, God forgave Adam and Eve

after they were cast out of His Garden. Here is where every Muslim at least once in a lifetime, will come to ask God's forgiveness just as Adam did. Pilgrims must wear *Ihraam*, 2 sheets of un-sewn white linen, the same 2 sheets that will be our burial shroud. Hajj is therefore also a reminder of death. Pilgrimage is the great leveller. There is no distinction between rich and poor, aristocrat or peasant. Stripped of all our social pretensions, we see each other as God sees us, defined only by our good conduct, and our love and reverence for Him. God promises the truthful and sincere pilgrim that all sins will be forgiven and we can return home as innocent as newborn babes.

Islam is not a new religion

Those Muslims, who deeply understand their faith, see no difference between the original teachings of all God's prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus. We cannot accept one prophet without the other. All came to teach the message of Divine Unity: "Hear, O Israel, your Lord is One God...You shall worship none but Me..."

Prophet Muhammad did not bring a new religion. He came to re-affirm God's original message that was either lost or altered through human error. Our Christian and Jewish cousins in the Abrahamic tradition will be familiar with the Old Testament and the New Testament. Muslims consider the Holy Quran as God's Last Testament. If one reads the Quran, one soon realizes that this is not a new or different message. It simply reconfirms the message of monotheism taught by earlier prophets like Noah, Solomon, David, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, (may God's peace and blessings be on all of them).

We follow a Prophet whose mission was not only to Muslims exclusively, but to all human beings, inclusively, for all time. Our Prophet came as a mercy to all peoples, all creatures, plants, animals and the Unseen world of *Jinn*. The Quran describes Muhammad's mission as "a mercy to all the worlds." He preached against idol worship. He condemned burying alive of infant daughters. He stopped the blood feuds between the Arab tribes. He showed that good character is nobler than racial and tribal prejudice. He put an end to usury and all forms of economic injustice. He promoted monotheism, women's rights, brotherhood amongst believers, and protection for all minorities, freedom of conscience, sanctity of churches and synagogues, respect for people of other faiths. His mission was not an easy one. Many rich and privileged people felt threatened by his teachings. Just like every other Prophet of God, he suffered violence and rejection from his own people.

What was Prophet Muhammad's response to violence and personal humiliation?

Typically, when the Prophet Muhammad went to preach in Taif, a town near Makka, the people mocked him, stoned him and drove him out. Like all of God's prophets before him, he was tested to his physical and emotional limits. He was not a violent man, yet violence was inflicted on him, he was battered and bruised, the blood flowed and he lost a tooth. As he left Taif, the Angel of Mountains appeared before him, and offered to punish the people for their sins. He offered to destroy everything and everyone in Taif for injuring the Prophet. But Muhammad was alarmed at this suggestion. "No, no!" he said. "I am not the

Prophet of revenge. I am the Prophet of Mercy! Leave them alone! Perhaps one day, their children might accept my message.”

And he was right. Within his lifetime, the all the citizens of Taif accepted Islam, without force, without violence.

What does Islam say about violence and ‘holy war?’

Islam utterly condemns taking any life unlawfully. To take one life unlawfully is like taking the life of all humankind. A life can only be lawfully taken in a court of law, for example, in cases of where a death sentence follows a premeditated act of murder. Taking life unlawfully is a major sin. Muslims are not allowed to force others to accept Islam. “Let there be no compulsion in religion,” says the Holy Quran. Prophet Muhammad never condoned violence except in self-defence. And even then, when we must take up arms to defend ourselves, we are ordered to follow very strict rules of engagement. These rules have become the Islamic code of war for over 14 centuries:

- Do not attack anyone unless they attack you. Do not kill anyone unless they are imminently going to kill you.
- In battle, do not kill anyone indiscriminately [modern ‘collateral damage’ is forbidden]
- Respond proportionately. Do not be excessive. God hates those who exceed the limits He has set.
- Do not attack innocent people [non-combatants] who do you no harm.
- Do not cut down trees
- Do not destroy livestock or crops.
- Do not poison water supplies [chemical warfare].
- Do not violate women, children, unarmed civilians, monks, Priests or Rabbis.
- Do not violate any places of worship like churches, monasteries or synagogues.

The first asylum seekers

Prophet Muhammad trusted sincere and just Christian rulers. At one point he and his followers were so severely persecuted by the idol worshippers in Makka that he feared Islam might be totally destroyed. He therefore sent a small group of Muslims as refugees to Abyssinia, where he knew the Negus was a just king and a devout Coptic ruler. The king welcomed these first Muslim asylum seekers, and they lived safely under his protection.

Protection for all minorities

During his travels Prophet Muhammad also befriended the monks at St Catherine's monastery, at the foot of Mount Sinai, [see Appendix 1] where Moses brought down the Ten Commandments. I personally visited this historic site, and saw a ‘Charter of Privileges’ dictated by Prophet Muhammad, and bearing his seal. [see appendix 2] The monks there have proudly preserved this Charter for more than 1400 years. It guarantees the safety of Christians under Islamic rule, and has been faithfully observed in Muslim lands over the centuries.

Imagine, even during the blood-soaked history of the Crusades, the monks at St Catherine's monastery lived peacefully under the protection of Islam. I have to say, this was nothing unusual. For 13 out of the last 14 centuries when Islam and political power went hand in hand, there were thriving Christian and Jewish communities throughout the Muslim world. Church, Mosque and Synagogue stood side by side in mutual respect and harmony, from Spain to Indonesia and from Bosnia to the Sudan. Under Islam, a multi-faith society was not only 'tolerated' but it was positively encouraged. The great Jewish philosopher Rabbi Moses Maimonides, codified Jewish law in the Middle Ages. He was also the personal physician of the Caliph, Salahuddin [Saladin]. In Ottoman Turkey, Christian youths joined the elite Janissary corps, the Sultan's Praetorian Guard, and rose to high positions in the empire. The Mamluk rulers of Egypt were appointed from this group. So you see, multi-culturalism and multi-faith society wasn't actually invented by New Labour under Tony Blair. It only seems that way! Indeed, it flourished for more than 1,000 years in the Islamic world!

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Islam and Terrorism

If one is to believe the popular press these days, Islam is a violent, militant faith bent on world conquest. The sensation-hungry media taps deep into our collective subconscious, deep into our Christian-western psyche, drawing on subliminal fears of the 'barbaric Turk, the wild Oriental infidel, the anti-Christ.' They subtly and not-so-subtly invoke our worst fears, of fanatics forcing conversions at the point of the sword. The sword these days could be a Kalashnikov AK-47, a rocket propelled grenade, or a bomb strapped to a suicide belt. But what is the reality behind these powerful mythical images?

Admittedly, a few young Muslims have been drawn into extreme groups who preach hatred and promote acts of violence. They feed on a sense of perceived injustice by pointing to the effects of British and US foreign policy in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Lebanon. They accuse Western governments of double standards in foreign policy, and of waging a war for oil, a war against Islam. So this is how they try to justify their own acts of terror, as an appropriate way of addressing unjust foreign policies.

Means and Ends: What is the Islamic view?

Over 1,400 years of Islamic history, there is no precedent, and therefore no justification, for Muslims to take innocent lives in seeking to put right perceived injustices against them. In the age-old debate about 'means' and 'ends' the secularists and Marxists, for example, argued that 'the end justifies the means,' in other words, you could very well do anything you please, using any means you choose, to put right injustice. But Islam disagrees. Islam teaches that you cannot achieve moral ends by using immoral means. You cannot build a

just society by following unjust policies and practices. You would simply be perpetuating the cycle of mutual injustice. This was precisely what Prophet Muhammad came to stop. He stopped inter-tribal violence that recycled from one generation to the next, where many people could not even remember why it all started.

Who are the ‘terrorists?’

In Islam, moral ends must be pursued only by equally moral means. Means and Ends are integrated and inseparable. Punishment must be proportionate to the crime, and injustice cannot be stopped by more injustice. Compare this, for example, with Israel’s disproportionate use of force to terrorize whole communities while illegally seizing their land. Islam teaches that its followers must observe the limits [*wudood*] set by God, even in the most provocative situations. Muslims are forbidden to reciprocate indiscriminate terror and violence. Extremism of any sort is totally outside the spirit of Islam. In the Holy Quran, God’s own words describe Prophet Muhammad as a “Mercy to all the nations.” His followers, the true believing Muslims, are described as *ummatan wasatan*, meaning, “the justly-balanced people.” The Holy Quran further confirms that the ‘best of people are those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and they believe in God.’ Throughout the Scripture and throughout the living example of Prophet Muhammad’s life, there is consistency on the subject of justice and the role of violence. Islam does not condone ‘collateral damage,’ the excuse that innocent lives can be taken in pursuit of the real criminals. Indeed, violent extremists or terrorists cannot be Muslims as well. Terrorists are criminals, whatever they may choose to call themselves, whether they wear suicide belts or whether they wear smart suits and commands huge armies, navies and air forces. “Islamic Terrorist” is a contradiction in terms, like ‘Peaceful Warmonger’ or ‘Angelic Satan.’ It’s a crude distortion of language that makes no sense. It suggests a deliberate attempt to discredit Islam as a faith, and Muslims as trustworthy and law-abiding citizens. Hitler was a Christian but one does not hear constant references to his religion. The true teachings of Jesus are in no way responsible for the excesses of some Christians, just as the true teachings of Moses cannot be blamed for the atrocities of the Israelis. The sooner our media and politicians stop using offensive and misleading terms, the better for all of us.

Alienated Muslim youth

There are some angry, marginalized and alienated young Muslims who feel no loyalty to the wider society, and who become easy prey for sinister groups with their own political agenda. We ignore the needs of these young people at our own peril. We must provide convincing proof that our commonly shared values still work. We must show by example that injustice can and will be addressed by lawful and peaceful means. It will not help if politicians absolve themselves of responsibility for unwise, unjust foreign policies, and the mass media try to demonize an entire faith community. There are many factors that alienate young Muslims. Educational under-achievement, under-employed graduates, prejudices in recruitment as well as in the workplace, and attacks on Muslims, branded as a ‘war on terror’ are just some of the problems. There is widespread ignorance about Islam that breeds fear: Islamophobia. This must be addressed by more balanced and factual information about Islam and the civilization that it has produced. No-one benefits by

having our diverse British society polarized on religious grounds. We need to show that Muslims have a real stake in Britain, that we are not simply unwelcome foreigners that need to be 'tolerated' by an unwelcoming host. It will take some time and effort to persuade young, alienated Muslims that we belong here, this is our home and we all have a responsibility to make Britain a safe and happy country we can all be proud of. Our mosques can play an important role. Some are doing so already. But it really needs a much wider combined effort of the Muslim community, the government and the education and employment sectors to ensure that young Muslims are treated no differently from others. We all have an important role to play in making Britain safe and successful for everyone.

Islam, Peace and Justice

Islam is an Arabic word, the literally means 'The Way of Peace' or, 'the state of being in harmony, peace, with God. This means surrendering one's ego, one's whimsical and capricious desires, to Allah, to God.' A Muslim, therefore, literally is 'one who joyfully, passionately surrenders his/her will to God's Will. Peace is therefore an integral part of the meaning of Islam. However, peace is not more important than justice, and cannot be enjoyed at the price of justice. Muslims are not allowed to tolerate injustice. We are not only forbidden to commit injustice to others. We are also forbidden to accept injustice to ourselves. An unjust peace is not acceptable in Islam. God demands justice. Muslims are ordered to put wrongs aright with their own hands, and if they cannot do so, they should at least speak out against it, and if they cannot even do this, then they must at the very least, hate that injustice within their hearts. A well known verse in the Holy Quran orders Muslims to be just, to be witnesses to fair dealing, even if it is against themselves or against their own family and loved ones. God commands us to be fair and just even to our enemies! Islam has put justice beyond any concept of self-interest or narrow tribal, racial or national loyalties. Muslims cannot take a smug, 'I'm all right, Jack,' attitude because all people are God's creatures, so an injustice to anyone is an offence to God. There is no concept of being 'God's chosen people.' A Muslim must earn God's pleasure by good actions with a generous heart if he has any hope of salvation in the afterlife. Jesus said, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Prophet Muhammad said, 'You are not a true believer until you wish for your brother what you wish for yourself.' There is no contradiction between these statements. Even though 600 years separated their speakers, the words were inspired by the same author, God Himself.

What do Muslims really want?

We do not want, nor do we deserve, any special favours or privileges. The vast majority of Muslims simply want to get on with their lives, to provide security and good education for their children. We want no more and no less than any other British citizen deserves, to be treated with kindness and respect. We want to feel we are an integral part of British society, not simply some unwelcome visitors who must be 'tolerated.' We want our young people in particular, to have a fair chance in finding employment. There is far too much religious discrimination in recruitment. [Muslim graduates are 3 times more likely to be unemployed than other graduates]. This sense of alienation increases the danger of radical influence.

When Muslims enjoy a sense of fairness and belonging, they can make a useful contribution to the wider society in which we live.

What can Muslims do for our wider society?

As a community that avoids gambling, alcohol and drug abuse, that values family life and worships God through serving others less fortunate, Muslims can and should add value to their wider society. Our noble ancestors always improved the lands where Islam found itself. Look to the history of Spain, of India, Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Indonesia and other parts Africa. Compare the conditions before, during and after the arrival of Islam. Spain, for instance, suffered terribly under the Visigoths. From 711 till 1492, for nearly 800 years, Spain enjoyed its golden age under Muslim rule. How many of us know that Jews and Christians were allowed to observe their own legal systems in the land of the Caliphs? What we in our Euro-centric perception of history call the 'Dark Ages' was dark only in Christian Europe. Elsewhere, it was really a time when science, philosophy and art flourished and learning was pursued passionately. Christian, Muslim and Jewish scholars debated philosophy while translating the works of Plato and Aristotle in the universities of Toledo, Cordoba and Granada. When Granada fell in 1492, the Catholic Inquisition started a reign of religious terror and genocide, killing countless Jews and Muslims who refused to convert. The effects of this dark chapter of European history are still felt today.

You will find that in every country, living conditions improved for all its citizens with the arrival of Islam. This is not just the sentimental opinion of a Muslim writer. Check it for yourself.

What does the future hold for Britain and its Muslim citizens?

At every level we need to take responsibility and we need to be honest about our failings and limitations. We Brits have had a taste of indiscriminate terror and its aftermath. It is not helpful for our most senior politicians simply to lay the blame entirely on the Muslim community. They ask Muslim leaders to 'put their house in order' by taming the young militants. Modern terrorism is a multi-faceted problem, and we all must do our bit to make Britain safe for everyone. Our political leaders too, should refrain from dragging our country into unnecessary and unjust conflicts abroad. We need inspirational leadership on all levels, based on a common sense of justice and humanity. We are all children of Adam. We cannot enjoy national security in Britain by making life unbearable for others elsewhere. Sooner or later the chickens come home to roost. "As you sow, so shall you reap." Jesus said. He also reminded us: "By their fruits shall ye know them." During the Civil Rights campaign of the 1960's, the Reverend Martin Luther King warned his fellow Americans that they must choose to live together as brothers or perish together as fools. He realized how interconnected and interdependent we are, and that our actions today will have consequences for our children tomorrow and our grandchildren the day after tomorrow. Do we not owe it to them, to leave the world a better place than we found it?

My dear friends! Our troubled world needs the kind of inspirational leadership that will bring people together, celebrating our differences as a sign of Gods artistry and His infinite

creativity. We should cultivate a sense of emotional and cultural maturity so that we do not feel threatened by others who are different. Everyone deserves respect. We are not just Christians or Muslims or Sikhs or Jews or Hindus, separated by gulfs of mutual incomprehension. We are all children of Adam. We are mostly good but insecure and forgetful creatures of a loving and compassionate God. We owe it to ourselves, and to the One Who created us, Who nourishes and sustains us, to treat one another justly and kindly. Showing each other kindness and mercy is a way of being courteous to God.

To conclude, I would like to tell you about the inscription that welcomed visitors to the University of Granada. It reads:

“THE WORLD IS HELD UP BY FOUR PILLARS:
THE WISDOM OF THE LEARNED
THE JUSTICE OF THE GREAT
THE PRAYERS OF THE RIGHTEOUS
THE VALOUR OF THE BRAVE”

These inspiring words sum up what I believe to be the essence of a truly just and noble society. This was the ethos that underpinned eight centuries of peace, prosperity and progress for a diverse population in Muslim Spain, from the 8th – 16th Centuries. It is a vision that offers valuable lessons for our troubled world today.

Friends, I pray that our faith communities will work together to make Britain safe and successful, not only for its own citizens, but for all people on our fragile, crowded planet.

Thank you for listening so patiently. God bless you all.

As-salaamu 'alaykum

Arshad Gamiet

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Suggested further Reading:

Islam the Natural Way by *Abdulwahid Hamid*

Muhammad, A Prophet for our time. by *Karen Armstrong*

Islam and the Destiny of Man by *Gai Eton*

The Wisdom of Islam by *Robert Frager, Ph.D*

The Wisdom of the Prophet by *Thomas Cleary*

Prophet Muhammad's
Charter of Privileges to Christians

(Letter to the Monks of St. Catherine Monastery)

In 628 C.E. Prophet Muhammad (s) granted a Charter of Privileges to the monks of St. Catherine Monastery in Mt. Sinai. It consisted of several clauses covering all aspects of human rights including such topics as the protection of Christians, freedom of worship and movement, freedom to appoint their own judges and to own and maintain their property, exemption from military service, and the right to protection in war.

An English translation of that document is presented here:

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Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by Allah! I hold out against anything that displeases them.

No compulsion is to be on them.

Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries.

No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses.

Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate.

No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight.

The Muslims are to fight for them.

If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray.

Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants.

No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world).

(This charter of privileges has been honoured and faithfully applied by Muslims throughout the centuries in all lands they ruled).