

The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدٍ

'Amr bin Al-'Aas رضي الله عنه

# The Conqueror of Egypt

By: Abdul Basit Ahmad

Edited by: Aqeel Walker

*The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions*

عمرو بن العاص رضي الله عنه - فاتح مصر

**'Amr bin Al-'Aas** رضي الله عنه

# **The Conqueror of Egypt**



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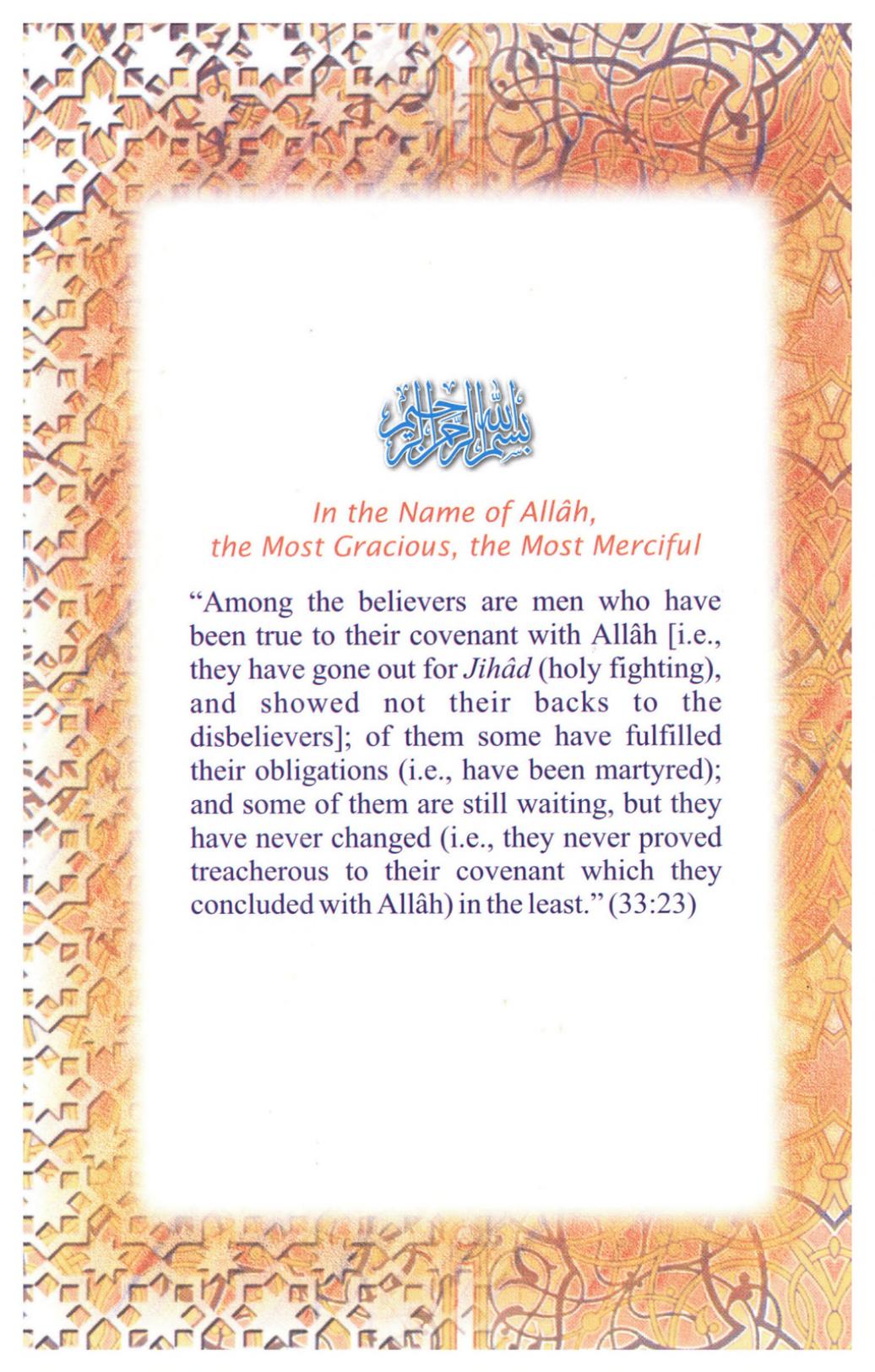
**‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas** رضي الله عنه  
**The Conqueror of  
Egypt**

*By*  
**Abdul Basit Ahmad**

*Edited by*  
**Aqeel Walker**  
**Muhammad Ayub Sapra**



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## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allâh,  
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allâh [i.e., they have gone out for *Jihâd* (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]; of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred); and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allâh) in the least.” (33:23)

## Publishers Note

All praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists. May Allâh's peace and blessings be upon His final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Darussalam is pleased to present this valuable series, "*The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions*", to the Muslim youth. The purpose of these books is to enlighten our youth about the lives of the greatest heroes of Islam, the Prophet's Companions. Also, we wish to increase the enthusiasm of the Muslim youth for following and adhering to their religion. In this way, these books achieve two very important tasks: educating our children and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

The following story, "*Amr bin Al-'Aas ؓ - The Conqueror of Egypt*", is about one of the Prophet's famous Companions, 'Amr bin Al-'Aas ؓ. 'Amr spent years fighting against Islam on the side of the Quraish pagans. Yet, with deep thought and reflection, it was only a matter of time that a clever and brilliant man like 'Amr ؓ would see the clear truth and accept Islam. He eventually became one

of the great assets to the Muslims, as an Envoy, Commander and Governor.

We hope that these books are beneficial to our Muslim youth, as they are the future of Islam. We at Darussalam realize the importance of good Islamic literature for Muslim children, especially in the West where non-Islamic influences are so strong. For this reason, we feel that the availability of this series will be a valuable aid in instilling a genuine love for Islam in our children. We would like to thank the author, Mr. Abdul Basit Ahmad, the editors, Mr. Aqeel Walker, and Mr. Muhammad Ayub Sapra for their diligent work in preparing this series. As Allâh says:

“Is there any reward for good other than good?” (55:60)

And our final word is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

**Abdul Malik Mujahid**  
General Manager

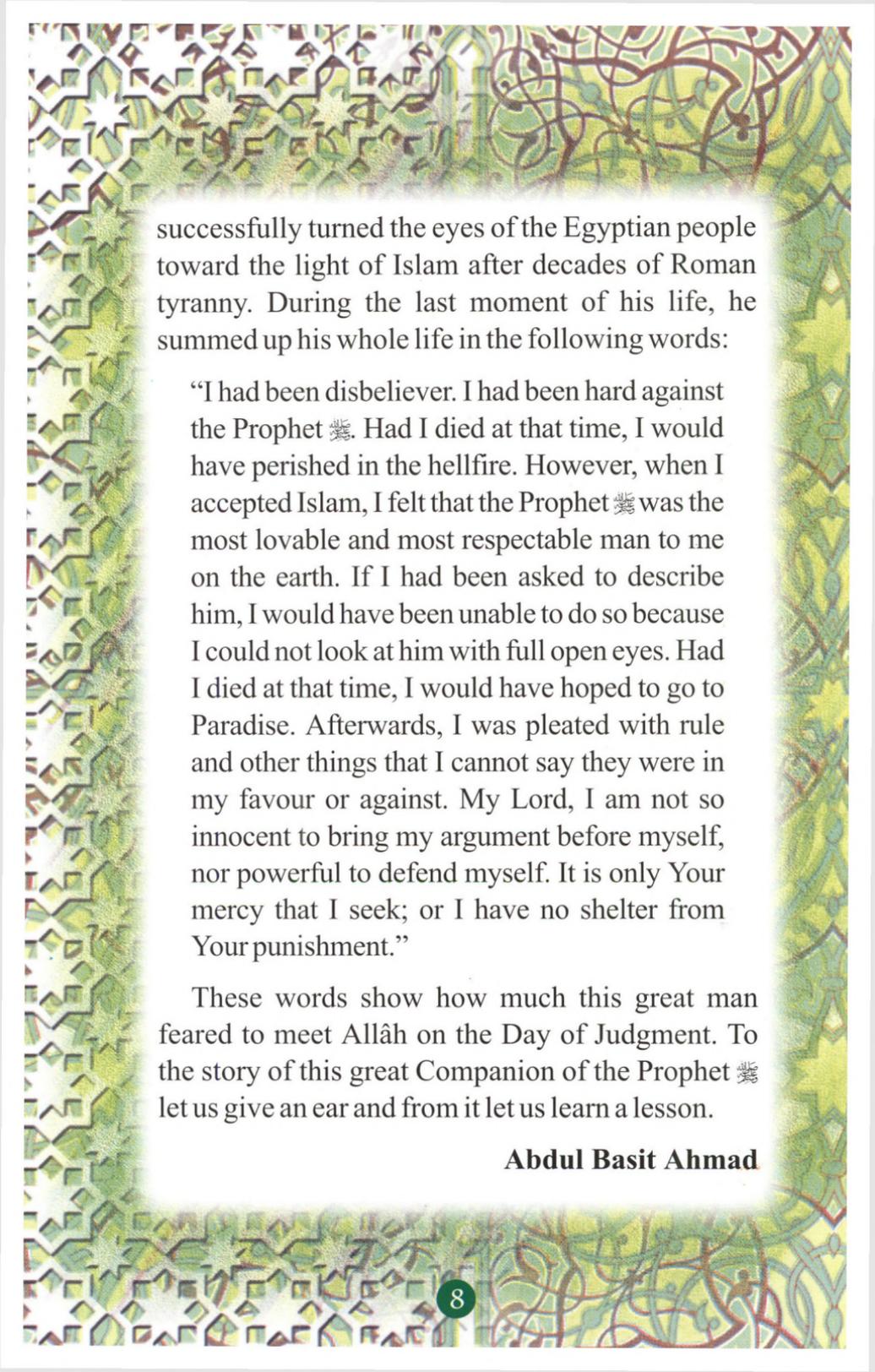
## Foreword

Usually a few men play important roles in their societies. Some of these men excel others in achieving their objectives through clever plans and shrewd plots. Our hero, ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas ؓ was one of those distinguished men who played a major role in the history of Islam. He was a great conqueror and leader both before and after the rise of Islam.

During the period of opposition to Islam and the Muslims, he used all his shrewdness and cynical skills to tease the Muslims and make their life in Makkah as hard as possible. He also plotted to get back to Makkah the Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia, to make the Quraish army win the battle of Uhud and to gather as many allies as he could in preparation for the Trench Battle.

After embracing Islam, he also dedicated all his mental abilities to serve the just cause of Islam. After years of struggle against Islam, he realized that it was time to join the overwhelming march of the true faith. Had it not been for his cleverness supported by divine guidance, he would have lost his way to the truth.

He was the man who conquered Egypt and



successfully turned the eyes of the Egyptian people toward the light of Islam after decades of Roman tyranny. During the last moment of his life, he summed up his whole life in the following words:

“I had been disbeliever. I had been hard against the Prophet ﷺ. Had I died at that time, I would have perished in the hellfire. However, when I accepted Islam, I felt that the Prophet ﷺ was the most lovable and most respectable man to me on the earth. If I had been asked to describe him, I would have been unable to do so because I could not look at him with full open eyes. Had I died at that time, I would have hoped to go to Paradise. Afterwards, I was pleased with rule and other things that I cannot say they were in my favour or against. My Lord, I am not so innocent to bring my argument before myself, nor powerful to defend myself. It is only Your mercy that I seek; or I have no shelter from Your punishment.”

These words show how much this great man feared to meet Allâh on the Day of Judgment. To the story of this great Companion of the Prophet ﷺ let us give an ear and from it let us learn a lesson.

**Abdul Basit Ahmad**

## **Introduction**

### **Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula**

Arabs lived in the Arabian Peninsula both in cities and in the desert. The people of cities mostly worked as traders while desert Bedouins followed their flocks everywhere in the desert in search of food and water. They consisted of tribes and clans which kept in constant clashes against each other. Wars erupted now and then to snatch more lives and leave many houses lacking any fatherly support. In addition, women and children were taken as slaves as a result of such bloody wars.

Gloom and ignorance shrouded the life of Arabs in the absence of any heavenly guidance. Every tribe had its own major idol made of stone to which people worshipped beside Allâh. They claimed that such idols would bring them closer to Allâh. The Ka'bah in Makkah was itself surrounded with hundreds of idols which were considered by Makkans as gods.

Slavery, burying girls alive and injustices were dominating the societies of the city and desert alike. Any free man today might become a slave tomorrow and a girl who was given the right to live by Allâh was buried alive by her father for fear to

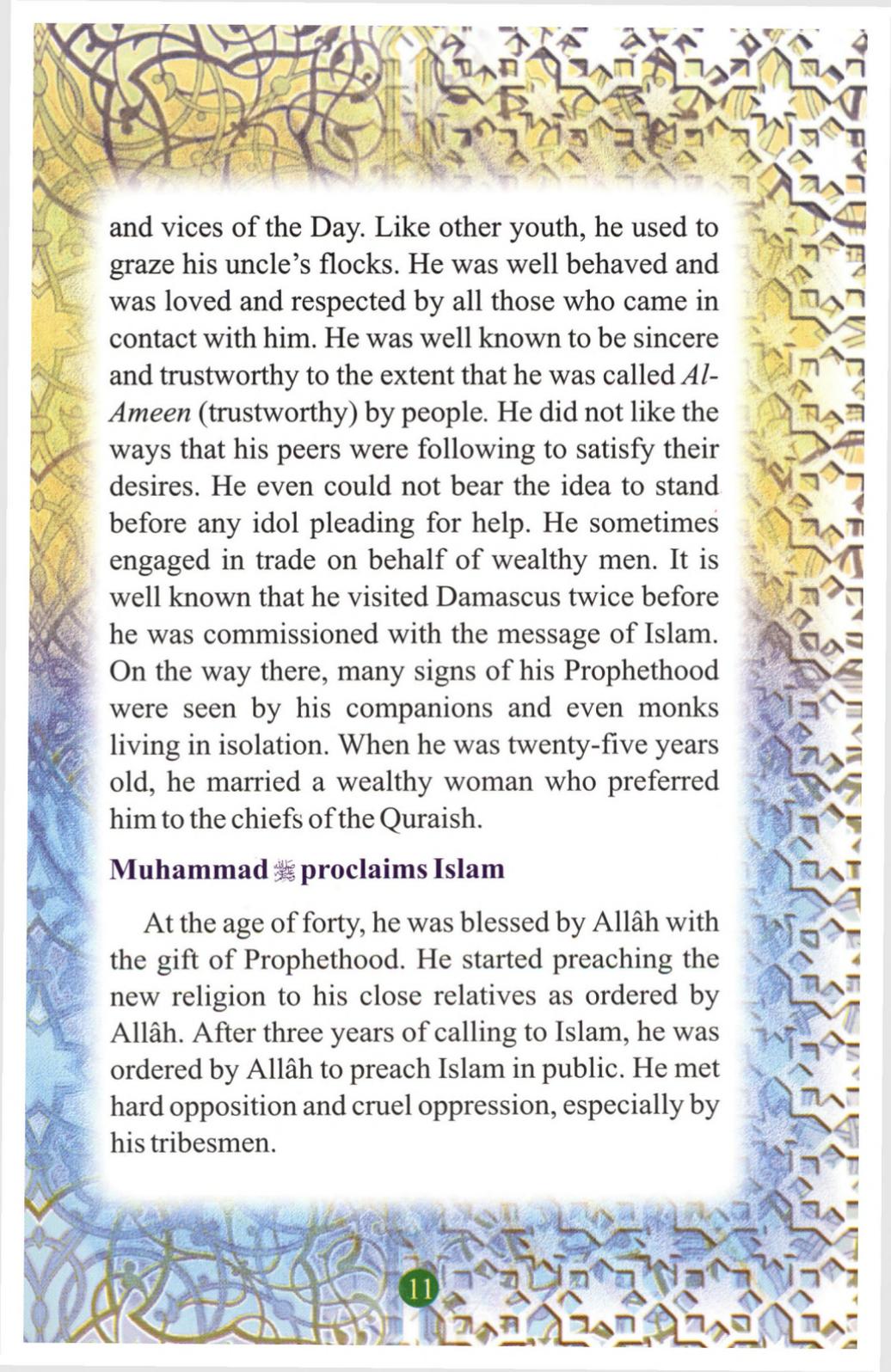
bring him shame.

Youth and old were spending their time in grazing animals or practicing trade during the daytime and seeking worldly pleasures during the night. The guidance brought by previous religions was absent from the life of people. There was no central government; rather, every tribe had its own chief and customs. A number of Jews and Christians were scattered here and there, but their practice of their religions had greatly diminished. The neighbouring Roman and Persian Empires were also lacking such heavenly guidance.

All these vices and atrocities urgently needed a Messenger from Allâh to reform the society and spread guidance throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

### **The Messenger of Islam**

The child Muhammad grew up in such a corrupt environment. His father died before he was born and his mother left him alone when he was only six years old. His grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, the chief of Bani Hashim clan, reared the boy. However, he died when Muhammad was only eight years old. His uncle Abu Tâlib took care of him and loved him dearly. When Muhammad ﷺ became a young man, he kept himself away from the evils



and vices of the Day. Like other youth, he used to graze his uncle's flocks. He was well behaved and was loved and respected by all those who came in contact with him. He was well known to be sincere and trustworthy to the extent that he was called *Al-Ameen* (trustworthy) by people. He did not like the ways that his peers were following to satisfy their desires. He even could not bear the idea to stand before any idol pleading for help. He sometimes engaged in trade on behalf of wealthy men. It is well known that he visited Damascus twice before he was commissioned with the message of Islam. On the way there, many signs of his Prophethood were seen by his companions and even monks living in isolation. When he was twenty-five years old, he married a wealthy woman who preferred him to the chiefs of the Quraish.

### **Muhammad ﷺ proclaims Islam**

At the age of forty, he was blessed by Allâh with the gift of Prophethood. He started preaching the new religion to his close relatives as ordered by Allâh. After three years of calling to Islam, he was ordered by Allâh to preach Islam in public. He met hard opposition and cruel oppression, especially by his tribesmen.

The Prophet ﷺ spent thirteen years calling the people of Makkah and its surrounding areas to accept Islam. However, he did not realize much success. He visited some nearby towns like Tâ'if to preach Islam and to seek protection against oppression. His attempts did not meet so much success.

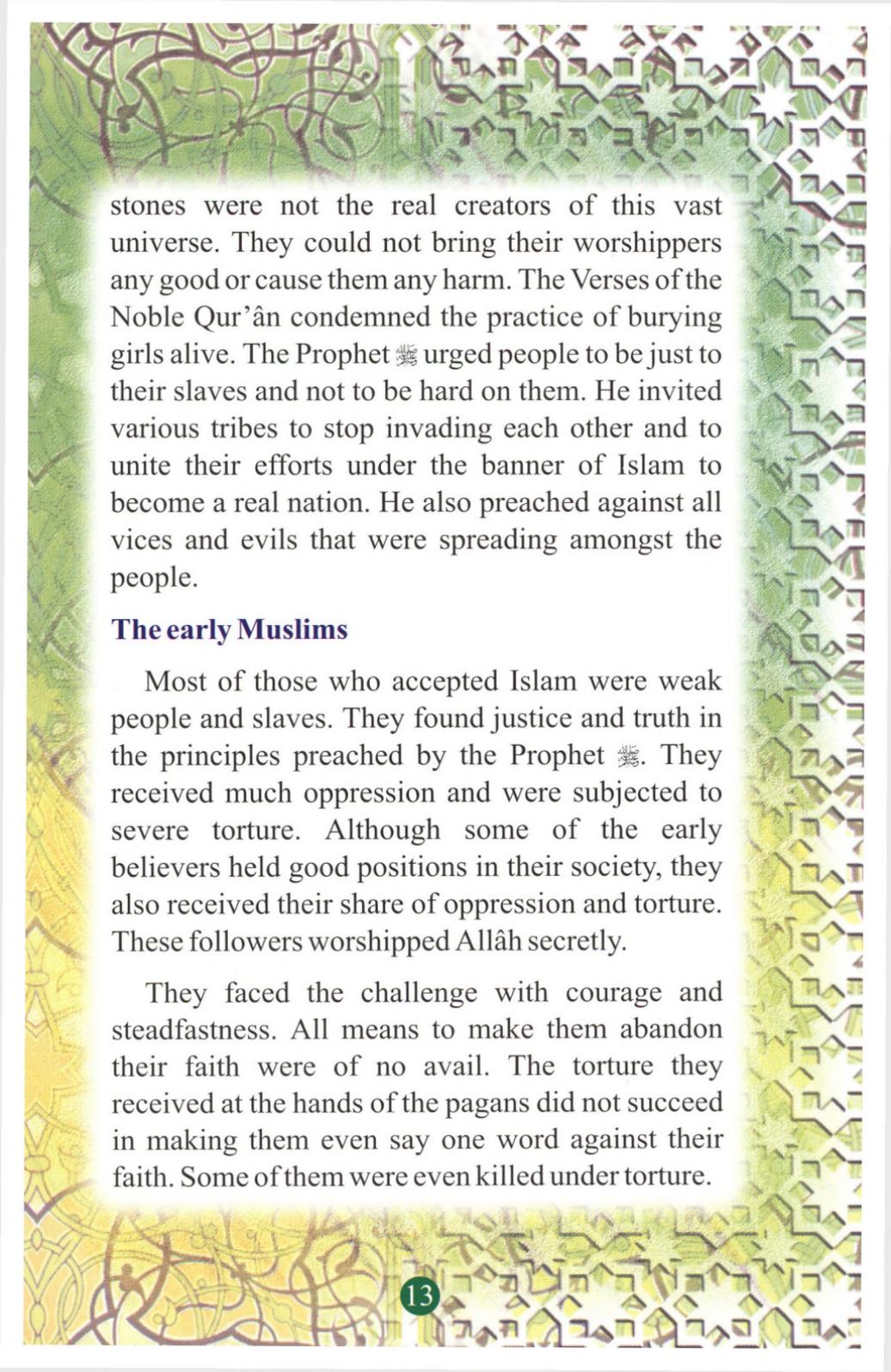
The Prophet ﷺ tried other ways of preaching Islam. He began calling visitors of Makkah to provide him with protection to be able to proclaim the Word of Allâh. A group of visitors from a town called Yathrib believed in the message of Islam and pledged to provide the needed protection.

### **Migration to Al-Madinah**

The Prophet ﷺ and his followers migrated to Al-Madinah (Yathrib). In Al-Madinah, an ideal state of brotherhood among Migrants (from Makkah) and Supporters (in Al-Madinah) prevailed the society. From there, they could establish their Islamic State and propagate the message to the entire world.

### **Values and morals of Islam**

Islam called people to worship One Allâh. The Prophet ﷺ told people that the ideals they were worshipping were just stones made by them and that they did not deserve to be worshipped. These



stones were not the real creators of this vast universe. They could not bring their worshippers any good or cause them any harm. The Verses of the Noble Qur'ân condemned the practice of burying girls alive. The Prophet ﷺ urged people to be just to their slaves and not to be hard on them. He invited various tribes to stop invading each other and to unite their efforts under the banner of Islam to become a real nation. He also preached against all vices and evils that were spreading amongst the people.

### **The early Muslims**

Most of those who accepted Islam were weak people and slaves. They found justice and truth in the principles preached by the Prophet ﷺ. They received much oppression and were subjected to severe torture. Although some of the early believers held good positions in their society, they also received their share of oppression and torture. These followers worshipped Allâh secretly.

They faced the challenge with courage and steadfastness. All means to make them abandon their faith were of no avail. The torture they received at the hands of the pagans did not succeed in making them even say one word against their faith. Some of them were even killed under torture.

## The Quraish challenges Islam

The chiefs of the Quraish did not like the principles preached by the Prophet ﷺ because they felt that their privileges as chiefs would be lost. In the beginning, they tried their best to make the followers of Islam abandon their religion. When they could not force the believers to give up their faith, they began accusing the Prophet ﷺ of things that they themselves knew were untrue. They alleged that Muhammad ﷺ was a magician or a liar, although they themselves used to call him the trustworthy. However, all their attempts met no success. They tried to entice the Prophet ﷺ to make abandon the mission of spreading Islam. They began negotiating with the Prophet ﷺ and his uncle to reach a compromise. They told the Prophet ﷺ that they would make him a king or give him all the money he might ask for.

However, the Prophet ﷺ rejected all of their worldly proposals and continued preaching the message of Islam to all humanity. When they felt that neither oppression nor enticement could make the Prophet ﷺ accept their views, they tried to kill him but Allâh protected him against their conspiracies.

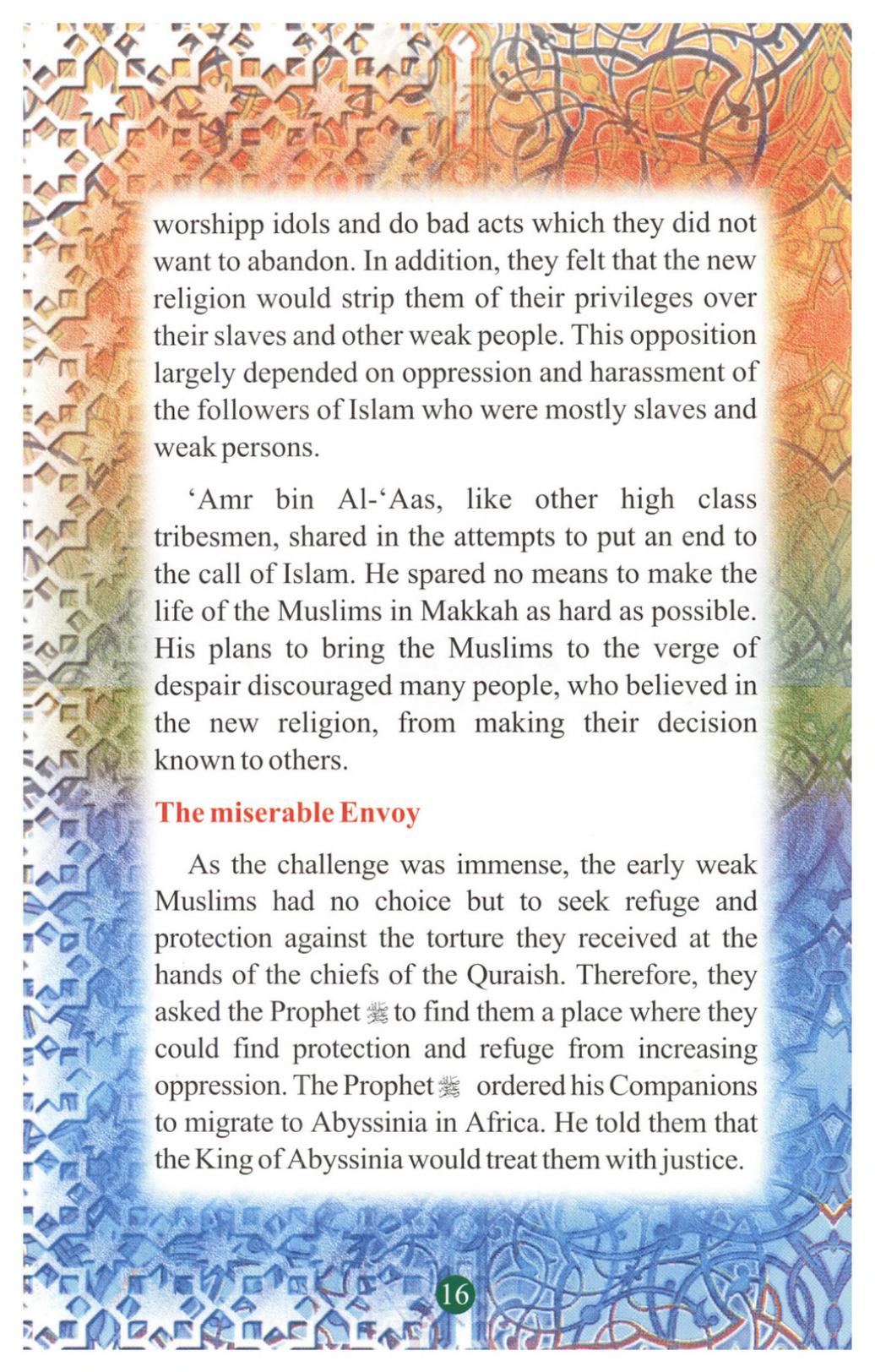
# The Most Cunning Opponent

## Background

Like other first class men, ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas was brought up in a high ranking house in Makkah. Since childhood, he showed signs of cleverness that his society highly appreciated. He was trained with his fellow youngsters on how to use his sword to defend his tribe and how to use his mind to foil the plots of enemies. He dedicated all his physical and mental powers for this end. He was known since he was a boy to be of high mental capabilities reflected in shrewd thinking and sound planning. While still young, ‘Amr established close relations with several kings and governors of lands in and out of the Arabian Peninsula. Among those kings was the Emperor of Abyssinia and other high ranking persons whom he approached in due course to achieve his goals.

## Opposition to Islam

When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was ordered to proclaim the new religion of Islam, most leaders of the Quraish opposed the new religion. They did their best and used most of their resources to kill the newborn faith while still fresh. They used to

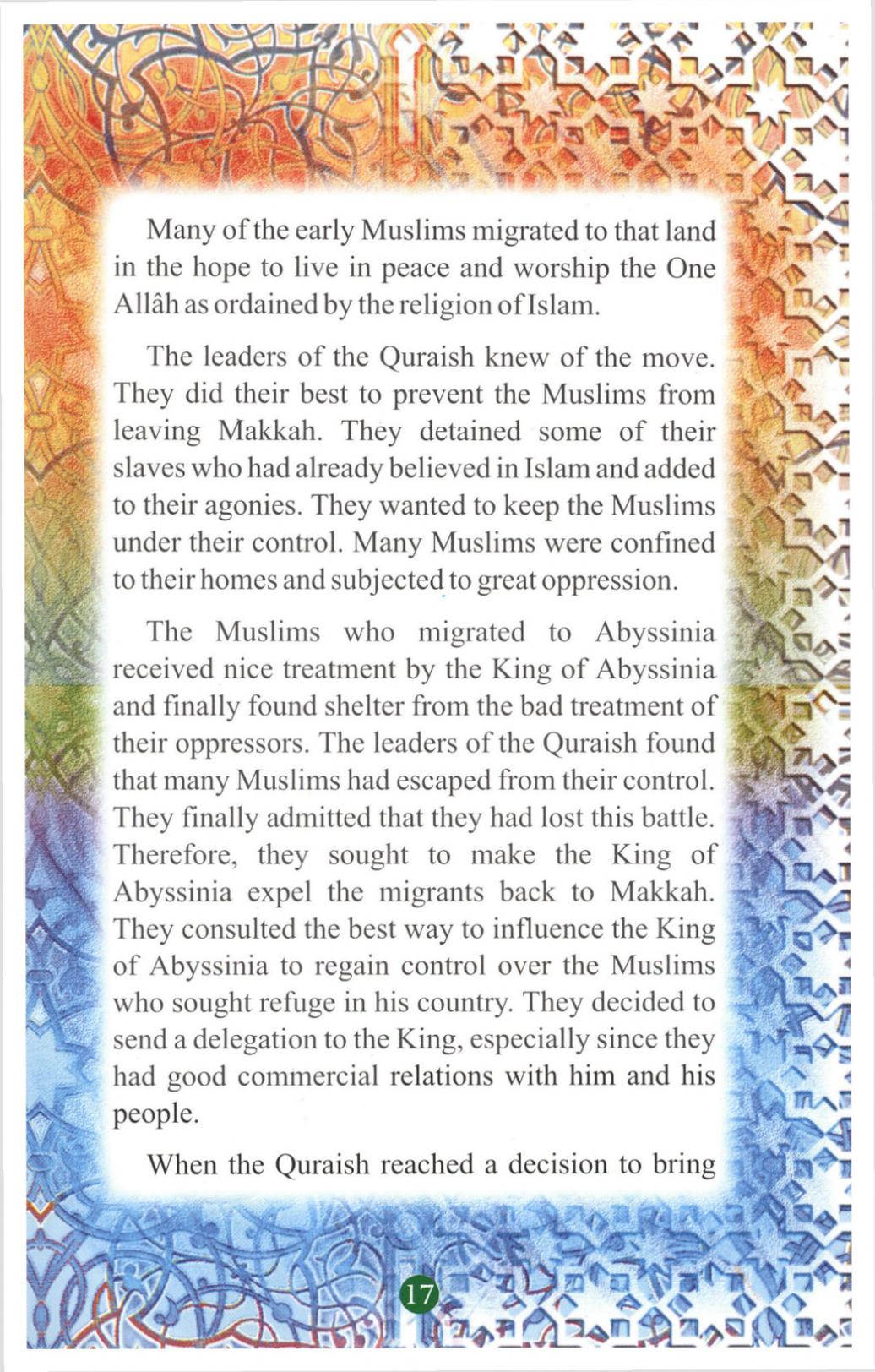


worship idols and do bad acts which they did not want to abandon. In addition, they felt that the new religion would strip them of their privileges over their slaves and other weak people. This opposition largely depended on oppression and harassment of the followers of Islam who were mostly slaves and weak persons.

‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas, like other high class tribesmen, shared in the attempts to put an end to the call of Islam. He spared no means to make the life of the Muslims in Makkah as hard as possible. His plans to bring the Muslims to the verge of despair discouraged many people, who believed in the new religion, from making their decision known to others.

### **The miserable Envoy**

As the challenge was immense, the early weak Muslims had no choice but to seek refuge and protection against the torture they received at the hands of the chiefs of the Quraish. Therefore, they asked the Prophet ﷺ to find them a place where they could find protection and refuge from increasing oppression. The Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions to migrate to Abyssinia in Africa. He told them that the King of Abyssinia would treat them with justice.

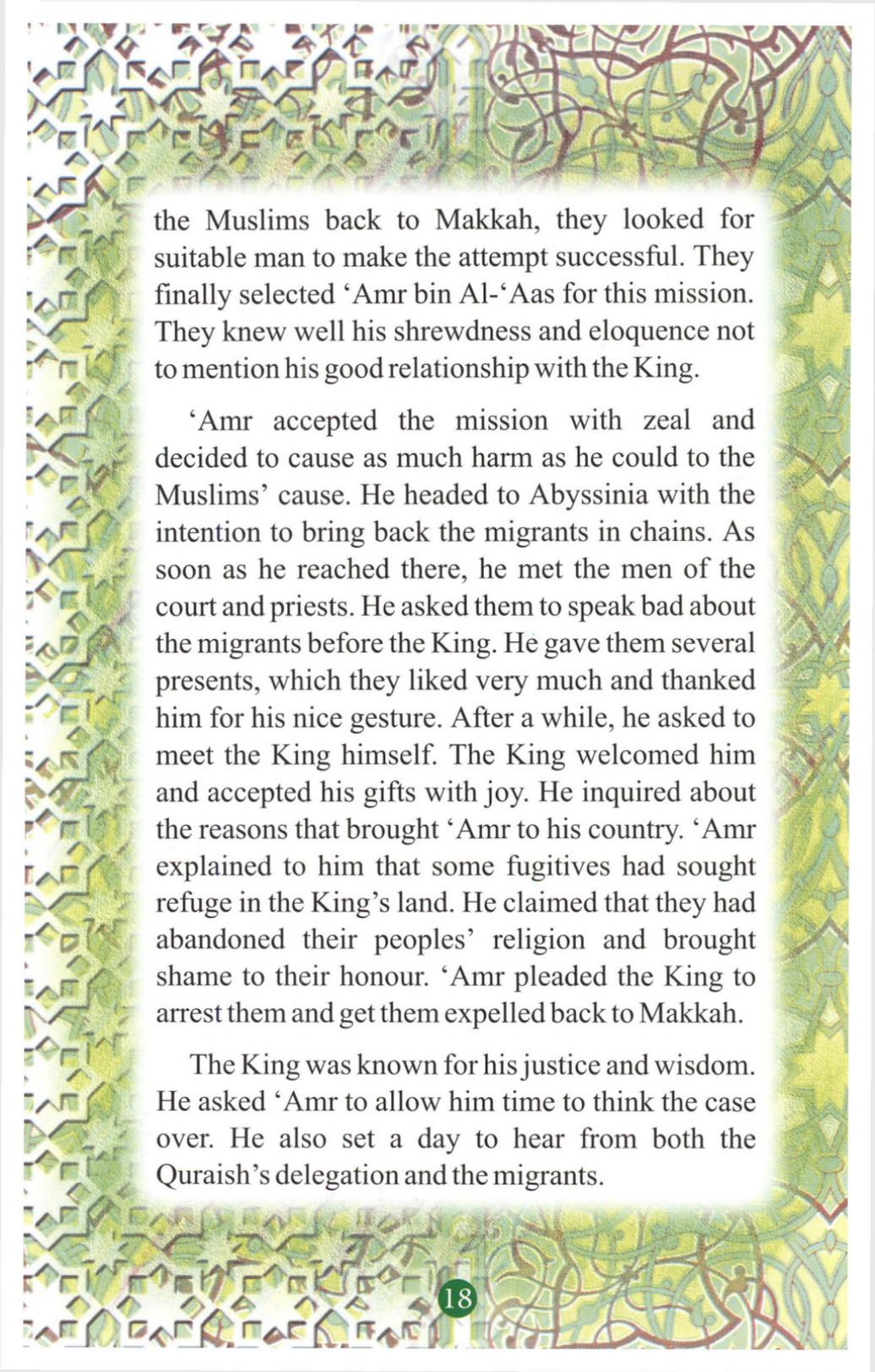


Many of the early Muslims migrated to that land in the hope to live in peace and worship the One Allâh as ordained by the religion of Islam.

The leaders of the Quraish knew of the move. They did their best to prevent the Muslims from leaving Makkah. They detained some of their slaves who had already believed in Islam and added to their agonies. They wanted to keep the Muslims under their control. Many Muslims were confined to their homes and subjected to great oppression.

The Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia received nice treatment by the King of Abyssinia and finally found shelter from the bad treatment of their oppressors. The leaders of the Quraish found that many Muslims had escaped from their control. They finally admitted that they had lost this battle. Therefore, they sought to make the King of Abyssinia expel the migrants back to Makkah. They consulted the best way to influence the King of Abyssinia to regain control over the Muslims who sought refuge in his country. They decided to send a delegation to the King, especially since they had good commercial relations with him and his people.

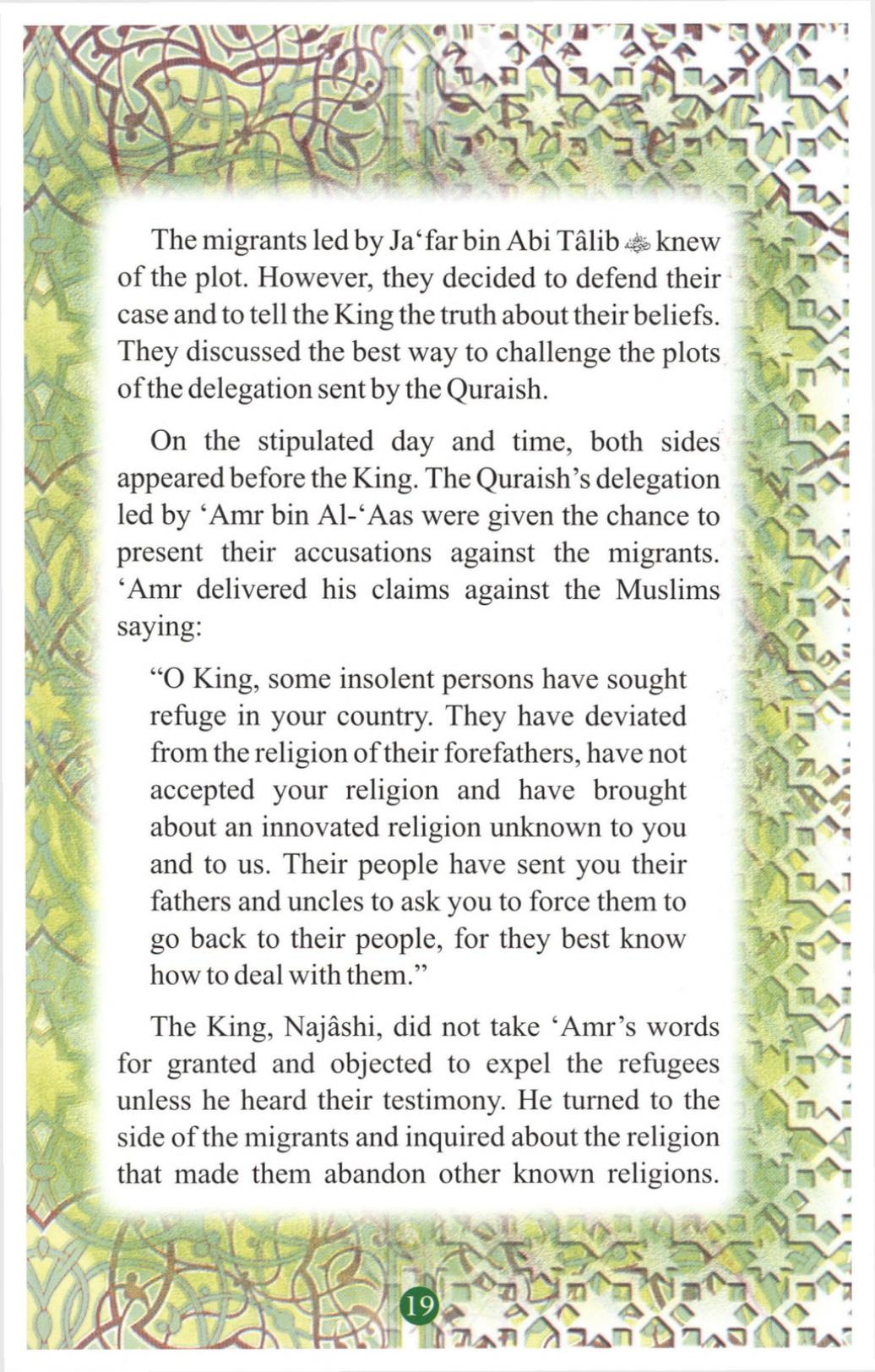
When the Quraish reached a decision to bring



the Muslims back to Makkah, they looked for suitable man to make the attempt successful. They finally selected ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas for this mission. They knew well his shrewdness and eloquence not to mention his good relationship with the King.

‘Amr accepted the mission with zeal and decided to cause as much harm as he could to the Muslims’ cause. He headed to Abyssinia with the intention to bring back the migrants in chains. As soon as he reached there, he met the men of the court and priests. He asked them to speak bad about the migrants before the King. He gave them several presents, which they liked very much and thanked him for his nice gesture. After a while, he asked to meet the King himself. The King welcomed him and accepted his gifts with joy. He inquired about the reasons that brought ‘Amr to his country. ‘Amr explained to him that some fugitives had sought refuge in the King’s land. He claimed that they had abandoned their peoples’ religion and brought shame to their honour. ‘Amr pleaded the King to arrest them and get them expelled back to Makkah.

The King was known for his justice and wisdom. He asked ‘Amr to allow him time to think the case over. He also set a day to hear from both the Quraish’s delegation and the migrants.

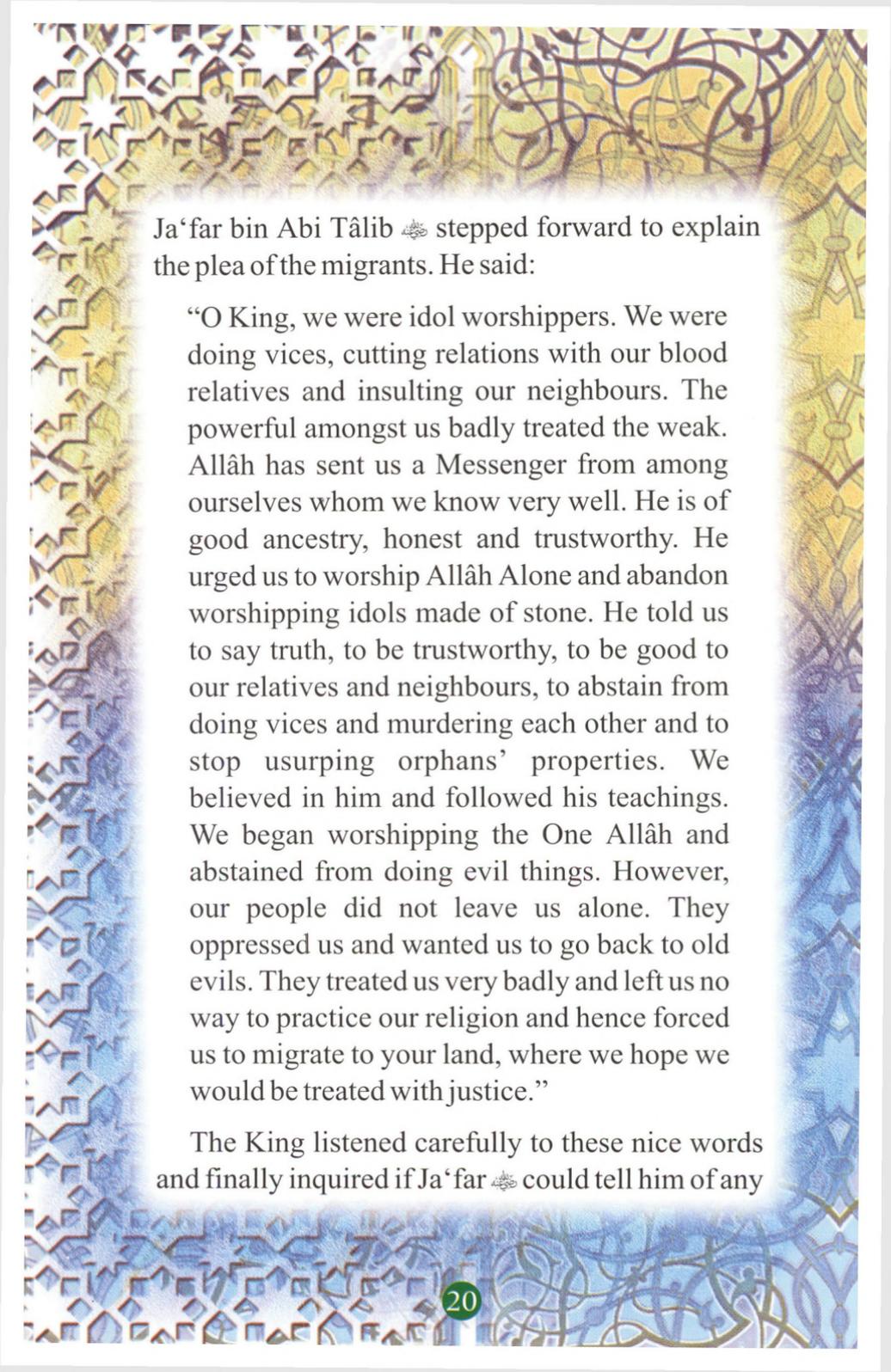


The migrants led by Ja‘far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ knew of the plot. However, they decided to defend their case and to tell the King the truth about their beliefs. They discussed the best way to challenge the plots of the delegation sent by the Quraish.

On the stipulated day and time, both sides appeared before the King. The Quraish’s delegation led by ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas were given the chance to present their accusations against the migrants. ‘Amr delivered his claims against the Muslims saying:

“O King, some insolent persons have sought refuge in your country. They have deviated from the religion of their forefathers, have not accepted your religion and have brought about an innovated religion unknown to you and to us. Their people have sent you their fathers and uncles to ask you to force them to go back to their people, for they best know how to deal with them.”

The King, Najâshi, did not take ‘Amr’s words for granted and objected to expel the refugees unless he heard their testimony. He turned to the side of the migrants and inquired about the religion that made them abandon other known religions.



Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ stepped forward to explain the plea of the migrants. He said:

“O King, we were idol worshippers. We were doing vices, cutting relations with our blood relatives and insulting our neighbours. The powerful amongst us badly treated the weak. Allâh has sent us a Messenger from among ourselves whom we know very well. He is of good ancestry, honest and trustworthy. He urged us to worship Allâh Alone and abandon worshipping idols made of stone. He told us to say truth, to be trustworthy, to be good to our relatives and neighbours, to abstain from doing vices and murdering each other and to stop usurping orphans’ properties. We believed in him and followed his teachings. We began worshipping the One Allâh and abstained from doing evil things. However, our people did not leave us alone. They oppressed us and wanted us to go back to old evils. They treated us very badly and left us no way to practice our religion and hence forced us to migrate to your land, where we hope we would be treated with justice.”

The King listened carefully to these nice words and finally inquired if Ja'far ﷺ could tell him of any

revelations sent down by Allâh to their Prophet ﷺ. Ja'far ؑ immediately started reciting some Verses of the Noble Qur'ân.

Upon hearing a few Verses, the King's tears ran down his beard and even the monks shared in this highly spiritual moment. He addressed the Quraish's delegation saying:

“You know that these words and those revealed unto Jesus come from one source. Go back to your people for I will never surrender these people to you.”

### **Insisting on harming the Muslims**

‘Amr felt very angry to lose this round against the Muslims. He felt that his plot was failed. However, he started considering another way to seed doubt in the heart of the King about the beliefs of the migrants.

On the next day, he requested to meet the King again. He told him that the migrants said something bad about Jesus Christ. The King again ordered for the migrants to be brought before him to hear from them.

The migrants thought that the King had changed his mind and that he would surrender them to the

delegation of the Quraish.

The migrants gathered and appeared before the King. Najâshi asked Ja‘far ﷺ about the things they said about Jesus. He immediately replied that the Noble Qur’ân told them that Jesus was Allâh’s servant, His word and spirit given to Maryam. The King then asked if Ja‘far could prove his statement. Ja‘far immediately began reciting some of the Verses of the Qur’ân from *Sûrah Maryam* describing Jesus Christ and how he was born.

As Ja‘far ﷺ completed reciting the Verses of the Qur’ân, the King said:

“By Allâh, what we have about Jesus is exactly the same these people have. These are the things Jesus himself said about himself.”

He addressed the Muslims saying:

“You will be safe in my land as long as I am alive. Whoever causes harm to you, he would surely be a loser. Had I have been given a mount of gold to cause harm to you, I would have rejected it.”

He again turned toward the Quraish’s delegation and told them that he would not accept their gifts for he would not accept any bribe against the Muslims.

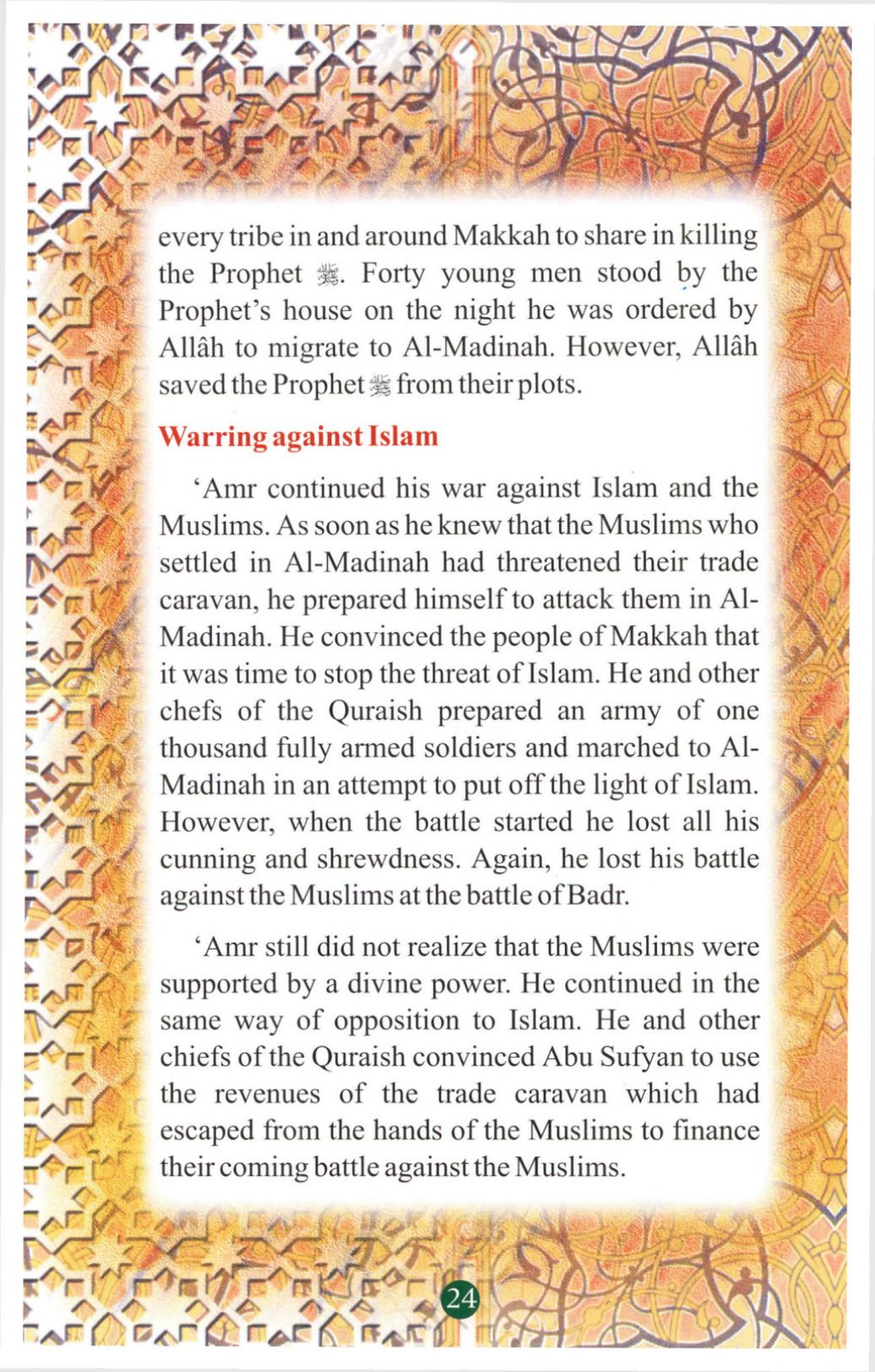
At this moment, ‘Amr realized for the first time that his shrewdness was of no avail. It was Allâh who protected the migrants against his plots. He surely felt inside himself that something unusual made the migrants win this battle against him and the Quraish.

‘Amr returned to Makkah disappointed. He and other chiefs of the Quraish thought of another trick to make the migrants come back to Makkah by themselves. The Quraish spread rumors that they had made an agreement with Muhammad ﷺ and that no more oppression would be inflicted on the Muslims.

Some of the migrants believed the rumors and came back to Makkah. These Muslims were caught by the Quraish and subjected to more torture. Other Muslims fled again to Abyssinia and stayed there until the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions migrated to Al-Madinah.

### **Still living in Darkness**

‘Amr continued his fighting against the Muslims and used all means to undermine the new Faith. He and other chiefs of the Quraish tried to prevent the Muslims from migrating to Al-Madinah. Even after many of the Muslims had migrated to Al-Madinah, the bitter enemies of Islam plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ. They agreed to have one person from



every tribe in and around Makkah to share in killing the Prophet ﷺ. Forty young men stood by the Prophet's house on the night he was ordered by Allâh to migrate to Al-Madinah. However, Allâh saved the Prophet ﷺ from their plots.

### **Warring against Islam**

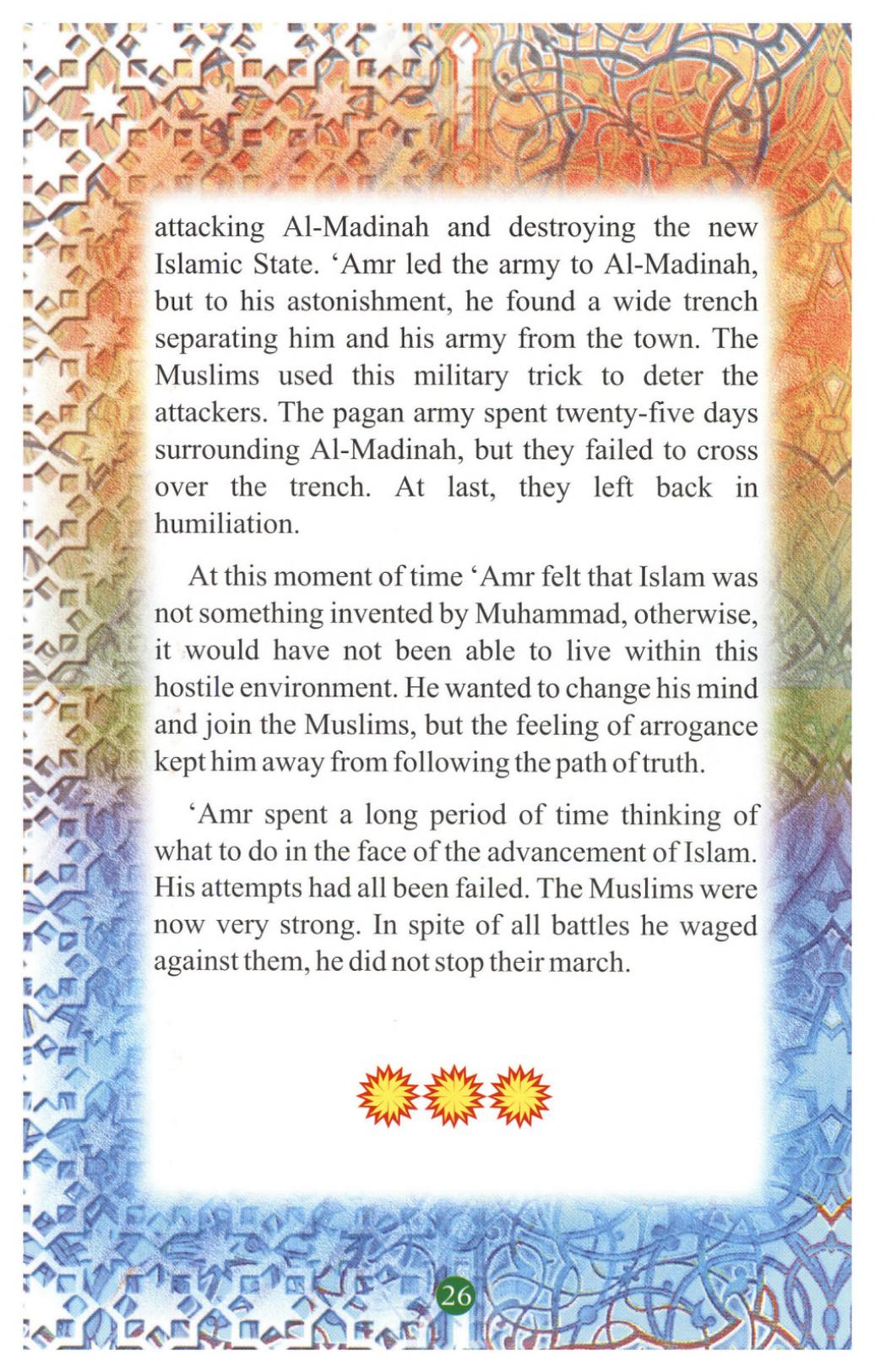
‘Amr continued his war against Islam and the Muslims. As soon as he knew that the Muslims who settled in Al-Madinah had threatened their trade caravan, he prepared himself to attack them in Al-Madinah. He convinced the people of Makkah that it was time to stop the threat of Islam. He and other chiefs of the Quraish prepared an army of one thousand fully armed soldiers and marched to Al-Madinah in an attempt to put off the light of Islam. However, when the battle started he lost all his cunning and shrewdness. Again, he lost his battle against the Muslims at the battle of Badr.

‘Amr still did not realize that the Muslims were supported by a divine power. He continued in the same way of opposition to Islam. He and other chiefs of the Quraish convinced Abu Sufyan to use the revenues of the trade caravan which had escaped from the hands of the Muslims to finance their coming battle against the Muslims.

## More and more challenges to Islam

‘Amr and other chiefs of the Quraish gathered an army of three thousand soldiers and marched to Al-Madinah. They thought that they would revenge themselves against the Muslims and put an end to the message of Islam. Even women participated in the march. ‘Amr and other horsemen of the Quraish led the army near to Al-Madinah. In spite of their little number compared to the army of the Quraish, the Muslims defeated their enemy in the beginning of the battle. However, the archers whom the Prophet ﷺ positioned over a small hill behind the Muslim army to protect their backs came down and joined the other members of the army in collecting war booty. ‘Amr and Khalid bin Al-Waleed turned from behind the Muslim army and attacked them. Although they defeated the Muslims in this battle, their aims to destroy Islam did not succeed.

As ‘Amr returned to Makkah, he began preparing for another battle against the Muslims. He used his shrewdness to convince most of the Arab tribes in Arabia to join the Quraish in their final battle against the Muslims. Even the Jews, who were closer to the Muslims in belief than to pagans, shared in the efforts to gather a huge army of ten thousand soldiers. They were intent on



attacking Al-Madinah and destroying the new Islamic State. ‘Amr led the army to Al-Madinah, but to his astonishment, he found a wide trench separating him and his army from the town. The Muslims used this military trick to deter the attackers. The pagan army spent twenty-five days surrounding Al-Madinah, but they failed to cross over the trench. At last, they left back in humiliation.

At this moment of time ‘Amr felt that Islam was not something invented by Muhammad, otherwise, it would have not been able to live within this hostile environment. He wanted to change his mind and join the Muslims, but the feeling of arrogance kept him away from following the path of truth.

‘Amr spent a long period of time thinking of what to do in the face of the advancement of Islam. His attempts had all been failed. The Muslims were now very strong. In spite of all battles he waged against them, he did not stop their march.



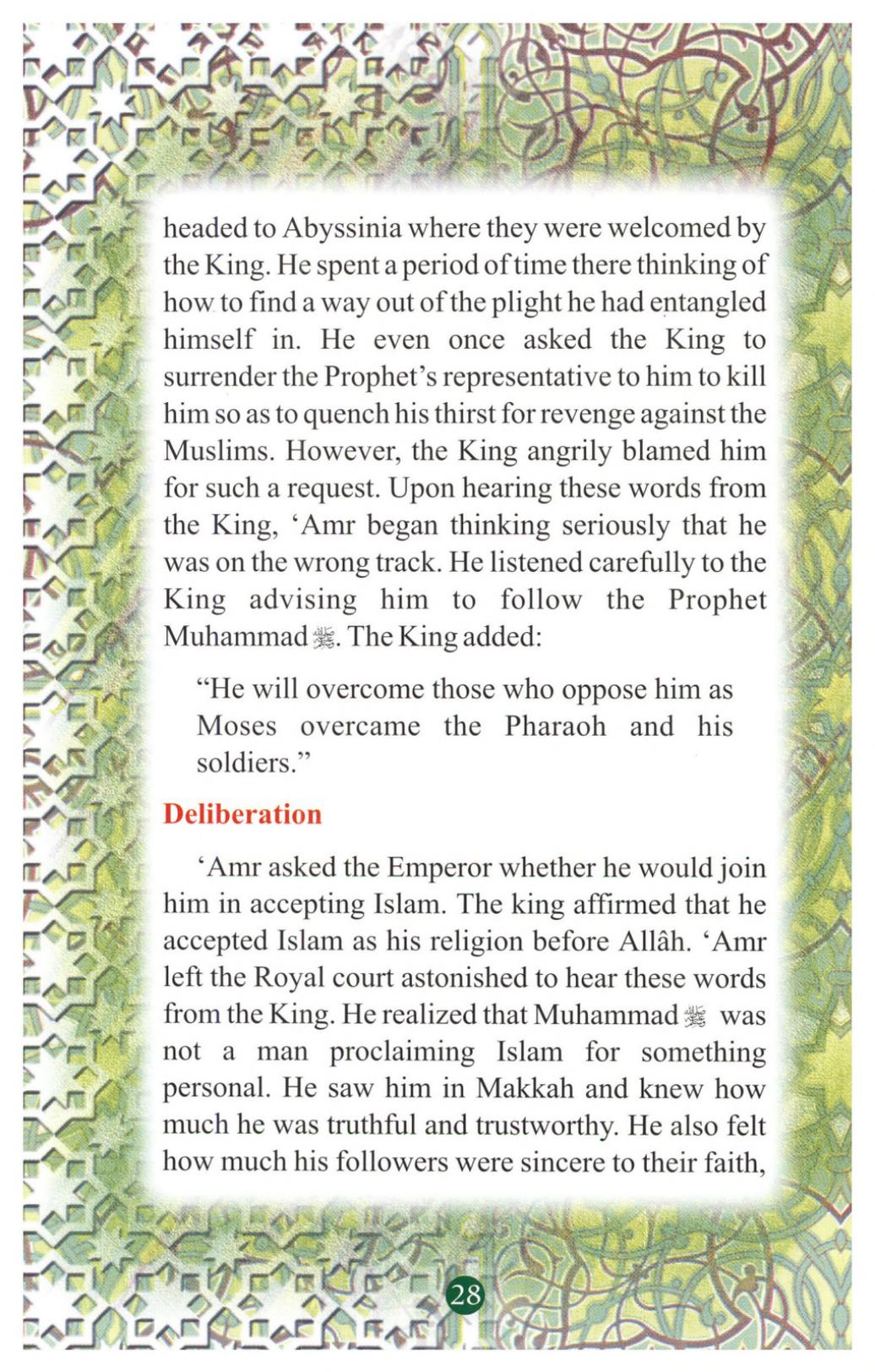
## **A Pause before Submission**

In spite of the fact that ‘Amr had been a hard opponent of Islam, he should have thought once that all his efforts to undermine the new religion had ended in vain. He should have mediated how could such a small group of weak and oppressed people overcome the challenge of the Quraish and other Arabs had it not been for something divine supporting them. However, ‘Amr was still doubting the truthfulness of the new faith, for he was brought up among the leaders of the Quraish who found their status and power weakened by the message of Islam.

### **The plotter himself seeking Refuge**

Upon returning defeated to Makkah after ending the siege against Al-Madinah, ‘Amr was fully sure that the new religion would finally triumph over all other opponents. Hence, he decided to seek refuge before he was caught by Muhammad ﷺ and his followers. He suggested to a group of his friends to leave to Abyssinia where his friend, the King, might provide protection to him until the battle with Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions was over.

‘Amr and his friends collected some gifts and

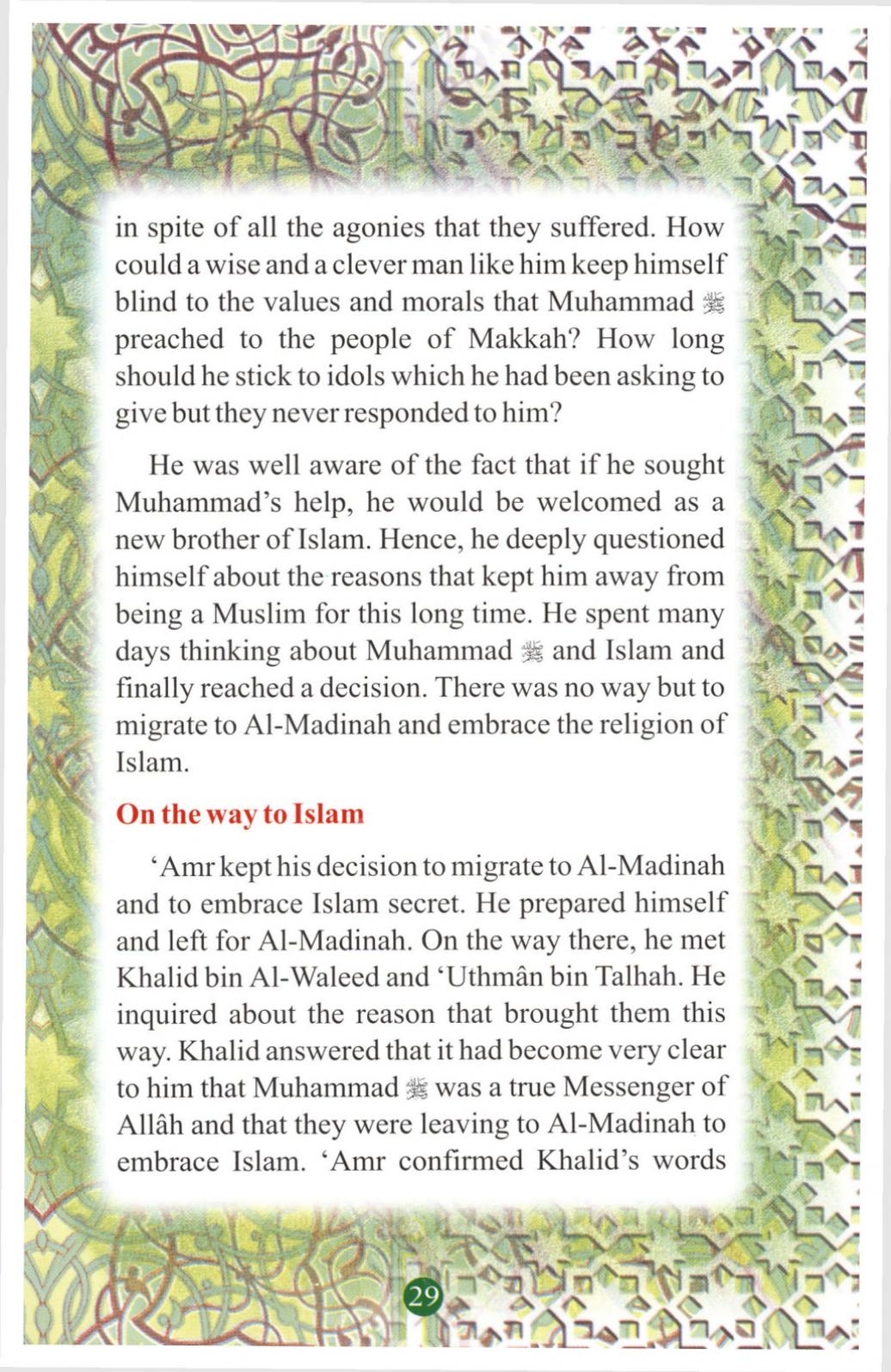


headed to Abyssinia where they were welcomed by the King. He spent a period of time there thinking of how to find a way out of the plight he had entangled himself in. He even once asked the King to surrender the Prophet's representative to him to kill him so as to quench his thirst for revenge against the Muslims. However, the King angrily blamed him for such a request. Upon hearing these words from the King, 'Amr began thinking seriously that he was on the wrong track. He listened carefully to the King advising him to follow the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The King added:

“He will overcome those who oppose him as Moses overcame the Pharaoh and his soldiers.”

### **Deliberation**

‘Amr asked the Emperor whether he would join him in accepting Islam. The king affirmed that he accepted Islam as his religion before Allâh. ‘Amr left the Royal court astonished to hear these words from the King. He realized that Muhammad ﷺ was not a man proclaiming Islam for something personal. He saw him in Makkah and knew how much he was truthful and trustworthy. He also felt how much his followers were sincere to their faith,

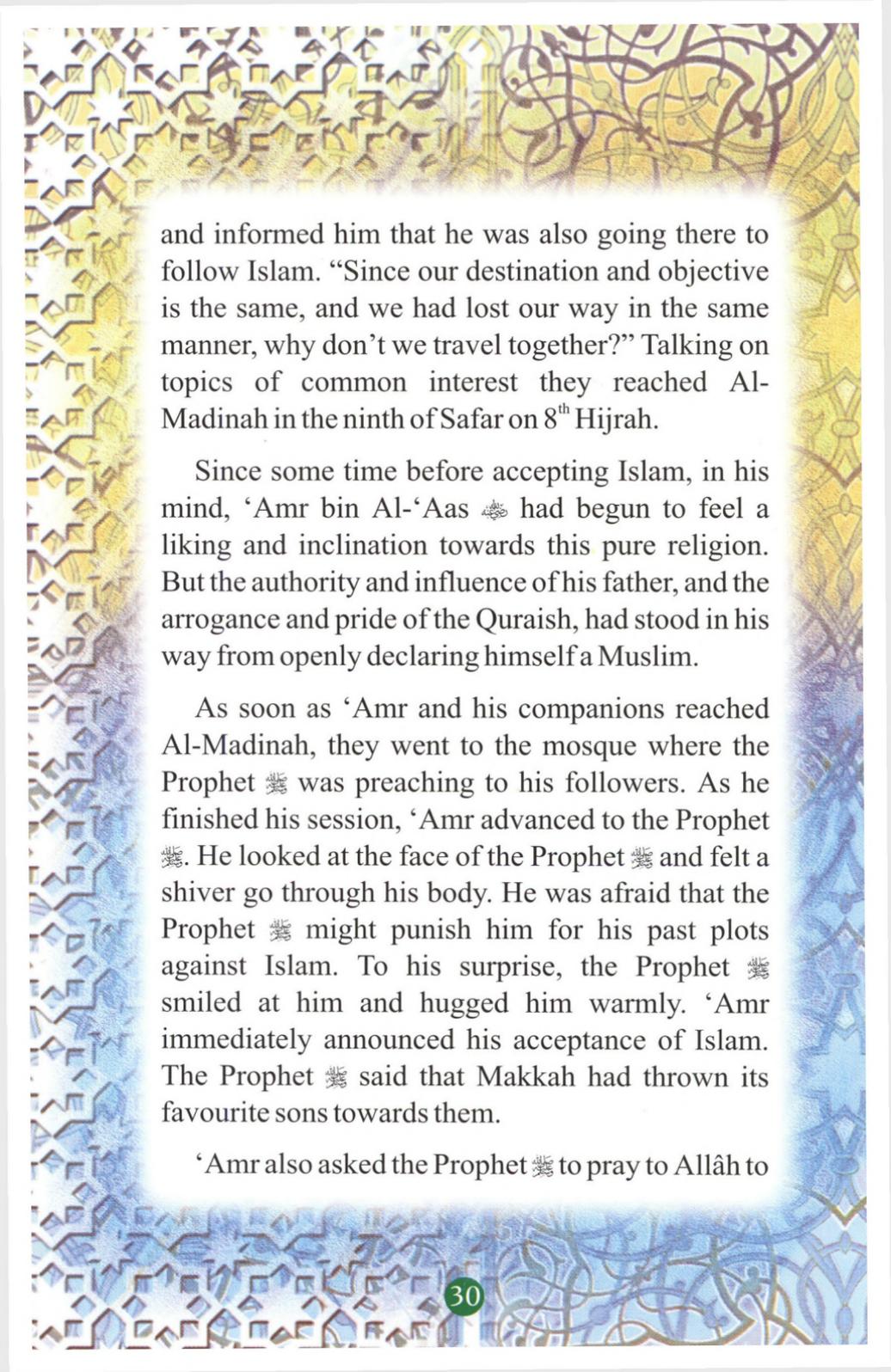


in spite of all the agonies that they suffered. How could a wise and a clever man like him keep himself blind to the values and morals that Muhammad ﷺ preached to the people of Makkah? How long should he stick to idols which he had been asking to give but they never responded to him?

He was well aware of the fact that if he sought Muhammad's help, he would be welcomed as a new brother of Islam. Hence, he deeply questioned himself about the reasons that kept him away from being a Muslim for this long time. He spent many days thinking about Muhammad ﷺ and Islam and finally reached a decision. There was no way but to migrate to Al-Madinah and embrace the religion of Islam.

### **On the way to Islam**

'Amr kept his decision to migrate to Al-Madinah and to embrace Islam secret. He prepared himself and left for Al-Madinah. On the way there, he met Khalid bin Al-Waleed and 'Uthmân bin Talhah. He inquired about the reason that brought them this way. Khalid answered that it had become very clear to him that Muhammad ﷺ was a true Messenger of Allâh and that they were leaving to Al-Madinah to embrace Islam. 'Amr confirmed Khalid's words



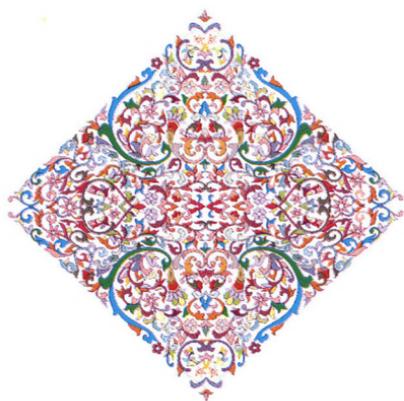
and informed him that he was also going there to follow Islam. “Since our destination and objective is the same, and we had lost our way in the same manner, why don’t we travel together?” Talking on topics of common interest they reached Al-Madinah in the ninth of Safar on 8<sup>th</sup> Hijrah.

Since some time before accepting Islam, in his mind, ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas ﷺ had begun to feel a liking and inclination towards this pure religion. But the authority and influence of his father, and the arrogance and pride of the Quraish, had stood in his way from openly declaring himself a Muslim.

As soon as ‘Amr and his companions reached Al-Madinah, they went to the mosque where the Prophet ﷺ was preaching to his followers. As he finished his session, ‘Amr advanced to the Prophet ﷺ. He looked at the face of the Prophet ﷺ and felt a shiver go through his body. He was afraid that the Prophet ﷺ might punish him for his past plots against Islam. To his surprise, the Prophet ﷺ smiled at him and hugged him warmly. ‘Amr immediately announced his acceptance of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said that Makkah had thrown its favourite sons towards them.

‘Amr also asked the Prophet ﷺ to pray to Allâh to

forgive him his past sins. The Prophet ﷺ replied that whenever one becomes a Muslim all his past sins would be forgiven. The Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions to welcome the new Muslim and teach him how to pray. He also asked them to provide all means of help to the new comer. 'Amr's heart was filled with love of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions for their attitude toward him. He understood well that they were not struggling for worldly things, rather their aims were to bring all human beings under the merciful umbrella of Islam.



## ‘Amr the Muslim

From the day ‘Amr accepted Islam, his mission had changed from fighting against Islam to fighting for the sake of Islam. He remained by the side of the Prophet ﷺ supporting the message of Islam and spared no effort to make it victorious.

### The Muslim Leader

In the eighth year after the migration to Al-Madinah, there were still some clans around Al-Madinah who caused some harm to the Muslims. Now and then, their men attacked the suburbs of Al-Madinah and robbed some camels and killed some Muslims. Other tribes also held pacts with the Romans to weaken the march of Islam toward the northern parts of the Arabian Peninsula.

‘Amr ﷺ knew very well the locations of these tribes. He also knew how to stop their threats to the Muslims.

The Prophet ﷺ selected ‘Amr ﷺ to lead a small army to subdue the Arab tribes who tried to cause harm to the Muslims. He could punish these tribes and stop their efforts to harm the Muslims. ‘Amr ﷺ also led several Muslim brigades throughout

Arabia. He successfully undermined the plans of enemies and put an end to their plots against the Muslims.

### **The conquest of Makkah**

‘Amr ؓ was a witness to the peace treaty that the Prophet ﷺ concluded with the Quraish at Al-Hudaibiyah. At that moment he was at the side of the pagans. However, the pagans failed to respect the treaty. They attacked the Muslims and killed some forty men and women.

The Prophet ﷺ had no choice but to retaliate. It was time to put an end to idolatry in the Arabian Peninsula and to spread the light of Islam in the centre of Arabia.

On the day when the Prophet ﷺ headed to Makkah to conquer the capital of the Quraish, ‘Amr ؓ was at his side. He thought that the Prophet ﷺ would avenge himself against the chiefs of the Quraish. However he forgot how merciful the Prophet ﷺ was to him. He witnessed how much the Prophet ﷺ was merciful to those who did their best to stop his call to Islam. As soon as the Prophet ﷺ finished his job in Makkah, he ordered ‘Amr ؓ to destroy Suwa’, an idol worshipped by a mighty Arab tribe named Huzail. ‘Amr ؓ did the job

successfully and convinced the people there to embrace Islam.

The tribe of Hawazin near Makkah collected a huge army and prepared themselves to fight the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ led the Muslims to deter Hawazin. The two armies met at a place called Hunain. ‘Amr ؓ fought along with the Muslims. He was astonished to see the Muslims flee from the battlefield. Only a few Muslims including the Prophet ﷺ held fast to their positions. They fled because they said that from now on they would never be conquered. The Prophet ﷺ called them to return to their positions and the Muslims finally won the battle.

‘Amr ؓ also shared with the Prophet ﷺ in the excursion to Tabuk to deter the Romans and their allies who were threatening to attack the Muslims. He and his fellow Muslims did their best to raise the Word of Allâh high at the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula.

The Prophet ﷺ was well aware of ‘Amr’s skills of management. He appointed him as governor of Oman. ‘Amr ؓ established peace and justice in that land within a short period. He kept there until he received news that the Prophet ﷺ had passed away.

He returned to Al-Madinah to face the dilemmas that the Muslims were entangled in after the death of the Prophet ﷺ.

A surge of apostasy began spreading throughout the Arabian Peninsula. ‘Amr ؓ was selected by Abu Bakr ؓ as one of the army leaders to fight against the apostates. He was directed to fight a tribe called Quda‘a in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula. He undermined apostasy there and re-established the rule of Islam.

After a while, ‘Amr ؓ was commissioned by Abu Bakr ؓ to fight the Romans in Palestine. He led an army of three thousand soldiers and was paid farewell by Abu Bakr ؓ himself who advised him to follow the principles of Islam in his effort. He said to him:

“Be self-restrained both in privacy and in public. Allâh sees everything you do. You see that I have given you priority over other senior Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, so try to work for the Hereafter and for Allâh’s sake. Care for the soldiers you lead and never make their secrets public. Be serious in your endeavours and be truthful when you meet your enemy. Do not permit any kind of deceit

and punish those who deceive the Muslims.”

‘Amr رضي الله عنه led the army northward. He encouraged his soldiers to be loyal to their faith and to fight their enemy as true Muslims.

‘Amr رضي الله عنه also participated as a leader of the right wing of the army in the battle of Yarmouk against the Romans and he conquered Syria with his fellow Muslims under the leadership of his friends Khalid bin Al-Waleed and Abu ‘Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنهما. He dedicated most of his time for fighting evil everywhere and bringing peace and justice to every land he treaded.

## The Conqueror of Egypt

‘Amr ؓ continued his struggle for the sake of spreading the Word of Allâh under the rule of Abu Bakr ؓ. He spared no time for rest or pleasure.

Under the rule of ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ, ‘Amr ؓ was highly interested in conquering Egypt. So, he encouraged ‘Umar ؓ to do so and requested him to allow him to march there, for he had known the land well before Islam when he was a trader. ‘Umar ؓ permitted him to conquer Egypt and sent an army of four thousand fighters under his command. He paid him farewell with the following words:

“March under the blessing of Allâh. I will pray to Allâh to make my choice rightful and I will inform you of my final decision. If you receive orders from me to divert attention from Egypt before you go into the land, do as I order you. However, if you receive no orders as such go on with the support and help of Allâh.”

‘Amr ؓ marched to Egypt until he reached

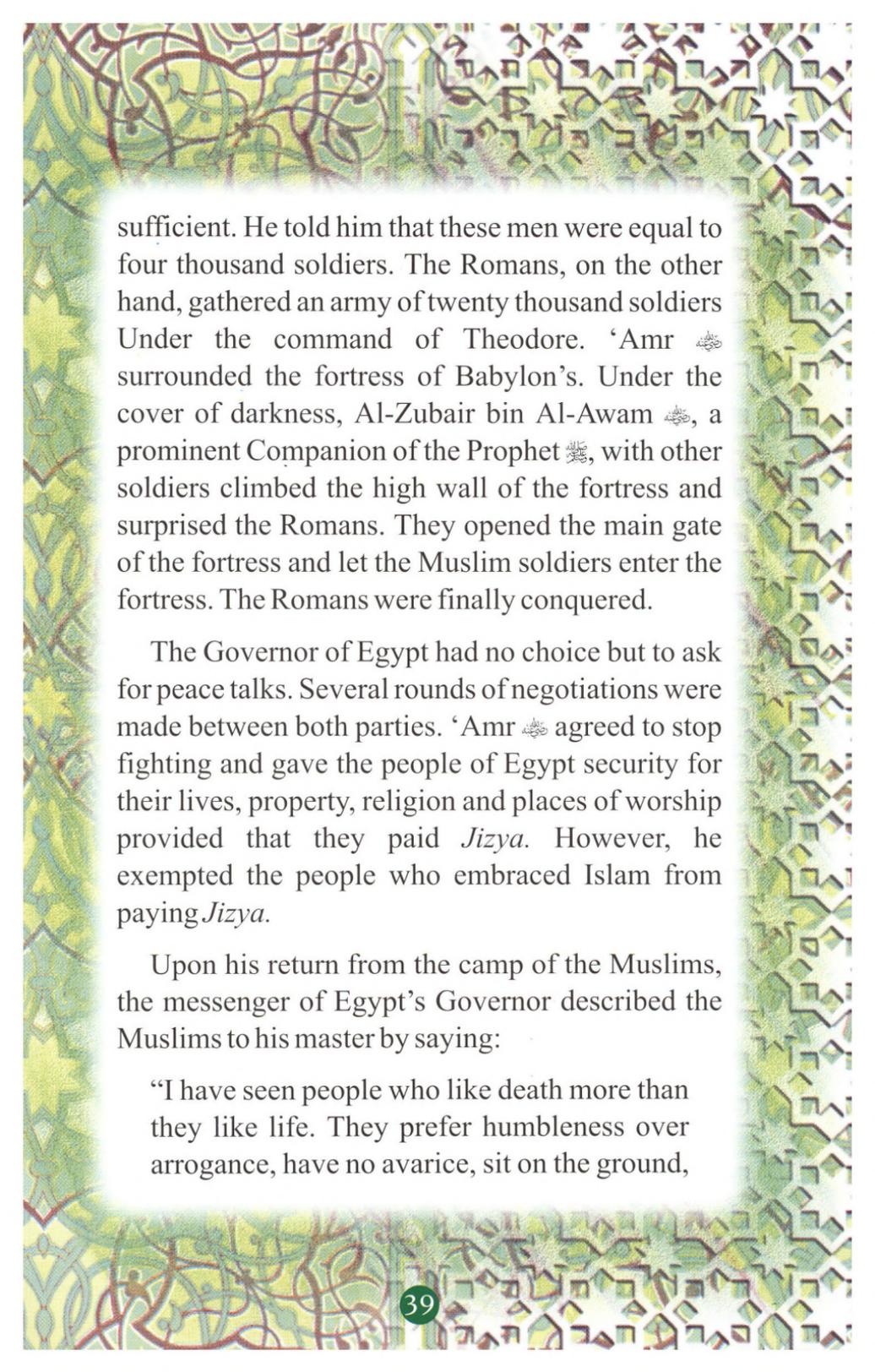
Farma at the side of Syria. He surrounded the town for one month until he conquered it. He went on with his army until he reached Qantara, Salihiya and Balbees and conquered all these towns easily.

When he conquered Balbees, he caught there the daughter of the governor of Egypt. He treated her nicely and dispatched her to her father. This act had a great effect on the governor and his people. They admired the morals of the Muslims, welcomed them and provided them with support and assistance against the Romans.

‘Amr ؓ marched toward ‘Ain Shams where he lured the Romans to an open battle away from their fortresses. The Muslims fought a big battle against the Romans and finally defeated them. The remaining Roman army sought shelter in Babylon’s fortress and Fayoum. So, ‘Amr ؓ continued his march, crossed the river Nile and conquered Fayoum.

### **A well done Job**

‘Amr ؓ wrote to ‘Umar ؓ about the conquest that the Muslim army had achieved and asked him to send him more soldiers to complete his mission. ‘Umar ؓ sent him four men and told him that those four great Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were



sufficient. He told him that these men were equal to four thousand soldiers. The Romans, on the other hand, gathered an army of twenty thousand soldiers Under the command of Theodore. ‘Amr ﷺ surrounded the fortress of Babylon’s. Under the cover of darkness, Al-Zubair bin Al-Awam ﷺ, a prominent Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, with other soldiers climbed the high wall of the fortress and surprised the Romans. They opened the main gate of the fortress and let the Muslim soldiers enter the fortress. The Romans were finally conquered.

The Governor of Egypt had no choice but to ask for peace talks. Several rounds of negotiations were made between both parties. ‘Amr ﷺ agreed to stop fighting and gave the people of Egypt security for their lives, property, religion and places of worship provided that they paid *Jizya*. However, he exempted the people who embraced Islam from paying *Jizya*.

Upon his return from the camp of the Muslims, the messenger of Egypt’s Governor described the Muslims to his master by saying:

“I have seen people who like death more than they like life. They prefer humbleness over arrogance, have no avarice, sit on the ground,

both rulers and subjects, so that you cannot distinguish higher class from the lower class individuals and when it is time for prayer, no one of them stays behind.”

Hence, ‘Amr رضي الله عنه conquered Egypt in a short time and established Al-Fustât (an ancient Islamic city south of present day Cairo) as his base of rule. He continued his mission by marching to Alexandria and Dumyat and conquered both cities. He expelled the Romans, who treated the people of Egypt unjustly, out of Egypt forever.

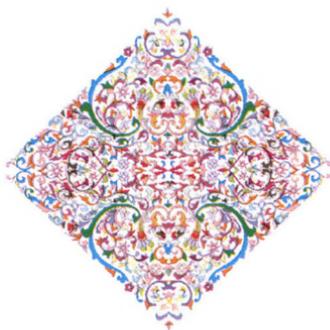
‘Amr رضي الله عنه established justice and equality among the people of Egypt and treated them kindly. These acts made most of the people of Egypt accept Islam and help the Muslims against the Romans. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه the Caliph, order ‘Amr to rule Egypt and to be kind to the people of the country.

‘Amr did his best to develop the country and the life of the people. He built new cities, dug new streams and developed agriculture. He paved many roads and built many mosques to spread light of Islam in the country. The Muslims armies marched from Egypt in future days and conquered all the northern parts of Africa. Since he considered wealth to be a blessing from Allâh. He loved good

food and good clothes.

‘Amr ﷺ wrote to ‘Umar ﷺ describing the land of Egypt:

“Some parts of Egypt are deserts and some other parts are covered with trees. It is divided by a blessed river that floods the land to irrigate all kinds of plants. When the flood comes, people use light boats to cross from one village to another. When the land is planted, you would see many shades and shadows. It is a blessed land.”



## The Governor

‘Amr ﷺ settled in Egypt and adopted a policy of justice and equality among all people based on the principles of Islam. He also applied the principles of Islam to all people of Egypt on an equal basis. The Romans were not interested in developing the country or helping the Egyptians to lead an easy life. In fact, they were enslaving the Egyptians. ‘Amr ﷺ ordered engineers, craftsmen and other professionals to help develop the country, especially roads, farms and water canals.

Once the Egyptians came to him and told him that they used to sacrifice a beautiful girl for the Nile river so that it may flood their lands which needed such a flooding. ‘Amr ﷺ wrote to ‘Umar ﷺ about this matter.

He told him that the Egyptians rely in their life on such floods. He received Umar’s reply as follows:

“In the Name of Allâh,  
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

From the servant of Allâh, ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab, to the Nile of Egypt.

If you are flooding by your own will, we have no need for you; but if you are flooding by the Will of Allâh, do it in the Name of Allâh.”

‘Umar ﷺ ordered ‘Amr ﷺ to throw the paper in the river Nile. During that very night, the Nile flooded twice the level of previous floods. The people of Egypt were very happy to save their daughters from being drowned in the river.

Sometimes sons of rulers abuse the power given to their fathers. On one occasion, one of ‘Amr’s sons was racing with another Egyptian young man. It happened that the Egyptian won the race. ‘Amr’s son became very angry and whipped the Egyptian. The Egyptian man complained to ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab ﷺ. He immediately ordered for ‘Amr ﷺ and his son to appear before him. Upon arriving at ‘Umar’s place, He asked the Egyptian to whip ‘Amr’s son. The Egyptian could not believe his ears. However, he whipped ‘Amr’s son. ‘Umar ﷺ asked the Egyptian to whip ‘Amr’s head because his son had insulted the Egyptian by relying on the power of his father. However, the Egyptian told ‘Umar ﷺ that he was satisfied. ‘Umar told ‘Amr ﷺ some words which are still remembered today as a basis of freedom and equality among human

beings. He said:

“Since when did you enslave people while they were born free?”

‘Amr رضي الله عنه did not object to such a treatment because he knew that a Muslim should submit to the rules of Islam even though he was a governor.

‘Amr رضي الله عنه made the life of the Egyptian peasants easy. He gave them the land that the Roman landlords exploited for hundreds of years. He also paved many roads and built several bridges for caravans. He also cut a canal between the Nile river and the Red Sea to enable ships to carry crops to the Arabian Peninsula.

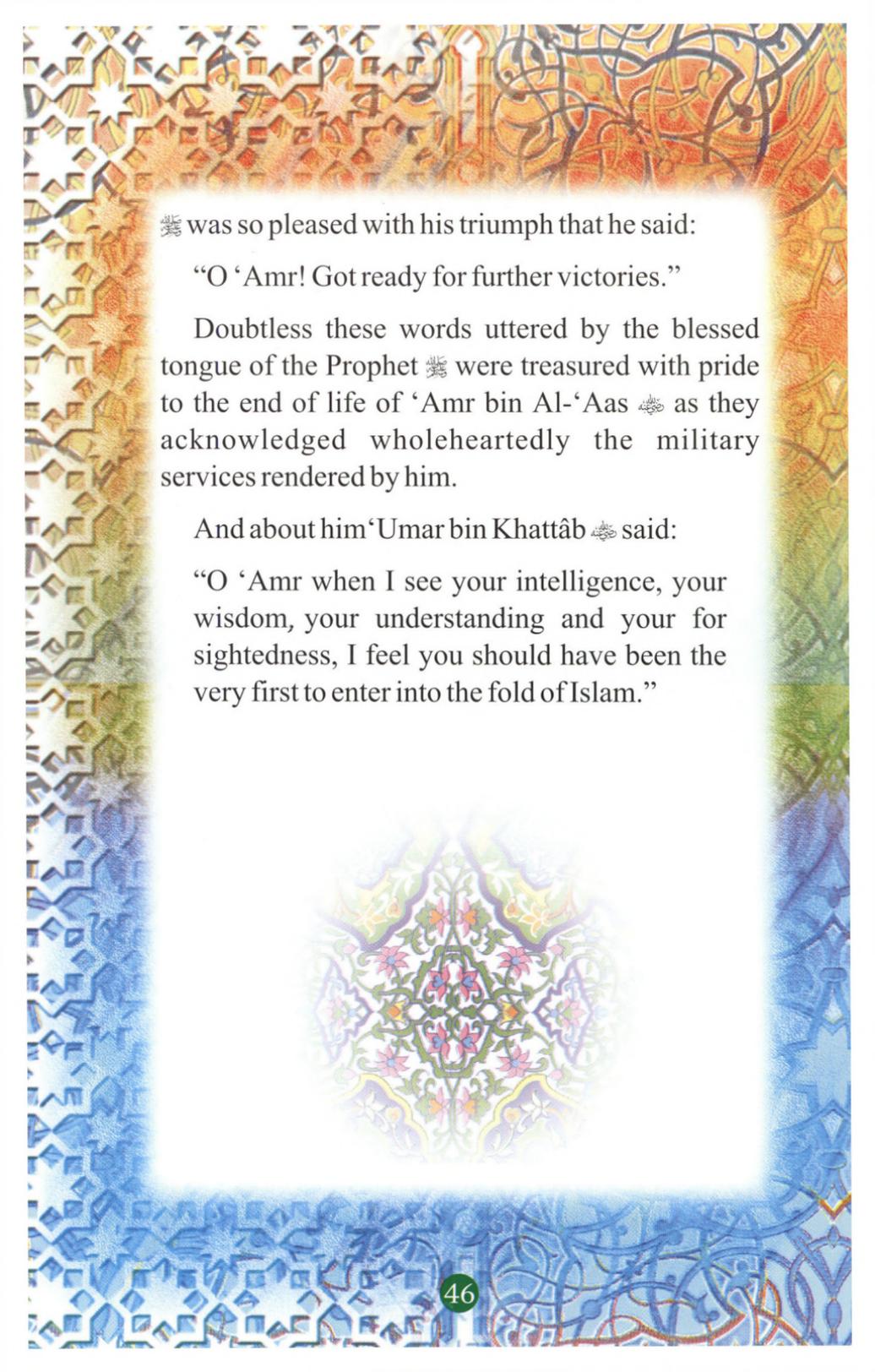
He kept his position as the ruler of Egypt during the rule of ‘Umar and ‘Uthman رضي الله عنهما. He was a man of skill and intellect through which he made the land of Egypt support the other Muslims lands during hard dry years.



## The Shrewd

Daring, fearless, resolute, intelligent and wise, these were some of the best qualities of ‘Amr bin Al-‘As ؓ. He was a self-controlled man who never let his passions and emotions get the better of him. Purity of heart and soul distinguished him. A very pious man, he devoted his nights to prayer. At the same time he was a skillful statesman, politician and a great leader of men. He was educated in his childhood – rare in the Arabia of the times – and wrote poetry for his own entertainment but never used it to make extravagant claims and never ever did he use satire as a medium for making fun of others. Short, stocky, but well built, he was a born leader of men, a general who could get his soldiers out of any tricky situation using his experience and ingenuity.

‘Amr bin Al ‘Aas ؓ had the qualities of political insight, courage, bravery, firmness of resolve, farsightedness and an ability to make quick decisions without faltering. And all these qualities he possessed to a very high degree of excellence. It was because of these virtues that in the battle of Salāsāl he gained resounding victory. The Prophet



ﷺ was so pleased with his triumph that he said:

“O ‘Amr! Got ready for further victories.”

Doubtless these words uttered by the blessed tongue of the Prophet ﷺ were treasured with pride to the end of life of ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas ؓ as they acknowledged wholeheartedly the military services rendered by him.

And about him ‘Umar bin Khattâb ؓ said:

“O ‘Amr when I see your intelligence, your wisdom, your understanding and your foresightedness, I feel you should have been the very first to enter into the fold of Islam.”

## Departure

‘Amr ؓ ruled Egypt till the 43<sup>rd</sup> year after Hijrah. He established a powerful state controlled by justice, freedom and equality.

While lying on his deathbed, he began crying. His son, Abdullah, asked him why he was crying. He replied:

“I was first disbeliever and fought hard against the Prophet ﷺ. Had I died at that time, I would have perished in the hellfire. When I embraced Islam, I felt that the Prophet ﷺ was the most lovable and most respectable man to me on the earth. If I had been asked to describe him, I would have been unable to do so because I could not look at him with full open eyes. Had I died at that time, I would have hoped to go to Paradise. I was then plighted with power and other things that I cannot say whether they were in my favour or against me. My Lord I am not so innocent to bring my argument before myself, nor powerful to defend myself. It is only your mercy that I seek; otherwise, I have no shelter.”

Some days later, ‘Amr ؓ died and was buried in Egypt after he had led a life full of activities in support of Islam and for the Islamic State.

For forty-six years, ‘Amr ؓ kept struggling hard to spread the light of Islam. He never thought when he was in Makkah that he would be the ruler of this vast land. Had he remained a pagan, he would have vanished and never remembered by anyone. Now, all Muslims remember the shrewd and skillful leader who established firm rule of Islam in Egypt.

May Allâh forgive ‘Amr ؓ and shower His mercy on him on the Day of Judgment for he had done his best to serve the Muslim *Ummah*.

