

STUDY GUIDE



BY SHAIKH KAMIL AHMAD

From the series:  
THE STRANGERS

# THE STRANGERS

PART 1



**AL HIDAAYAH**

الهداية

The Guidance for Humanity

Based on the Glorious Qur'an and Authentic Hadith



## Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Islam in the current world
3. Meanings of 'Al Ghareeb'
4. Attributes of the Ghurabaa
5. Kinds of strangers
6. Kinds of strangeness
7. Meaning of 'Bada'al Islaamu Ghareeba' – Islam began as something strange.
8. Reasons for the first strangeness of Islam – I
9. Reasons for the first strangeness of Islam – II
10. Appealing aspects of the first strangeness of Islam – I
11. Appealing aspects of the first strangeness of Islam – II

## Course Objectives

1. Understanding what it means to be a good Muslim
2. Learning to become responsible humans and also encouraging others to follow the right example
3. Opening up to new things and gaining new experiences in life



# Question & Answer Bucket

## TRANSCRIPTS

## ASSESSMENT

Multiple Choice Questions

Match the Columns

True or False

## COURSE DURATION

Video - 2 hours 20 min

Study Guide - 45 min

Assessment - 10 min

Total Duration - 3 hours 15 min

■ LESSON 1

# An Introduction

& THE MEANING OF A STRANGER





# 1

## INTRODUCTION

When the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was given prophethood by Allah (swt), he was all by himself, a stranger in a world full of darkness, filled with corruption, oppression, and disbelief in Allah (swt). He was sent to change the reality that existed in this world, to bring people out of the darkness into the light of Islam, and to put an end to the corrupt methodology of the people of this earth.

When the Prophet (pbuh) preached the message of Islam, only a handful of people believed in him and supported his Da'wah. Even though most of these people were from Makkah, yet the Prophet (pbuh) and his followers became strangers in their own land amongst their own people because they believed in the message of Islam.

As time passed by, the Prophet (pbuh) along with his followers continued to strive and struggle for the sake Allah (swt), spreading the message and getting more people to join him to a point that Islam stretched over most of the Arabian Peninsula, and the Muslims conquered Makkah, and the tribes from all over the Arabian Peninsula came to accept Islam at the hands of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).



The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Islam began as something strange, and it would revert to its (old position) of being strange. So good tidings for the strangers.”

Sahih Muslim – Vol 1 Hadith 372

The Prophet (pbuh) explains in the above Hadith that after Islam reaches its peak, a time will come, when once again Islam will return as being something strange and its followers to be looked at as strangers.



# 2

## ISLAM IN THE CURRENT WORLD

Are we living in times where Islam is considered as something strange as the Prophet (pbuh) mentioned in the above Hadith?

We definitely are living in times where Islam is considered as something strange, the case being more in some societies than others. In fact, the majority consider Islam and its followers as following something strange.

Not only in non-Muslim countries, but even in Muslim countries, a Muslim who decides to practice his or her religion, to adhere strictly to the teachings of Islam is considered a stranger even though they are living in their own land, among their people.





# 3

## MEANINGS OF 'AL GHAREEB'

The word “Al Ghareeb” (stranger) is used in two different meanings in the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh):

i

### SOMEONE RESIDING AWAY FROM HIS RESIDENCE

The first meaning of the term ‘stranger’ is for someone who resides somewhere other than his own place of residence (a temporary place of residence among people who are basically not his own).

**Abdullah ibn Umar (ra) said:**

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) took hold of my shoulder and said, ‘Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler.’”

Ibn ‘Umar (ra) used to say, “If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening, and take from your health for your sickness, and (take) from your life for your death.”



A true believer should not have his heart attached to this Dunya and its comforts, because the Dunya is only a temporary residence for him. His real home is in the Akhirah, the Jannah and everything that Allah (swt) has promised him there.

## **ii** SOMEONE CONSIDERED AS A STRANGER AMONGST HIS OWN PEOPLE

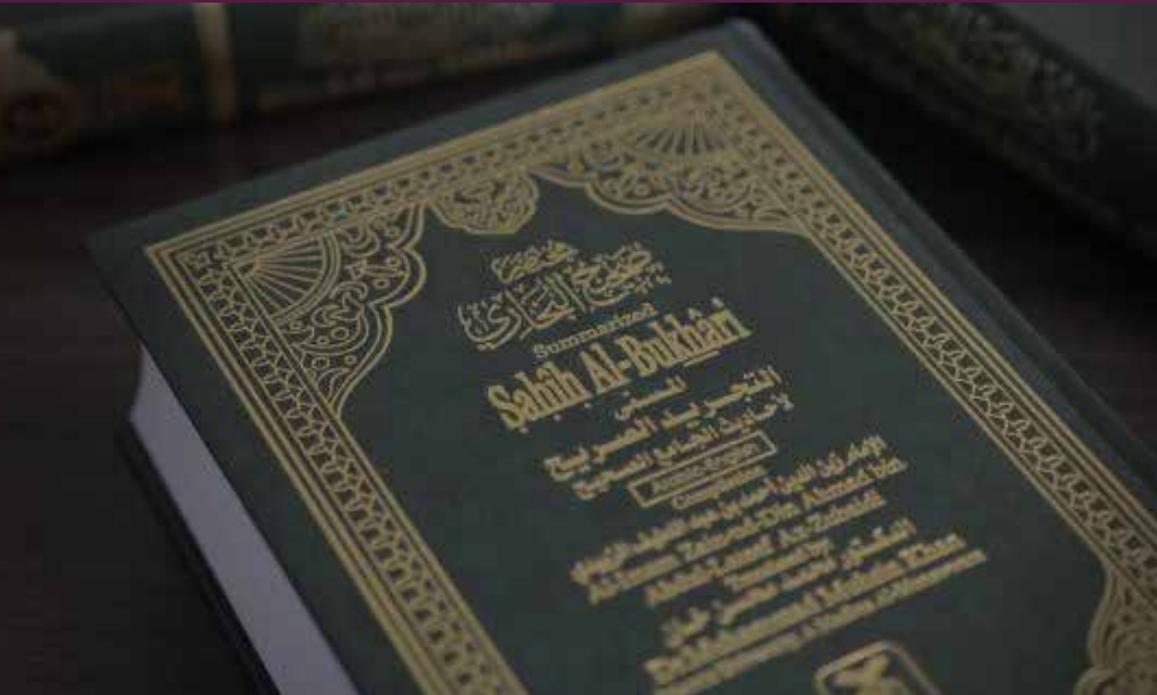
The second meaning of the term 'stranger' is for someone as being a stranger by his own people.

This is because he or she does not adhere to the rules, customs, and the way of life of his people. He has his way of life, and his people have their own way of life.



■ LESSON 2

# AN EXPLANATION OF THE HADITH ON THE STRANGER





# 4

## ATTRIBUTES OF THE GHURABAA



The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Islam began as something strange, and it would revert to its (old position) of being strange. So good tidings for the strangers.”

Sahih Muslim – Vol 1 Hadith 372



The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Verily Islam started as something strange and it would again revert (to its old position) of being strange just as it started, and it would recede between the two mosques just as the serpent crawls back into its hole.”

Sahih Muslim – Vol 1 Hadith 373



iii



**The Prophet (pbuh) said:**

**“Indeed, Islam began as something strange, and it will again return as being something strange, so give glad tidings to the strangers? The Sahaabah (ra) asked: ‘O Messenger of Allah, Who are the strangers.’ The Prophet (pbuh) said: ‘Those who reform the people when they have become corrupted.’”**

iv

**Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al ‘Aas (ra) said:**

**“One day while we're sitting around the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he said: ‘Give glad tidings to the strangers.’ The Sahaabah (ra) asked: ‘Who are the strangers, O Messenger of Allah?’ The Prophet (pbuh) said: ‘They are the people who are righteous among a larger group of people who are evil, those who obey them (righteous individuals) are less than those who disobey them.’”**



The general meaning of the word 'Al Ghurabaa' (strangers) in the above Ahadith refers to a Muslim who chooses the path of Islam and remains steadfast on it.

The further we get away from the time of the Prophet (pbuh) and his Sahaabah (ra), the more difficulties we must face in adhering to Islam.





**Hudhayfah ibn Al Yamaan (ra) said:**

**“The people used to ask Allah's Messenger (pbuh) about the good, but I used to ask him about the evil lest I should be overtaken by them. So, I said, "O Allah's Messenger (pbuh)! We were living in ignorance and in an (extremely) worst atmosphere, then Allah brought to us this good (i.e., Islam); will there be any evil after this good?" He said, "Yes." I said, 'Will there be any good after that evil?' He replied, "Yes, but it will be tainted (not pure.)" I asked, "What will be its taint?" He replied, "(There will be) some people who will guide others not according to my tradition? You will approve of some of their deeds and disapprove of some others." I asked, "Will there be any evil after that good?" He replied, "Yes, (there will be) some people calling at the gates of the (Hell) Fire, and whoever will respond to their call, will be thrown by them into the (Hell) Fire." I said, "O Allah's Messenger! Will you describe them to us?" He said, "They will be from our own people and will speak our language." I said, "What do you order me to do if such a state should take place in my life?" He said, "Stick to the group of Muslims and their Imam (ruler)." I said, "If there is neither a group of Muslims nor an Imam (ruler)?" He said, "Then turn away from all those sects even if you were to bite (eat) the roots of a tree till death overtakes you while you are in that state.”**



Being a stranger in this Dunya is not necessarily something bad. If people reject you because you adhere to the teachings of the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions, it does not mean that you are in a bad situation. For the path of Islam will lead you to happiness in this Dunya before the next, even though it may not seem like it in the present.

■ LESSON 3

# KINDS OF STRANGENESS





# 5

## KINDS OF STRANGERS

The meaning of 'Al Ghurabaa' (strangers) as mentioned in the above Ahadith can be divided into two main kinds:



### MUSLIMS AMONG A LARGER GROUP OF NON-MUSLIMS

In most countries, Muslims compared to non-Muslims have always been like a patch of white hair found on a black goat. They stand out as different.



**“And few of My servants are grateful.”**

*Al Qur'an 34:13*



**“And if you obey most of those on Earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah. They follow not except assumption.”**

*Al Qur'an 6:116*



This is a reality that Allah (swt) points out in the Qur'an, meaning that only a few accept what Allah (swt) has ordered, and the few are those who believe.

This is the reality of the world we live in today, look at the world population, Muslims are 2 billion out of the 7.5 – 8 billion population.

**ii** **AHLUS SUNNAH WA JAMA'AH AMONG A LARGER GROUP OF FOLLOWERS OF THE OTHER SECTS OF ISLAM**

The Ahlus Sunnah wa Jama'ah (those who follow the Prophet (pbuh) and his guidance) compared to the sects who oppose them are few.

Many times, the strangeness of these Muslims could be more severe than the strangeness of Muslims among non-Muslims.





# 6

## KINDS OF STRANGENESS

### **i** STRANGENESS WITH REGARDS TO SHARAA'I (THE LEGALITIES OF ISLAM)

There are certain rights and commandments of Allah (swt) and the Prophet (pbuh) that are perceived as strange by people.

For example, a Muslim woman who wears the Hijaab is looked at as someone oppressed and strange. A Muslim man who grows his beard following the command of the Prophet (pbuh) is looked at as someone practicing a strange religion.

### **ii** STRANGENESS REGARDS TO A PARTICULAR PLACE

The world we live in has different people with different beliefs, customs, and norms.

This strangeness relates to Islam and Muslims being considered a stranger in a particular city or a country etc. This can be specific for some places, while for the others it might not be anything strange.



## STRANGENESS REGARDS TO A PARTICULAR TIME

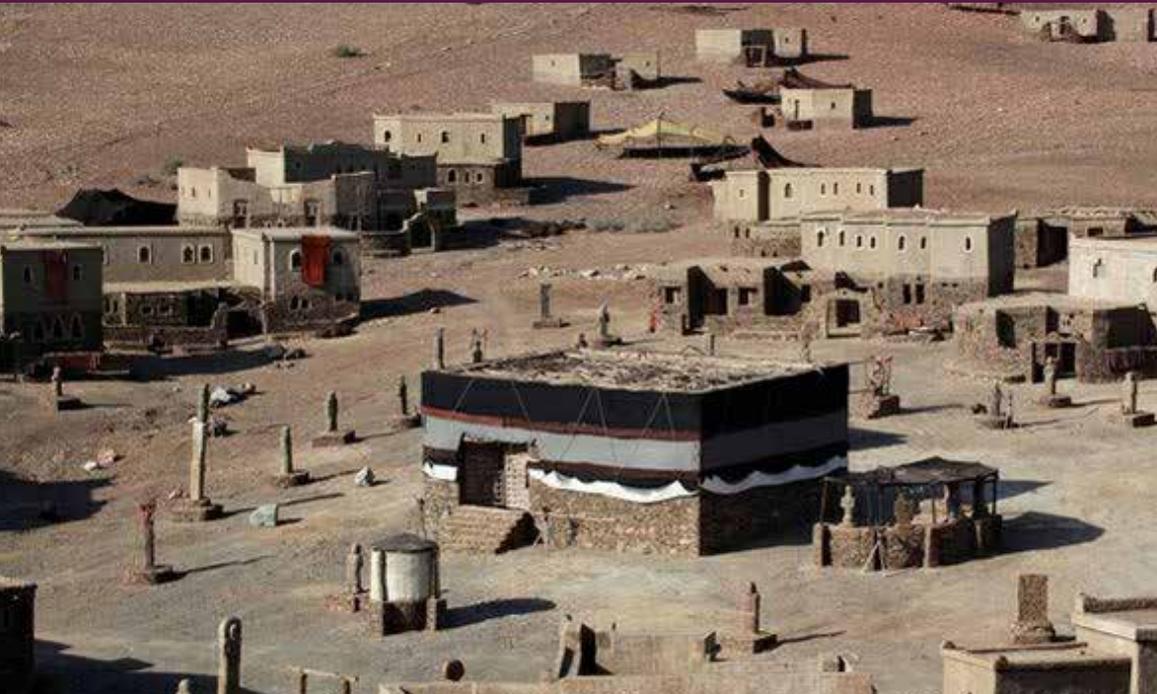
Islam being as something strange in a particular era by the entire world, regardless of any place.

For example, in the time of Jahiliyyah, at the advent of Qur'an when the Prophet (pbuh) was sent by Allah (swt) initially, the entire world was living in darkness, acting against the commands of Allah (swt), except a few individuals. So, in this era, Islam was considered as something strange by the entire world regardless of the place.



■ LESSON 4

# THE STRANGENESS OF ISLAM IN THE BEGINNING





# 7

## MEANING OF

## 'BADA'AL ISLAAMU GHAREEBA' – ISLAM BEGAN AS SOMETHING STRANGE

Before the coming of the Prophet (pbuh), the world was in darkness, living in Shirk, corruption, and oppression and humanity was at its worst state.

The spirit of Jahiliyyah (the days of ignorance), which was oppression, injustice, inequality, following whims, desires, and general ignorance was widespread.

Judaism and Christianity were distorted and corrupted, and there were only a few who still followed the teachings of Ibrahim (pbuh) 'Hunafaa', worshipped Allah alone, and rejected the idols that their people worshipped.





**The Prophet (pbuh) said:**

**“Allah (swt) looked at the people of the earth with hatred except for remnants of Ahlul Kitab.”**

When the Prophet (pbuh) was sent by Allah (swt), he was alone, a stranger in a world filled with Shirk and corruption. He was sent to bring people out from the darkness of Shirk into the light of Islam, putting an end to the corrupt teachings and customs of the people.





# 8

## REASONS FOR THE FIRST STRANGENESS OF ISLAM - I

Amongst the various reasons for this first strangeness of Islam were:

**i** NO PROPHETS WERE SENT AMONGST THE ARABS BEFORE

One of the main reasons why Islam appeared to be something strange, was the fact that the influence of prophetic guidance was weak in the Arabian Peninsula.

Most of the Prophets and Messengers were sent to Bani Israel, but this was the first time that a Prophet was sent amongst the Arabs.





“Or do they say, “he invented it”? Rather it is the truth from your Lord, that you may warn a people to whom no warner has come before you.”

*Al Qur'an 32:3*



“That you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are unaware.”

*Al Qur'an 36:6*

Thus, one of the main reasons for the strangeness of Islam in the beginning was the fact that no prophets ever came to the Arabs before our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

## **ii ARABS WERE STUBBORN AND BLINDLY FOLLOWED THE WAYS OF THEIR ANCESTORS**

Among the reasons for why Islam was looked at as being something strange was the fact that the Arabs were stubborn people who blindly followed the ways and customs of their ancestors.

This was nothing new, because one of their main excuses that every prophet was given by his people was that ‘you have come to us with something new that our forefathers never told us.’



“They said, “Have you come to us to turn us away from that upon which we found our fathers and so that you to may have grandeur in the land? And we are not going to believe in you.”

*Al Qur'an 10:78*



“And when it is said to them, “Follow what Allah has revealed”, they say, “Rather, we will follow that which we found our forefathers following.”

*Al Qur'an 2:170*



### **POSITION OF AHLUL KITAB AND THEIR SUPPORT OF THE MUSHRIKS**

When the Prophet (pbuh) came with the message of Islam, he expected the Jews and the Christians to believe in his message because they had received scriptures before him. But the Jews and the Christians supported the Mushrikoon over the Prophet (pbuh) and acted against him.



**“And the eminent among them went forth (saying), “Continue and be patient over (the defense of) your gods. Indeed, this is a thing intended; we have not heard of this in the other religions. This is not but a fabrication.”**

***Al Qur’an 38:6-7***

The above verse explains the stand of the pagan Arabs against the Prophet (pbuh) when they noticed the support of the Jews and the Christians for them.

Also, in the next verse Allah (swt) explains the actions of the Jews and the Christians towards the message of the Prophet (pbuh) and in preventing the Arabs from accepting his message.



**“Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture, who believe in Jibt (superstition) and Taghoot (false gods) and say about the disbelievers, “these are better guided than the believers following the straight path.”**

***Al Qur’an 4:51***



**iv** **ARABS WERE STUBBORN AND BLINDLY FOLLOWED THE WAYS OF THEIR ANCESTORS**

Among the customs and traditions of pagans was tribal and leadership competition. Every tribe wanted to have the upper hand. They thought that if status of prophethood was to be given to anyone, it should have been given to someone amongst the tribal leaders and not Muhammad (pbuh) a young individual having no special status among his people.



“And they said: “Why was this Qur’an not sent down upon a great man from one of the two cities?”

*Al Qur’an 43:31*

The scholars of Tafseer explained that the two cities referred to are Makkah and Taif.



■ LESSON 5

# APPEALING ASPECTS

OF THE FIRST STRANGENESS OF  
ISLAM – PART 1





# 9

## REASONS FOR THE FIRST STRANGENESS OF ISLAM- II

v

### INFLUENCE OF QURAYSH IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

The Quraysh justified their rejection to the message of the Prophet (pbuh) by pointing towards the Ahlul Kitaab, if they being the People of the Scripture have rejected this message then why should we accept it.

And since Quraysh had great influence over all the other Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula, they too rejected the message of the Prophet (pbuh).

vi

### THE UNBELIEVERS WERE PEOPLE OF POWER AND AUTHORITY

The earliest of Muslims were not from the elite of Quraysh, instead they were slaves and the poor. When the Prophet (pbuh) started his Da'wah, Islam did not have a state or tribe to protect it and back it up, the Prophet (pbuh) himself had very little aid and protection.

Therefore, if anyone outside of Makkah accepted Islam, he would return to his people and conceal his Islam, and not openly practice it until the times changed and the Islamic state was formed in Madinah.



# 10

## APPEALING ASPECTS OF THE FIRST STRANGENESS OF ISLAM - I

One of the important points to note, is that there's a difference between strangeness on the individual level (individual who is strange in his society) and strangeness on the communal level (group of believers looked as strangers among their people).

**This strangeness (individual and communal) had several aspects to it, among them were:**

### **i** WHEN ISLAM FIRST EMERGED, THE DA'WAH WAS SECRET

In the early years (first three years of the Da'wah), the Prophet (pbuh) was commanded to preach Islam secretly, only to those he trusted.

The wisdom behind such a step was that openly calling to Islam from the start would have been difficult upon the Prophet (pbuh) to handle, because even though he started secretly, he was rejected by his people.

However, it is important to note that though the Da'wah to Islam started secretly, Islam was not meant to be an underground movement or a secret society. It was only what best suited the prevailing situation and conditions.

■ LESSON 6

# APPEALING ASPECTS

OF THE FIRST STRANGENESS OF ISLAM  
– PART 2





# 11

## APPEALING ASPECTS OF THE 'FIRST STRANGENESS OF ISLAM - II

ii

### ISLAM HAD VERY FEW FOLLOWERS

Ammar ibn Yasir (ra) one of the earlier Muslims who had accepted Islam in this first strangeness said:

“I saw the Messenger of Allah, and none were with him, except five slaves, two women, and Abu Bakr (ra).”

This does not mean that only these people had accepted Islam, but there were others as well who hid their Islam out of fear.

Thus, one of the appealing aspects of the first strangeness of Islam is that the Muslims were very few.





## THE PERSECUTION AND TORTURE FACED BY THE EARLY MUSLIMS

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (ra) said:

“The first people to declare their Islam publicly were seven: The Messenger of Allah, Abu Bakr, 'Ammar and his mother Sumayyah, Suhaib, Bilal and Miqdad. With regard to the Messenger of Allah, Allah protected him through his paternal uncle Abu Talib. With regard to Abu Bakr, Allah protected him through his people. As for the rest, the Mushrikun seized them and made them wear coats of chainmail and exposed them to the intense heat of the sun. There was none of them who did not do what they wanted them to do, except for Bilal. He did not care what happened to him for the sake of Allah, and his people did not care what happened to him. Then they gave him to the children who took him around in the streets of Makkah while he was saying, 'Ahad, Ahad (One, One).'"

This does not mean that only these people had accepted Islam, but there were others as well who hid their Islam out of fear.

Thus, one of the appealing aspects of the first strangeness of Islam is that the Muslims were very few.



## **iv** ISLAM WAS FACED WITH AN EMBARGO AND A BLOCKADE

Although the Arabs are known for their generosity and helpfulness, when they heard about the message of Islam, they wanted to end to it.

When they realized that torturing the Muslims yielded them nothing, and people were still accepting Islam in great numbers, they resorted to an economic and social blockade on the Muslims.

No one was allowed to trade or interact with them for any of their needs.

This blockade lasted for about two to three years, and the Sahabah narrate that there were times when they had nothing to eat, so they would resort to eating grass and leaves of trees, drinking things that would not quench their thirst.





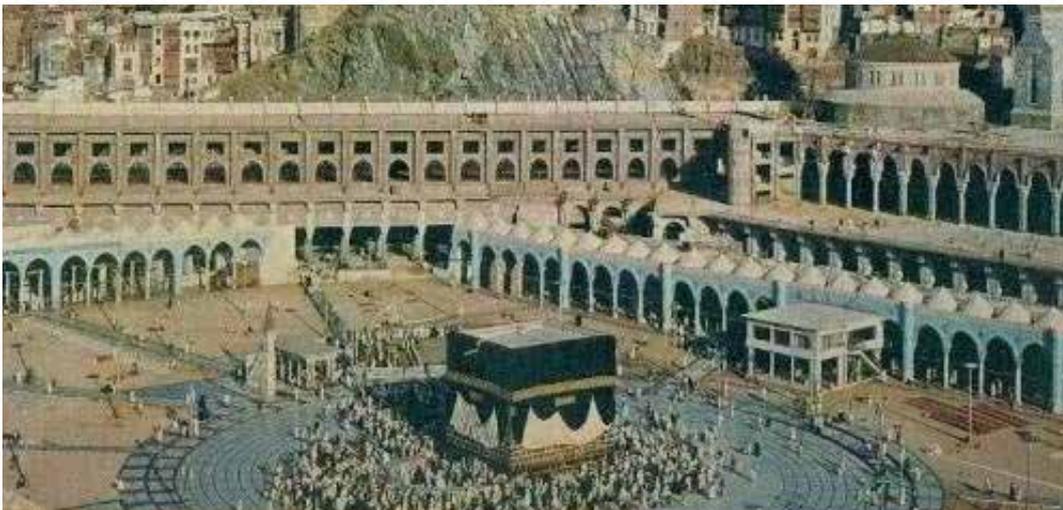
V

## CONFINED TO ONE ENVIRONMENT (MAKKAH)

The Prophet (pbuh) was not commanded by Allah (swt) to spread his Da'wah in other places in the Arabian Peninsula. Rather, he went to Taif, one of the closest places to Makkah after approximately 10 years of the beginning of the Da'wah.

For the first seven years of public Da'wah, it was restricted to Makkah even though Islam came for all of humanity.

This was done to strengthen the message and to help the Muslims go out and establish the message of Islam all over the Arabian Peninsula.





**QUESTION  
& ANSWER**  
BUCKET





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## Q1

### WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF STRANGERS AMONGST THE MUSLIMS?

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Ibn al Qayyim while explaining the Hadith “Islam began as something strange, and it will once again return as something strange” said with regards to the various kinds of strangers, that Muslims are strangers among mankind.

He further explains that Muslims are strangers among non-Muslims, the true believers (who follow the Sunnah) are strangers among Muslims, the scholars are strangers among the true believers, and the Ahlus Sunnah wa Jama’ah are strangers among those who follow the Bid’ah (innovation).

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## Q2

### WHO WERE THE ‘HUNAFAA’ DURING THE PRE-QUR’ANIC ARABIA?

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Hunafaa were the monotheists who followed the teachings of Ibrahim (pbuh), believed in Tawheed and worshipped Allah alone. They did not follow in the footsteps of the Arabs, worshipping the idols that their people worshipped.

For example, Zaid Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Nufail, he was known to never slaughter to any idol as the Arabs used to, nor would he eat dead meat or blood that was common among the Arabs.



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## Q3 GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF STRANGERS ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL FROM THE TIMES OF THE PROPHET (PBUH).

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An example of a stranger on an individual level was 'An Najashi', the king of Abyssinia.

Najashi was a stranger among his people because he embraced Islam and died upon it. He was one individual among his people, and that is why when he died, the Prophet (pbuh) gathered his companions and prayed Salatul Janazah for him while in Madinah.

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