

The Golden Series of the
Prophet's Companions

In Quest of Truth



Salman Al-Farisi عليه السلام

By: Abdul Basit Ahmad



The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions

Salman Al-Farisi رضي الله عنه
In quest of Truth



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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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)



Publisher's 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.

The following story, "Salman Al-Farisi-In Quest of Truth," discusses the life of one of Islam's greatest heroes. Salman Al-Farisi was born into a house of nobility and wealth in the land of Persia. Yet, due to his sincerity and virtue, Allâh placed a burning desire in his heart to know the truth about the purpose of life and religion.

Darrusalam 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.

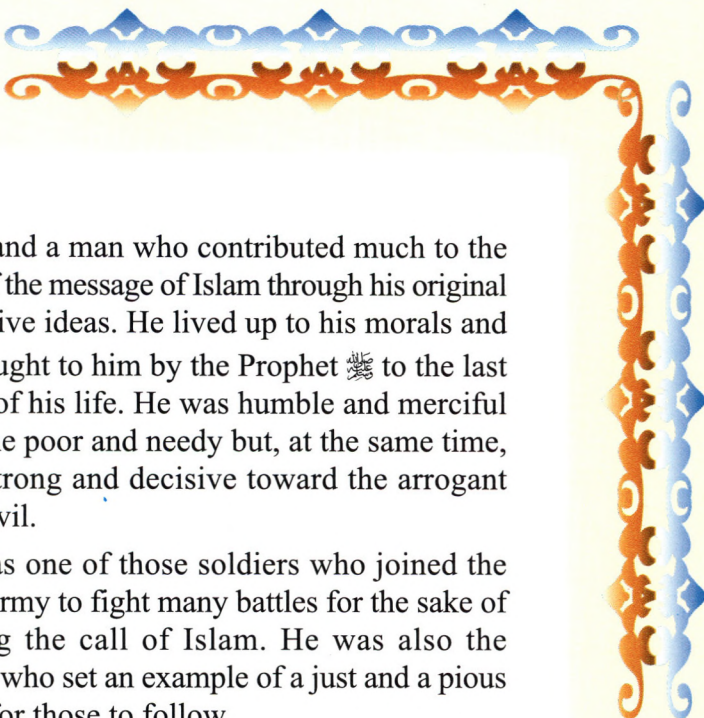
The stories in this series are not "make-believe" or fables, but are real life stories of various important individuals in the history of Islam. The reader will learn how very ordinary people heard and came to accept the message of Islam from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager



Foreword

Every human being has an objective in his life for which he does everything he can to attain. Some people see that collecting much money is the thing that deserves working for; but others look for something more rewarding than worldly things. Therefore, they go on a long journey of hardships and sufferings until they achieve their objectives. Our hero, Salman Al Farisi ﷺ, is one of those men who sought to attain the ultimate truth. He was given the power that enabled him to go beyond worldly things and to search for a more meaningful life. He left behind the world of pleasures and easy life and, instead went in pursuit of the truth. He was a man who never looked behind when he knew that he found the answers to all of his inquiries about the true faith. Before that, his life was a mix of doubts and hesitations that made him, in spite of the luxury and riches he enjoyed, live in a world of smoke and gloom. Hence, he made his long journey to the land where Divine truth was revealed. In spite of the many obstacles he met and the sufferings he experienced on his way to guidance, he never complained or retreated. He was driven by an overwhelming desire to free himself from the slavery of doubt and false deities. He was a man of thought and



wisdom and a man who contributed much to the victory of the message of Islam through his original and creative ideas. He lived up to his morals and values taught to him by the Prophet ﷺ to the last moment of his life. He was humble and merciful toward the poor and needy but, at the same time, he was strong and decisive toward the arrogant and the evil.

He was one of those soldiers who joined the Muslim army to fight many battles for the sake of spreading the call of Islam. He was also the governor who set an example of a just and a pious Muslim for those to follow.

To know more about our hero, Salman Al-Farisi رضي الله عنه, I invite you to read the following pages. I hope they will shed light on some aspects of his life, which he spent in quest and defense of truth.

Abdul Basit Ahmad

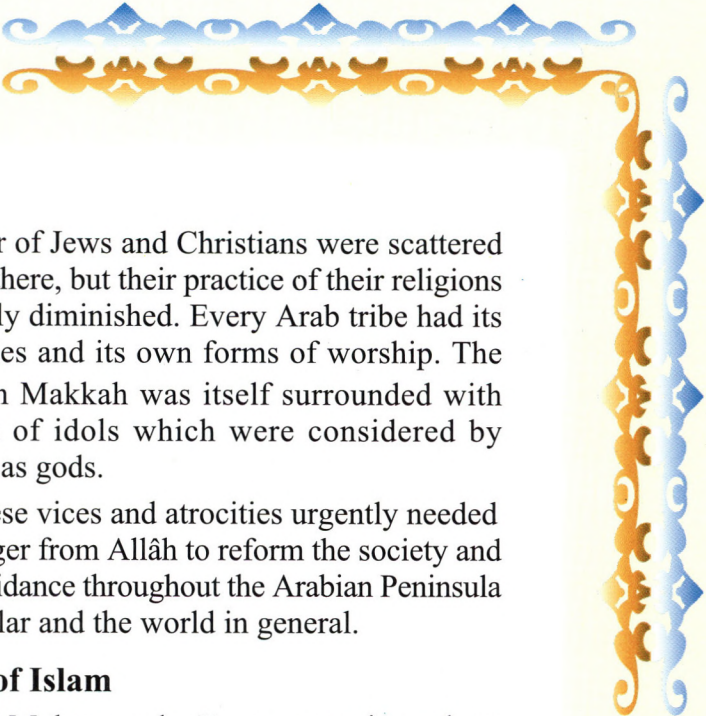


Introduction

Arabs before the rise of Islam

The Arab society in the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding areas mainly consisted of tribes and clans. Some of them lived in towns while most of them followed their flocks everywhere in the desert in search of food and water. These tribes were usually involved in wars amongst each other. Every tribe was invading and invaded by other tribes.

The gloom that loomed over the Arabian Peninsula and the world in general before the rise of Islam killed nearly every virtue in the minds and hearts of human beings at that time. Human rights, for example, were not given any value. Slavery, burying girls alive and injustices were dominating the societies of the city and desert alike. Youth and old were spending their time in grazing animals or practicing trade during the daytime and seeking trivial 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 in spite of the fact that some common laws were prevailing in the society. The people of Arabia were largely idol worshippers.

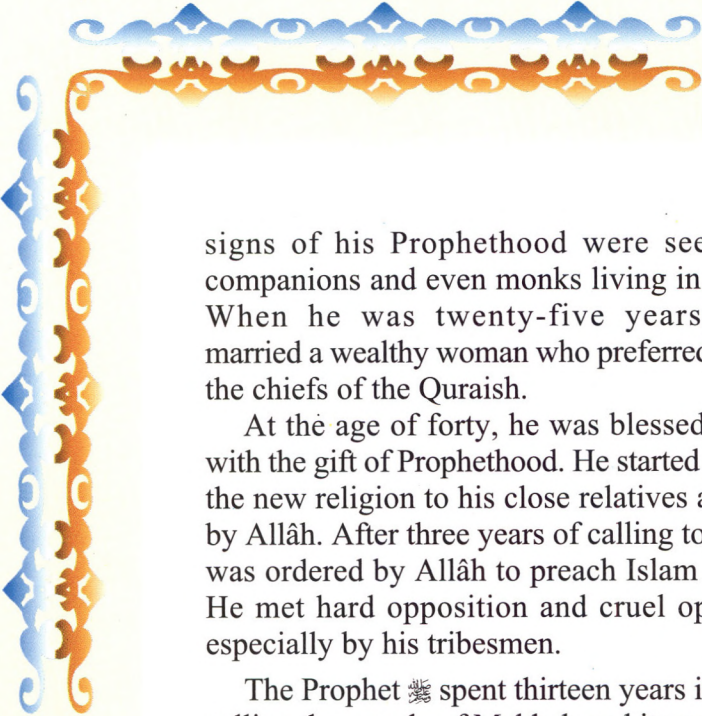


A number of Jews and Christians were scattered here and there, but their practice of their religions had greatly diminished. Every Arab tribe had its own deities and its own forms of worship. The Ka'bah in Makkah was itself surrounded with hundreds of idols which were considered by Makkans as gods.

All these vices and atrocities urgently needed a messenger from Allâh to reform the society and spread guidance throughout the Arabian Peninsula in particular and the world in general.

Advent of Islam

The child Muhammad ﷺ grew up in such an environment. When he 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 over the chiefs of the Quraish.

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 in Makkah 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 *Taif* to preach Islam and to seek protection against oppression. His attempts did not meet success.

The Prophet ﷺ changed his way of preaching Islam. He began calling visitors of Makkah to provide him 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.

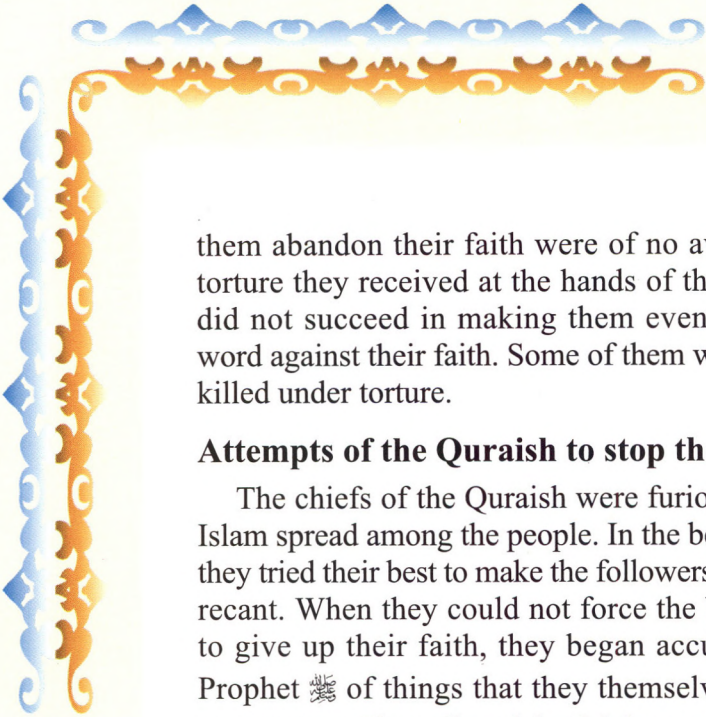
The Prophet ﷺ and his followers migrated to *Yathrib* (Al-Madinah). From there, they could establish their state of Islam and propagate the message to the entire world.

Values and morals called to by the Prophet ﷺ

The first thing the Prophet ﷺ called people to adopt was to worship One Allâh. He told people that the idols 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 Prophet ﷺ urged people to stop burying their daughters alive. These little girls were given the right by Allâh to live and no one should deprive them of this sacred right. He also urged them to be just to their slaves and not to be hard on them. He invited the different 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.

Followers of Islam

In the beginning of the call, most of those who accepted Islam were weak people and slaves. They found justice and truth in the principles preached by the Prophet ﷺ. Although some of the early believers held good positions in their society, they also received their share of oppression and torture. These followers were worshipping 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.

Attempts of the Quraish to stop the call

The chiefs of the Quraish were furious to see Islam spread among the people. In the beginning, they tried their best to make the followers of Islam recant. 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 were of no avail. They followed another direction. 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.



The Long Journey to Truth

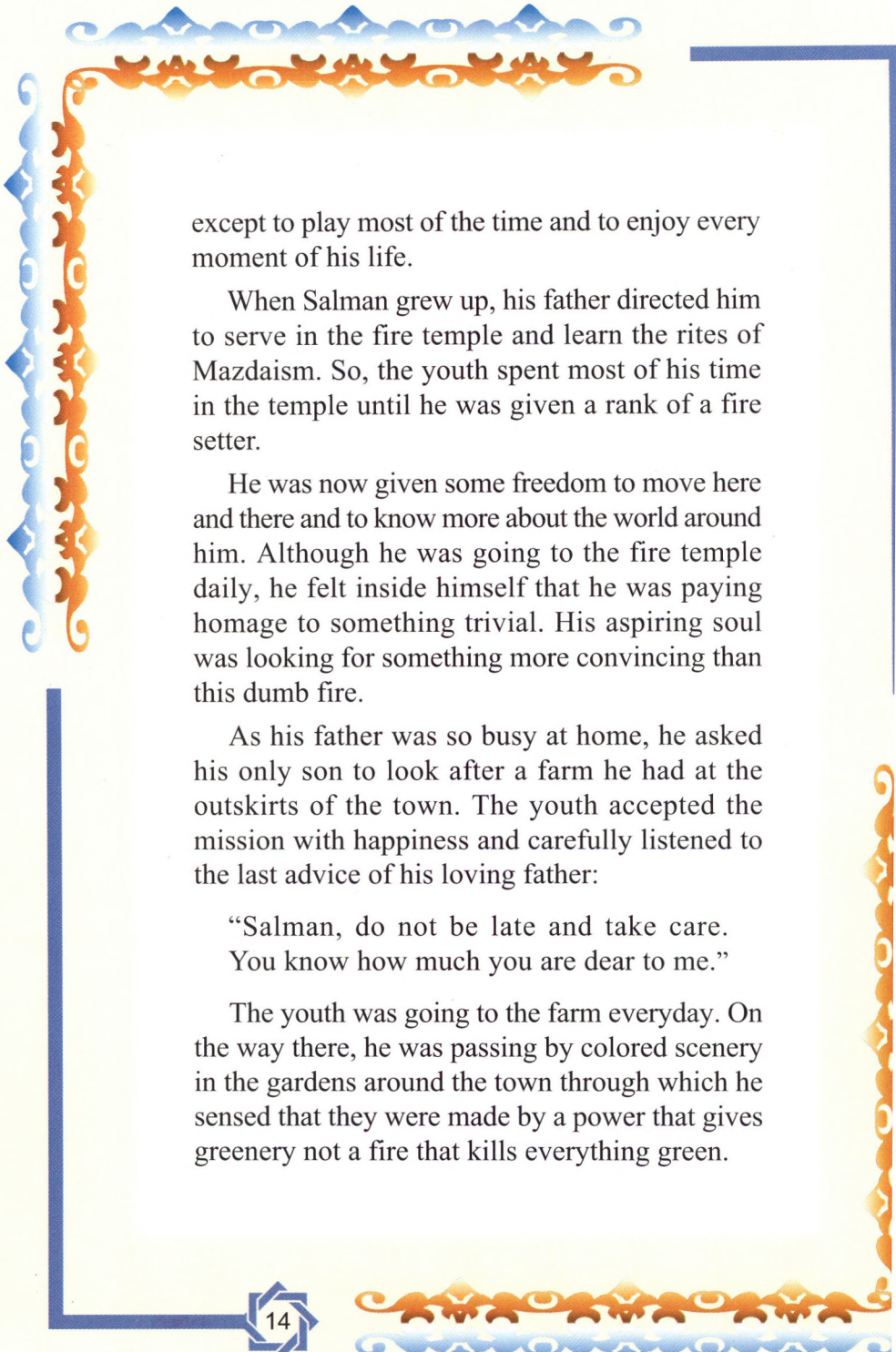
Background

In ancient times there were two super powers; the Persian and Roman Empires. The Persian Empire, on the one hand, was spreading its power over nearly half of the populated world. The people of this powerful empire mostly worshipped fire, falsely claiming it to be the source of light and knowledge. They erected fire temples throughout the empire and spent large sums of money to run such temples.

The Roman Empire, on the other hand, ruled over the other half of the world. The people under the rule of this Empire followed a distorted copy of the Christian Bible. The two empires were not on good terms with each other and therefore, they waged fierce wars against each other.

The lonely boy

Salman Al-Farisi (the Persian) was the only son of a ruling family in Persia. His father ruled over a town named Jay of Asbahan Province (presently Iran). The boy led a pleasant and painless life under the care of his father who loved him very much and kept him under close watch for fear of losing him. The boy had nothing to do



except to play most of the time and to enjoy every moment of his life.

When Salman grew up, his father directed him to serve in the fire temple and learn the rites of Mazdaism. So, the youth spent most of his time in the temple until he was given a rank of a fire setter.

He was now given some freedom to move here and there and to know more about the world around him. Although he was going to the fire temple daily, he felt inside himself that he was paying homage to something trivial. His aspiring soul was looking for something more convincing than this dumb fire.

As his father was so busy at home, he asked his only son to look after a farm he had at the outskirts of the town. The youth accepted the mission with happiness and carefully listened to the last advice of his loving father:

“Salman, do not be late and take care.
You know how much you are dear to me.”

The youth was going to the farm everyday. On the way there, he was passing by colored scenery in the gardens around the town through which he sensed that they were made by a power that gives greenery not a fire that kills everything green.

Introduction to Divine guidance

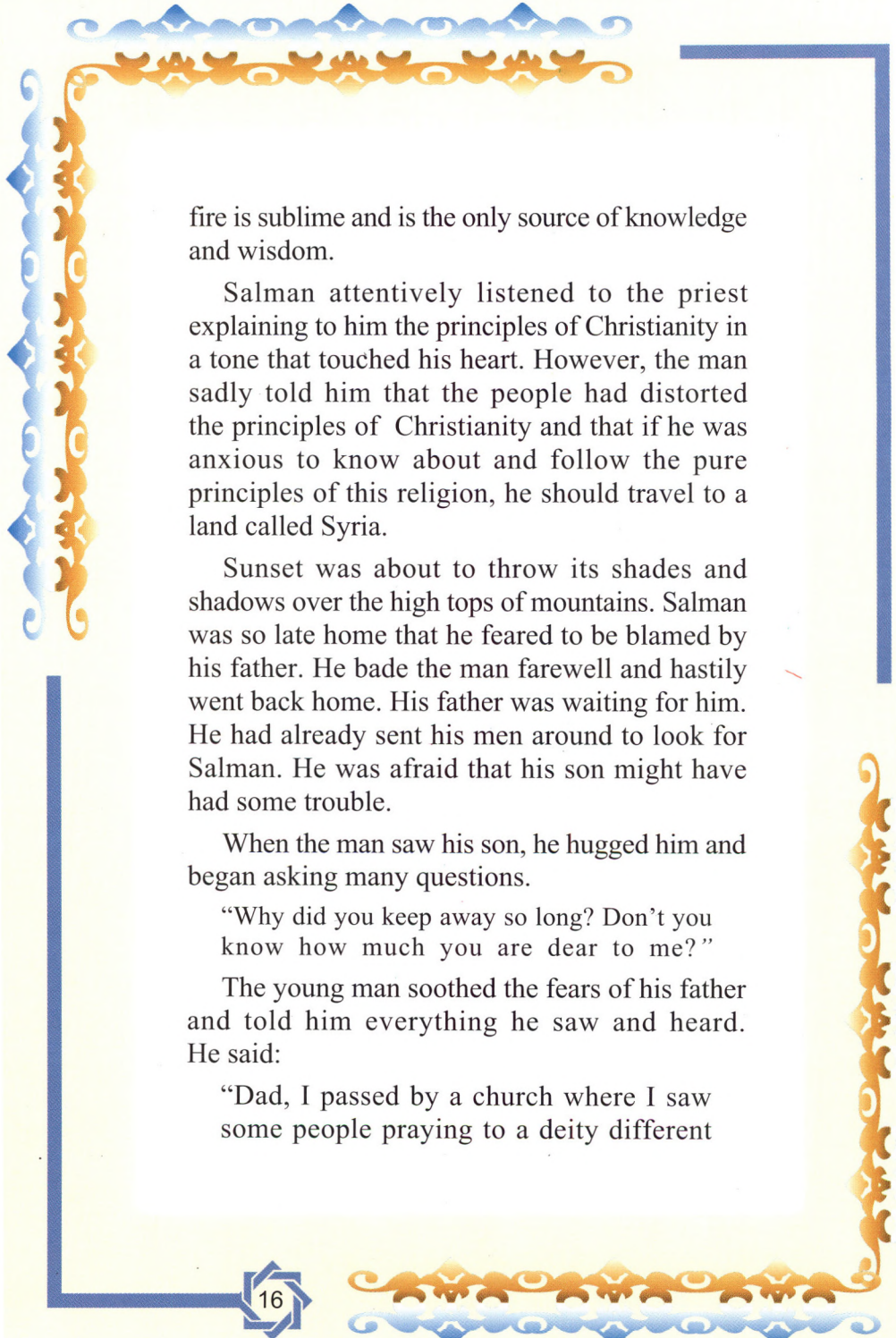
One day, he suddenly heard voices coming out of a church that stood near to his way to the farm. The closer he came to the church, the louder the voices were coming to his ears. He stood at the gate of the church hesitant to go in or to leave. However, a driving force pulled his legs inside. He was anxious to know about those people who were chanting with serenity within those high walls.

He stood in a corner with his eyes fixed on the man on stage giving a sermon to a group of people who were listening to him with great attention and tranquillity. After a while, they all said their prayers and began dispersing.

Salman was amazed on hearing those nice words uttered by the priest and could not help but to move toward him. He greeted the man and began inquiring about the things he saw and heard. He immediately started asking:

“What was that you had been doing? To whom were you praying and what is your religion?”

Salman recalled that his father had told him that Mazdaism was the only true religion on earth. Many times, he warned him not to divert from the right way and urged him to stick to the fire temple and fire rites. He, more than once, told him that



fire is sublime and is the only source of knowledge and wisdom.

Salman attentively listened to the priest explaining to him the principles of Christianity in a tone that touched his heart. However, the man sadly told him that the people had distorted the principles of Christianity and that if he was anxious to know about and follow the pure principles of this religion, he should travel to a land called Syria.

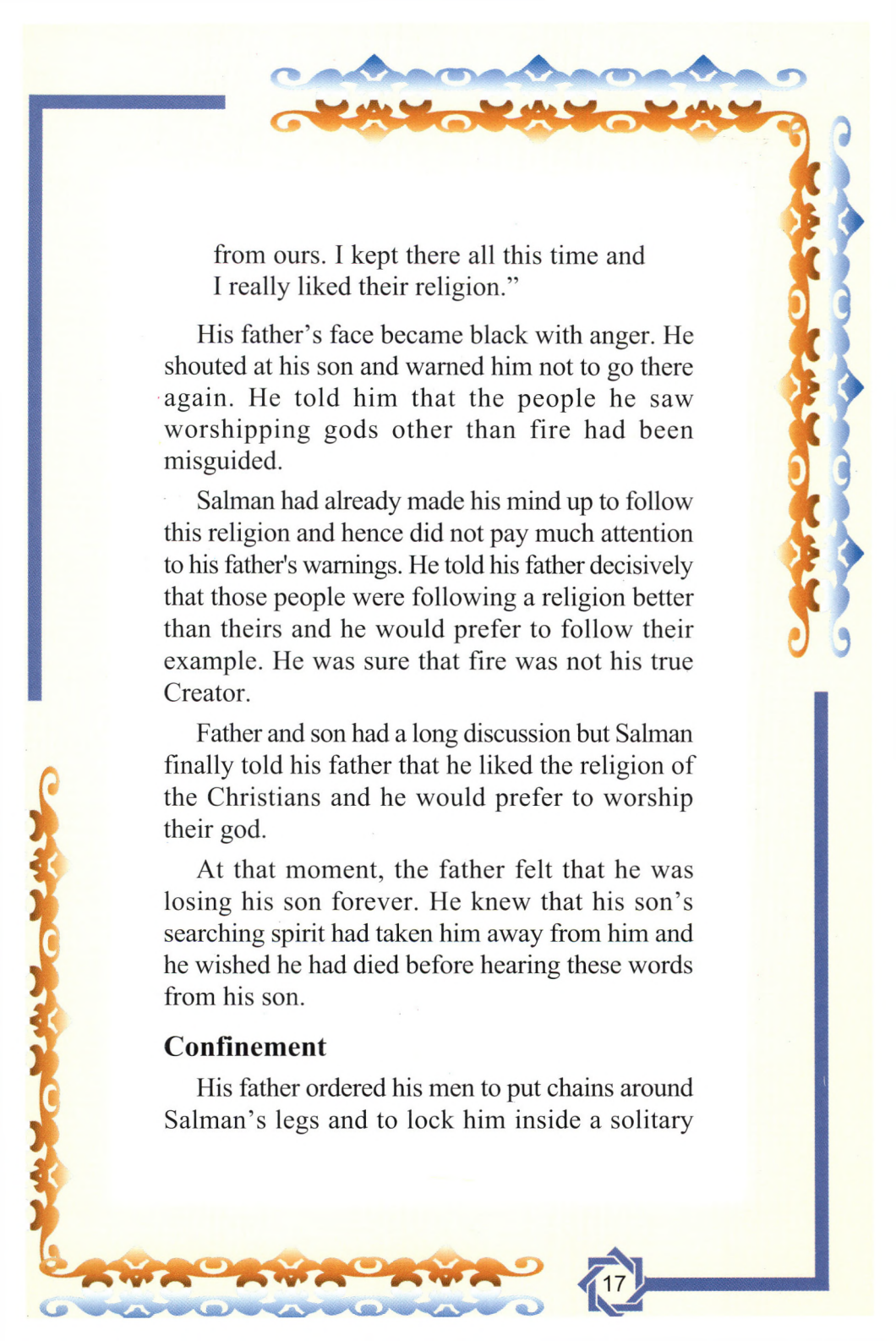
Sunset was about to throw its shades and shadows over the high tops of mountains. Salman was so late home that he feared to be blamed by his father. He bade the man farewell and hastily went back home. His father was waiting for him. He had already sent his men around to look for Salman. He was afraid that his son might have had some trouble.

When the man saw his son, he hugged him and began asking many questions.

“Why did you keep away so long? Don’t you know how much you are dear to me?”

The young man soothed the fears of his father and told him everything he saw and heard. He said:

“Dad, I passed by a church where I saw some people praying to a deity different



from ours. I kept there all this time and I really liked their religion.”

His father’s face became black with anger. He shouted at his son and warned him not to go there again. He told him that the people he saw worshipping gods other than fire had been misguided.

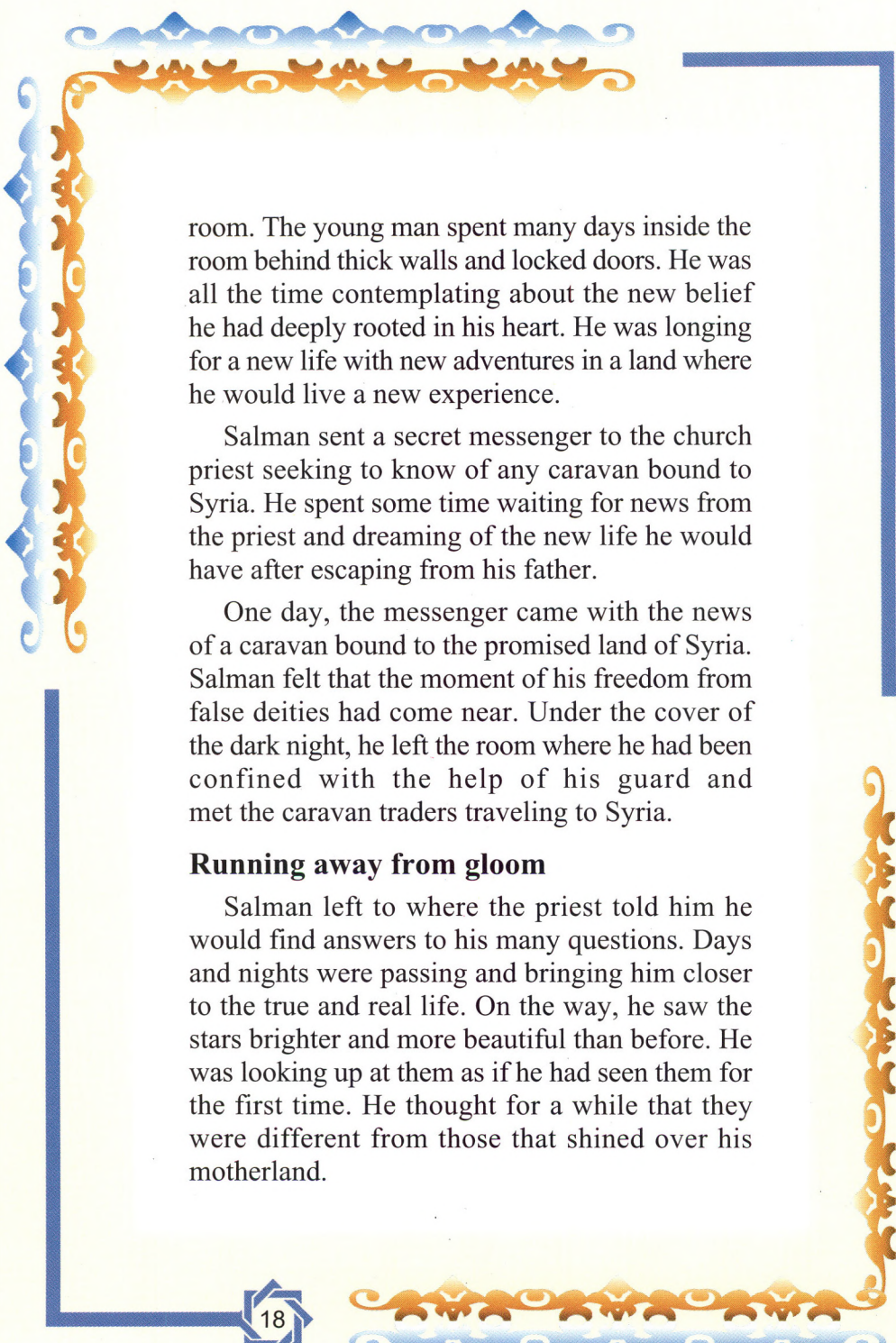
Salman had already made his mind up to follow this religion and hence did not pay much attention to his father’s warnings. He told his father decisively that those people were following a religion better than theirs and he would prefer to follow their example. He was sure that fire was not his true Creator.

Father and son had a long discussion but Salman finally told his father that he liked the religion of the Christians and he would prefer to worship their god.

At that moment, the father felt that he was losing his son forever. He knew that his son’s searching spirit had taken him away from him and he wished he had died before hearing these words from his son.

Confinement

His father ordered his men to put chains around Salman’s legs and to lock him inside a solitary



room. The young man spent many days inside the room behind thick walls and locked doors. He was all the time contemplating about the new belief he had deeply rooted in his heart. He was longing for a new life with new adventures in a land where he would live a new experience.

Salman sent a secret messenger to the church priest seeking to know of any caravan bound to Syria. He spent some time waiting for news from the priest and dreaming of the new life he would have after escaping from his father.

One day, the messenger came with the news of a caravan bound to the promised land of Syria. Salman felt that the moment of his freedom from false deities had come near. Under the cover of the dark night, he left the room where he had been confined with the help of his guard and met the caravan traders traveling to Syria.

Running away from gloom

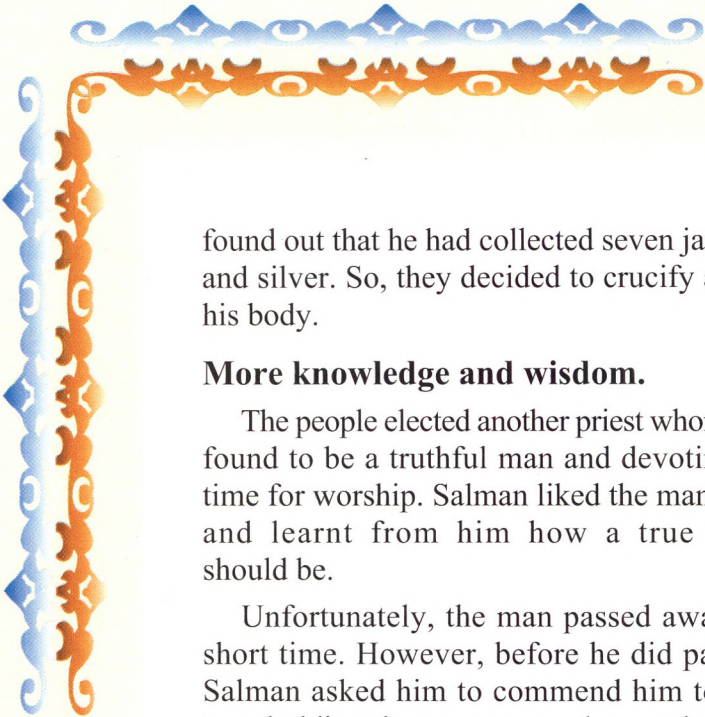
Salman left to where the priest told him he would find answers to his many questions. Days and nights were passing and bringing him closer to the true and real life. On the way, he saw the stars brighter and more beautiful than before. He was looking up at them as if he had seen them for the first time. He thought for a while that they were different from those that shined over his motherland.



Salman and the priest

Upon his arrival to Syria, he saw a new world and new faces. He did not spare a minute to ask about the man whom he should keep company with to know more about the new religion. The people told him to go to the church where he should meet their priest. Salman met the priest and told him his story. He asked him to allow him to stay with him to worship god, to learn more about the teachings of Christianity and to serve in the church. The man agreed that Salman could stay in the church and keep company with him.

Salman started learning new things about the new religion. He was asking many questions and reading the Bible. Unfortunately, after a short time, he discovered that the priest he was serving was very bad. He was urging his followers to give alms to the poor but he was keeping such alms for himself. The inevitable end came and the priest died. His followers were busy with his funeral but before they buried him, Salman told them about the truth of their priest. They were astonished to hear such words about the man they loved and took as an example of piety. They asked Salman to prove his words; otherwise, they would subject him to torture. Salman took them to the place where the man was collecting the money. They



found out that he had collected seven jars of gold and silver. So, they decided to crucify and stone his body.


More knowledge and wisdom.

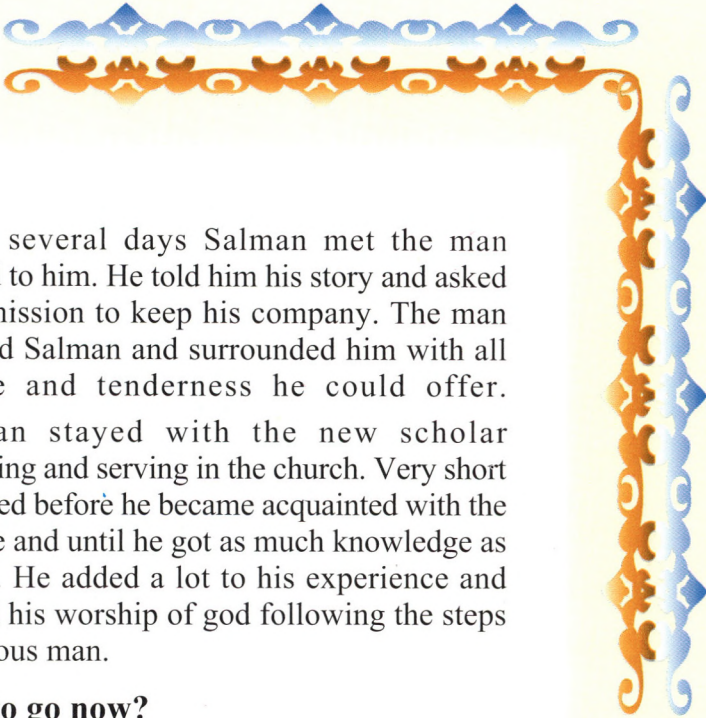
The people elected another priest whom Salman found to be a truthful man and devoting all his time for worship. Salman liked the man so much and learnt from him how a true believer should be.

Unfortunately, the man passed away after a short time. However, before he did pass away, Salman asked him to commend him to another man holding the same true values and teachings. The priest told him about a man still sincere to the true Bible and teachings of the Messiah. “Go, my son, to Mosel, for there is a man whom you can trust,” were the last words of the priest to Salman.

A New journey to another strange land

Salman left Syria seeking the man in Mosel. He traveled a long journey on the back of camel to that land. He thought all the way how much he had to suffer in pursuit of truth. However, he was aware that it was inevitable for him to go that direction. He recalled how he left all riches and pleasures behind for the sake of a true religion for which he would tour the globe if he had to.





After several days Salman met the man described to him. He told him his story and asked him permission to keep his company. The man welcomed Salman and surrounded him with all the love and tenderness he could offer.

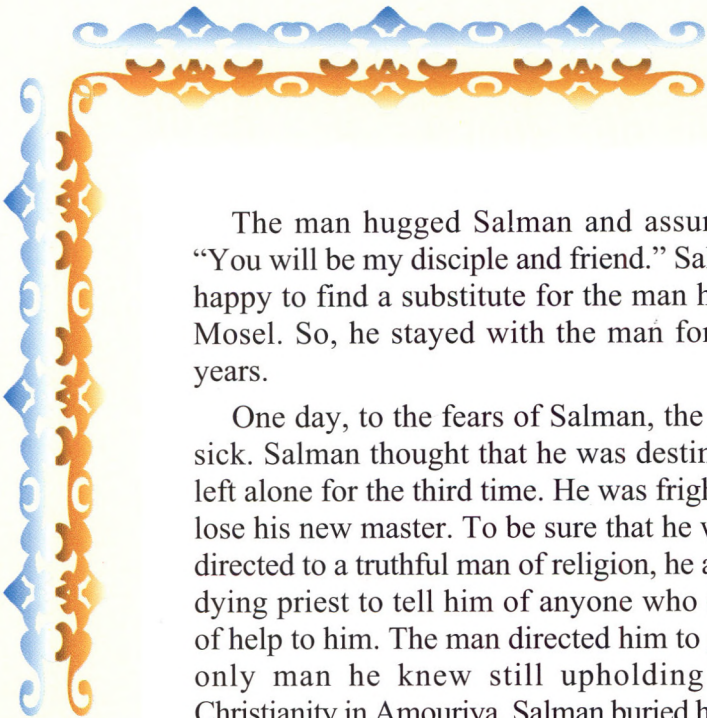
Salman stayed with the new scholar worshipping and serving in the church. Very short time passed before he became acquainted with the true Bible and until he got as much knowledge as he could. He added a lot to his experience and perfected his worship of god following the steps of this pious man.

Where to go now?

As Salman had been destined to continue his journey to the very end, the man whom he stayed with for years was now dying. Salman felt sad to depart with this good man and pitied for his misfortune. He asked the dying man to tell him where to go. The man told him about a man of true knowledge and strict adherence to Christianity at a town called Nasibeen.

Salman went to Nasibeen where he met the man he was sent to. He met the elderly man, told him his story and pleaded with him to accept him as a disciple. Salman said:

“I traveled a long way here and spent days and nights seeking your company. Would you accept me as your servant?”



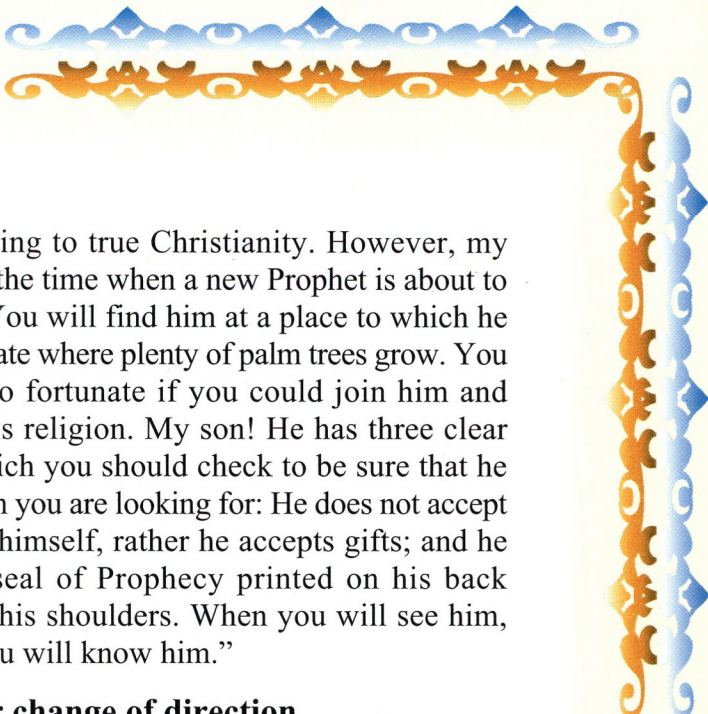
The man hugged Salman and assured him; “You will be my disciple and friend.” Salman felt happy to find a substitute for the man he lost in Mosel. So, he stayed with the man for several years.

One day, to the fears of Salman, the man got sick. Salman thought that he was destined to be left alone for the third time. He was frightened to lose his new master. To be sure that he would be directed to a truthful man of religion, he asked the dying priest to tell him of anyone who could be of help to him. The man directed him to go to the only man he knew still upholding to true Christianity in Amouriya. Salman buried his master and left to the new station in his journey.

The last Christian resort

Now Salman had become a mature man. He learnt the details of true Christianity. And there in Amouriya he met the man whom he was looking for. He told him the whole story and asked him to allow him to keep his company. After a short time, to the bad fortune, or may be the good fortune of Salman, the man passed away.

“Wait! old man!” Salman said, “Don’t leave me alone. Tell me where I am destined to go and whom I should look for as a teacher.” The man said to him with a weak voice: “My dear son, I have no idea about anyone in the world who is



still holding to true Christianity. However, my son, it is the time when a new Prophet is about to appear. You will find him at a place to which he will migrate where plenty of palm trees grow. You will be so fortunate if you could join him and follow his religion. My son! He has three clear signs which you should check to be sure that he is the man you are looking for: He does not accept alms for himself, rather he accepts gifts; and he has the seal of Prophecy printed on his back between his shoulders. When you will see him, surely you will know him.”

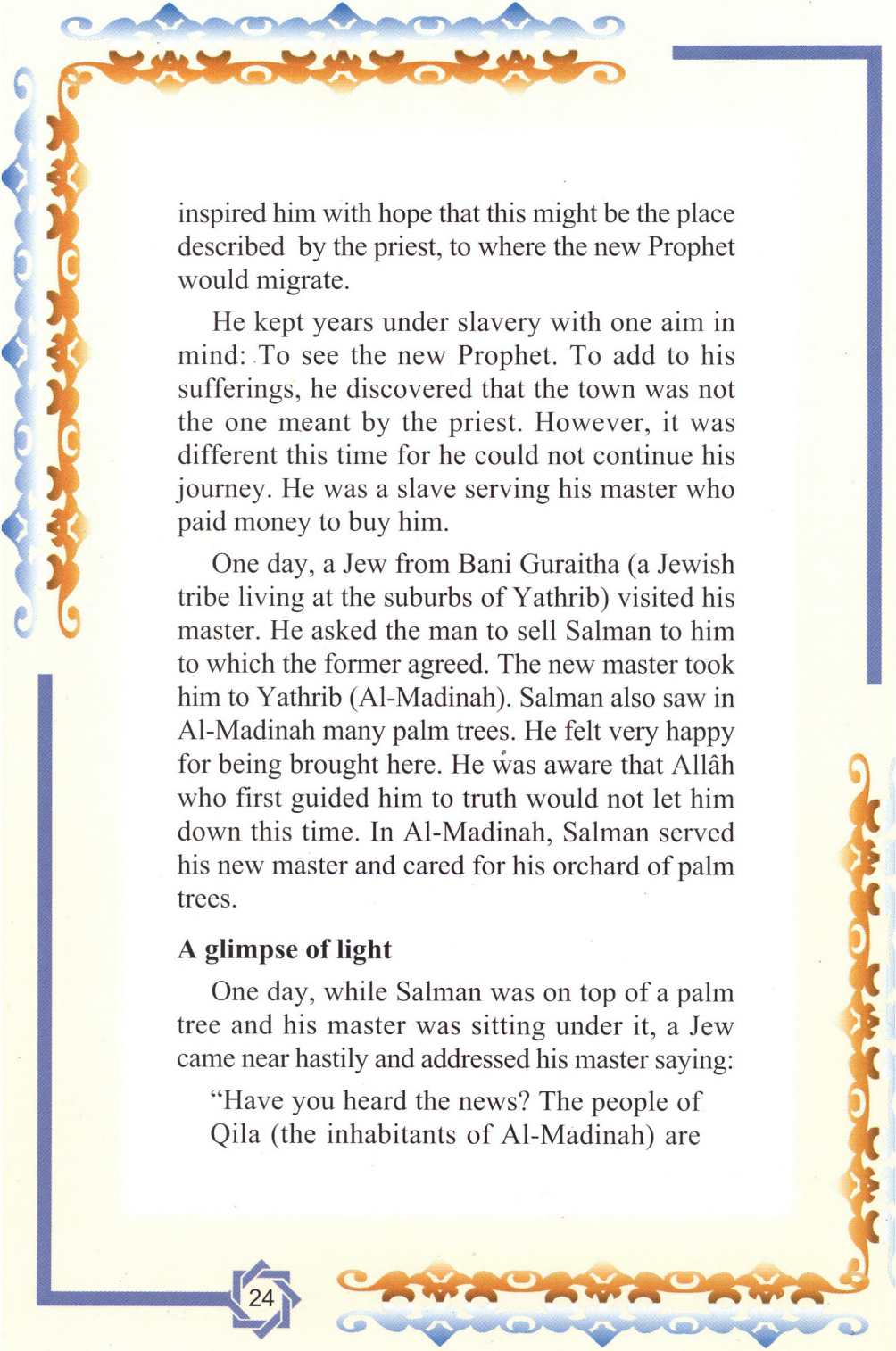
Another change of direction

Salman started asking people about the land that the man described. He finally knew that it was the Arabian Peninsula. However, he did not know how to get there and whom to accompany.

One day, a caravan was bound to that land. Salman asked the caravan men to take him with them. He offered them his cattle and sheep as a reward. They accepted the offer and took him to the land with plenty of palm trees.

Salman caught as a slave

When the caravan was about to reach Makkah, the caravan men captured Salman, took him as a slave and sold him to a Jew in the town. There he saw plenty of palm trees which, in spite of slavery,



inspired him with hope that this might be the place described by the priest, to where the new Prophet would migrate.

He kept years under slavery with one aim in mind: To see the new Prophet. To add to his sufferings, he discovered that the town was not the one meant by the priest. However, it was different this time for he could not continue his journey. He was a slave serving his master who paid money to buy him.

One day, a Jew from Bani Guraitha (a Jewish tribe living at the suburbs of Yathrib) visited his master. He asked the man to sell Salman to him to which the former agreed. The new master took him to Yathrib (Al-Madinah). Salman also saw in Al-Madinah many palm trees. He felt very happy for being brought here. He was aware that Allâh who first guided him to truth would not let him down this time. In Al-Madinah, Salman served his new master and cared for his orchard of palm trees.

A glimpse of light

One day, while Salman was on top of a palm tree and his master was sitting under it, a Jew came near hastily and addressed his master saying:

“Have you heard the news? The people of Qila (the inhabitants of Al-Madinah) are

competing to host a man who came from Makkah and who claims to be a Prophet.”

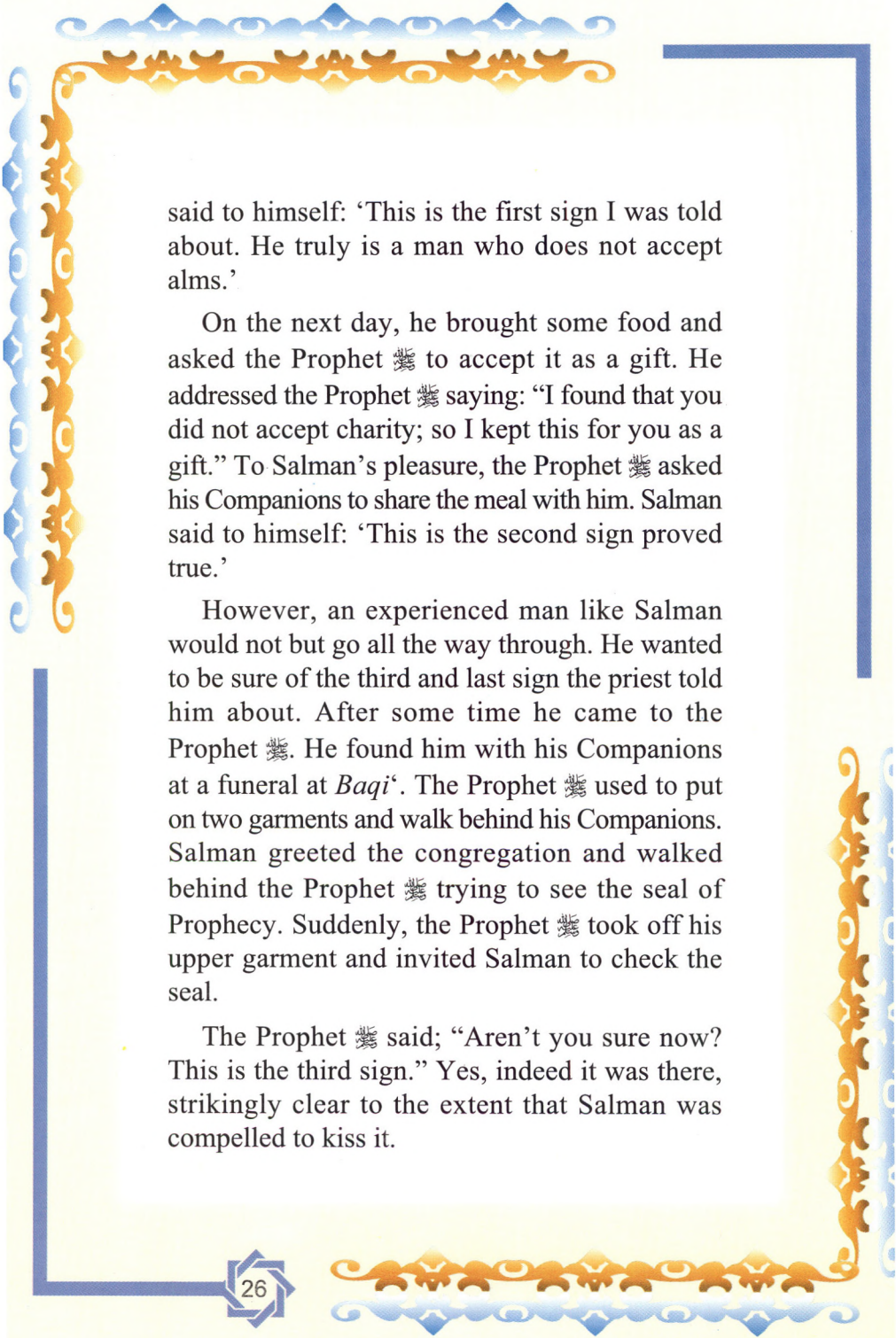
Upon hearing these words, Salman’s body started to shiver and he almost fell down from the tree. He hurriedly climbed down the tree and pleaded to the man to tell the news again.

His master felt angry for Salman’s interference, hit him severely in the side and said, “It is none of your business. Get back to work.” Salman obeyed the orders of his master.

He spent the whole day thinking of the words the rabbi said to him about the new Prophet and the news he heard from the Jew. He, on the other hand, felt that the days of slavery were about to end. But now he had to find a way to meet the Prophet ﷺ and test the signs told to him by the priest.

The first meeting with the Prophet ﷺ

Salman waited till sunset. He gathered some dates and went to the Prophet ﷺ at Quba. The Prophet ﷺ was sitting there with a group of his Companions. Salman greeted them and said, “I know you are strangers and poor. Please accept this charity.” He put the dates and watched how the Prophet ﷺ would act. To Salman's amazement, the Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions to take the food but he did not share it with them. Salman



said to himself: ‘This is the first sign I was told about. He truly is a man who does not accept alms.’

On the next day, he brought some food and asked the Prophet ﷺ to accept it as a gift. He addressed the Prophet ﷺ saying: “I found that you did not accept charity; so I kept this for you as a gift.” To Salman’s pleasure, the Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions to share the meal with him. Salman said to himself: ‘This is the second sign proved true.’

However, an experienced man like Salman would not but go all the way through. He wanted to be sure of the third and last sign the priest told him about. After some time he came to the Prophet ﷺ. He found him with his Companions at a funeral at *Baqi’*. The Prophet ﷺ used to put on two garments and walk behind his Companions. Salman greeted the congregation and walked behind the Prophet ﷺ trying to see the seal of Prophecy. Suddenly, the Prophet ﷺ took off his upper garment and invited Salman to check the seal.

The Prophet ﷺ said; “Aren’t you sure now? This is the third sign.” Yes, indeed it was there, strikingly clear to the extent that Salman was compelled to kiss it.

In the shrine of Islam

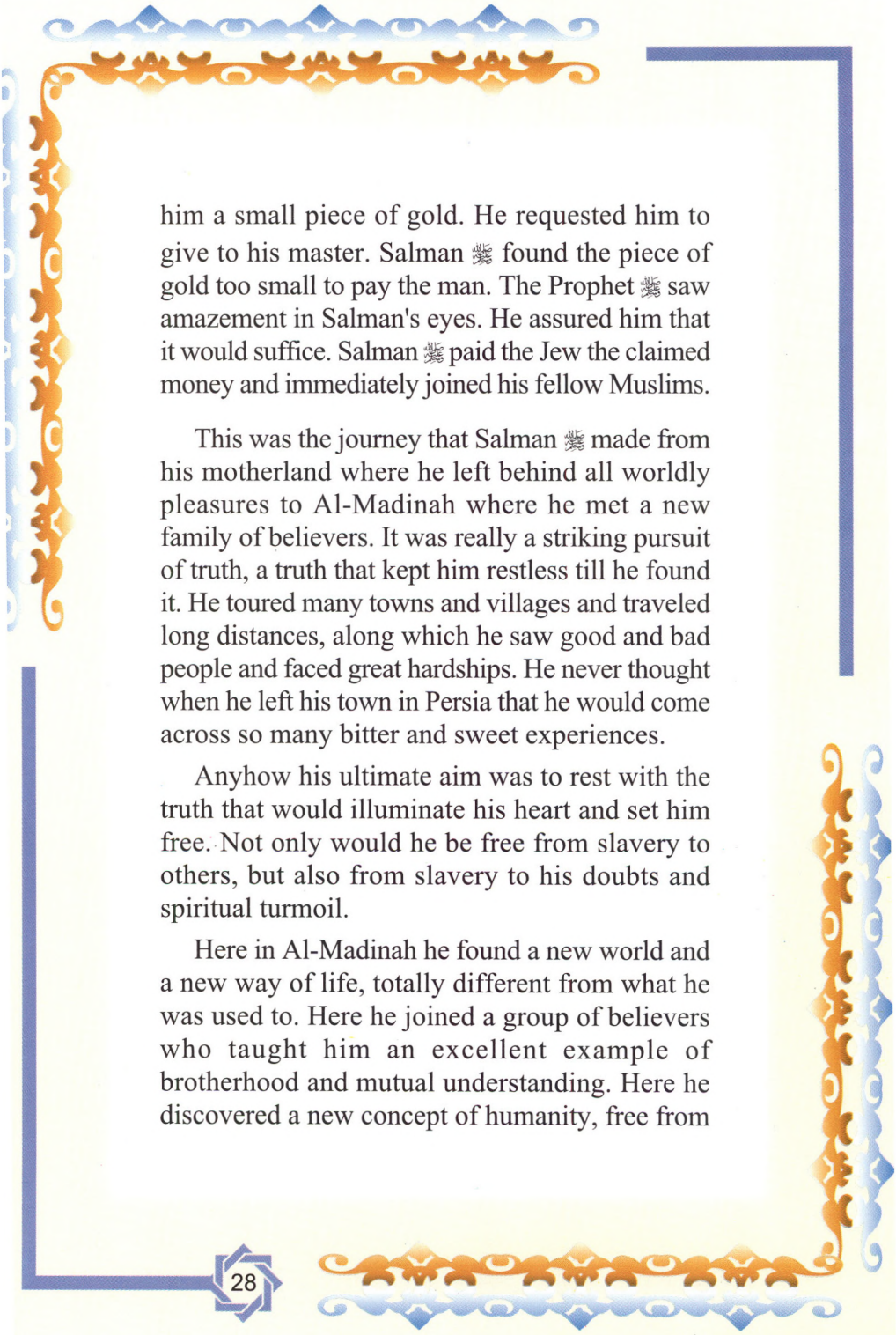
The Prophet ﷺ sat with Salman and asked him about his story. Salman told the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions about his journey. He advanced toward the Prophet ﷺ and told him that he accepted Islam as his Faith.

However, Salman ﷺ was still a slave. He was longing to free himself so as to be able to share with his fellow Muslims in building the new state of Islam. He urged the Prophet ﷺ to help him in order that he might free himself.

The Prophet ﷺ assured Salman ﷺ that he would help. He told him to get his master to agree to set him free. Salman ﷺ asked his master to set him free and the Jew accepted to do so on the condition that Salman ﷺ should grow three hundred palm trees for him and pay forty silver ounces.

As Salman ﷺ was too poor to meet his master's conditions, the Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions to offer help. Although they had very limited resources, they offered a number of palm trees and Salman ﷺ finally grew the requested palm trees. However, Salman ﷺ still had to pay the forty silver ounces. He thought for a while that he would never be able to escape the yoke of slavery.

One day the Prophet ﷺ called him and gave



him a small piece of gold. He requested him to give to his master. Salman ؓ found the piece of gold too small to pay the man. The Prophet ؓ saw amazement in Salman's eyes. He assured him that it would suffice. Salman ؓ paid the Jew the claimed money and immediately joined his fellow Muslims.

This was the journey that Salman ؓ made from his motherland where he left behind all worldly pleasures to Al-Madinah where he met a new family of believers. It was really a striking pursuit of truth, a truth that kept him restless till he found it. He toured many towns and villages and traveled long distances, along which he saw good and bad people and faced great hardships. He never thought when he left his town in Persia that he would come across so many bitter and sweet experiences.

Anyhow his ultimate aim was to rest with the truth that would illuminate his heart and set him free. Not only would he be free from slavery to others, but also from slavery to his doubts and spiritual turmoil.

Here in Al-Madinah he found a new world and a new way of life, totally different from what he was used to. Here he joined a group of believers who taught him an excellent example of brotherhood and mutual understanding. Here he discovered a new concept of humanity, free from

racial discrimination, with equal rights and duties regardless of colour or origin.

Finally, he found the ultimate source of light and wisdom where he would quench his thirst for a meaningful life and where he would accompany the man whom he longed to live with. He loved the Prophet ﷺ, the Muslims and Islam and he defended the true religion to his best.

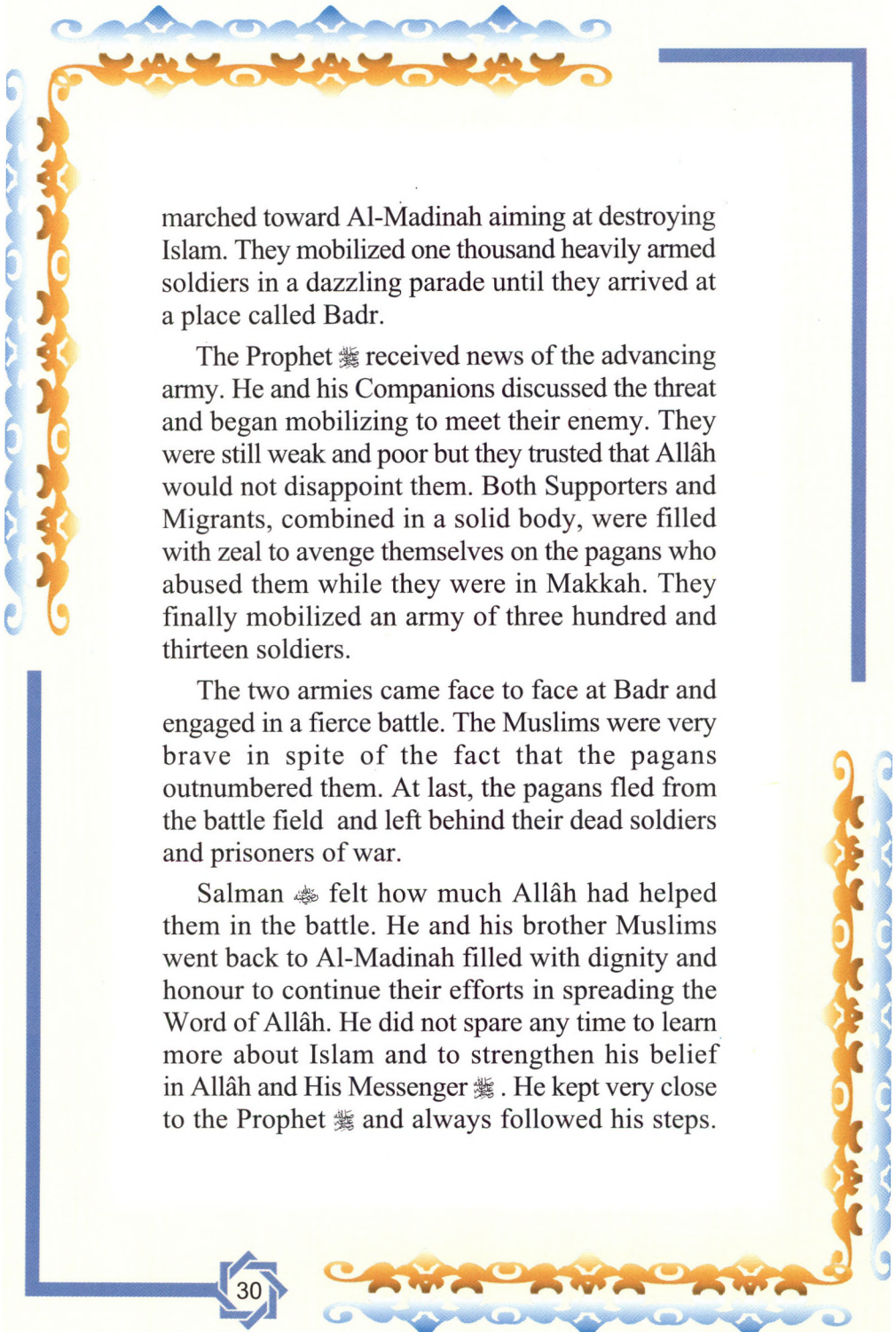
In this new community of believers, Salman ﷺ was preparing to start a new journey. This would be a journey that would go on to the last minute of his life. However, this new journey would be totally different. It would be a journey into truth and for the sake of spreading the light of truth.

The new challenges

Salman ﷺ was fully aware of the difficulties Muslims were facing in their struggle to keep secure against the plots of Jews as well as pagans. He and his brother Muslims wanted to proclaim the message of Islam, but the followers of evil would not let them do that.

Badr battle

No sooner did the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions settle in Al-Madinah before the pagans of Makkah started their conspiracies to put an end to the new message. During the second year after migration to Al-Madinah, the Quraish



marched toward Al-Madinah aiming at destroying Islam. They mobilized one thousand heavily armed soldiers in a dazzling parade until they arrived at a place called Badr.

The Prophet ﷺ received news of the advancing army. He and his Companions discussed the threat and began mobilizing to meet their enemy. They were still weak and poor but they trusted that Allâh would not disappoint them. Both Supporters and Migrants, combined in a solid body, were filled with zeal to avenge themselves on the pagans who abused them while they were in Makkah. They finally mobilized an army of three hundred and thirteen soldiers.

The two armies came face to face at Badr and engaged in a fierce battle. The Muslims were very brave in spite of the fact that the pagans outnumbered them. At last, the pagans fled from the battle field and left behind their dead soldiers and prisoners of war.

Salman ؓ felt how much Allâh had helped them in the battle. He and his brother Muslims went back to Al-Madinah filled with dignity and honour to continue their efforts in spreading the Word of Allâh. He did not spare any time to learn more about Islam and to strengthen his belief in Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ. He kept very close to the Prophet ﷺ and always followed his steps.

The Jewish conspiracies

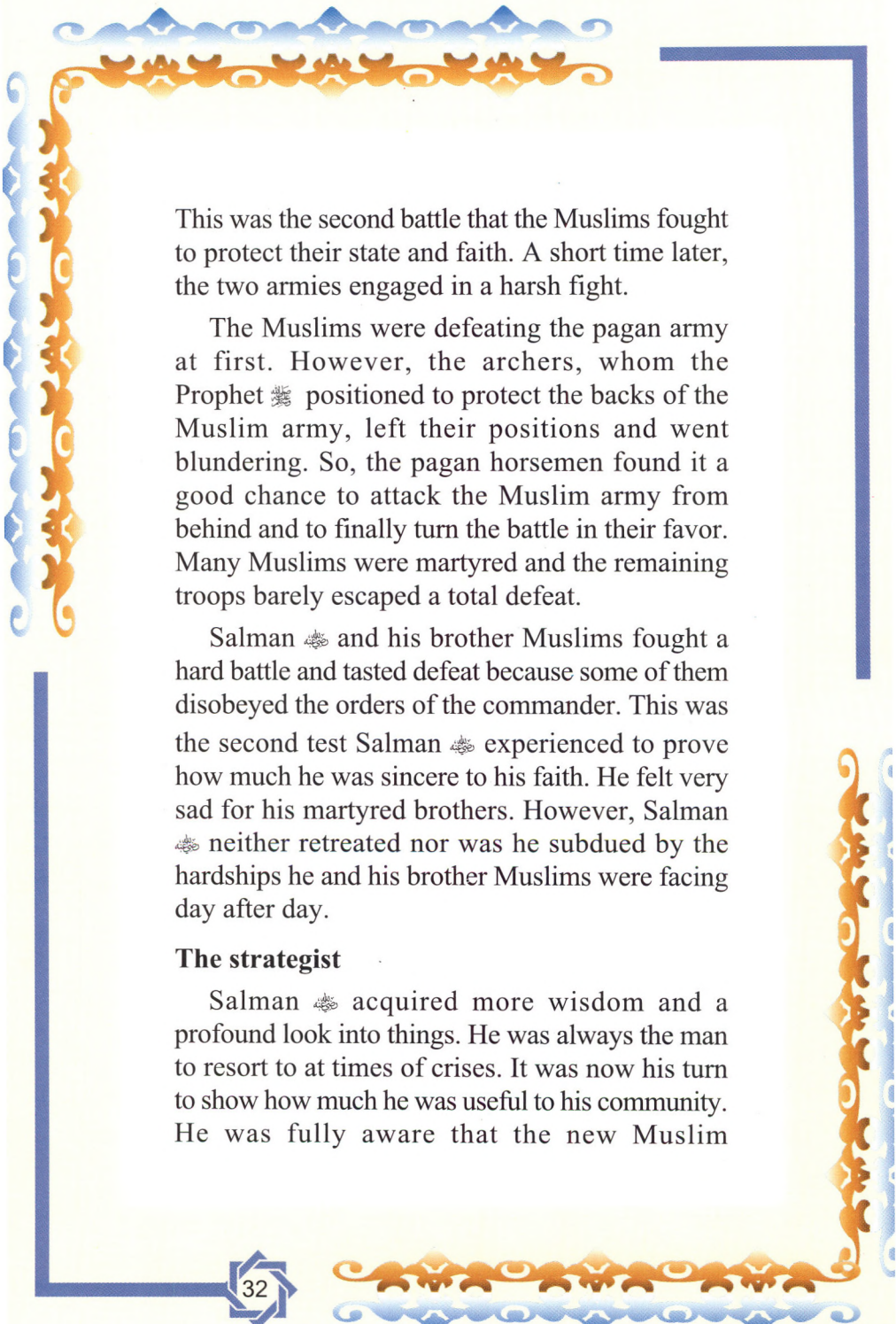
As suburbs inhabited by Jews surrounded Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ made treaties with them of mutual support. However, the Jews kept no promises and met no obligations. They felt the danger that Islam posed for them. Hence, they were secretly plotting to weaken the Muslims.

The Prophet ﷺ, out of trust, visited one of their clans and asked them to help the Muslims. Instead of supporting the Muslims, they tried to kill the Prophet ﷺ. A man climbed up on a roof and attempted to throw a big rock on the Prophet's head. However, the angel Gabriel told him about the plot and asked him to leave his place. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ had no choice but to expel them out of Al-Madinah.

Uhud battle, a setback!

To add to the Muslims' difficult situation, the pagans were restless after they had been defeated at Badr. They insisted on avenging themselves against the Muslims. They mobilized an army of three thousand soldiers and again marched toward Al-Madinah.

The Prophet ﷺ knew of the Quraish's plans and decided to face the challenge. He held a war council and finally decided to meet the enemy at Uhud.



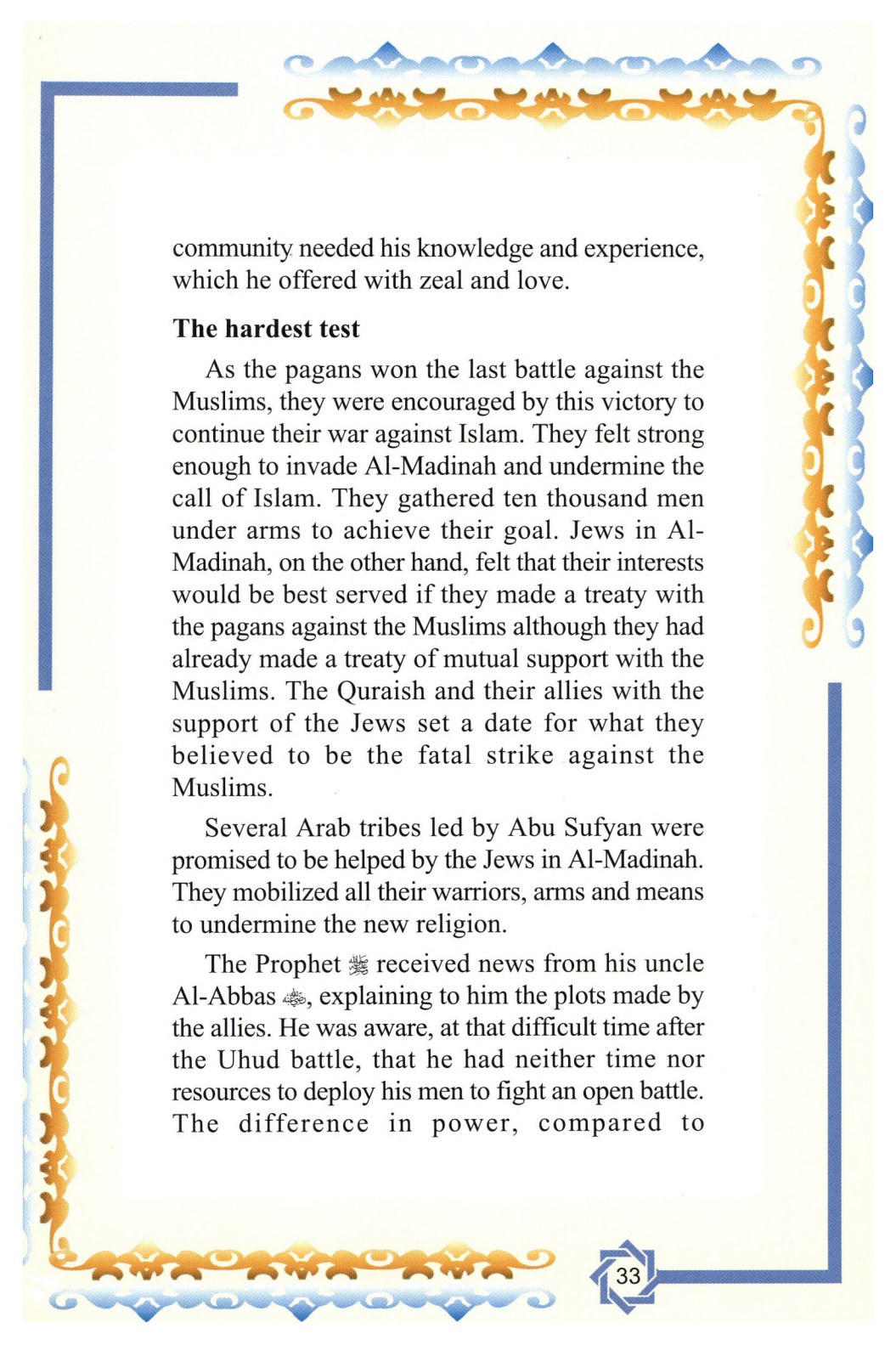
This was the second battle that the Muslims fought to protect their state and faith. A short time later, the two armies engaged in a harsh fight.

The Muslims were defeating the pagan army at first. However, the archers, whom the Prophet ﷺ positioned to protect the backs of the Muslim army, left their positions and went blundering. So, the pagan horsemen found it a good chance to attack the Muslim army from behind and to finally turn the battle in their favor. Many Muslims were martyred and the remaining troops barely escaped a total defeat.

Salman ؓ and his brother Muslims fought a hard battle and tasted defeat because some of them disobeyed the orders of the commander. This was the second test Salman ؓ experienced to prove how much he was sincere to his faith. He felt very sad for his martyred brothers. However, Salman ؓ neither retreated nor was he subdued by the hardships he and his brother Muslims were facing day after day.

The strategist

Salman ؓ acquired more wisdom and a profound look into things. He was always the man to resort to at times of crises. It was now his turn to show how much he was useful to his community. He was fully aware that the new Muslim



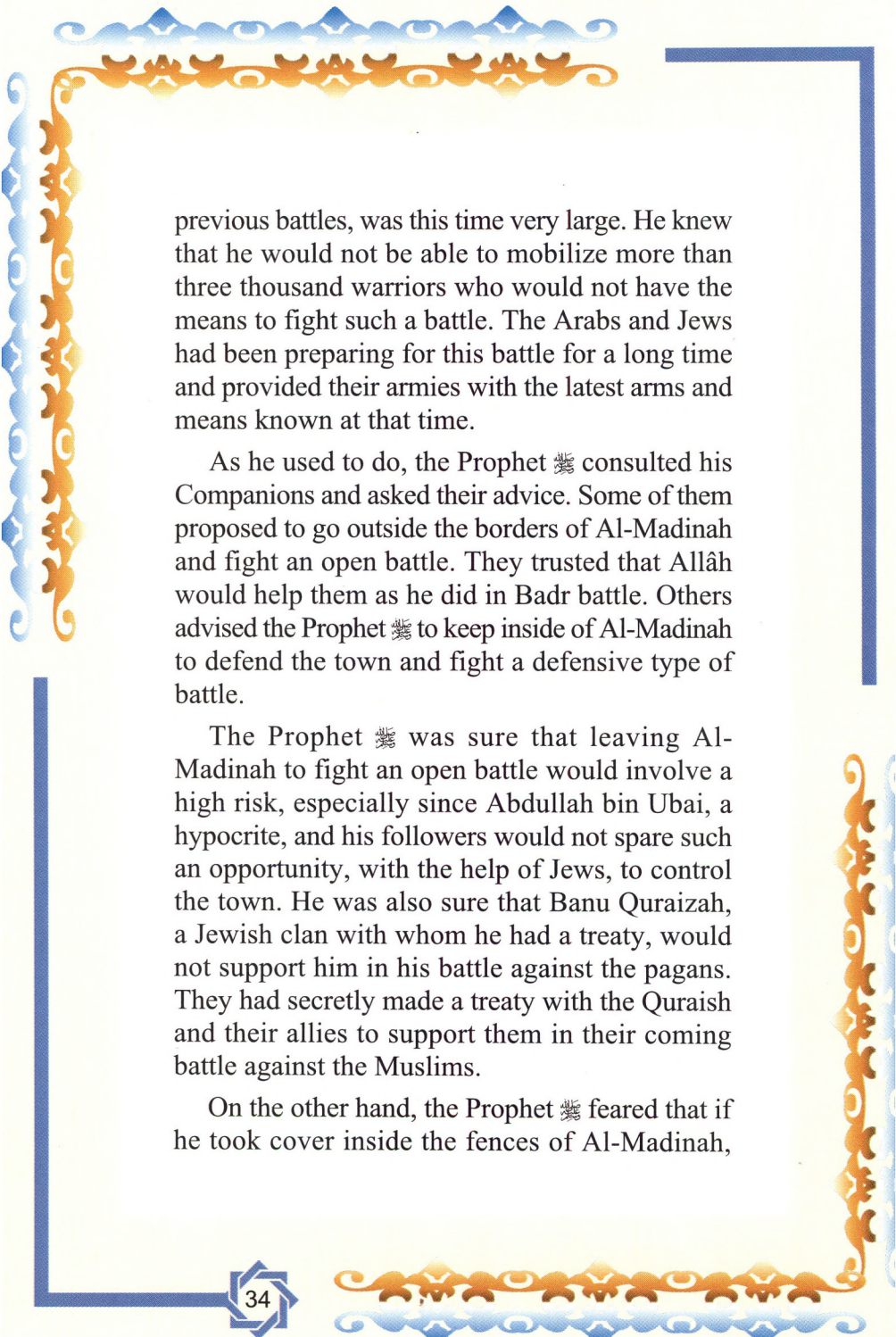
community needed his knowledge and experience, which he offered with zeal and love.

The hardest test

As the pagans won the last battle against the Muslims, they were encouraged by this victory to continue their war against Islam. They felt strong enough to invade Al-Madinah and undermine the call of Islam. They gathered ten thousand men under arms to achieve their goal. Jews in Al-Madinah, on the other hand, felt that their interests would be best served if they made a treaty with the pagans against the Muslims although they had already made a treaty of mutual support with the Muslims. The Quraish and their allies with the support of the Jews set a date for what they believed to be the fatal strike against the Muslims.

Several Arab tribes led by Abu Sufyan were promised to be helped by the Jews in Al-Madinah. They mobilized all their warriors, arms and means to undermine the new religion.

The Prophet ﷺ received news from his uncle Al-Abbas ؓ, explaining to him the plots made by the allies. He was aware, at that difficult time after the Uhud battle, that he had neither time nor resources to deploy his men to fight an open battle. The difference in power, compared to

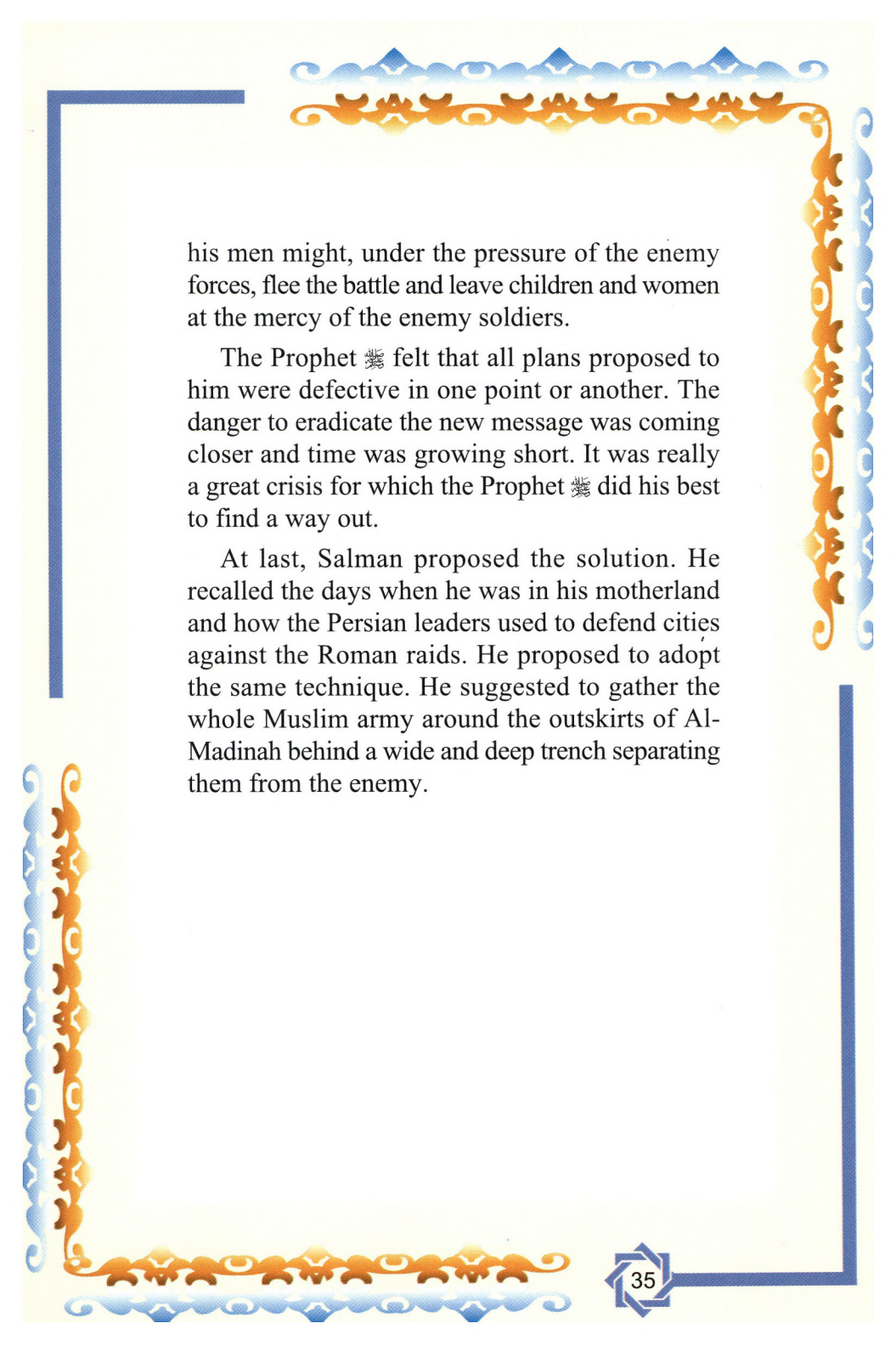


previous battles, was this time very large. He knew that he would not be able to mobilize more than three thousand warriors who would not have the means to fight such a battle. The Arabs and Jews had been preparing for this battle for a long time and provided their armies with the latest arms and means known at that time.

As he used to do, the Prophet ﷺ consulted his Companions and asked their advice. Some of them proposed to go outside the borders of Al-Madinah and fight an open battle. They trusted that Allâh would help them as he did in Badr battle. Others advised the Prophet ﷺ to keep inside of Al-Madinah to defend the town and fight a defensive type of battle.

The Prophet ﷺ was sure that leaving Al-Madinah to fight an open battle would involve a high risk, especially since Abdullah bin Ubai, a hypocrite, and his followers would not spare such an opportunity, with the help of Jews, to control the town. He was also sure that Banu Quraizah, a Jewish clan with whom he had a treaty, would not support him in his battle against the pagans. They had secretly made a treaty with the Quraish and their allies to support them in their coming battle against the Muslims.

On the other hand, the Prophet ﷺ feared that if he took cover inside the fences of Al-Madinah,



his men might, under the pressure of the enemy forces, flee the battle and leave children and women at the mercy of the enemy soldiers.

The Prophet ﷺ felt that all plans proposed to him were defective in one point or another. The danger to eradicate the new message was coming closer and time was growing short. It was really a great crisis for which the Prophet ﷺ did his best to find a way out.

At last, Salman proposed the solution. He recalled the days when he was in his motherland and how the Persian leaders used to defend cities against the Roman raids. He proposed to adopt the same technique. He suggested to gather the whole Muslim army around the outskirts of Al-Madinah behind a wide and deep trench separating them from the enemy.

The Trench

Muslims were astonished to hear Salman's proposal. They had never known such a way of fighting. All they knew was to meet with the enemy face to face in an open battle. However, Salman ﷺ explained the plan. He proposed to dig a wide and deep trench behind fences with the Muslim army to be deployed at the inner side of the trench with their backs to Al-Madinah. This would foil any attempts made by the enemy soldiers to cross over the trench.

The Prophet ﷺ welcomed the idea and asked Salman ﷺ to set the layout. Salman ﷺ planned to deploy the archers over fences while the other soldiers were to be deployed on the inner side of the trench with their backs to the Al-Madinah fences.

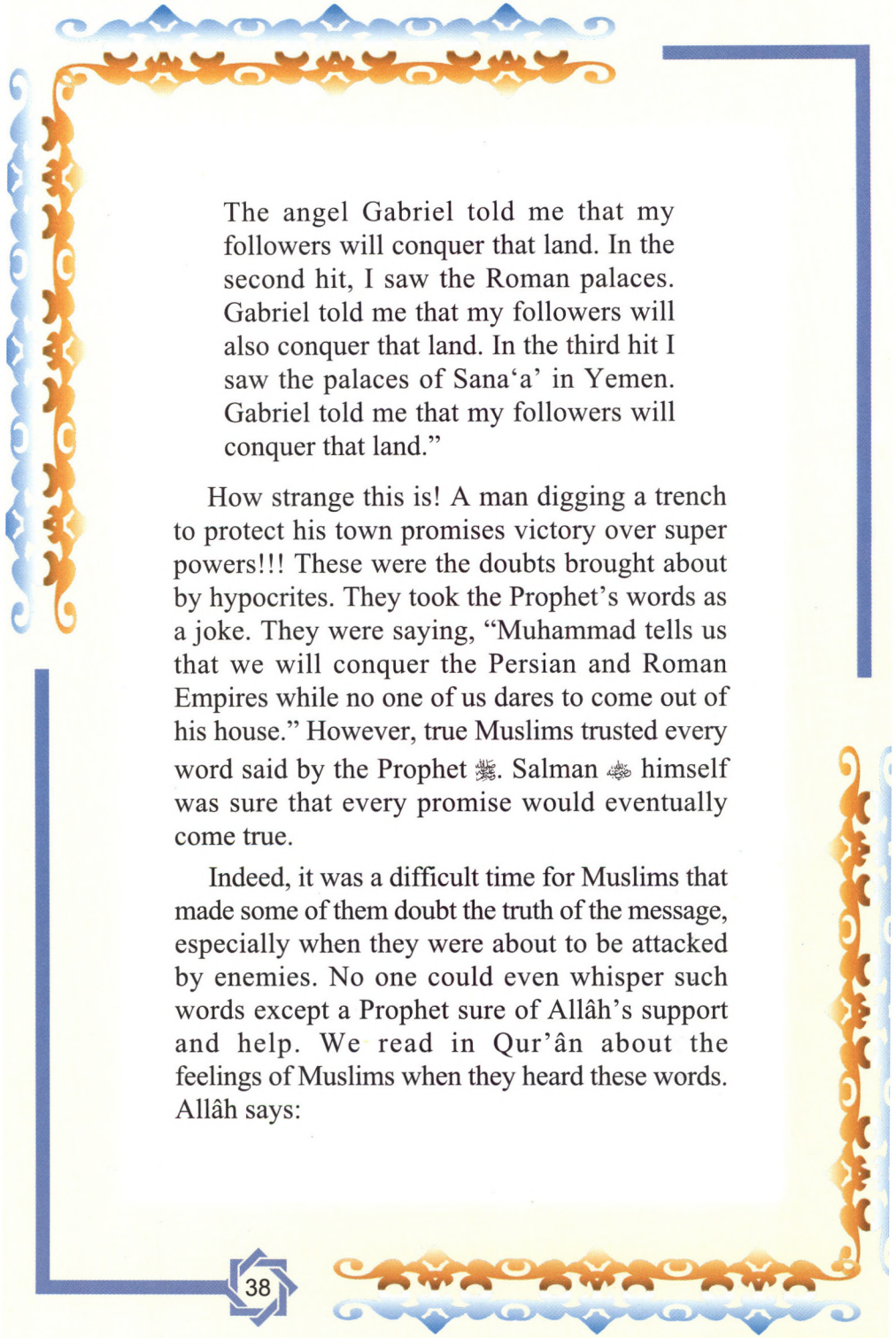
After lengthy discussions, the Prophet ﷺ was totally convinced that this was the only way to defend their town and community. He gave orders to dig the trench and initiated the first strike. All Muslims participated in the work with a very high spirit and overwhelming enthusiasm. Salman ﷺ helped them and told them stories about the miracles that trenches made against invading armies. Work on digging the trench was progressing hour by hour.

As usual in every human effort, some difficulties might appear. While Muslims were digging in a rocky area, a huge rock blocked the progress of work. Nine persons were trying their best to break the rock but all efforts were in vain. At last they suggested to report the case to the Prophet ﷺ.

Miracles and promised miracles

The Prophet ﷺ took Salman's ax, went down into the trench and hit the rock with the ax. Sparks came out as a result of the blow and the Prophet ﷺ shouted: *Allâhu Akbar* (Allâh is the Greatest). The other Muslims standing at the top of the trench repeated his words. The second hit by the Prophet ﷺ brought out a light as if a lantern was lit in a dark room and the Prophet ﷺ said: *Allâhu Akbar* (Allâh is the Greatest). The other Muslims repeated his words. The third hit by the Prophet ﷺ broke the rock into pieces. The Prophet ﷺ came out of the trench. Salman ؓ was filled with wonder and said:

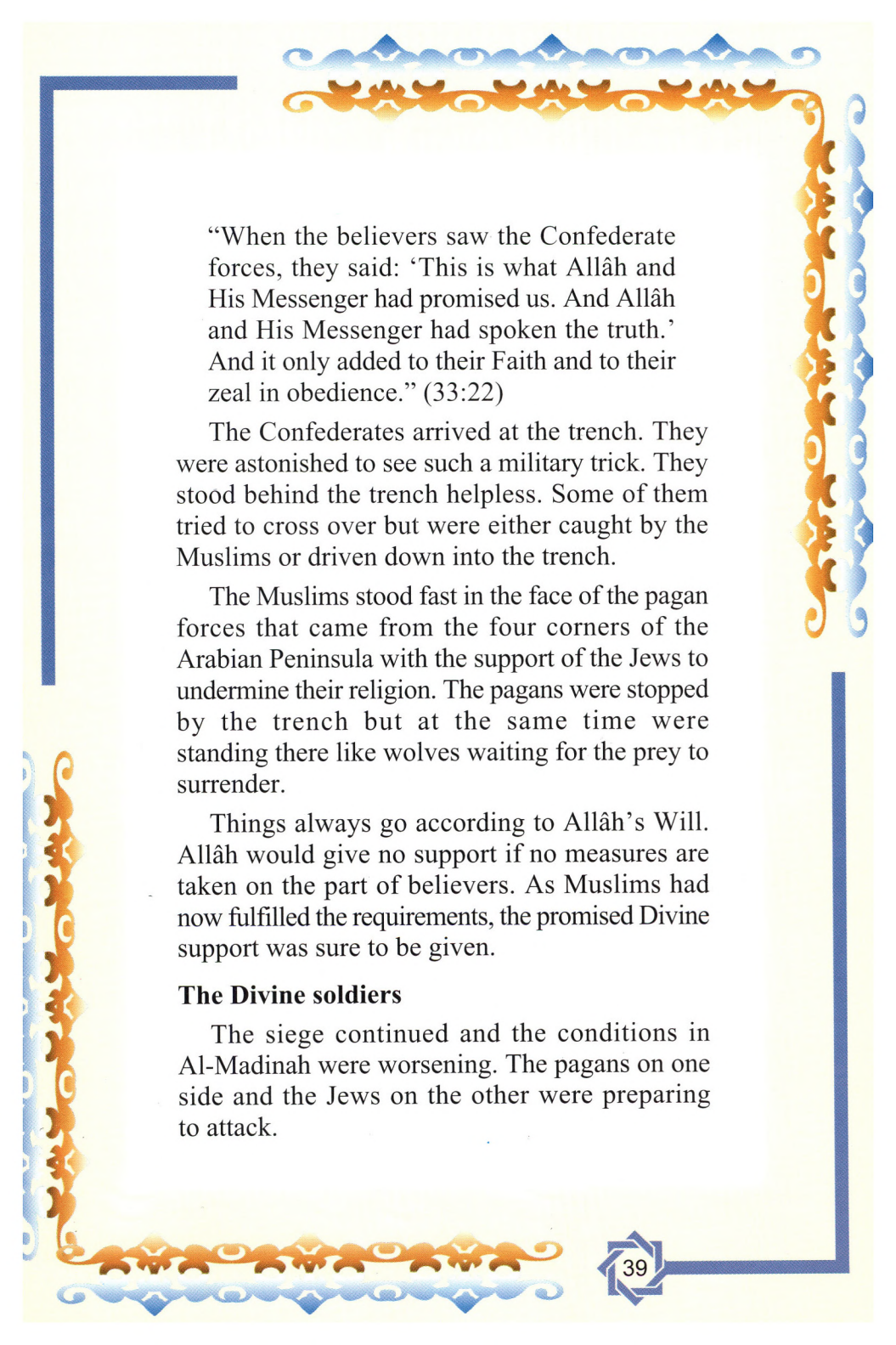
“O Messenger of Allâh ﷺ! I have seen something I had never seen before.” The Prophet ﷺ asked the other Muslims, “Did you see what Salman saw?” They replied, “Yes, we saw you hitting the rock and light was coming out.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “When I hit the rock the first time I saw Persian palaces and Caesar's fortresses.



The angel Gabriel told me that my followers will conquer that land. In the second hit, I saw the Roman palaces. Gabriel told me that my followers will also conquer that land. In the third hit I saw the palaces of Sana‘a’ in Yemen. Gabriel told me that my followers will conquer that land.”

How strange this is! A man digging a trench to protect his town promises victory over super powers!!! These were the doubts brought about by hypocrites. They took the Prophet’s words as a joke. They were saying, “Muhammad tells us that we will conquer the Persian and Roman Empires while no one of us dares to come out of his house.” However, true Muslims trusted every word said by the Prophet ﷺ. Salman ؓ himself was sure that every promise would eventually come true.

Indeed, it was a difficult time for Muslims that made some of them doubt the truth of the message, especially when they were about to be attacked by enemies. No one could even whisper such words except a Prophet sure of Allâh’s support and help. We read in Qur’ân about the feelings of Muslims when they heard these words. Allâh says:



“When the believers saw the Confederate forces, they said: ‘This is what Allâh and His Messenger had promised us. And Allâh and His Messenger had spoken the truth.’ And it only added to their Faith and to their zeal in obedience.” (33:22)

The Confederates arrived at the trench. They were astonished to see such a military trick. They stood behind the trench helpless. Some of them tried to cross over but were either caught by the Muslims or driven down into the trench.

The Muslims stood fast in the face of the pagan forces that came from the four corners of the Arabian Peninsula with the support of the Jews to undermine their religion. The pagans were stopped by the trench but at the same time were standing there like wolves waiting for the prey to surrender.

Things always go according to Allâh’s Will. Allâh would give no support if no measures are taken on the part of believers. As Muslims had now fulfilled the requirements, the promised Divine support was sure to be given.

The Divine soldiers

The siege continued and the conditions in Al-Madinah were worsening. The pagans on one side and the Jews on the other were preparing to attack.

A very high and cold wind blew through the enemy's tents and forced them to leave with despair. Allâh had sent his help down to the Muslims. Allâh says:

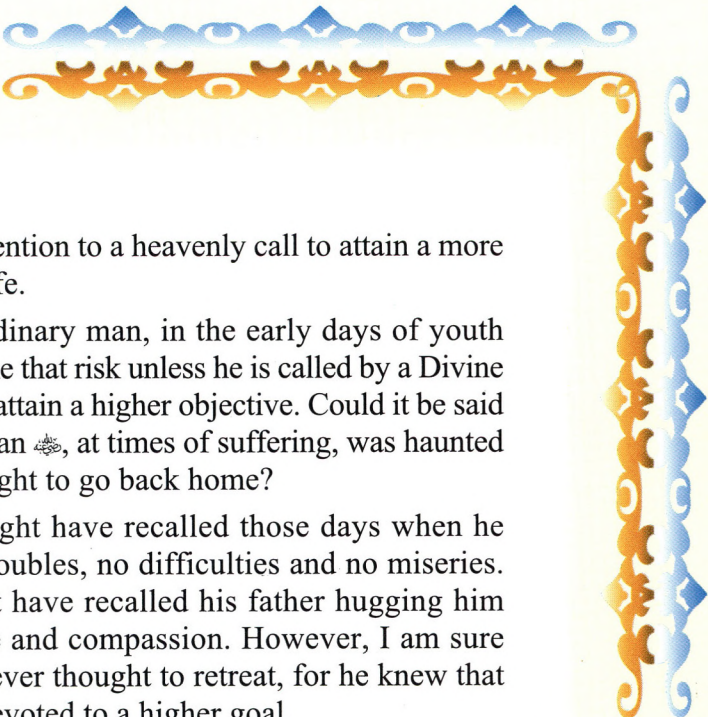
“When there came against you hosts, and We sent against them a wind and forces that you saw not [i.e., troop of angels during the battle of *Al-Ahzâb* (the Confederates)]. And Allâh is Ever All-Seer of what you do.”
(33:9)

Since the day Salman ؓ heard those words from the Prophet ﷺ he began counting days to witness the truth of Islam spreading all over the globe. He surely knew that it was a matter of time to see the Persian and Roman empires conquered by the new religion as promised by the Prophet ﷺ.

And indeed, he witnessed the four corners of the globe saying the blessed call of *Allâhu Akbar* (Allâh is the Greatest). He saw with his own eyes peoples of all nations gathered together to repeat these Divine words as he had heard them on the day he was digging the trench to protect the eternal message of Islam.

The real family

Salman ؓ rejected the pressure of the powers of darkness and toured the globe searching for truth. He left all worldly things behind and directed



all his attention to a heavenly call to attain a more fruitful life.

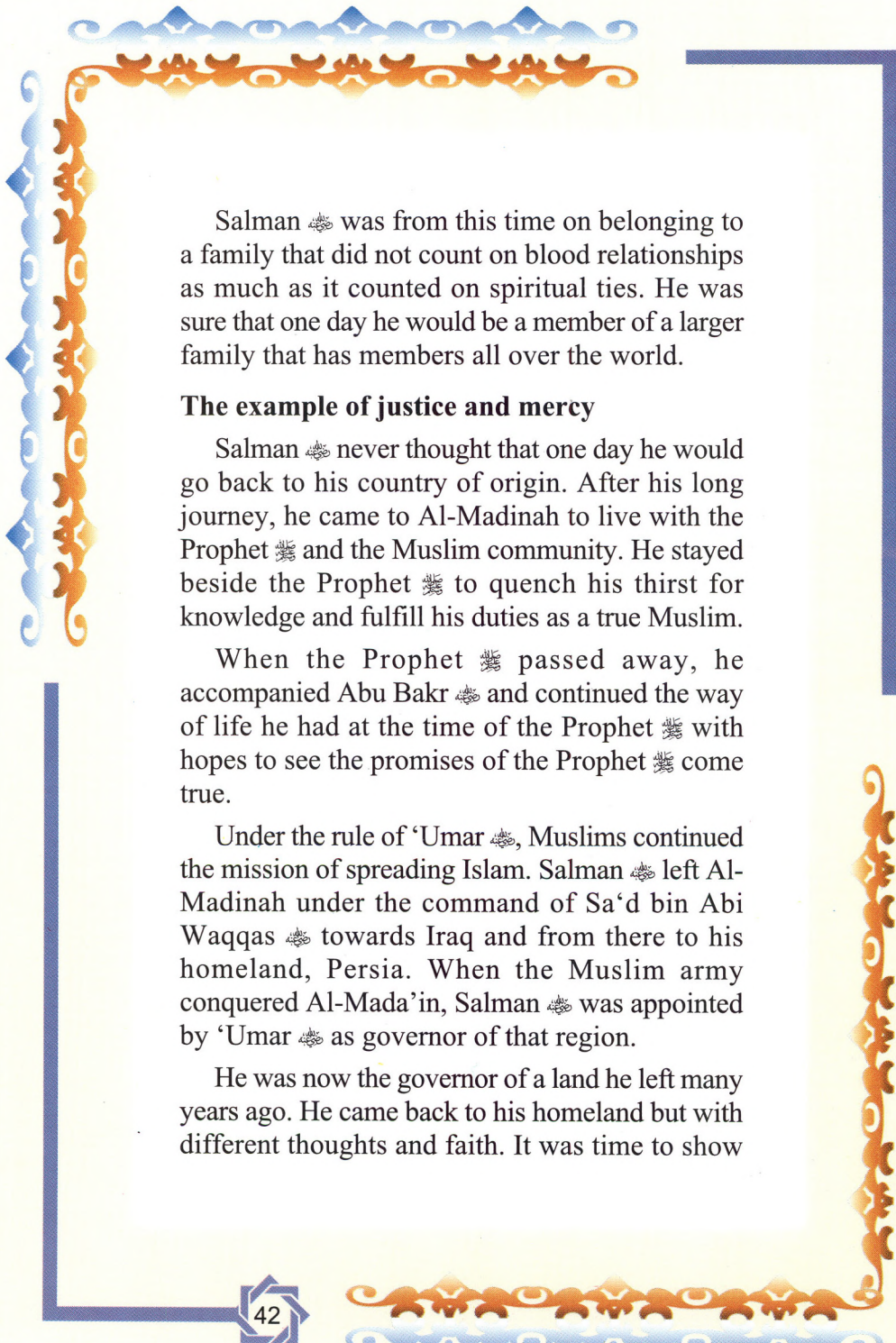
No ordinary man, in the early days of youth would take that risk unless he is called by a Divine power to attain a higher objective. Could it be said that Salman ؓ, at times of suffering, was haunted by a thought to go back home?

He might have recalled those days when he had no troubles, no difficulties and no miseries. He might have recalled his father hugging him with love and compassion. However, I am sure that he never thought to retreat, for he knew that he was devoted to a higher goal.

When Salman ؓ arrived in Al-Madinah and joined the Muslim community, from the very beginning, he felt a real sense of family. As soon as he declared himself a Muslim, the whole Muslim community helped him to free himself from slavery. Now he felt that all Muslims were his brothers and sisters.

He was loved by all Muslims, both Migrants and Supporters. They all asked him to be a member of their families. However, he was honored at last to be a member of the Prophet's family when the Prophet ﷺ told both parties:

“Salman ؓ is a member of the House of the Prophet .”



Salman ؓ was from this time on belonging to a family that did not count on blood relationships as much as it counted on spiritual ties. He was sure that one day he would be a member of a larger family that has members all over the world.

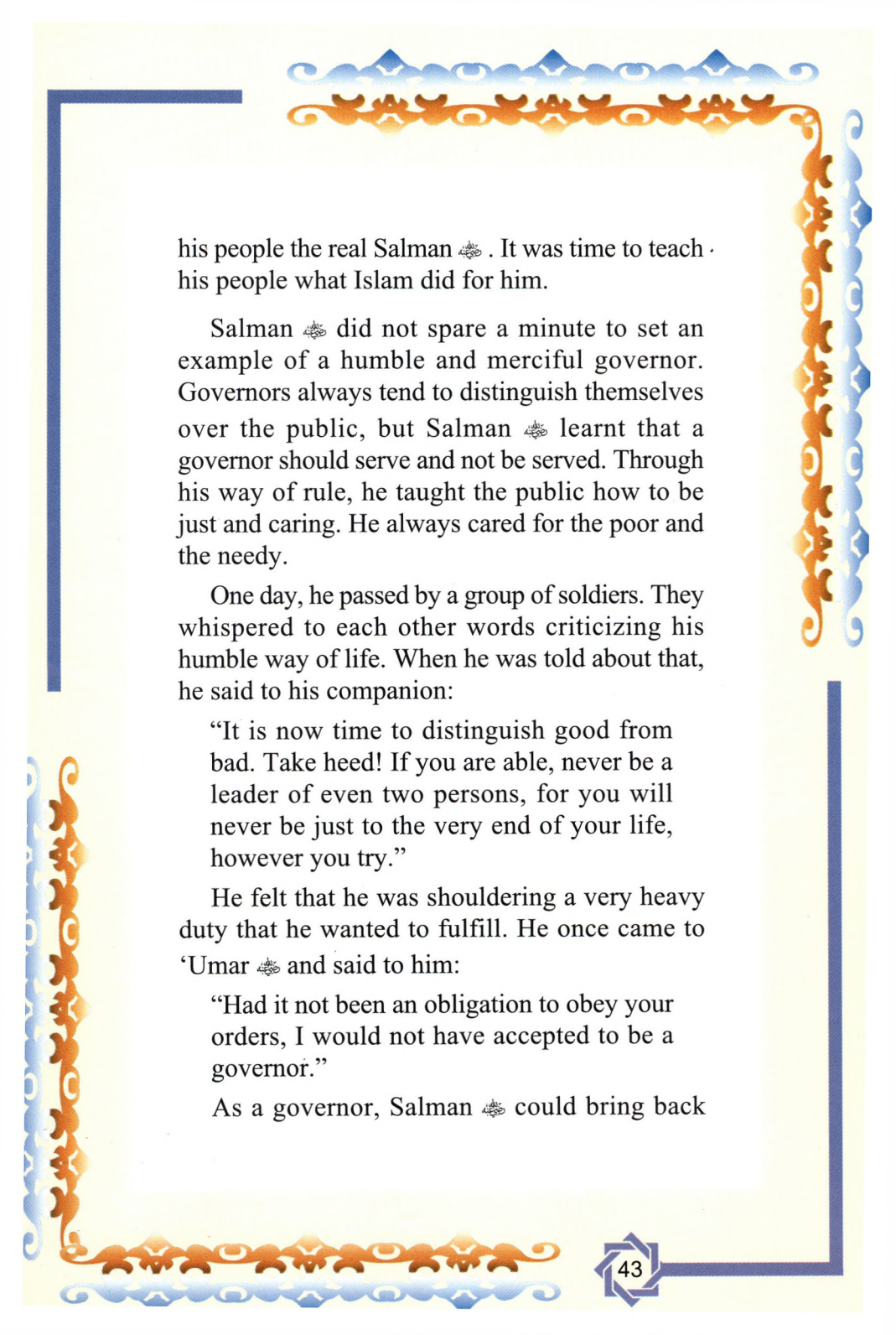
The example of justice and mercy

Salman ؓ never thought that one day he would go back to his country of origin. After his long journey, he came to Al-Madinah to live with the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslim community. He stayed beside the Prophet ﷺ to quench his thirst for knowledge and fulfill his duties as a true Muslim.

When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, he accompanied Abu Bakr ؓ and continued the way of life he had at the time of the Prophet ﷺ with hopes to see the promises of the Prophet ﷺ come true.

Under the rule of 'Umar ؓ, Muslims continued the mission of spreading Islam. Salman ؓ left Al-Madinah under the command of Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ؓ towards Iraq and from there to his homeland, Persia. When the Muslim army conquered Al-Mada'in, Salman ؓ was appointed by 'Umar ؓ as governor of that region.

He was now the governor of a land he left many years ago. He came back to his homeland but with different thoughts and faith. It was time to show



his people the real Salman ؓ . It was time to teach his people what Islam did for him.

Salman ؓ did not spare a minute to set an example of a humble and merciful governor. Governors always tend to distinguish themselves over the public, but Salman ؓ learnt that a governor should serve and not be served. Through his way of rule, he taught the public how to be just and caring. He always cared for the poor and the needy.

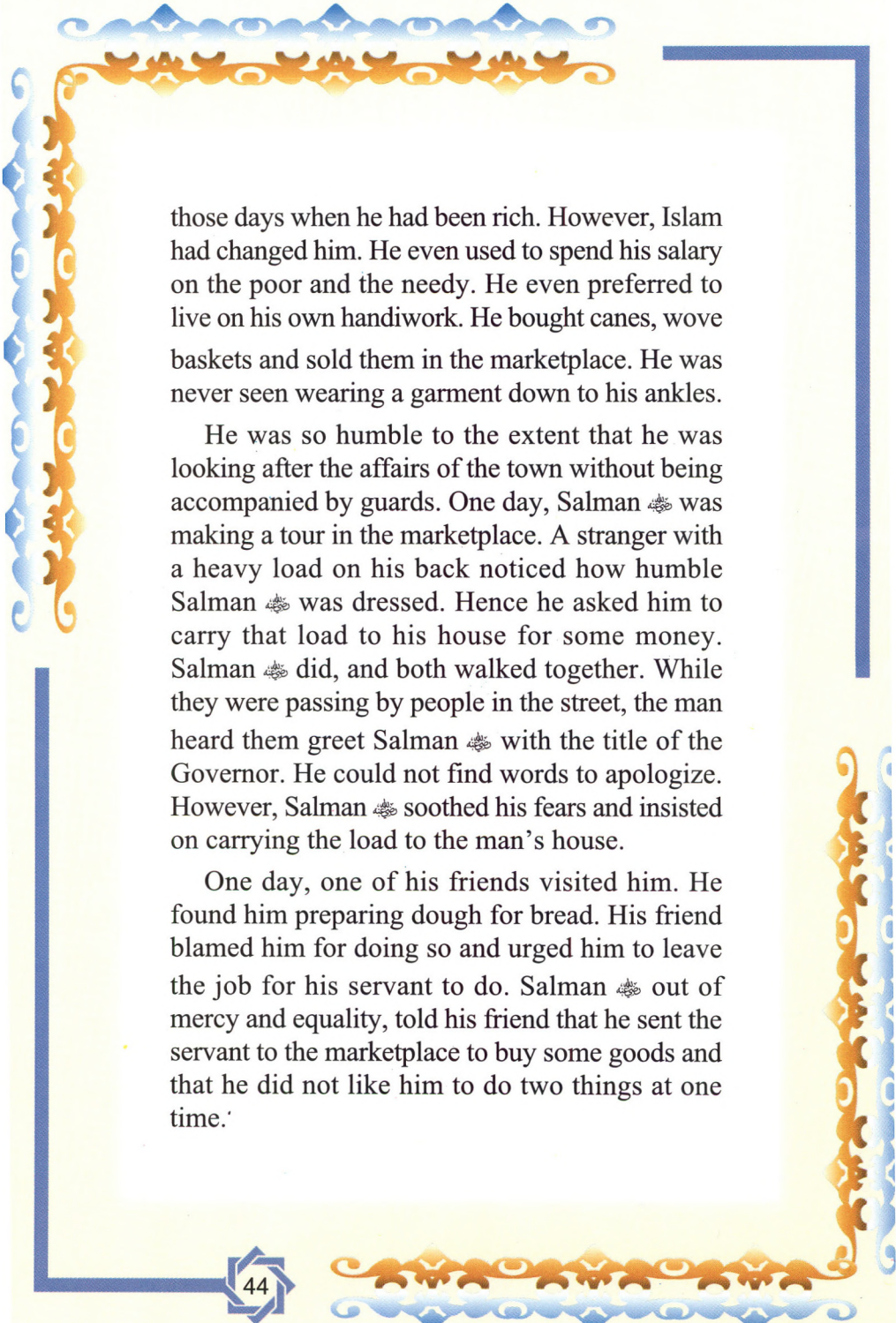
One day, he passed by a group of soldiers. They whispered to each other words criticizing his humble way of life. When he was told about that, he said to his companion:

“It is now time to distinguish good from bad. Take heed! If you are able, never be a leader of even two persons, for you will never be just to the very end of your life, however you try.”

He felt that he was shouldering a very heavy duty that he wanted to fulfill. He once came to ‘Umar ؓ and said to him:

“Had it not been an obligation to obey your orders, I would not have accepted to be a governor.”

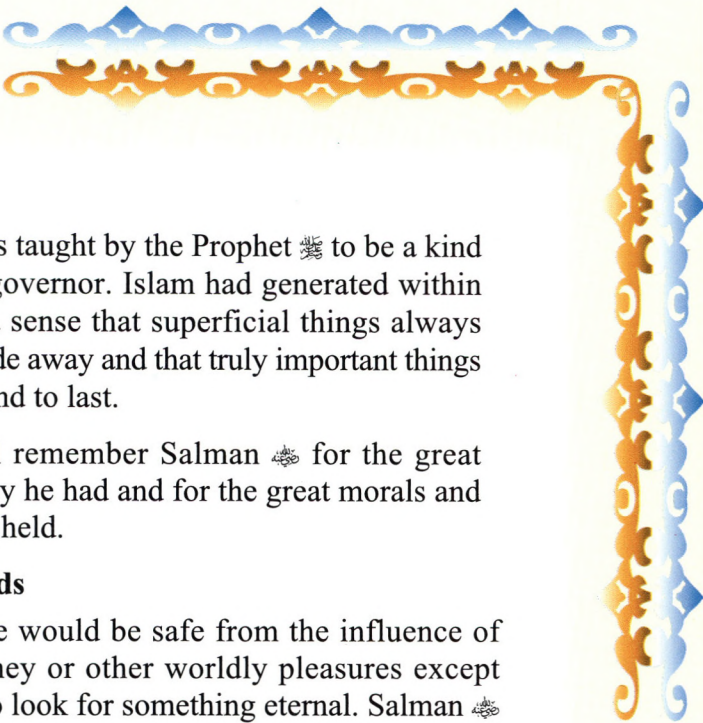
As a governor, Salman ؓ could bring back



those days when he had been rich. However, Islam had changed him. He even used to spend his salary on the poor and the needy. He even preferred to live on his own handiwork. He bought canes, wove baskets and sold them in the marketplace. He was never seen wearing a garment down to his ankles.

He was so humble to the extent that he was looking after the affairs of the town without being accompanied by guards. One day, Salman ؓ was making a tour in the marketplace. A stranger with a heavy load on his back noticed how humble Salman ؓ was dressed. Hence he asked him to carry that load to his house for some money. Salman ؓ did, and both walked together. While they were passing by people in the street, the man heard them greet Salman ؓ with the title of the Governor. He could not find words to apologize. However, Salman ؓ soothed his fears and insisted on carrying the load to the man's house.

One day, one of his friends visited him. He found him preparing dough for bread. His friend blamed him for doing so and urged him to leave the job for his servant to do. Salman ؓ out of mercy and equality, told his friend that he sent the servant to the marketplace to buy some goods and that he did not like him to do two things at one time.'



He was taught by the Prophet ﷺ to be a kind and just governor. Islam had generated within his soul a sense that superficial things always tend to fade away and that truly important things always tend to last.

We all remember Salman ؓ for the great personality he had and for the great morals and values he held.

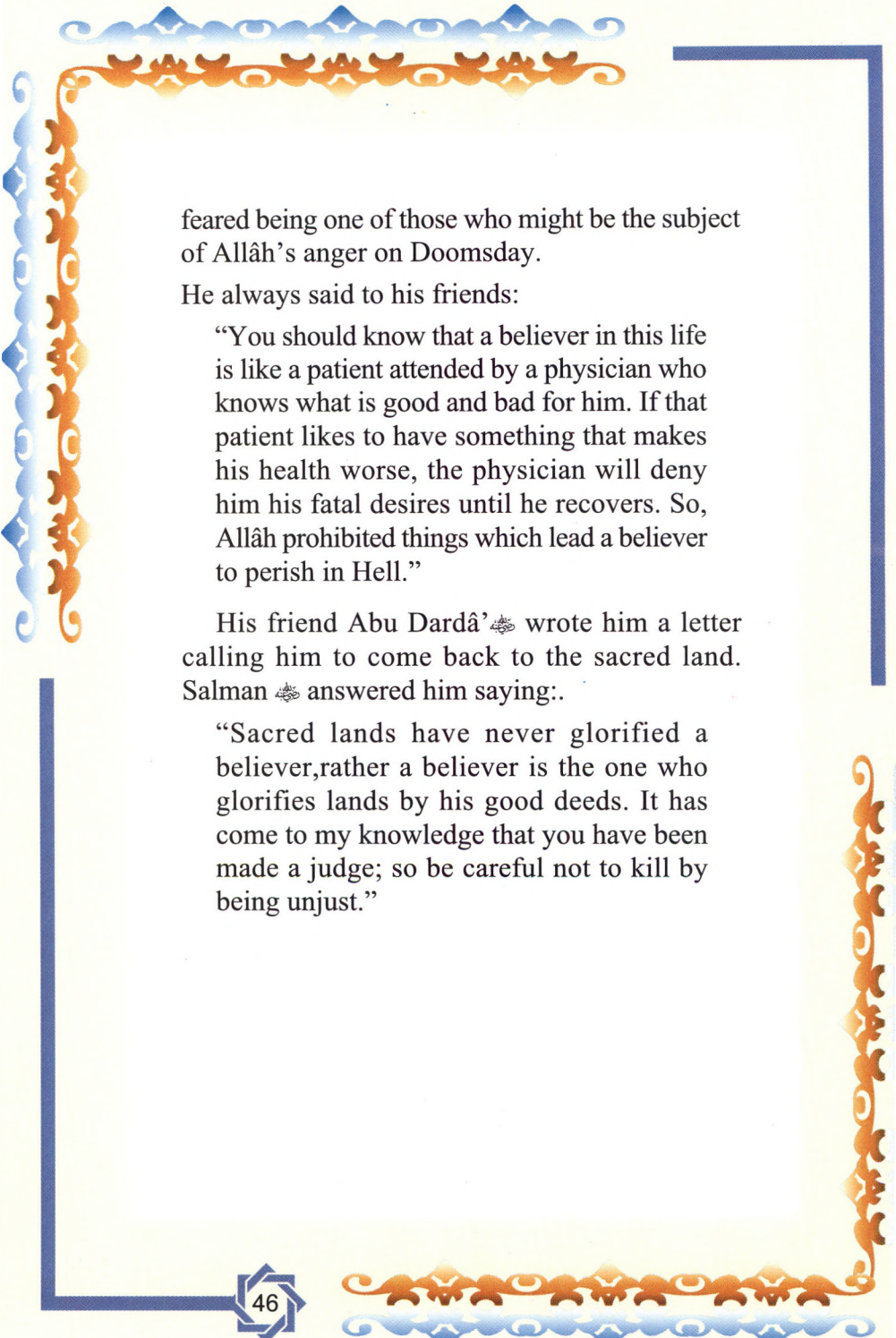
Last words

No one would be safe from the influence of post, money or other worldly pleasures except those who look for something eternal. Salman ؓ was one of those whose interests went beyond earthly things and temporary satisfaction of desires. All those who met him felt his strict observance of the Islamic teachings.

On the other hand, Salman ؓ was the type of Muslim who was moderate in everything. He used to spend several days with his close friend Abu Dardâ' ؓ, who used to fast successive days and pray whole nights.

Salman ؓ did not like that way of worship and advised his friend to care for himself and to give his body a break. When the Prophet ﷺ was informed of Salman's advice, he admired his fine understanding of Islam.

He usually thought about the eternal life. He



feared being one of those who might be the subject of Allâh's anger on Doomsday.

He always said to his friends:

“You should know that a believer in this life is like a patient attended by a physician who knows what is good and bad for him. If that patient likes to have something that makes his health worse, the physician will deny him his fatal desires until he recovers. So, Allâh prohibited things which lead a believer to perish in Hell.”

His friend Abu Dardâ' ؓ wrote him a letter calling him to come back to the sacred land. Salman ؓ answered him saying:

“Sacred lands have never glorified a believer, rather a believer is the one who glorifies lands by his good deeds. It has come to my knowledge that you have been made a judge; so be careful not to kill by being unjust.”

The End

After a long life spent in worship and piety, Salman ؓ fell ill and bed ridden, but his mind was awake. He recalled those days when he stood beside the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions and the time he devoted himself to serve the cause of Islam.

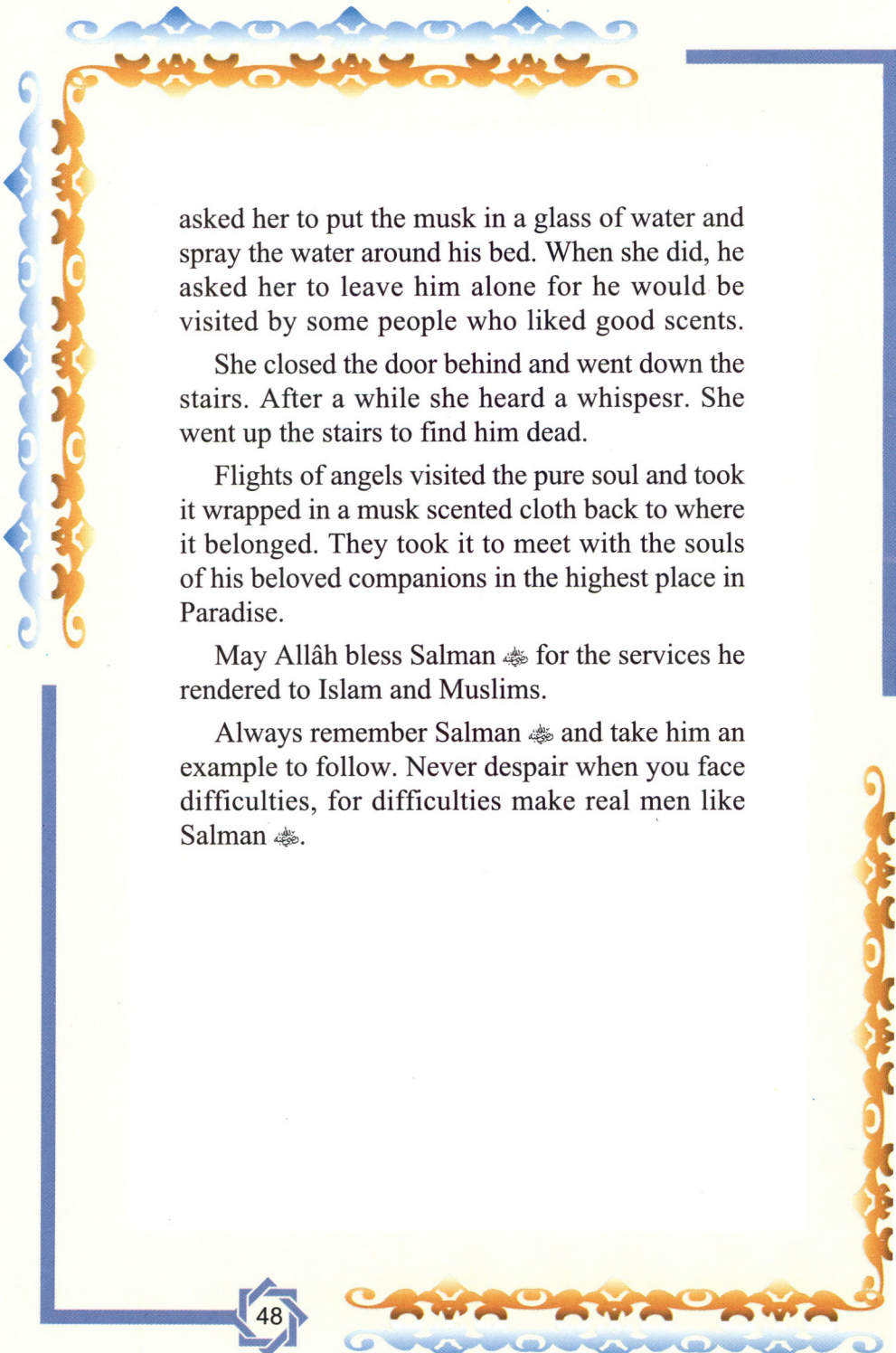
Many times did tears come down his cheeks and wet his beard for fear to be separated from his companions on the Day of Judgment. He was left alone and he longed to meet his friends in the eternal life.

He neither feared death nor feared to leave this temporary life behind but he feared to have failed to fulfill the words of the Prophet ﷺ when he told him and his Companions:

“Be in this life like a traveler who keeps a small amount of everything.”

It was time for Salman ؓ, the son of Islam, to take rest after this long life for Islam, by Islam and in quest of Islam. Yes, it was Islam that gave to his life a unique end that no one did share.

The dawn was about to rise and the dying man was left alone with his wife. He asked her to bring him the piece of musk he brought from a far land a long time ago specially for this moment. He



asked her to put the musk in a glass of water and spray the water around his bed. When she did, he asked her to leave him alone for he would be visited by some people who liked good scents.

She closed the door behind and went down the stairs. After a while she heard a whisper. She went up the stairs to find him dead.

Flights of angels visited the pure soul and took it wrapped in a musk scented cloth back to where it belonged. They took it to meet with the souls of his beloved companions in the highest place in Paradise.

May Allâh bless Salman ؓ for the services he rendered to Islam and Muslims.

Always remember Salman ؓ and take him an example to follow. Never despair when you face difficulties, for difficulties make real men like Salman ؓ.