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HIGHLIGHTED HANDOUT

ISL4760

Seerah: Life of the Holy Prophet

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Seerah: Life of the Holy Prophet

Study Handout

Complete lecture-wise notes for Virtual University students

About This Handout

This handout covers ISL4760 Seerah -- the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from pre-Islamic Arabia to his passing. Written in English with transliterated Arabic terms (no Arabic script). The exam rewards chronological command, cause-and-effect analysis, and drawing lessons (dawat, leadership, character) from events. After each lesson, close the handout and retell the narrative from memory -- the Seerah is learned as story, then analyzed as guidance. 

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Lesson 1: Arabia Before Islam

Learning Objectives

- Describe pre-Islamic Arabia
- Explain Makkah's importance
- Link context to reforms
- Use the setting analytically

Arabia before Islam (Jahiliyyah): tribal society -- loyalty to the tribe (asabiyyah), blood feuds, raiding (ghazw); religion -- polytheism centered on the Ka'bah's 360 idols, though hanifs (monotheists like Zayd ibn Amr) and Jewish/Christian communities existed; economy -- Makkah's caravan trade (Syria-Yemen route), Quraysh's commercial aristocracy; social ills -- female infanticide (wa'd), wine, gambling, usury, slavery. Yet virtues: hospitality, courage, eloquence (poetry as mass media), keeping covenants.

Makkah's position: the Ka'bah made it a pilgrimage-commercial hub; Quraysh's leadership via the mala' (council) and offices (siqayah -- water, rifadah -- feeding pilgrims). The Year of the Elephant (~570 CE): Abraha's assault and its failure -- the Prophet's birth year, remembered as divine protection of the sanctuary. This context explains the Qur'an's first audiences: merchants who understood trade metaphors, tribesmen who valued honor.

Why study the setting: the Seerah is not hagiography floating in a vacuum -- revelation engaged a real society. Exam questions often ask 'describe pre-Islamic Arabia' as the scene-setter; answer with structure (social, religious, economic) and link each to what Islam changed.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Jahiliyyah — Pre-Islamic 'ignorance' era.
- Asabiyyah — Tribal partisanship.
- Quraysh — Makkah's leading tribe; the Prophet's tribe.
- Year of the Elephant — ~570 CE; Abraha's failed assault; birth year.

Example / Illustration

- Tribal asabiyyah -> the ummah (brotherhood beyond blood); wa'd (infanticide) -> Qur'anic condemnation and the Prophet's love of daughters; 360 idols -> tawhid's cleansing of the Ka'bah.

Lesson Summary

- Tribal, polytheist, commercial Makkah.
- Ka'bah + trade = Quraysh's power.
- Each Jahiliyyah feature met an Islamic reform.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Describe Jahiliyyah society and link each feature to an Islamic reform -- the classic scene-setter.

Lesson 2: Birth, Youth, and First Revelation

Learning Objectives

- Narrate birth and youth
- Explain al-Amin's significance
- Describe the first revelation
- Use biography evidentially

Lineage and birth: Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib, of Banu Hashim (Quraysh), born ~570 CE in Makkah; father died before birth, mother Aminah died when he was six; raised by grandfather Abd al-Muttalib then uncle Abu Talib. Nursing by Halimah al-Sa'diyah in the desert (Bedouin fosterage custom). The chest-splitting incident (shaqq al-sadr) -- reported in Muslim -- childhood's miraculous marker.

Youth and character: shepherding, then trade -- Khadijah's caravan to Syria managed so honestly she proposed marriage (he was ~25, she ~40; 25 years of devoted marriage, six children). Al-Amin (the Trustworthy): Quraysh deposited valuables with him; the Black Stone arbitration (placing it on a cloak, all chiefs lifting) -- leadership before prophethood. Hanif tendencies: retreat to Hira cave for tahannuth (devotion) -- the seeking soul before revelation.

The first revelation (610 CE, Ramadan, Laylat al-Qadr): 'Iqra' (Read!) -- the command that made learning Islam's first word. Khadijah's support and Waraqah ibn Nawfal's confirmation ('the Namus that came to Moses'). Pause (fatrah), then resumption -- the mission begins. Lessons: character preceded revelation; the Prophet's pre-prophetic life is itself da'wah evidence (40 years of known truthfulness).

Key Terms & Definitions

- Al-Amin — The Trustworthy; pre-prophetic title.
- Hira / tahannuth — Cave retreat / devotion.
- Iqra' — 'Read!' -- the first revelation.
- Waraqah ibn Nawfal — Confirmed the revelation.

Example / Illustration

- The Quraysh, who later called him liar, had titled him al-Amin -- the exam's favorite irony: their own testimony refutes the 'liar' charge.

Lesson Summary

- Orphan, shepherd, trader, al-Amin.
- Khadijah's marriage; Hira's seeking.
- Iqra': learning as Islam's first word.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Narrate the pre-prophetic life with its evidential significance -- biography question.

Lesson 3: The Makkan Mission: Call and Persecution

Learning Objectives

- Trace the Makkan da'wah phases
- Explain persecution responses
- Narrate key events to 622
- Extract da'wah lessons

The secret then public call: three years of private da'wah (family -- Khadijah, Ali, Zayd, Abu Bakr; the early circle), then 'warn your nearest kin' (the Safa assembly -- 'if I warned of cavalry behind this hill, would you believe?'). Message: tawhid (one God), the Last Day, and moral reform -- direct hits on Quraysh's idols, ancestor-pride, and exploitative trade.

Persecution and perseverance: mockery, boycott (the Shi'b Abi Talib siege -- three years of hunger), torture of the weak (Bilal, Ammar's family -- Sumayyah the first martyr), and the Prophet's own suffering (Ta'if -- stoned, yet praying for the city). Responses: patience (sabr), the Abyssinian migration (615 CE -- the Negus's justice), and Hamzah's and Umar's conversions (strength).

The Year of Sorrow (619 CE): Khadijah and Abu Talib die -- protection lost; Ta'if's rejection; then Isra' and Mi'raj (the Night Journey -- consolation and the gift of prayer). Aqabah pledges (621-622): Yathrib's invitation -- the Hijrah's doorway. Themes: da'wah method (wisdom, gradation), suffering as purification, and divine timing.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Safa assembly — Public call's beginning.
- Shi'b Abi Talib — Three-year boycott siege.
- Year of Sorrow — 619 CE; Khadijah + Abu Talib die.
- Aqabah pledges — Yathrib's invitation; Hijrah's doorway.

Example / Illustration

- Ta'if: bleeding, offered the mountains' angel against the city -- 'rather, I hope their descendants believe.' Mercy under torture -- the character argument for prophethood.

Lesson Summary

- Private call, then Safa's public challenge.
- Boycott, torture, Ta'if -- met with sabr.
- Aqabah: the exit divine timing provided.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Analyze Makkan da'wah strategy and the persecution response -- the core Makkan-period question.

Lesson 4: The Hijrah and Madinan Foundations

Learning Objectives

- Narrate the Hijrah
- Explain Madinan foundations
- Analyze the Charter
- Describe early institutions

The Hijrah (622 CE): secret emigration, the cave of Thawr (divine protection -- the spider's web in tradition), Quba's first mosque, and entry into Yathrib -- renamed Madinat al-Nabi. Why it matters: 1 AH -- the Islamic calendar's epoch; the shift from persecuted minority to ummah-building; the Prophet as statesman begins.

Foundations: the mosque (worship + community center + school -- Suffah), mu'akhah (brotherhood -- Muhajirun paired with Ansar; the Ansar's legendary generosity), and the Mithaq al-Madinah (Charter of Madinah -- the ummah as one community, Jews as part of the political ummah with religious freedom, mutual defense). The Charter: arguably the first written constitution -- pluralism with prophetic authority.

Reforms: adhan (the call to prayer), qiblah change (to the Ka'bah -- identity), fasting of Ramadan, zakat -- the community's institutions in 1-2 AH. The Prophet's leadership: consultation (shura -- Uhud's lesson), delegation, and mercy to opponents (the Charter's inclusion). Exam staple: the Charter's clauses and significance.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Hijrah — 622 CE; 1 AH; the epoch.
- Mu'akhah — Muhajirun-Ansar brotherhood.
- Mithaq al-Madinah — Charter; first written constitution.
- Suffah — Mosque school of the poor.

Example / Illustration

- Charter clause: 'The Jews... are one ummah with the believers' -- religious freedom within a prophetic polity; compare with modern constitutional pluralism debates.

Lesson Summary

- 622: from minority to ummah.
- Mosque, brotherhood, Charter -- the tripod.
- Charter: pluralism under prophetic authority.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Explain the Charter of Madinah's clauses and constitutional significance -- the Madinan-period anchor.

Lesson 5: Battles, Treaties, and the Conquest

Learning Objectives

- Narrate the major campaigns
- Analyze turning points
- Explain Hudaybiyyah's wisdom
- State prophetic war ethics

Badr (2 AH / 624): 313 vs ~1000 -- the Quraysh caravan crisis; the Prophet's prayer and strategy (wells, ranks); angels in tradition; 14 martyrs, 70 captives -- treated kindly (ransom by teaching literacy!). Significance: divine aid (nasr), the ummah's birth-certificate, and the furqan (criterion). Uhud (3 AH): archers' disobedience -- victory turned defeat; Hamzah martyred; the Prophet wounded yet forgiving; Qur'anic commentary (Al Imran) -- defeat as discipline, not abandonment.

Khandaq (5 AH / 627): the Confederates' siege; Salman's trench suggestion (Persian military wisdom -- the ummah learns from all); the storm and disunity; Banu Qurayzah's treachery and judgment (graded reports -- handle carefully). Hudaybiyyah (6 AH): the 'victory' that looked like surrender -- treaty terms (10-year truce, return of converts), Umar's distress, the Prophet's far sight; 'Indeed We granted you a clear victory' -- Makkah's conquest came through the truce's peace.

Khaybar (7 AH), Mu'tah (8 AH -- Zayd, Ja'far, Ibn Rawahah martyred; Khalid's tactical retreat), and the Conquest of Makkah (8 AH / 630): 10,000 entering peacefully -- 'no blame on you today' (general amnesty!); the Ka'bah cleansed of 360 idols ('truth has come, falsehood has vanished'); Bilal's adhan from the Ka'bah -- the former slave atop the sanctuary. Hunayn and Ta'if (8 AH), Tabuk (9 AH). Military ethics: no killing of non-combatants, no mutilation, no tree-felling -- the shari'ah of war's prophetic roots.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Badr / Uhud / Khandaq — 2/3/5 AH; the three sieges.
- Hdaybiyyah — 6 AH; the 'clear victory' treaty.
- Conquest of Makkah — 8 AH; general amnesty.
- Military ethics — Non-combatant immunity etc.

Example / Illustration

- Hdaybiyyah: companions wept at the terms; two years later Makkah fell without battle -- the exam's 'apparent defeat, real victory' analysis. 

Lesson Summary

- Badr: nasr; Uhud: discipline; Khandaq: resolve.
- Hdaybiyyah: peace as the weapon.
- Makkah: amnesty, not vengeance.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Compare Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Hdaybiyyah as turning points -- the military-diplomatic essay.

Lesson 6: Farewell Hajj, Passing, and Legacy

Learning Objectives

- Explain the Farewell Hajj
- Analyze the Sermon's rights
- Narrate the passing and succession
- Apply *uswah hasanah*

The Farewell Hajj (10 AH / 632): ~100,000 companions; the Farewell Sermon at Arafat -- the charter of human rights: sanctity of life/property/honor, abolition of *riba* and blood-feuds, women's rights ('treat women kindly'), racial equality ('no superiority of Arab over non-Arab'), and holding to Qur'an and Sunnah. 'Have I conveyed?' -- 'O Allah, bear witness.' The verse: 'Today I have perfected your religion.'

The final illness and passing (Rabi' al-Awwal, 11 AH): choosing the highest companionship (*al-rafiq al-a'la*); Abu Bakr leading prayer; the ummah's shock -- Umar's denial, Abu Bakr's 'whoever worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad is dead...' -- theology in crisis management. Burial in A'ishah's chamber; Saqifah and Abu Bakr's caliphate -- the succession the Prophet left to *shura*.

Legacy: the rightly-guided caliphs continuing the mission; the Seerah as the Qur'an's lived tafsir; the Prophet as *uswah hasanah* (the excellent model -- Al-Ahzab 21) -- every role: worshipper, husband, father, friend, general, statesman, forgiver. The course's thesis: study the Seerah to love, to follow, and to convey -- knowledge that moves the

heart and the limbs.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Farewell Sermon — 10 AH; rights charter at Arafat.
- Uswah hasanah — The excellent model (33:21).
- Rabi' al-Awwal 11 AH — The Prophet's passing.
- Saqifah — Succession consultation.

Example / Illustration

- 'No superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab except by piety' -- 632 CE; pair with the Charter of Madinah for the 'Prophet and pluralism/equality' essay.

Lesson Summary

- Arafat: life, property, women, race -- rights declared.
- 11 AH: the shock; Abu Bakr's anchor.
- Uswah hasanah: the model for every role.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Analyze the Farewell Sermon as a human-rights charter -- the capstone question.

Lesson 7: Character and Proofs of Prophethood

Learning Objectives

- Describe shama'il
- Grade famous miracles
- Build the cumulative case
- Link character to da'wah

Shama'il (noble features): appearance -- neither tall nor short, radiant face; character -- truthful, trustworthy, merciful ('We sent you only as mercy to the worlds'), humble (mending his own clothes, sitting with the poor), humorous with companions, brave in battle, generous 'more than the wind'. A'ishah: 'His character was the Qur'an' -- the walking tafsir. Study shama'il to love; love drives following.

Dala'il al-nubuwwah (proofs of prophethood): the Qur'an itself (the standing miracle -- inimitability, tahaddi), foretellings (Badr's details, the conquest of Persia/Byzantium's lands), answered prayers, and physical miracles with grades (the moon's splitting -- sahih; water from fingers -- sahih; Isra'/Mi'raj -- mutawatir in essence). Method: present miracles with their grades -- the course's hadith-conscious approach (links ISL2352!).

The evidential structure: character (40 years of al-Amin) + scripture (the Qur'an's challenge unmet) + history (the ummah's transformation) = the cumulative case. Exam

essays on 'prove prophethood' should layer all three, not rely on miracles alone.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Shama'il — Noble features and character.
- Dala'il al-nubuwwah — Proofs of prophethood.
- Tahaddi — The Qur'an's inimitability challenge.
- 'His character was the Qur'an' — A'ishah's summary.

Example / Illustration

- Heraclius to Abu Sufyan (then an enemy!): 'Does he betray?' -- 'No.' 'Did you accuse him of lying before?' -- 'No.' Even enemies testified to the character premise.

Lesson Summary

- Character + Qur'an + history = the case.
- Grade miracles; don't inflate.
- 'His character was the Qur'an.'

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Build the cumulative case for prophethood -- the evidential essay.

Lesson 8: Family Life

Learning Objectives

- Narrate family events
- Discuss marriages' wisdom
- Describe fatherhood
- Apply domestic lessons

Khadijah (d. 619): 25 years of marriage, first believer, financier of the mission, mother of all children except Ibrahim; the Prophet's grief and lifelong loyalty (A'ishah's jealousy of a memory!). A'ishah: scholar -- 2,210 hadith, jurist consulted by Companions; the marriage's wisdom debated -- present the scholarly discussion respectfully. Other wives (Mothers of the Believers): Sawdah, Hafsa, Umm Salamah (counsel at Hudaibiyyah!), Zaynab, Juwayriyah, Umm Habibah, Safiyyah, Maymunah -- each with a story (tribal reconciliation, widow care).

Children: Qasim, Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum, Fatimah, Abdullah, Ibrahim -- all but Fatimah died in his lifetime; his tears at Ibrahim's death ('the eyes weep...') -- prophetic tenderness. Fatimah: 'leader of the women of Paradise'; Ali's marriage; Hasan and Husayn -- the household (Ahl al-Bayt) loved by all Muslims.

Household lessons: the Prophet as husband (helping at home -- 'he was at his family's service'), as father (Fatimah's standing welcome), jealousy handled with justice (equal time division), and the verse of the Cloak's love. Domestic Seerah: the model for Muslim family life -- mercy at home first.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Mothers of the Believers — The Prophet's wives; title of honor.
- Ahl al-Bayt — The Prophet's household.
- Umm Salamah's counsel — Hudaybiyyah's turning advice.
- Domestic Seerah — Family life as model.

Example / Illustration

- Umm Salamah at Hudaybiyyah: companions frozen; her counsel -- 'sacrifice your camel and shave; say nothing' -- he obeyed; all followed. Shura at home; wisdom honored.

Lesson Summary

- Khadijah: first believer, lifelong loyalty.
- A'ishah: scholar; Umm Salamah: counselor.
- Mercy at home first.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Discuss the wisdom in the Prophet's marriages respectfully -- the sensitive essay.

Lesson 9: Worship and Spirituality

Learning Objectives

- Describe worship practices
- Explain spiritual balance
- Quote key duas
- Apply the model

Prayer: 'the coolness of my eyes' -- night prayer (qiyam) until feet swelled ('shall I not be a grateful servant?'); leading with mercy (shortening for the crying infant); the five prayers as the ummah's spine. Fasting: Ramadan plus voluntary (Mondays/Thursdays, the white days, Ashura, Arafah for non-pilgrims); breaking fast promptly; suhur's blessing.

Dhikr and dua: constant remembrance -- morning/evening adhkar, dua for every occasion (eating, sleeping, travel, distress); the Prophet's duas as literature (the Jawshan? no -- stick to canonical: 'O Allah, I ask You for beneficial knowledge...'). Tears in recitation; long prostrations. Simplicity: 'I am but a servant; I eat as the servant eats.'

Spirituality's balance: worship with presence (khushu') yet engagement with the world -- the Prophet was no monk; asceticism (zuhd) in dunya with full responsibility toward people. The lesson: spirituality fuels service; retreat (i'tikaf in Ramadan) recharges engagement. Exam: 'describe the Prophet's worship' -- structure by prayer, fasting, dhikr, and balance. 

Key Terms & Definitions

- Qiyam al-layl — Night prayer; the Prophet's habit.
- Khushu' — Presence in worship.
- Zuhd — Asceticism with engagement.
- I'tikaf — Ramadan retreat.

Example / Illustration

- Feet swelling in qiyam + 'shall I not be a grateful servant?' -- gratitude, not guilt, as worship's engine; pair with his shortening prayer for infants -- devotion with mercy.

Lesson Summary

- Qiyam, fasting, constant dhikr.
- Gratitude as worship's engine.
- Retreat recharges engagement.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Describe the Prophet's devotional life and its balance -- spirituality question.

Lesson 10: Da'wah Methodology

Learning Objectives

- Explain gradation
- Apply hikmah
- Analyze audience strategies
- Practice contemporary da'wah

Gradation (tadarruj): the Makkan-Madinan sequencing -- creed first (13 years of tawhid), law later (wine's three-stage prohibition; qiblah's timing); individuals too (the Bedouin urinating in the mosque -- teach, don't rebuke; Mu'adh sent to Yemen: tawhid first, then prayer, then zakat). Wisdom (hikmah): 'call to your Lord's way with wisdom and good counsel' -- audience-aware da'wah.

Audiences: kings (letters -- next lesson), tribes (Aqabah dialogues), individuals (the youth asking permission for zina -- 'would you like it for your mother?' -- empathy as argument), opponents (Abu Sufyan's Heraclius interview -- truth disarms), and the hostile (Ta'if's prayer). Methods: questioning, stories, parables, lived example -- the

Prophet rarely debated abstractly.

Contemporary da'wah: personal example first (the missionary's character is the message), wisdom over confrontation, gradation with new Muslims (don't drown them in rulings), and digital da'wah's manners (the Prophet's gentleness as the online ethic). The course's practical payoff: every student a caller by character.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Tadarruj — Gradation in teaching/commanding.
- Hikmah — Wisdom; audience-aware da'wah.
- Mu'adh to Yemen — The gradation hadith.
- Empathy as argument — The youth and zina hadith.

Example / Illustration

- Wine: first 'sin greater than benefit' (2:219), then 'don't pray intoxicated' (4:43), then total prohibition (5:90) -- the Qur'an's own gradation; apply to new Muslims' learning curves.

Lesson Summary

- Creed before law; wisdom before words.
- Empathy disarms; example convinces.
- Gradation for new Muslims today.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Analyze gradation with three examples -- the da'wah-methodology question.

Lesson 11: Economic Teachings

Learning Objectives

- State market ethics
- Explain riba's abolition
- Trace zakat/waqf roots
- Apply to Islamic finance

The Prophet as trader: honest dealing ('the truthful merchant with the martyrs'), forbidding gharar (uncertainty), najsh (false bidding), and cheating ('whoever cheats us is not of us' -- the grain-heap hadith: wet grain hidden under dry); fair weights ('woe to the defrauders' -- al-Mutaffifin revealed for Madinah's market!); and market supervision (hisba's seed -- inspecting the market himself).

Riba's abolition: the Farewell Sermon's 'all riba is abolished, beginning with my uncle Abbas's' -- the Prophet abolishing his own family's interest income first. Zakat institutionalized (2 AH); sadaqah's culture ('even a smile'); waqf's seed (Umar's Khaybar

land -- 'its principal preserved, its yield given'); inheritance shares protecting women/children -- economic justice as worship.

Labor and wealth: 'pay the worker before his sweat dries'; dignity of labor (Da'ud ate from his hands' work); wealth as trust (amanah), not evil -- Khadijah's and Uthman's fortunes served the mission. Contemporary: Islamic banking's prophetic roots (link [ISL4868/BNK725!](#)); business ethics curricula from the Seerah.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Gharar / najsh — Uncertainty / false bidding; banned.
- Hisba — Market supervision; prophetic seed.
- Waqf's seed — Umar's Khaybar land endowment.
- 'Pay before sweat dries' — Labor rights hadith.

Example / Illustration

- The grain-heap: fingers wet under dry grain -- 'why didn't you put the wet on top so buyers see?' Disclosure as religious duty -- the hadith behind modern consumer-protection readings.

Lesson Summary

- Disclosure, fair weights, no gharar.
- Riba abolished -- family first.
- Wealth as amanah serving the mission.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Derive Islamic business ethics from the Seerah -- the applied-economics question.

Lesson 12: Non-Muslims and Minorities

Learning Objectives

- Narrate minority relations
- Explain treaty ethics
- Apply to modern pluralism
- Counter extremist misuse

The Charter's Jews: protected religious freedom, mutual defense -- then the breaches (Banu Qaynuqa, Nadir, Qurayzah -- each with specific treachery in wartime; present the scholarly narrative carefully, grading-sensitive). Christians: Najran's delegation -- prayed in the mosque (!), the treaty of protection; the Prophet's letters inviting, not coercing ('no compulsion in religion'). Pagans: Hudaibiyyah's diplomacy; Makkah's amnesty.

Individuals: the Jewish boy he visited in illness (who accepted Islam); the funeral he stood for ('is it not a soul?'); Abdullah ibn Ubayy (the hypocrites' chief) -- his funeral prayer and the revelation's gentle correction -- mercy stretched to its limit. Neighbors: the Jewish neighbor's rights honored; gifts exchanged.

Principles: dawah with dignity (invite, don't coerce), treaties honored ('fulfill covenants'), justice even against Muslims (the armor-of-Ali judgment for a Jew -- famous!), and wartime ethics (the campaigns' rules). Contemporary: minority rights in Muslim states -- the Seerah as the charter; countering extremism with the Prophet's own practice.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Najran delegation — Christians in the mosque; treaty.
- 'Is it not a soul?' — The funeral he stood for.
- Covenant fidelity — Treaties honored absolutely.
- Ali's armor — Rule-of-law precedent.

Example / Illustration

- Ali's armor: the caliph loses his case to a Jewish citizen before a Muslim judge -- rule of law over ruler privilege; the Seerah's answer to 'Islam and justice'.

Lesson Summary

- Invite, don't coerce; honor treaties.
- Justice even against Muslims.
- The Seerah: minorities' charter.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Assess the Prophet's treatment of minorities with evidence -- the pluralism essay.

Lesson 13: Women in the Seerah

Learning Objectives

- Profile key women
- List status reforms
- Apply to contemporary debates
- Counter patriarchal misuse

Khadijah: the mission's financier and first believer (above). Fatimah: the Prophet's beloved -- 'part of me'; her poverty and patience; the tasbih of Fatimah (33-33-34 -- the 'better than a servant' gift). A'ishah: scholarship (2,210 hadith), the Ifk incident and exoneration (Surah al-Nur -- slander law from her trial), her juristic verdicts. Umm Salamah: Hudaybiyyah's counselor. Sumayyah: the first martyr. Nusaybah at Uhud: fighting in defense -- the Prophet's praise.

Women's status reforms: inheritance shares (against burying women propertyless), mahr as the wife's right, consent in marriage (the virgin's silence as permission -- and the runaway bride's annulment hadith!), education ('seeking knowledge is obligatory' -- for all), and mosque access ('do not prevent God's maidservants'). The Farewell Sermon's 'treat women kindly' -- the headline.

Contemporary: the Seerah vs cultural patriarchy -- the Prophet's practice (consulting wives, domestic help, defending women's property) as the reformist resource; countering both neglect and distortion. Exam: 'women in the Seerah' -- structure by individuals, reforms, and contemporary relevance. 

Key Terms & Definitions

- Tasbih of Fatimah — 33-33-34; better than a servant.
- Ifk incident — Slander; Surah al-Nur's exoneration.
- Consent hadith — Annulment of forced marriage.
- 'Do not prevent' — Women's mosque access.

Example / Illustration

- The runaway bride: a woman married without consent -- the Prophet annulled it; consent as prophetic law, centuries before modern debates.

Lesson Summary

- Individuals: scholars, martyrs, counselors.
- Reforms: property, consent, knowledge, access.
- The Seerah: the reformist resource.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Evaluate the Seerah's women's reforms vs pre-Islamic practice -- the gender essay.

Lesson 14: Letters to Kings: Prophetic Diplomacy

Learning Objectives

- Narrate the correspondence
- Analyze diplomatic method
- Use Heraclius's testimony
- Apply to IR studies

The letters (6-7 AH): to Heraclius (Byzantium -- 'accept Islam, you will be safe; if you turn away, the sin of your subjects'), to Khosrow II (Persia -- tore the letter; the Prophet: 'may his kingdom be torn' -- and it was), to the Negus (Abyssinia -- the gracious invitation), to Muqawqis (Egypt -- sent Mariyah and gifts), to Bahrain, Oman, Yamamah chiefs. Diplomatic method: dignity ('from Muhammad, servant of God and His messenger, to...'),

clarity of invitation, consequences stated, messengers honored.

Heraclius's response: summoned Abu Sufyan (still pagan!), interrogated him about Muhammad -- the famous testimony (no lying, no betrayal, followers increasing, the weak following him); Heraclius: 'if what you say is true, he will rule what is beneath my feet' -- the enemy's emperor as character witness. Khosrow's arrogance vs the Negus's tears -- responses as moral typology.

Diplomatic principles: sovereign equality in address, invitation before confrontation, envoy immunity (he refused to kill Musaylimah's envoys -- 'envoys are not killed'), and truth as statecraft. Contemporary: the Seerah in international relations courses -- prophetic diplomacy's modern study.

Key Terms & Definitions

- Letters to kings — 6-7 AH; da'wah diplomacy.
- Heraclius interview — Abu Sufyan's testimony.
- Envoy immunity — 'Envoys are not killed.'
- Dignified address — 'From Muhammad, servant of God...'

Example / Illustration

- Heraclius's cross-examination of Abu Sufyan -- the exam's favorite primary source: an emperor testing prophethood claims through character evidence.

Lesson Summary

- Dignity, clarity, invitation -- the method.
- Heraclius: the emperor as witness.
- Envoys immune; truth as statecraft.

Exam Pointers — Very Important

- ★ Analyze the letters' diplomatic method -- the international-relations question.

Lesson 15: Revision: Seerah Master Drill

Master drill (two per lesson): (1) Jahiliyyah features-reforms; (2) Year of the Elephant; (3) al-Amin's evidential value; (4) Iqra' significance; (5) Safa assembly; (6) Shi'b boycott; (7) Year of Sorrow; (8) Aqabah pledges; (9) Hijrah/1 AH; (10) Charter clauses; (11) mu'akhah; (12) Badr/Uhud/Khandaq/Hudaybiyyah -- one line each; (13) Conquest's amnesty; (14) Farewell Sermon rights; (15) uswah hasanah; (16) shama'il summary; (17) cumulative case; (18) Umm Salamah's counsel; (19) gradation examples; (20) grain-heap hadith; (21) Najran delegation; (22) Ali's armor; (23) women's reforms; (24) Heraclius interview. Essay frames: Makkah perseverance, Madinan state-building, the Prophet as mercy, Seerah and contemporary issues.

Timeline spine: 570 (birth) -> 610 (revelation) -> 615 (Abyssinia) -> 619 (Sorrow) -> 622 (Hijrah/1 AH) -> 624/625/627 (battles) -> 628 (Hudaybiyyah) -> 630 (Makkah) -> 632

(Farewell + passing). Recite with one event-detail each.

Final method: narrate first (story), then analyze (lessons), then apply (today). Every Seerah answer should move heart (love), mind (wisdom), and limbs (following). If you can retell the whole Seerah in 10 minutes from memory, you are ready.