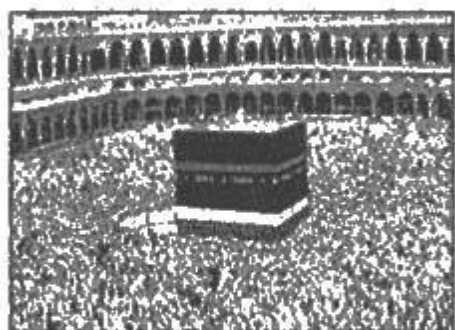


## Universal brotherhood

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan



**I**n the Quranic chapter, Al-Fatihah (The Opening) the concept of universal brotherhood is highlighted. The relevant verse is as follows: *All praise is due to God, the Lord of the Universe. (1:2)*

According to this verse, God is not the God of some community; He is the God of all mankind. The oneness of God is the basis of the oneness of humanity. It means that God is one and so also is humanity. In the eyes of God, there is no difference between one man and another, between the poor and the rich. When, in the eyes of God, all humanity is one, it is but natural that mankind should adopt this kind of thinking and live as one divine people. There is a beautiful story about the Prophet of Islam which is a fine illustration of this

Quranic concept. This story is totally authentic because it is narrated by Al Bukhari, who has the highest status among the group of *muhadissin* (narrators of the Prophet's traditions). The story goes like this: The Prophet of Islam started his mission in 610 AD. 13 years later, he migrated to Madinah, the second most important city of Arabia. At that time there were some Jewish tribes living in Madinah. It happened that one day the Prophet saw a funeral procession passing through a street in the town. At that time the Prophet was seated, but on seeing the funeral, he stood up out of respect. One of his companions said: "O Prophet, that was the funeral of a Jew. Why are you giving so much respect to a deceased non-Muslim?" The Prophet replied: "*Alaisat nafsan?*" (*Was he not a human being?*) This example set by the Prophet of Islam shows that irrespective of religion or tradition, all men and women are equal.

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