The Seerah Nabawiyyah

A structured introduction to the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, adapted faithfully from the Kitab Kuning Digital Seerah Nabawiyyah

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The Seerah Nabawiyyah

A Life, a Community, and the Making of a Moral Civilization

A fourteen-lesson micro-course adapted from the Malay-language **Seerah Nabawiyyah** *(Kitab Kuning Digital) by Jauhari Che Wan, which itself draws on the earliest sources — Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham, al-Tabari, al-Bukhari and Muslim, al-Baihaqi, and Martin Lings'* Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources.

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How to read this course

This is not a timeline of dates and battles, nor a set of "leadership tips." It is an invitation to sit with a life — to walk from the darkness before dawn in Mecca to the grave in Aisha's chamber,

and to notice, at every step, the formation of a human being and then of a people.

The fourteen lessons follow the ten chapters of the source, with four of the denser chapters opening naturally into two lessons each. Each lesson keeps the voice of the original: the address to *"saudaraku"* — "my dear brother" — the reverence, and the primary narrations (the **matan**) on which the exposition (**syarah**) rests. Where the original narrates a miracle, a sorrow, or a contested event, this course preserves the source's own treatment rather than explaining it away or taking a side the original does not take.

The lessons move through the themes the Seerah actually carries: **character** before prophethood; **revelation** and the fear and consolation that came with it; **family** and the grief of losing it; **community** and covenant; **conflict, mercy, and the burden of decision;** and finally **farewell**. Read slowly. This is sacred history, lived.

A closing note on scope appears at the end. In short: this is a doorway, not a destination, and never a substitute for study with qualified teachers.

Lesson 1 — The Age of Ignorance and the Birth of a Light

> *"The birth of the Prophet took place in the Year of the Elephant, on a Monday, the twelfth day of Rabi' al-Awwal — the very day on which he was to die." — Martin Lings, Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*

> *"Kelahiran Rasulullah SAW itu pada hari Isnin, dua belas malam Rabiulawal, tahun Gajah." — narrated from Ibn Abbas (al-Baihaqi)*

In this lesson: the world Muhammad ﷺ was born into, and the signs that attended his coming.

Before we approach the light, we must first stand in the darkness. The sixth-century Arabia the Seerah describes is not called *Jahiliyyah* — the Age of Ignorance — because its people could not read; among them were great poets, shrewd merchants, capable chiefs. It is called Jahiliyyah because of an ignorance of a deeper kind: ignorance of the one God, of the message of the prophets, of the true worth of a human being. As the source puts it, *"Hati mereka buta, walaupun mata mereka celik"* — their hearts were blind, though their eyes could see.

At the centre of that world stood Mecca, a barren valley with no river and no field, and in it the Kaaba, the house built by Ibrahim and Isma'il, now ringed by three hundred and sixty idols. Pilgrims still came, but their pilgrimage had been mixed with *shirk*. Society was organized by tribe; blood-feuds ran for generations over a wounded camel or a slight at a well. Women could be inherited as property; infant daughters were buried alive out of fear of poverty and shame — a horror the Qur'an itself names in Surah al-Nahl. This is the ground on which the Seerah opens its first page.

Yet even here there were threads of good: the honoured tribe of Quraysh keeping the Kaaba; a few *hanif* seekers — Waraqah ibn Nawfal, Zayd ibn Amr — who had quietly abandoned the idols to search for the true God. And there was Abd al-Muttalib, the Prophet's grandfather: generous keeper of Zamzam, a man of noble bearing who nonetheless still bowed to the idols of his fathers.

The source tells, as it was told, the story of the **Year of the Elephant**. Abrahah, the Abyssinian ruler of Yemen, marched on Mecca with war-elephants to destroy the Kaaba. Abd al-Muttalib went out to meet him, asked only for the return of his own camels, and when Abrahah marvelled, answered: *"I am the owner of the camels; the House has a Lord who will protect it."* The great elephant, Mahmud, knelt and refused to advance on Mecca. Then God sent the birds of Ababil, each carrying stones of baked clay, and the army was undone — a sign preserved in Surah al-Fil. In that same year a child was born.

In the small house in the quarter of Banu Hashim, Aminah bint Wahb gave birth to a boy on a Monday, the twelfth of Rabi' al-Awwal. Abdullah, his father, had already died in Yathrib on a trading journey, months before the birth; the child was an orphan from his first breath. The source relates the signs narrated by Ibn Abbas: a light that shone from Aminah as far as the palaces of Syria, the fire of the Persian Magians — burning a thousand years — gone out, the arches of Chosroes' palace cracked, the lake of Sawah dried. Abd al-Muttalib carried the infant into the Kaaba, gave thanks, and named him **Muhammad** — "the praised one," a name no Arab had carried before. Asked why, he said: *"I want him to be praised in heaven and on earth."*

For reflection: The Seerah does not present Jahiliyyah as a dead chapter of history. It names it a condition of the heart — heedless of God, proud of its strength, enslaved to appetite. In Mecca they worshipped stone; the source warns that in every age people worship something else — wealth, rank, power, desire. The birth of the Prophet ﷺ is the pivot from darkness to light. And, as the source reminds us, the fall of a vast army to small birds teaches that no human strength is anything before the power of God.

Lesson 2 — Childhood and Youth: A Garden Watered by Loss

> *"Perhaps God will bless us through him." — the words of al-Harith, husband of Halimah, urging her to take the orphan child (Martin Lings)*

In this lesson: the desert nursing, the opening of the breast, successive bereavements, and the shaping of *al-Amin*.

By the custom of Mecca's noble families, newborns were sent to be nursed among the Bedouin of the open desert, so that they would grow strong, breathe clean air, and learn the pure Arabic tongue. The women of Banu Sa'd came in a year of drought. Every child was taken but one — the orphan, whom no father would pay to foster. Only Halimah bint Abi Dhu'ayb was left without a child, and she turned to this one reluctantly. Her husband said: *"Perhaps God will bless us through him."* From the moment she took him, the Seerah relates, her thin goats gave abundant milk, her lean camel grew fat, and the parched land around her tent turned green. *"I have never seen a more blessed child than him,"* she said.

It was in that desert, as the source narrates on the authority of Ibn Abbas, that the **opening of the breast** took place. Two men in white — the angels Jibril and Mika'il — laid the child down,

opened his chest without pain, removed a clot, washed his heart with the water of Zamzam, and closed him again. His foster-brothers ran crying, *"Muhammad has been killed!"* They found him pale but unharmed. The Seerah reads this, as the tradition reads it, as a purification: a preparation of the heart that would one day receive revelation. Frightened, Halimah returned the boy to his mother.

Then came the losses that, the source says, "a garden watered by loss" — one after another. His mother Aminah took him to visit his father's grave in Yathrib; on the return, at **Abwa'**, she fell ill and died with her small son beside her. He was six. His grandfather Abd al-Muttalib took him in with a tenderness that set the orphan on his own carpet by the Kaaba, saying, *"By God, this child will be great"* — and died two years later, charging his son Abu Talib: *"Guard this orphan, for he will bring a light to mankind."*

Abu Talib, though never wealthy, kept that trust with a full heart, favouring the boy even over his own children. Muhammad grew into a quiet, thoughtful, trustworthy youth. As a shepherd of Mecca's flocks he learned patience in the silence of the pasture — and he would later say, *"There was no prophet but that he herded sheep."* On a trading journey to Syria at twelve, the monk **Bahira** of Busra saw a cloud shading the boy and the seal of prophethood between his shoulders, and warned Abu Talib to take him home, for *"this is the master of the worlds."* Among a people drowning in idolatry, the youth never worshipped an idol, never lied, never betrayed a trust — so that Mecca itself called him **al-Amin**, the trustworthy, long before any revelation came.

For reflection: The author's own closing note on this chapter speaks directly across the centuries: the Prophet ﷺ lost father, mother, and grandfather in childhood, yet from every loss grew strength. *"Dia tidak pernah berkata: 'Aku yatim, maka aku lemah.'"* — He never said, "I am an orphan, so I am weak." Loss became the ground of the most compassionate and understanding of leaders. For anyone passing through grief, the Seerah offers this: behind every tear, God may be shaping something great.

Lesson 3 — Khadijah, and the Years Before Prophethood

> *"When Khadijah heard of the honesty of Muhammad's speech, his trustworthiness and his noble character, she sent to him… and the marriage took place when he was twenty-five and she was forty." — adapted from Martin Lings (from Ibn Ishaq and al-Tabari)*

In this lesson: a marriage that was a partnership, the Black Stone, and the long preparation at Hira'.

Before prophethood, the name *al-Amin* was already carved into Mecca's heart. Men entrusted their goods to him; disputes were brought to him; his word was taken as truth. When **Khadijah bint Khuwaylid** — a woman of wealth, lineage, and discernment, twice widowed — heard of his character, she hired him to carry her trade to Syria with her servant Maysarah. On that journey Maysarah witnessed what the source records on the authority of Ibn Abbas: angels shading him from the sun, branches lowering to give him shade. More than this, Maysarah watched how he traded — never cheating the scale, never swearing falsely. The Syrians said, *"We have never met a Meccan trader so honest."*

Khadijah, hearing all this, sent her friend Nafisah to sound him out. "Why do you not marry?" Nafisah asked. "I have nothing to marry with," he answered. When she named Khadijah herself, he

was moved. The marriage was modest and full of *barakah*: he was twenty-five, she forty, and for as long as she lived he married no other. From it came Qasim and Abdullah, who died as infants, and the daughters — Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum, and Fatimah. He never raised his voice in that house, never struck, never wounded.

The source then tells the **rebuilding of the Kaaba**. When the tribes came to the moment of setting the Black Stone, each clan demanded the honour, and swords were nearly drawn. They agreed that the first man to enter by the gate would judge between them; and when Muhammad appeared they cried, *"This is al-Amin — we are content!"* He spread out a cloth, placed the stone at its centre, and had each chief lift a corner, so that all shared the honour equally; then with his own hands he set it in place. Bloodshed was averted, and all went home honoured. The source draws the lesson plainly: a true leader seeks not his own glory but the best path for everyone.

In the years that followed, a restlessness grew in him. He saw his people worshipping stones, burying daughters, oppressing the poor, breaking their pledges, and his heart ached. Each year in Ramadan he withdrew to the cave of **Hira'** on Jabal al-Nur, to reflect on the heavens and the earth and to worship in the pure way of Ibrahim. He had never bowed to an idol. And through all of it stood Khadijah — who prepared his provisions, who waited, and who, the source says, "was the first to see the light, before anyone else."

For reflection: This is a chapter of preparation. The source observes that before the first revelation, before Jibril's *"Iqra',"* his character was already *"al-Qur'an yang berjalan"* — a walking Qur'an; his conduct was revelation not yet written. Greatness, the Seerah insists, is not a matter of age but of a soul tempered by God — in honesty, in a gentle and faithful marriage, in wisdom that heals rather than wounds.

Lesson 4 — The First Revelation and the Beginning of the Call

> *"Read, in the name of your Lord who created — created man from a clinging clot. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know." — Surah al-Alaq 1–5*

> *"Bergembiralah! Demi Allah, Allah tidak akan menghinakanmu selama-lamanya." — Khadijah to the Prophet ﷺ (al-Bukhari, Muslim)*

In this lesson: the night in the cave, Khadijah's shelter, Waraqah's testimony, the silence of the *fatrah*, and the first open call.

At forty — the age of full maturity of mind and soul — in the small cave of Hira', the light came. Jibril appeared and commanded, *"Iqra'!"* — Read! "I do not know how to read," he answered truthfully. The angel embraced him until he could not breathe, released him, and commanded again; three times, until the words came: *"Read, in the name of your Lord who created…"* They were etched into his heart like fire. He ran down the mountain trembling — not from fear of spirits, the source is careful to say, but because an honest man had met something beyond the reach

of the mind, and asked himself: *am I a prophet, or have I lost my mind?*

He reached home shaking. *"Cover me! Cover me!"* Khadijah wrapped him and waited until he was calm, then heard him out. Here the Seerah pauses on the greatness of her soul. She did not say, "Perhaps you dreamed," or "Perhaps it was a devil." With complete conviction she said: *"Rejoice! By God, God will never disgrace you. You keep the ties of kinship, carry the burdens of others, help the weak, give to the destitute, and honour the guest."* This was not blind love but the argument of character — fifteen years of witness that God does not disgrace the noble.

She took him to her cousin **Waraqah ibn Nawfal**, old, blind, learned in the former scriptures. Waraqah said at once: *"This is the Namus [the angel of revelation] whom God sent down to Musa. Would that I were young, that I might live when your people drive you out."* "Will they drive me out?" the Prophet ﷺ asked. "Yes — none has brought the like of what you bring but he was made an enemy." Waraqah died soon after, and the revelation paused.

This pause — the ***fatrah al-wahyu*** — was a severe trial: after so overwhelming a thing, suddenly no angel, no word. In that silence came the second revelation: *"O you who are wrapped in garments, arise and warn!"* (al-Muddaththir). From then the call began — first in secret, over three years, in the house of al-Arqam on Safa. The earliest believers: Khadijah, the first; Abu Bakr al-Siddiq; Ali ibn Abi Talib, then a boy of about ten; and Zayd ibn Harithah. Through Abu Bakr came Uthman, al-Zubayr, Abd al-

Rahman ibn Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Talhah; and among the weak and enslaved, Bilal and Ammar and many more.

Then came the command to warn openly. He climbed **Safa** and called the clans by name until they gathered. *"If I told you horsemen were behind this hill about to attack — would you believe me?"* "We have never heard you lie," they said. "Then I am a warner to you before a severe punishment." His uncle **Abu Lahab** rose and cursed him — *"Perish you! Is it for this you gathered us?"* — and Surah al-Masad was revealed. So the open call began as the prophets' calls always began: with rejection, insult, and threat — and, quietly, with hearts that opened to the light.

For reflection: Why begin in secret? Because, the source explains, the message was still young; openness too early might have extinguished it. There is a time to build in quiet and a time to stand in the open, and the wise know which is which. Notice, too, the order of God's gentleness: a character formed over forty years; an overwhelming encounter; a wife to steady him; a witness to confirm him; a silence to test him; then the call. Nothing was rushed.

Lesson 5 — Persecution, and the Refuge in Abyssinia

> *"Go to the land of Abyssinia; there is a king there who wrongs no one." — the Prophet ﷺ (narrated from Ibn Abbas)*

> *"Truly, what Isa brought and what Muhammad brought come from one and the same source of light. By God, I will not hand them over to you." — the Negus, after hearing Surah Maryam (narrated from Ibn Abbas)*

In this lesson: the torture of the weak, the two migrations to Abyssinia, Ja'far before the Negus, and the three-year boycott.

As the message spread, Quraysh turned from mockery to cruelty. They could not reach the Prophet ﷺ, shielded by Banu Hashim and Abu Talib — so they fell upon his weakest followers, those without a strong clan.

The Seerah lingers, as it must, on the martyrs. **Bilal ibn Rabah**, the Abyssinian slave of Umayyah ibn Khalaf, was stretched on the burning midday sand with a great stone on his chest, told to renounce Muhammad and worship al-Lat and al-Uzza. From his cracked lips came only one word: *"Ahad! Ahad!"* — One! One! Abu Bakr bought him and set him free, and Bilal's voice would one day be the call to prayer over Madinah. The family of **Yasir**

was tortured in the open; **Sumayyah**, an old woman, refused to recant and was killed by Abu Jahl — the first martyr of Islam. Her husband Yasir died under torture; their son **Ammar**, forced to utter words of unbelief to save his life, came weeping to the Prophet ﷺ, who wiped his face and said, *"If they return, say it again — your heart is at rest with faith,"* and the verse of the compelled one was revealed. **Khabbab ibn al-Aratt**, the blacksmith, was laid on burning coals until his flesh seared, and said only: the fire *"ate my flesh, but it could not eat my faith."*

Seeing this, the Prophet ﷺ permitted migration to **Abyssinia**, a Christian kingdom under the just king, the **Negus (Najashi)**. A first group of some fifteen crossed the Red Sea; a second, larger group of over eighty followed, among them **Ja'far ibn Abi Talib**. Quraysh sent envoys — Amr ibn al-As and Abdullah ibn Abi Rabi'ah — with rich gifts, demanding the refugees back. The Negus summoned Ja'far, who rose and spoke: *"We were an ignorant people, worshipping idols, eating carrion, doing evil — until God sent us a messenger whose lineage, truthfulness, and trust we knew…"* Asked to recite, Ja'far read the opening of **Surah Maryam** — the mercy to Zakariyya, the birth of Isa. The Negus wept until his beard was wet, and his bishops with him, and he said: *"This and what Isa brought come from one lamp."* He returned Quraysh's gifts and refused to surrender a single believer.

Failing abroad, Quraysh struck at home: a total **boycott** of Banu Hashim and Banu Abd al-Muttalib, its document hung in the Kaaba — no trade, no marriage, no dealing until Muhammad was given up. For three years the clan was besieged in the valley of

Abu Talib, reduced, as Lings records, to eating leaves and hides; the cries of hungry children could be heard in Mecca. The Prophet ﷺ shared every hardship. At last a few Meccans with conscience remaining — Hisham ibn Amr, Zuhayr, al-Mut'im ibn Adi — moved to tear up the document, and it was found already eaten by worms, with only the words *"In Your name, O God"* remaining. The boycott ended, but it had left its mark: soon after, both Abu Talib and Khadijah would die.

For reflection: The path of truth, the source says, is often strewn with thorns — but the thorns do not wound the one who walks in faith. The believers raised no sword and took no revenge; they endured, prayed, and when a land held justice, they sought it. And Abyssinia stands as proof in the Seerah that justice can be found anywhere, in anyone, if we look for it — even in a Christian king who wept at the Qur'an.

Lesson 6 — The Year of Sorrow, and Ta’if

> *“O Allah, to You I complain of my weakness, my helplessness, and my lowliness before people… If You are not angry with me, I do not care.” — the Prophet’s ﷺ supplication at Ta’if (narrated via Ibn Ishaq)*

In this lesson: grief — the loss of Khadijah and Abu Talib, the stoning at Ta’if, and the most tender prayer in the Seerah.

This lesson sits in the deepest valley of the whole life. In the tenth year of prophethood, within a short span, the two pillars of his earthly support were taken. **Khadijah** — the first to believe, the one who steadied him at the first revelation, who gave her wealth and her whole self, the wife of twenty-five years — died. *“I was never given a better replacement,”* he said. *“She believed in me when people disbelieved, she affirmed me when they denied me, and she gave me her wealth when others withheld.”* And **Abu Talib**, the uncle and shield who, though he never embraced Islam, never let a hand be raised against him — died too. The year was named ***’Am al-Huzn*** — the Year of Sorrow.

With the shield gone, Quraysh grew bold. The source relates how Abu Jahl once threw filth upon him as he prayed, and how his daughter Fatimah came weeping to clean it away, and he said only: *“Do not weep, my daughter. God will protect your father.”*

Mecca had become too narrow. In Shawwal of that year he went to **Ta'if**, a town in the mountains some eighty kilometres away, hoping Banu Thaqif might accept the message or at least give him shelter to call others. They not only refused — they mocked cruelly, and then set the town's youths and slaves to pelt him with stones. He was driven out, blood flowing from both feet, until he took refuge in a vineyard. When Zayd — wounded himself — asked why he did not call down ruin upon them, he answered: *"I was not sent to curse, but to be a mercy."*

There, alone, bleeding, rejected, he raised his hands — not to ask for their destruction, but to lay his weakness before his Lord. The supplication the Seerah preserves is the heart's deepest surrender: *"O Allah, to You I complain of my weakness and my lowliness before people. O Most Merciful, You are the Lord of the weak and You are my Lord. To whom do You entrust me?... If You are not angry with me, I do not care — Your pardon is vast enough for me."* He did not complain of the stones or the wounds; he complained of weakness, and feared only one thing: the anger of God.

Then the angel of the mountains came, offering to crush Ta'if between two mountains at his word. And in the moment he could have had vengeance, he said: *"No. I hope that God will bring from their descendants those who worship Him alone."* The source notes the fulfilment: from Ta'if later came believers like Urwah ibn Mas'ud and al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, and the town itself embraced Islam in the ninth year. On the way home, at Nakhlah, a company of jinn heard his recitation of the Qur'an and

believed — recorded in Surah al-Jinn — a quiet sign that the call was never in vain, even when every human door had closed.

For reflection: The Seerah teaches that the Year of Sorrow and what follows it are two faces of one truth: when people rejected him on earth, God honoured him in the heavens. When they stoned him at Ta'if, God would soon call him to the Lote Tree of the farthest boundary. *"Bersama kesulitan ada kemudahan"* — with hardship comes ease. The darkest night is the threshold of dawn. Hold to this, the source says, as Abu Bakr held, and be patient as the Prophet ﷺ was patient.

Lesson 7 — Isra’ and Mi’raj: Consolation from Heaven

> *“Glory be to the One who took His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him some of Our signs.” — Surah al-Isra’ 1*

In this lesson: the night journey and ascension, the meeting of the prophets, and the gift of the five prayers.

After the Year of Sorrow, God gave His Messenger ﷺ a consolation unlike any other — not merely to lift grief, but to raise him to the highest station. This is **Isra’ and Mi’raj**.

On a night, Jibril came and the Prophet ﷺ was carried upon **Buraq**, a mount whose every stride reached as far as the eye could see. In an instant he reached the **Masjid al-Aqsa** in Jerusalem, where he led all the prophets in prayer — a sign, the source says, that he is the leader of all the prophets, and that Islam completes what came before.

Then he was taken up through the seven heavens, meeting a prophet at each: **Adam** in the first; **Isa and Yahya** in the second; **Yusuf** in the third; **Idris** in the fourth; **Harun** in the fifth; **Musa** in the sixth; and **Ibrahim** in the seventh, resting against the Bayt al-Ma’mur. Each meeting carried meaning. Musa wept when he saw this Prophet raised higher than himself — not

from envy, but because, he said, *"a prophet was sent after me whose followers will enter Paradise in greater numbers than mine."*

He was brought to the **Sidrat al-Muntaha**, the Lote Tree that is the boundary of creation's knowledge, and there the five daily prayers were enjoined — first as fifty. On the way down Musa counselled him to ask for relief, and he went back and forth until it was reduced to five, with the reward of fifty. The prayer, the source draws out, is thus a gift given directly, without intermediary — *"solat adalah mikrajnya orang mukmin"*: the prayer is the believer's own ascension.

The next day he told Quraysh, who mocked — a month's journey by camel, in a single night? Some of the weak in faith fell away. But when they ran to **Abu Bakr**, he said: *"If he said it, then it is true."* For that certainty he was called **al-Siddiq**, the one who wholly affirms.

For reflection: The pairing is deliberate. When the earth grew too narrow — when he was stoned and bereaved — the heavens opened. The source's lesson is not that suffering is erased but that it is answered: every descent in the Seerah is met by an ascent. And the enduring fruit of that night is the most ordinary and most precious of gifts — the five prayers, a daily ascension left within reach of every believer.

Lesson 8 — The Hijrah to Madinah

> *"If you do not help him, God has already helped him… the second of two, when they were in the cave, when he said to his companion: 'Do not grieve; surely God is with us.'" — Surah al-Tawbah 40*

In this lesson: the pledges of Aqabah, the plot of Dar al-Nadwah, Ali on the bed, the cave of Thawr, and the road to Quba'.

The Hijrah, the source insists, was not flight from a battlefield but a divine strategy — to build a fortress of faith where the final message could grow. It began with a pledge. At the pilgrimage, men of Yathrib from the tribes of Aws and Khazraj — long told by the Jews among them that a final prophet was awaited — met the Prophet ﷺ at **Aqabah**. At the **First Pledge of Aqabah**, twelve men promised the simplest and deepest of things: to associate nothing with God, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill their children, not to slander, not to disobey in what is right. He asked for no war and no wealth — only that they be clean human beings. He sent Mus'ab ibn Umayr to teach them, and Islam spread through Yathrib's homes. The next year, at the **Second Pledge**, seventy-three men and two women pledged to protect him as they protected their own families, and he chose twelve *naqibs* (leaders) from among them.

Quraysh, alarmed, gathered in their council hall, **Dar al-Nadwah**. On Abu Jahl's proposal they resolved to kill him by the hands of one youth from every clan at once, so that his blood would be scattered among all the tribes and Banu Abd al-Muttalib could not avenge it. On the appointed night the assassins surrounded his house. But God had warned him. He had **Ali** lie in his bed wrapped in his green cloak — Ali accepting the danger with courage and love — and he walked out through the besiegers reciting Surah Yasin, unseen. In the morning they rushed in to find Ali. *"I am Ali,"* he said. *"Muhammad has gone."*

He went to Abu Bakr, who had prepared two mounts and a trusted guide, Abdullah ibn Urayqit — still a polytheist, but honest. They took the road south, away from the known northern road to Madinah, to the **cave of Thawr**, and hid there three nights. In the dark cave Abu Bakr feared discovery, and the Prophet ﷺ said the words that would last forever: *"Do not grieve; surely God is with us."* When the pursuers reached the mouth of the cave, they found a spider's web spun whole across it and a dove nesting over eggs, and said: *"No one could have entered here."* So God made the weakest of creatures a fortress for His beloved. Each night Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr brought news and Asma' brought food — tearing her own belt to tie the provisions, earning the name *"she of the two belts."*

On the road, **Suraqah ibn Malik** chased them for the bounty of a hundred camels; his horse's legs sank into the sand until he cried for pardon, and the Prophet ﷺ let him go — and he would embrace Islam at the conquest of Mecca. They reached **Quba'** on a Monday, the twelfth of Rabi' al-Awwal, where the Prophet ﷺ

built the first mosque of Islam, carrying stones himself, saying: *"I do not like to be given special treatment."*

For reflection: Every step of the Hijrah is a lesson, the source says: the pledges teach planning and trust; Dar al-Nadwah teaches that enemies may unite, but God's plan is greater; the cave teaches that help comes from where it is least expected; Ali on the bed teaches sacrifice. And at the centre is one sentence to carry into every narrow place: *"Do not grieve; surely God is with us."*

Lesson 9 — Building a People: Brotherhood and Covenant

> *"May God bless your wealth and your family — just show me the way to the market." — Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf, declining his Ansari brother's offer of half his wealth*

In this lesson: the welcome at Madinah, the Prophet's Mosque, the brotherhood of Muhajirun and Ansar, and the Constitution of Madinah — the formation of a community.

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Madinah after Quba', the whole city came out — men, women, children — in their finest, the children singing *"Tala'a al-Badru 'alayna"*, "the full moon has risen over us." Every household wished to host him. He let his camel walk free, saying, *"Leave her, for she is commanded,"* until she knelt on a plot of land belonging to two orphans of Banu Najjar. He refused to take it as a gift and bought it at a fair price; there the **Masjid al-Nabawi** was built — walls of mud-brick, pillars of palm-trunks, roof of palm-fronds. He worked on it himself. It became not only a place of prayer but the centre of government, teaching, law, and community life; beside it was the *Suffah*, a shelter for the poor companions who became devoted students.

Then came one of his wisest acts: he **joined the Muhajirun and the Ansar as brothers**, each emigrant paired with a helper — at first even inheriting from one another. The bond was extraordinary. Sa'd ibn al-Rabi' said to **Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf**: "I have two gardens — take one; I have two wives — I will divorce one for you to marry." Abd al-Rahman answered: *"May God bless your wealth and your family — just show me the way to the market,"* and traded until he grew wealthy. There was no envy, no greed — only giving. The Prophet ﷺ made himself the brother of Ali: *"You are my brother in this world and the next."* The old wars of Aws and Khazraj dissolved; they were no longer two tribes but one people — the Ansar. Faith proved a stronger bond than blood.

He also wrote the ***Sahifah al-Madinah*** — the **Constitution of Madinah** — binding all the city's people, Muslim and Jewish and others, into one community of mutual right and obligation. Its terms, as the source lists them: all the people of Madinah are one *ummah* (one political community) with equal rights and duties; each tribe is free to practise its own religion; in war all defend the city together; the Jews may not aid the enemies of the Muslims; disputes are referred to the Prophet ﷺ as arbiter; all share responsibility for the common safety. This, the source says, was a revolution in governance: in an age that knew only tribe and clan, he gathered them all under one covenant — the first example in history of a pluralistic polity founded on a shared, agreed charter.

The source does not hide what came later. The Jewish tribes — Banu Qaynuqa', Banu Nadir, Banu Qurayzah — at first accepted

the covenant and were guaranteed their faith and property; some later broke it by aiding the enemy, and were dealt with accordingly. But in its foundation, the Seerah presents the Constitution as proof that Islam did not compel, but built a just and harmonious society by agreement. And he renamed the city: no longer **Yathrib** but **al-Madinah** — the City — rooted, the source notes, in a word meaning obedience: the city obedient to God.

For reflection: The Hijrah, the source concludes, made the Prophet ﷺ not only a prophet but a leader, judge, commander, and teacher, and raised a new society on three foundations: faith, brotherhood, and justice. The lesson for us is to migrate inwardly too — from discord to unity, from heedlessness to devotion — and to remember that a people is made not by blood or wealth, but by covenant kept and by the strong carrying the weak.

Lesson 10 — Badr: Help from Heaven

> *"O Allah, if this group is destroyed, You will not be worshipped on earth." — the Prophet's ﷺ prayer on the eve of Badr (Martin Lings)*

In this lesson: the first great trial of arms, the night of supplication, and the dignity shown to captives.

In the second year of the Hijrah, the Muslims of Madinah lived in hardship, having left home and property behind. When a Quraysh caravan under Abu Sufyan passed, the Prophet ﷺ moved to intercept it — a signal that Islam's strength was forming — but God had a greater plan. Abu Sufyan diverted the caravan and sent to Mecca for help, and Quraysh marched out nearly a thousand strong, well-armed and mounted. Against them stood three hundred and thirteen men, with two horses and seventy camels, some of them young and untried.

The night before battle, the Prophet ﷺ did not sleep. He stood before his tent, hands raised, and prayed with a voice both loud and humble: *"O Allah, if this group is destroyed, You will not be worshipped on earth."* This, the source says, was not despair but the summit of trust — he knew victory lies not in numbers or weapons but in God's leave alone. The Qur'an records the answer: *"I will reinforce you with a thousand angels, rank upon rank"*

(al-Anfal 9). The rain of the night before hardened the sand under the Muslims' feet and mired the enemy. He took a handful of dust and cast it toward them. The battle was fierce; **Abu Jahl**, the fiercest enemy of Islam, was killed; seventy of Quraysh fell and seventy were taken captive.

What most distinguishes Badr in the source is not the victory but its aftermath. The Prophet ﷺ consulted his companions on the captives — Abu Bakr advised ransom, Umar advised execution — and he chose ransom, and gave the literate among the captives a choice: pay, or teach ten Madinan children to read and write. *"This,"* the source marvels, *"was the battle that gave birth to the first school in Islam."* In the flush of victory, he put knowledge and education first.

For reflection: Badr teaches that God's help comes when the servant surrenders completely. But the deeper lesson the Seerah draws is in the treatment of the defeated: victory was measured not by the enemies killed but by the standing of the word of God — and even enemy captives were offered freedom in exchange for teaching children to read. Mercy and learning stood at the centre of the first Muslim victory.

Lesson 11 — Uhud and Khandaq: The Bitter and the Besieged

> *"Do not leave this position, whether you see us winning or losing." — the Prophet's ﷺ order to the archers at Uhud (narrated from Ibn Abbas)*

In this lesson: the costly lesson of Uhud, the grief over Hamzah, and the trench that saved Madinah.

A year after Badr, Quraysh returned for revenge — three thousand strong, led by Abu Sufyan, with Hind bint Utbah among them, her heart full of vengeance for her kin fallen at Badr. The Muslims went out some seven hundred (three hundred hypocrites under Abdullah ibn Ubayy having turned back) to **Uhud**. With great foresight the Prophet ﷺ placed fifty archers on the hill of al-Rumah with a clear and absolute order: *"Do not leave this position, whether you see us winning or losing."*

At first the battle went to the Muslims; Quraysh broke. But seeing the enemy routed and the spoils scattered, most of the archers left their post to gather booty, disobeying the command. **Khalid ibn al-Walid** — then still an unbeliever — saw the hill emptied, wheeled his cavalry, and struck from behind. In an instant victory turned to catastrophe. Many were killed; the Prophet ﷺ himself

was wounded, a stone breaking his tooth and bloodying his face, and he fell into a pit dug by the enemy. **Hamzah**, his uncle, the Lion of God, was martyred — struck by the spear of Wahshi, hired by Hind, who then mutilated his body. Seeing Hamzah's disfigured corpse, the Prophet ﷺ wept: *"I have never been angrier than I am today."* Yet he did not take revenge; the verse came down holding back his wrath — *"if you are patient, it is better for the patient"* — and he prayed, *"O Allah, forgive my people, for they do not know."* Seventy companions were martyred at Uhud, among them **Mus'ab ibn Umayr**, once Mecca's most elegant youth, now barely recognizable.

Uhud, the source says, teaches that obedience to the leader is part of faith: one small lapse — leaving a post out of greed — brought a great calamity. Yet God did not let the Muslims be destroyed; the trial purified their sincerity.

In the fifth year the enemies united into a confederacy — ***al-Ahzab*** — Quraysh, the exiled Banu Nadir, and Arab tribes, ten thousand strong, marching to end Islam at once. Here wisdom and consultation became the weapon. **Salman al-Farisi**, the Persian companion, proposed a strategy the Arabs had never used: to dig a **trench (khandaq)** around Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ agreed, and all dug together, he among them, a stone bound to his belly against hunger. Striking a great rock, he saw flashes of light and declared he had been given the keys of Syria, of Persia, of Yemen — signs of victories to come. The confederates reached the trench and could not cross; they camped two weeks as the cold deepened, until God sent a violent wind that overturned their tents and filled their hearts with fear (al-Ahzab 9), and the

alliance broke apart — Nu'aym ibn Mas'ud sowing distrust between Quraysh and the treacherous Banu Qurayzah until all withdrew. Madinah was saved almost without a pitched battle. Afterward Banu Qurayzah, who had betrayed the covenant by aiding the Ahzab, were besieged and judged — by their own chosen arbiter Sa'd ibn Mu'adh — according to a severe wartime justice. Here, the source says plainly, we learn that mercy does not mean weakness, and that justice is sometimes bitter.

For reflection: Three battles, three lessons the source names in one breath: Badr — that God's help comes when the servant surrenders; Uhud — that obedience to the leader is a shield; Khandaq — that intellect and faith must act together. And beneath them all, one thread: with every hardship comes ease, and God never breaks His promise to those who are patient.

Lesson 12 — Hudaybiyyah: The Covenant That Looked Like Defeat

> *"Indeed, We have granted you a clear victory." — Surah al-Fath 1*

> *"I am the servant of God and His Messenger. I will not disobey His command, and He will not forsake me." — the Prophet ﷺ to Umar at Hudaybiyyah*

In this lesson: the pilgrimage that was turned back, the Pledge of Ridwan, a treaty that stung, and the victory hidden inside patience.

In the sixth year the Prophet ﷺ dreamed that he entered Mecca in peace and performed the lesser pilgrimage. He set out with 1,400 companions — unarmed but for sheathed swords, in *ihram*, calling *"Labbayk Allahumma labbayk,"* intending worship, not war. Quraysh, suspicious, barred the way, and rather than shed blood in the sacred precinct he halted at **Hudaybiyyah**.

He sent **Uthman ibn Affan**, a kinsman of Quraysh, as envoy. Uthman was delayed, and a rumour spread that he had been killed. Beneath a tree the Prophet ﷺ called the companions to pledge — to stand and not flee — and 1,400 men raised their hands in the **Pledge of Ridwan**, not one drawing back. God

Himself declared His pleasure with them *"when they pledged to you under the tree"* (al-Fath 18).

Uthman returned safe, and Quraysh sent Suhayl ibn Amr to negotiate. The resulting **Treaty of Hudaybiyyah** seemed, on its face, lopsided and humiliating: a ten-year truce; any Meccan who came to the Muslims without his guardian's leave would be returned, but a Muslim who fled to Quraysh would not; and the Muslims must turn back this year, performing the pilgrimage only the next, and then for three days only. When it was read, **Umar ibn al-Khattab** could not contain his distress. He came to Abu Bakr: "Are we not Muslims and they idolaters? Why do we accept humiliation in our religion?" Abu Bakr answered, *"He is the Messenger of God; hold fast to him."* Umar went to the Prophet ﷺ himself with the same questions, and received the answer that stilled him: *"I am the servant of God and His Messenger; I will not disobey His command."* When Suhayl objected to "In the name of God, the Most Merciful" and to "Muhammad the Messenger of God," the Prophet ﷺ had them changed to "In Your name, O God" and "Muhammad son of Abdullah" — and signed. The companions could barely watch; but God was planning something greater. He ordered the sacrifice and the shaving of heads, and called it, the source records, *"the greatest victory."*

And so it proved. Then **Surah al-Fath** was revealed: *"Indeed, We have granted you a clear victory."* Victory? They had seemed to lose at the negotiating table — yet God named it triumph, and the companions understood: the real victory is the victory of the heart, of creed, of patience. With the truce, the Muslims were no

longer treated as rebels but as an equal party; the message spread in peace; within two years the number of believers doubled — among the new Muslims, the future commanders Khalid ibn al-Walid and Amr ibn al-As. The truce also gave room for the Prophet ﷺ to send letters to the kings of the earth — Heraclius of Rome, Chosroes of Persia, the Negus of Abyssinia, al-Muqawqis of Egypt — calling them to Islam. The call was no longer local; it had become a mercy addressed to the whole world.

For reflection: Take the lesson, the source urges: sometimes we feel we have lost, while God is arranging a larger victory; sometimes a covenant that stings is in truth a door of provision. Do not despair when an agreement seems to go against you, and do not rush to anger when truth seems overruled — for with hardship comes ease, and God does not break His word to the patient.

Lesson 13 — The Conquest of Mecca: Mercy over Vengeance

> *"When the Prophet entered Mecca on the day of the conquest, he was not a conqueror seeking revenge. He was a mercy to the worlds… Then he said to the people of Mecca: 'Go, for you are free.'" — Martin Lings*

> *"Go — you are all free. There is no reproach upon you this day." — the Prophet ﷺ at the door of the Kaaba*

In this lesson: the march on Mecca, the clearing of the Kaaba, and the amnesty that conquered hearts.

When Quraysh's allies, Banu Bakr, attacked the Muslims' allies, Banu Khuza'ah, the truce of Hudaybiyyah was broken, and in the eighth year the Prophet ﷺ moved on Mecca with ten thousand. They marched by night, campfires like a river of light across the desert, so that Quraysh did not grasp their strength. **Abu Sufyan**, Mecca's chief, went out to scout and was brought before the Prophet ﷺ, where he embraced Islam. To honour him and to spare the city, the Prophet ﷺ proclaimed: *"Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufyan is safe; whoever shuts his door is safe; whoever enters the Sacred Mosque is safe."*

So Mecca opened almost without bloodshed. He entered his birthplace with his head bowed low, nearly touching the saddle in humility and gratitude, the takbir of his companions filling the valley. He went to the Kaaba, around and within which stood three hundred and sixty idols, and struck them down one by one with his bow, reciting: *"Truth has come, and falsehood has vanished; surely falsehood is bound to vanish"* (al-Isra' 81). The idols that had been worshipped for centuries fell like dry leaves; no one dared defend them.

Then he stood at the door of the Kaaba, and the people of Mecca gathered before him, trembling — those who had tortured, boycotted, exiled, and warred against him, now awaiting the fate the victorious usually dealt the defeated. He asked: *"O people of Quraysh, what do you think I will do to you?"* They answered: *"Good — for you are a noble brother, the son of a noble brother."* He said: *"Go — you are all free. There is no reproach upon you this day. May God forgive you."*

This, the source says, is the true victory — measured not by enemies killed but by hearts won. He took no revenge, seized no property, enslaved no one; he forgave even those who had wronged him most. History records, the Seerah notes, that almost no one was killed that day; Mecca fell into Muslim hands without bloodshed, fulfilling his dream. This is the character of the Qur'an, and the model that endures to the end of time.

For reflection: Hudaybiyyah and the Conquest are two faces of one story: a bitter patience became a sweet victory. At Hudaybiyyah they learned that triumph is not always by force but

by wisdom and trust in God's promise; at the Conquest they saw that gentleness and forgiveness are the sharpest weapons for winning human hearts. The source closes with a summons we can take as our own: cleanse the heart of its modern idols — love of the world, fear of other than God, pride, and the thirst for revenge.

Lesson 14 — The Farewell Pilgrimage and the Passing

> *“This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and chosen for you Islam as your religion.” — Surah al-Ma’idah 3*

> *“I leave with you two things; you will not go astray so long as you hold to them: the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger.” — the Farewell Sermon*

In this lesson: the farewell sermon at Arafah, the last days, the passing in Aisha’s chamber, and Abu Bakr’s steadying word.

In the tenth year the Prophet ﷺ made the pilgrimage, and tens of thousands — the source says over a hundred thousand — came from every valley and tribe. On the Day of **Arafah**, as the sun declined, he mounted his camel al-Qaswa’ and delivered the **Farewell Sermon**, short and complete, each phrase a jewel. He began: *“O people, listen to my words, for I do not know whether I shall meet you again after this year in this place.”* The words struck every heart; those who knew him best began, quietly, to weep.

He abolished the claims of Jahiliyyah — the vendettas of blood, the compounding of *riba* — beginning the cancellation with the blood-claims and the interest owed to his own family. He clarified the rights of women: *“Fear God concerning women; you have*

taken them as a trust from God." He affirmed that *"the believers are brothers; a brother's wealth and blood are forbidden to him except by his own consent."* And he left the lasting inheritance: *"I leave with you two things… the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger."* As the sermon ended, the verse came down: *"This day I have perfected your religion for you"* — and Umar wept, for the wiser among them understood: when a thing is perfected, its time is near; the moon is brightest just before it wanes. On the way back, at **Ghadir Khumm**, the source relates, he raised the hand of Ali and said: *"Whoever takes me as his mawla, Ali too is his mawla"* — a word, the source frames it, not of politics but of deep affection.

Back in Madinah his health soon failed. A fever took him — burning, severe. He asked his wives' leave to be nursed in the chamber of **Aisha**, and they consented; he was carried there, his feet dragging. He did not complain, saying only: *"There is no god but God; truly death has its agonies."* He kept urging, in his last counsels: *"The prayer, the prayer — and those whom your right hands possess"* — remembering to the end the weak and the dependent. In his final moments he prayed, *"O Allah, forgive me and have mercy on me, and join me with the Highest Companion (al-Rafiq al-A'la)."* He opened his eyes to the heavens, spoke those words, and his hand fell. On **Monday, the twelfth of Rabi' al-Awwal, in the eleventh year**, as the sun rose, his soul returned to its Lord.

Madinah was thrown into grief. **Umar**, unable to accept it, stood with his sword and swore to strike down any who said the Prophet ﷺ had died — he had only gone to meet his Lord, as

Musa had, and would return. Then **Abu Bakr** came, uncovered the blessed face, kissed it, and said: *"You are noble in life and in death."* He went out to the people and, after praising God, spoke the words that steadied a nation: *"Whoever worshipped Muhammad — Muhammad has died. Whoever worshipped God — God is Living and does not die,"* and recited: *"Muhammad is but a messenger; messengers have passed away before him…"* (Al Imran 144). Umar's legs gave way beneath him, and he said it was as if he heard the verse for the first time. The Prophet ﷺ was washed by Ali, al-Abbas and his sons, shrouded in three white Yemeni cloths, prayed over by the people in groups without a single imam, and buried in the very chamber where he died — for he had said no prophet is buried but where he dies. Abu Bakr became the first caliph; the community, bereaved, stood firm — for Muhammad ﷺ had gone, but Islam remained, and God never abandons the believers.

For reflection: The Farewell Pilgrimage, the source says, is a sign that everything has its end — but an end in this world is a beginning in the next. The Prophet's ﷺ passing was not a defeat but a completion: he fulfilled the trust and left his community upon a path whose night is as clear as its day. Our task is to hold fast to the two inheritances — the Book and the Sunnah — through which, whenever we recite the Qur'an or follow his way, he remains among us still.

Closing Reflection

We began in a dark valley ringed with idols and end at a grave in a small chamber, dug by night, shrouded in three plain cloths. Between the two lies not a career but a life — and through it, the making of a people.

Read again what the Seerah actually asked us to notice. Not a sequence of battles, but a *character*: the orphan who became *al-Amin* before a single verse was revealed. Not abstract doctrine, but *revelation* received with trembling and steadied by a wife's faith. Not triumph without cost, but *grief* — the Year of Sorrow, the blood at Ta'if, the weeping over Hamzah — answered each time by mercy and by a heaven that opened when the earth grew narrow. Not conquest for its own sake, but *covenant* kept and *forgiveness* offered to the very people who had driven him out: *"Go — you are all free."*

If one thread runs through all fourteen lessons, it is the one the source returns to again and again: *with hardship comes ease*, and God does not forsake those who are patient. The spider's web at the cave, the small birds over the great army, the trench dug by hungry hands, the treaty that looked like defeat and was named a clear victory — all of it says the same thing. Strength is not in numbers, and victory is not in vengeance.

This course has tried to carry that voice faithfully, without adding to it or smoothing away what it chose to preserve — its miracles,

its sorrows, its hard moments of justice, its tenderness. Whatever is good in it is from the sources it rests upon; whatever falls short is ours.

May the reading of this life soften the heart, and may we be joined, as he asked to be, with *al-Rafiq al-A'la* — the Highest Companion.

A Note on Scope and Study

This micro-course is a **structured introduction** to the Seerah tradition, not a substitute for it. It is an adaptation of a single Malay-language work (*Seerah Nabawiyyah*, Kitab Kuning Digital, by Jauhari Che Wan), which in turn draws on the classical sources — Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham, al-Tabari, the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim, al-Baihaqi's *Dala'il al-Nubuwwah*, and Martin Lings' *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*.

A course of fourteen lessons cannot carry the full weight of that tradition. Reports vary in strength; scholars differ in their readings of particular events, their chronology, and their details; and the law and meaning drawn from this life belong to a living science. Where this course met a sensitive, contested, or miraculous matter, it preserved the source's own treatment rather than taking a position the original did not take. That restraint is deliberate — and it is also a limit you should keep in mind.

The Seerah is meant to be studied with qualified teachers, alongside the Qur'an and the sciences of hadith, in the company of those who can place each report in its context. Let this be a doorway: a first, reverent walk through the life, after which you return to the sources themselves — and to the scholars who carry them — to go deeper.

And God knows best. Wallahu a'lam.