

King Abdul Aziz Al Saud

Noble Character

“ I do not ever want to hear of anyone suffering
injustice. Haven't I delivered , Allah, be my witness ”

Abdul Aziz Al Saud

Dr. Khaled A. Al jeraisy



King Abdul-Aziz' Noble Character

Dr. Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Jeraisy

Translated by

Dr. Mohamed Atif Mogahed Mohamed

**"Blessed be he through whose hands
Allah lets good flow!"⁽¹⁾**

Prophet Muhammad

(1) *Sunan Ibn Maajah*, Hadith No. 237.

Dedication

To

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,
His Majesty King Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Aziz

I dedicate these pages
Glittering with traits of
King Abdul-Aziz' noble character!

It was in a fatherly audience with his majesty King Abdullah that I had the honor of catching his majesty's words: "I haven't seen a book yet about the character of King Abdul-Aziz." These words, from his majesty's big heart, were but a royal directive and trust which I sought to fulfill.

Despite my humble efforts, I am hereby greatly honored to present this book in response to the heart-felt words of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques.

May this humble piece of work be for Allah's Sake, and may Allah be pleased with it.

May Allah bless our king and country.

May Allah bless the royal family.

May Allah keep them spreading good and promoting Islam.

Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Jeraisy

Translator's Note

I wish to thank Dr. Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Jeraisy for giving me the opportunity to do this translation about the character of King Abdul-Aziz. The translation includes some modifications made with the target reader in mind.

Having read the Arabic original and having done the translation, I could not but feel the respect I have had for the late King rise to love, extending to his sister Nora. His image when kneeling and lowering his shoulder for his father to step on it to get on his horse has left a beautiful note in my heart.

Evidently, King Abdul-Aziz was God-fearing, and this quality was the key to his character. In the light of this key, his behavior as a Muslim individual, as a family man and as a leader can be properly understood and appreciated.

King Abdul-Aziz had a mission and a vision. He was dedicated to the promotion of pure faith, and he sought to modernize his society. He cared and shared. I would love the great grandchildren of King Abdul-Aziz to be made aware of their great grandfather's mission and vision and to continue his practice of caring and sharing.

May Allah grant King Abdul-Aziz mercy.

May Allah bless his successors and country.

Translator

Mohamed Atif Mogahed Mohamed

College of Languages and Translation

King Saud University

Email Address: mammdeso@hotmail.com

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Introduction

Praise be to Allah, the true King, Who has honored us by accepting us among those that believe in Him as the One and Only Lord. Thanks be to Him for having sent to mankind Prophet Muhammad, the seal of His prophets and the Imam of his messengers. Praising Prophet Muhammad's conduct in the Qur'an, Allah says, "And verily, you are of a great character."⁽¹⁾ May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his kin, his Companions and his followers.

May Allah grant mercy to King Abdul-Aziz, whose character is the topic of this book. The achievements of King Abdul-Aziz have attracted historians, particularly with respect to their significance and the great speed at which they took place. In this regard, attention has been focused on the practical policies of King Abdul-Aziz, e.g. his unique political stances, his distinct ways of government and his dedication to the application of Shari'ah and the establishment of religious duties. However, the humane dimension of King Abdul-Aziz' personality has not received due attention. This may be due to the fact that his achievements were so great and rapid that they overwhelmed observers worldwide. Also, it is not easy to grasp all the aspects of such a talented leader without full awareness of the details of his day-to-day conduct and his background morality and thought.

Realizing the importance of the humane aspect of the late King Abdul-Aziz' personality, the writer attempts to explore

(1) Surat Al-Qalam, Ayah 4.

it, hoping to shed light on it so that the reader can have a better picture of his noble character. Underpinning his ideals was his dedication to Islamic teachings, which guided his humane conduct. In fact, it was that dedication that rallied his subjects around him, giving him their full support. His behavior reflected Islamic qualities and genuine Arab traditions, and his character manifested both nobility and humility. It is these qualities that distinguish the character of King Abdul-Aziz as a prominent world leader. He is considered "one of the greatest leaders, not only in the twentieth century, but also throughout history".⁽¹⁾

Typical of King Abdul-Aziz was his acknowledgement that whatever achievements he made were by the Grace of Allah. In one of his statements, he said, "I have established this kingdom with the help of no one, but Allah. It is Allah that has granted me success. I am not a king brought in by the will of a foreign power. I am a king by the will of Allah, through the will of the Arabs who have chosen and given me their pledge. However, titles are but words, and I am only Abdul-Aziz"⁽²⁾

King Abdul-Aziz was committed to a lofty goal, namely founding a nation on brotherhood, love and mutual caring and sharing. This is a sublime aim compared to the down-to-earth seeking of worldly, transient pleasures. His devotion to Islamic ideals and exemplary conduct enhanced his people's loyalty to him and boosted their dedication to underlying Islamic

(1) Al-Turky, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud: Ommah fee Rajul (King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man)*, (in Arabic), Daarat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 163.

(2) Al-Uhaideb, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *Min Hayaat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz (From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz)*, (in Arabic), Riyadh, Mataabi' Al-Ish'aa' Al-Tijaari, 1st ed. 1399 H (1979 AD), p. 81.

principles. Indeed, a nation built on *taqwa* of Allah and commitment to His Shari'ah cannot be but strong and long lasting. Such is the uniquely strong foundation of our nation that it has not been shaken by the wind of destructive ideologies sweeping the globe. In contrast, as historically evidenced, a nation built on the pursuit of sheer worldly aims never survives.

Guided by Islamic teachings, King Abdul-Aziz' conduct was exemplary, manifesting multiple but harmonious qualities. This may explain the sincere love people have had for him till today. To study his whole personality would need a colossal effort, beyond the writer's humble attempt. The present book attempts to explore the humane traits of King Abdul-Aziz' character. Chapter (1) introduces King Abdul-Aziz, the social environment where he grew up, the significant events of his time and the factors impacting his conduct. It also presents examples of his style of government. Chapter (2) is the locus of this book. It is concerned with the distinct humane traits of his personality in theory and practice. Chapter (3) deals with his relationship with his immediate family, the Al-Saud, and with his larger family, namely his subjects. Chapter (4) shows his great interest in Islamic scholarship, scholars and the spread and development of education. Chapter (5) is concerned with the last days of King Abdul-Aziz and testimonials to him. The Conclusion sums up the treatise on the humane traits of his unique personality.

The whole experience of writing this book has multiplied sincere love for Abdul-Aziz, the man before King. Indeed, he earned, by the Grace of Allah, the love of people before earning his title. He captured hearts before territory, and became king of hearts before king of country. He deserved both rightly.

The writer's effort can never match his love and admiration for King Abdul-Aziz, nor can it match the latter's ideals and character.



Chapter 1

King Abdul-Aziz: A Historical Synopsis

1.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Lineage and Upbringing

1.2 King Abdul-Aziz' Political Insight and Practice

1.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Lineage and Upbringing

1.1.1 Lineage

King Abdul-Aziz was the son of Abdul-Rahman Ibn Faisal Ibn Turkey Ibn Abdullah Ibn Mohammad Ibn Saud Ibn Mohammad Ibn Moqrin Ibn Markhan Ibn Ibraheem Ibn Moosa Ibn Rabee'ah Ibn Maani' Ibn Rabee'ah Al-Muraydiy.⁽¹⁾

Maani' Al-Muaydiy is the founder of Dir'eyyah, and his line of ancestors goes back to Rabee'ah Ibn Nizaar Ibn Ma'add Ibn Adnan. In brief, according to most Arab genealogists, the Al-Saud family goes back to the Bani Haneefah tribe, from Bani Bakr Ibn Waa'el Ibn Asad Ibn Rabee'ah Ibn Nizaar Ibn Ma'add Ibn Adnan.⁽²⁾

1.1.2 Date and Place of Birth

King Abdul-Aziz was born in Riyadh towards the end of the thirteenth Hijri century, marking the end of the Second Saudi State. Regarding his date of birth, there are two contending dates: 24/12/1876 AD and 12/11/1880 AD. The writer agrees with the argument for the former date.⁽³⁾

1.1.3 Upbringing

Naturally, one interacts with one's environment in a two-way relationship. During the early years, representing the formative stage, the environment provides the conditions of development, which are likely to have a lasting effect on

behavior, positively or negatively. During later stages, one is more likely to have some influence on one's milieu, depending on such factors as character, potentials and status. Now, let us consider a number of the upbringing conditions thought to have affected King Abdul-Aziz' character formation, so that we can understand and appreciate his return influence on his milieu, politically, economically and socially.

1. Family

King Abdul-Aziz was brought up in conditions where disputes divided the Al-Saud. On the one hand, the sons of Imam Faisal Ibn Turkey were divided. On the other hand they were fighting their uncle Imam Abdullah. This situation was a sign of their failure and loss of power⁽⁴⁾. Against such a state of affairs, the Qur'an warns: "... [And] dispute not one with another lest you falter and your strength depart from you...."⁽⁵⁾

However, King Abdul-Aziz' parents were known for their piety, and they looked after him, instilling in him noble values and manners. His father was one of the rulers and distinguished fighters in Najd. This may explain the King's determination and courage. His mother, Sarah Bint Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Al-Sidairy⁽⁶⁾, was known for her faith, wisdom and good home management. This may explain the King's wise and reflective dispositions.⁽⁷⁾

At a very young age, King Abdul-Aziz was taught martial arts, and he trained to endure the Bedouin tough life, hunger and thirst. He was encouraged by his father to explore the desert and tribal living conditions.⁽⁸⁾

The task of teaching young Abdul-Aziz the basics of reading, writing and Qur'an recitation was entrusted to Judge Abdullah Al-Kharji, a scholar from Al-Kharj, but residing in Riyadh. This provided the opportunity for religious education to enhance faith and Islamic teachings. Young Abdul-Aziz was able to master the Qur'anic recitation in four years. He had a revision of the whole Qur'an under the supervision of Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Musaibeeh. After that, he was entrusted to Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdullateef Al-Sheikh to study *tawheed* and jurisprudence.⁽⁹⁾ Indeed, religious studies are considered a sign of Allah's blessings; the Prophet says, "It is a sign of Allah's love that one is guided to the study of religion."⁽¹⁰⁾

In addition, his father had to take him in his company to men's assemblies so that he could be exposed to adult debates and be accustomed to arguing frankly and boldly. In fact, he took young Abdul-Aziz to several battles where he had to do actual fighting.⁽¹¹⁾

Eventually, young Abdul-Aziz opted for military life and preparation for an active role in the battlefield. He was keen on it, and he mastered horsemanship and using the sword, excelling his peers. He was also fond of listening to the history of his brave grandfather Faisal Ibn Turkey. Thus, young Abdul-Aziz' upbringing combined both religious education for faith and values and education for worldly affairs.⁽¹²⁾ The combination enhanced his character and skills.

On the negative side, young Abdul-Aziz had first-hand experience of conflicts over power and the workings of politics. This led him to the conclusion that dissensions were destructive of even the strongest institutions. He also

concluded that maintaining good government was the ruler's top priority. Thus, the negative experiences young Abdul-Aziz went through contributed to the development of his character.

2. Desert Life

In 1891 AD, young Abdul-Aziz had to accompany his family to the desert, where life was hard. There, he experienced tough circumstances, and learnt how to endure difficulties and how to cope with changing times and human nature. Living in the desert had an impact on his upbringing.⁽¹³⁾ During his desert life, he gained self-confidence and valuable experience that represented good preparation for tackling future difficulties. He had first-hand experience of Bedouins' hard life and struggle for survival; he witnessed their daily activities, seeking food and water for their herds. He had the opportunity to be familiar with Bedouin customs and traditions, such as the right to pasture and water resources, as well as generosity to guests.⁽¹⁴⁾

Due to his religious background, young Abdul-Aziz was able to see the negative aspects of Bedouin life. For example, there were injustices in the traditional boasting and tribalism. In addition, he became aware of the reality of hunger and thirst. Attending assemblies of tribal elders, he was able to listen to their debates and to stories from the heroic past of Bani Murrah⁽¹⁵⁾ in the battlefield. In brief, living in the desert provided young Abdul-Aziz with valuable knowledge and experience in dealing with Bedouins and rallying their support when needed.

3. Missions

Imam Abdul-Rahman Ibn Faisal provided his son Abdul-Aziz

with both religious education and political preparation. Let us see some examples of his political preparation:

- In 1890 AD, young Abdul-Aziz was among the delegation sent by Imam Abdul-Rahman to negotiate with Mohamed Ibn Rasheed.⁽¹⁶⁾ The delegation included Mohamed Ibn Faisal, Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdullateef Al-Sheikh and Sheikh Hamad Ibn Faaris.⁽¹⁷⁾
- In 1891 AD, Ibn Rasheed defeated Al-Qasseem people in Al-Mulaidaa' battle, and marched towards Riyadh, where Imam Abdul-Rahman was stationed. Imam Abdul-Rahman had to leave Riyadh and take with him his family and some of his men. That was in 1891 AD. He traveled deep into the desert.⁽¹⁸⁾ He camped in the desert where he was the guest of the Al-Murrah tribe and Al-Ajmaan tribe⁽¹⁹⁾, between Yebreen⁽²⁰⁾ and Al-Ihsaa'. At that time, the Ottoman Commissioner of Al-Ihsaa', Aakif Pasha, assigned the army doctor (Zaakhuur Azaar Al-Libnaani) to negotiate with Imam Abdul-Rahman and his son Abdul-Aziz. Among the conditions for negotiations were the following: 1. Imam Abdul-Rahman was to rule Riyadh on behalf of the Ottomans; 2. He was to recognize the Ottoman state and to pay the Ottoman state the yearly tax.⁽²¹⁾

Imam Abdul-Rahman rejected the conditions, and he had to send his son young Abdul-Aziz to Sheikh Eesa Ibn Khaleefah,⁽²²⁾ ruler of Bahrain, to request refuge for women and children. Young Abdul-Aziz' mission was successful.⁽²³⁾

Having gathered Bedouin fighters from the desert, Imam Abdul-Rahman had skirmishes with Ibn Rasheed's men around Riyadh. In 1891 AD, Imam Abdul-Rahman captured Al-Dilam

from Ibn Rasheed's men. When Ibn Rasheed learnt about the attack on Al-Dilam, he marched onto Huraimilaa', where he defeated Imam Abdul-Rahman, who had to retreat to the desert. Young Abdul-Aziz was sent to Al-Hufoof, Al-Ihsaa' Center, to negotiate with its Ottoman ruler for a place where the Imam and his men could stay. The Ottomans refused, and so young Abdul-Aziz' mission was not successful.⁽²⁴⁾

When negotiations with the Ottoman ruler of Al-Ihsaa' failed, the Imam sought refuge with the emir of Kuwait, but the latter refused. So, the Al-Saud had to go back to the desert, where they stayed with the Al-Ajmaan.

Having written to Sheikh Qaasim Ibn Thaani of Qatar, Imam Abdul-Rahman got a favorable response; he was welcomed to stay in Qatar. There, the Imam and his company stayed for 2 months, then moved to Kuwait. It is not clear whether the arrangement to move to Kuwait was for a payment to Haafiz Pasha, the Ottoman ruler of Al-Ihsaa', or in return for helping the latter to retreat from the battle against the Sheikh of Qatar. In either case, settling in Kuwait had to be done with the consent of the Ottomans.⁽²⁵⁾

Thus, young Abdul-Aziz found himself conducting negotiations and going on diplomatic missions. Such activities at a young age had an impact on the development of his personality and self-confidence and contributed to diplomatic experiences that proved valuable in later encounters.⁽²⁶⁾

4. Living in Kuwait and the Battle of Al-Sireif⁽²⁷⁾

It is argued that young Abdul-Aziz' time in Kuwait marked

the beginning of his political development; he witnessed the impact of destructive dissensions on the ruling family of Al-Subaah. However, it is argued that young Abdul-Aziz had already witnessed the dissensions among his own family before having to go to Kuwait. He saw how infighting amongst the Al-Saud led to the loss of their power. Young Abdul-Aziz had practiced politics during his involvement in missions immediately after having to leave Riyadh. He also took part in negotiations with Ibn Rasheed. Thus, he practiced real politics before the Kuwait period.

Despite evidence supporting young Abdul-Aziz' practice of politics earlier, the Kuwait period is considered the most significant in his political development. He had the opportunity to see great events shaping the region and the influence of foreign powers. There were conflicting interests of great powers, such as Britain, Germany, the Ottoman Empire and Russia. By seeing all these conflicts at work, young Abdul-Aziz was able to gain valuable experience in political thinking and leadership.

However, it is maintained that King Abdul-Aziz' possessed leadership qualities and an investigative mind regardless of place. What happened around him presented contexts where he exercised his potential. Accordingly, the conflict among the Al-Saud and the subsequent loss of their power and exile in Kuwait sharpened his capabilities. The Kuwait stay enriched his experience. He saw Sheikh Mubaarak Al-Subaah of Kuwait⁽²⁸⁾ consult his father on several occasions. Yet, young Abdul-Aziz was in the company of his father more than in Sheikh Al-Subaah's. This implies that, if influenced by either of them, young Abdul-Aziz was influenced by his

father, even before departure to Kuwait.

The political scene in Kuwait was rich with maneuvers and negotiations among great powers; the Ottomans were nominally in charge of the Arab world; Britain had control of the Gulf area; and Germany and Russia were seeking access to the Gulf. In addition, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mitéb Ibn Rasheed had designs on Kuwait. He wanted to capture it in order to have access to the Gulf. Towards this end, he looked for all sorts of pretexts.⁽²⁹⁾ Young Abdul-Aziz was aware of all these events, thus experiencing the workings of politics on the international and the national levels. This experience, coupled with his qualities of devoutness, determination, courage and rationality,⁽³⁰⁾ was a great asset for his political future.

While in Kuwait, young Abdul-Aziz was alerted by one particular event, namely the conflict between Sheikh Mubaarak and Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mitéb Ibn Rahseed.⁽³¹⁾ Wanting to capture Kuwait, the latter raided it in preparation for a bigger attack. In response, Sheikh Mubaarak sought Imam Abdul-Rahman's help against Ibn Rasheed. On 17/3/1901 AD, Al-Sireif Battle took place between Al-Subaah and Ibn Rasheed north-east of Buraidah, between Al-Sirief and Al-Tarafiyah. Ibn Rasheed won the battle.⁽³²⁾

Al-Sireif Battle had great significance for young Abdul-Aziz. It showed his military shrewdness, and it was some kind of introduction to his later capture of Riyadh. This is how Al-Zarkaly explains the significance of Al-Sireif Battle:

- Young Abdul-Aziz did not expect the Kuwaiti army to defeat Ibn Rasheed's. So, it was militarily wise of him not to involve the Al-Saud and their men in a lost battle. He had to

separate from the Al-Subaah company in Al-Shawki;⁽³³⁾ he marched towards Riyadh and besieged it for 4 months. After the Sirieif defeat of Al-Subaah, young Abdul-Aziz returned to Kuwait. There, Mubaarak Al-Subaah said to Imam Abdul-Rahman, "Your son will take revenge for you."⁽³⁴⁾

- Al-Sireif Battle was the biggest one ever fought in the Najd region, if not in the Arabian Peninsula, in the beginning of the 14th Hijri century; modern weapons of the time were used; great numbers of soldiers on both sides were involved; and it was followed by several interested international parties with influence in the area.⁽³⁵⁾
- It provided young Abdul-Aziz with the opportunity to besiege Riyadh - though not for long - and, in turn, to gain firsthand knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the Riyadh defenses. This was very useful in planning successfully for the recapture of Riyadh the following year. Having realized the importance of Al-Musmak Castle,⁽³⁶⁾ young Abdul-Aziz planned to capture it first of all; the capture of Riyadh without Al-Musmak was useless. Therefore, when the time came, young Abdul-Aziz carried out his plan brilliantly by surprising the Musmak guards, who thought the city had already fallen to the Al-Saud. The guards were taken aback at the surprise, and had no choice but to surrender, especially as their leader was killed. The plan showed great, intelligent military thinking.⁽³⁷⁾
- The Sireif Battle furthered young Abdul-Aziz' confidence in his political judgments and military thinking. He concluded from Mubaarak Al-Subaah's planning and action in Al-Shuki that it was necessary not to depend on Mubaark, but

to plan and act independently for the recapture of Riyadh.⁽³⁸⁾

- With regard to the Al-Rasheed, the Sireif Battle showed how stronger Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mitéb Ibn Rasheed became. He attacked Kuwait hoping the Ottomans were going to let him have a free hand in Kuwait, but they refrained from helping him for fear of conflict with Britain.⁽³⁹⁾
- The Battle deepened the conflict between Imam Abdul-Rahman and Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mitéb Ibn Rasheed. This was due to the alliance between the former and the Al-Subaah and to the aid the alliance received from Saadoon Pasha Abu Ajmi,⁽⁴⁰⁾ who raided some tribes under the Al-Rasheed control.⁽⁴¹⁾



1.2 King Abdul-Aziz' Political Insight and Practice

1.2.1 His Political Insight

King Abdul-Aziz combined military skills and political experience. His political skills were manifest when dealing with internal encounters during the founding stage of the Kingdom. They were also evident when negotiating with neighboring countries; he had to take into account the minutest details at the international level and the regional level, as well as within the Arabian Peninsula. He was also appreciative of the skills of his representative negotiators.⁽⁴²⁾

British diplomatic experts at the time of King Abdul-Aziz regarded him as the most important political negotiator in the first half of the twentieth century. His negotiating skills were evident in the gains he achieved for safeguarding his borders while giving no concessions whatsoever. In fact, some counter negotiators would have preferred going back to war rather than negotiate with King Abdul-Aziz.

Even though Britain had politically dominated most of the world scene, and the Arabian East in particular, King Abdul-Aziz was able to use it for his political ends. In its negotiations with him, Britain was able only to secure his neutrality on certain issues of interest to it in the region. The Darrin Treaty of 1915 AD⁽⁴³⁾ between him and Britain was a case in point. Despite criticism, the Treaty gave King Abdul-Aziz some advantages. For example, it strengthened his position in relation to the problems with Kuwait, Al-Shareef Hussein Ibn

Ali⁽⁴⁴⁾, Ibn Rasheed and the Ottomans. In addition, Britain supplied him with money and arms, which were helpful in dealing a blow to Ibn Rasheed. The British card was also useful in the Ottoman departure from Al-Ihsaa' forever. The Treaty secured the British recognition of the regions under King Abdul-Aziz rule and of his independence.⁽⁴⁵⁾ It implied Britain's recognition of his growing importance as the strongest man in the Arabian Peninsula. King Abdul-Aziz was well aware that the Treaty would keep Britain on his side against the Ottomans. However, the treaty did not represent any significant change in the British politics in the Gulf, save that it was a turning point in the Saudi-British relations. It changed Britain's position towards that part of the Arabian Peninsula.⁽⁴⁶⁾ This explains how King Abdul-Aziz was a gifted negotiator, who was able not only to gain new lands, but also to remain on solid ground for further negotiations. He was also aware of the importance of military strength on the scene of international conflicts.

World War I did not undermine King Abdul-Aziz' position. After the end of the War, he had two fronts: Al-Rasheed in Hael, and Al-Shareef Hussein in Al-Hijaaz. Both were a great danger to him.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Fighting started on both fronts, in the direction of Shammar⁽⁴⁸⁾ and that of Al-Hijaaz. Before battles were settled, a conference for religious scholars was held in Riyadh, and it declared Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud to be "the Sultan of Najd and its Adjuncts". This was recognized by Britain.⁽⁴⁹⁾

As events unfolded, King Abdul-Aziz was in a difficult position; Iraq was declared a kingdom under the rule of Faisal, Al-Shareef Hussein's son;⁽⁵⁰⁾ the East of Jordan became an emirate under the rule of Abdullah,⁽⁵¹⁾ the son of

Al-Shareef Hussein;⁽⁵²⁾ and Al-Shareef Hussein, ruler of Al-Hijaaz, declared himself King of the Arabs - he was expecting strong support and recognition from his British allies after having sided with Britain against the Ottomans in World War I.⁽⁵³⁾

King Abdul-Aziz found himself in a critical situation, the Hashimite siege in the north and southwest. As expected, trouble started; some tribes in the north crossed the borders into Najd. King Abdul-Aziz had to act militarily. His army swiftly annexed two significant villages, Turbah and Al-Khurmah,⁽⁵⁴⁾ thus settling in his favor the dispute with Al-Shareef Hussein over right of ownership. The villages were significant for securing the western borders, and King Abdul-Aziz was able to concentrate on defending his northern borders.⁽⁵⁵⁾

The annexation of Turbah and Al-Khurmah gave King Abdul-Aziz a better negotiating position. Britain wanted to reach a settlement for the problems between the Hashimites (Faisal, king of Iraq; Abdullah, ruler of Jordan; and Hussein, ruler of Al-Hijaaz) and King Abdul-Aziz. The British suggested a meeting for negotiations between the two parties, but King Abdul-Aziz preferred to negotiate with each one of them on his own. Separate negotiations were advantageous for him; possible overlap of issues would be avoided and so would unpredicted, undesirable political influence from outside. The British had to accept the demand for separate negotiations. Then, King Abdul-Aziz was able to negotiate with the King of Iraq, and they reached Al-Muhmmarah Agreement⁽⁵⁶⁾ on 5/5/1922 AD; it dealt with the issues of borders, tribes and trade.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Initially, King

Abdul-Aziz refused to sign the agreement,⁽⁵⁸⁾ but he ratified it later when signing Al-Aqeer's two protocols⁽⁵⁹⁾ on 2/12/1922 AD.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Obviously, by refusing initial signing, the King was trying to gain time and advantages on his borders by getting the tribes on his side, especially Shammar, Al-Ammaaraat⁽⁶¹⁾ and Al-Muntafiq.⁽⁶²⁾ Having done so, he was then able to sign the agreement, demonstrating again his skill as a negotiator and a successful political strategist.

The King had another round of successful negotiations, securing his northern borders with Iraq and Kuwait. He signed the border agreement with Kuwait the same day he signed Al-Muhammarah protocols.⁽⁶³⁾ He wanted to eliminate any possible confusion that might give rise to future misinterpretations, something that was common at the time.

The way King Abdul-Aziz conducted negotiations manifested far-sightedness and ingenuity. This was particularly evident during the Bahrah⁽⁶⁴⁾ Treaty negotiations between him and Britain on behalf of Iraq on 1/11/1922 AD. The treaty had to deal with unimplemented clauses concerning trade and security from Al-Muhammarah Treaty. In the period between the two treaties, 1922-1925 AD, King Abdul-Aziz was able to change the British political direction in the Arabian Peninsula. He was not seeking to have the British on his side as much as he was seeking to keep them away from his adversaries' side. The King managed to make Britain change its usual support for Al-Shareef Hussein, who was keen on the Caliphate after its abolition in Turkey in 1924 AD.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Just before they were about to sign the treaty, King Abdul-Aziz had already annexed Taif⁽⁶⁶⁾ and was already marching onto Al-Hijaz. The annexation of Taif at that particular time was

a significantly shrewd move on his part. It created new realities on the ground, strengthening his bargaining position, while putting Britain to the test regarding his wider military operation towards Al-Hijaaz.⁽⁶⁷⁾

King Abdul-Aziz' approach to Taef and Al-Hijaaz successfully combined diplomatic and military moves to maximize his gains within complicated conditions. He managed to use British influence favorably to make Abdullah Ibn Al-Shareef Hussein, ruler of East Jordan, remain neutral towards the conquest of Makkah. This presented Britain with the opportunity to get King Abdul-Aziz to finalize the Bahrah Treaty, settling the remaining problems between him and Iraq, particularly border issues. Having used the delay in concluding the treaty as a bargaining chip, the King had to reward Britain for its position regarding his conquest of Al-Hijaaz; he had to conclude the Bahrah Treaty with Iraq, gaining the neutrality of the king of Iraq as a result. By securing the neutrality of Britain and Al-Sahreef brothers in Jordan and Iraq, King Abdul-Aziz was able to conquer Al-Hijaaz, ousting their father, Al-Shareef Hussein, from power on 18/10/1924 AD.⁽⁶⁸⁾

King Abdul-Aziz' determination and political genius were particularly evident in the negotiations leading to the Haddah Treaty between him and Britain on behalf of the Emirate of East Jordan on 2/11/1925 AD.⁽⁶⁹⁾ He was determined to annex Al-Jawf Wadi Asserhaan and Kaaf, known as Qurrayyaat Al-Malh, while East Jordan claimed the right to Kaaf and most of the northern areas. Britain had to send Sir Gilbert Clayton⁽⁷⁰⁾ to King Abdul-Aziz, who was besieging Jeddah at that time, regarding the Bahrah and Haddah treaties.

On 1925 AD, negotiations were on when Sir Gilbert Clayton received instructions from the Ministry of British Colonies to focus on border issues between East Jordan and Najd, and on remaining issues that were not settled between Iraq and Najd during the Kuwait Conference. Concerning Al-Jawf, Sir Clayton initially had instructions to have Al-Jawf given to East Jordan, and not to let any Najdi areas separate East Jordan from Iraq. Also, he was told to ignore the ongoing war in the Hijaaz region.

Though convinced that King Abdul-Aziz was determined to have the three areas, Sir Clayton started with Wadi Assarhaan. This was to test the resolve of the King and to give himself room for maneuver with respect to other issues on the negotiating table. In order to soften the King's position and weaken his resolve, Sir Clayton played the card of the importance of friendship with Britain, whose influence was surrounding him in the Arabian Gulf, Persia, Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, East Jordan and South Yemen. As for the King, he argued first against giving Kaaf to Jordan, for it would result in uniting the Hashimites in East Jordan and Iraq while denying Najd access to Syria. He also argued that Wadi Assarhaan was one indivisible whole, and Kaaf was an extension of the Wadi.⁽⁷¹⁾

Despite Sir Clayton's attempts to obtain from the King territorial concessions, the King managed to take Al-Jawf, Wadi Assarhaan and Kaaf, in return for a 50-mile long demilitarized buffer zone, marking the borders.⁽⁷²⁾ The conclusion of the negotiations was a remarkable diplomatic victory for King Abdul-Aziz. He obtained what he wanted, secured his northern borders, and had a custom-free trade

access to Syria. The trade route to Syria was to be under the direct control and protection of the British High Commissioner in Jordan.

In addition, King Abdul-Aziz was able to have the borders monitored and controlled by Britain, Jordan and Egypt. As revealed by the correspondence between the Egyptian Minister of War and the Foreign Minister and the Director of Border Control, and between the latter and his Prime Minister, Egypt gave a positive response; it immediately put a ban on any carrier going through the ports of Suez and Attuur, if suspected to be transporting arms or ammunition destined for rebels in Al-Hijaaz. At that time, there were rumors in diplomatic circles that Egypt was helping the rebellion staged by Hamid Ibn Rifaadah.⁽⁷³⁾ However, the Egyptian Prime Minister's letter to the Directorate of Borders was definite and straightforward; any suspect carriers heading to Al-Hijaaz had to be detained.

Thus, the King was able to change the Ibn Rifaadah rebellion to his favor. The border measures were to the benefit of King Abdul-Aziz, for his long borders along the Red Sea were being guarded without human or material costs. Rebels were denied access to the Saudi state, thus, preventing troubles. The King was able, then, to pay attention to development and construction efforts, especially in Al-Hijaaz region.⁽⁷⁴⁾

The aforementioned illustrates how King Abdul-Aziz had to deal with important political and territorial issues. There is more documented evidence showing how wisely he dealt with institutions, such as the American petroleum company Standard Oil of America and the Arab League, and with foreign countries. This may explain why countries were keen

on establishing diplomatic relations with him.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Similarly, he succeeded in dealing with internal problems⁽⁷⁶⁾ so wisely that he was able to keep achievements intact, and to look after the public interest.

1.2.2 Internal Stability and Reform

At both the external and internal levels, King Abdul-Aziz' character was at work. He is said to have been blessed with a unique character as evidenced in his handling of varied and complex issues and conditions, nationally and internationally. Two main sources for his uniqueness were: (a) cumulative acquisition and experience - he had a systemic approach characterized by investigation, organization, experimentation and competency; and (b) innate qualities - he was creative by nature.⁽⁷⁷⁾

In what follows, let us have a brief look at how successfully he employed his intuitive qualities, with particular reference to dealing with two domestic issues: the settlement of Bedouins and modernization.

1.2.2.1 Settlement of Bedouins

King Abdul-Aziz was concerned with Bedouin problems while nation building was underway. As usual, he would investigate any problem carefully, while praying for Allah's help. Internal stability was necessary for building and development. The King was well aware of Bedouin problems; their unsettled lifestyle was an obstacle to achieving the type of nation he aspired to. In addition, they had some undesirable customs, such as raiding and robbing other tribes. So, the King planned to have them settled as a means to eliminating such hostile

customs. He had to turn the roaming Bedouins into settled communities where they could live comfortably.⁽⁷⁸⁾ He managed to achieve this significant social leap peacefully.

The actual project of Bedouin settlement started in 1912 AD. It was meant to alleviate their economic sufferings, and so it directed them towards agriculture. Land in the Artaawiyah⁽⁷⁹⁾ area was distributed to a number of tribes, starting with the Miteir tribes.⁽⁸⁰⁾ There, the Bedouins started building their first village.⁽⁸¹⁾ Great numbers were settled in scattered parts especially built for them in an agricultural area north of Najd, and in simple homes added to a number of small villages in the same region. These new settlements were known as Al-Hijar.⁽⁸²⁾ Being successful, the Hajar-style settlements were expanded, but with slight modifications. They were gradually increased in number till they reached about 72 Hajar, mostly from 10 tribes. About 76,300 men of the settlers were trained and organized into a force to be later called the "*tawheed* soldiers"⁽⁸³⁾.

However, King Abdul-Aziz had to deal with a new problem arising from settlement. He found out that settled Bedouin men started to neglect their farming duties, leaving women to do the farming, and staying in the mosque, occupying themselves with prayers and retreat. It was necessary, the King concluded, to lead them to an approach whereby they could work for this world as well as for the Hereafter. Since it was an issue that involved religion, the King had to seek the cooperation of religious scholars in this respect. They had to point out how commitment to Islamic teachings did not contradict making lawful earnings, and how Muslims were urged to make a living by all legitimate means. In fact, the Prophet used to pray for protection from poverty.

These efforts were fruitful. Extreme religiosity was abandoned, and the Hajar flourished, integrating settlers. Village life started to attract Bedouins, particularly as King Abdul-Aziz took several measures to improve living conditions there. The following are some of the measures he had taken in that regard:

- Water wells were dug to boost agriculture and attract neighboring Bedouins.⁽⁸⁴⁾
- A registry was made in the King's court for Bedouin tribes, and there was easy access to the King and district emirs.
- Preachers were sent to teach the necessary do's and don'ts of Shari'ah and to instill Islamic values so that Bedouins could be refined and disciplined.
- Relationships between tribe members and their chiefs were organized in such a style that the latter were entrusted with communal welfare, and the individuals were responsible to their chiefs.
- Communal responsibility for crime was adopted with respect to each village and its surroundings.

It was insightful on the King's part to organize the Hajar internally to accommodate members of different tribes on equal footing. In general, no one Hijrah was purely allocated to one tribe or clan. Like melting pots, most Hajar represented communities, integrating members of varied tribes. Such organization boosted communal solidarity and joint responsibility. The King's policy embodied a basic Islamic principle of brotherhood, which is crucial to security and stability. The principle guides behavior to individual as well as

communal positive outcomes while eliminating negative ones. To activate the principle, it was necessary, in the Bedouins' case in particular, to teach it in theory and practice, and to follow up its application in real life. The teaching required educational efforts, the follow-up needed communal cooperation, and security needed a strong executive system of law and order to protect communities from disruptive elements and to safeguard resources and gains.⁽⁸⁵⁾ In brief, the King adopted and applied successful policies for communal interaction based on Islamic principles.

By making great efforts to settle the Bedouins into integrated communities, King Abdul-Aziz did not mean to weaken their fighting morale. He wanted to tame them into a disciplined force guided by Islamic values and rules, thus channeling their fighting spirits into controlled behavior beneficial to the nation. In this regard, the King classified them into three categories:

- Category 1: This was a highly trained group, always ready to respond to the Imam's (King's) call for *jihad*. Its members were on the alert, in possession of munitions and a camel each.
- Category 2: This was the type of group whose members, if *jihad* was declared as "dual", had to recruit another *mujaahid* (fighter) each, and both shared one camel for transport.
- Category 3: This included the group of people that would respond to a general call for *jihad* made by the *ulama* on the advice of the Imam to defend the nation - all capable adults were eligible.

The 3-category jihad call system was efficiently used by the King in his battles.⁽⁸⁶⁾

King Abdul-Aziz' approach to the settlement and transformation of Bedouins achieved great results, socially, religiously and economically:

One important result was the effective elimination of prevalent tribal disputes. Another important result was the increasing integration of the Saudi society, both Bedouin and urban.

By Allah's Grace, the King made remarkable achievements in law and order and administration.

In addition, the approach enhanced the communal spirit among diverse settlers. It necessitated cooperation in doing good and combating evil, and this is an important Islamic demand. This meant balancing collective and individual interests, for this world and the Hereafter. However, for looking after collective interests, a high degree of unselfishness is required. This is motivated by a drive for collective good, the quality of loving for others what one would love for oneself.

By Allah's Grace, the King's efforts resulted in the replacement of undesirable customs and habits by Islamic attitudes and practices, based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Such changes were conducive to stability, security, cohesion and collective welfare.

One wonders how King Abdul-Aziz identified and diagnosed Bedouin problems, and how he suggested successful solutions, and implemented and followed them up. These processes presume specialist sociological knowledge and practice, and the King had no prior sociological training. His unique

sociological insight is considered to be a gift from Allah. This blessing was manifested in a number of forms:

- The King was committed to the delivery of rights and dispensation of justice in the broadest sense, as demanded by the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
- He interpreted historical events from an Islamic perspective. Before Islam, the Arabs were fighting amongst themselves for tribal interests and domination. They blindly followed obstructive customs and traditions that prevented them from accepting Islam. Through the brotherhood of Islam, they became one nation with one faith, and under one leadership. By Allah's Grace, the nation changed world history; Islamic conquests were incredible.
- As a result of first-hand experience and observation, the King was well aware of the Bedouin mentality, traditions and customs. Such ⁽⁸⁷⁾ experience and awareness were helpful in working out suitable solutions and monitoring social transformation.

1.2.2.2 Modernization

By the nature of his religious character on the one hand and by his great aspirations for his country on the other, King Abdul-Aziz sought to promote Islamic teachings and apply Shari'ah, and sought to modernize the country simultaneously. Due to his creative nature, King Abdul-Aziz was not rigid. He did not see modernity and religiosity as two conflicting qualities; these were reconcilable. He wanted to benefit from technological advances in order to achieve social and economic development, moving his society from the nomadic state to the modern world. The required

development can be best attained by adherence to Islamic teachings, which provide for communal stability and security as well as for individual fulfillment. Nonetheless, modern technology provides great resources for the promotion of Islam. Throughout the book, his devotion to Islamic teachings is evident in what he said and did. As for modernization, the King introduced the telephone, the telegraph and the radio into the country despite objections from uninformed religious quarters.

In his speeches, the King forcefully expressed his concept of unity between means and ends and between Faith and modernity. In the reception speech, delivered in the Taif Financial Under-secretariat, on 18/1/ 1351 H (24/6/1932), he said, "As for modern things, we take what helps and benefits us, and we promote it, provided it is allowed, but we reject what is not allowed; in fact, we fight it. The Muslim must not obey anyone in sin. Nothing can supersede a civilization based on Islam, nor can we realize honor except through compliance with Islam."⁽⁸⁸⁾

On the occasion of the Great Festival held at Al-Qasr Al-Aali (the High Palace) in Mina on 5/3/1936 AD, the King reiterated the same concept in the speech he delivered: "Islam commands us to take whatever gives us strength and benefit, provided that it does not corrupt our beliefs or qualities. If we want progress, we have to follow Islam, otherwise the result would be all evil."⁽⁸⁹⁾

Resistance to modern technology was initially shown by some uninformed sheiks. Subtly did the King dismiss their fears. For example, when the King first introduced the telephone and the radio, some sheiks denied them as devil's tools. By

showing how such tools transmitted the Glorious Quran, the King managed to convince the uninformed sheikhs that the tools were technological inventions, not magic or devil's work.⁽⁹⁰⁾ However, some sheikhs remained unconvinced for no good reason. So disappointed was the King that he had to firmly say this to them: "My sheikh brothers, you are "on my head" (an Arabic expression of respect). Hold on firmly to each other. Do not let "my head shake", otherwise some of you would fall to the ground (meaning "lose respect"), and if one falls off, I will not be able to put him back onto my head. There are two things I would not want to discuss at all, for they have proved good for my people They are the wireless and the car. There is no evidence whatsoever in the Qur'an or the Sunnah to suggest the banning of their use."⁽⁹¹⁾

When some inventions were rejected for having been made by non-Muslims, the King had to tell the rejecters to get rid of their guns too, as they had not been Muslim-made. It was a convincing argument.⁽⁹²⁾

The above-mentioned cases show King Abdul-Aziz' wisdom in logical persuasion, particularly in matters where knowledge is lacking. When ignorance was involved, he resorted to experimenting. When obstinacy was involved, he had to ask them for evidence, and to show he was disappointed. Though he had great respect for scholars, he had to show dissatisfaction at unfounded arguments. Thus, his ways of argument reflected a character that was confident, caring, rational, patient, and knowledgeable of human nature and of how people would react to changes.

Chapter 1 Endnotes

- (1) Al-Ruwaishid, Abdul-Rahman Ibn Sulaiman: *The Family Tables of the Saudi Royal Family Offspring*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Riyadh, Dar Al-Shibl Press for Publishing and Distribution, 1419 H (1998 AD), pp. 11-20.
- Al-Keelaani, Kamaal: *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud and Contemporary Islamic Reform*, in Arabic, Daarat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1419 H (1999 AD), pp. 10-11.
- (2) For further information on the Al-Saud lineage, the reader is referred to Hamad Al-Jaasir's book *Jamharat Ansaab Al-Osar Al-Mutahiddirah fee Najd (Lineage of Urban Families in Najd)* in Arabic, Part One, 2nd ed., Riyadh, Dar Al-Yamaamah for Research, Translation and Publishing, 1988 AD.
- (3) For the 2 arguments about the exact birth date of King Abdul-Aziz, the reader may check the following references: [1] Raaghib, Abdul-Waahid Mohammad: *Fajr Arriyaadh (The Riyadh Dawn: An Analytical Study)*, in Arabic, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 29 and pp. 31-32. [2] Al-Faraj, Khalid Ibn Mohammad: *Al-Khabar wal Iyaan fee Taareekh Najd (The News and the Truth in the History of Najd)*, in Arabic, investigated by Ibn Abdullah Al-Shuqair, 1st ed., Riyadh, 1421 H (2000 AD), p. 365. [3] Al-Omawiy, Abu-Amru Uthmaan Ibn Saeed: *Al-Bayaan fee 'Ad Aay Al-Qur'an (Explaining the Use Counting the Verses of the Qur'an)*, in Arabic, 1st. ed., Kuwait, Manuscript and Heritage Centre, 1414 H (1994 AD), pp. 330-333. [4] Azzubaidiy, Mohammad Murtadha Al-Hussainiy: *Taj Al-Aruus min Jawaahir Al-Qaamuus (The Bride's Crown from the Dictionary Jewels)*, in Arabic, Kuwait, the Kuwait Government Press, Part 28, pp. 239-240. [5] Al-Zarkaliy, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, in Arabic, 7th ed., Beirut, Daar Al-Ilm Lilmalaayeen, 1997 AD, Part One, p. 58 and p. 64. [6] Al-Saud, Talaal Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Glimpses from the Life of Abdul-Aziz*, in Arabic, Riyadh, Dar Al-Shawwaaf, 1419 H, p.26. [7] Hamzah, Fouad: *Al-Bilaad Al-Arabiyyah Al-Sa'uudiyyah (The Saudi Arabian Country)*, in Arabic, 2nd ed., Riyadh, Maktabat Al-Nasr Al-Hadeethah, 1388 H (1968 AD), p. 15.
- (4) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam, his Majesty King Abdul-Aziz*

Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Faisal Al-Saud: Biography, Heroism and Greatness, comment by Dr. Abdullah Ibn Fahd Al-Simaari, Riyadh, 1419 H (1999 AD), Part 1, p. 49.

- (5) Surah 8, Ayah 46.
- (6) Sarah Bint Ahmad Al-Sidairy: She was from the Al-Sidairy family, well known for its loyalty to the Al-Saud; she was from Al-Ghaat, Sudair, between Al-Majmaah and Al-Zulfee. Her father, who served the Al-Saud faithfully, had 5 sons (Ali, Abdul-Muhsin, Abdullah, Abdul-Aziz and Abdul-Rahman). He had 3 daughters (Nora, who got married to Jalawi, father of Emir Abdullah Ibn Jalawi; Falwah, who got married to Imam Mohammad Ibn Faisal, an uncle of King Abdul-Aziz; and Sarah, the mother of King Abdul-Aziz. Sarah was a great woman, and she died in Riyadh in 1327 H (1910 AD) - may Allah have mercy on all of them.
- Hamzah, Fouad: *The Saudi Arabian Country*, op cit, pp. 98-111.
- (7) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Falcon of the Peninsula*, op cit, Part 3, p. 685
- (8) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op cit, Part 1, p. 50.
- (9) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 57.
- (10) *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 71. & *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No.1037.
- (11) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Ruler*, op cit., part 1, p. 50.
- (12) Abdul-Raheem, Abdul-Raheem Abdul-Rahman: "The Impact of King Abdul-Aziz' Determination on Founding the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia", (in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz*, Riyadh, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1406 H, (1985 AD), Part 1, pp. 110-111.
- (13) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-Wajeez on the Biography of King Abdul-Aziz*, (in Arabic), 10th edition, Beirut, Dar Al-Ilm Lilmalaayeen, 1999, pp. 19-20.
- (14) Mullen, Van Dar: *King Ibn Saud and the Rising Arabian Peninsula*, translated by Wesy: I. C., comments by Fahd Ibn Abdullah Al-Simaari, Riyadh, Daar Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 43.
- (15) Al-Murrah: The Al-Murrah go back to the tribes of Gashm from Yaam. They were known for their bravery, large number and power. They have several tribes, such as Al-Jaabirs, Al-Athbah, Al-Ghufraan and Al-Ali.
- Al-Shareefi, Ibraaheem Jaarallah Ibn Dukhnah: *Golden Encyclopedia*, op

cit, Part 8, pp. 2990-2991.

(16) Al-Saud, Saud Ibn Hathluul: *The History of the Al-Saud Kings*, (in Arabic), 2nd edition, Riyadh, Mataabi' Al-Madeenah, 1402H (1982AD) Vol. 2, p.48.

(17) It is Sheikh Hamad Ibn Faaris Ibn Mohammad Ibn Rumeih (1263-1345H / 1847-1927AD), from Najd. He was a follower of the Hanbali School of Thought. He was a scholar of Arabic and an expert on inheritance laws. He was in charge of the treasury for Imam Abdullah Al-Faisal, Imam Abdul-Rahman, then King Abdul-Aziz.

(18) The departure of Imam Abdul-Rahman from Riyadh did not stop his activities. In 1309 H (1891 AD), when Ibraaheem Ibn Mahanna, a brother of Buraidah's ex-emir, with a number of fighters, joined the Imam, they attacked Al-Dilam. Then, they marched onto Riyadh, but did not stay there long. They left for Al-Mahmal region. Mohamed Ibn Rasheed mobilized his army to Huraimilaa', where he defeated the Imam. It was the last encounter between the two opponents.

Al-Uthaimen, Abdullah Al-Saalih: *History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, Part 1, p. 312.

(19) Al-Ajman: They are a tribe going back to Al-Qahtaan; their homes are found in the Area between Attuf and Al-Uqair, and as far as Al-Qasseem and Al-Kharj. They were known for being strong.

Al-Shareefi, Ibraaheem Jaarallah Ibn Dukhnah: *Golden Encyclopedia*, op cit, Part 5050-2051.

(20) Yebreen: It is an oasis 160 miles south of Ihsaa', and 175 miles south east of Riyadh.

Al-Reehaani, Ameen: *Najd's Modern History*, (in Arabic), 6th edition, Beirut, Dar Al-Jeel, 1988, p. 123.

(21) Ibid, pp. 105-106.

(22) Eesa Ibn Khaleefah: He is Eesa Ibn Khaleefah Ibn Salmaan Ibn Ahmad Al-Khaleefah; he was the emir of Bahrain; he was born and brought up in Bahrain. He had to move to Qatar after his father's assassination, but he returned when Bahrainis chose him emir in 1286 H (1869 AD).

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Renowned Men*, op cit, Part 5, p. 106.

(23) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 63.

Abdul-Raheem, Abdul-Raheem Abdul-Rahman: *The Impact of King*

Abdul-Aziz' Determination on Founding the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, op cit, p. 111-112.

(24) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 63-64.

(25) Ibid, Part 1, p. 67.

(26) Abdul-Raheem, Abdul-Raheem Abdul-Rahman: The Impact of King Abdul-Aziz' Determination on Founding the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, op cit, p. 111-112.

(27) This part has been added to the upbringing of King Abdul-Aziz, for whatever took place before the recapture of Riyadh went under his upbringing. Since the recapture of Riyadh has been dealt with extensively by several writers, we will not deal with it. Besides, it is not the focus of this book.

(28) It is Mubaarak Ibn Subaah Ibn Abdullah Ibn Subaah, the 7th Al-Subaah emir of Kuwait.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Renowned Men*, op cit, Part 5, p. 270.

(29) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p.57. Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 72-73.

(30) Raaghib, Abdul-Waahid Mohamed: *The Riyadh Dawn*, op cit, pp. 37-38.

(31) One reason for the conflict between Al-Subaah and Ibn Rasheed was that Mohammad and Jarraah, nephews of Yousof Al-Ibraaheem, were killed in Kuwait in 1313 H (1895 AD). Yousuf Al-Ibraaheem had to persuade Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mit'eb Al-Rasheed to attack Kuwait the same year. Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed welcomed Al-Ibraaheem as Al-Subaah gave refuge to Abdul-Rahman Al-Faisal.

Al-Reehaani, Ameen: *Najd's Modern History*, op cit, pp. 116-117.

Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Awadh Al-Tha'labi: "State Institutions during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz", 1343-1373 H (1934-1953 AD), an Analytical Study, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Riyadh, King Saud University Press, 1419 H (1998 AD), p. 28.

(32) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 72-76.

(33) Al-Shuki: It is a small valley 195 km north of Riyadh; there, young Abdul-Aziz separated from Al-Subaah's army before the Sireif battle in 1318 H (1901 AD).

Ibid, Part 2, p. 497.

(34) Ibid, Part 1, p. 76.

(35) Raaghib, Abdul-Waahid Mohamed: *The Riyadh Dawn*, op cit, p. 49.

(36) Al-Musmak: Its meaning is said to indicate strong fortification. It was a square-shaped palace with thick walls and it had towers. It was the headquarter of government during the Al-Rasheed control of Riyadh till young Abdul-Aziz recaptured it in 1319 H (1902 AD).

Ibn Khamees, Abdullah Ibn Mohammad: *Geographical Dictionary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Al-Yamaamah Dictionary*, (in Arabic), 2nd edition, Riyadh, Al-Farazdaq Commercial Press, 1400 H (1980 AD), Part 2, p. 372.

(37) Raaghib, Abdul-Waahid Mohamed: *The Riyadh Dawn*, op cit, pp. 50-51.

(38) Ibid, p. 51.

(39) Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Awadh Al-Tha'labi: *State Institutions during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 30.

(40) It is Saadoon Ibn Mansour Ibn Raashid Ibn Saalih Ibn Taamir Al-Saadoon, Abu Ajmi; his family was from an Iraqi family in Al-Muntafiq area. He was known for his mediation to remain in the fold of the Ottomans. For his efforts, he was made Pasha by the Ottomans in 1297 H (1897 AD). He often raided the Shammar tribes. He also fought Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mitéb in 1317 H (1899 AD). He arrested some tribal chiefs from Anzah. When he killed them, the Muntafiq tribe attacked him, but he had to head for Basra, whose governor arrested him, and sent him first to Baghdad, then to Aleppo. He died before his trial ended.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Renowned Men*, op cit, Part 3, p. 89.

(41) Al-Reehaani, Ameen: *Najd's Modern History*, op cit, p. 117.

(42) Al-Jeraisy, Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *From the Documents of the Saudi Egyptian Relations during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 24-32.

(43) The Treaty was between King Abdul-Aziz and Sir Percy Cox on the Darrin island, opposite Al-Qateef. It is also called the Qateef Treaty. It was signed on 18/2/1334 H (26/12/1915 AD). The treaty clauses can be summed up in the following:

- Britain recognizes King Abdul-Aziz' rights to Al-Ihsaa', Al-Qateef, Al-Jubail and their annexes and ports.
- In return, King Abdul-Aziz allows access to the holy places while keeping

them under his control, provided he does not sell or mortgage them or give another country any prerogatives without consulting Britain.

- King Abdul-Aziz respects Britain's treaties with the Gulf states.

Whichever son succeeds the King after his death and wants to continue the treaty has to be selected by the ruling Imam, and must not be hostile to Britain in any way.

Criticizing the treaty, Fouad Hamzah said it was unjust, and it had been of no value several years before it was cancelled. Haafiz Wabah considered Ibn Saud's advisors as short-sighted regarding what was going on in the world and available opportunities. Khalid Al-Faraj considered it the lesser of two evils despite the restrictions it laid on the King. The British would not have recognized the King's right to Al-Ihsaa', Al-Qateef, Al-Jubail and the rest of the coast.

Criticism also came from British quarters; M F Seiton Williams described the treaty as futile and unsuccessful from the British point of view, for Ibn Saud did not take necessary action against the Turks. However, the treaty remained valid till it was officially cancelled in 1345 H (1927 AD), when the Jeddah Treaty was signed.

Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam, his Majesty King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Faisal Al-Saud: Biography, Heroism and Greatness*, Riyadh, 1419 H (1999 AD), Part 1, pp. 70-73.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 285-298.

- (44) Al-Shareef Hussein Ibn Ali (1270-1350 H / 1854-1931 AD): It is Al-Hussein Ibn Ali Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Mueen Ibn Aun. He was the first to call for the independence of the Arab countries that were under Turkish rule. Britain supported him. He sent his son Faisal to Syria, but sent his son Abdullah with an army to subdue the oases of Turbah and Alkhurmah, north of Taif. Abdullah lost to Ibn Saud, who took the initiative to make peace with Al-Hussein. The latter declined, stiffening his position so much that he did not allow the Najd people to go on pilgrimage. This prompted crowds from Najd, Turbah and Al-Khurmah to march onto Taif, occupy it and beat the army there. Al-Shareef Hussein was advised to abdicate in favor of his eldest son Ali. He abdicated and left for Jeddah in 1342 H (1924 AD), then for Al-Aqabah, and then for Cyprus in 1343 H (1925 AD). Later, he went to Amman, where he died. His body was buried in Al-Aqsa Mosque, Al-Quds.

- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 249-250.
- (45) Armstrong, H. C.: *The Master of the Arabian Peninsula, King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud, the Story of Founding the Kingdom*, translated into Arabic by Yousuf Noor Awadh, Cairo, Al-Ahram Commercial Press, p. 120.
- (46) Al-Saud, Khalid Ibn Thiniyyaan: *Saudi British Relations 1341-1351 H (1922-1932 AD), a Documentary Study*, in Arabic, 2nd edition, Riyadh, Al-Obeikan Bookshop, 1422 H (2001 AD), pp. 29-30.
- (47) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 249-250.
- Al-Saud, Khalid Ibn Thiniyyaan: *Saudi British Relations*, op cit, p. 29.
- (48) Shamar: It is a tribe that goes back as far as the Taaiy and Al-Qahtani tribes. It lies between the Aaja and Salma mountains; its center is the city of Ha'il. A great number of the Shamar tribe are in Iraq. It has a substantial history in Najd and Iraq. It has produced strong emirates and great sheikhs, e.g. Al-Jarbaa' in Iraq, Al-Rasheed in the Arabian Peninsula and Al-Tuwaalah.
- Al-Harbi, Faa'iz Ibn Moosa Al-Badraani: *News about the Tribes in Najd during the Period 850-1200 H ((1445-226 AD), (in Arabic), Riyadh, Dar Al-Badraani for Publishing and Distribution, Part 1, p. 226.*
- (49) King Abdul-Aziz' Public Library: *Encyclopedia of King Abdul-Aziz' Diplomatic History*, (in Arabic), Riyadh, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 25.
- (50) Faisal Ibn Al-Husseini: It is Faisal Ibn Al-Husseini Ibn Ali Ibn Mohammad Al-Hassani Al-Haashimi, Abu Ghaazi - 1300-1352 H (1883-1933 AD). He was born in Taif. In 1331 H (1913 AD), he was chosen as deputy for the city of Jeddah, in the Ottoman Council of Deputies. When his father rebelled against the Turks in 1334 H (1916 AD), Faisal took charge of the Northern army, then he was named the leader of the Arab army. When the Ottomans left Syria, he entered it in 1336 H (1918 AD). In 1338 H (1920 AD), he was proclaimed King of Syria.
- After his defeat in the battle of Maisloon at the hands the French, Faisal left for Europe. In 1921 AD, Britain invited him to attend a conference in Cairo. He was selected for the throne of Iraq in 1339 H (1921 AD). He died in Switzerland, but was buried in Baghdad.
- Kahhaalah, Omar Ridha: *Authors' Dictionary* (in Arabic), 1st edition, Beirut, Muassasat Al-Risaalah, 1414 H (1993 AD), Part 2, p.632

- (51) Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, (in Arabic), 2nd edition, Riyadh, Maktabat Al-Nasr Al-Hadeethah, 1388 H (1968 AD), p. 387.
- (52) Abdullah Ibn Al-Hussein: It is Abdullah Ibn Al-Hussein Ibn Ali Ibn Mohammad Al-Hassani Al-Haashimi - 1299-1370 H (1882-1951 AD). He was born in Makkah. He was the emir of east Jordan, then the king of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan. When his father was in Turkey, Abdullah studied there. Then, he returned to Makkah In 1327 H. He was appointed a deputy for Makkah in the Ottoman Council of Deputies. He supported his father in his rebellion against the Turks in 1334 H (1916 AD); He headed the army that besieged the Ottoman protection forces in Taif till they surrendered. He worked as deputy-foreign minister for a while. In a dispute with the British representative, he was somewhat lenient, and so his father reprimanded him. As a result, in 1339 H (1921 AD), he had to resign. He met Churchill, and they laid the foundation for the emirate of east Jordan. In 1365 H (1946 AD), he was declared king. Abdullah was killed in Al-Aqsa Mosque in Al-Quds (Jerusalem).
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Renowned People*, op cit, Part 4, p. 82.
- (53) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 315-316.
- (54) Turbah and Al-Khurmah: They are 2 villages / oases between Hijaaz and Najd, 3,500 ft above sea level. Al-Hussein considered them part of Hijaaz, but Ibn Saud considered them part of Najd, and hence the conflict between both men. According to Hamad Al-Jaasir, a battle took place in Turbah in 1337 H (1919 AD).
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 317.
- Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, p. 382.
- Al-Jassir, Hamad: *The Geographical Dictionary of Saudi Arabia, an Introduction Containing the Names of Cities, Villages and the Most Important Desert Resources*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Riyadh, Dar Al-Yamaamah for Research, Translation and Publication, 1397 H (1977 AD), Part 1, p. 195.
- (55) Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, p 385.
- (56) Al-Muhammarah is a town on the Gulf coast. There, a treaty bearing its name (Al-Muhammarah Treaty) was signed between King Abdul-Aziz on one side and Al-Shareef Hussein and his 2 sons, Faisal and Abdullah, on the other side. It was sponsored by the British, who sought to stabilize the

region under their control; the Shammar and the Rowlah tribes, with the help of the Al-Hussein rulers, were raiding and destabilizing Najd and neighboring areas.

Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, pp 387-388.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 288.

(57) Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, pp 387-391.

(58) King Abdul-Aziz' initial refusal to sign the treaty was due to that his representative, emir Ahmad Ibn Thiniyyaan, acted beyond his limits by signing the treaty without referring it to the King, who thought that Ibn Thiniyyaan surrendered to Iraqi tribes that were subjects of Abdullah Ibn Saud Al-Kabeer, such as Al-Ammaraat, Al-Zufair and Al-Muntafiq.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 365-366.

(59) Al-Aqeer: It is a port southwest of Al-Qateef, about 70 km from Al-Ihsaa'. There, a meeting was held between King Abdul-Aziz with his advisors (Abdullateef Pasha Al-Mandeel, his deputy in Basra and Dr. Abdullah Ibn Saeed Al-Damlooji) and Mr. Percy Cox (the head of the British delegation) and the Iraqi delegation headed by Subaih Nashát. The meeting had significant results, the most important of which was the demarcation of the borders between Najd and Iraq. However, Iraq violated the treaty, and the Kuwait Conference had to be held in 1342 H (1923 AD) to settle the resulting disputes between Najd on one side and Iraq, Jordan and Al-Hijaaz on the other side. This conference failed as well. A conference was held in Najd to decide on the approach which the people of Najd should adopt in dealing with the Hashimite government.

Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, p 385.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 293 and p. 325.

(60) Al-Saud, Khalid Ibn Thiniyyaan: *Saudi British Relations*, op cit, pp 63-65.

(61) Al-Ammaaraat: It is a branch of the Anzah tribe, and it used to live in Al-Qasseem in particular. The Ammaaraat people were subjects and cousins of the Al-Saud. Among their sheikhs were Ibn Haththaal and Ibn Sha'laan.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 289.

(62) Al-Muntafiq: It is one of the most important tribes of Iraq. It lived in the regions between Basra and Baghdad, and roamed on the island between the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Kahhaalah, Omar Ridha: *Dictionary of Arab Tribes*, (in Arabic), 8th

- edition, Beirut: Muassassat Arrissalah, I418 H (1997 AD), Part 3, p. 1144.
- (63) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 389.
- (64) General Gilbert Clayton: He was the British representative, and he was authorized to negotiate and sign agreements on behalf of the Iraqi government. With him was Tawfeeq Al-Sweidi from the Iraqi government. General Clayton signed 2 treaties with King Abdul-Aziz. One was known as Al-Bahrah Treaty - named after a village near Makkah towards the west. The treaty dealt with the Iraqi-Najdi borders. The other one was the Haddah Treaty - named after a village between Jeddah and Makkah. This treaty dealt with the borders between east Jordan and Najd.
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 294-295.
- Al-Jaasir, Hamad: *Geographic Dictionary, Introduction Containing Names of Cities and Villages*, op cit, Section 1, p. 142, and p. 296.
- (65) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op. cit, Part 1, pp. 190-194.
- Mullen, Van Dar: *King Ibn Saud and the Rising Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, pp. 83-85.
- (66) Al-Saud, Khalid Ibn Thiniyyaan: *Saudi British Relations*, op cit, p. 77.
- (67) Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, p 393.
- (68) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 294.
- (69) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op. cit, Part 1, p. 202.
- (70) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op. cit, Part 1, pp. 296-299.
- (71) Hamzah, Fouad: *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, pp 386-388.
- Al-Saud, Khalid Ibn Thiniyyaan: *Saudi British Relations*, op cit, p. 92.
- (72) Al-Saud, Khalid Ibn Thiniyyaan: *Saudi British Relations*, op cit, p. 93.
- (73) Hamid Ibn Salim Ibn Rfaadah: He was from the Bali tribe, from the Wajh, a Hijaaz coastal area. He rebelled against King Abdul-Aziz in 1347 H (1928 AD). He fled to Egypt, then to Jordan, where he contacted its ruler emir Abdullah Ibn Al-Husseini. Returning to Egypt, he contacted King Ahmad Fouad, who showed him sympathy and support. In the end of Rabee' Al-Awwal, 1351 H (1932 AD), he died in a clash with King Abdul-Aziz' men.
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 161.
- (74) The National Documents House, Cairo, Mihfazah No. 122, File No. 8/49, 1932 AD.

- (75) Al-Jeraisy, Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *From the Saudi-Egyptian Documents During the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 24-32.
- (76) There is a later section in this book illustrating King Abdul-Aziz' unique approach to dealing with internal problems.
- (77) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Falcon of the Peninsula*, op cit, Part 3, pp. 711-713.
- (78) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 189-190.
- (79) The name "Al-Artaawiyah" derives from "Al-Arati", the name of a type of tree. It refers to an area between Al-Zulfee and Kuwait. It is located to the south of Al-Zulfee and Al-Majmaáh, and the west of Al-Dahnaa', the east of Al-Duweih sand dunes and to the north of Al-Orma passes. It was founded by Saad Ibn Muthayyab, from the Harb tribe, and it was later given to Faisal Al-Duweish and his people from Miteir.
- Al-Faraj, Khalid Ibn Mohamed: *The News and the Truth in the History of Najd*, op cit, p.477.
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 263-264.
- (80) "Miteir" refers to an alliance of tribes, some of which belong to Qahtaan and others to Adnan. They live in such areas as Al-Aaridh, Al-Washm and Sudair. As for their homes, they extend from the Kuwait borders and the Arabian Gulf to the west of Qasseem. And to Al-Ojmaan and Banu Khalid to the south, Now the Mutairs are divided into two: 'Olwah and Bariyyah.
- Al-Shareefi, Ibraaheem Jaarallah Ibn Dukhnah: *The Golden Encyclopedia*, op cit, Part 8, p. 117.
- (81) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 189-190.
- (82) "Al-Hijrah" is the plural of "al-hijrah", meaning the area with plenty of water and pasture. King Abdul-Aziz allocated the Hijrah for the Bedouins to settle in.
- Al-Faraj, Khalid Ibn Mohamed: *The News and the Truth in the History of Najd*, op cit, p. 477.
- (83) Assaa'aati, Hassan: "King Abdul-Aziz' Security Policies in the Kingdom", (in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz*, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press,

1419 H, Part 3, p. 993.

(84) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 450.

(85) Ibid, p. 456.

Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword: Collection of Letters, Speeches, Memos and Conversations of His Majesty King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, (in Arabic), 4th edition, Riyadh, Dar Al-Sahraa' Al-Saudiyyah for Publishing and Distribution, 1418 H (1997 AD), p. 307.

(86) Al-Khrejji, Abdullah Mohammad: "King Abdul-Aziz Social Policy in Bedouin Settlement", (in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz*, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1419 H, Part 2, op cit, pp. 330-331.

(87) Al-Dijaani, Zaahiyah: *Heroes in History, King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Beirut, 1423 H (2003 AD), pp. 22.

(88) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 80.

(89) Ibid, p. 96.

(90) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Falcon of the Peninsula*, op cit, Part 3, pp. 713-714.

(91) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 745.

(92) Al-Keelaani, Kamaal: *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 62-63.

Chapter 2

King Abdul-Aziz'

Physical Features and Character Traits

2.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Physical Features

2.2 King Abdul-Aziz' Character Traits

2.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Physical Features

In his book *Saqr Al-Jazeera (The Peninsula Falcon)*, Attaar⁽¹⁾ provides a comparatively detailed description of the physical traits of King Abdul-Aziz. According to it, King Abdul-Aziz was handsome looking. He was six feet and four inches tall, which means he was distinctly taller than his subjects. His body was well-built and had a strong big frame. He had broad shoulders, a wide chest and large fingers. His head was equally big, in harmony with his frame. His forehead was wide and shiny, and he had black eyebrows, between which was a prominently clear space. His eyes were brown, glittering with purity. These were clearly shiny whenever he was pleased, but fire-like when angry. He had a jubilant face, with a proud nose. He had a light beard, and his moustache fully covered his upper-lip. His teeth looked nicely arranged and spaced out. His clothes were typically clean, and he was used to putting on perfume. He was characteristically simple and often quiet. When he spoke, he was brief and to the point, indicating broad knowledge.⁽²⁾

The physical features of King Abdul-Aziz were a blessing from Allah. His big frame and strong build invoked respect from those meeting him. He was blessed with such strength that he was able to endure severe pain on several occasions, as in the following incidents.

- In the 1915 AD Battle of Kanzaan,⁽³⁾ the Ojmaans made a surprise night attack against King Abdul-Aziz and his men and defeated them. The King and his men were on their way back from the battlefield when he learned from two servants

that his brother Saad had been killed. Not believing the news, the King shouted, "I am Nora's brother!⁽⁴⁾ Saad has not been killed! He must have been wounded, and you must have abandoned him in your defeat! I must return to get him." "We saw the enemy holding his horse and killing him," said the servants. Not believing what they said, the King decided to go and rescue his brother.

In the meantime, the Ojmaans identified one of the dead bodies to be Saad's. Aware of the King's character, they expected him to return for his brother and so prepared a trap for him. The King arrived as expected, and was able to identify Saad's body despite the dark. The King got off his horse and carried his brother's body. He was kissing it when the waiting Ojamans started shooting at him. The King was wounded. A bullet entered his side near the kidney, but he tied the wound with his *ghutrah* (headscarf). He did not tell any of his men about his wound that night. It became known only in the morning when blood stains were noticed on his clothes. When asked about it, he said it was a minor thing in the skin of his thigh; he did not want them to be sacred. It was not a minor wound, but was fifteen cm deep.

Arriving at the Nakhl Al-Qusaibi area, on the outskirts of Al-Ihsaa', the King sent one of his knights to fetch fresh clothes and gauze. There were no doctors around. He dressed the wound and changed his clothes. Having entered Al-Ihsaa', he went straight to his palace. He was said to have wedded a woman from Al-Ihsaa and the marriage was consummated the same night. This was meant to make all believe his wound was not serious at all.⁽⁵⁾

- In another incident, King Abdul-Aziz was riding a camel

when it bolted as he hit it with a stick. As a result, he fell off the camel, and was trodden by other running camels, but he was able to get up and ride the camel again. In fact, he took part in a battle the following day.⁽⁶⁾

- As related by Prince Talaal Ibn Abdul-Aziz, King Abdul-Aziz had two bullet wounds in one of his thighs. The King did not pay attention to the wounds then, and the bullets remained in his thigh. He forgot all about the bullets. Years later, he felt pain in his thigh. The doctor found out the cause of the pain. It was the two bullets. Having decided to remove the bullets, the doctor made the necessary preparations, anesthetic included. Pointing at the anesthetic, the King asked, "What is this?" "Anesthetic," answered the doctor. "What for?" asked the King. "For killing pain so that you won't feel it," said the doctor. "What will you do after injecting the anesthetic?" asked the King. "I'll cut the skin with a scalpel, remove the two bullets, and then stitch the skin," said the doctor. The King took the scalpel from the doctor, made a cut where the bullets were, removed the two bullets, and then, said to the doctor, "Now you can stitch the wound!"⁽⁷⁾

- One day, the King was sitting, and with him were Faisal Al-Duweish,⁽⁸⁾ Faisal Ibn Hashr⁽⁹⁾ and Habbaash Ibn Harshaan.⁽¹⁰⁾ One of the Ojmaan tribe managed to climb a palm tree and shoot at the King. When they heard the impact of the bullet among them, Al-Duweish said, "Brother of Jawzaa! Are you safe Abdul-Aziz." "Yes, I am. I'm safe. But what about you?" The King remained in his place for a while. Then, he dismissed the soldiers around him so that he could speak in private to his close allies around him. When the

soldiers left, the King told the men around him, "The bullet hit my thigh, but, by the Grace of Allah, I am well. Let me rely on you pretending my leg was numb because of sitting till I get into the tent. O you, Habbaash! Carry the mat, but do not let the soldiers see the blood." In the tent, the King dressed the wound with some herbal medicine and changed his clothes. Then, he went out of the tent on foot for the soldiers to see him. Eventually, his wound healed, but none of the soldiers realized he had been wounded.⁽¹¹⁾

Endowed with such unique physical strength, King Abdul-Aziz was able, by the Grace of Allah, to endure tough circumstances, painful wounds and operations, etc., which an ordinary person cannot bear. It is believed that the King's mental state was central to his amazing physical ability. Underlying his unique mental state was an interacting host of harmonious character qualities, which will be examined in the remainder of this chapter.

2.2. King Abdul-Aziz' Character Traits

Character can be defined as a combination of qualities or traits that distinguish one person from another.⁽¹²⁾ In their interaction, they guide one's mental, emotional and physical behavior. Let us elicit the prominent qualities comprising the character of King Abdul-Aziz. Elicitation is based on what the King is reported to have said and done and on observers' statements.

2.2.1 Religious Devotion

King Abdul-Aziz was known for righteousness and religious devotion. On the one hand, he was a committed worshipper.

On the other hand, he called on fellow Muslims to adhere to Islam's sound beliefs and to act in accordance with its teachings.⁽¹³⁾ Those close to him were fully aware of his strong faith in Allah. It was his faith that raised him to an extraordinary level of heroism. He put all his trust in none but Allah and was therefore certain of Allah's help.

His religious commitment was clearly manifested in the observance of the Islamic acts of worship. For example, he was known to regularly observe mandatory prayers in congregation. He also fulfilled his religious duties as required. In addition, he used to make nightly retreats, when people were asleep.⁽¹⁴⁾ This was a sign of Islam or submission to and trust in Allah. It is considered the cause of his success and greatness.

Every day, a little before dawn, King Abdul-Aziz woke to pray and read the Qur'an. He often did *dhikr* (remembrance) in praise of Allah at good times and bad ones. Never did he write a letter to anyone without starting it with the mention of Allah and thanking Him for His blessings.⁽¹⁵⁾

According to a story by a war veteran, he was outside King Abdul-Aziz' tent at night during one of the battles when he heard crying within. He went towards the tent and asked Ibraheem Al-Humaidi, a guard at the door, what the matter was. The guard replied that Abu-Turkey (the King) was praying. There, King Abdul-Aziz was in the tent with hands raised, supplicating Allah while shedding tears in humility.⁽¹⁶⁾ This story implies how strong his faith in and fear of Allah were. In fact, such fear was obvious if any of his subjects said to him, "O Abdul-Aziz, fear Allah!"

A story related by Prince Abdullah Ibn Faisal AL-Farhan

concerned a man from the Eastern Province who was heavily in debt. The man went to ask King Abdul-Aziz for help. When the man finished the night prayer, he waited for the King to end his prayers. Seeing the King supplicate Allah in humility, the man left without asking for anything. When the King finished his prayer, he enquired about the man who wanted to speak to him. He was told that the man was looking for help to pay his debts, but he felt too shy to ask when he saw the King praying to Allah for help. Instead, he felt he could pray for help from Allah, just like the King did. Thus, such a normal act of worship was a motive for the man to boost his faith in Allah. This simple episode was representative of the impact King Abdul-Aziz had on those who came to know him.⁽¹⁷⁾

King Abdul-Aziz' observance of required daily Islamic duties was based on sound knowledge of Qur'anic explanations, Hadith, jurisprudence and the art of preaching. In his sessions, he would usually quote Qur'anic statements. Religious lessons and seminars were given daily, and many people attended them. They reinforced the religious knowledge necessary for running the state, which derived its principles and practices from Islam.⁽¹⁸⁾

His observance of his Islamic duties was reflected in his daily activities. He organized them in relation to prayer times. This was a simple but effective system for urban as well as rural areas and only those with a shaky faith could not follow it.⁽¹⁹⁾ In fact, encouraging people to perform their daily religious duties was part of his mission as the leader of a Muslim community. He practiced what he preached, thus providing a role model as a community member and as a statesman.

While encouraging fellow Muslims to practice Islamic teachings, he would show no leniency towards those who neglected basic Islamic duties. For example, he had to lock up one of his sons in the Musmak Fort for missing the dawn prayer in congregation. He was equally concerned about the performance of daily acts of worship by all. As a typical Muslim, he loved for others what he loved for himself. This was clearly reflected in the introduction of a register in each neighborhood mosque. If a resident was absent two or three times, something had to be done to check if he was ill. If so, it was the residents' duty to visit him in fulfillment of Islamic teachings. However, if there was evidence to negligence, corrective measures had to be taken.⁽²⁰⁾

Having full faith in Allah and adopting the cause of Islam as his strategy, King Abdul-Aziz believed that the bigger the kingdom, the better he could serve Islam. His faith and dedication to Islam immunized him from the weaknesses of worldly conceit. As he usually admitted, the successes he had were only by Allah's Grace.⁽²¹⁾

While relying on Allah, he did his best. He used to say, "I am not the sort of person that depends on others to do what I must do. I depend on Allah alone..."⁽²²⁾

On matters with a religious dimension, King Abdul-Aziz consulted Shari'ah. He even sought the opinion of the *ulama* regarding the introduction of the telegraph, the telephone and the radio. He also sought their views regarding the Egyptian *mahmal*⁽²³⁾. This demonstrates his strong faith and commitment to Islamic teachings and practices. Since the Hijaz region became part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, King Abdul-Aziz had led the annual pilgrimage procession.

He rarely missed it, except when he was unable to do it due to old age. One year, 1941 AD, he had to skip performing pilgrimage in order to save the expenses for the needy.⁽²⁴⁾

In dispensing his duties, King Abdul-Aziz was fully aware of Islamic demands on him as an individual and as a leader. These duties were inherently acts of worship, to be performed intentionally. As a genuine Muslim, he responded to the Qur'anic command to worship Allah sincerely in all affairs. Only pride would prevent one from responding, and this would lead to the individual's downfall, but King Abdul-Aziz was blessed with the knowledge, faith and character to obey Islamic commands. May Allah have mercy on his soul and include him among the righteous.

2.2.2 Humility

Humility involves modesty, tolerance and the acceptance of the truth irrespective of source.⁽²⁵⁾ It is a quality highly valued by the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Calling for humility, Allah commands the Prophet, "And lower your wing to the believers who follow you."⁽²⁶⁾ Allah also says, "Turn not your cheek in scorn toward folk, nor walk with pertness in the land. Lo! Allah loves not each braggart boaster."⁽²⁷⁾ In one Hadith, the Prophet says, "Never does anyone exercise humility for Allah's sake but is raised in status by Allah in return."⁽²⁸⁾ This takes place in this world and in the Hereafter.

King Abdul-Aziz must have been aware of this value. He is said to have never been swayed by worldly gains, authority or fame. Whatever was said in praise of his genius qualities and great character never diminished his humility, nor did the vastness of the Kingdom he had established - extending from

the Red Sea to the Arabian Gulf.⁽²⁹⁾

Despite his authority, King Abdul-Aziz never saw himself but as an ordinary individual. He would stand up for his guests as a sign of warm welcome and hospitality. Only when his knees failed him in old age did he have to stop that.⁽³⁰⁾ Entertaining his guests, the King would say words of welcome. He would also speak with them about their own affairs as befit the situation, in addition to chatting with them about matters of a general nature.

As much as the King loved humility, he hated hypocrisy, never succumbing to words of praise nor allowing his name to be chanted⁽³¹⁾ If poets had to say something in his presence, he listened, but he would get uncomfortable. He would also show disinterest when he heard verses beyond the acceptable or reasonable. He had such self-confidence coupled with humility at heart that pretense had no access to his character.

The following statement by King Abdul-Aziz demonstrates his genuinely Islamic character. "I am not one of those who find pride in royal titles or protocol, nor am I one of those who yearn for titles or run after them. Islam is our real pride, and we are proud to be promoters of *tawheed* and to be disseminators of Allah's religion. Whatever we do towards this cause is the best of deeds for us. It is much more honorable than whatever royal protocol may claim. We are calling for adherence to the pure faith [as defined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah]."⁽³²⁾

Consider the following encounter in Al-Kharj. On one of his visits to Al-Kharj on 1944 AD, the King gave an audience to a Najdi poet. No sooner had the man started his poem saying, "You are our hope and it is you we beg," than the King said to

him, "May you be let down." The King, knowing Sheikh Hamad Al-Jaasir⁽³³⁾ was there, said, "O Ibn Al-Jaasir, take this fellow and teach him *tawheed* (to worship only Allah)." This incident shows the genuine humility on the King's part and his awareness of his real mission and responsibilities. It was his duty to promote Islamic values, not to seek worldly gains or praise which, in that case, befit none but Allah. The King realized at once the poet had gone beyond the acceptable, and so had to be taught a lesson. His awareness of his mission as a servant of the Islamic faith made him ascertain the humility Islam preaches and the honor gained by serving it. This attitude was typical of King Abdul-Aziz.

In a similar encounter, Fouad Shaakir⁽³⁴⁾ was reciting a poem he had composed before King Abdul-Aziz. The poet recited these verses:

"Stand up, to the House go, and on it the flag raise,
There, ask: Who has made the Haram Mosque safe?"

At once, the King interrupted: "It is Allah that has made it safe."⁽³⁵⁾ He was definitely aware of this verse from the Quran: "(67) Have they not seen that We have appointed a sanctuary immune (from violence), while mankind are ravaged all around them? Do they then believe in falsehood and disbelieve in the bounty of Allah?"⁽³⁶⁾ The King believed in Allah as the sole Provider.

In one incident during the pilgrimage season, King Abdul-Aziz had to react angrily, and his anger was caused by his humility. As related by Fouad Shaakir, he was leading a delegation of pilgrims to introduce them to the King. As he was walking towards the King's reception area, the King suddenly shouted angrily, "No! No! *Haraam* (forbidden)!"

Haraam! Raise your heads, o sheikh! You and your group, raise your heads! This is *haraam*. This is *haraam!* None is worthy to bow to but Allah - glory be to Him, the Great Creator."⁽³⁷⁾

When dealing with the soldiers under his command, King Abdul-Aziz acted with humility, sharing their work and giving them support. His humility and constant care for their welfare, earned him their love, respect and loyalty.⁽³⁸⁾ Yet, towards his enemies, he acted with courage and pride. They knew him as a fearless fighter, and his high morale was great strength for his army.⁽³⁹⁾

The aforementioned are examples of the humility of King Abdul-Aziz. They show how great an influence Islamic teachings had on his behavior, and hence his character. He was fully aware of the virtues of humility as an Islamic demand, and of the dangers of pride as an abominable trait.

2.2.3 Justice

Justice involves the proper delivery of rights.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Allah says, "Lo! Allah enjoins justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorts you in order that ye may take heed."⁽⁴¹⁾ This command to Muslims applies to rulers in particular. According to the Hadith, just rulers top the list of seven types of people whom Allah will provide with special protection on the Day of Judgment. Prophet Mohammad says, "Seven types of people will be especially provided by Allah with special protection on the Day when there will be no protection but His..." The first one mentioned by the Prophet is "a just ruler".⁽⁴²⁾

Motivated by Islamic beliefs and seeking rewards from Allah, King Abdul-Aziz had as a priority the delivery of justice in theory and practice.⁽⁴³⁾ His concept of justice was comprehensive, applying it to all activities. It covered the assignment of government duties to the qualified and competent, judicial responsibilities, day-to-day dealings, even treatment of wives and children, etc. His pursuit of justice was a continuation of his family's orientation and faith. It also reflected a natural instinct in his personality.

In the dispensation of justice, King Abdul-Aziz was known for his emphasis on equality of all before the law. He showed no bias towards anyone regardless of economic or social status. He was particularly uncompromising with those spreading confusion and falsehoods, for they were a source of destabilization and danger to security. He wanted to provide stability, which is indispensable to welfare. This is well expressed in the following statement: "Nothing could benefit this country except security and stability. Therefore, let all be in comfort and peace. Yet, let all beware of following Satanic and selfish whims, which disturb the country's security. In this regard, I am really tough with culprits. So, let nobody fall into temptation."⁽⁴⁴⁾

In one incident, a man who committed murder went to King Abdul-Aziz seeking pardon. "Look son! Allah has blessed this country by the establishment of the Shari'ah laws. If a person is found guilty and is sentenced according to Shari'ah, we will never hesitate to carry out the sentence regardless of his status."⁽⁴⁵⁾

As a Muslim individual and leader, King Abdul-Aziz firmly believed in Shari'ah as the ideal system for mankind. So, he

channeled all his efforts to establish and apply it at all times, even in war. While fighting violators of Shari'ah, he was calling on people to observe Islamic teachings, spreading virtues and preventing vice. Dedication to the application of Shari'ah had an obvious impact on the new society in the Arabian Peninsula, creating as it did a well-established state of security and justice. This was a top priority of his leadership duties. He had to look after public affairs and interests and preserve the country's unity and stability.

One may wonder how King Abdul-Aziz was able to establish such a stable system, and how he was able to turn fighting tribes into a civilized society whose members vie for the delivery of rights! The answer lies in his commitment to the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Practically, he was committed to giving people their rights and providing guidance to them. In the meantime, offenders were not punished without prior warning and guidance.

In the dispensation of justice, King Abdul-Aziz delegated responsibilities to chiefs of tribes, making good use of their Bedouin traditions. He got them involved in looking for offenders in their relevant tribes and in administering appropriate punishments immediately. In tracking wanted criminals, the Bedouins used their desert skills of footprint tracing. The Al-Murrah tribe was well known for this skill, and the security forces made use of their skill in bringing criminals to justice. It was something King Abdul-Aziz wanted to continue for the service of justice.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Thus, it was possible to reconcile traditions with innovations, and to achieve cooperation and social integration in accordance with Islamic teachings.

In his endeavor to establish justice, King Abdul-Aziz emphasized the development of the judicial system so that it could match the complexity of the modern age. The simple structure of the judiciary had to be replaced by a new sophisticated one. The change was necessary despite variations in creed in the Kingdom regarding judicial systems and organization prior to the annexation of Al-Hijaaz. Based on Islam, the system was typically religious, and it accommodated all recognized creeds. Basically, all judicial matters had to be carried out within the Shari'ah framework. "My constitution, my system and my law and motto is Muhammad's religion," said King Abdul-Aziz.⁽⁴⁷⁾ He also said, "Allah has made us, from my forefathers till now, promoters and teachers of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and the ways of the righteous Salaf. We are not bound by a particular school of thought at the expense of the others. If any of the four schools of thought has the strongest evidence on a particular issue, we have to accept and hold on to it."⁽⁴⁸⁾

Thus, King Abdul-Aziz considered the judiciary as the symbol of justice; it did not matter to him which of the four schools of thought was involved in a particular ruling. He gave special attention to the organization of the judicial system and the establishment of law courts at varied levels and with varied specializations, serving both urban and Bedouin areas.⁽⁴⁹⁾

Special attention was also given to the selection of judges. The King selected for the judiciary conscientious and righteous scholars. He provided them with the necessary care, while maintaining their independence. The authority to appoint, transfer and dismiss judges was the King's alone. He did not allow any member of his family or government to interfere

with the judiciary.

The following steps reflected the King's care for the judiciary. In the temporary classification of state posts, in 1926 AD, judges were at the top of the scale. In fact, they were called "the pillars of the state". In the 1928 AD job classification of state employees, judges were in the top group, which was directly appointed by the King himself. Judges remained at the top of the scale in the first system of state personnel, which was issued in 1931 AD. Later, when the system was reviewed in 1945 AD, and the scale became eleven grades, the King put the Chief Judge on the Distinct Grade, and all judges on the Third Grade. Compared to other state employees, judges were given higher monthly salaries so that they could focus attention on judicial tasks and the dispensation of justice.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Well aware of the difference between the nature of Bedouin and urban cases, King Abdul-Aziz insightfully appointed two judges in Riyadh. One of them was responsible for looking into Bedouin cases for purposes of speed; they were not complicated cases, and Bedouins would be in the city for speedy trade transactions. Delay would be inconvenient for them.⁽⁵¹⁾

In addition to the establishment of an organized judicial system responsible for the dispensation of justice, King Abdul-Aziz was concerned with providing proper guidance and promoting legal awareness among people. Then, came punishment, which was administered for criminal offences as a deterrent. The King advised the judiciary to do their duties to Allah, to seek the truth, and to be on the side of the wronged and to give the weak their rights. In this respect, he says, "The most evil to their people are the rulers that do not judge

according to Allah's Revelations." He continued, "In fact, all citizens are accountable before Allah for neglecting the offering of advice on matters related to Allah, His Messenger and all Muslims. It is their duty to inform their governor of his wrongdoings. My door is open to all. It is my duty to give the wronged their rights even from my own sons and relatives."⁽⁵²⁾ It was the custom of King Abdul-Aziz to look after the affairs of his subjects as much as possible. This custom reflects the Prophet's statement, "All of you are trustees, and each one of you is responsible for who is in his / her trust. A ruler is a trustee and is responsible for those in his trust..."⁽⁵³⁾

Every morning, King Abdul-Aziz would be in his court to receive people who had complaints and needs. He would listen to them, look into their complaints and help with their needs. Twice a day, morning and evening, the chief of the royal court would give the King a briefing on cases and complaints. So great was the King's dedication to justice that people were keen not to wrong others lest he should hear of it, and punish them heavily as a result.

Oftentimes, a Bedouin with a complaint would say to King Abdul-Aziz, "O Abdul-Aziz, fear Allah! Look! My complaint is in your trust." The King would normally appoint a committee to look into the complaint. He would say to the committee members, "Now the onus is on you. I have done my part by entrusting you with his case. Allah will ask you about it." Underlying his concern for the delivery of justice in general was his fear of Allah. He would often say to his learned audience, "I'm afraid, I may have unintentionally done something displeasing to Allah. What do you think I

should do as atonement?"⁽⁵⁴⁾

The following are practical examples of the King's dispensation of justice:

- Once a Bedouin, beaten by one of the King's sons, complained to the King. The King summoned his sons for identification. Angry with his son, King Abdul-Aziz asked him, "Have you beaten him?" The son said nothing, as admission of guilt. The King turned to the Bedouin, "What did he hit you with?" "With a long stick - may you live long," answered the Bedouin. "Get up, hit him. Take your revenge. Do it," said the King. "I can't," said the Bedouin. The King said to him, "May Allah guide you! Stand up. Hit him. Nothing to fear. Justice means both of you are equal. In fact, you are greater because right is on your side, but he is small because he has wronged you. Stand up and hit him." The Bedouin replied, "I am afraid I can't do it - may you live long. What you have done is enough for me. Your justice has erased your son's offence, and nothing is better than what you have done. I hereby waive my right entirely."⁽⁵⁵⁾
- In another incident, one of the King's sons hit one of the guards. Learning of the incident, the King punished his son in public and sent him to prison. Being the king's son was not of any help. "Are you satisfied?" the King asked the guard. "May you live long, Abdul-Aziz," answered the guard. The King said to the guard, "O son, what I have done should be a lesson to him and to all the other members of my family. Your place in my heart is like that of my sons."⁽⁵⁶⁾
- The following incident represents what can be called "self

application of justice." Once, after the King's father died, a man saw the King after the dawn prayer and told him, "Your late father owed me one hundred... riyals." Do you have a witness?" asked the King. "Allah is my witness," said the man. The King said, "I am afraid, I can't help you unless you have a witness." Both agreed to have the issue settled in court. They went to judge Saad Ibn Ateeq.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Aware of the nature of their visit, the judge did not receive them inside his house. He sat on the house threshold, while the two litigants sat on the ground. After the case was settled, and the man left, Judge Ibn Ateeq invited the King into his house, saying to Him, "Now, be my guest." The King and the judge had coffee together."⁽⁵⁸⁾ This situation reflects the King's observance of judicial procedures, his humility and his respect for court rulings. Also, Ibn Ateeq's behavior reflects the independence of the judiciary.

- In his pursuit of justice for his subjects, King Abdul-Aziz gave special attention to the quality of judges and governors, especially their dedication to the application of Shari'ah. The case of Mohammad Ibn Zaid, the governor of Riyadh,⁽⁵⁹⁾ was a good example. Ibn Zaid was very faithful to King Abdul-Aziz and was greatly dedicated to his duties and responsibilities. Once, a servant of the King's brother Imam Saud committed an offence for which Ibn Zaid had to send him to prison, disregarding the Imam's special place in the King's heart. Having heard of the incident, Imam Saud, though known for his intelligence and wisdom, was so angry that he had to confront Ibn Zaid over his servant's imprisonment. They had an argument that can be reconstructed as follows:

IMAM SAUD: How dare you send my servant to prison

without consulting me?

IBN ZAID: Abdul-Aziz has appointed me in this post in order to implement Shari'ah and establish justice, which are the basis of his rule. By Allah, if you violated the law, I would send you to prison too.

Overwhelmed by the Ibn Zaid's answer, Imam Saud went straight to King Abdul-Aziz. This is what he said to the King, "O Abdul-Aziz, when choosing governors, make sure they are like Ibn Zaid." He informed the King of his argument with Ibn Zaid. Ibn Zaid was summoned to the King, who praised his dealing with the servant's case, considering his behavior as a sign of faith, and of loyalty to country and King.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Nothing would ever sway King Abdul-Aziz from the dispensation of justice. He would remove the negligent from office, regardless of family or social status. For example, when he learned that the Secretariat of Makkah municipality neglected their duties, he summoned the Shura Council and reprimanded them for inaction towards one of the dignitaries close to the King, and removed the dignitary in question from office.⁽⁶¹⁾

The King's dedication to justice was part of his care for his subjects. He obliged the judges of the Taif Shari'ah court to double their efforts in order to speed up the settlement of people's cases and rights. Once, a woman complained to him about an inheritance problem; there was nobody to help her get her rights. His response was swift. He took her papers from her, telling her he himself was going to be her lawyer. He followed up her case with the Shari'ah court until a ruling was reached. He informed the woman of the court decision, and he

saw to it that it was carried out.⁽⁶²⁾

Entering through Al-Majeedi Door of the Prophet's mosque in Madeenah, one pilgrim reported seeing an interesting notice on the walls. The notice read as follows:

"From: Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saud

To: The people of the Arabian Peninsula.

"If any of our subjects feels wronged, he should contact us by telegraph or post free of charge. So, all the post and telegraph employees have to process the complaints sent by our subjects, even if they are against my children, my grandchildren or my family. Let each employee be aware not to dissuade any subject from filing complaints, regardless of value, or persuade them to moderate the complaint's language. If an employee does that, he will be severely punished... I do not want anyone to suffer injustices as long as I live, nor do I want to bear the blame for injustices befalling others or for not helping them remove injustices or get their rights.... Let everyone know this. O Allah, be my Witness."⁽⁶³⁾ The notice was put up in 1372 H. King Abdul-Aziz had it put on Mosque doors so that people could be encouraged to send their complaints free of charge. This measure was a boost to the promotion of justice and an indication of the King's serious efforts in this respect.

This conduct reflects the Qur'anic demand for good rulers. As described in the Qur'an, they are "those who, if We give them power in the land, establish worship and pay *zakaah* and enjoin virtue and forbid vice...."⁽⁶⁴⁾ May Allah grant King Abdul-Aziz mercy.

2.2.4 Courage

Courage is defined as a state of emotional power that drives one to do things that need to be done, such as fighting.⁽⁶⁵⁾ And the courageous are those whose hearts are daring in affliction.⁽⁶⁶⁾ The Qur'an calls on Muslims to be courageous in the battlefield, and condemns cowardice and desertion, "(15) O you who believe, when you meet those who disbelieve in battle, turn not your backs to them."⁽⁶⁷⁾

Applying the definition to King Abdul-Aziz, related literature is full of situations where his bravery is evident. Indeed, he was known for his courage. An obvious testimony is his recapture of Riyadh with the help of only a few fighters.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Another example is the Battle of Al-Hareeq,⁽⁶⁹⁾ which took place in a valley surrounded by mountains south of Kharj between Al-Hareeq fighters and the men of King Abdul-Aziz. When the latter attacked the valley, they were overwhelmed by a surprise onslaught of firepower from the tops of the mountains, where the Hareeq fighters had positioned themselves. The King's men were caught unawares and were in such disarray that they had to flee, each seeking his own survival. On seeing his men fleeing, King Abdul-Aziz, who was at the rear on foot - his horse being led by an attendant - tried to rally them back, calling on them, "O! People of Al-Awjaa'!⁽⁷⁰⁾ Back to battle!" Getting no answer from the men, the King struck his horse with the sword, shouting at them, "O! People of Al-Awjaa! Do not say you have not seen me! Whoever wants to be back with his own family let him go! Whoever wants to be with me let him follow me! I am attacking on my own!" Indeed, he did march on his own. Seeing how serious he was, the men revived and their morale

returned. They joined King Abdul-Aziz, and they fought their way through to the inside of the village.⁽⁷¹⁾ So daring was King Abdul-Aziz that his courage and determination turned fleeing men back to the battlefield, fighting and eventually winning.

However, the quality of courage King Abdul-Aziz possessed was not reckless indifference to danger. It was coupled with wisdom and insight. With solid determination, he had to calculate impending dangerous consequences within ongoing actions so that they could be effectively encountered.⁽⁷²⁾ For example, sometimes, he would get news of insubordination or rebellion in an area. In response, the King would order a military expedition to impose order and take disciplinary measures against the offenders. On another occasion, he would be advised to ignore some offending village or tribe for being weak. The King would strongly reject the advice in a loud voice, "No! No! I should prepare for a fox as I do for a lion."⁽⁷³⁾

The following incident reflects the type of courage King Abdul-Aziz had: it was courage restrained by deliberation and insight. Jeddah was under siege by the troops of King Abdul-Aziz. In a meeting dealing with the Jeddah situation, Khalid Ibn Lu'ayy⁽⁷⁴⁾ and Sultaan Ibn Bijaad⁽⁷⁵⁾ implied that the King's response was cowardly. Composed and cool, the King said, "Deliberation! Deliberation! Patience! Patience!" It was certainly not lack of courage on the part of the King; controlled courage demanded that rushing to attack was not the appropriate solution. The King was proven right, whereas both Lu'ayy and Bijaad were not.⁽⁷⁶⁾

Despite his courage, wisdom and insight, King Abdul-Aziz

never boasted of having such qualities, nor did he ever see himself as *the* hero. In fact, he would often say, "Whatever strength I may have is not from me, but from Allah the Almighty to make up for my weakness."⁽⁷⁷⁾

2.2.5 Intuition

Intuition involves making a correct judgment on something by looking at and reflecting on it.⁽⁷⁸⁾ There are two aspects of intuition, one related to the judgment maker, and the other to the object of intuition. The judgment maker must possess both intelligence and a pure heart. As for the intuition object, it must manifest identifiable signs. If the two aspects exist, the judgment is highly likely to be right, and vice versa. However, if the two exist, but one weaker than the other, the guess may be right and may be wrong.⁽⁷⁹⁾

However, there is intuition-related faith. It derives from the light Allah puts in one's heart. The light helps distinguish truths and falsehoods. The stronger the faith, the sharper the intuition is. It depends on the senses of seeing and hearing.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The Prophet says, "Beware of the intuition of the faithful. They see by Allah's light."⁽⁸¹⁾

In the case of King Abdul-Aziz, he was endowed with a great intuitive faculty which enabled him to make sound and perceptive judgments. The following are good examples.

One year, the country experienced some kind of drought. As a result, prices of sheep and ghee rose. So, the King banned the smuggling out of those goods. One merchant was caught violating the ban by moving 20 tins of ghee from his shop. He was arrested, and the goods were confiscated. The merchant

complained to the King, claiming he was just moving the goods to his home, and doing so was not banned. The King got the complaint before getting any information from the finance administration. The King sent to the merchant the following reply:

"You are the kind of person to whom this description applies: a companion pretending fun, but if not seen, he will get away. The fact of the matter is that by moving the goods to your home you had planned to sneak them away during the night. The finance administration did what it had to do." The merchant was amazed at how the King was able to get to the truth.⁽⁸²⁾ The following day, came his reply, admitting guilt and asking for pardon. The King ordered the tins of ghee to be returned to the merchant, on condition that the merchant abided by the ban. In addition to showing the King's intuitive judgment of the merchant's guilt and subsequent confession, this incident shows the King's willingness to show kindness to offenders if they acknowledge their guilt and are willing to reform their behaviour.

In another incident, a caravan was attacked in the desert, and its goods were stolen. The victims complained to the King. He asked them if they knew the criminals. The answer was in the negative. He asked them if they knew their dialect. The answer was also in the negative. When asked about signs on what the culprits were riding, the victims were able to describe some signs. From the description, the King was able to identify the culprits' tribe. He immediately summoned the chief of that tribe, demanding the return of the stolen goods and the surrender of the culprits, specifying a deadline. Both demands were met.⁽⁸³⁾ Thus, the King's questions were intuitively

pertinent, and he based his conclusion on his good knowledge of tribes. In addition, the King's whole response showed his commitment to people's causes and the delivery of justice.

Once, a man complained to King Abdul-Aziz in Riyadh. He claimed that the Emir of Turabah had committed an injustice against him. Having looked at the man's face, the King said to him, "You are a thief, and you are a traitor." He ordered the man to be detained pending further enquiry. He sent a message to his son Faisal to enquire about the suspect in detention. Faisal's reply confirmed the suspect's guilt; the man was an escaped prisoner who had been involved in theft crimes. The man was sent back under guard to Makkah.⁽⁸⁴⁾ This incident demonstrates the King's intuitive faculties.

One day, an Iraqi delegation headed by Nouri Al-Saeed,⁽⁸⁵⁾ the then foreign minister, was on a visit to Riyadh. It was there for negotiations over a number of issues, the most important of which was that of borders. The Saudi foreign minister, Prince Faisal Ibn Abdul-Aziz, attended the negotiations. The King said to Nouri Al-Saeed, "What do you want?" Nouri explained the purpose of his visit. The King ordered a pen and paper to be brought and handed them to Nouri, saying, "Write what you want, and Faisal will sign." When Nouri finished writing, the King handed the writing to Prince Faisal to sign without reading it. The Prince did sign as told. The King gave the document to Nouri, telling him of his approval of all its contents. Later, when on their own, the King said to his son, "O Faisal, you seemed disturbed for not knowing the contents of the document. Nouri came here with the intention of disagreeing. That is why I made him write what he wanted and instructed you to sign. Our being easy

with him will raise his suspicions, and he will go back on what he has written. Let it come from him."

Indeed, having returned to Baghdad, Nouri raised objections to some clauses in the agreement.⁽⁸⁶⁾ How insightful was the King's intuition! It led him to take a risky decision. The intuitive decision and its predicted consequences reflected the King's political sense, awareness of events around him and of human nature and purity of heart and mind. Such qualities are necessary for making intuitive judgments, and the King had them all.

2.2.6 Generosity

Islam calls on Muslims to be generous and spend for Allah's sake. The Qur'an says, "Those who spend their wealth by night and day, by stealth and openly, verily their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve."⁽⁸⁷⁾ On the other hand, Islam condemns miserliness." The Qur'an says, "(8) But as for him who hoards and deems himself independent, (9) And disbelieves in goodness; (10) Surely We will ease his way unto adversity. (11) His riches will not save him when he perishes."⁽⁸⁸⁾

According to the Hadith, "Whenever the Prophet was asked to help for the sake of Islam, he gave generously. Once, he gave a man a large number of sheep. When the man returned to his own people, he told them: O people, be Muslims; Mohammad gives generously, fearing no poverty."⁽⁸⁹⁾

Regarding King Abdul-Aziz' generosity, it included not only the material side but the behavioral side as well. He looked

after the needy in fulfillment of the Islamic demand. He also spent generously for political purposes in order to achieve unity and security for all.⁽⁹⁰⁾

Underlying the King's generosity was his firm belief that all the wealth he had was a blessing from Allah. So, he felt it was his responsibility to spend it on people, by treating guests and visitors generously.⁽⁹¹⁾ In fact, his generous acts were a source of enjoyment for him. He would give even if the treasury barely had any money. No wonder, he described himself as a 'slaughtered camel' from which any person in need could cut as much meat as possible. The King's generosity was a great worry to the King's treasurer Abdullah Ibn Sulaiman⁽⁹²⁾, for he had to often readjust the budget.

King Abdul-Aziz often said, "Allah has been always generous to me, and in return, I have been generous to people. I do not want to stop my generosity to people lest Allah should stop his to me.... I spend all that I get on Muslims, and it is their right."⁽⁹³⁾

Let us consider some examples of King Abdul-Aziz' generous acts:

- The King was once travelling when some cars of his entourage got stuck in the sand. He refused to move till he was sure all stuck cars were out. While the King was sitting under a tree during the rescue operations, a Bedouin approached him. The Bedouin did not recognize him, particularly as he was wearing simple clothes. He sat beside the King and asked him, "Where are the Sheikhs (the VIPs)?" The King replied with a smile on his face "They must be with the men over there." The man waited, hoping

to see the King. As the cars were all out of the sand, the King got ready to leave. He handed the man some money. The man put his hand out to shake his hand saying, "Peace be upon you, Abdul-Aziz." "How do you know I am Abdul-Aziz?" asked the King. The man replied, "Who else will give so generously but you?"⁽⁹⁴⁾

- A delegation happened to be the King's guests. He decided to give them a donation. So, he wrote to the treasurer to give them 300 riyals. The treasurer had to check with the King, for it was written 3000, not 300. The King said, "It was a writing error. However, give the delegation 3000 riyals, Abdul-Aziz' pen cannot be more generous than Abdul-Aziz."⁽⁹⁵⁾
- It was the King's custom to visit tribes' quarters from time to time. On his visits, he would carry gold coins in one bag and silver coins in another. On one visit, an old Bedouin approached the King's car. The King wanted to give him some money, and so, he put his hand in one of the two bags to get some silver coins. By mistake, the King got out gold coins instead of silver. Hesitating for seconds, the King decided to give the old man the gold coins. Realizing the man was blind, the King told him, "Listen, the money you have taken is gold. Make sure nobody deceives you." He turned to his companions, saying, "Glory be to Allah. I meant to give him silver coins, but I put my hand in the gold bag. In fact, I thought of putting the gold back and getting silver out instead, but I said to myself: I won't be less generous than my hand!"⁽⁹⁶⁾
- In one incident reported in the news, the King was on a picnic outside Riyadh when he saw an old man in rags. The

man rose from his place and stood in front of the King's horse, saying, "O Abdul-Aziz, it is terribly cold, and I have no clothes to protect me." Saddened by the man's state, the King took off his cloak and gave it to him. He also ordered a sum of money to be given to him for daily living.

- In a similar incident, the King was out on a camel that was strong and beautiful. Outside the city, the King stopped for rest. A man had already been sitting there. The man greeted him, saying, "Peace be upon you, Abdul-Aziz." "Peace be upon you too. Who are you?" replied the King. "I have come from Medina," said the man. The King asked, "But where is your camel?" The man answered, "It died on the way, and I cannot afford to buy another one." The King asked, "Are you planning to return to Medina?" "In a few days' time," said the man. The King said, "Then, take this camel, for you cannot go back to Medina on foot!"⁽⁹⁷⁾
- The King's generosity was well known to the poor, and so they would await the opportunity to see him in villages and towns and even in the desert. That is why the King had to have a great deal of money in his car. Whenever he saw a poor person, he would order some money to be given to him / her.⁽⁹⁸⁾
- One day, an old woman approached his procession, saying, "O Abdul-Aziz, may Allah give you in the Hereafter as He has given you in this world!" This prayer filled his heart with so much pleasure that he ordered all the money in his car to be given to her; it was 10 bags of money, which was too heavy for her to carry. So, the King ordered a camel to be assigned to the transport of the money and ordered an aid to escort her to her house in the middle of the desert.⁽⁹⁹⁾

- King Abdul-Aziz established a guest house for the poor in general, and for the Bedouins in particular. It was called "Thulaim". It was also known as "The Host". There, the poor were given rice, meat and *jareesh* (a variety of porridge) to eat. In addition, his palace used to be full of people coming from all over the Kingdom, particularly tribal chiefs and foreigners. Guests would usually have meat, rice and ghee, etc. They would also be given clothes to wear, and this varied according to the status of the guest. The presents ranged from cloaks to swords, daggers, watches and cars. Guests were also given a gift of money, ranging from 10 to hundreds of riyal. The gift was called "al-shurhah".⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Women in particular were given a present called "al-sougha" and a "buqjah" (a bundle) of clothes. The King loved his presents to be accepted, especially the "buqjah"⁽¹⁰¹⁾.
- As soon as King Abdul-Aziz annexed Hael, he treated its people as his guests and was extremely generous to them. Due to its long siege, Hael was economically in bad shape. Food items, if available, were highly expensive. The King opened a guest house for the poor. His care for Hael continued till prices went down considerably.⁽¹⁰²⁾
- World War II caused a severe economic crisis all over the world. The war prevented Muslims from going on pilgrimage to Makkah. As a result, the Arabian Peninsula faced food shortages and suffered starvation. In response to the economic crisis, King Abdul-Aziz gathered tribal leaders in order to assure them of his concern with regard to their livelihood, promising to share with them whatever supplies he had. In practical terms, the King ordered the supply of "royal kits" of bread for the needy throughout the country. For this task, committees were especially formed.⁽¹⁰³⁾ Also,

annual aid, known as "Qawaa'id"⁽¹⁰⁴⁾, was given to a lot of senior government officials in order that they could afford some of the day-to-day basics of living, such as rents and clothes. In addition, some of them were given a monthly ration of food. However, thousands of poor citizens were allocated annual monetary gifts, called "waayid", normally given at the beginning of each year.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

- Once, a man from Muscat gave a number of genuine Omani camels as a present to the King. The King ordered the Omani guest to be put on the list of those receiving gifts that evening. When the time came to distribute the gifts, the Omani guest's name was called, but a Bedouin, bearing the same name, came out and received the gift, the sum of SR 10,000. The following day, the Omani guest saw the King, who asked him if he had received his gift. The guest said he did not. The King was angry and demanded an explanation from the treasurer, who said he paid the gift and had a receipt of payment. Investigation revealed the error, and the Bedouin was summoned to the royal court for investigation. The Bedouin was troubled lest he should be told to return the gift. Asking the Bedouin about his name, the King saw that the two names were identical. The King said to the Bedouin "Keep the money. It is to you from Allah." The Bedouin was happily relieved, and he left, thanking Allah and praying for the King. The King gave the Omani guest the gift meant for him.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾
- Being generous by nature, King Abdul-Aziz extended his generosity beyond the national level. All were aware that meeting the King resulted in getting a lot of presents. For instance, General Gilbert Clayton visited the King in Jeddah in 1928 AD. The General fell ill, and so he had to leave

early. As was his custom with his guests, the King offered to give a farewell party in the General's honor. The latter had to apologize due to his sickness and the consequent loss of appetite. Instead of the party, the King ordered food to be supplied to the General's ship for the whole crew during the return trip to Britain.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

- Shortly after Al-Sabalah Battle⁽¹⁰⁸⁾, a Kuwaiti delegation headed by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jabir Al-Subah⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ went to congratulate the King on his victory in the battle. Even though the treasury was suffering from the effects of a long conflict, the King could not but give his guests the presents usually given on such an occasion.⁽¹¹⁰⁾

The aforementioned incidents illustrate how generous by nature King Abdul-Aziz was. His generosity was genuine, and his subjects were all aware of it, and so were foreigners. It was not pretense, but was inherent in his character and harmonious with his conduct and traits.

Not only was the King's generosity genuine, it was also unique. It was available for all: friends and foes, natives and foreigners, men and women and young and old. Most importantly, it was coupled with humility, acknowledging Allah's Grace. He would often say, "I haven't obtained all this wealth by myself. It is a blessing from Allah, and all of you have a share in it. So, I want you to guide me to whatever takes me nearer to my Lord and qualifies me for His forgiveness."⁽¹¹¹⁾

2.2.7 Dignity

Dignity is a degree of inherent nobility and self-respect that

keeps one above low behavior and trivialities.⁽¹¹²⁾ The following situations demonstrate King Abdul-Aziz' inherent nobility and self-respect.

- This situation was a consequence of Al-Muhammarah Treaty, signed by King Abdul Aziz and the government of Iraq on May 5, 1922 AD. According to the Treaty and its subsequent Aqeer protocols, infiltrators were to be deported to their respective government on request. The Shammar tribe represented a problem. The Shammars lived on both sides of the borders. To avoid conflicts, King Abdul-Aziz decided to have a demarcation of borders to disengage the Shammars of Najd from those of Iraq. It was agreed that the Shammars from Iraqi origin be on the Iraqi side, and those of Najdi origin on their side of the border. The deportation clause applied.

Applying the above-mentioned treaty, King Abdul-Aziz requested the Iraqi government to deport Iqaab Ibn 'Ijl,⁽¹¹³⁾ a chief from the 'Abdah clan.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ He was originally from Najd, but moved to Iraq before the unification of the Kingdom. The Iraqi government was ready to hand him to King Abdul-Aziz, but Sheikh 'Ojail Al-Yaawir,⁽¹¹⁵⁾ a tribal chief of the Shammars of Iraq and member of the Iraqi parliament, opposed the deportation move. Al-Yaawir's argument was based on his faith in Arab traditions of nobility. He considered the deportation practice to be incompatible with Arab dignity. He was told that King Abdul-Aziz also knew Arab traditions for, otherwise, he would not have made the deportation request or signed the Treaty in the first place.

Aware of the King's observance of such noble traditions, Al-

Yaawir asked the parliament to appeal to the King on his behalf to withdraw his request. The appeal invoked the King's faith in Allah as well as his typical commitment to Arab traditions. Al-Yaawir argued that Ibn 'Ijl sought his protection, and asked the King whether he would deport Ibn 'Ijl if he sought the King's protection. Seeking and honoring protection had been a long established Arab tradition. As expected, the King abandoned the Ibn 'Ijl matter. He did not even reply to the Iraqi government's appeal.

Though mainly done as a noble gesture, the King's whole response to the appeal had an element of political wisdom, which surfaced in the Keelaani affair. The King gave asylum to Rasheed 'Aali Al-Keelaani⁽¹¹⁶⁾ after the latter's failed revolt against the British occupation of Iraq during World War II. Defending his decision, the King argued that the deportation clause was concerned with escapees who committed crimes against their nation, but Al-Keelaani's revolt was against the British occupation of Iraq. The King also argued, "I am an Arab who believes and practices Arab traditions. It is my duty to represent noble conduct first and to act as King second. Should you request the deportation of any of my sons, I would send him to you at once. As for handing to you a seeker of my protection, never can it be done so long as my veins show signs of life."⁽¹¹⁷⁾

- As published in *Al-Musawwar*, the Egyptian magazine, Jameel Mirdim Bek⁽¹¹⁸⁾ reported an incident where King Abdul-Aziz had to settle a dispute between two tribes. The King's arbitration was described as brilliant and wise. Concluding his arbitration, he called on the chiefs of both

tribes to embrace this, demonstrating reconciliation and the end of conflict. As a typical believer in and practitioner of Arab noble traditions, the King declared he was paying for all the damages incurred as a result of the dispute. The King's handling of the case could be seen as interference in the role of the judiciary, but for fairness sake, it should be pointed out that the King normally referred cases to the judiciary. That particular case had a highly emotional dimension, and so he wisely sought the long-term reconciliation and prevention of future hostilities. Thus, his intervention was intended for the good of both tribes and for stability. It was consistent with the Islamic concepts of intentions and aims as well as with Arab traditions. His aim was noble and so was his way of settling the dispute. The Qur'an calls on Muslims to make peace and reconciliation with warring believers as a first step, before resorting to stricter measures. Allah says, "And if two parties of believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them...."⁽¹¹⁹⁾

Thus, the afore-mentioned incidents demonstrate his character's embodiment of the dignity typical of Arab noble traditions and consistent with Islamic demands.

2.2.8 Patience

Patience refers to self-restraint and refraining from action in a state of hardship.⁽¹²⁰⁾ It involves related qualities and states, e.g. endurance, anger control, nonviolence, forbearance, deliberateness, kindness, gentleness, and rationality. As wisely said, like the head to the body, so is patience to faith.⁽¹²¹⁾ Islam considers patience and its associated qualities to be superior ones loved by Allah. As mentioned in the

Qur'an, "... Allah loves the steadfast."⁽¹²²⁾ Also, according to the Hadith, the Prophet said to Al-Ashagg, "You possess two qualities loved by Allah and His Messenger: they are forbearance and deliberateness."⁽¹²³⁾

Evidently, King Abdul-Aziz was blessed with patience coupled with forbearance and deliberateness and rationality, in addition to other associated qualities. Once, during the Hajj season, an Indian pilgrim, greeting the King with a handshake, started reading a poem, which turned out to be a hundred verses. Unfortunately, the pilgrim's reading was terrible because of his broken Arabic. As a result of the pilgrim's act, a lot of people were held back from greeting the King. Despite the large number of guests, the King did not show any sign of disinterest or leave. He listened to the man reading the poem, but eventually he nicely remarked, "Nice poem! Who is the writer?" A little hesitant, the man replied, "I am." The King asked, "Who is it talking about?" The man replied, "About your majesty." The King, with a nice smile, said, "I'll take the poem. Since it is about me, I will enjoy reading it on my own at home." The pilgrim gave the poem to the King, and the guests were relieved to see it over, and they were able to resume greeting the King.⁽¹²⁴⁾

Consider the following incident. A Bedouin went to the King's court. As soon as the King entered, the Bedouin said to him, "O Abdul-Aziz, your garment is too long." [Islamically, men's garments should not be too long, i.e. should not reach below the ankle.] Having prayed for Allah's protection from Satan, the outcast, the King prayed for the Bedouin. Then, he said to those present, "I wish you were all like this man." Speaking to the Bedouin, the King said, "Can you recite (the Qur'an)?"

"Yes," said the Bedouin. The King asked him, "Will you recite some to us?". The Bedouine recited Al-Faatihah (the opening chapter of the Qur'an). The King said, "Thanks be to Allah. You know the chapter necessary for performing prayer." The fact of the case was that the King's garment was not long. The Bedouin saw it was wide, and therefore thought it was too long.⁽¹²⁵⁾ This incident shows King Abdul-Aziz' forbearance and intuition. He did not rebuff the Bedouin's statement, but prayed for him. He intuitively realized the Bedouin's level of education, as the dialogue revealed.

Once King Abdul-Aziz was on his way to Shaqraa' when a Bedouin came running after his procession, trying to catch up with it. He was shouting, "O Abdul-Aziz! Stop! I am a poor man. I have been wronged. Do not abandon me!" The King stopped his camel and looked down to listen to what the man had to say. The man was not apparently pleased with the King up on the camel while he was down. He said, "O Abdul-Aziz, fear Allah! Pride belongs to none but Allah - glory be to him. You are weak like me. Do not look at me from the top of your camel. This is not permissible. Have humility. Allah gave you victory yesterday, so you should show a bit of gratitude to Him." Hearing these words, the King dismounted, shook the man's hand, saying, "Welcome brother. It is good what you have told me to do. What is your name?" The man said, "Motlaq." "What tribe do you belong to?" asked the King. The man said, "I am one of the *ikhwaan* that fought with you yesterday." The King asked, "What is your problem?" the man said, "The emir of Al-Dawaadmi has allocated for his own camels the best parts of the Muslims' common land, thus denying access to others. My camel went into the land, the emir confiscated it, and marked it as his. I told him to fear

Allah, but he dismissed me." The King patted the Bedouin's shoulder to pacify him. The King wrote to the emir of Al-Dawaadmi ordering him to return the camel to the man and to give him a camel as punishment for the injustice committed. He also warned the emir not to commit such injustices in the future. The King handed the letter to Motlaq, rode his camel and resumed his journey.⁽¹²⁶⁾ However, the man returned running and calling on the King to stop again. The King stopped and said, "What is it again Motlaq? Haven't you finished your business? May Allah guide you!" Motlaq said, "Your letter is not stamped." "But the emir of Al-Dawaadmi knows my handwriting," said the King. The man was not satisfied till the letter was stamped; then, expressing gratitude, he prayed for the King.⁽¹²⁷⁾ The King's responses in this situation reflected his humility, patience and justice. They were typical of his conduct. People would call him by his first name with no titles, and he would listen when told to fear Allah.

As mentioned in the literature on the unification of the Kingdom, the King was not keen on war. He would not resort to it unless there was no other choice. He would try all peaceful means possible first. His policy was to avoid bloodshed by all possible means. He would attempt peaceful settlements by providing the opportunity for unity without conflict. He would typically write to chiefs of targeted regions, "It must be well known to you and to all - and Allah knows it - we are interested in nothing but comfort⁽¹²⁸⁾ for all and the avoidance of shedding Muslim blood."⁽¹²⁹⁾

The King's deliberateness and forbearance were put to the test when some of his *ikhwaan* men rebelled against him. The test

was on two issues, one when they rejected modern inventions as⁽¹³⁰⁾ (something new that is alien to pure Islam), and the other when they insisted on fighting. In this regard, the King did his utmost to persuade them to see sense. He had to speak with them first. Then, he sent them the messages and *fatwas* from the *ulama* regarding the Shari'ah demand for obedience to the ruler of Muslims and regarding some of the issues they raised. He also pointed out the possible dangers resulting from their disobedience to him, particularly as they had been amongst his most faithful men. In fact, the King sent to the rebels some grand *ulama* such as Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mohammad Ibn Sulaim⁽¹³¹⁾ and Sheikh Omar Ibn Mohammad Ibn Sulaim⁽¹³²⁾, two great sheikhs of Al-Qasseem. The Sheikhs had to point out to the rebels the Shari'ah view on the disputed issues. Their aim was to persuade them to see the soundness of the Shari'ah view so that the use of force could be avoided. Unfortunately, the *ikhwaan* rebels did not heed the *ulama's* advice, yet the King kept seeking peaceful settlements for the disputes, by means of dialogue, endurance and patience.⁽¹³³⁾

When all attempts to reach a peaceful settlement failed, the King had to move from Riyadh to Al-Qasseem. War seemed inevitable, but the King was still for peace, and so, he suggested having arbiters to mediate between the two camps. Some *ulama* were chosen for the mediation task. Amongst them were Sheikh Abdullah Al-Anqari⁽¹³⁴⁾ and Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Al-Shatri.⁽¹³⁵⁾ A tent was erected between the two camps for the mediators. Unfortunately, the Ikhwaan rebels did not agree on mediation and refused to meet the Sheikhs and King Abdul-Aziz. However, Faisal Al-Duweish himself went to the King, and both of them agreed that each side would return to

its original position and seek an end to the dispute. When the King saw no fulfillment of this agreement, he sent Saud Ibn Ghareer to Faisal Al-Duweish to enquire about the state of their agreement, but the rebels started firing at Saud. At this point, King Abdul-Aziz declared that they had no choice but to fight. The fight ended in the defeat of the rebels, some of whom were killed and others fled. Thus, it was only after having patiently exhausted all available avenues for a peaceful settlement that King Abdul-Aziz had to use force.⁽¹³⁶⁾

However, as typical of King Abdul-Aziz, he gave the rebels a fresh opportunity to return to the unified Kingdom, declaring a general amnesty for all. This was on 1935 AD.⁽¹³⁷⁾ First, he did his utmost with great patience in order to avoid bloodshed and reach a peaceful settlement. Then, forced into a fight which he won, he pardoned all. He sought peace from a strong position, and he gave amnesty from a strong position, too. Such noble conduct is indicative of confident, genuine, caring and forgiving leadership.

What has been written about King Abdul-Aziz' life teems with examples of his deliberateness, forbearance and patience. These were leadership qualities necessary for guiding his efforts towards the unification of the country. Further illustrations of these noble traits are evident in the King's treatment of the Al-Rasheeds, Ibn 'Aedh⁽¹³⁸⁾ and Ibn Dhab'aan, a Buraidah ruler supporting the Al-Rasheeds. They were also evident in the siege of Jeddah; the King exercised great patience and restraint in order to avoid bloodshed and loss of life on both sides.⁽¹³⁹⁾ He spared no effort to make Al-Shareef Hussein surrender peacefully often saying, "I haven't spared any effort to have a settlement

between us and Al-Hijaaz in the best possible way, but the more closely I went towards Al-Hussein, the farther he moved away."⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

Let us see what the King did with Ibn 'Aedh who had been appointed ruler of Asseer by the Ottomans. In 1919 AD, a delegation of tribal chiefs from Asseer arrived in Riyadh to complain to King Abdul-Aziz of 'Aedh's injustices. The King agreed to mediate between them and Ibn 'Aedh, and so sent an envoy to Asseer. Considering mediation to be interference in his internal affairs, Ibn 'Aedh refused to discuss the matter with the King's envoy. In fact, he persecuted the tribal chiefs more. In response to such injustices, the King had to send an army headed by Prince Abdul-Aziz Ibn Musaaed Ibn Jalawi⁽¹⁴¹⁾ to Asseer towards the end of 1920 AD. First Ibn Jalawi sent a message to Ibn 'Aedh asking him to confirm his allegiance to King Abdul-Aziz, but the former replied by sending a cartridge of bullets. It was clearly aggression. Ibn Jalawi marched into the Hajlah Valley,⁽¹⁴²⁾ where he defeated Ibn 'Aedh, who withdrew to Abha and fortified its defenses. The Saudi army marched into Abha, occupying it without facing any resistance; Ibn 'Aedh surrendered and was treated well by Ibn Jalawi, who sent him and members of his family to Riyadh. There, the King gave him a good reception and was generous to him. In fact, the King offered to appoint him emir of Asseer, but Ibn 'Aedh refused. However, the King let him return to Asseer. There, Ibn Jalawi appointed Fahd Al-Oqaili emir of Abha.

Unrepentant, Ibn 'Aedh rebelled again and besieged Abha, which fell to him in the end. Fahd Al-Oqaili⁽¹⁴³⁾ was taken prisoner, and Ibn 'Aedh was in charge once more. Despite

Asseer's relative remoteness from Riyadh, King Abdul-Aziz had to react quickly. He sent an army headed by his son Prince Faisal, who brought order back to Asseer. Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ was appointed emir of Abha, and Ibn 'Aedh was once more taken prisoner and sent back with members of his family to Riyadh. Once again, the King treated Ibn 'Aedh with kindness and generosity. He gave his prisoner a good reception and pardoned him too.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Thus, the case of Ibn 'Aedh reflects King Abdul-Aziz' unique behavior. His repeated kindness to an enemy who was twice a rebel reflects innate love for goodness as well as unique tolerance and patience. It also reflects self-confidence.

Concluding this examination of the patience of the King, biographical evidence testifies to the King's unique patience, coupled with tolerance, forbearance and deliberateness. He was patient with all, friends and foes. Allah blessed him with those traits, and it is He that rewards those who practice these virtues. May Allah reward King Abdul-Aziz well.

2.2.9 Forgiveness

Forgiveness has two levels. At a normal level, the offender is spared punishment, whereas at a higher level, he is spared rebuke and blame as well.⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ The quality of forgiveness is highly valued in Islam. The Qur'an is full of statements calling for forgiveness and promising forgivers great rewards. For example, the Qur'an says, "The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then lo! Your sworn enemy will become your bosom friend."⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ It also says, "Keep to forgiveness (O Muhammad), and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant."⁽¹⁴⁸⁾

King Abdul-Aziz was considered to be a great practitioner of forgiveness. It was a source of pleasure for him to forgive his enemies, particularly whenever he had the upper hand. This is considered the best of all. The King's love for forgiveness is attributed to his dedication to the Qur'an and the Sunnah in belief and practice. In this regard, he would say to his captured enemies, "Promise me to be faithful to Allah and to work for the happiness of Muslims, not for my own."⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ He also said on one occasion, "When Allah blessed us with this Islamic victory to which we had looked forward, I declared a general amnesty for all political offences. As for other crimes, I referred them to the Shari'ah judiciary to decide whether pardon was permissible." This statement demonstrates how the King distinguished between political offences directed at him personally and the offences that needed to be investigated by Shari'ah courts. In other words, the King favored forgiveness whenever possible.⁽¹⁵⁰⁾

Underlying his love of forgiveness is his belief in its benefits in terms of the elimination of hatred and the promotion of love. In this regard, the King went beyond forgiving personal offences. He said, "One may deceive us using a religious argument, but one will be accountable to Allah, Who is well aware of everything."⁽¹⁵¹⁾ This attitude reflects Allah's command in this verse, "Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then lo! Your sworn enemy will become your bosom friend."⁽¹⁵²⁾ It is also consistent with the Prophet's Sunnah in relation to the ideal of forgiveness. The following are some examples that illustrate the King's belief in and practice of forgiveness:

- When the King recaptured Riyadh in 1902 AD, he declared

amnesty for all the Ibn Rasheed men that remained in Riyadh. The men were allowed to leave for Hael. He also pardoned Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Dhab'aan and the emir of Buraidah, and let them leave Buraidah after it fell to King Abdul-Aziz in 1322 H.⁽¹⁵³⁾

- Despite the hostilities between the Al-Saud and the Al-Rasheed, the King treated the Al-Rasheed family and their followers generously when their capital Hael fell to him after a long siege. Hael had been under siege for a long time when emir Mohammad Ibn Talaal, the last Al-Rasheed emir, deputized one of his men, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem, to negotiate surrender with the King in return for pardon for the Al-Rasheed family, followers and companions. The King accepted, and they were pardoned, given great palaces in Riyadh and allocated substantial income. In addition, the King got married to one of the Al-Rasheed ladies. He also gave special treatment to Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem, the peace negotiator, and made him one of his close advisors.⁽¹⁵⁴⁾
- The Al-Idrees case is testimony to King Abdul-Aziz' forgiveness and generosity. Mohammad Ibn Ali Al-Idreesi found himself between two potential enemies: Al-Shareef Hussein in the north and Al-Imam Yahya in the south. He was not a match for the two neighbors. So, he sought help from King Abdul-Aziz - the then Sultan of Najd and its Adjuncts - in order to secure his rule and region. The King's response was positive. When Mohammad Al-Idreesi died, his son Ali succeeded him, but he was too weak to control the region, which fell into chaos. In these circumstances, Al-Imam Yahya annexed Al-Hudaidah and marched onto the coast further north till he reached Meedi. The result was a

rebellion against Ali Ibn Mohammad, who was ousted and replaced by his uncle Al-Hassan. King Abdul-Aziz gave asylum to Ali, who stayed in Makkah.⁽¹⁵⁵⁾

- Al-Hassan had to negotiate with various parties at one time, e.g. with the Italians, the British and with King Abdul-Aziz. He managed to sign a treaty with King Abdul-Aziz in 1926 AD. It was called the Makkah Treaty, according to which the Idreesi territories were put under the protection of King Abdul-Aziz, who became in charge of foreign affairs, whereas Al-Hassan was to be in charge of internal affairs. Al-Hassan was so unable to assume his tasks that the King had to send a deputy to help him.⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ Also, in 1926 AD, Al-Hassan sent a delegation to Taef in order to lay the political rules for running the region. The King accepted the suggestions of Al-Hassan's men.⁽¹⁵⁷⁾
- However, once unification was achieved, marking the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the administration of the territories under Al-Hassan had to be reconsidered. Al-Hassan, incited by the Ahraar (liberal) Party in Al-Hijaaz, rebelled against the King. In response to both rebellions, the King had to send an army which crushed the Hijaaz rebellion and put an end to the rule of the Idreesi family, who fled to Yemen. King Abdul-Aziz demanded their deportation as a condition for peace with Al-Imam Yahya of Yemen after the end of the war between Yemen and Saudi Arabia in 1934 AD.⁽¹⁵⁸⁾
- Al-Imam Yahya had to agree to the deportation. In response, the King promised to pardon all of them. To alleviate the Imam's fears regarding the reaction of some of the emirs in Yemen, the King reiterated how he always kept

his word even with his worst enemies. The Idreesis were handed over to Prince Faisal in Al-Hudaidah on 22/2/1353 H. Though initially dejected, they were overwhelmed by Prince Faisal's generous reception. In recognition of the Prince's kindness, Al-Hassan Al-Idreesi sent the following telegram: "To his majesty King Abdul-Aziz the great - may Allah grant him support. We have been overwhelmed by the kindness and care of His Highness your son during our travel and stay. We reached Al-Hudaidah at ten o'clock today. We appreciate your forbearance and generosity. May peace be unto you."

- Despite Al-Hassan's rebellion, the King sent him the following comforting reply: "To Brother Al-Sayyid Al-Hassan Al-Idressi - in Al-Hudaidah. Thank God for your safe arrival. As you are well aware - may Allah bless you - in Allah's knowledge, those things (reference to the rebellion) were bound to happen, but they were incited by your enemies. As for us, we care for you, as you see now and will see in the future. Be assured that our feelings towards you have not changed, and you will see nothing but what pleases you on all occasions, by Allah's Grace. Your welfare and ours are one. May Allah grant you success. Signed: Abdul-Aziz."

Also, in 1934 AD, Abdul-Wahaab Al-Idreesi was handed over to Prince Faisal in Al-Hudaidah, who decided to send him to Makkah. At that time, Abdul-Wahaab Al-Idreesi sent King Abdul-Aziz the following message:

"Your majesty our father King Abdul-Aziz the great. We have arrived in Al-Hudaidah safely. We were generously received

by his highness your great son. He gave us the best reception. May Allah - glorified be He - make you victorious over your enemies. May He keep your fatherly kindness and mercy extended to us. We hope you will forgive us for what we did in the past. May you remain guided to all good. Signed: Your son Abdul-Wahaab Ibn Mohammad Al-Idreesi."

To this letter the King sent a reply which demonstrated the forgiveness, the faithfulness to keeping promises and the concern for old friends which was typical of him. The message read as follows: "Praise be to Allah for your safe arrival. You have mentioned our son's generosity to you. It is our duty towards you and it is your right. You have also asked for forgiveness for what you did unto us in the past - may Allah bless you. It is not we you wronged. You wronged yourself. In fact, we feel sorry for what happened. We would like to make three things clear. Firstly, we sympathize with every Arab. Secondly, we will never forget the friendship we had with your father, Mohamed, even if none were left of your family save one woman. Thirdly, if you were to treat us badly, but you came to our place and dwelling, we would forgive and forget, and you would see nothing from us except hospitality sooner or later, God willing. Signed: Abdul-Aziz. Dated: 1934 AD."⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

Let us consider some more incidents reflecting King Abdul-Aziz' forgiveness.

- An Ikhwaan rebel was captured and brought to the King. His name was Taami Al-Quraifah, a fighter from the Mutair tribe. He used to be the emir of the Mubaayidh Hijrah, one of the Ikhwaan Hajar. The King said to him, "Haven't I been generous to you, and haven't I given you special treatment?!"

He rebuked Taami strongly, but Taami listened without uttering a word. "However, for Allah's sake, I do not want to be unfair to the man. He has two good qualities; he is generous and brave," said the King, who asked the man, "What do you say to this?" The man said, "O, Abdul-Aziz, I have nothing to say, except that I am guilty of many things, your readiness to forgive is greater than my sins, and your justice is immense. May you enjoy a long life - you have said that I have two good qualities, being generous and being brave. This is an honor I do not deserve. In Najd, if people want to condemn someone, they deny his possession of the two qualities. Yet, you have said I possess both of them. Keep me as one of your men." Looking at him, the King said, "I forgive you."⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Ever after, Taami remained one of the King's most loyal men. Thus, by intelligently exercising forgiveness, the King was able to reform a rebel and transform him into a loyal individual, by the Grace of Allah. He was not interested in punishment, but in saving his men and helping them to improve. This is the vision of true and caring leadership.

- In another incident, King Abdul-Aziz sent a force headed by Fahd Ibn Abdullah Ibn Jalawi to fight Dhaidaan Ibn Hithleen⁽¹⁶¹⁾ and the Ojmaans. Dhaidaan opted for peace despite his followers' objection. Dhaidaan went to Fahd for negotiations, but Fahd took him as a hostage in order to check if he genuinely wanted peace. He suspected Dhaidaan was there on a spying mission. Fahd's men were instructed to kill Dhaidaan if his people tried to free him from prison. Unfortunately, a woman from the Ojman incited Dhaidaan's men to free their leader. So, Fahd and his men were attacked and killed, but Dhaidaan was killed too as the guards had been

ordered to do that if they were attacked. However, when King Abdul-Aziz captured the Ojmaans, no harm was done to them.⁽¹⁶²⁾

- Similarly, some of Faisal Al-Duwaish's followers rebelled against the King, rejecting peace and offers of pardon and opting for military confrontation. This took place, and the rebellion was crushed. Some of the defeated rebels fled the country. Such were the hardships they had to go through that they realized that the wrath of King Abdul-Aziz was better than the kindness of outsiders. So, they decided to return to the King, yesterday's foe. They were welcomed back and were well treated and had a good night's sleep. In the morning, they had to appear before the King. The King reprimanded them for what they did. They were blood-thirsty transgressors, and they killed a lot of Muslims. He asked them if it would be injustice or betrayal on his part if he were to execute them all. He also asked if there was a safety pledge between him and them, and why they went back to him.

One of the prisoners asked for permission to speak. He said, "O Abdul-Aziz, indeed there is no pledge between us. If you were to execute us, it would not be unjust. However, if you forgive us, it will not be alien to your noble character. It is our trust in your nobility that motivated us to come to you. We cannot deny that we have wronged you a lot, behaved badly and disturbed security. Despite the gravity of our guilt, we are seeking your pardon, which will be more punishing than the sword. We are honest and will remain loyal to you. We will appreciate your pardon by the Grace of Allah. So, pardon us, but do not reprimand us, for we cannot bear it." Having listened to the plea, the King reflected for a while, as if

recollecting these verses by Abu Al-Tayyib Al- Mutanabbi:

"Nothing is so killing for the free as pardon,
Greater it is with the free who kindness value."⁽¹⁶³⁾

The King's reply can be reconstructed as follows: "May Allah suffice me in your case. By Allah, you are like my sons. If I were to cut off ties with my relatives amongst you - yet you are my right hand - how can I confront life's calamities? You are my sons, and I pardon you." Pointing towards his men, the King said, "These are your brothers and cousins. They are amongst the best of my people. They have sacrificed a lot of lives, blood and sweat for the sake of this country. Their past atones for their present. I do not want to hear any of you say: We are Abdul-Aziz' supporters and his men, but the others are his enemies and adversaries. I owe them what I owe you."⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ What a big heart King Abdul-Aziz had! It was always ready to forgive and forget, thus turning foes into loyal supporters.

- The case of Rasheed Al-Nasser Ibn Laila⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ is further illustration of how forgiving and accommodating King Abdul-Aziz was. Ibn Laila was fully trusted by Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mit'ib Ibn Rasheed. So absolute was Ibn Al-Rasheed's trust in Rasheed Ibn Laila that the former gave the latter several books of blank checks in preparation for negotiating on his behalf with the Ottoman Sultan. When the Turks and the Germans were allies during World War I, it was Ibn Laila that first introduced modern German-made weapons into the Arabian Peninsula. The weapons he brought were known in Najd as the Ibn Laila weapons. Having stayed seven years in Turkey, Ibn Laila wanted to return, but King Abdul-Aziz was in charge. Ibn laila wrote to the King asking for his permission

to visit his own family in Hael. The King gave him permission. In fact, the King gave him a good reception, and appointed him to the Shura council, and later his representative in Damascus, where he stayed till he died.⁽¹⁶⁶⁾

- When Mijarri Al-Oteibi disturbed law and order, one security unit sent a force to arrest him, but he challenged the force, threatening them with guns. Thus, he doubled his guilt. On hearing of Mijarri's behavior, the King got very angry, and he sent a bigger force that arrested Mijarri and his son. He had to appear before the King. There, Mijarri confessed, then he said, "My guilt is too obvious to deny. It makes me tongue-tied. The crime is known and there is no excuse. Nothing is left for me except either your pardon or your punishment." The King's pardon superceded his punishment, and Mijarri was pardoned.⁽¹⁶⁷⁾

- As seen from King Abdul-Aziz' practice of forgiveness, his pardon was normally followed by hospitality and charity. Such was his noble character to which there were plenty of testimonies. Let us see how the King treated Sheikh Mishall Al-Timyaat Al-Shamri.⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Mishall left the Kingdom for Iraq, seeking asylum. According to the treaties between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, respective governments were to deport escapees to either country. So, the King demanded the Iraqi government to deport Mishall. The initial delay of the Iraqi response made Mishall feel he was safe and secure. So, he wrote to the King explaining why he had to seek asylum. In fact, he suggested that he did not regret his move. This made King Abdul-Aziz insist on his deportation. When brought before the King, Mishall asked for the King's pardon. The King granted him pardon, gave him presents and arranged for him to have a

regular income, Such generosity supplementing pardon captured the heart and the mind of Sheikh Mishall.⁽¹⁶⁹⁾

- Having captured the Buraidah Palace, King Abdul-Aziz pardoned all its guards. There, he said, "God willing, we will capture the Barzaan Palace in Hael. "In fetters," said one of the pardoned guards. His name was Mubaarak Al-Shamraan. Though said in a low voice, the comment was heard by the King, who ignored it completely. Months later, the King recaptured Hael. Entering the Barzaan Palace, he said, "O brother Shamraan, here we are, entering the Barzaan Palace without fetters!" This incident shows the exercise of forgiveness, while ignoring insults. He could have punished the freshly pardoned guard. He delayed his response till his prediction materialized. It was a confident, noble response, bearing no grudge against the guard who had expressed his thought or wish that the King be defeated and taken prisoner to the Barzaan Palace. This is typical leadership conduct manifesting forbearance, tolerance and forgiveness combined.⁽¹⁷⁰⁾

King Abdul-Aziz was well aware that a genuine leader should rise above envy and resentment, even towards enemies. Any time a foe put his hand out for peace, allegiance or fraternity, the King would hasten to shake it. He would never reject such a hand. Arrogance had no place in character. This simple episode sums up the outcome of his relentless efforts towards achieving integrity of territory, community and character. Once, sitting among his loyal and close friends, the King had a look to his right and another to his left, then smiled. He asked them: why has none of you asked me why I smiled. Awaiting no answer, he proceeded to tell them, "The reason why I smiled was that I looked at you one by one. There is not one

of you with whose family I have not had a dispute and, in some cases, this has involved physical force. Yet, there is nothing in my heart for you but love. You are like my grateful sons and faithful brothers. It is love that runs in our blood. As for trivialities and feuds, they are all bound to vanish."⁽¹⁷¹⁾

May Allah have mercy on King Abdul-Aziz. Not only did he exercise forgiveness, but he also coupled it with kindness and generosity.

2.2.10 Self-Esteem and Gallantry

Self-esteem refers to one's appreciation of and trust in one's strengths. A person with high self-esteem does not accept low aspirations or means. Gallantry refers to commitment to great deeds that deserve appreciation and praise.

Literature on King Abdul-Aziz reveals that he possessed many character traits that embodied self-esteem and gallantry. Without these, worldly temptations would have got hold of him, eliminating piety, righteousness and religiosity as well as the respect and reverence his subjects had for him. Subjects normally look up to their leaders as role models. If they find their leaders trustworthy, they appreciate their leadership and open their hearts to them and become ready to make sacrifices.⁽¹⁷²⁾ In the case of King Abdul-Aziz, his subjects appreciated his humility and self-denial. He led a simple life like his subjects. It was his disinterest in worldly gains and interest in rewards from Allah that secured his success in doing good for all.

Historical evidence shows the King's great self-esteem and gallantry. For instance, his behavior as a young lad at the

Bahrain court of Sheikh Eesa Ibn Ali Ibn Khaleefah reflected self-denial and dignified initiative at an early age. It was customary for Sheikh Eesa to sit in the court's central place, while his family emirs sat to his right, and the elders of Bani Haajar⁽¹⁷³⁾ to his left, without any particular order. One day, Raakaan Ibn Hithleen, the Ojmaan chief, arrived at the court. Having greeted Sheikh Eesa, Raakaan stood there, unsure of what to do. Young Abdul-Aziz, who was sitting to the right of Sheikh Eesa, stood up, asking Raakaan to take his place. Pleased at young Abdul-Aziz' initiative, Sheikh Eesa prayed for him and praised his behavior as typical of Arab noble traditions.⁽¹⁷⁴⁾

Later, when King Abdul-Aziz had his own court, he devised a system whereby members of his own family had their own place, while the seats to his right and left were allocated to dignitaries in order of age. Apparently, he had not forgotten Raakaan's embarrassment, and so, had to plan to avoid a repeat. This reflected his attention to the dignified reception of family and guests and his concern for the good image of the royal court.

Al-Zarkali mentions a relevant incident related by Sheikh Mohammad Suruur Al-Subbaan.⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ "One day, the King left Jeddah for Makkah. When he arrived at his palace in Makkah, no wheel-chair was available. Yet, he got off his car and had to walk. It was a slow walk, and he was followed by several guests from Jeddah. I was standing on the side of the way, and I had a smile on my face. He asked me: Why are you smiling? I answered: Because I am pleased. He asked: What for? I answered: Because I can see you walk, and your people can see that too, and they can see you are well - praise be to Allah. The King looked pleased. He took my hand,

saying: sit with me. He invited all the Jeddah guests to have dinner. I was still beside him when he told me: I have thought of what it would be like if the wheel chair was not there. It would not be appropriate to be carried by others, would it? What should I do then? So, today, I had to walk, and it was too slow as you saw, but I had to endure pain."⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ Had he wanted, he would have been carried on the necks of men, who would have been pleased to do it. His self-respect made him endure the painful walk, yet he could talk about it to an associate of his. Compare this to his humility when kneeling and lowering his shoulder for his father to step on it to ride the horse. What humility in strength! And what dignity in old age!

Al-Zarkali relates another incident when the King had to address a number of tribal chiefs during the period of internal feuds. As quoted by Al-Zarkali, the King said to them, "None but Allah has bestowed on me this dominion. There is hardly any of you whose father or grandfather I did not fight, but I have never betrayed any of you. I hereby offer goodness to you, and peace and security too, and in return, I expect you to give your pledge to me. If you did not honor your pledge, may Allah help me against you."⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ These words to tribal chiefs expressed sincerity, self-confidence and, above all, faith in Allah as the sole provider, thus negating any alleged arrogance. In fact, his trust in Allah is said to be the source of King Abdul-Aziz' successes.

2.2.11 Faithfulness

Faithfulness involves fulfillment or honoring pledges and promises.⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ It entails an element of gratitude. It is the opposite of betrayal, disloyalty and deception. Islam considers

it a worthy quality, and it calls on Muslims to possess it, while condemning betrayal and deception. Allah says, "(34)... [And] keep the covenant. Lo! Of the covenant it will be asked."⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ Praising Prophet Ismael (Ishmael), Allah says, "(54) And make mention in the Scripture of Ishmael. Lo! He was a keeper of his promise, and he was a messenger (of Allah) a Prophet."⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ Even in the pre-Islamic era, there was in Arabia a tradition of honoring words and fulfilling pledges.⁽¹⁸¹⁾ Let us have a quick look at some of the situations that demonstrate King Abdul-Aziz' typical quality of honoring promises and pledges.

- As a result of the Al-Ruwalah tribe's⁽¹⁸²⁾ conquest of Al-Jawf town, Saud Ibn Rasheed and his forces had to leave Hael for the rescue of Al-Jawf, but he was besieged there. King Abdul-Aziz was advised to take the opportunity to attack Hael, thus finishing off Ibn Rasheed. Dismayed at the advice, the King answered, "Were anyone to attack Hael while Ibn Rasheed is in his present predicament, I would defend it myself. I am not the sort of person that stabs in the back."⁽¹⁸³⁾

- According to another version of this episode, the King said, "Between me and Ibn Rasheed is Allah's pledge. So, I cannot nullify the pledge I have taken unless there are good excuses, accepted by reason, faith, morals and conscience. Even if there were no pledge between us, my faith, my character and my conscience would not allow me to invade a place where there are none but women and children."

The answers are the words of a man of honor, who considers opportunism to be mean. May Allah reward him and grant him mercy for what he believed in and practiced. Indeed, lofty aims demand lofty means.⁽¹⁸⁴⁾

- The story of Abdul-Raheem Al-Qinaawi depicts a generous example of gratitude and faithfulness. During Al-Shareef Hussein's rule of Al-Hijaaz, the King's brother Prince Mohammad,⁽¹⁸⁵⁾ with a group of people from Najd, planned to go on pilgrimage to Makkah in 1916 AD. When they reached the borders of Al-Hijaaz, Al-Shareef Hussein prevented them from entering armed. So, they had to leave some of the men and belongings behind. In Al-Hijaaz, they put on the pilgrimage clothes, starting the hajj rites. Passing by a village called Al-Zeemah, they met its chief, Sheikh Abdul-Raheem Al-Qinaawi. The Sheikh looked after Prince Mohammad and his group, providing them with the food and camels they needed. The Sheikh helped them on their return from hajj as well. Though paid for, the Sheikh's services and supplies were very much appreciated, particularly as Al-Shareef Hussein was hostile to them. Having gained control of Al-Haijaaz, King Abdul-Aziz passed by Al-Zeemah on his way to Najd. There, Sheikh Qinaawi offered the King his services as he did to Prince Mohammad before. Hearing of how good the Sheikh was to the Najd pilgrims at the times of hostilities, the King thanked the Sheikh for his previous services and accepted his offer. The King rewarded the Sheikh with the sum of SR 25,000. Every time the King passed by Al-Zeemah, Sheikh Qinaawi provided the usual services for which he was rewarded that sum of money. When the King decided to use the plane instead of the car for Hajj purposes, Sheikh Qinaawi said to him: I hope you will not change your custom regarding me. The King replied: No. Just bring your services here instead. The King ordered the customary amount of money to be paid regularly to the Sheikh, and this went on annually for a long time.⁽¹⁸⁶⁾ The King's response to Sheikh

Qinaawi's services showed the former's appreciation and gratitude, particularly as they were offered at hard times. It also showed the King's generosity and faithfulness to those who deserved it.

- A similar case is that of Ismaaeel Ibn Mubaireek, emir of Raabigh. Ismaaeel had a high position with King Abdul-Aziz because of his help to the King. He helped the King have access to the outside world through his port during the wars around Jeddah. It was a token of gratitude and faithfulness on the King's part.⁽¹⁸⁷⁾

- Once, King Abdul-Aziz was on a visit to Kuwait when he learnt of the presence of a teacher who had taught him the Qur'an in his childhood. The King invited him, entertained him and gave him a present of 3,000 rupees.⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ It was a mark of gratitude, faithfulness and recognition of the King's childhood teacher.

- King Abdul-Aziz' response to Sheikh Mubaarak Al-Subaah's request for help was an expression of faithfulness to old friends. The King was busy with the affairs of his new state, when Sheikh Mubaarak asked him for support against an imminent invasion by Sa'doon Pasha, the chief of the Muntafiq tribes in Iraq. The Ottomans incited Sa'doon to attack Kuwait. The King had to answer the call of an old friend and neighbor who had given support to the Al-Saud before. In Kuwait, the King suggested to Sheikh Mubaarak to have a negotiated settlement to the conflict in order to avoid bloodshed. He offered to mediate between Sheikh Mubaarak and Sa'doon Pasha, but Mubaarak refused, sticking to the military option. Thus, the King found himself involved in a war that did not concern him at all, but he had to join as a

gesture of gratitude.⁽¹⁸⁹⁾

- The King's faithfulness to old friends was also evident in the case of King Faarooq of Egypt. When the 1952 Egyptian revolution took place, King Faarooq, was deposed and the "free officers" took over. They were keen to know King Abdul-Aziz' view on the events of the day. On his behalf Prince Faisal declared that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had no say regarding what the "free officers" did in their own country. Egypt was theirs, and they could run their own affairs the way they wanted. As for King Faarooq, had he asked for asylum, King Abdul-Aziz would not have refused, for it would be morally inappropriate to abandon an old friend in trouble.⁽¹⁹⁰⁾

Thus, King Abdul-Aziz' statements and deeds exemplified faithfulness. He expressed his gratitude in word and deed to all those who had served or helped him, especially in his efforts to establish the Kingdom. He rewarded them more generously than expected. How many a person rose high in rank and work as a result of their loyalty to the King at some stage in their life!⁽¹⁹¹⁾ May Allah reward King Abdul-Aziz for his faithfulness, gratitude and kindness to friends and helpers.

In conclusion of this chapter, it can be said that King Abdul-Aziz was blessed with a character that embodied both Islamic and related Arab qualities. These were evident in his statements and practices. By the Grace of Allah, he was able to care for all, collectively and individually, friends and foes, family and subjects, young and old, foreign and local, etc. In dealing with minor or major issues at all these levels, King Abdul-Aziz had been fully aware of his basic mission, namely the promotion of Islam. His approach was the epitome of

wisdom. He sought to modernize the Kingdom, but within an Islamic framework. Character analysts attribute his successes to his faith in and fear of Allah. This is obviously the key to his character. It entails the host of traits or qualities discussed in this chapter. Indeed, as mentioned in the Qur'an, "... And whosoever keeps his duty to Allah, Allah will appoint a way out for him, (3) And will provide for him from (a quarter) whence he has no expectation. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him...."⁽¹⁹²⁾



Chapter 2 Endnotes

- (1) It is Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor Attaar (1337-1411 H (1919-1991 AD). He was a great Islamic thinker and man of literature. He had numerous publications. He was born in Makkah. He established the Saudi daily *Okaaz*, and he was its editor-in-chief twice. He was awarded the State Prize for Literature in 1405 H. He donated his private library to the Haraam Mosque Library in Makkah in 1408 H.
- Yousof, Mohammad Khair Ramadaan: *Tatimmat ALA'laam Lizzarkali (Al-Zarkali's Who Is Who Continued)*, in Arabic, 2nd edition, Riyadh, Dar Ibn Hazm, 1422 H (2002 AD), pp. 41-44.
- (2) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, p. 686.
- (3) Kanzaan is a mountain near Al-Hufoof.
- Al-Jaasir, Hamad: *The Geographic Dictionary of Saudi Arabian Territories*, op cit, Part 2, p. 1055.
- (4) See p. 176 for an explanation of these words.
- (5) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 923-924.
- Al-Reehaani, Ameen: *The Modern History of Najd*, op cit, pp. 225-226.
- (6) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, pp. 694-695.
- (7) Al-Saud, Talaal, Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations from the Life of Abdul-Aziz*, op. cit, pp. 157-159.
- Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *Men and Memories with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 2, p. 69.
- (8) It is Faisal Ibn Sultaan Ibn Naayif Al-Duweish 1299-1349 H (1882-1930 AD). He was one of the Miteir tribal chiefs. He was a companion of King Abdul-Aziz in their youth stage, but he rebelled against the King in 1330 H (1912 AD). He was defeated at Assabalah, near Al-Zulfee, in 1337 H (1929 AD). Faisal had to flee to the Iraqi desert, then to Kuwait. He was eventually brought back to the Kingdom in 1330 H (1948 AD), and he was

imprisoned in Al-Ihsaa'. Seven months later, he died.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 5, p. 166.

Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *Men and Memories with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 2, p. 69.

- (9) It is Faisal Ibn Hashr from Qahtaan. He was one of the best known snipers. He died in 1358 H (1939 AD).

Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, p. 271.

- (10) It is Habbash Ibn Harshaan, from the Shammar tribe and the clan of Abdah, to which Ibn Rasheed belonged. He used to be one of the closest men to Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mit'ib Ibn Rasheed, who used to entrust him with serious military matters. Then, Habbash changed sides, joining King Abdul-Aziz in 1333 H (1915 AD), and he became the King's faithful guard during the Jiraab Battle. This incident demonstrated how King Abdul-Aziz was blessed with the ability to win the hearts of adversaries, turning them into faithful allies.

Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, 2nd edition, 1400 H (1980 AD), Part 1, pp. 133-142.

- (11) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 3, p. 924.

Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, 2nd edition, 1400 H (1980 AD), Part 1, pp. 133-142.

- (12) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, p. 683.

- (13) Al-Keelaani, Kamaal: *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud and Contemporary Islamic Reform*, op cit, p. 49.

- (14) Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *I Was with Abdul-Aziz*, the National Guard Press, 1408 H (1988 AD), Vol.1, pp. 72 and 176.

- (15) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op cit, Part 2, p. 10.

- (16) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohamed: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 25.

- (17) Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *I Was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol.1, p. 291.

- (18) Al-Simaari, Fahd Ibn Abdullah: *The Private Library of King Abdul Aziz*

- Al-Saud*, Darat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1417 H, pp. 10-11.
- Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work: A Historical Documentary Study*, Riyadh, the Arab Publisher Press, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 82.
- (19) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op cit, Part 2, p. 66.
- (20) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, Beirut, the Commercial Establishment for Printing and Distribution., 1st edition, 1392 H (1972 AD), pp. 442-443.
- Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *I Was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol.1, p. 305.
- (21) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd edition, Dammam, Al-Mutawwi' Press, 1415 H, p. 314.
- (22) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 85.
- (23) The Arabic noun *almahmal* was associated with a particular tradition during the pilgrimage season. It was a name given to the wooden container that used to carry the Ka'bah draperies and curtains. The container would be covered with embroidered silk. It's bottom part was shaped like the Ka'bah. The shape given to the top part depended on the historical context of the time or the country of origin; for example it was shaped like a pyramid and a tent. *Almahmal* used to be transported by camel in a special caravan amidst celebrations in the country of origin and the holy land. Princes, the *ulama* and the public took part in the celebrations. The departure and the return journeys were emotional events where tears were shed. Muslim's were keen on witnessing the events. The return of the *mahmal* with the old draperies and curtains was eagerly awaited. These were cut into pieces, some of which were put in heritage mosques, and others were given to important figures. Though famous in the past, *almahmal* is hardly known nowadays. *Almahmal* tradition raised controversies among the *ulama* of the time.
- (24) Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 84.
- (25) Ibn Al-Qayyim: *Madaarij Al-Saalikeen*, (in Arabic), investigated by Abdul-Aziz Ibn Nasser Al-Jaleel, Riyadh, Dar Teebah, 1423 H, op cit, Part 3, pp. 113-114..
- (26) Surah 26/ Ayah 215.

- (27) Surah 31/ Ayah 18.
- (28) *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No. 2588.
- (29) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, p. 687.
- (30) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 415.
- (31) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, pp. 692-604.
- (32) Selections from the Royal Speeches, op cit, Part 1, p. 50.
- (33) Thabit, Saeed Ibn Ali: *King Abdul-Aziz' Methods in Building Public Opinion*, op cit, p. 43.
- (34) Shaakir, Fouad: *King Abdul-Aziz: Biography, Not History, Feddah, 1st edition, 1395 H. p. 57.*
- (35) Ibid, pp 51-60.
- (36) Surah 29 / Ayah 67.
- (37) Shaakir, Fouad: *King Abdul-Aziz: Biography, Not History*, op cit, p. 57.
- (38) Ibid, p. 99.
- (39) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, Part 3, pp. 692-694.
- (40) Al-Maidaani, Abdul-Rahman Hassan: *Fundamentals of Islamic Manners*, Part 1, op cit., p. 622.
- (41) Surah 16/ Ayah 90.
- (42) *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 660. & *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No. 1031.
- (43) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 421.
- (44) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 104.
- (45) Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Oweidh Al-Tha'labi: *Security during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz: Development and Effects*, from 1319 to 1373 H (1902-1953 AD), in Arabic, King Fahd Library, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 99.
- (46) Assaa'aati, Hassan: "King Abdul-Aziz' Security Policies in the Kingdom", op cit, p. 1000.
- (47) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, (in Arabic), Daarat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 58.
- (48) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 88.
- (49) Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Oweidh Al-Tha'labi: *State Organizations during*

the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz, op cit, p. 155.

(50) Ibid, p. 160.

(51) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 425-426.

Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Oweidh Al-Tha'labi: *State Organizations during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 60.

(52) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 424.

(53) Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith No.

(54) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 426.

(55) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, p. 701.

(56) Al-Saud, Talaal, Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations from the Life of Abdul-Aziz*, op. cit, pp. 100-101.

(57) It is Saad Ibn Ali Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ateeq Ibn Raashid Ibn Himeidhah. He was born in Al-Hulwah. His father taught him at the early stage. Then, in 1301 H (1884 AD), Saad left for India, where he was taught by Shiekh Natheer Ibn Hussein Al-Dahlawi and other scholars. Also, he was taught in Makkah by Sheikh Shu'aib Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Dukaali Al-Maghribi and other scholars. He succeeded his father as the judge of Al-Aflaaj. King Abdul-Aziz appointed him the judge of the Bedouin areas around Riyadh. He died in Riyadh in 1349 H (1930 AD).

Source:

Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Three Centuries*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 220-227.

(58) Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Oweidh Al-Tha'labi: *State Organizations during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 187.

(59) Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Oweidh Al-Tha'labi: *State Organizations during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 187.

(60) Al-Otaibi, Ibraheem Ibn Oweidh Al-Tha'labi: *State Organizations during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 187.

(61) Al-Saud, Talaal, Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations from the Life of Abdul-Aziz*, op. cit, pp. 101-103.

(62) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A*

Nation in a Man, op cit, p. 69.

(63) Al-Thiniyyaan, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *Humaneness of a King*, op cit, Riyadh, Al-Obeikan Bookshop, 1421 H (2000 AD), pp. 42-44.

(64) Surah 22, Ayah 41.

(65) Al-Jirjaani, Ali Ibn Mohamed Ibn Ali: *Definitions*, investigated by Ibraaheem Al-Ibyaari, 4th edition (in Arabic), Daar Al-Kitaab Al-Arabi, 1418 H (1998 AD), p. 165.

(66) Al-Zubaidi, Mohamed Murtadha Al-Husseini: *Taaaj Al-'Aruus*, op cit, p. 251.

(67) Surah 8, Ayah 15.

(68) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, p. 694.

(69) Al-Hareeq is a village in the upper part of the Na'aam Valley. It has quite a few residents, and it has many palm trees and farms. Its agricultural produce is considered good. It has schools and government services.

Ibn Khamees, Abdullah Ibn Mohammad: *Geographical Dictionary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Al-Yamaamah Dictionary*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 312-316.

(70) Ibid, p. 424.

The words "O! People of Awjaa!" were meant to boost morale, by reminding the defeated men that they were fighting for the Da'wah, championed by Sheikh Mohamed Ibn Abdul-Wahaab and Imam Mohamed Ibn Saud. In fact, the words were originally used by the opponents of the Da'wah to ridicule it. Ironically, the very words were turned into a booster of morale, as the Da'wah advocates were happy to be called "the people of Awjaa" meaning "Diriyyah", the place symbolically associated with the Da'wah.

(71) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 3, p. 922.

(72) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, p. 324.

(73) Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman, et al: *I Was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 1, p. 46.

(74) It is Al-Shareef Khalid Ibn Mansour Ibn Luayy, from the Al-Abaadilah tribe, named after Abdullah Ibn Humuud. He was in charge of Al-Khurmah emirate, in the east of Al-Hijaaz, and so were his predecessors.

He joined Al-Shareef Hussein's rebellion against the Turks during World War I. He was dispatched with Abdullah Ibn Al-Shareef Hussein to besiege the Ottoman's remaining forces still in Taef. There, he was attacked by one of the Otaibah chiefs, but Abdullah Ibn Al-Hussein refused to go to his help. Back in Al-Khurmah, he was so disappointed that he had to contact King Abdul-Aziz, offering allegiance to him. He remained loyal to the King. When the Adaarisah rebelled against King Abdul-Aziz, Ibn Luayy was sent with a force to Sabya. He fell ill in Abha, and he died in 1351 H (1933 AD), at the age of 70.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 2, p. 299.

(75) It is Sultan Ibn Bijaad Ibn Humaid, from the Otaibah tribe. He was a close companion and ally of King Abdul-Aziz. He took part in several battles. He lived in Al-Ghatghat Hjarah. However, he joined the Duwaish rebellion against King Abdul-Aziz in the wake of reforms. King Abdul-Aziz had to send a force to put an end to the rebellion. In the end, Ibn Bijaad was captured, and he died in a Riyadh prison in 1351 H (1932 AD).

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 3, p. 109.

(76) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, p. 729.

(77) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, p. 324.

(78) Al-Jirjaani, Ali Ibn Mohamed Ibn Ali: *Definitions*, op cit, p. 324.

(79) Ibn Al-Qayyim: *Madaarij Al-Saalikeen*, op cit, Part 367, p.358.

(80) Ibid, p. 360.

(81) Jami' Attermidhiy, Hadith No. 3127, Amman, Bait Al-Afkaar Al-Dawliyyah, 1420 H (1999 AD).

(82) Addajjaani, Zaahiyah: *Amongst the Great in History, King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, pp. 26-27.

(83) Al-Afnan, Saad Ibn Khalaf: *Social Reform during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, (in Arabic), Beirut, Al-Ma'rifah Press, 1420 H, pp. 31-32.

(84) Al-Subait, Abdul-Rahman Ibn Subait, *et al: Men and Memoirs with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Volume 2, p. 103.

(85) It is Nouri Ibn Saeed Ibn Saalih Ibn Al-Mullah Taaha, from the Qurrah Ghoori clan in Baghdad. He was a military man and politician. He was born in Baghdad and was brought up in its military schools. He took part

in the Balkan wars. He was involved in the pan Arab movement. He was member of the Secret Pledge Society. He took part in the Hijaz revolution of 1916 AD. He believed in British politics, and continued his public faith in it till his death. He was the Prime Minister of Iraq during the reign of 3 monarchs, Faisal, his son Ghazi and Faisal Ibn Ghazi. In the wake of the 1958 revolution in Iraq, he had to hide, but was caught trying to escape disguised as a woman, and he was executed.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 8, p. 53.

(86) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohamed: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 46-47.

(87) Surah 2, Ayah 274.

(88) Surah 92, Ayahs 8-11.

(89) Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 2312.

(90) Addajjaani, Zaahiyah: *Amongst the Great in History, King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 99.

(91) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 428.

Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, pp. 318-319.

(92) It is Abdullah Ibn Sulaiman Ibn Hamdan 1305-1385 H (1878-1965 AD). He was born in Unaizah, Al-Qasseem. He went to India at a young age and went to school there. He did trading between India and Bahrain and neighboring countries. In 1338 H (1919 AD), he started working for King Abdul-Aziz, as a clerk in the royal court. He became the undersecretary of finance in 1345 H (1926 AD). Then, he became the minister of finance. He quit his ministerial post when King Abdul-Aziz died. He lived in Jeddah till his death, in 1965 AD.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 4, pp. 91-92.

(93) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 3, p. 919.

(94) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, pp. 318-319.

(95) Al-Thiniyyaan, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman, "The Humaneness of a King", op cit, pp. 146-147.

- (96) Ibid, pp. 147-148.
- (97) Al-Juheimi, Nasser Ibn Mohammad: "King Abdul-Aziz in the Arab Press", Riyadh, Daarat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 25, quoted from the magazine *Kul Shai' wad Dunya (Everything and the World)*, issue No. 484, 13/2/1935 AD.
- (98) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 429.
Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 102-103.
- (99) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 432.
- (100)
Ibid, p. 429.
Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 102-103.
- (101) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-Wajeez*, op cit, p. 365
- (102) Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, p. 121.
- (103) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 430.
- (104) "Qawaa'id" is the Arabic plural of "Al-Qaa'ödah". In financial terms during the reign of King Abdul-Aziz, it referred to the annual allowance paid to the each of the Hijar settlers on the royal registry, particularly those enlisted for war.
- (105) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 431.
- (106) Ibid, p. 432.
- (107) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, pp. 319-320.
Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *I Was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 1, p. 395.
- (108) Al-Sabalah battle took place after the general assembly conference was held in 1347 H (1928 AD) to renew allegiance to King Abdul-Aziz. In the conference, waging jihad without the imam's approval was outlawed. However, some violated the law and took the law into their own hands, attacking Iraqi Bedouins in the desert of Kuwait and Al-Zubair. They rebelled against the King, appointing themselves guardians of Shari'h.

Ibn Bijaad killed a number of merchants from Al-Qasseem. He also sent a large force to raid northern territories. On its way, the force attacked a contingent under the command of Abdul-Aziz Ibn Jalawi. In response to such violations and destabilizing activities, King Abdul-Aziz had to march towards Al-Sabalah, near Al-Zulfee, to confront the rebels. Before waging any attacks, the King sought a peaceful end according to Shari'ah, but the rebels refused. The battle was fought, and the rebels were defeated on Ahawwaal 19, 1347 H (March 30, 1929 AD).

Al-Faraj, Khaled: *Al-Khabar wal 'Iyaan (News and Reality)*, op cit, p.505-520.

- (109) It is Ahmad Ibn Jaabir Ibn Mubaarak Al-Subaah (1302-1369 H (1885-1950 AD). He was emir number 10 in the chain of Al-Subaah family ruling Kuwait. He came to the throne when his uncle Saalim Ibn Mubaarak Al-Subaah died, in 1339 H. Oil was discovered during his reign.

Al-Haazimi, Ibraaheem Ibn Abdullah: *Encyclopedia of the Renowned in the Arab and Islamic Worlds in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Riyadh, Daaral-Malik Abdul-Aziz, 1419 H (1999AD), Part 1, pp. 285-286.

- (110) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, p. 320.

- (111) Ibid, p. 433.

- (112) Al-Zamakhshari, J A Ibn Omar: *Assaass Al-Balaaghah (Foundations of Rhetoric)*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, investigated by Mohamed Baasil Oyoon Al-Sood, Beirut, Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah, 1419 H (1998 AD), Part 2, p. 258.

Al-Zubaidi, M. Murtadha Al-Hussaini: *Taaaj Al-Aroos*, op cit, Part 40, p. 51.

- (113) It is 'Iqaab Ibn 'Ijl. He was from Abdah, a branch of the Shammar tribe. He was known for his courage and generosity. He was a trusted advisor to the Al-Rasheed emirs.

Al-'Aani, Khaled Abdul-Mun'im: *Al-Jrabaa and the Renowned among the Shammar Tribe in the Arabian Peninsula*, (in Arabic), Beirut, Al-Dar Al-Arabiyyah for Encyclopedias, 1425 H (2004 AD), p. 255.

- (114) 'Abdah belongs to the Shammar tribe, which goes back to Qahtaan. Its

roots are in Al-Dhayaaghim, and there are Abdahs living in Najd till now, and they are called Shammar Al-Jabal. Some of them are in Syria and some in Iraq.

Ibid, p. 32.

- (115) It is 'Ojail Ibn Abdul-Aziz Al-Yaawir. He was one of the tribal chiefs of Shammar in Iraq. He was appointed by King Faisal of Iraq as Sheikh of the Shammar chiefs in 1922 AD. He was involved in real politics as representative of the Shammars in the foundational assembly. He died of a heart attack in 1940 AD.

Williams, John Fred: *The Arab Tribe of Shammar: Status and Political History*, translated into Arabic by Meer Basri, Beirut, Al-Dar Al-Arabiyyah for Encyclopedias, 1421 H (2000 AD), pp. 243-249.

- (116) Rasheed 'Aali Abdah Al-Keelaani (1309-1385 H) (1896-1965 AD) was the leader of a revolution carrying his name. He was born in Baghdad. He was trained as a lawyer, and he took part in the 1920 revolution in Iraq. He was appointed minister of justice. In 1941 AD, he formed the National Defense Government against the British occupation of Iraq. King Abdul-Aziz gave him refuge and refused to hand him over to the British occupation, for the King did not consider his resistance of occupation as a crime. After the death of King Abdul-Aziz, in 1953 AD, Keelani left for Egypt, then to Baghdad in 1958. Later, he left for Lebanon. He stayed in Beirut, where he died, but his body was returned to Baghdad, where it was buried.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 3, pp. 23-24.

King Abdul-Aziz gave asylum to several prominent individuals who were involved in Arab resistance movements, such as Sheikh Sultan Al-Atrash and his companions, Nabeeh Al-Azamah, Subri Al-Asali, Dr. Mohamad Al-Shawwaaf and Khaled Al-Hakeem.

Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 2, p. 278.

- (117) Al-Saud, Talaal, Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations/ Glimpses from the Life of Abdul-Aziz*, op. cit, pp. 86-90.

Al-Subeit, Abdul-Rahman *et al*: *Men and Memories with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 2, pp. 77-78.

- (118) It is Jameel Ibn Abdul-Qadir Ibn Mirdim Bek. He was a politician and

minister in Damascus. He had been educated in France, and he used to send journalistic dispatches to Damascus from France under the name "From a student in France". He became a special advisor to Faisal Ibn Al-Hussein in Damascus in 1338 H (1919 AD). When the French occupied France, they sentenced him to death, but he escaped to Egypt, and he remained there for 12 years. Then, he returned to Syria, and became minister of finance, but resigned in 1358 H (1939 AD). When the French tried to capture him, he fled to Iraq, but he returned to Syria during the Quatly era, and he was appointed foreign minister. He died in Cairo, but he was buried in Damascus.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 2, p. 138.

(119) Surah 49, Ayah 9.

(120) Al-Zubaidi, M. Murtadha Al-Hussaini: *Taaj Al-Aroos*, op cit, Part 12, pp. 271-272.

(121) Ibn Al-Qayyim: *Madaarij Al-Saalikeen*, op cit, Part 2, p. 424 and Part 3, p. 73.

(122) Surah 3, Ayah 146.

The Qur'an is full of references to the importance of patience, e.g.:

" But if you endure patiently, verily it is better for the patient." [16/126]

"And have patience, (O Muhammad), for lo! Allah loses not the wages of the good." [11/115]

"Seek help in patience and prayer; and truly it is hard save for the humble-minded, ." [2/145]

". The reward of Allah for him who believes and does right is better, and only the steadfast will obtain it" [28/80]

"And verily whoso is patient and forgives, lo! That, verily, is (of) the steadfast heart of things."

[42/43]

(123) Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 18.

(124) Al-Simaari, Ibraaheem Ibn Abdullah: *King Abdul-Aziz, Personality and Leadership*, op cit, pp. 104-105.

(125) Al-Subait, Abdul-Rahman Ibn Subait *et al: I was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 151-153.

(126) This incident also demonstrates the King's justice in action.

- (127) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, (in Arabic), 3rd edition, Beirut, 1998, pp. 220-221.
- (128) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, (in Arabic), 3rd edition, Beirut, 1998, pp. 220-221.
- (129) Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 91-92.
- (130) Please see Chapter 1, section 1.2.2.2, pp. 37-39.
- (131) It is Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Hamad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Saalih Ibn Hamad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Sulaim. He was born in Buraidah in 1284 H (1867 AD). He was taught Qurnic recitation by his father, and his father's cousin Mohammad Ibn Omar Ibn Sulaim. Then, he moved to Riyadh, where he studied with Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdullateef Al-Sheikh Tawheed, Interpretations of the Qurn, Hadith and Jurisprudence and fundamentals of Arabic. Then, he returned to birthplace, where he became a renowned scholar. He was appointed judge of Al-Bukairiyyah, then of Buraidah. He died in 1351 H (1932 AD). King Abdul-Aziz had high regard for him.
- Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Three Centuries*, op cit, Part 4, pp. 461-471.
- (132) It is Sheikh Omar Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Hamad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Saalih Ibn Hamad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Sulaim. He was born in Buraidah in 1299 H (1881 AD). Having mastered Qurnic recitation, he left for Riyadh to be taught by Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdullateef Al-Sheikh. Then, he returned to Buraidah, where he became the imam of Oudah Al-Rdaini mosque. Later, King Abdul-Aziz appointed him judge of Al-Artaawiyyah. In addition, he practiced guidance and preaching. Then, he was appointed imam of a mosque in Buraidah, where he was appointed assistant to his brother Sheikh Abdullah, judge of Buraidah. He fell ill, and died in 1362 H (1943 AD).
- Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Three Centuries*, op cit, Part 4, pp. 265-270..
- (133) It is Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem Ibn Hamad Al-Shatri.

Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of*

Najd in Three Centuries, op cit, Part 5, pp. 329-335.

- (134) It is Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Anqari (1290-1373 H) (1873-1954 AD). He was born in Tharmadaa', Bai Saad, one of Al-Washm villages. Orphaned at the age of 2, he was brought up by his mother and uncles. He was blinded at the age of 7, as a result of smallpox. He was given basic education by Abdullah Ibn Majid and Hamad Ibn Shuil. Then, he was sent to Riyadh to be taught by the Al-Sheikh scholars and others. The, he returned to his birthplace, where he became a mosque imam, preacher and teacher when Hamad Ibn Shuil died. Then, he was appointed judge of Sideir by King Abdul-Aziz after its capture. He worked as judge and teacher in a number of Hajar and villages. Due to old age, he had to retire, and he died in 1373 H (1954 AD).

Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Eight Centuries*, op cit, Part 4, pp. 265-270.

- (135) It is Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem Ibn Hamad Al-Shatri, Abu Habeeb. He was born in Huutat Bani Tameem in 1305 H. He was taught by a number of renowned sheikhs 1 of his time. He was appointed a judge in 1337 H. he did a lot of work for Da'wah and mending relations among people. He died in 1387 H.

Al-Shatri, Mohammad Ibn Nasser Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Nafh Al-Teeb fee Seerat Al-Shekh Abu Habeeb*, (in Arabic), 3rd edition, Riyadh, Dar Al-Habeeb, pp. 21, 24, 33, 71, 72, 169.

- (136) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p 203, and pp. 209-211 and pp. 218-219.

Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 90-93.

- (137) Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 94.

- (138) It is Hassan Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn 'Aaedh. He was the last emir of the Bani 'Aaedh family. The emirate was established by 'Aaedh ibn Mar'i, from the Raidahs, who belonged to Al-Zaid, from Bani Moghaidh, from the 'Asseer tribe. Ibn 'Aaedh ruled 'Asseer with the consent of Shafeeq Kamaali Pasha the Ottoman representative in Abha. He died in 1357 H (1938 AD).

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 2, p. 207.

- (139) Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 90.
- (140) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 329-330.
- (141) It is emir Abdul-Aziz Ibn Musaa'ed Ibn Jalawi. He was King Abdul-Aziz' cousin. He was emir of Qasseem, and later emir of Hael. He had been to Kuwait with the Al-Saud during their stay there earlier.
Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p. 419.
- (142) Hajlah is a valley between Abha and Khamees Mushait.
Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, p. 249.
- (143) Al-Maani', Mohammad: *The Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, pp. 96-99.
- (144) It is Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ibraaheem. He was born in Riyadh 1293 H (1867 AD). In 1343 H (1924 AD), he was appointed as the first emir of Taef. He held a variety of governmental posts. He was transferred to Medinah. Then, he was appointed member of the Assembly of Deputies. He died in Egypt in 1365 H (1946 AD) when on a trip for medical treatment.
Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 337-338.
According to Khaled Al-Faraj, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Ibraaheem succeeded Saad Ibn Ufaisaan after the latter's death. Saad had been appointed by Prince Faisal.
Al-Faraj, Khaled: *Al-Khabar wal 'Iyaan (News and Reality)*, op cit, p. 430.
- (145) Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 53.
- (146) Al-Zubaidi, Mohamed Murtadha Al-Husseini: *Taaaj Al-'Aruus*, op cit, Part 6, p. 540 and Part 39, pp. 67-38.
- (147) Surat 41, Ayah 34.
- (148) Surah 7, Ayah 199.
- (149) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the*

History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, op cit, p. 434.

(150) Al-Simaari, Ibraaheem Ibn Abdullah: *King Abdul-Aziz: Personality and Leadership*, op cit, pp. 96-97.

(151) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 434.

(152) Surat 41, Ayah 34.

(153) Al-Amri, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 85-86.

(154) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 434.

(155) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 434.

(156) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 535 - 536.

(157) Hamza, Fouad, *The Heart of the Arabian Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 365.

(158) Ibid, p. 366.

Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 2, p. 537.

(159) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *Al-Imaam Al-'Aadil (The Just Ruler)*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 113-115.

(160) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p. 220.

(161) It is Dhaidaan Ibn Hizaam Ibn Khaled Ibn Hithleen. He was the leader of the Ojmaans. He sided with Al-Duwish and the Ikhwaan in their rebellion against King Abdul-Aziz. He made several raids against the borders of Iraq and Kuwait. He was killed in the fight against the force commanded by Fahd Ibn Abdullah. His cousin Naayef Ibn Hithleen, nicknamed Abu Kilaab, became the leader of the Ojmaans.

Al-Faraj, Khaled: *Al-Khabar wal 'Iyaan (News and Reality)*, op cit, pp. 521-525..

(162) Al-Faraj, Khaled: *Al-Khabar wal 'Iyaan (News and Reality)*, op cit, pp. 521-525.

Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, p. 726.

- (163) Al-Barquuqi, Abdul-Rahman: Explanation of Al-Mutanabbi's Poetry, op cit, Part 2, p. 11.
- (164) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p. 227-229.
- (165) It is Rasheed Ibn Nasser Ibn Rahseed Ibn Laila (1294-1362 H). He was born in Hael. He was educated in the *kataateeb*. He learned Qurnic recitation at an early age. He learned 300 Hadiths of Sahih Al-Bukhari. Ibn Rasheed sent him to Istanbul as his representative in the Assembly of Delegations in Turkey. He stayed there for a number of years, and he was awarded the title of Pasha by the Ottomans. He used to supply arms to the Arabian Peninsula. The arms he supplied were known as "the arms of Ibn Laila". After the unification of the Kingdom, he was welcomed by King Abdul-Aziz. The King appointed him member of the Shura Council from 1349 to 1351H. Then, he was appointed the King's consul and representative in Damascus - that was before the establishment of the Saudi embassy there in 1352 H. He continued in his post in Damascus till his death in 1362 H. He was buried in Al-Baab Al-Sagheer Macabre.
Al-Qash'ami, Mohammad: "Rasheed Ibn Laila, the King Abdul-Aziz representative in Damascus", *The Arab Magazine, Issue No. 304, Year 27, Jamaada I, 1423 H (August 2002 AD)*
- (166) Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 161-166.
- (167) Al-Hiqeil, Hamad Ibn Ibraaheem: *Abdul-Aziz in History: History and Literature*, 4th edition (in Arabic), Riyadh, Al-Madeenah Press, 1410 H. (1989 AD), p. 241.
Al-Subait, Abdul-Rahman Ibn Subait *et al: I Was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Volume 1, p. 337.
- (168) It is Mishall Ibn Burghush Ibn Muqhim Ibn Watbaan Al-Timyaat. He was one of the Shammar tribal leaders. He was born in Al-Hijrah in 1317 H, and died in 1407 H.
Al-Tuwiyyan, Abdullah Ibn Zaayid: *Men in Recollection: Biographies of Contemporary Najdi Men*, 1418 H, Part 1, p. 189.
- (169) Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 45-47.
- (170) Al-Thiniyyaan, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *Humaneness of a King*, op cit, pp. 14-17.

- (171) Al-Saud, Talaal, Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations from the Life of Abdul-Aziz*, op. cit, pp. pp.83-84.
- (172) Attaar, Ahmad Abdul-Ghafoor: *The Peninsula Falcon*, op cit, Part 3, pp. 690-691.
- (173) Bani Haajar belong to the well known knights and tribesmen of Shareef. Their dwellings were in Saraat Obaidah, then the eastern province in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, the Emirates and Oman. Early in the 13th century Hijri, their chief Mohammad Ibn Shaabaan led them to the south of Najd. Later, when his grandson Shaafi Ibn Safar became chief, he led the Bani Haajar to their dwellings near Al-Ihsaa'. Among their leaders were Ibn Shaafi, Ibn 'Aayid and Ibn Ba'eeth.
- Al-Shareefi, Ibraaheem Jaarallah Ibn Dukhnah: *Golden Encyclopedia of Lineage the Tribes and Families of the Arabian Peninsula*, (in Arabic), Kuwait, Al-Khaalidiyyah, 1419 H (1998 AD), Part 2, p. 574.
- (174) Hamza, Fouad, *The Saudi Arabian Land*, op cit, pp. 29-30.
- (175) It is Mohammad Suruur Al-Subbaan. He was born in Al-Qunfudah in 1316H (1899 AD). He lived in Jeddah as a child for a while, then in Makkah, where he received his education. His discipline and brilliance earned him such high regard that he was appointed minister of finance after the death of King Abdul-Aziz. He became secretary general of the Muslim League, in Makkah. He died in 1391H (1972 AD).
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 6, p.136.
- (176) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Biography of King Abdul-Aziz in Brief*, op cit, pp. 331-332..
- (177) Ibid, p. 330.
- (178) Al-Jirjaani, Ali Ibn Mohamed Ibn Ali: *Definitions*, op cit, p. 327
- Al-Kafwi, Abu al-Baqaa' Ayyuub Ibn Moosa Al-Husseini: *Kitaab Al-Kulliyyaat (Book of Wholes)*, in Arabic, Beirut, Al-Rissalah Establishment, 1419 H (1998 AD), p. 209.
- Al-Zubaidi, Mohamed Murtadha Al-Husseini: *Taaaj Al-'Aruus*, op cit, Part 40, pp. 218-219.
- (179) Surah 17, Ayah 34.
- (180) Surah 19, Ayah 54..
- (181) Al-Maidaani, A. H. Habankah: *Foundations of Islamic Conduct*, op cit, Part 1, p. 554..

- (182) "Al-Ruwalah" is the plural of "Al-Ruwaili". Al-Ruwalah tribe belongs to Muslim from Anazah. Among its clans are Al-Dughman, Al-Mur'ōdh, Al-Furaihah, Al-Qa'qa' and Al-Maani'.
- Al-Jassir, Hamad: *Dictionary of the Tribes of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Riyadh, Dar Al-Yamaamah, 1400 H (1980 AD),.
- (183) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohamed: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 47.
- (184) Thaabit, Saeed Ibn Ali: *King Abdul-Aziz Approaches to Forming Public Opinion*, op cit, p. 57.
- (185) Prince Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Rahman Ibn Faisal Al-Saud, 1298-1362 H (1881-1943 AD) was King Abdul-Aziz' helper in the saga of establishing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 6, p.199.
- (186) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Imam*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 111-112.
- (187) Ibid.
- (188) Al-Zarkali, Khayruddeen: *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, Part 2, op cit, p. 616..
- (189) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 445.
- (190) Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 12-15.
- (191) Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The True Account of the History of Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud*, op cit, p. 421..
- (192) Surah 65, Ayahs 2-3..

Chapter 3

**King Abdul-Aziz' Kindness
To
Subjects and Family**

3.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Kindness to his Subjects

3.2 King Abdul-Aziz' Special Care for Orphans

3.3 King Abdul-Aziz' Care for Family Ties

3.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Kindness to his Subjects

Mercy, kindness and gentleness represent a multi-quality that Islam calls on all to practice and promote, particularly on leadership levels. Teaching Prophet Muhammad, Allah says, "It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if you had been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee. So, pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when you are resolved, then put your trust in Allah. Lo! Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)."⁽¹⁾ Also, the Prophet says, "... If gentleness is found in anything, it beautifies it, but if it is taken out of anything, it disgraces it."⁽²⁾ People encounter challenging situations that need great patience, without which their position would be undermined.⁽³⁾ The quality of kindness involves mercy; this necessitates gentleness, not roughness, in dealing with others. As the Prophet says, "Allah is Gentle, and He loves gentleness and rewards for it as much as He denies roughness or similar qualities."⁽⁴⁾

Having spent all his life among his family and community, brothers and sisters, assistants and soldiers and friends and foes, King Abdul-Aziz was an open book for all to read. Never did he keep himself aloof as Emir, Sultan or King.⁽⁵⁾ He often said that he was for all and from all, and he never withheld from anyone possible assistance or care. He called upon people to take their troubles to him and to be truthful in their complaints. Such calls to people were often declared in his speeches and in official statements. On one occasion he

said, "If one has been wronged by a (government) employee, big or small, but does not file a complaint, one has wronged oneself."⁽⁶⁾

In general, King Abdul-Aziz' relationship with his subjects was based on reciprocal advice and counseling. It reflected typical elements of charity, justice, humility and mercy.⁽⁷⁾ The King expressed these elements succinctly in a public statement in Jeddah on 25/12/1925 AD. Stating the leader-led relationship in terms of rights and duties, the King said, "We owe you rights, and you owe us rights. It is your right that we advise you in private and in public, and that we protect your blood, honor and wealth in accordance with Shari'ah. It is our right that you advise us, for the Muslim is his fellow Muslim's mirror. If any of you encounters something reprehensible in religious or worldly matters, he is to advise us on it. If it is a religious matter, let the arbiter be the Qur'an and the Sunnah. If it is a worldly matter, justice will be equally done for all, God willing."⁽⁸⁾

It was typical of King Abdul-Aziz to speak to his audience in the language they could comprehend. For example, he was aware of differences between people in urban areas and Bedouins. On one occasion, he had a meeting with heads of tribes when he was preparing for establishing of the *Shura* Council. Addressing them in the way they understood things, the King asked them, "Would it be possible for one person to catch a loose camel in the desert on his own?" They answered, "No, Abdul-Aziz. It needs two persons or more to catch it." He said, "That's it! When two minds or more meet, *shura* is secured in the eyes of Shari'ah."⁽⁹⁾ Also, taking such differences into consideration, the King had special

assemblies at which he would use the language his audience could comprehend.

The siege of Jeddah was taking longer than expected when the men of King Abdul-Aziz became disgruntled due to lack of supplies. Aware of their state, the King offered them the choice to leave, saying, "Supplies were on the way from Najd, but the camels were normally slow. Let whoever wants to leave do so. As for me, I am staying, and I trust that Allah will bring about ease."⁽¹⁰⁾ Despite the military significance of the siege, the King was kind enough to offer them the choice to leave. He even gave them the excuse, i.e. the camels were going to take long to get to them.⁽¹¹⁾ Such is the behavior of caring leaders.

Relating an incident he witnessed involving his grandfather King Abdul-Aziz, Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal says, "I had the honor of being in his [the King's] company one day in the Month of Ramadan."⁽¹²⁾ The Procession was on the way from Al-Deerah Palace to Al-Murabba' Palace when we saw a number of workers doing renovations. The King stopped and asked about the foreman. The foreman was summoned, and the King asked him about their work schedule. The foreman answered: From 8 am to 2 pm. The King wondered: I do not do manual work, and a car takes me to and from the Government Palace, where I stay not more than 4 hours. Yet, I feel thirsty. As for you, you work for 6 hours, exposed to poisons. Listen! From now onward, do not work more than 4 hours during the month of Ramadan, and let it be early in the day; nonetheless, you will be paid your wages in full."⁽¹³⁾ Such is the conduct of a merciful caring leader. Though seemingly a simple situation, it would need special qualities of awareness

of suffering and caring for ordinary subjects, otherwise it would not have been noticed. So alert and caring had been the King's conscience that he immediately felt that the men laboring during fast must have been suffering and must have needed rest.⁽¹⁴⁾

From a hot day to a cold night, there is another situation demonstrating the King's feeling of mercy and care for others' sufferings. The King woke up one night to offer his usual voluntary prayers. Having washed for *salaah* and prayed, the King noticed it was too cold and rainy for the guards on duty. So, he summoned the officer in charge of the night shift and told him: "Don't you fear Allah?! Why have you kept these soldiers out there in such cold weather?" The officer replied, "To guard you, may Allah grant you long life." The King said, "May Allah be my guard; let them into the tent to protect themselves from the severe cold."⁽¹⁵⁾ This scenario reflects not only the feelings of a caring 'father', but also the trust the King had in his Lord; he cared more about the soldiers' comfort than his own safety.

The following are some measures the King had taken over a period of time. They are selected to show his kindness and care for the welfare of his subjects:

- He abolished the fees and taxes (known as the fifth) levied for the protection of roads, pastures and farming land.
- He made all land common for all, except lawfully recognized ownerships, as Shari'ah dictated. Also, pastures were common, and so was the water that did not have a lawfully recognized owner. In addition, citizens had the right to move freely within the borders of the country.⁽¹⁶⁾

- He did his utmost to establish security throughout the country.
- He would send necessary supplies to settlers in remote areas.
- He would often revise the customs fees and regulations in order to make changes when necessary as the public interest demanded.⁽¹⁷⁾

In addition, the King always encouraged government officials to look after citizens' affairs and finish their business with great care. At a reception held in the Finance Under-Secretariat in Taef on 24/5/1932 AD, King Abdul-Aziz said, "I urge you to keep your duty to Allah, to consider the state of homeland and country and to refer people's affairs and grievances to me; I am shouldering greater responsibilities, some of which are delegated to you because you can deal with them better. However, I do ask about people's affairs and look after their interests as much as I can. When I find a problem, I appoint a special body from amongst you to investigate it; I supervise its work myself, and I discuss with its members related matters, till the problem is settled in accordance with Allah's Book. O people of this holy land, by Allah, I consider the elderly man amongst you as my father, the medium-aged as my brothers, and the young as my sons. What I say is what I believe - let Allah be my witness."⁽¹⁸⁾ These words express the genuine feelings of a great leader towards his subjects; he saw them as family, and linked his responsibilities with his officials, delegating to them what they knew better, while asking them to refer to him problematic issues. His words started with calling for keeping duty to Allah, then promised to settle things according to the

Qur'an. They ended with calling upon Allah to be his witness. These words could not have been uttered but by a God-fearing person, a capable administrator and a trustworthy leader.

As a capable administrator, King Abdul-Aziz took practical measures to put his words into action. He would send inspection teams to remote villages and towns in order to check how people were and listen to their complaints. The teams would record their activities in writing, which would then be reported to the King. He would give orders as to what was to be done in the interest of his subjects. In addition, it was customary of the King, on returning to Al-Hijaz from Najd, to gather its people and ask them how things were. On such occasions, he would ask them if they had any complaints against any emirs or officials, and he would provide them with useful pieces of advice.

On one occasion, the King was told by one of the pilgrims that the Makkah municipality was not doing a good job with respect to street cleanliness and lighting and to markets. Sheikh Abbaas Al-Qattaan⁽¹⁹⁾, one of the notables close to the King, was in charge of that particular municipality. The King summoned all members of the Shura Council. He told them: I have put my trust in you, and I have entrusted you with looking after people's affairs, big and small. Unfortunately, I have not heard from you any criticism or warning of any wrong-doing. After all, we are all humans, and must make mistakes. I have been told by one of the pilgrims that the Capital's secretariat had not done its job of cleaning and other things. Since pilgrims have noticed that, you must be well aware of it then, for you are the city's permanent residents.

Obviously, you have said nothing lest you should offend Abbaas Al-Qataan because you felt he was close to me. I consider that to be improper behavior. So, I have decided to relieve him of his duties as head of the Shura Council, but he will retain his membership with you. Now, you have to choose another one who can do the required job properly. After long discussions, Sheikh Abdul-Ra'uf Al-Subbaan, the then Director of Public Endowments, was put in charge of the Makkah municipality.⁽²⁰⁾

Despite his immediate duties towards state affairs, King Abdul-Aziz always had the welfare of his subjects in mind. At hard times, he would check how they were. For instance, in 1941 AD, it became severely cold. He sent messengers to Bedouin areas to see how people, even their animals, were coping.⁽²¹⁾ The King would send aid to areas in need, and would follow up the distribution of supplies. So careful was the King that he warned his men against distributing aid to those who did not deserve it.⁽²²⁾

May Allah reward King Abdul-Aziz for looking after his people, providing aid where needed, establishing mechanisms for administering people's affairs and interests, following up their tasks, giving advice and making changes when necessary for better functioning. In the state hierarchy, he was all over, up at the top for broader issues, and down at the bottom, listening to complaints and offering advice and help.



3.2 King Abdul-Aziz' Special Care for Orphans

Looking after orphans is an important Islamic demand, as repeatedly expressed in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. For example, Allah says, "Therefore, the orphan oppress not."⁽²³⁾ In the Hadith, the Prophet says, "The one who takes care of orphans will be in Heaven with me...."⁽²⁴⁾ Committed to Islamic teachings, King Abdul-Aziz, no wonder, paid great attention to caring for orphans. He set up homes for them. In fact, the first orphanage was established by the King himself. He officially opened it together with a private school in one place, which was administratively under the direct supervision of the Royal Palace. It was beside a school which the King set up for his children, grandchildren and the children of his brothers in Riyadh in 1935 AD.⁽²⁵⁾

In 1936 AD, an orphanage called Dar Al-Aytaam was set up in Makkah. It was officially opened on behalf of the King by Mahdi Al-Muslih.⁽²⁶⁾ Then, the orphanage had a new building that was opened by the King himself in 1938 AD. Its school curriculum was the same as that of the Education Directorate schools. In the beginning, the orphanage was funded by charitable donations. As donations were not sufficient, the state had to allocate financial aid. The first group to graduate from the orphanage was in 1941 AD. Later, the orphanage was affiliated with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.⁽²⁷⁾

Obviously, the success achieved by the Makkah orphanage prompted the King to affiliate the administration of Al-Madeenah private orphanage with that of the Makkah

governmental orphanage. The former was suffering from a great deal of financial instability due to being self-funding and to dependence on donations from merchants and notables in Al-Madeenah. After administrative affiliation, it was able to function properly and receive the special attention the King gave to orphanages, such as the Private School for Orphans, established in Riyadh, in 1938 AD and the one opened in Hellat Al-Ahraar in 1362 H (1943 A D).⁽²⁸⁾

The following year, the school expanded and was merged with that of Emir Mansour Ibn Abdul-Aziz, to form a single school, known as the Saudi School, with one budget from the Royal Court.⁽²⁹⁾ In addition, there was Al-Murabba' school in Riyadh, which provided a program similar to that of Al-Madeenah orphanage.⁽³⁰⁾ The program contained academic and vocational components. The vocational component included teaching simple trades, such as carpentry, sewing and making leather cases. The orphanages in general played an important part, forming the nucleus for good social care in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



3.3 King Abdul-Aziz' Care for Family Ties

Maintaining good family ties is a basic Islamic demand, as mentioned in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. In the Qur'an, Allah says, "And serve Allah. Ascribe nothing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred,...."⁽³¹⁾ Such is the importance of family ties that Allah puts the call for keeping good family with the call for *tawheed* in one command. He commands people to worship Him alone and to treat parents and relatives so well that He will be pleased. As for the Sunnah, it has a great deal of related statements. For example, the Prophet calls for kindness to parents and family. In one Hadith, he says, "The *rahim* [Arabic for 'womb' / 'relatives'] is attached to the Throne, saying: May Allah keep ties with whoever keeps ties with me, and may He cut off ties with whoever cuts off ties with me..⁽³²⁾ In another Hadith, the Prophet says, "Whoever cuts off ties with relatives shall not go to Heaven."⁽³³⁾

The conduct of King Abdul-Aziz was consistent with the demands of the Qur'an and the Sunnah for kindness to family and relatives. He could not have been but good to them because of his Islamic beliefs and attitude. Despite his responsibilities at the state and the public levels, he did not neglect the affairs of his family.⁽³⁴⁾ He was known for his keenness on keeping good ties with relatives. He looked after his family at the personal and the public levels.⁽³⁵⁾ By the Grace of Allah, there was in his big heart a place for everyone in the Al-Saud family, his own children, his brothers and sisters and the rest.⁽³⁶⁾ Let us see some examples of how good

King Abdul-Aziz was to his family.

King Abdul-Aziz and his Parents

Realizing the importance Islam gave to parents, King Abdul-Aziz loved and obeyed them; Allah says, "Your Lord has decreed, that you worship none save Him, and (that you show) kindness to parents."⁽³⁷⁾ Since his childhood, he had had a close relationship with his parents. In fact, when his family was in Kuwait, he had to ask his parents for permission to make preparations for the recapture Riyadh. Having recaptured and secured Riyadh, he asked his father to move there. When the father arrived, Abdul-Aziz asked him to accept leadership and he would be under the father's command as a soldier. Recognizing his son's dedication, skills and competence, the father refused the offer and insisted Abdul-Aziz be the leader. He had to accept his father's decision and to be in charge of the emirate, providing his father continued to guide and advise him on all affairs.⁽³⁸⁾ King Abdul-Aziz' conduct was exemplary when asking parents' permission to take military steps, and when offering his father to be in command. Such are shining moments in leadership's recorded history, expressing great qualities, filial gratitude and humility. These qualities, according to Islam, are a definite source of blessings from Allah.

Stability and security were established in Riyadh, and the father-son exemplary relationship grew stronger. This was evident in daily activities and serious affairs. The son would visit the father every morning, and the father would pay the son a visit once a week, after the Friday prayer. The father would be seated in the most prominent place while the son

would take a seat among the guests, and would be waiting on his father. As for serious matters, concerning the emirate, the son would normally consult his father before deciding or acting. However, the father trusted the son's intuitive leadership qualities. In this regard, the father commented, "Abdul-Aziz has been blessed with success. We have had differences of opinion many times, but he has been proven right. His intentions are for Allah; he wants nothing but the good of the country and its people. May Allah grant him success and guide him."⁽³⁹⁾ These words sincerely depict a key quality of character, i.e. purity of intention, which is typical of the God-fearing and God-loving. They also reflect a healthy atmosphere of differing in opinion, typical of confident, genuine leadership.

Archives host several documents showing the exemplary relationship between King Abdul-Aziz and his father. Let us read these lines from one letter, sent by the King to his father on 1926 AD:

- "Your respectable letter has arrived, and we have read it. We thank Allah, the Most High, for your being in good health. What you have written is to your servant [me] known."
- "Our news is good. There is nothing to say, but to ask Allah for forgiveness, good health, prosperity and best wishes. May Allah answer all these prayers for all. May He preserve you. That is all from us. Will you please keep your servant [me] informed of your state of health? Best regards to the children. Regards from the children here, too. May Allah preserve and protect you."⁽⁴⁰⁾

The Haraam Mosque in Makkah witnessed a typical Abdul-Aziz conduct towards his aging father. It happened when the father was on pilgrimage in Makkah, after Al-Hijaaz region had been secured and order had prevailed. King Abdul-Aziz and his father were doing *tawaaf* (walking round the Ka'bah) when the latter, having done 3 rounds, collapsed due to fatigue. The King could have ordered his father to be comfortably carried to continue the *tawaaf* rites, as permitted by Shari'ah. Instead, he himself carried his father during the rest of the rounds.⁽⁴¹⁾ What a lesson in caring for parents! Doesn't it satisfy the Quranic demand "... and be good to parents"⁽⁴²⁾ What a lesson in humility! A king carrying his father and walking round the Ka'bah among pilgrims from all over the world!

Prince Talaal Ibn Abdul-Aziz relates an incident that shows in action exemplary conduct with parents. On one occasion, the Najd emirs, religious scholars, notables and tribal chiefs had a meeting in Riyadh. Imam Abdul-Rahman Ibn Faisal was there. After the meeting was over, the Imam got ready to leave. A horse was brought for him to ride, but his son Abdul-Aziz immediately took the horse's lead from the servant in order to serve his father by himself. When the father was about to mount, his son Abdul-Aziz knelt, lowering his shoulder for his father to step on it to get on his horse. Then, he saw off his father and his entourage with great respect.⁽⁴³⁾ What a lesson in respect and humility! Obviously, such humility, from a leader to his father in front of the community elite, may explain why King Abdul-Aziz earned the love and admiration of his subjects. It may also explain why he is loved and admired by those who hear or read about it nowadays.

May Allah reward him.

King Abdul-Aziz and his Brothers and Sisters

Writings on King Abdul-Aziz show how dearly he loved his family members. The following are some situations illustrating his love for them.

In 1912 AD, King Abdul-Aziz' brother Saad was camping in the desert on the outskirts of Najd. Al-Shareef Hussein, the then emir of Al-Hijaaz, was trying, at the instigation of the Turks, to win some tribes on his side against the Al-Saud. So, he left for the Utaibah desert where he captured Saad. This was a good catch to bargain with against them. Relating the reaction of King Abdul-Aziz to the capture of his brother, Al-Zarkali says, "King Abdul-Aziz was so disturbed that he abandoned everything else but Saad. Marching his army to the west of Riyadh, he wrote to the Utaibah chiefs threatening them with inevitable war if they let Al-Shareef Hussein return to Al-Hijaaz with his captured brother. Aware of the King's threat, the Utaibah chiefs heeded the warning. Through Al-Shareef Khalid Ibn Luayy, Al-Shareef Hussein bargained for a written statement with which he could please the Ottoman sultan and which would not be of any trouble to King Abdul-Aziz. The King agreed to write a statement pledging the payment of a certain amount of money to the Ottoman government. For the King, the pledge was nothing but a piece of paper. What mattered was that his brother was freed."⁽⁴⁴⁾

King Abdul-Aziz was well aware of the material and moral responsibilities of his family within their community. So, he had to look after their needs at various levels. A letter from his brother emir Mohammad to Mohammad Ibn Shalhoob⁽⁴⁵⁾ demonstrates the King's care for his family's affairs. Emir

Mohamed's letter asked for the supplies ordered by his brother to be sent as quickly as possible. He wrote, "My brother (Ibn Shalhoob), enclosed is a *barwah*⁽⁴⁶⁾ (*order of transfer*) from my brother - may Allah grant him safety. It is an order worth 400 riyals. Once you get this letter, send the supplies as quickly as possible with the first person leaving for our place, God willing...."⁽⁴⁷⁾

Oftentimes, the King would hold a morning assembly at seven for the family elderly, his brothers and sisters and relatives. They would discuss their problems or simply greet the King. It gave him great pleasure to keep ties with them, and he loved to have as many of them as possible around him. He often ordered precious presents from Bombay and Damascus to give to his family members.⁽⁴⁸⁾

According to Al-Zarkali, "He [King Abdul-Aziz] would ask how the family's women were, especially the elderly. In fact, he would ask about these by name. If he missed any of them and found out she was not well, he asked the family doctor to take care of her, check her up twice a day and give him a report. The King would phone her daily to see how she was."⁽⁴⁹⁾

By keeping family ties and looking after them, King Abdul-Aziz must have had a great source of blessings open for him. Indeed, Allah rewards highly for such conduct in this world and the Hereafter. According to the Hadith, reward in this world should be evident in greater provisions,⁽⁵⁰⁾ and the growing wealth of the Kingdom he founded should be a witness. For King Abdul-Aziz, all his subjects were family, and he considered himself a father, brother or son to all.⁽⁵¹⁾

King Abdul-Aziz and his Sister Nora

King Abdul-Aziz had a special place in his heart for Princess Nora, his eldest sister. When their family had to move to Kuwait, both of them suffered the pains of exile. He trusted her, and her encouragement to him was instrumental in regaining lost family power. Despite her immediate family responsibilities, she had a stronger relation with her brother. He cultivated the habit of visiting her twice a day, except when he had to travel or in emergencies. She is said to have been entrusted with solving his palace's internal problems. He would consult her on family matters, and she kept his secrets. Her influence on the King was so well known that people would ask her to intercede with him on their behalf. Indeed, Princess Nora was renowned for doing good and working for the benefit of people."⁽⁵²⁾

So immense was King Abdul-Aziz' pride in his sister that he would occasionally say, "I am Nora's brother." On a particularly grim occasion, he would say, "I am Al-Anwar's brother, offering condolences."⁽⁵³⁾

The book *Onto the Night Travellers the Night Called* contains interesting documents showing the strong relationship between the King and his sister Princess Nora. One document is a letter dated 1920 AD. It was sent by Princess Nora to her brother in reply to a letter from him asking her to look after the mother of Dhaidaan Ibn Hithleen. Dhidaan was the uncle of the Al-Ajmaan leader, Rakaan. Here are her words to her brother:

"To my dear brother Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Faisal, the magnificent, the honorable, the great and the possessor of commendable traits.

May you be blessed with long life. Amen!

May Allah's peace and mercy and blessings be unto you.

Asking about your dear self, we hope, by Allah's Grace, that you will remain in good health and happiness.

We have received your dear letter, and we are delighted to know that you are well and that your conditions are good.

As for Dhaidaan's mother, whom your greatness have requested to be looked after, we would like you - may Allah bless you with long life - to know that she has arrived and will be well taken care of, God willing.

As for our news, let me tell your greatness that the kids and Al-'Anuud are well and in shape pleasing to you. You may be interested to know that Saud Ibn Abdul-Rahman has had a baby boy - may it be a blessed baby. There is no other news to tell your greatness about.

We beg Allah to grant you long life and safety, and to keep the greatness of Islam.

This is all what we have to let your greatness know.

All of us here, my father and children, are good and send their greetings. May you remain safe and sound."⁽⁵⁴⁾

There was a lot of correspondence between the King and his sister. Some letters were concerned with family problems. Others were personal. For example, in one letter, she expressed her sisterly feeling for what she saw as his negligence of their family's rights in comparison with what he did for others.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Though frank, the message was meant to remind the King of his sister's expectation of him; who else would look after her but he? As for the King, evidently, it was

not negligence on his part, but urgent state affairs. At the time of the message, dated 1912 AD, he was preparing for the battle for Al-Ihsaa', having just come out of the battles of Hadiyyah and Al-Hareeq. However, that the supplies to the sister had arrived, as understood from her letter, negated any negligence.

The King's dearest sister passed away a few years before him. He was terribly saddened by her death.

The King's relationship with His sister Nora was an example of mutual love, trust and responsibility. They shared hard times and good times, and they cared for their community as well as their family and relatives. She was proud of her brother as he was of her. Their conduct reflected their devotion to Islamic values. One could safely conclude she was the feminine counterpart of King Abdul-Aziz. His relationship with his sister refutes the stereotyping of Muslim attitude towards women. May Allah reward both of them.

King Abdul-Aziz and his Wives

Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal relates the following about King Abdul-Aziz' attitude towards his wives:

"He was known for his love for cleanliness and perfume. I could understand it when he observed it during the day. However, one night, before going to bed, he went to the bathroom, had a bath, and put on fresh clothes. He called for the incense burner and incensed himself with 'uud smoke, and he also perfumed himself with rose oil and his favorite 'uud oil. On his way to the bedroom, I was brave enough to ask him what he did all that for. He replied: O my son, my wife always

makes sure that I see her in her best form and smell from her the nicest smell. Doesn't she, then, deserve the same thing from me? See me in the best form and smell from me the nicest smell?"⁽⁵⁶⁾ What a great character, as leader and husband! Not only had he paid attention to political and military details, but also to personal details with wives' rights.

When his wife Princess Al-Joharah died, King Abdul-Aziz was so sad that he cried. She was the mother of his sons Mohamed and Khalid.⁽⁵⁷⁾ She occupied a special place in his heart for a number of reasons: she was his cousin; she was an important Al-Saud princess; she died at a young age; and she was his mother's choice. Long after she had gone, the King remained sad for her death. He remained generous to those who had served her during her life. Nobody was allowed into her room in the palace except his sister Nora.⁽⁵⁸⁾

Thus, King Abdul-Aziz showed exceptional feelings for his wives, in their lifetime and after their death. He cared for earning their love and appreciation as they did for him. Though a tough negotiator, warrior and upholder of law and order, the King was an affectionate husband. He was well aware of the important role of women at large, and so his attitude was one of respect and kindness to them as mothers, sisters, wives and daughters. His attitude and actions reflected Islamic conduct.

King Abdul-Aziz and the Family Children

Obviously, King Abdul-Aziz' heart was big enough for all, subjects and family, sisters and wives, and elderly and young at hard times and good times. As a father and grandfather, no wonder, he was particularly fond of children. According to

Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal, King Abdul-Aziz ordered on one occasion that his grandchildren leave Taef for Riyadh so that he could see them and enjoy their presence with him. Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal says, "I remember that King Abdul-Aziz missed hajj (the pilgrimage to Makkah) one year. After hajj, my father... [Prince] Faisal Ibn Abdul-Aziz was on a trip somewhere, and I was in Taef when I got a telegram from the King. The telegram read: 'I am keen to see your brothers and your children. Therefore, we have ordered Mansour Ibn Abdul-Aziz (the then Minister of Defense) to send our plane to bring them to us in Riyadh.' The eldest of them was only ten. I wondered how he was shouldering the great responsibility and problems of a nation, yet he did not forget about his grandchildren!"⁽⁵⁹⁾

Remarking his father's style of upbringing children, late King Faisal Ibn Abdul-Aziz said, "In his upbringing of us, he combined mercy and toughness. To him, we and the sons of others were the same, without distinction. He firmly believed that there could not be two different criteria for justice. He considered all to be equal and all to be his sons. I can recollect an incident when one of my younger brothers hit another. King Abdul-Aziz had to punish him regardless of being the son of the King. However, he was extremely loving and kind to his children and grandchildren. He loved to see them on a daily basis, particularly little ones, showering them with his affection all the time. Every evening, after sunset, they would see him in his palace. There, he would sit with them and entertain each one of them, giving them presents and sweets."⁽⁶⁰⁾

Seeking to bring up his children properly, King Abdul-Aziz

paid great attention to the art of instilling values by example. Al-Zarkali mentions a relevant educative situation involving King Abdul-Aziz and his 5-year-old son Abdul-Majeed. "On a recreational trip, the young prince was sitting with his father in the back seat of their car. The King gave a handful of riyals to his son, who started playing with the money. The King said to him, "Give your brothers some (meaning those sitting with him, and they were Hamzah Ghawth⁽⁶¹⁾ and the narrator, i.e. Al-Zarkali)." The young prince gave both all the money, and they, in turn, gave it to the guards standing on both sides of the car. After a little while, the King asked, "Where is the money, Abdul-Majeed?" The son put forward his empty hands. The King said, "You have spent it, haven't you?" "Yes," was the answer. The King said, "Don't worry - may Allah compensate you for it." He gave him more money, and Abdul-Majeed distributed it. This went on, and so we realized that he was teaching his son a practical lesson in being generous and that generosity does not lead to poverty."⁽⁶²⁾

In another educative situation, his daughters raced to meet him, each trying to be first. He said to them, "Who is the eldest?" There was no answer. He said a little louder, "Who is the eldest?" They were a little confused. He asked the question a third time, at which they got the message. They started queuing in the order of age, with the eldest first. This was a practical lesson in teaching order and respect for seniority, which represent commendable conduct.⁽⁶³⁾

In 1930 AD, King Abdul-Aziz sent a message to his eldest sons, emirs Saud, Faisal, Mohammad and Khalid. The message contained advice on matters more of a political nature than educational. Let us focus on the items that

embody the educational foundations that the King wanted his sons to observe:

1. "Be united. Your young must respect and listen to their seniors. Your adults must be kind to your young. However, if the young saw a senior do something impermissible, they have to point it out to him, tell him it was wrong. On their part, seniors have to listen to what their juniors have to say. They also have to advise their juniors."
2. "Whatever order I give or measure I take has to be carried out without objection or obstructing whomever I entrust with it."
3. "You have to tell me the whole truth regarding whatever I ask you about or whatever has to be referred to me."
4. "You must not interfere with my financial affairs, none whatsoever, by any means."

"These are four things that you have to understand and to abide by, otherwise, you will earn my condemnation."⁽⁶⁴⁾

In conclusion of this chapter, I wonder how King Abdul-Aziz managed to take care of such a wide range of people amidst his urgent duties of keeping the faith pure and spreading it, duties of military and diplomatic battles, duties of state building and modernization and duties of law and order! To be able to take care of all these, one must possess exceptional qualities, and must have trustworthy helpers. How could one have such qualities and such people? These Qur'anic verses may provide an explanation: "... And whosoever keeps his duty to Allah, Allah will appoint a way out for him, (3) and will provide for him from (a quarter) whence he has no

expectation. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him. Lo! Allah brings His command to pass. Allah has set a measure for all things."⁽⁶⁵⁾ In other words, such qualities and helpers are a blessing, implying faith in Allah and acting accordingly.



Chapter 3 Endnotes

- (1) Surah 3, Ayah 159.
- (2) *Sunan Abu-Daawuud*, Hadith No. 4790.
- (3) Al-Maidaani, Abdul-Rahman Hassan: *Fundamentals of Islamic Manners*, op cit., pp. 351-352.
- (4) *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No. 2593.
- (5) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, p. 71.
- (6) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 20.
- (7) Al-Keelani, Kamal: *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud and Contemporary Islamic Reform*, op cit, p. 89.
- (8) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 1, p. 350.
Al-Simaari, Ibraheem Ibn Abdullah: *King Abdul-Aziz: Personality and Leadership*, op cit, p. 90.
- (9) Al-Saud, Talaal Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations from the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 56-57.
- (10) Thabit, Saeed Ibn Ali: *King Abdul-Aziz' Methods in Building Public Opinion*, op cit, pp. 58-59.
- (11) Al-Afnaan, Saad Ibn Khalaf: *Social Reform*, op cit, p. 35.
- (12) Ramadan is the month of fasting in the Muslim world. Adult Muslims are obliged not to eat or drink from dawn to sunset, and married couples are obliged not to have sexual intercourse during that period.
- (13) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 45.
- (14) Al-Simaari, Ibraheem Ibn Abdullah: *King Abdul-Aziz: Personality and Leadership*, op cit, p. 95.
- (15) Al-Subait, Abdul-Rahman Ibn Subait: *Men and Memories with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 45.
- (16) Al-Afnaan, Saad Ibn Khalaf: *Social Reform*, op cit, p. 45.
- (17) Al-Afnaan, Saad Ibn Khalaf: *Social Reform*, op cit, p. 45.

(18) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 64.

Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 80.

(19) It is Abbaas Yousuf Qattaan. He was one of the notables in Makkah. He was appointed as the head of the Makkah Municipality. Then, he moved to business, trading between Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Shaakir, Fouad: *The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Guide*, 1367 H (1948 AD).

As for Qattaan's appointment in the Shura Council, it was not carried out for some reason.

(20) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Ruler*, op cit., part 2, pp. 77-78.

(21) *Ibid*, p.236.

(22) Al-Tweijri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travelers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p. 707.

(23) Surah 93, Ayah 9.

(24) *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 2983.

(25) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 193-194.

(26) It is Mahdi Al-Muslih. He was known as Mahdi Bek ("Bek" was similar to the British title "Sir"). It was King Abdul-Aziz who called him "Al-Muslih" (meaning "reformer"), and this name was retained by his children. He was an Iraqi, but worked for King Abdul-Aziz as early as 1346 H (1927 AD). He retired in 1365 H (1945 AD). He was director of public security for 19 years. He was director of the police force in Medina, then in Makkah. He established the home for orphans and handicapped in Makkah. He died in Cairo in 1372 H (February, 1953 AD).

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 621.

Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 211-212.

(27) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, (in Arabic), Riyadh, Mataabi' Annaashir Al-Arabi, 1419 H (1999 AD), p. 160.

(28) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 197.

(29) *Ibid*, p. 198.

(30) Attar, Mustafa Abdul-Ghafoor: "King Abdul-Aziz and Education", (in

Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1419 H, Vol. 3, p. 814.*

(31) Surah 4/ Ayah 36.

(32) *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No. 2555.

(33) *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 5984. & *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No. 2556.

(34) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 113.

(35) Ibid, p.114.

(36) Ibid, p.115.

(37) Surah 17, Ayah 5

(38) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, pp. 63-64.

(39) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 366.

(40) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 134-135.

(41) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 32-33.

(42) Surah 2, Ayah 83.

(43) Al-Saud, Talaal Ibn Abdul-Aziz: *Situations from the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 104.

(44) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-Wajeez (Brief Biography of King Abdul-Aziz)*, op cit, p. 52.

(45) It is Mohammad Ibn Shalhoob. He was born in Riyadh in 1274 H. He worked as minister of supplies and finance. He was in charge of all supplies, ranging from matches to cannons. He was responsible for distributing sticks for fires, clothes, weapons and money. He followed primitive methods of calculation, typical of rural and Bedouin life. He was known for his honesty and hard work. He died in Beirut on 6 / 7 / 1389 H. He was buried in Riyadh.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 4, op cit, p. 1423 H.

Al-Subait, Abdurrahman Ibn Subait *et al: I was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 1, p. 429.

(46) The term "barwah" meant a transfer of money or goods to be cashed or

taken from a money transfer office or *zakaah* office within the Kingdom. It was in a monetary or a material form, such as sugar, ghee, flour, etc. It could be received annually, but through asking the royal court.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 1, op cit, p. 178.

Al-Zaamil, Abdullah Al-Ali Al-Mansour: *The Most Truthful Records on the History of Ibn Saud*, op cit, p. 118.

(47) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 118.

(48) Al-Mani', Mohammad: *Uniting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, op cit, p. 338.

(49) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 3, op cit, p. 920.

(50) *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 2067.

Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 2557.

(51) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 64.

(52) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 116.

(53) This happened when a person had to be executed for lawful reasons. Despite the crime and punishment, King Abdul-Aziz would be as kind as possible with the executed person's family. He would even offer condolences as well as material help. This was his way of alleviating suffering on such a grim occasion. It was meant to remove possible grudge against upholding the law. The name "Al-Anwar" refers to his sister Nora; both names derive from the Arabic word *noor* (meaning "light").

Al-Maarik, Fahd: *Traits of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, pp. 253-254.

(54) Al-Tweijri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travelers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p.519.

(55) *Ibid*, p.699.

(56) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 45.

(57) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 3, op cit, p. 954.

(58) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, p. 65.

(59) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 3, op cit, p. 920.

(60) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-*

Aziz, op cit, p. 39.

(61) Hamzah Ghawth was one of the literary figures in Al-Madeenah (Medina). He had to move to Riyadh at the request of King Abdul-Aziz. He joined the diplomatic staff, as an advisor on foreign affairs. He took part in the 1st and 2nd Kuwait conferences. He was appointed the Saudi ambassador to Iran.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 1, op cit, p.337.

Al-Amari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, Part 1, op cit, p. 121.

(62) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, Part 4, op cit, p.1430.

(63) Al-Thiniyyaan, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *Humaneness of a King*, op cit, p. 102.

(64) Al-Tweijri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travelers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p.459.

(65) Surah 65, Ayahs 2-3.

Chapter 4

King Abdul-Aziz' Care for Learning and Scholars

- 4.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Islamic Background**
- 4.2 King Abdul-Aziz' Outstanding Efforts towards
Educational Development**
- 4.3 King Abdul-Aziz' Custom of Consulting the
Ulama and Specialists**

4.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Islamic Background

King Abdul-Aziz was basically devoted to a straightforward approach, namely adherence to the Qur'an and the Sunnah in all affairs and activities. In the footsteps of the *sahaabah*, he sought to emulate the Prophet's example, thus answering Allah's call, "Verily in the messenger of Allah you have a good example for him who looks unto Allah and the last Day..."⁽¹⁾ The King's approach is clearly reflected in his sayings about himself on various occasions. For instance, he once said, "By Allah, I do not love anyone except those who love Allah sincerely, associating no partners with Him and introducing no impurities into Islam. By Allah, my work is dedicated only to this end, and I do not care be I King or a poor man."⁽²⁾ On numerous occasions, the King declared that he did not seek authority, worldly rewards or luxuries. All he sought was to be a means to the triumph of Allah's Word."⁽³⁾

The aims the King set for himself were not alien to him. He was exposed to pure faith and related activities at an early age. To him, *tawheed* was basically vital for the life of the individual and society. He often emphasized this on his public and private occasions in a spontaneous and natural way. Rarely in his speeches did he fail to mention the importance of beliefs⁽⁴⁾ and adherence to Islamic teachings. For example, on the occasion of the Grand Royal Luncheon on 04/12/1351 H (03/4/1933), the King said, "I am a promoter of Islam; I call people unto it, and spread it among communities. I promote the faith of the righteous *salaf*; it is adherence to Allah's Book and His Messenger's Sunnah, as conveyed to us by the rightly guided

Caliphs."⁽⁵⁾ On another occasion, he said, "I am a Muslim, and I'd love Muslims to be united. I am an Arab, and I love my people, and I'd love them to live in harmony and unity."⁽⁶⁾ He also said, "The religion of Mohammed is my constitution. It is my law. It is my system, and it is my emblem...."⁽⁷⁾

The King had wanted Muslims to be united on the basis of Allah's Book and His Messenger's Sunnah. Towards this end, he emphasized two things: the importance of Islam and the need to follow the Qur'an and the Sunnah; and what Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Wahaab called for was not a new religion or creed, but the very faith mentioned in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as embraced by the first Muslim generation. In addition, King Abdul-Aziz declared respect for Islam's four imams⁽⁸⁾, who were dedicated to the same faith. This was consistently typical of the King's mission to promote Islam, of his love for fellow Muslims and of his commitment to Muslim unity.⁽⁹⁾

Even though King Abdul-Aziz was occupied with running the affairs of the state, religious literacy was important to him. He would select certain books to read, or have them read and discussed in his presence in seminars. The books covered a variety of areas and topics, and they had a culturally enriching effect on the personal and general levels.⁽¹⁰⁾ The following are some of his favorite references: Qur'an explanation books: *Tafseer Attabari (Attabari's Explanation of the Qur'an)* and *Tafseer Ibn Katheer (Ibn Katheer's Explanation of the Qur'an)*; Hadith books: *Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (Ahmad's Anthology of Hadith)* and *Riyaadh As-Saaliheen (The Orchards of the Righteous)*; Tawheed books: *Fat-hul Majeed Sharh Kitaab At-Tawheed (The Glorious*

Opening for Explaining the Book of Oneness); History books: *Seerat Ibn Hishaam (The Prophet's Biography by Ibn Hishaam)* and Ibn Katheer's *Al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah (The Beginning and the End by Ibn Katheer)*; politics: Ibn Taymiya's *Assiyaasah Al-Shariyyah (Lawful Politics by Ibn Taymiyah)*; Literature: Ibn Al-Qayyim's *Rawdat Al-Muhibbeen (The Orchard of Lovers by Ibn al-Qayyim)* and *Deewaan Al-Mutanabbi (Al-Mutanabbi's Anthology of Poetry)*.

The influence of King Abdul-Aziz' religious knowledge was evident in his speeches, letters and conversations; he would regularly quote from the Qur'an, the Sunnah and Islamic history. In a related study, Dr. Mohammad Al-Sayyid Saleem analyzed 68 of the King's published documents, containing 29 speeches, 9 talks, 21 letters, 4 meeting minutes, one radio talk and 4 personal conversations. The following are the study findings:

- The King's major source of political beliefs is Islam.
- He believed that the right life is that which is based on faith. For example, attributing political conflict to human nature, he quoted Qur'anic statements; stating his political beliefs and the role of the political leader in historical development, he bases his argument on statements from the Qur'an. To support the validity of his political beliefs, he drew on history for evidence, as in the case of the constant hostility with the Jews and the never-ending afflictions he expected as a result of establishing a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. Also, when defining power as basically spiritual, he quoted relevant Qur'anic verses to support his view.⁽¹¹⁾

"This is Allah's faith, in which we believe, and so do our religious scholars, and so did our predecessors. It is the straight path; whoever strays from it in ignorance has to turn back to Allah in repentance. If one strays from it believing it is not right, we must testify to Allah that one has nothing to do with Islam in any way; in this case, one has denied Allah's Book and His Messenger's Sunnah, in which all the Muslim scholars have believed at all times."⁽¹²⁾

Persuading violators to return to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, King Abdul-Aziz said, "As Arabs we were insignificant till we became Muslims. We were slaves for non-Arabs, but Islam made us masters. We have no worth except by submission to Allah and following His Prophet Mohammad. We must understand the reality of our faith and our Arab sense of belonging, and we must not forget them at all."⁽¹³⁾

Regarding some calls for freedom, the King affirmed that freedom was not something Europeans invented. The Qur'an calls for complete freedom that guarantees human rights and equality for all, be they old or young, poor or rich, strong or weak.⁽¹⁴⁾

Three things represented the cornerstone of King Abdul-Aziz' strategies. They were *tawheed*, Shari'ah and unity. He was committed to the promotion of pure faith as adopted and practiced by the *salaf*. No wonder he chose the *tawheed* declaration of faith (There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) to be the emblem on the Kingdom's flag. As for the flag's date-palm tree and the color green, they symbolize aspiration for development and welfare. The swords represent the military power necessary for the defense of homeland, the delivery of justice and the

implementation of Shari'ah sentences. Thus, his concept of the function of the state embodies promoting *tawheed*, following the Prophet's Sunnah and achieving material power.⁽¹⁵⁾

The cornerstone of King Abdul-Aziz' strategies was jointly set long before King Abdul-Aziz was born. It was laid down by the Al-Saud and Imam Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Wahaab when they declared the Dir'iyyah Pledge in 1744 AD. It was the Al-Saud who first adopted Ibn Abdul-Wahaab's Da'wah for reform and *tawheed* and provided the necessary protection for it. They have continued to do so, making great sacrifices for Da'wah's sake ever since. Motivated by the family commitment to the Da'wah for *tawheed*, and by his faith, King Abdul-Aziz established the Kingdom on the principles of Islam. When asked by the United Nations to send them a copy of the Kingdom's constitution, the King sent them a copy of the Qur'an. He told them it included the Godly teachings which his country follows.⁽¹⁶⁾ This was a typical response from the King, whose faith was the prime mover of his thought and action.

The King's devotion to *tawheed* meant following the *salaf's* approach to discourse. Basic to the *salafi* approach is making judgments on the basis of evidence, not on the status or reputation of the discourses.⁽¹⁷⁾ Affirming this evidence-oriented approach, the King declared that he would accept the judgment with the strongest evidence regardless of which of the four jurisprudence schools it came from.⁽¹⁸⁾ Not only did he adopt the *salafi* approach in theory, but also in practice.

Relating an incident in which King Abdul-Aziz was extremely upset, Fouad Shaakir said that he would not be so angry except in serious faith matters. Shaakir said, "Having asked

the King's permission for one of the official high commissions of hajj, I ushered them in. They were following me, and the king was sitting when, all of a sudden, I saw fury on the King's face. Turning around, I saw the head and the members of the commission bending as if in prayer. His Majesty shouted aloud in extreme anger: No, no! O Sheikh, put up your head, you and your group! This is *haraam* (forbidden)! Haraam! Bowing is due to none but Allah, the magnificent creator - glory and exaltation be to Him.⁽¹⁹⁾

Following his annexation of Al-Hijaz, the King ordered that *shirk* (polytheism) manifestations be removed from there, as required by the *Da'wah* for *Tawheed*.⁽²⁰⁾ In this regard, Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Aziz Al-Anqary had to send a letter to Sultan Ibn Bijaad and the people of Ghatghat. The letter expressed how the King considered the removal of *shirk* manifestations a top priority. It also demanded no objections or violations. As mentioned in it, "As for the issue of domes (on graves), it has been confirmed to us that the Imam - may Allah grant him success - has sent Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Bleihid⁽²¹⁾ to remove them. Praise be to Allah, his determination on having that done is very great."⁽²²⁾

Thus, King Abdul-Aziz' determination to remove such *shirk* manifestations reflects his pursuit of pure faith for which the *Da'wah* called. It also demonstrates how his conduct was consistent in terms of beliefs and actions. It was his pursuit of pure faith that drove him to purge religious practices of *shirk* influences while working for the welfare of his people on the modernization fronts.

4.2 The King's Outstanding Contribution To Educational Development

Educational Rationale and Policies

Believing in the crucial role of education in modernization, King Abdul-Aziz had to take due measures to develop the educational system, along with the state's other systems. He believed that nation building could not be achieved except through education.⁽²³⁾ Since the recapture of the Riyadh city in 1902 AD, the King had striven to modernize the state within Islamic guidelines.

Despite being occupied with the immediate problems of uniting the country and establishing law and order,⁽²⁴⁾ he saw to it that educational efforts were steadily underway, though not as rapidly as desired. In order to have the heritage books printed in Al-Manaar Press, he had to contact Mr. Mohamed Rasheed Ridha,⁽²⁵⁾ owner of *Al-Manaar Magazine*. The contacts and printing were done, even before the conquest of Al-Hijaz. Publication then continued steadily on a large scale.⁽²⁶⁾

Measures

Once the major issues of unification and law and order were established, the King directed resources to the other issues of internal reform and development. Education received special attention. The King established the Directorate of General Education in 1926 AD.⁽²⁷⁾ This marked a new phase in educational development. Education became more organized,

and it covered all regions. The Directorate of Education carried out its duties till it was replaced by the Ministry of Education in 1953 AD. This was meant to organize and advance education, and to regulate and open schools as needed. Elite of scholars and thinkers were put in charge of the Ministry to develop education within a sound Islamic framework.

The King's concern for education was reflected in Article 23 of the Basic State System in 1926 AD: "The duties of the Directorate of General Education are to disseminate sciences and knowledge, to provide vocational training, to establish *makaatib*⁽²⁸⁾ and schools, to maintain religious institutes and to give meticulous attention to the foundations of religion throughout the Kingdom."⁽²⁹⁾ Indeed, religious studies occupied a special place in school curricula, taking the highest share (about 40%), followed by Arabic studies, and then the other subjects.⁽³⁰⁾

In one of his speeches, King Abdul-Aziz reiterated the religious rationale for his educational policy. He said, "Allah has made us, from my great grandfathers till now, promoters and teachers of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and the ways of the righteous *salaf*."⁽³¹⁾

The following examples illustrate the King's untiring efforts in the field of education:

In 1933 AD, he endorsed a petition from the religious scholars of Najd, encouraging all those capable of education to seek it. Infact, he made it obligatory on those who could afford it. As for those who refused, they were to be banished to places they did not like. This was re-confirmed in 1934 AD.

The year 1938 AD witnessed an increase in the number of students attending the lessons of Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Ibn Baaz, who was the judge of Al-Kharj at that time. Some students were from Iraq, Syria and Yemen. In response, the King ordered the setup of a building for their education.

He supported the efforts being made by Sheikh Abdullah Al-Qar'aawi⁽³²⁾ in the south of the Kingdom; the King ordered the opening of many schools, and he financed them generously.

In 1944 AD, when Dar Al-Tawheed Secondary School was established in Taef, the King instructed regional emirs to take the youth who were at the schooling age to Taef to study at the school. Free accommodation and care were available for them.⁽³³⁾

In addition to making education free, the King ordered that books and stationery be free for all students in the Kingdom. He also ordered that students at the secondary and high schools be given a monthly stipend, as some kind of reward for continuing their education.⁽³⁴⁾

He established a school for the emirs in Makkah, then a similar one in Riyadh, in order that his children be educated there. He was not lenient with laggards, for he considered education the sole means to benefiting from modern civilization.

During a visit to Al-Falaah School and the Fakhriyyah School in Makkah, the King donated to the former one hundred pounds, ten slaughtered sheep and six sacs of rice. The latter got fifty pounds, six slaughtered sheep and four sacs of rice.

He assigned Haafiz Wahbah⁽³⁵⁾ and Yousuf Yaaseen⁽³⁶⁾ the task of inspecting eight *kataateeb* / *makaatib* in Makkah, and gave a stipend of two 'gold' pounds each to seven of them.⁽³⁷⁾

So great was the King's keenness on promoting education that he made sure he received the first graduates of schools. In 1931 AD, he gave audience to the first group of graduates the Saudi Religious Institute in Makkah produced.⁽³⁸⁾ On this occasion, the King delivered an instructive speech, encouraging the students to continue their education. In the speech, he said, "O sons, you are the first fruit of what we have planted in the Institute. You must appreciate the knowledge you have acquired, but you must bear in mind that knowledge without application is like a tree without fruit."⁽³⁹⁾ He also emphasized to them the importance of seeking useful knowledge, which did not contradict Islamic teachings; it was perfectly legitimate to take from non-Muslims beneficial things, for wisdom is what the believer sought, and it was to be taken wherever found."⁽⁴⁰⁾ His wise words to the students were vibrant with insight for their gains and future; encouraging them, he said, "Whoever amongst you comes from a respectable home, let him not be a means of making it low. Let others build for themselves future glory."⁽⁴¹⁾ These words resonate with the well known verses:

Homes from nothing are by learning raised,
While noble ones are by ignorance demolished.

During the reign of King Abdul-Aziz reign, there were two policies for the provision of higher education: sending students on missions abroad; and the establishment of university colleges at home. The first mission of Saudi students to Egypt was in 1346 H. It consisted of 14 students

in various majors. All costs were paid by the Saudi government. Having finished their education in their respective colleges and institutes, the students returned to the Kingdom in the period between 1354 H and 1358 H.⁽⁴²⁾

Due to difficulties arising from Egyptian secondary school requirements, the Saudi government established a school in 1935 AD, especially to prepare students for studying in Egypt. The curriculum of this school was formulated along Egyptian lines. Graduates of the school were qualified to join Egyptian institutes and colleges. Unfortunately, due to World War II circumstances, the missions were interrupted for a while. They were resumed in 1942 AD,⁽⁴³⁾ when 15 mission school graduates were sent to Egypt. In 1944 AD, another 18 students went to Egypt.

With the increase in oil revenues, missions were sent to a variety of countries in addition to Egypt. Also, after a college of Shari'ah was established in Makkah, in 1369 H, missions were restricted to areas of study not available in the Kingdom.

Missions for studying abroad had to be regulated, and the Mission Act of 1355 H was issued. The Act contained 22 articles on mission requirements and regulations, including all that concerns the student from selection to graduation.

Since Egypt was the major mission destination for Saudi students, the Education Directorate established the Saudi Administration for Academic Missions in Cairo. The administration was responsible for supervising Saudi mission students in Egypt.

During the reign of King Abdul-Aziz, the number of mission graduates to Egypt was about 705 students, to Syria 259 and

to Europe and America 46. The results of the mission policy were very fruitful, particularly as there had been great need for graduates in the Kingdom.⁽⁴⁴⁾

Colleges

As the number of secondary school graduates rose, there was more demand for higher education, which the mission system alone could not satisfy. The Directorate of Education suggested the establishment of a college of Shari'ah in Makkah. The King readily agreed, and it started admission the same year, 1369 H. Enrolment required a secondary school certificate from Religious Institutes, Tawheed Schools, or equivalent certificates from private schools. That year, 14 students were enrolled.

The establishment of the Makkah College of Shari'ah marked a new phase in the development of higher education in the Kingdom. It was followed by other colleges, e.g. the Makkah Teachers' College in 1952 AD and the Riyadh College of Shari'ah in 1953 AD.

In brief, during the reign of King Abdul-Aziz, education developed from the basic traditional *kuttaab* to higher education. The number of elementary schools increased from 4 in 1344 H to 326 in 1373 H. Secondary education started with one school (the Saudi Religious Institute) in 1345 H and reached 12 schools in 1373 H. Also, the budget of the Directorate of Education rose from SR 66,650 in 1926 AD to SR 20,000,000 in 1953 AD. Thus, King Abdul-Aziz gradually laid the foundation for the Saudi modern system of education.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Printing and Distributing Books

As part of King Abdul-Aziz' efforts in the development of education, he spent generously on the printing of books. They were necessary as teaching-learning material and for the dissemination of religious knowledge in the first place. Thousands of *tawheed*-related printed materials were bought, and the printing of others was financed by the King as well.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The publications bought or printed for distribution are said to have reached about one hundred thousand books.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Contacts were made earlier with Mohammad Rasheed Ridha in order to have the heritage books printed at Al-Manar Press. Other contacts were made with the press in India, particularly in Bombay.⁽⁴⁸⁾ This explains why the revival of heritage in the Arabian Peninsula was associated with the King's name.⁽⁴⁹⁾

The following are some conclusions made by studies conducted on publications during the reign of King Abdul-Aziz:

1. Most of the publications, the printing of which was financed by the King, had been written by renowned *salafi* scholars, such as Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Al-Qayyim and Ibn Qudaamah Al-Maqdissiy.
2. The publications included a wide range of topics, such as beliefs, explanation of the Qur'an, jurisprudence, Arabic language and literature, Islamic history, geography and lineage.
3. The King gave special attention to publishing and distributing the works of Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Wahaab and his students. He wanted to spread the truth

and aims of the Da'wah for Tawheed, and to refute the anti-Da'wah allegations.

4. Printing had to be done in various countries, depending on the circumstances in the host country where the printing house existed. It also depended on the availability of those serving the King in that regard.⁽⁵⁰⁾
5. The King had some books published in Javanese and Hindi in order to promote the Da'wah in Islamic countries. He also had the interpretation of the Qur'an printed in English and distributed in Europe.⁽⁵¹⁾

In conclusion of this section, it can be safely said that the King, driven by his commitment to Islamic teachings, embarked on the systematic dissemination of knowledge and practice related to pure faith. As he often declared, education was the means to spreading Islamic teachings and the modernization of the state. Therefore, it was necessary to send missions abroad and to develop a proper system at home, to provide the necessary finances, to start an educational administration, and to co-ordinate all efforts on the educational front, in terms of quantity and quality. As educational content was basically in printed form, the King paid special attention to printing needed books and references. Such measures reflect an Islamically consistent character in belief, thought and action - starting with an Islamic vision, adopting the right means to realizing it, and taking measured steps within available resources for implementation, with unprecedented perseverance. Such is the conduct of a God-fearing character, expected to fulfill shouldered trust and leadership responsibilities. This may reflect the **Qur'anic statement**: "... And whosoever keeps his duty to Allah, Allah

will appoint a way out for him, (3) and will provide for him from (a quarter) whence he has no expectation. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him...."⁽⁵²⁾



4.3 The King's Custom of Consulting

The Ulama and Specialists

The Arabian Peninsula went through a stage of weakness and disintegration. There were disputes over the fundamentals as well as the branches of religion. Apparently, this state of confusion was prevalent in all Muslim countries. Portraying this state of Muslim deterioration, King Abdul-Aziz said, "Ignorance has spread widely, and Muslims have become indifferent. This explains our present state of affairs with which you are well aware. Nothing has remained of religion except name, and we are now in a terrible state of disarray. Muslims have disintegrated into sects and factions."⁽⁵³⁾

Such was King Abdul-Aziz' awareness of the state of the Muslim nation that he was able to depict it with great honesty. He was also fully aware of the dangers awaiting it and the important role of religious scholars in this respect, particularly if they abstained from promoting the truth. In this case, faith and day-to-day affairs would be endangered. Also, pseudo-scholars, according to the King, were a source of backwardness in the Arabian Peninsula. They claimed knowledge they never possessed, and so he wanted them to be put to the test by the well known trustworthy ulama. He said, "If any sees himself fit for calling people unto Allah, let him prove himself to one of the Sheikhs: our Sheikh and imam, Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdullateef - may Allah preserve him and grant him support - in Al-'Aaridh; his brother Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Abdullateef ⁽⁵⁴⁾ in Al-Washam; Sheikh Abdullah Al-Anqari in Sudair; and Sheikh Abdullah Ibn

Mohammad Al-Saleem in Al-Qasseem. It would be improper to go beyond the *ulama* we have mentioned. However, one could go to the recognized deputies who are assigned the tasks of promoting virtue and preventing vice. They follow the Sheikhs' traditions,⁽⁵⁵⁾ and we and the emirs will support them, God willing."⁽⁵⁶⁾

By these succinct words, the King expressed his high regard for the genuine responsible scholars, while warning "false" ones of the consequences of leading people astray and undermining the image of scholars. He supported the efforts to combat falsehoods and non-Islamic practices which had been introduced and had led to confusion among Muslims. This has been typical of Al-Saud since their early support for the Da'wah for *Tawheed*; one of the Da'wah objectives is to combat practices and beliefs not preached by Prophet Muhammad.

Since its establishment, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted Shari'ah to guide all its affairs. This explains the significance of the *ulama* and the high regard the King had for them. In his court, the King had them sit in the most important place. In fact, he gave them priority over his brothers, sons and executives. He would give them a very generous reception, and would pay great attention to what they had to say.⁽⁵⁷⁾ He would consult them on matters of legal concern. On Thursdays, he had a regular meeting with *ulama*, in addition to a seminar, normally held after the night prayer, for Qur'anic studies and history.⁽⁵⁸⁾ When important matters arose about which the *ulama* had some advice to offer, they would discuss it amongst themselves, then put their conclusion in writing, and put their signatures to it. It was the King's

custom to receive them or whomever they deputized to present the matter. The King had genuine reverence for the grand *ulama*, and the Al-Sheikhs, the descendents of Imam Mohamed Ibn Abdul-Wahaab,⁽⁵⁹⁾ who started the Da'wah for *Tawheed*.

The following are some situations demonstrating King Abdul-Aziz' reverence for the *ulama*:

One day the King received a foreign diplomat discuss to some affairs. The king gave a hospitable reception in the royal palace. Thinking it was too much to give such a reception to an enemy of Allah, Sheikh Saad Ibn Ateeq, a religious scholar, was displeased; he thought that the negotiations should have taken place in an outside tent, not in the palace. Having learnt about Sheikh Ateeq's displeasure, the King sent for him. In the King's presence, when asked by a fellow scholar to kiss the King's head, Sheikh Ateeq refused, as he was still upset about the reception. The King stood up saying, "It is I that will kiss the Sheikh's head," and so he did.⁽⁶⁰⁾

On a visit to the King in Riyadh one of the *ulama* saw the King was wearing such a long thobe that it touched the ground. He said to the King, "My God! Abdul-Aziz, a streak of pride has come unto you! Your thobe is trailing behind you!" On hearing the Sheikh's remark, the King ordered the servants to bring a pair of scissors. Giving the scissors to the Sheikh, the King said, "Cut as much as you think is inconsistent with Islam."⁽⁶¹⁾

King Abdul-Aziz revered the *ulama* so much that, before his death, he called upon his future successor to look after them; he said, "I call upon you to be good to Muslim scholars. Make sure that they get their due respect, that you have them in your

assemblies and that you seek their advice. Be keen on acquiring knowledge, for people are useless without Allah's blessing in terms of knowledge, particularly of beliefs."⁽⁶²⁾

It may be alleged that the King treated religious scholars well for political expediency; he was well aware of their role, and so, he wanted to avoid any conflict with them at a time when stability was badly needed for nation building and the elimination of external danger. This allegation is false, for the King's behavior towards the *ulama* remained consistent even after having secured his rule and established the Kingdom. He continued to consult them, and he never ignored their advice on matters of reform.

The King's respect for scholars was extended to those in other Muslim countries. During the pilgrimage season, he would meet and discuss with them issues of general Islamic importance. Among them were Sheikh Abdul-Majeed Saleem,⁽⁶³⁾ who was Al-Azhar's Grand Sheikh, Sheikh Mohammad Rasheed Ridha and Sheikh Mohammad Haamid Al-Fiqi⁽⁶⁴⁾ from Egypt, Sheikh Mahmoud Shukri Al-Alousi⁽⁶⁵⁾ from Iraq and Sheikh Bahjat Al-Beetaar⁽⁶⁶⁾ from Syria.⁽⁶⁷⁾

In addition to the hajj season, the King occasionally invited the *ulama* of the Muslim world in order to consult them on common Muslim issues and how they should be dealt with. This reflected broadminded leadership, for he was the guardian of the holy sanctuaries for all Muslims. He wanted the *ulama* of the Muslim world, including the Kingdom, to be involved in matters related to their common faith.

In 1926 AD, King Abdul-Aziz hosted the Makkah Al-Mukarramah Islamic Conference⁽⁶⁸⁾, to which he invited

Muslim leaders and *ulama*. At the conference, Sheikh Haafiz Wahbah delivered the King's speech; he said that the aim of the conference was to bring about happiness to the country, and to help it to gain the religious, scientific and economic knowledge befitting a Muslim country. He recommended that Muslim countries send experienced and knowledgeable *ulama* to help in preaching, guiding and reforming the country with respect to faith and worldly affairs; negative criticism was not considered consistent with the spirit of Islamic brotherhood. The King submitted a plan to the conferees to consider.⁽⁶⁹⁾

Shura

King Abdul-Aziz followed a tradition of *shura* (consultation) in running the affairs of the state. It was consistent with Islamic teachings; commanding the Prophet, hence Muslim leaders, to exercise *shura* with Muslims, Allah says, "... [And] consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when you are resolved, then put your trust in Allah. Lo! Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)."⁽⁷⁰⁾ It is in light of this that the King's establishment of the Shura Council ought to be seen. It demonstrates his devotion to Islamic teachings.⁽⁷¹⁾

Having captured Makkah, in 1924 AD, King Abdul-Aziz invited the *ulama* and the notables for discussions and consultations about matters that encountered their city; this was the nucleus of the *Shura* Council. Addressing his guests and subjects on this occasion, the King said, "I would like you to fix a time for a meeting for the *ulama*, the notables and the merchants to choose representatives for each group. The representatives' job is to look after the community's interests and its affairs. The selection has to be put in writing and

signed by the electorate, confirming consent to the chosen representatives. Those elected are to take charge of related affairs and to fix times for meetings to decide on issues of interest to the community. As for the electorate, I would like them to put the public interest first, not their own, and to exercise responsibility, devotion and piety."⁽⁷²⁾

Even in military affairs, the King never embarked on operations without consulting, in addition to military experts, those with knowledge of peace and war, in light of Shari'ah. This adherence to decisions reached through consensus and open debate based on Shari'ah meant the King was always able to rally public support.⁽⁷³⁾

With extremists among the Ikhwaan (Brotherhood members), the King showed genuine leadership qualities by listening to them with great patience and calling on them for negotiations several times. The dispute was put for open debate at the Second Riyadh Conference, known as the General Assembly, in 1928 AD. The aim was to reach appropriate solutions through negotiations.⁽⁷⁴⁾ This was the epitome of wisdom on the part of the King, who, despite the availability of physical means, preferred to go the patient way of *shura* and open debate. It was a sign of his confidence as well as responsibility and care for his countrymen.

King Abdul-Aziz was so concerned with the exercise of *shura* that he would be angry when he asked for an opinion and was told he knew better. This answer: "Chiefs know better," meaning the King. He hated this response; had he known better, he would not have asked for the opinions of others. He told his advisors not to say he knew best. All he wanted was honest opinions and frank discussions when necessary.

Consider the following dialogue between the King and one of his advisors; the King wanted him to pledge loyalty to him, supporting whoever supported the King and being enemy of the King's enemies. This is the dialogue:

King: Shake hands and give me your pledge.

Advisor: What for?

King: Loyalty to me, supporting my supporters and being the enemy of my enemies.

Advisor: Loyalty to you and supporting your supporters are indisputably right.

King: What about the second part of the pledge?

Advisor: Being the enemy of your enemies? There is something about it.

King: How?

Advisor: It is pledged only to the Prophet. He is perfect, and so whoever takes him for an enemy takes Allah too.

King: So?

Advisor: Man can be right and can be wrong.

King: True.

Advisor: Would you mind letting me investigate the causes of enmity?

King: Not at all.

Advisor: Enmity can be caused by rumor, and it can be a mistake which can be corrected. It is better to make your enemy see the truth, isn't it?

King: Yes, it is.

Advisor: Isn't it better than remaining enemies? You need to make more friends, not more enemies.

King: True.

Advisor: My lord, I believe it is imperative that your assistants and I clear our souls of all grudges and envy, and sincerely dedicate all our loyalty to you.

King: Excellent!

Advisor: However, if it becomes clear that enemies or enviers deliberately persist in their hostility towards you, we have to take them for enemies.

King: Perfect! I have never heard such wise analysis before. May Allah guide us to what is right, and may He make our steps firm.

Advisor: Thank you sir. May Allah grant you success.

King: Starting today, you will be one of my personal advisors.⁽⁷⁵⁾

Since that time, the advisor's relationship with the King had grown stronger and more cordial.



Chapter 4 Endnotes

- (1) Surah 33, Ayah 21.
- (2) Al-Keelani, Kamaal, *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud, and Contemporary Islamic Reform*, op cit, p. 73.
- (3) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 78.
- (4) Thabit, Saeed Ibn Ali: *King Abdul-Aziz Approaches to Building Public Opinion*, ibid, p. 42.
- (5) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 74.
- (6) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 84.
- (7) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, (in Arabic), op cit, Part 1, p. 87.
- (8) Maalik, Al-Shaafi'iy, Abu-Haneefah and Ibn Hanbal.
- (9) Al-Keelani, Kamal, op cit, p. 76.
- (10) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 120-121.
- (11) Saleem, Mohammad Al-Sayyid: "Political Analysis of King Abdul-Aziz' Thought" (in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1419 H, Vol. I*, pp. 236-230.
- (12) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 25.
- (13) Al-Obood, Saalih Ibn Abdullah Ibn Abdulrahman: "King Abdul-Aziz: His Leadership Qualities of Determination and Will"(in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1419 H, Vol. 3*, p. 138.
- (14) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 61.
- (15) Al-Keelani, Kamal: *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud, and Contemporary Islamic Reform*, op cit, p. 77.
- (16) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, pp. 78-79.
- (17) Al-Simaari, Ibraheem Ibn Abdullah: *King Abdul-Aziz: Personality and Leadership*, op cit, p. 34.

- (18) Al-Qaabisi, Muhyiddeen: *The Qur'an and the Sword*, op cit, p. 88.
- (19) Shaakir, Fouad: King Abdul-Aziz: *Biography not History*, 1st edition, Jeddah, 1395 H, p. 57.
- (20) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 77.
- (21) It is Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Sulaiman Ibn Saud Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sulaiman Ibn Uthman Ibn Bleihid Ibn Abdullah Ibn Fawzaan Ibn Mohammad Ibn 'Aed Ibn Bleihid Ibn Uthman. He was born in Al-Qarâa' in Al-Qasseem in 1278 H (1861 AD). He was taught by Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Saleem of Buraidah. He was also taught by Sheikh Saalih Ibn Qirnaas. He studied in India, too. When he returned home, he worked in the judiciary and guidance in a number of places in Al-Qasseem. Then, he was appointed the judge of Hael. After the annexation of Al-Hijaz, he was appointed Chief Judge, whose headquarters was in Makkah. In 1348 H (1940 AD), he returned to Hael, where he worked as a judge. He was known for his scholarly work, courage and wisdom. He wrote a number of books. He died in 1359 H (1940 AD).
- Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdurrahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Eight Centuries*, op cit, Part 4, pp. 138-150.
- (22) Al-Omari, Omar Ibn Saalih Ibn Sulaiman: *King Abdul-Aziz and Charity Work*, op cit, p. 77.
- (23) Ibn Dheish, Abdullateef Ibn Abdullah: "Formal Educational System during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz" (in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz*, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1419 H, Vol. 3, p. 720.
- (24) Ibid, p. 721.
- (25) It is Mohamed Rasheed Ali Ridha Ibn Mohammad Shamsuddeen Ibn Mohammad Bahaaúddeen Ibn Mulla Ali Khaleefah Al-Qalaamooni 1282-1354 H (1865-1935 AD). He was born and brought up in Al-Qalaamoon, Tripoli, Al-Shaam. He was originally from Baghdad. His ancestors go back to Al-Hussien Ibn Ali. He was one of the Islamic reformists, and he owned Al-Manar Magazine. In 1315 H (1897 AD), he left for Egypt and was taught by Sheikh Mohammad Abduh. He issued Al-Manaar Magazine to promote the social and religious views of the reformist movement. He visited Syria. There he was elected the head of the Syrian Conference.

Then, he went back to Egypt and stayed there. He died in a car crash on the Cairo-Suez Road.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who?)*, Part 6, op cit, p. 126.

(26) Al-Rifa'iy, Abdul-Aziz Ahmad: "King Abdul-Aziz' Care the Publication of Books", (in Arabic), *Proceedings of the International Conference on the History of King Abdul-Aziz, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Press, 1419 H, Vol. 2*, p. 650.

(27) Ibn Dheish, Abdullateef Ibn Abdullah: "Formal Educational System during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz", op cit, p. 761.

(28) The Arabic word *makaatib* is the plural of *maktab*. Though *maktab* now refers to an *office* or *bureau* and even *desk*. In the history of education the word refers to a one-room school. There, children received Islamic education, including Qur'anic recitation and the three Rs as well as the Hadith. The *maktab / kuttaab* barely had any furniture. It was normally a part of the teacher's / sheikh's house. The word *kuttaab* is a synonym for *maktab*, but not in the modern sense - the plural of *kuttaab* is *katateeb*. A lot of Muslim scholars started their education in the *maktab / kuttaab*.

(29) Attaar, Mustafa Abdul-Ghafoor: *King Abdul-Aziz and Education*, op cit, p. 789.

(30) Ibid.

(31) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 82

(32) He is Abdullah Ibn Mohammad Ibn Hamad Ibn Othmaan Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn Nujaid Al-Qar'aawi. He was born in Unaizah in 1315 H (1897 AD). He worked in trading, but went on learning missions throughout the Kingdom. Then, he left for India, where he joined Al-Rahmaaniyyah school. There, he studied Al-Hadith. Back in the Kingdom, he went to the south, where education was known to be backward. With the King's support, Al-Qar'aawi started the establishment of schools in 1360 H (1940 AD). In his lifetime, the number of schools reached about 2,200. The King allocated a budget to those schools, then incorporated them into the formal system of the ministry of education. Sheikh Al-Qaáawi died in Riyadh in 1389 H (1969 AD).

Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdurrahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Eight Centuries*, 1419 H, (1999 AD), op cit, Part 4, pp. 389-409.

(33) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of*

King Abdul-Aziz, op cit, pp. 122-123.

(34) Ibn Dheish, Abdullateef Ibn Abdullah: *The Formal Educational System during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 762.

(35) It is Haafiz Wahbah (1307-1387 H) / (1889-1967 AD). He was born and brought up in Egypt. He was educated in Al-Azhar. He studied at the School of the Shariáh Judiciary. He worked for the Journal of the national party in Cairo, then in Turkey, India and Kuwait, where he worked in teaching. He ended up in Riyadh. There, King Abdul-Aziz employed him. He was sent to London as minister without portfolio, then as an ambassador. After retirement, he died in Rome. Among his publications are: *Fifty Years in the Arabian Peninsula*, and *The Arabian Peninsula during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who?)*, Part 6, op cit, p. 160.

(36) It is Yousuf Ibn Mohammad Ibn Yaaseen (1309-1381 H) / (1892-1962 AD). He was one of the major officials working for King Abdul-Aziz during the formative period of the Kingdom. He was born and brought up in Al-Laziqiyyah, Syria. He mastered Quránic recitation. He studied for two years at the Mohamed Rasheed Ridha school for Da'wah and Irshaad in Cairo. Then, he left for Al-Qudse (Jerusalem), where he studied in Al-Salaahiyah school. When the French invaded Syria, he sought refuge in Makkah, then he went to Jordan before the arrival of Abdullah Ibn Al-Shareef Hussein. From there, he wrote to Al-Shareef Hussein in Makkah about the bad conduct of his son Abdullah in Jordan. Fearing Abdullah's wrath, ibn Yaaseen left for Al-Qudse, where he worked as a journalist. He became in charge of *Jareedat Al-Sabaah (the Morning Paper)*. Then, he left for Syria, where he enrolled at the college of law. Then, he left for Riyadh. There, he earned the trust of King Abdul-Aziz. He was in the King's company during Al-Sabalah Battle. He also accompanied him on his first trip by camel to Makkah. He became in charge of *Om Al-Qura Newspaper*. The King appointed him the chief of the diplomatic section in the royal court. In addition, he became minister of state, deputized the administration of the ministry of foreign affairs. He continued this post, till he died in Dammam. He was buried in Riyadh.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who?)*, Part 8, op cit, p. 253.

(37) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 124-125.

(38) The Institute was established in 1345 H (1926 AD). It was first established in 1345 H (1926 AD) under the name of The Islamic Institute Later, it was named The Saudi Religious Institute. At first, duration of study was 4 years, a preparatory one included. Later, in 1366 H, it became 5 years. The aim of the institute was to prepare teachers for primary schools and to prepare qualified clerks for government posts. Considered the first secondary school in the Kingdom, the Institute was instrumental in the development of education there. Shortage of enrolment caused by involvement in earning a living prompted the King to offer stipends to students for motivation purposes. The stipend started as 3 piastres a day, then was raised to 2 gold guineas a month. This increased enrolment. Later, syllabus plans were modified. The Institute recruited graduates of primary schools and mosque *halaqaat* (study seminars) as well as non-government schools. Candidates had to pass an entry test. Later, enrolment became restricted to primary school graduates due to the increase in demand and in the institute's number of graduates.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 636.

Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 251-254.

(39) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 59.

(40) Ibid, p. 60.

(41) Ibid, p 61.

(42) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 294-295.

(43) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 638.

(44) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 295-298.

(45) Ibid., pp. 300-316.

(46) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Ruler*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 300-316.

(47) Attaar, Mustafa Abdul-Ghafoor: *King Abdul-Aziz and Education*, op cit, pp. 794-795.

(48) Al-Rifa'iy, Abdul-Aziz Ahmad: "King Abdul-Aziz' Care the Publication of Books", op cit, pp. 650-651

(49) Al-Simaari, Fahd Ibn Abdullah: *The Private Library of King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud*, Daaral-Malik Abdul-Aziz, Al-Hayaah Press, 1417 H, p. 10.

(50) Ibid, pp. 13-14.

(51) Al-Khateeb, Abdul-Hameed: *The Just Ruler*, op cit, part 1, p. 76.

(52) Surah 65, Ayahs 2-3.

(53) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 59.

(54) It is Mohamed Ibn Abdullateef Ibn Abdurrahman Al-Sheikh (1273-1367H) / (1857-1948 AD). He was born and brought up in Riyadh. He learned Qur'anic recitation while his father was still living. He was educated by his brother Sheikh Abdullah as well as other sheikhs. He excelled in the subjects of Tawheed, Hadith, Jurisprudence, Qur'anic interpretations and Arabic. He became one of the outstanding scholars of his time. He was appointed judge of Al-Quwai'iyyah, then Al-Washm, then Shaqraa'. He also worked on Da'wah activities in Asseer and Al-Hijaaz regions.

Al-Bassaam, Abdullah Ibn Abdurrahman Ibn Saalih: *The Scholars of Najd in Eight Centuries*, op cit, Part 6, pp. 134-139.

(55) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 59.

(56) *Selections from the Royal Speeches*, op cit, Part 1, p. 59.

(57) Al-Subait, Abdurrahman Ibn Subait et al: *I was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 1, pp. 257-278.

(58) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, pp. 126-127.

(59) The King is reported to have said, "Whenever I meet Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Abdullateef, I perspire profusely under my arms."

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 741.

(60) Al-Subait, Abdurrahman Ibn Subait et al: *I was with Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Vol. 1, pp. 350-351.

(61) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 74.

(62) Al-Uhaidib, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Mohammad: *From the Life of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 279.

(63) It is Sheikh Abdul-Majeed Saleem (1299-1374 H) / (1882-1954 AD). He was born and educated in Egypt. He studied in Al-Azhar University. He was a student of Sheikh Mohammad Abdu. He held a number of important posts in teaching, Iftaa' (religious ruling), and the judiciary. He was the Egyptian Grand Mufti for 20 years, and Al-Azhar Grand Sheikh twice. He belonged to the Hanafi school of thought. He died in Cairo in

1954 AD.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who?)*, op cit, Part 4, p. 149.

(64) It is Mohammad Haamid Al-Fiqi (1892 - 1959 AD). He was an important Egyptian scholar. He was the founder and head of the Society for the Supporters of the Mohammedan Sunnah. His writings were a great contribution to the Islamic library.

(65) It is Mahmoud Shukri Ibn Abdullah Ibn Shihaab Al-Deen Mahmoud Al-Alousi, Al-Husseini, Abu Al-Maáali (1273-1343 H) / (1857-1924 AD). He was a historian, man of literature and religion. He was a reformist. He was born in Baghdad, and he was taught by his father and his uncle as well as others. He taught at a number of mosques, and gave lessons at his own home. He was member of the Education Council when the Arab Iraqi government was first formed. His publications reached 52. He died in Baghdad in 1924 AD.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who?)*, Part 7, op cit, pp. 172-173.

(66) It is Mohammad Ibn Bahjah Ibn Mohammad Bahaa' Al-Deen Al-Beetaar (1396 - 1976 AD). He was a competent religious scholar, a reformer, a literary figure, a historian and an orator. He worked in the teaching profession in Syria, Al-Hijaaz and Lebanon. He was a member of the Arab Scientific Consortium. He authored several publications and manuscript investigations.

Yousof, Mohammad Khair Ramadaan: *Al-Mustadrak 'Alaa Tatimmat Al-A'laam, (Addendum to Who Is Who Continued)*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Beirut, Dar Ibn Hazm, 1422 H (2002 AD), pp. 84-85.

(67) Al-Salmaan, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah: *Education during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, p. 127.

(68) In 1344 H (1926 AD), King Abdul-Aziz invited Muslim peoples and heads of states to the Makkah Islamic Conference. Invitations were sent to: the king of Egypt, who sent a delegation headed by Sheikh Al-Azhar Mohammad Al-Zawaahiri; to the Turkish government, which sent a delegation; the king of Afghanistan; the Shah of Iran; the king of Iraq; Emir Abdul-Kareem Al-Khataabi; Imam Yahaya Hameeduddeen; the Head of the Islamic Higher Council in Jerusalem; the head of the government of Tripoli West; Sheikh Badr Al-Hassani; Sheikh Bahjat Al-Beetaar from Damascus; the Central Religious Ministry in Ederna

(Russia); Judge Mustafa Sharshali from Algeria; head of the Islamic Society in Jakarta; and the Mohammedan Society in Java, Indonesia. The invitees represented 18 Islamic territories. The conference had to be delayed from Thul-Qi'dah 20 to 26, 1344 H due to arrival problems. All issues were there for discussion except international politics, particular disputes among Muslim nations and the Hijaaz issue, which had been already settled.

Saeed, Ameen: *History of the Saudi State, The Reign of King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Faisal, 1319-1373 H, op cit, Vol. 2, p. 172.*

Darweesh, Madeeha Ahmad: *History of the First Saudi State till the First Quarter of the Twentieth Century*, 8th edition, Jeddah, Dar Al-Shurouq, 1416 H (1996 AD), p. 34.

(69) For more information on this conference, please see Al-Jeraisy, Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *Documents on the Saudi-Egyptian Relations during the Reign of King Abdul-Aziz*, op cit, Part 1, p. 65

(70) Surah 3, Ayah 159.

(71) On 22/5/1343 H (18/12/1924 AD), a meeting was held for establishing the Shura Council. The King asked the attendees to select a number of people to be the council members. They made a list of 12 people, forming what was known as the People's Council in 1344 H (1925 AD). The Council was assigned several duties: looking into the system of Shari'ah courts, investigating endowment issues, formulating a system for internal security, setting locality regulations, public health, promoting religious education, spreading literacy, regulating commerce, and post and telegraph. In 1345 H (1926 AD), The system of the People's Council was modified, having been merged with the Advisory Council, which was formed to assist the King's deputy in Al-Hijaaz. The new council was headed by Prince Faisal. After the Council was formed, basic instructions were written. In 1342 H (1927 AD), at the recommendation of the inspection committee, a Royal decree was issued, amending the section on the Shura Council in the basic instructions. Accordingly, the Council had 8 members headed by the Attorney General, Prince Faisal or any of his assistants or advisors. The Council duties increased. In 1347 H (1928 AD), a Royal decree was issued for a new basic system for the Council. Among its important articles were: the Shura Council was to be formed of the number determined by a royal decree; the King appoints a permanent

deputy head for the Council; a second deputy head was to be elected by the Council in order to replace the first deputy in his absence. Amendments continued till the Council members reached 13, plus a secretary, an assistant secretary and the 2 deputy heads, in 1369 H (1950 AD).

Hamzah, Fouad: *The Saudi Arabian Country*, op cit, pp. 98-111.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 569-580.

(72) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 570.

(73) Thabit, Saeed Ibn Ali: *King Abdul-Aziz' Methods in Building Public Opinion*, op cit, pp. 107-108.

(74) Ibid, pp. 107-108.

(75) Al-Thiniyyaan, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman: *Humaneness of a King*, op cit, pp. 112-115.

Chapter 5

Last Days and Testimonials

5.1 King Abdul-Aziz' Last Days

5.2 King Abdul-Aziz in the Eyes of the East and the West

5.1 The Last Days of King Abdul-Aziz

In his final years, King Abdul-Aziz suffered health problems⁽¹⁾, in addition to an old knee injury he had sustained as a result of a bullet during his early battles. At that time, the King did not follow up the bullet wound, and so a blood clot formed in the knee, causing pain on standing up or sitting down. King Abdul-Aziz continued to suffer for decades, but he endured, seeking Allah's reward. He had to use a wheelchair for his last nine years.⁽²⁾

In 1953 AD, he went to Taef to spend the summer. There, he became terribly ill. In addition to his private physicians, three doctors were called from Germany to treat him, but the treatment did not work.

Despite his suffering at his final hour, King Abdul-Aziz gave a symbolic lesson on the importance of cooperation and solidarity in doing good. On his deathbed, he looked at his two sons Saud and Faisal with love and pity and said, "Faisal, Saud is your brother. Saud, Faisal is your brother." Then, he said, "There is no might or power except with Allah. I testify that there is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah." These were his last words, which he repeated several times before passing away on a Monday morning, 09/11/1953 AD.

A funeral prayer was conducted for him in Al-Hawiyyah.⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾ HRH Prince Faisal Ibn Abdul-Aziz, as well as a number of princes, took the King's body to Riyadh - the news of his death had not spread in Taef yet. The body was buried in Al-

'Oud Macabre, Riyadh. Burial was done in accordance with Islamic teachings.

The death of King Abdul-Aziz saddened a lot of Muslims and Arabs greatly; he was regarded as an exemplary Arab Muslim king in modern times.⁽⁵⁾ On death occasions, Muslims say, "(156)... Lo! We are Allah's, and Lo! Unto Him we are returning."⁽⁶⁾ May Allah reward him greatly, and give him an eternal abode in Paradise with those who will be "reclining upon couches lined with silk brocade, the fruit of both gardens near to hand."⁽⁷⁾

The life of King Abdul-Aziz was full of great struggle, and he was blessed with great lineage and deeds. By the Grace of Allah, he was able to unite the country and establish the Kingdom after it had been in conflict for so long. He was also able to revive the call to promote genuine Islamic teachings. His Islamic conduct was evident in two things: his commitment to the Qur'an and the Sunnah; and his God-given insight, endurance and unique strength of body and mind.

May Allah grant King Abdul-Aziz mercy. May Allah bless his successors and make them defenders of the Islamic faith forever. Indeed, his sons have succeeded him, promoting Islamic teachings and dispensing the duties with which they have been entrusted. The trust now lies with his son King Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Aziz, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. May Allah take care of King Abdullah, grant him honor, make him a means to Islamic triumph and give him support so that the banner of Islam can stay high up and that our people can enjoy security and prosperity.

5.2 King Abdul-Aziz in the Eyes of the East and the West

King Abdul-Aziz, was a great leader with remarkable achievements, an experienced politician, and also an individual with lofty humane qualities and ideals, which appealed to whoever knew him directly or indirectly. The King's actual behavior and achievements are the best testimony to the greatness of his character. In the words of Abbaass Al-Aqqaad,⁽⁸⁾ the renowned Egyptian thinker, "King Abdul-Aziz is judged as a genuine leader by experienced judges of character"⁽⁹⁾ However, let us see what major thinkers and politicians had to say about King Abdul-Aziz.

5.2.1 Testimonies by Arabs and Muslims

Abdul-Rahman Azzam,⁽¹⁰⁾ the well-known former secretary general of the Arab League, said, "I knew King Abdul-Aziz, and he knew me a few years before we met in person. It was during the Hajj season of 1928 AD that I had the honor of meeting him and being his guest. In him I saw the embodiment of the genuine Arab, reflecting the untainted qualities of Arab life before and after Islam. His most outstanding qualities were dignity and self-confidence, indicating the greatness of the people he represents...."⁽¹¹⁾ Mr. Azzam also said, "In addition to being brave, generous and wise, King Abdul-Aziz is straight forward as a talker, and is entertaining as a host. In the Arabian Peninsula, not only was he King, but he was also considered as the family head of the whole country."⁽¹²⁾

As mentioned by a particular historian, "One wonders how he was able to bring together into this family those who were once his opponents and enemies and his allies! I had the honor of being his guest twice, and it was really incredible to see those whom he had to fight once, or those whose fathers had been killed in battle against him, dining or hunting with him! They were being treated like brothers and sons."⁽¹³⁾

Summing up the most prominent qualities and the most significant achievement of King Abdul-Aziz, Mr. Khalid Mohammad Khalid,⁽¹⁴⁾ the well-known Islamic thinker, says, "The person who derives his commitment to the political and territorial unification of his country from his faith in Islamic *tawheed* must possess a broad vision, enthusiasm and purity of heart, mind and conscience; such were Abdul-Aziz' qualities. That person must be his own master, an ambitious leader, fully aware of his steps, in possession of noble soul and temper, well intentioned and well behaved; Abdul-Aziz fits this description. That person must have faith in what Allah has rather than what he has himself, thus making the sword in his hand like a surgeon's scalpel, not a butcher's knife, and a doctor's tool, not a tyrant's dagger; such faith did Abdul-Aziz have, and such was his sword. He did his utmost within the specific historical conditions of his country and time to unite a nation that would otherwise be still in dissention and disintegration."⁽¹⁵⁾

Awni Abdul-Hadi,⁽¹⁶⁾ a former Jordanian foreign minister said, "There are two giants in Al-Jazeera (Arabian Peninsula): the desert and Ibn Saud. He is a world in a man. He is well aware of the minutest details of his kingdom, yet he is greatly religious. It is said: If one listens to him

reciting the Qur'an during the night, one will not be able to resist weeping."⁽¹⁷⁾

The Egyptian leader Aziz Al-Misry⁽¹⁸⁾ said, "Ibn Saud's interest in modern armament, and his courage, simple lifestyle, shrewdness, determination and generosity should be a sign of great expectations."⁽¹⁹⁾

Sheikh Mohammad Rasheed Ridha, a great Muslim scholar, said, "During the reign of King Abdul-Aziz, Najd grew into a large well administered emirate, where security prevailed. He organized the *daawah* activities to spread religion and culture among its tribes and neighboring regions. He also prepared a combat force well enough to defend it against any aggression from neighboring quarters. Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud did all these, which are really great achievements. No wonder, they were done by someone like him, especially in a short period of time. However, he was extremely modest in how he lived, ruled and dealt with his own people as well as others. He never sought luxurious life or unnecessary ornaments, let alone forbidden ones, nor was he interested in glory, pride or pompous titles; He never gave his helpers such titles as "minister", or rewarded them with extra salaries or honorary medals. By His Grace, Allah blessed him with lot of genuine people ready to execute his plans for his people...."⁽²⁰⁾

Mahmoud Abul-Fat-h, a journalist and owner of Al-Misry newspaper said, "Ibn Saud is not just one of the greatest men of the twentieth century, but is one of the greatest historical figures."⁽²¹⁾

Comparing King Abdul-Aziz with the Arab Kings and Emirs at his time, Ameen Al-Reehani,⁽²²⁾ the renowned Arab writer and literary figure said, "I have met all the Arab rulers, but

none are greater than he is. There is something in him bigger than a mere sultan. Whatever may be said about King Abdul-Aziz, he is first and foremost a man with a big heart and a great soul and affection. He is such an embodiment of Arab virtues that it would be hard to find them except in the Kings whose achievements decorate our poetry and history; his mind is clear and so is his conscience; he is void of pride, arrogance and false pretences. There is in him something bigger than a sultan; he prevailed among his own people by his great virtues, not by titles."⁽²³⁾

All the afore-mentioned refined qualities of King Abdul-Aziz, as described by a number of people who knew him, are typical Islamic virtues with which Allah has blessed him. They were so naturally ingrained in him that he acted according to them without difficulty."⁽²⁴⁾

5.2.2 Testimonials by Non-Arabs and Non-Muslims

A lot of thinkers, writers and diplomats, Muslims and non-Muslims, have been impressed by King Abdul-Aziz' character and achievements. The following are illustrative examples of Westerners' testimonials to his noble character and great achievements.

In his book *The Master of the Arab Countries*, Armstrong, an English historian, says, "King Abdul-Aziz had a big heart, and he was generous, too brave to be impatient, well aware of Arab minds and wise in dealing with tribes, and he possessed the qualities and traits which the Arabs admire."⁽²⁵⁾

Bert Fish, a former American minister plenipotentiary, said, "King Ibn Saud is a genius, determined and extremely

intelligent. He makes those sitting with him feel his elegance as reflected in his tall stature and brown face, on which years of experience have left their mark. His voice is full of confidence and power. His eyes radiate intelligence and signs of determination. I was amazed at his knowledge of international issues, as if he was amidst the European conditions and international politics."⁽²⁶⁾

Dacoubert, a German historian says, "King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud has succeeded greatly in finding solutions to every problem. In so doing, he managed to make his country benefit from all modern inventions, without infringing on faith, traditions or heritage. This is particularly important for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which includes Makkah Al-Mukarramah and the Ka'bah, which Muslims face in prayers."⁽²⁷⁾

Kenneth Williams, a British writer says, "Is there among the present kings of the East one that matches Ibn Saud?! I do not ever remember a strong ruler who has reached the status of such a matchless king in the Muslim world. He proved to be a brave soldier, a great reformer, one dedicated to faith, and an individual that is nice, generous, frank, firm and extremely courageous, yet extremely modest."

Filby,⁽²⁸⁾ a British traveler who was close to the King and was in a position to witness his life events since youth, says, "King Al-Aziz is a successful soldier, a genuine reformer. He is extremely pious, frank, firm, shrewd and modest. I know of no rulers in the world other than Abdul-Aziz with whom his subjects can speak so freely. Yet, they revere him greatly and are amazingly loyal to him."⁽²⁹⁾

Germanous⁽³⁰⁾, a Hungarian orientalist, says,⁽³¹⁾"He is a hero

by all the meanings that the word can bear, and he would leave a strong impression on those who knew or met him."

Germanous mentions how King Abdul-Aziz had such a great impact upon the character of Filby that the latter admired and appreciated the King's qualities. This was obvious in Filby's support for the King against the British government.

Germanous also says, "The King who has unsheathed his sword for the sake of his faith and beliefs, combining the spirit of war and the spirit of peace, does not fight people or transgress against them, but fights ignorance, intransigence and conspiracies."

Describing his feelings during an audience with King Abdul-Aziz, Germanous says, "Listening to him, I felt the emotions of a father bringing out the best of his traits to his son so that the latter could be affected by them and follow them. What he said was a strong indication that I was listening to an Arab-minded man with an inborn dedication to the religious side, which dominated all his feelings. On shaking hands with him, I had an awesome feeling. This was of the type that overwhelms one who recognizes heroes' worth as one's hand is fully in the hero's."

Lord of Athlone, ruler of Canada, said, "When I visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I saw for myself what King Abdul-Aziz had done for the welfare of his people. Thanks to him, peace and security were established in a country that had been torn apart by internal dissensions. I was able to see how he was recognized as king and leader of his people, which was guided by his rule towards advancement in all social and cultural aspects."⁽³²⁾

Describing King Abdul-Aziz in his book *Letters to my Daughter*, Jawahar Lal Nehru, the Indian leader, says, "Ibn Saud has proved he is smarter than Al-Hussein. He managed to convince the British to recognize his independence, yet he remained neutral. Having succeeded as a soldier and warrior, Ibn Saud channeled all efforts towards building his country on modern foundations. He wanted it to leap from tribal to modern lifestyle. Apparently, Ibn Saud has succeeded to a great extent, proving himself to be a capable statesman with broad vision."⁽³³⁾

Thus, the testimonials of non-Arabs and non-Muslims reflect a fair judgment of King Abdul-Aziz, as an Arab and Muslim king. Those who loved him dearly and his adversaries agree on the fact that he was a pious Muslim who had a very clear path to follow, guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah. He had to seek guidance in them for his acts and judgments, and to oblige his subjects to adhere to their teachings.⁽³⁴⁾



Chapter 5 Endnotes

- (1) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 4, pp.1436-1437.
- (2) Ibid, p. 1436.
- (3) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 4, p.1437.
- (4) Al-Hawiyyah is a valley 18 km north of Taef. In the valley, lies the Hawiyyah village / town.
Al-Saalimi, Hamaad Ibn Haamid: *The Geographical Dictionary of the Taef Governorate*, (in Arabic), the Taef Tourism Promotion Committee in collaboration with the Public Administration for Education, 1st edition, 1424 H (2003 AD), Part 1, pp. 408-409.
- (5) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, p. 258.
- (6) Surah 2 / Ayah 156.
- (7) Surah 55 / Ayah 54.
- (8) It is Abbaass Ibn Mahmood Ibn Ibraaheem Ibn Mustafa Al-Aqqaad. He was born in Egypt. He worked as a government employee, then he focused on writing in the press. He was a great man of literature and writer. He mastered a number of languages. He had 83 publications in his name, written over 50 years.
Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 3, p. 266.
- (9) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, p. 161.
- (10) It is Abdul-Rahman Azzaam (1319-1396 H) / (1892-1976 AD). He was born and brought up in Egypt. He was the first Egyptian plenipotentiary ambassador and minister to Saudi Arabia. He first submitted his credentials to Prince Faisal, the then Saudi foreign minister, in Shawwaal 1357 H (December, 1938 AD). He was the first secretary general of the Arab League.
Daarat Al-Malik Abdul-Aziz: *Encyclopedia of King Abdul-Aziz Diplomatic History*, op cit, pp. 167-169.
Yousof, Mohammad Khair Ramadaan: *Al-Mustadrak 'Alaa Tatimmat Al-*

A'laam, (Addendum to Who Is Who Continued), op cit, pp. 57-58.

(11) This quotation is taken from an interview with Azzaam in the Egyptian *Al-Musawwar* weekly magazine, issue No. 1109, dated 11/1/1946 AD.

Al-Juheimi, Nasser Ibn Mohammad: "King Abdul-Aziz in the Arab Press", op cit, p.19.

(12) Al-Mawjaan, Abdullah Ibn Hussein: *King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud between Supporting Allah's Cause and Allah's Support to him*, 2nd edition, Jeddah, Kunuuz Al-Ma'rifah Company Press, 1419 H (1998 AD), p. 10.

(13) Ibid, p.10.

(14) It is Khalid Mohamed Khalid (1339-1416 H) / (1920-1906 AD). He was an Islamic thinker and writer. He was born in Al-Adwah village, Al-Sharqiyyah governorate, Egypt. He was a graduate of the College of Shariáh, Al-Azhar University. He worked as a teacher, then he worked for the ministry of culture. He was member of the Higher Council for Arts. He had several publications.

Al-Alaawnah, Ahmad: *Thail Al-A'laam (Addendum to Who Is Who?), Dictionary of the Most Renowned Men and Women among Arabs, the Arabized and the Orientalists*, (in Arabic), 1st edition, Jeddah, Dar Al-Manarah, 1418 H (1998 AD), pp.77-78.

(15) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travelers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p.838.

(16) It is Awni Abdul-Hadi (1305-1395 H) / (1888-1970 AD). He was a lawyer, and he was one of the pioneers championing Arab causes. He was educated in Beirut and Turkey. He studied law in Paris. He was one of the founders of Al-Fataah Al-Arabiyyah society in 1329 H (1911 AD). He took part in the Reconciliation Conference in 1337 H (1919 AD). He was appointed Jordan's ambassador to Egypt. Then, he became foreign minister. Then, he became the chief of the legal committee of the Arab League till he died in 1970 AD.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 5, p.98.

(17) Al-Mawjaan, Abdullah Ibn Hussein: *King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud between Supporting Allah's Cause and Allah's Support to him*, op cit, p. 79.

(18) It is Aziz Ibn Ali Al-Misri (1296-1385 H) / (1879-1965). He was born and educated in Egypt. Then he enrolled in the military school in Istanbul. He led the forces fighting against the Bulgarian, Albanian and Greek guerillas.

He joined Turkiya Al-Fataah (the Society of Young Turkey) prior to the Ottoman constitution. He mediated between Imam Yahya and the Ottoman state. He took part in several wars. He was sentenced to death by the Ottomans, but he was released under pressure from Britain and the Arab world. He returned to Egypt, and he was appointed an inspector in the Egyptian army in 1356 H (1937 AD), then the Egyptian ambassador to Moscow during the Revolution era. Then, he returned to Cairo, where he died.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 4, p.231.

(19) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p.737.

(20) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man, op cit, p.Ibid.

(21) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 3, p.1376.

(22) It is Ameen Ibn Faaris Ibn Antoon Ibn Yousuf Ibn Abdul-Ahad Al-Bajjaani, known as Al-Reehaani (1293-1359 H) / (1876-1940 AD). He was an orator and writer, and was considered a historian too. He was born in al-Furaikah, Lebanon. He left for the States at the age of 11, then he returned to Lebanon in 1315 H (1898 AD). He studied Arabic, and shuttled between Al-Shaam (now Lebanon and Syria) and America. He visited Najd, Al-Hijaz, Yemen, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Spain and England. He was Honorary Head of the Institute of Arabic Studies in Western Spain. In 1339 H, he became a correspondent member of Al-Majma' al-'Ilmi Al-Arabi (the Arab Academic Assembly). There are several publications under his name. He died in his home village in 1940 AD.

Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 2, pp. 18-19.

Al-Haazimi, Ibraheem Ibn Abdullah: *Encyclopedia of Who Is Who in the Arab and Muslim Worlds in the 14th and 15th Hijri Centuries*, Part 3, pp. 983-991.

(23) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 3, p.1376.

(24) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man, op cit, p. 166-168.

(25) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travelers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p.836.

(26) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p.716.

- (27) Al-Twiejri, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *The Morning Cheered the Night Travellers, King Abdul-Aziz, a Documentary Study*, op cit, p.837.
- (28) It is Harry St. John Filby, known as Al-Hajj Abdullah Filby. He was a British Orientalist. He was born in Celon and educated in England. He served his government in India in 1908-1915 AD. Then, he was called to Iraq, where he worked in Basra. With a British delegation, he visited Riyadh in 1917 AD. There, he was introduced to King Abdul-Aziz. He is said to have disagreed with his government's policy in the Middle East, and he went back to England and resigned as a result. A year later, he went to Najd, then Iraq, where he worked as an advisor to the Iraqi government. Then, he worked as head of the British emissaries to Jordan. Resigning for the second time, he left for Jeddah, where he worked in commerce. His relation with King Abdul-Aziz became strong, and he adopted Islam in 1349 H (1930 AD). He had several publications on the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *Al-A'laam (Who Is Who)*, op cit, Part 8, pp.63-64
- (29) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, p.170.
- (30) It is Abdul-Kareem Germanous. He was a Hungarian Orientalist. He was born in Budapest. He studied in the universities of Budapest, Istanbul, Vienna and Leipzig. He had a teaching post at the Eastern Commerce Academy in 1912 AD. At the invitation of the Indian poet Tagore, Germanous visited India, where he established the department of Islamic studies at the Bengal University. Later, he adopted Islam, and called himself Abdul-Kareem instead of Julius. Then, he left for Egypt, where he studied at Al-Azhar. He went on pilgrimage to Makkah, and he went back to his country, where he was appointed Head of the Eastern Institute in Budapest in 1941 AD. He held several posts in Hungary. Al-Alaawnah, Ahmad: *Thail Al-A'laam*, op cit, p. 127.
- (31) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, pp.171-172.
- (32) Al-Zarkali, Khairuddeen: *The Peninsula*, op cit, Part 2, p. 718.
- (33) Al-Turki, Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muhsin: *King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud: A Nation in a Man*, op cit, p.173.
- (34) Ibid, p. 177.

Conclusion

Thanks be to Allah for facilitating the completion of this book. By His Grace, it was possible to present genuine accounts about King Abdul-Aziz' life, character, upbringing and Islamic culture. His devotion to the Qur'an and the Sunnah is clearly manifest in his unique personality and Islamic conduct and his struggle in defense of pure Islam, as conveyed by the righteous *salaf*, i.e. the first Muslim generation.

It is a blessing that this book, on the noble character of King Abdul-Aziz, is completed. However, it must be admitted that it is not easy to write about great figures in Islamic History. This may be due to the multiple talents possessed by the subject of writing, particularly if he excels his peers in talent and achievements. In the case of King Abdul-Aziz' character and achievements, relevant material would be too much for one writer to deal with and for one volume to cover..

The book speaks about the genius and moral traits of the King's personality. Yet, it is but a modest contribution, which falls short of the truth and which cannot match his historical significance. Suffice the book that it deals with an issue normally outside the concern of historians. These focus on political and military aspects when writing about such historical figures, while neglecting personal conduct despite its significance. Praising Prophet Mohamed's conduct, Allah says, "And lo! You are of a tremendous character."⁽¹⁾ When

(1) Surat Luqman, Ayah 4.

asked about the Prophet's character, A'isha said, "His character was an embodiment of the Qur'an."⁽¹⁾ The Ayah and the Hadith show the significance of character or conduct in Islam.

Apparently, King Abdul-Aziz took the Prophet's character as the model to follow. This is evidently reflected in his commitment to the promotion of *tawheed*, and in his acts of obedience to Allah's commands, fear of Allah, and reliance on Allah, turning to Him in all affairs. It is also reflected in his qualities of courage, keeping pledges, generosity, love of justice, kindness, humility, forgiveness, patience, endurance in affliction, supporting wronged ones, care for education, and devotion to promoting cooperation and brotherhood among Muslims within the Arabian Peninsula and beyond.

Following Islamic conduct and models, King Abdul-Aziz adopted and adhered to Shari'ah. As a result, by the Grace of Allah, he was successful in his endeavors to promote Islamic teachings while seeking and employing modern methods and inventions. The King Abdul-Aziz endeavor is a lesson in modernization within an Islamic framework and a lesson in adherence to and promotion of Islamic teachings while modernizing his country.

The King's modernization endeavor within an Islamic framework has not stopped with his death. By the Grace of Allah, his dedicated sons have continued their father's efforts, while confident of the support of the great people they are leading. King Abdul-Aziz was succeeded by his sons in this chronological order: King Saud, King Faisal, King Khaled,

(1) *Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad*, Hadith No. 25341.

King Fahd and King Abdullah, the reigning Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. Like father like sons; they have continued commitment to the application of Shari'ah while orchestrating necessary development efforts for the welfare of citizens and fellow Muslims.

This book is but a modest attempt to highlight some traits of King Abdul-Aziz' character in light of Islamic values. Admittedly, it does not give the King his due worth. Despite shortcomings, it is hoped that this book has successfully achieved its objective. Whatever success it may realize, it is by the Grace of Allah.

It would be appropriate to quote one of HRH Prince Salman's related statement to conclude this book about his father: "King Abdul-Aziz had not just emerged from a vacuum. He followed in the footsteps of his father, grandfather and great grandfathers. Theirs was a sincere call for the sake of Allah; it started with Imam Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Wahaab, calling for *tawheed* in all affairs. So, the King never sought status, fame, authority or worldly gains. His goal was to establish a state governed according to Allah's Book and His Messenger's Sunnah...."⁽¹⁾



(1) Al-Keelaani, Kamaal: *Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud and Contemporary Islamic Reform*, op cit, pp. 129-130.

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Arabic Words in this Text

Tawheed

Tawheed refers to the following beliefs and demands, which can be summed up in the "oneness of godship, the oneness of lordship and the oneness of worship:

- There is no God but Allah. There is nothing before Him or after Him. He does not beget nor is he begotten. Nothing is comparable to Him. There is nothing that is not under His control, and nothing happens without His permission.
- Allah has no partners, no helpers and no associates.
- Allah is the sole creator and the sole provider for all creatures, be they believers or non-believers.
- None but Allah deserves to be worshipped. The worship of Allah has to be done as He defines. To be valid and qualify for Allah's rewards, an act has to be intended for His sake alone, and hence the "purity of intention" as the criterion of validity.

All the above beliefs and demands are the core of Islam or pure faith as preached by Allah's messengers and prophets, of whom Prophet Muhammad is the seal. Thus, *tawheed* means believing in and acting according to the message conveyed by Prophet Muhammad.

Salaf

In general, the noun *salaf* means "predecessor(s)", and *salafi* is an adjective. In Islamic literature, *salaf* refers to the early Muslim generation, i.e. Prophet Muhammad and his rightly guided companions and followers, who conveyed Allah's message or pure Islam, without deviations or additions.

Sahaabah

Prophet Muhammad's rightly guided companions.

Da'wah

In general, the noun *da'wah* means "call" or "invitation". In Islamic literature, *da'wah* refers to promoting Islam, by calling on people to be Muslims and on Muslims to adhere to Islamic teachings. In the historical context of the Arabian Peninsula, the *Da'wah* refers to the call championed by Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Wahaab for *tawheed*, i.e. adherence to the pure faith of Islam, as conveyed by the *salaf*.

Ulama

The noun *'ulama* means scholars in any field of knowledge - singular *'aailm*. In Islamic literature, as used in this book, it refers to religious scholars.

Taqwa

In general, the Arabic noun *taqwa* means avoidance. In Islamic literature, the observance of *taqwa* refers to taking Allah's commands into account. It has two aspects, one negative and the other positive, and *taqwa* requires one to refrain from reprehensible acts and to good deeds. The *taqwa* aspects require faith in Allah and the intention to please Him in thought and practice. Muslims are called upon to exercise *taqwa* at all times.

Hadith / Hadeeth

In general, the Arabic noun "*hadeeth*" means "talk". In Islamic literature, *alhadeeth* / the Hadith refers to all the reports about what Prophet said, did or approved. *Sahih Al-Bukhari* is a well known anthology of *alhadeeth*. The Arabic plural of *hadeeth* is *ahaadeeth* - we can say "one *hadeeth*/ *hadith* and two *hadeeths* / *hadiths*. The transliteration forms *hadeeth* and *ahaadeeth* provide for better pronunciation of the Arabic original.

Sunnah

In general, the noun *sunnah* means a tradition / a custom / an established way of doing things. In Islamic literature, Al-Sunnah /Sunnah refers to Prophet Muhammad's traditions, as reported in the sound *ahaadeeth*. It is considered the second major source of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an being the first. As Prophet Muhammad says, guided by these two, a Muslim will never go astray. Sometimes, the word *sunnah* is used to describe an act of worship as voluntary - the word is not used in this sense in the present book.

The Qur'an

According to Islam, the Qur'an is the true word of Allah, the One God. It was revealed to Prophet Muhammad, who was commanded to convey it to mankind. It was revealed in Arabic, and there is only one copy of it in Arabic. It is the main source of the Message of Islam. The Sunnah provides explanations, details and applications of Qur'anic statements. In words of the Qur'an itself, the Qur'an is mercy to all.

A copy of the Qur'an is called "*muss-haf*". The *muss-haf* consists 114 chapters. A chapter is called *Surah* / *Sura* / *Surat*. Each *Surah* consists of verses (*Ayahs* / *Ayas*). The *Surahs* in the *Muss-haf* are not arranged according to order of revelation.

Publications by the Author

1. *Raghbah* (an Arabic-English edition)
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The following booklets in the *Believer's Provision Series*:

19. *Book 1: Selected Adhkaar* (Arabic - English)
20. *Book 2: Comprehensive Du'a* (Arabic - English)

21. Book 3: *Daily and Nightly Prayers* (Arabic - English)
22. Book 4: *Teaching Qur'anic Recitation* (Arabic)
23. Book 5: *Self-Ruqya Treatment* (Arabic - English)
24. Book 6: *Fasting is Protection* (Arabic - English)
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26. Book 8: *The Guide to Hajj* (Arabic - English)
27. *Supplications for the Young* (Arabic - English)
28. *An Anthology of Fatwas by Scholars of the Holy Land*
(Arabic - English - French - Urdu)
29. *Selected Fatwas on Faith-healing and Witchcraft*
(Arabic - English - French - Urdu)
30. Series of Fatwas by Scholars of the Holy Land:
- Book 1: *Fatwas on Beliefs (Section 1)* (Arabic)
- Book 2: *Fatwas on Beliefs (Section 2)* (Arabic)
- Book 3: *Fatwas on Beliefs (Section 3)* (Arabic)
- Book 4: *Fatwas on Intentions, Cleanliness and Salaah* (Arabic)
- Book 5: *Fatwas on Zakaah, Fasting, Hajj and Omrah* (Arabic)
- Book 6: *Fatwas on Marriage, Divorce and Treatment of Wives* (Arabic)
- Book 7: *Fatwas on Sales, Transactions and Usury* (Arabic)
- Book 8: *Fatwas on Medicine, Ruqya Treatment, Amulets and Magic* (Arabic)
- Book 9: *Fatwas for Women* (Arabic)
- Book 10: *Fatwas on Manners* (Arabic)
- Book 11: *Fatwas on Religious Knowledge, Ijtihad and Daawah* (Arabic)
- Book 12: *Miscellaneous Fatwas* (Arabic)

The following Arabic reference books jointly investigated - co-investigator: Dr. Saad Ibn Abdullah Al-Humayyid:

31. *Kitaab Al-'Ilal (Book of Defects of Hadith Evaluation)* by Ibn Abi Hatim
32. *Mu'jam Al-Tabaraani: Part of Vol. 21, in Musnad Al-Nu'man Ibn Basheer*
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34. *Su'aalaat Assulami Liddaara-Qutniy* (Questions put by Assulami to Al-Daara-Qutniy)
35. *Ibn Al-Jawzi's Afat Ashaab Al-Hadeeth* (The Problem with Hadith Researchers)

The Author in Brief

Dr. Khaled Ibn Abdul-Rahman Al-Jeraisy:

- Was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 1384 H (1964 AD).
- Holds a Ph. D. in Business Administration, from Kensington University, USA - doctoral dissertation on marketing philosophy.
- Holds another Ph. D. in Business Administration, from Al-Awza'iy University in Lebanon - doctoral dissertation: Types of Leadership Behavior from Islamic and Administrative Perspectives.
- Holds a master's degree in Business Administration, from Al-Imam Al-Awza'iy University in Lebanon - master's thesis on: "Time Management from Administrative and Islamic Perspectives".
- Holds a BA in Islamic Studies, from the College of Arts and Humanities, King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah.
- Has been the Executive President of the Riyadh House Company, the well-known Saudi leading business organization, since 1993.
- Has written several books on various religious, social, historical and administrative issues.
- Is member of the following academic societies:
 - The Saudi Management Association - headquarters at King Saud University.
 - The Society of Arab Managers - headquarters in Cairo.
 - The Saudi Economic Association - headquarters at King Saud University.
 - The Union of Arab Economists, headquarters in Baghdad.
 - The Saudi Historical Society, headquarters at King Saud University.
 - The Union of Arab Historians - headquarters in Cairo.

About This Book

The security, prosperity and religious stability the Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia experiencing today are the fruit of the efforts of King Abdul Aziz may Allah bless his soul This book attempts to portray the distinct traits of his noble character through presenting:

- The conditions in which he was brought up, and the most important events that impacted his conduct;
- Examples of his political insight and skills and his intuition in reading significant changes on the international scene and their economic and political implications for the Kingdom's important role;
- His personality traits, which were derived from his Islamic faith and which guided his conduct.
- His exemplary relation with his subjects, care for the orphans and keeping good ties with family and relatives.
- His special attention to education in general, and Islamic teachings and knowledge in particular, and seeking the advice of religious scholars and experts whenever necessary.