

Hadith

- Date** ■ Written in the 800s, events described took place in the 600s
- Place** ■ Arabia
- Type of Source** ■ Religious text (original in Arabic)
- Author** ■ Recorded by Abul Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj Qushayri al-Nishapuri, also called Imam Muslim
- Historical Context** ■ *Hadith* are stories about the actions of Muhammad as told by the people who knew him or compiled later from second-hand accounts. Muslims use the *Hadith* to explain questions about law and history using Muhammad as the best example of humanity. Different Muslim denominations use different *Hadith* collections. This story is taken from *Sahih Muslim*, one of the most important Sunni collections. It was compiled in the 800s by a scholar from Persia.
- Internal Context** ■ The first book of *Sahih Muslim*, *The Book of Faith*, deals with issues of Muslim belief and the requirements for Muslim belief. Here pre-destination, whether our actions are freely determined or directly controlled by God, is discussed.

Sahih Muslim—Book 1, Hadith 1

It is narrated on the **authority** of **Yahya ibn Yamur** that the first man who discussed about **Qadar** [Divine Decree] in **Basra** was **Mabad al-Juhani**. I along with **Humaid bin Abdur-Rahman Himyari** set out for [the hajj] or for **Umrah** and said: Should it so happen that we come into contact with one of the **Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)** we shall ask him a bout [sic] what is talked about **Taqdir** [Division Decree].

Accidentally we came across **Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab**, while he was entering the mosque. My companion and I surrounded him. One of us [stood] on his right and the other stood on his left. I expected that my companion would authorize me to speak. I therefore said: **Abu Abdur Rahman** there have appeared some people in our land who recite the Holy Qur'an and pursue knowledge. And then after talking about their affairs, added: They [such people] claim that there is no such thing as Divine Decree and events are not predestined. He [Abdullah ibn Umar] said: When you happen to meet such people tell them that I have nothing to do with them and they have nothing to do with me. And verily they are in no way responsible for my [belief]. Abdullah ibn Umar swore by Him (the Lord) [and said]: If any one of them [who does not believe in the Divine Decree] had with him gold equal to the bulk of (the mountain) **Uhud** and then, it (in the way of Allah), Allah would not accept it unless he affirmed his faith in Divine Decree. He further said: My father, **Umar ibn al-Khattab**, told me: One day we were sitting in the company of **Allah's Apostle** (peace be upon him) when there appeared before us a man dressed in pure white clothes, his hair extraordinarily black. There were no signs of travel on him. None amongst us recognized him. At last he sat with the Apostle (peace be upon him) He knelt before him placed his palms on his thighs and said: Muhammad, inform me about **al-Islam**. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: Al-Islam implies that you testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and you establish prayer, pay **Zakat**, observe the fast of **Ramadan**, and perform pilgrimage to the **[House]** if you

authority

Because all hadith were based down by word-of-mouth, scholars like Imam Muslim were careful to note who the source of their information was.

Yahya ibn Yamur
the narrator of the story and the main hadith source on Qadar.

Qadar
the belief that God has knowledge of the future

Basra
a Persian Gulf port in modern Iraq

Mabad al-Juhani
Mabad al-Juhani was one of the first Muslims to believe in free will. He was executed in 699 by the caliph.

Humaid bin Abdur-Rahman Himyari
a friend of Yahya ibn Yamur

Umrah
a pilgrimage to Mecca at sometime other than the time of the hajj

Companions of ..
Muslims who lived and worked with Muhammad during his life

Hadith

are solvent enough [to bear the expense of] the journey. He (the inquirer) said: You have told the truth. He (Umar ibn al-Khattab) said: It amazed us that he would put the question and then he would himself verify the truth. He (the inquirer) said: Inform me about Iman [faith]. He (the Holy Prophet) replied: That you affirm your faith in Allah, in His angels, in His Books, in His Apostles, in the Day of Judgment, and you affirm your faith in the Divine Decree about good and evil. He (the inquirer) said: You have told the truth. He (the inquirer) again said: Inform me about al Ihsan [performance of good deeds]. He (the Holy Prophet) said: That you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him, for though you don't see Him, He, verily, sees you. He (the enquirer) again said: Inform me about the **hour (of the Doom)**. He (the Holy Prophet) remarked: One who is asked knows no more than the one who is inquiring [about it]. He (the inquirer) said: Tell me some of its indications. He (the Holy Prophet) said: That the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress and master, that you will find barefooted, destitute goat-herds vying with one another in the construction of magnificent buildings. He (the narrator, Umar ibn al-Khattab) said: Then he (the inquirer) went on his way but I stayed with him (the Holy Prophet) for a long while. He then, said to me: Umar, do you know who this inquirer was? I replied: Allah and His Apostle knows best. He (the Holy Prophet) remarked: He was **Gabriel** [the angel]. He came to you in order to instruct you in matters of religion.

Allah

the Arabic word for God

peace be upon him

"Peace be upon him" is the proper expression given after mentioning a prophet. Called the Sawalat.

Taqdir

predestination

Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab

a narrator of the Hadith who told stories about Muhammad that he heard from his father

Abu Abdur Rahman

father of Abdur Rahman, another name for Abdullah ibn Umar

Uhud

a high mountain near Medina

Umar ibn al-Khattab

The second Caliph. During Umar's rule (634–644), the Muslim Empire conquered the Middle East.

Allah's Apostle

Muhammad

al-Islam

"the submission." It can also mean the religion of Islam.

Zakat

charity for the poor

Ramadan

the Islamic holy month

House

the mosque in Mecca

hour (of the Doom)

the end of the world

Gabriel

the archangel who revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad

Source: Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, "Sahih Muslim Hadith," *ahadith*, 2010, <<http://ahadith.co.uk/chapter.php?cid=6>> (June 7, 2011).