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An introduction to Allah:

Unlike the word 'God', which can be manipulated to its plural, 'gods', or reverted into its gender connotation, 'goddess', or converted to its diminutive form, 'god-ling', or could be attached to a guardian of a child as "god father", the Arabic word 'Allah' is pure from all these defectives, just as God is pure from all defects. This is so, because the Arabic language does not allow such interpolation of this word, as a law of grammar. Thus the name 'Allah' is protected by the laws of grammar, and its manipulation is unacceptable: there is no such thing as an "Allah father." (Deedat: 1995, 32).

The word 'Allah' commonly means God, but to its Arab users it has a special meaning. In Islam, Allah has many attributes and qualities. Of these, ninety-nine attributes or names have been specifically assigned to describe Allah. These pristine attributes and qualities can only truly belong to God. For example, God is All Knowing, and is aware of the condition and state of every atom in the entire cosmos at any given time. No one can share this quality with God. (Please refer to these ninety-nine attributes of Allah in Appendix B).

The word 'Allah,' thus encompasses all His attributes and qualities, and by saying Allah, one will be including all His attributes and qualities which make Him God.

The Qur'an makes it explicit to mankind in numerous manners, in order to describe and allow mankind to reflect, ponder and realize who the Creator is. I quote:

- ***"He is Allah, besides whom there is no other Gods; who knows all things both secret and open; He is Most Gracious, Most Merciful.***
- ***He is Allah besides whom there is no other God. The Sovereign, The Holy One, The Source of Peace and Perfection, The Guardian of Faith, The Preserver of Safety, The Exalted in Might, The Irresistible, The Supreme: Glory to Allah: High is He above the partners they ascribe to Him. He is Allah, The Creator, The Evolver, The Bestower of Forms, To Him belong the most beautiful names: All that is in the heavens and the earth, doth declare His praises and glory. And He is The Exalted in Might, The Wise."*** (Qur'an, 59:22-24).

In the Chapter of Sincerity, the Qur'an establishes a definition of God in four lines:

- ***"Say: 'He is Allah, The One and Only; Allah, the Eternal Absolute / The Self Sufficient; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten: There is none like unto Him'."*** (Qur'an, 112:1-4).

The above four-lined definition from the Qur'an is a clear and decisive manner for Muslims, in order to ascertain whether a being is God or not. The first and second verses above indicate that God is alone and shares no partners, and is totally independent of anything. The third verse indicates that God has no offspring and that He was never begotten; He always existed, even though

this may be far from human comprehension. (Commentators explain that God is the creator of the abstract elements, such as 'time and space,' and these are human limitations, paradigms to appease human purpose, but for God, He is beyond these dimensions). The fourth verse is the ultimate definition: nothing can be compared to God, who is unlike anything humans can ever perceive.

(Only the form for Building-A is required for thesis purposes. Thus spaces 1-9 are merely presented to indicate the process towards finding a suitable form)

Design rationale: Exhibition 1- Introduction to Allah

This introductory exhibition space was decided to portray God, which is the first article of faith: Belief in the One God. Without this aspect, the entire journey through the exhibition spaces to follow would be meaningless.

Symbolically reflecting God within space, led to the realization of the circle being implemented as a key element, as depicted below:

Attributes and qualities of a circle:

Purity
Perfection
Infinity
Harmonious form
Holistic and all encompassing nature

Attributes and qualities of God:

The Pure
The Perfect
The Eternal; The Everlasting
The Designer; The Giver of Form
The One; The Mighty

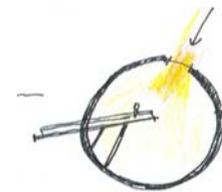
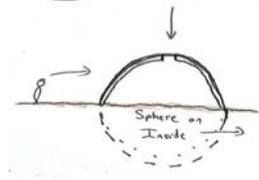
Thus the circle was found to be a suitable means to symbolically represent God. In terms of a circle transforming itself into the third dimension gave rise to the implementation of the dome. A dome in essence gave rise to imperfection to a certain degree, since a dome resulted in a semi-circle in the third dimension. This then gave rise to a sphere, whose form ultimately coincided with the circle, and was consequently chosen as the internal form of the space.

Due to structural difficulties in constructing a sphere, especially with regard to openings, it was decided that the sphere should be contained within a cube, thereby facilitating structural requirements, and also integrating the forms of both square and circle into a harmonious fusion: the sphere would be perfectly embedded within the dimensions of the cube. Externally, this would give rise to a flat two-dimensional bland wall, which would conceal the spherical nature of the internal space. Thus a strong contrast between inside and outside was created, which was to become a part of the theme as discussed later on.

Fig. 1. Introspection of sphere

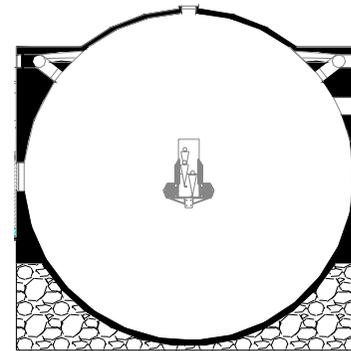
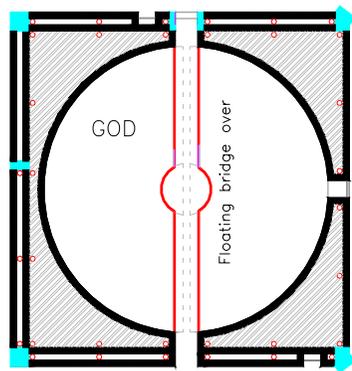


Below: Fig. 2. Section through sphere. Externally the sphere appears to be a dome. Internally the sphere is excavated into the ground



Far right: Fig. 3. Journey experienced through sphere via a floating bridge, with supports hidden beneath the bridge. Light to penetrate through a vertical opening, with the word "Allah" above. In this manner the name of God will be seen to move along the inside perimeter of the sphere, portraying God's countenance throughout the universe.

Fig.'s 4 and 5. Later in the design stage, the plan and section portrayed itself as follows:



The space was seen as suitable since it portrayed the perfection, infinity and purity of God

An introduction to the Holy Qur'an: In praise of the Qur'an:

- "There is probably in the world no other book which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text," states the historian critique, Sir William Muir. (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.3).
- "So there has been no opportunity for any forgery or pious fraud in the Koran, which distinguishes it from almost all other important religious works of ancient times...It is exceedingly strange that this illiterate person should have composed the best book in the language." (Basanta Coomar Bose, Mohammedanism, London 1953, p.33).
- Goethe, a famous German poet, in complimenting the Qur'an says, "This book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.11).

The Qur'an in reference to creation

"There is no human work in existence that contains statements as far beyond the level of knowledge of its time as the Qur'an", states Becuille in his book titled "The Qur'an and Modern Science". (Becuille: 1995, p.44). He further substantiates his findings in numerous examples, out of which I have elaborated a few below:

- **The origin of the universe:**

"Do the disbelievers not see that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then I split them apart?"
(Qur'an, 21:30).

"The Quranic references are all in perfect agreement with the modern ideas on the existence of the primary nebula (galactic dust), followed by the separation of elements which resulted in the formation of galaxies and then stars from which the planets were born." (Becuille: 1995, 18).

Reference is also made in the Qur'an to an intermediary creation between the heavens and the earth, as seen in chapter *al-Furqaan*:

"God is the one who created the heavens, the earth and what is between them."
(Qur'an, 25:59).

- **Stars and planets**

"The word '*najm*' or 'star' in the Qur'an (86:3) is accompanied by the adjective '*thaaqib*' which indicates that it burns and consumes itself as it pierces through the shadow of the night. It was much later discovered that stars are heavenly bodies producing their own light like the sun." (Becuille: 1995, 21).

The Qur'an uses the word '*siraj*' or 'lamp' for the sun, which indicates that it gives off light, (78:12-13), whilst it uses the word, *kawkab*, to refer to the planets, that are celestial bodies that reflect light and do not produce their own light like the sun. (Becuille: 1995, 21).

- **Orbits**

"Today the laws governing the celestial systems are well known. Galaxies are balanced by the position of stars and planets in well-defined orbits, as well as the interplay of gravitational forces produced by their masses and the speed of their movements. In chapter *Al-Ambiyaa* we find:

"God is the one who created the night, the day, the sun and the moon. Each one is traveling in an orbit with its own motion." (Qur'an, 21:33).

- **The Day and Night**

"The Qur'an uses the verb '*kawwara*' in chapter *az-Zumar* to describe the way the night 'winds' or 'coils' itself around the day and the day around the night." (Becuille: 1995, 23).

"He coils the night upon the day and the day upon the night." (Qur'an, 39:5).

"The original meaning of the verb '*kawwara*' is to coil a turban around the head. This is a totally valid comparison; yet at the time the Qur'an was revealed, the astronomical data necessary to make this comparison were unknown. It is not until man landed upon the moon and observed the earth spinning on its axis that the dark half of the globe appeared to wind itself around the light and the light half appeared to wind itself around the dark." (Becuille: 1995, 23).

- **The Solar Apex:**

"The sun runs its course to a settled place. That is the decree of the Almighty, the All Knowing." (Qur'an, 36:38)

"Settled place is the translation of the word '*mustaqarr*' which indicates an exact appointed place and time. Modern astronomy confirms that the solar system is indeed moving in space at a rate of twelve miles per second towards a point situated in the constellation of Hercules (alpha lyrae) whose exact location has been precisely calculated. Astronomers have given it a name, the solar apex." (Becuille: 1995, 23-24).

- **Expansion of the universe:**

"I have built the heaven with power and it is I, who am expanding it." (Qur'an, 51:47).

Becuille explains this phenomenon is in perfect accordance with modern astronomy in the following manner:

"The expansion of the universe was first suggested by the general theory of relativity and is supported by the calculations of astrophysics. The regular movement of the galactic light towards the red section of the spectrum is explained by the distancing of one galaxy from another. Thus, the size of the universe appears to be progressively increasing." (Becuille: 1995, 51:47).

- **Geology: Mountains**

"It has been recently discovered that the stability of mountains is linked to the phenomenon of folding. The process of mountain formation by folding drove the earth's crust down into the lower layers and provided foundations for the mountains. Stakes, which are driven into the ground like those used to anchor a tent, are the deep foundations of geological folds." (Becuille: 1995, 29). This is in perfect keeping with the Quranic version: **"Have We not made the earth an expanse and the mountains stakes?"** (Qur'an, 78: 6-7).

- **Biology**

"Do the unbelievers not realize that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then I clove them asunder and I made every living thing out of water. Will they still not believe?" (Qur'an, 21:30). Becuille states: "This is a dramatic affirmation of the modern idea that the origin of life is aquatic." (Becuille: 1995, p.30).

- **Botany**

"Progress in botany at the time of Muhammad (SAW) was not advanced enough in any country for scientists to know that plants have both male and female parts. Today we know that fruit comes from plants that have sexual characteristics even when they come from unfertilized flowers like bananas." (Becuille: 1995, 31).

This is once again in accordance to the Qur'an: **"God is the one who sent down rain from the sky and with it brought forth a variety of plants in pairs,"** (Qur'an, 20:53), or **"...and of all fruits God placed on the earth two pairs,"** (Qur'an, 13:3).

- **Physiology**

"The constituents of milk are secreted by the mammary glands (of cattle) which are nourished by the product of food digestion brought to them by the bloodstream. The initial event which sets the whole process in motion is the conjunction of the contents of the intestine and blood at the level of the intestinal wall itself.

This very precise concept is the result of the discoveries made in the chemistry and physiology of the digestive system over one thousand years after the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)." (Becuille: 1995, 33).

The Qur'an made this known to man in the following manner: **"Verily, in cattle there is a lesson for you. I give you drink from their insides, coming from a conjunction between the digested contents (of the intestines) and the blood, milk pure and pleasant for those who drink it."** (Qur'an, 16:66).

- **Conclusion:**

"A totally objective examination of the Qur'an, in the light of modern knowledge, leads us to recognize the agreement between the two...It makes us deem it quite unthinkable for a man of Muhammad's time to have been the author of such statements, on account of the state of knowledge today." (Becuille: 1995, 48).

"He does not speak of his own desire; it is no less than inspiration sent down to him; he was taught by One Mighty in Power." (Qur'an, 53:3-5).

Design rationale: Exhibition 2 – The origin of creation

This space was later designed to become part of exhibition 3 and 4. The plan below thus depicts it in this manner.

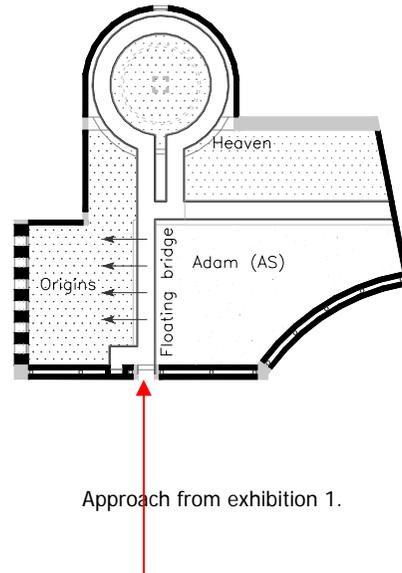


Fig. 6. Spatial resolution – exhibition 2.

After introducing the concept of God in exhibit 1, exhibition space 2 was set out to illustrate the origination of the universe as described in the Holy Qur'an. It was decided that since the theme of this section relates to the origin of creation within space, the exhibit should spatially present itself as a double volume, with the viewer over-viewing the space from above. A light floating bridge, either suspended or supported by beams underneath, would create a feeling of being suspended in space. This would allow the viewer to symbolically associate a relationship with God, and observe the formation of creation from God's perspective: God above everything, creating the universe from nothingness into existence. The theme of water was introduced since it is Islamically believed that water was used as a means to create life forms.

Lighting was decided to penetrate from above, depicting the countenance of God. Subtle lighting was chosen to infiltrate the space at large, appearing from specified locations, to depict the light of God.

Preservation of the Holy Qur'an:

It is a basic article of faith to believe in all the messengers of God, and in the divine scriptures which were revealed to them. However, Muslims believe that these scriptures were interpolated by the people, and that the Qur'an is the last and final word of God, which has been unchanged ever since it was revealed. (Muhammad: 2001, p.12). For the Holy Qur'an, God Himself declares:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the message; and We will assuredly guard it (against corruption)." (Qur'an, 15:9).

"And if you are in doubt as to that which We revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call upon your helpers besides Allah, if you are truthful." (Qur'an, 2:23).

"No falsehood can approach it (the Qur'an) from before or behind it. It is sent down by One, All-Wise and worthy of All Praise." (Qur'an, 41:42).

"Were men and jinn to combine to produce something like the Qur'an, they could not do so even if they aid each other." (Qur'an, 17:88).

"Had the Qur'an been a discourse other than Allah's, then they would have found in it many incongruities and contradictions." (Qur'an, 4:81).

The Holy Qur'an has been preserved in two manners. The first manner, is one common to all Muslims. For generations in every Muslim society, thousands of Muslims memorize the entire Qur'an. Furthermore, the "Qur'an is the most 'read' book in the world," (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.32). This is so, because Muslims are compelled to at least read the entire Qur'an twice a year, one reading of which is commonly performed during the holy month of Ramadan. Muslims are also compelled to read portions of the Qur'an at will, five times a day during obligatory prayers. This has also allowed the Qur'an to be preserved in its original form. All translations of the Arabic Qur'an are also accompanied by the Arabic text, in order to further preserve its originality. Also noticeable, is the fact that the Arabic of the Qur'an is not the vernacular Arabic spoken today: it is a classical form of Arabic which existed during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Arabs also refer to the Qur'an as the source for correct grammar application and principals. (Personal interview, Jamiat: 2004).

The second manner of preservation can be found in the works of Ahmad Deedat, in his book titled "Al-Qur'an, The Ultimate Miracle". From his detailed diagnosis of the preservation technique adopted by the Qur'an, I have withdrawn the following:

The Holy Qur'an comprises of 114 chapters, of which every chapter, except the chapter of forgiveness, begins with the words: *"In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful."* Each word of this code is repeated in the Qur'an as a multiple of nineteen. For example, the word 'Allah' is repeated 2698 times, which is a multiple of 19. Even the total number of chapters, 114 in total, is a multiple of 19. The code is thus repeated 113 times in the beginning of every chapter, except for the chapter of forgiveness, whereupon it is compensated for in chapter nine, when the prophet Solomon wrote a letter to the neighboring queen, recorded in the Qur'an as follows:

“She said: ‘O ye my ministers! Surely there has come to me a letter worthy of respect. It is from Solomon, and it begins: ‘In the name of God, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.’”

This once again brings the total number of this code to 114, an exact multiple of 19.

The Holy Qur’an has the heading of certain chapters, as ‘initials’ or ‘code’ letters. Adding all these abbreviations throughout the 114 chapters, we land up at 57. Once again, 57 is a multiple of 19. More shockingly however, is that the ‘initials’ then carry themselves throughout the chapter as a multiple of 19. For example, the initials ‘a’, ‘l’ and ‘m’ are the initials to the beginnings of chapters 2, 3,7,13,29,30,31. For these chapters, all the words beginning with the letters ‘a’, ‘l’ and ‘m’ collectively add up to multiples of 19. To elaborate further, I have demonstrated a table below:

Chapters beginning with the initials ‘a’, ‘l’ and ‘m’:			
	Beginning with ‘m’	beginning with ‘l’	beginning with ‘a’
Chapter 2	2195	3204	4592
Chapter 3	1251	1885	2578
Chapter 7	1165	1523	2572
Chapter 13	260	479	625
Chapter 29	347	554	784
Chapter 30	318	396	545
Chapter 31	177	298	348
Chapter 32	158	154	268

Total	5871	8493	12312

5871 + 8493 + 5871	=	26676	(19 x 1404)

(Table from Deedat: 1979, 68).

This is no coincidence, since it works for all the chapters with different initials’ for example the chapters titled with the initial ‘k’ collectively have a 114 words beginning with this letter, which once again is a multiple of 19. Furthermore, this interlocking system goes across chapters as a cross check, for example, the initial ‘k’ is also the initial to other chapters, with other initials as well, which also add up to multiples of 19! Even the very first revelation consisted of 19 words, which have exactly 76 letters, once again a multiple of 19. (Deedat: 1979, 30).

This interlocking system of multiples of 19 is carried forth throughout the Qur’an, accompanied by the most rhythmic and poetic Arabic, such Arabic that the poets of Arabia, when poetry was at its peak, openly admitted that “such poetry was not humanly possible”. (Deedat: 1979).

The discovery of this interlocking theme was unknown until it was recently discovered, prompted by the unexplained verse: “And over it are 19.” (Qur’an 74:30). This verse was revealed during the revelation of the 96th chapter of the Qur’an, which is the 19th

chapter from the back of the Qur’an (114 -18= 96). (Deedat: 1979, p. 1-75). Due to the limitations of text, it would be sufficient to say that the number 19 is intertwined into the fabric of the Qur’an, as illustrated from the above examples.

Design rationale: The significance of nineteen and its implementation

Since the number 19 holds such an important link to the Qur’an, it was decided to symbolically link this number to the Exhibition Center. Initially it was conceived to duplicate this number along smaller elements in a repetitive manner. After realizing that the entire context of the exhibition center was based upon Qur’anic narratives, it was decided that this theme of 19 should be subtly implemented into the scheme, more as a symbolic gesture, in order to further the theme of abstractness. This notion finally manifested itself into creating 19 distinct exhibition spaces, which would for the contemplative viewer, link its attachment to the Qur’an. This will be further explained in Section F, titled ‘The Overall Design Rationale’.

Introduction to the Prophets

In attempting to demonstrate Islamic beliefs, it would be of paramount importance to initially identify with elements common to all. According to the latest statistics released by the Jamiat of South Africa 2004, Christianity is the world’s largest religion. It would thus be safe to assume that Christian beliefs are widely and commonly known to all. Furthermore, within a more local context, South Africa was a Christian country until the 1994 elections, practicing Christian based ideologies, such as labeling abortion as illegal, and declaring Sundays as public holidays. Islam could be seen as a sister religion to Christianity, and essentially differs upon matters relating to the Christ, and furthermore, the acceptance of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the seal of the prophet hood. Besides these differences, Islam and Christianity share almost the same beliefs in all the Biblical narrations of the prophets from the beginning of time when Adam (AS) was created, until the birth of Christ (AS). From this analogy, it can be observed that the belief in the Prophets is a common link, and introducing Islam through this means, would enable people to identify the with religion via common knowledge.

Furthermore, the importance of the Prophets and accepting them as messengers of God is a fundamental article of the Islamic faith. Muslims believe that in order to guide mankind, God sent Messengers or Prophets to earth, to remind the various nations and tribes of the Oneness of God, and His attributes, and to enjoin upon mankind to establish good and to abstain from evil. *“And verily we have raised in every nation a messenger.”* (Qur’an, 10:48). *“Verily, We sent before thee (O Muhammad) messengers to their own folk. They brought clear proofs (of Allah’s Sovereignty).”* (Qur’an, 13:7).

It is believed that approximately 124 000 Prophets were sent to different nations and tribes, to preach this message.

“Say ye: ‘We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus; and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one another of them: And we bow to Allah (in Islam).’” (Qur’an, 2:136).

Indeed all the Prophets enjoy a lofty status in the eyes of God, but due to the lack of financial funding and space, only a few selected Prophets could be accommodated for in the proposed exhibition center. After measuring up spatial constraints, it was realized that only six Prophets could comfortably be viewed.

Upon observing the Qur’an, it is noted that the Qur’an only mentions twenty five prophets by name. Of these twenty five, six were chosen based upon the following criteria:

Adam (AS):

Adam (AS) was the first human being to be created, and allows man to reflect upon his origins. Furthermore, the story of Adam (AS) and Eve (AS) is well known throughout all Biblical records. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

Noah (AS):

Noah (AS) is often known as the “second Adam (AS)” or the “second father” of human kind. He was the first prophet to emigrate, and his story of the escape with the “Arc” to save the believers from a terrible flood, is also well known to throughout all Biblical records. (Muhammad: 2001, p.34-55).

Jesus (AS):

Jesus (AS) is known as the ‘founder of Christianity’, and he brought forth the Holy Bible. His miraculous birth, his miracles to cure the sick and feed the poor, is acknowledged throughout the Christian world. He is held in high esteem in the eyes of the Muslim world, and is believed to return to the earth in the future. His birth was approximately some 570 years before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). (Gemeiah: 2001, p.332-363).

Muhammad (SAW):

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his life would devour special detail and attention, since it his honor of bestowing the Holy Qur’an upon mankind, and for being the seal of the prophet hood. Without him there would be no Islam, and after declaring that there is no God but Allah, the second article of faith, would require one to testify that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the messenger of Allah. (Muhammad: 2001, Vol.2, p.231-355).

Muslims also believe that none of the other Prophets were sent to the entire universe, but were sent to a particular tribe or nation. In the case of Muhammad (SAW), Allah himself declares:

“You (O Muhammad) have been sent for the entire creation as a giver of glad tidings and a Warner.”

(Qur’an, 34:27).

“We have sent you (Muhammad) as a Messenger to mankind, and Allah is sufficient as a witness.” (Qur’an, 4:79).

Abraham (AS):

Abraham (AS) is accepted by both Christian and Jewish religions. For Muslims however, Abraham (AS) holds special value in many ways. He is often addressed as “the friend of God”, and had many trials and sacrifices to make, some of which are ritualized to this present day, during the obligatory pilgrimage. His story of being thrown in the fire is referred to in both the Bible and the Torah.

It was also Abraham (AS), with the help of his son Ishmael (AS), who had built the Holy Ka’ba, the first house to be built in the name of God, in the city of Mecca.

(Muhammad: 2001, p.95-147).

Abraham (AS) had two sons, Ishmael (AS) and Isaac (AS). From Isaac (AS) came the lineage to many great prophets, such as Moses (AS) and Jesus (AS). From Ishmael (AS), came the Arab brethren of the Jews, without any apparent lineage to the prophet hood, until after many centuries, Muhammad (SAW) was born. He was thus a descendent to Abraham (AS), through the lineage of his son Ishmael (AS). Due to this link in lineage, stems the link of Islam to Abraham (AS), to its sister religions, Judaism and Christianity. (Muhammad: 2001, p.95-147).

Moses (AS):

Moses (AS) came from the lineage of Isaac (AS), and was sent to the children of Israel, then residing in Egypt. He brought down the well-renowned Ten Commandments, as well as the Torah. He was blessed by saving his people through the parting of the ocean, and his life has many lessons to take heed from. He is mentioned no less than 514 times in the Holy Qur’an.

(Muhammad: 2001, p.225-333).

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad), but as a bringer of glad tidings and as a Warner unto all mankind, but most of mankind know not.” (Qur’an, 34:28).

“We sent you not but as a mercy for all creatures...” (Qur’an, 21:107).

A full walk through and explanation of his life would enable one to understand the origin of basic Islamic principals and beliefs. (The section to follow illustrates a more detailed account of the lives of the above mentioned Prophets, as well as a more refined version of the selection criteria. This would further enable the reader to understand the value of the prophets and their sacrifices in the eyes of Islam, as well as comprehend the symbolic, religious and spiritual meanings, as well as the rationale and overall layout in the exhibition spaces).

A detailed version of the selected Prophets

“Alas for mankind! There never came a Messenger to them but they used to mock at him. Do they not see how many of the generations We have destroyed before them? Verily they will not return to them.” (Qur’an: 36:13).

“...messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.” (Qur’an, 4:165).

Origin of Adam (AS):

Before Allah created Adam (AS), He informed the angels of the creation of vicegerents on the earth. The angels thus asked: “Are you going to create a being that will cause corruption and bloodshed on earth, while we on the other hand hymn Your praises and glorify You?” Allah replied: “I know that which you know not.” (Muhammad: 2001).

After Adam (AS) was created, the angels were commanded to prostrate before him. All besides Satan complied. Satan arrogantly proclaimed that Allah had created him from fire and Adam (AS) was created merely from dust, something inferior to him: he did not realize that merit did not depend upon external appearances. Upon realizing that he was distanced from the mercy of Allah, he requested respite till the Day of Judgment. His request was granted, whereupon he exclaimed that because Adam (AS) was the cause of his ruin, he would attempt to misguide and betray him in every conceivable manner. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

Adam (AS)'s superiority over the angels became manifest to the angels when they were asked the names of various entities. They were unable to reply, but since Adam (AS) had been given knowledge from Allah, he was able to inform the angels the names of the many things that he had been taught. The angels realized that the basis of vicegerency was not excessive hymning of praises but knowledge. (Muhammad: 2001, p14-32).

Adam (AS) resided in Heaven for some time. Heaven as depicted in the Qur’an is described as a place which no human mind can ever comprehend. Many traditions and versus from the Qur’an describe certain elements of Heaven, from which stem the descriptions of large, green gardens with rivers flowing through them in Islamic paintings. The rivers are described as being seven in number, with each flowing with differing contents. One should bear in mind that the number seven has a different connotation in Arabic terms, comparable to the English notion, ‘I’ve told you a dozen-times,’ which would in essence indicate ‘many’ or ‘numerous’. (Muhammad: 2001, p14-32).

Another description of Heaven mentions the Ka’ba, or Holy House in Heaven, which is placed directly above the Ka’ba on earth, with the angels circulating it in a similar fashion as is customarily performed at Mecca. It is believed that from the Ka’ba of Heaven, divine light and guidance pours down onto the Ka’ba on earth, and then radiates to the rest of the world. (Muhammad: 2001, p14-32).

Design rationale: Exhibition 3 - Heaven

This space was decided to depict Heaven, in order to indicate man’s initial above, to which he is bound to return to. In order to depict heaven spatially, it was decided to increase the height of the space, with Heaven hovering above, thereby allowing the viewer of observing Heaven, but not totally. The viewer’s position would be along a suspended floating bridge, circulating around Heaven just above eye level.

Heaven itself was decided to be portrayed as a transparent world, with natural light shining above it in the form of a skylight. The base of Heaven was depicted as a circular glass plate. The contents of Heaven were depicted as a glass Ka’ba, surrounded by water, which would fall to the ground in seven waterfalls.

From the floating bridge circulating Heaven, the viewer would be able to view the earth below, to which Adam (AS) was sent to.

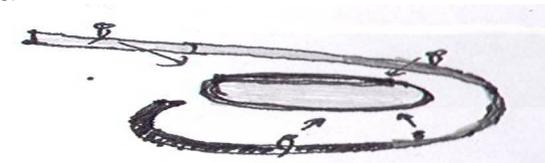


Fig. 7. Spatial rationale: Exhibition 3

The figure illustrates the conceptual circulation around Heaven via light floating bridges.

Adam (AS) sent to earth:

Adam (AS) lived alone in Heaven for a certain period, when he perceived a vacuum in his life. Accordingly, Allah created Eve (AS). Adam (AS) was overjoyed in finding a companion, and they were allowed to live in Heaven and partake of all its contents except for one tree, the partaking of whose fruits was forbidden. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

Satan found an opportunity of misleading Adam (AS) and Eve (AS), and deceptively convinced them that the prohibited tree was the “tree of eternity”. Upon hearing this, the human weakness of forgetfulness overcame Adam (AS) and he forgot that the command of prohibition was given against that tree. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

Allah reproached Adam (AS) for his mistake. Adam (AS), unlike Satan, did not begin debating with Allah, and admitted his mistake. The cause of his error was not obstinacy or rebelliousness, but forgetfulness. He implored Allah for forgiveness and he was pardoned. However, the time had come for Adam (AS) to fulfill the responsibility of vicegerency on earth. Based upon divine wisdom, the command to inhabit the earth for a specified period was given. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

Adam (AS) and Eve (AS) then lived on earth and had children who were then married to each other. Mankind soon began to expand into the different nations and tribes from thereon. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).
The object of mentioning Adam (AS) is to firstly inform mankind of his origin, and to inform people that the Islamic perspective of man’s origin also began in this manner, similar to the Jewish and Christian narratives.

It is a basic article of the faith to believe in the “ismat,” or sinlessness of a prophet. Every prophet was thus divinely protected from even the intention of sin, since it was essential for the messengers to be free from all types of sin in order to present Allah’s message correctly and to guide mankind. However, the messenger’s were also human, and consequently made mistakes or forgot. This however, is different from sin, which is done with an intentional pursuit, contrary to forgetfulness or erring, which is done unintentionally. In other words, **Adam (AS) did not sin, but was innocent, and his humanness made him forget Allah’s command.** (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

His innocence can be noted from the following versus of the Holy Qur’an:

“Satan caused the two, Adam and Eve to **falter.**” (Qur’an, 2:36).

“**Satan whispered to him.**” (Qur’an,7:20).

“We took an oath from Adam before, but **he forgot** it and We did not find him of determination.” (Qur’an, 20:115).

“Adam did not fulfill the command of his Sustainer and **he erred.**” (Qur’an, 20:121).

This goes for all the prophets, who were divinely protected against sin, but however, did make mistakes, which were not sins. This law and logic of Islam, elevates the status of the prophets, and indicates that they were perfectly suited to their task, since they were divinely protected and assisted. (Muhammad: 2001, p.14-32).

Design rationale: Exhibition 4- Adam (AS)

This space was decided to become a part of the overall space for exhibition 3, thereby allowing the viewer to reflect where Adam (AS) originally resided, and his new abode upon the earth. The space was decided to portray Adam (AS) and his wife as two glass columns, with their names inscribed within them. This would thereby highlight the origin of mankind upon earth, originally stemming from these two individuals.

Fig. 8. Sketch of Adam’s descent to earth from Heaven



Fig. 9. Exhibition 2 and 3 demarcated (in red)

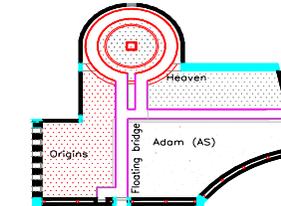
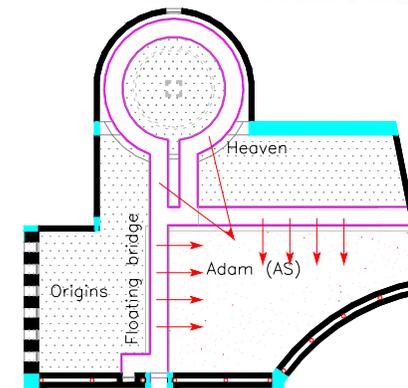


Fig. 10. Spatial rationale: Exhibition 4

The figure alongside illustrates Exhibition space’s 2,3 and 4 as one, since all three exhibition spaces relate strongly to the beginnings of creation. The floating ramp, illustrated in pink, begins to descend after circling Heaven, and brings one totally ‘down to earth,’ to depict Adam (AS) who was sent down to earth from Heaven



Noah (AS):

With some reservations, according to the experts on lineage, and narratives from the Torah, the lineage of Noah (AS) as follows:

"Noah (AS), son of Lamik, son of Matushalih, son of Akhnukh, son of Yarud, son of Mahlil, son of Qaynan, son of Anush, son of Adam (AS)." (Muhammad: 2001, p.34).

Before the advent of Noah (AS), people had replaced the Almighty with man-made idols. "Pagan worship had become the norm of the people." (Muhammad: 2001, p.35).

Noah (AS) was sent to guide his nation, and he invited his people to the true religion. His people ridiculed at him and rejected his message, except for a few, who were mostly of the poor of his nation. (Muhammad: 2001, p.36). "...**very few believed with him.**" (Qur'an, 11:40).

"The leaders of the disbelievers among his people said: 'We see nothing in you but a human like us and we see only the most despised amongst us following you...'" (Muhammad: 2001, p.37).

"Indeed We sent Noah to his nation with the command: 'Warn your nation before a grievous punishment afflicts them'.

He said: 'O my people! I am a clear Warner to you that you should worship Allah, fear Him and obey me...'

He said: 'O my Sustainer! I have invited my nation day and night, but my propagation only increases their flight. Every time I invited them so that You forgive them, they placed their fingers in their ears, covered themselves with their clothes, became obstinate and arrogant. Thereafter I spoke to them in public and private. I said: 'Seek forgiveness form your Nourisher. Indeed He is most forgiving'. (Qur'an, 71:1-10).

"They said: 'O Noah! You have quarreled with us and increased your dispute. If you are truthful, bring that which you are promising us.' (Qur'an, 11:32).

"It was revealed to Noah that none of his people will believe except those who have already embraced Islam. So do not grieve any longer on their actions." (Qur'an, 11:36).

When Noah (AS) realized that it was no deficiency in his propagation, but that the fault lied with the people, he supplicated to Allah:

"O my Sustainer, Do not leave any disbeliever on the surface of the earth. If you happen to leave them, they will mislead your servants and beget only wicked and ungrateful offspring." (Qur'an, 71:26, 27).

Allah accepted Noah (AS)'s supplication, and he was instructed to prepare an ark: ***"Construct the ark under Our protection and according to Our revelation. Do not address Me on behalf of the oppressors, for they are about to be drowned."*** (Qur'an, 11:37).

When he began constructing the ark, the disbelievers began jeering at him: "When we are drowning, you and your followers going to be saved on this ark? What a foolish thought!" (Muhammad: 2001, p.35-55).

Noah constructed the ark and saw the first sign of the bubbling of water from the earth. Thereupon he was given the divine command to embark on the ship with his followers and a pair of all the animals. The sky was ordered to pour forth its rain and the earth was ordered to let the water gush out. (Muhammad: 2001, p.35-55).

Noah (AS) supplicated to Allah: ***"O my Lord, indeed my son is of my family and your promise is true. You are the most just of all sovereigns."***

Allah replied: "O Noah, he is not of your family. His deed is incorrect. Therefore do not ask Me that of which you have no knowledge. I advise you, lest you become of the ignorant."

He (Noah) said: "O my Lord, I seek refuge in you from that of which I have no knowledge. I will become of the losers if you do not forgive me and have mercy on me."

It was said: "O Noah, alight with peace from Us and blessings upon you and those who are with you." (Qur'an, 11:45-48).

It thus became apparent to Noah (AS) that the promise of rescue was based upon belief and faith and not family relations. (Muhammad: 2001, p.35-55). His son announced in the distance: ***"I will seek refuge on a mountain which will protect me from the water."*** (Qur'an, 11:43).

Upon hearing this, Noah (AS) proclaimed: ***"Today there is no protector from the command of Allah except the one whom He has mercy on."*** (Qur'an, 11:43). A wave intervened and his son was drowned. (Muhammad: 2001, p.35-55).

When the divine punishment terminated, the ark settled on mount Judi, and the passengers of the ark safely stepped onto land once again. Noah is thus referred to as "the second father of mankind." (Muhammad: 2001, p.35-55).

Design rationale: Exhibition 5- Noah (AS)

After Noah (AS) was informed that the remaining disbelievers would never believe in him, we notice a turning point in the life of Noah (AS), as he prays not for the guidance of the disbelievers, but for their destruction. This culminated in the destruction of the disbelievers, and the escape of the believers via an ark. The ark was thus considered as a means of portraying the turning point in Noah (AS)'s life. Following this concept, water was introduced into the space, and a timber plank was placed at its center, thereby literally depicting the historical event. The timber plank was decided to be submerged into the water, held up by thin cables, in order to depict the feeling of floating. For further effects, the water would bubble, and little jets of water would be released from the ceiling.

By using the above-mentioned elements as a background, a suitable spatial setting was created. It was decided to use minimal text and graphics, and to rely more on sound effects to narrate the events leading to the escape with the ark.

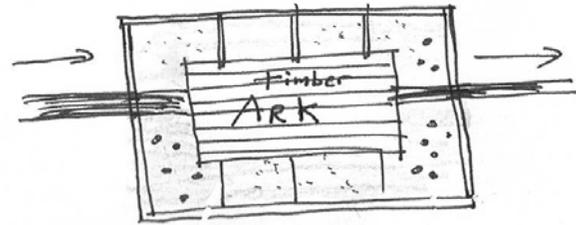


Fig. 11. Initial sketch depicting a timber plank floating in water, held by cables springing from the walls.

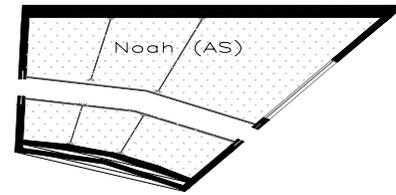


Fig. 12. Final plan of Noah (AS)'s exhibition space.

Abraham (AS):

His lineage according to the Torah is as follows:

"Abraham (AS), son of Tarikh, son of Nahur, son of Saruj, son of Ra'oo, son of Faleh, son of Abir, son of Shaleh, son of Irfkishaz, son of Sam, son of Noah (AS)." (Muhammad: 2001, p.95).

According to the Torah, Abraham (AS) was from the area of Aur in Iraq. He belonged to the tribe of Faddan who were idol worshippers. According to The Gospel of St. Barnabas, Abraham (AS)'s father was a carpenter, who made idols and sold them. (Muhammad: 2001, p.95-96).

From the very outset, Abraham (AS) had a firm conviction that these man-made idols could neither benefit nor harm, and could never be deities. "When he was conferred the mantle of prophet hood, this was the first aspect to which he turned the people's attention to". (Muhammad: 2001, p.97).

Abraham (AS) consequently addressed his nation:

"Behold!" he said to his father and his nation. 'What are these statues to which you are so assiduously devoted?'

They said: 'We have found our fathers worshipping them.'

He said: 'Undoubtedly you and your forefathers have been in manifest error.'

They said: 'Have you brought us the truth or are you one of those who mock?'

He said: 'Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and He is the one who created them. I am a witness to that'." (Muhammad: 2001, p.97).

On another occasion, he is reported to have said: "O nation! How can you worship idols which you make with your own hands? Are you in such a dream of negligence that you construct idols with wood, and if the idol is not made according to your wishes you break it and make another one? You regard these man-made idols as gods that can neither benefit nor harm. Refrain from such futility and accept the unity of Allah." (Muhammad: 2001, p.108).

"Abraham's nation began disputing with him. Abraham asked, "Are you disputing with me regarding Allah." He also said at another juncture, "I have turned my attention to the one who created the heavens and the earth. I am not of the polytheists." (Muhammad: 2001, p.112).

"One day, during his conversations with the people he said in passing to them: 'By Allah, I will conspire against your idols in your absence.' Very shortly thereafter, the people had an auspicious day of celebration. Whilst busy reveling in their celebration, Abraham (AS) proceeded to the largest idol in the temple: 'Will you not eat? What is the matter with you that you do not speak?' Then he turned upon them striking them with the right hand. He smashed them to pieces except the largest one so that they could refer to him as to what had happened. When the people returned, they asked: 'Who has done this to our gods? He is indeed an oppressor.' Some of the people said: 'We heard a youngster by the name of Abraham talking about them.'

They said: 'Bring him before the eyes of the people in order that they may bear witness.' When he was brought forth, they asked: 'Are you the one that did this to our gods, O Abraham?' He said: 'Nay, the largest one of them all has perpetrated this sin. Ask them if they can speak.'

They turned to themselves and said: 'Surely you are the ones in the wrong.' Then they were confounded with shame and said: 'You know full well that these idols do not speak.' Abraham (AS) then reproached them and gave them advice in the following manner: 'Do you then worship things besides Allah which can neither benefit nor harm you? Fie upon you and the things you worship besides Allah. Have you no sense?'" (Muhammad: 2001, p.114).

Instead of listening to Abraham (AS)'s advice, they became enraged and were deciding what to do about the matter. *Namrud*, the king at that time, soon came to know of the incident, and realized that if Abraham (AS) continued propagating, it would make all the subjects rebel against his godhood and authority. Abraham (AS), despite the slogans of enmity and a dreadful punishment in store for him, carried on his propagation. *Namrud* and his people captured Abraham (AS), and built a special place in which they lit a fire for several days. The fire was so intense that it scorched all the things around it. When they were completely satisfied that Abraham (AS) had no way of surviving, they flung him into the fire by means of a catapult. Allah ordered the fire to cool down and be a means of contentment for Abraham (AS). He emerged completely unscathed by the fire. (Muhammad: 2001, p.116).

"When Allah saved him from the fire and disgraced his nation, he decided to migrate to another place to continue his mission of propagating the truth. He said: 'I am going to my Sustainer. Soon He will guide me.'" (Muhammad: 2001). In this way he emigrated, and continued his propagation until he reached Egypt. The King of Egypt at that time became certain that Abraham (AS) was an accepted servant of Allah, and went to the extent of handing over his daughter Hagar (AS) to Abraham (AS). According to the custom prevalent at that time, Hagar (AS) would be a servant and assistant to Abraham (AS)'s elder wife, Sara (AS). (Muhammad: 2001, p118).

Hagar (AS) soon fell pregnant and gave birth to Abraham (AS)'s first child, Ishmael (AS). Sara (AS) was extremely perturbed at the birth of Ishmael (AS), since she was the first and elder wife. Consequently she told Abraham (AS) to remove Hagar (AS) and her son from her sight. This request hurt the feelings of Abraham (AS), however he was then told by Allah that it would be more expedient for him to do as Sara (AS) requested. (Muhammad: 2001).

Abraham (AS) thus took Hagar (AS) and his infant son, Ishmael (AS) and left them, as he was divinely commanded, with a packet of dates and a water-bag, in a barren and desolate place, approximately where the current well of Zam-Zam is located. (Located in Mecca, Saudi Arabia). After some time their sources became extinguished, and the situation deteriorated. Hagar (AS) ascended to the nearest hill, *Safa*, in the hope of seeing someone or finding some water. Then she rushed back to the child, who was now restless due to the extreme thirst being experienced. Thereafter she ascended to the opposite hill, *Marwa*. She repeated this procedure seven times, when upon the final ascent she heard a gurgling sound. Water came gushing out of the earth, close to where the child was located. She began enclosing the water due to the tremendous force

with which it was coming out, saying '*zam-zam*', or 'stop-stop'. For this reason the well became known as the well of *Zam-Zam*. Consequently, when Muslims perform the obligatory pilgrimage, they run up *Safa and Marwa* as part of a ritual, in commemoration of the event. Hagar (AS) then drank water and breast-fed Ishmael. During this period, birds began to fly to the newly found water, and the passing tribe of Jurhum, saw the birds flying, and assumed their destination to be water. They soon settled at the well, and took Hagar (AS) and her infant into their tribe. (Muhammad: 2001).

As time passed, Abraham (AS) would frequently come and visit his family. One day he had a dream in which he was commanded by Allah to sacrifice his son. Since the dreams of prophets are true, he immediately began to carry out the order of Allah. He first mentioned the dream to his son, Ishmael (AS), who replied: "O my father, do as you have been commanded to. By the will of Allah, you will find me of the patient ones." (Muhammad: 2001, p.118-123).

Abraham (AS) found his son willing and tied his hands and feet. Then he sharpened his knife and made Ishmael lay down and began to slaughter. The revelation immediately dawned upon Abraham (AS) that he had fulfilled the dream, and that this was indeed a test. Now he was ordered to sacrifice the ram which appeared next to him. This sacrifice was so thoroughly accepted by Allah, that today, Muslims throughout the world are compelled to practice it during the obligatory pilgrimage. (Muhammad: 2001, p.125).

Later in life, Abraham (AS) was commanded to build the Ka'ba. He mentioned this to his son Ishmael (AS), and thereafter both father and son began the construction. When they began digging, the foundations of the previous construction became evident. It is believed that Adam (AS) was the first to build the Ka'ba, although there has been no mention of this in the Qur'an. The Ka'ba is believed to be the first house erected to manifest the unity of Allah. As the Ka'ba was being constructed, and increased in height, Abraham (AS) began using a slab of stone, which he stood upon, to reach the higher portions of the Ka'ba. This stone is said to still bear the footprint of Abraham (AS), and can be found near the existing Ka'ba in a preserved casing, known as the '*Maqame-Ibrahim*,' or the footprint of Abraham (AS). (Muhammad: 2001, p.137-141).

Many centuries later, through the progeny of Ishmael (AS), the lineage of prophet hood was bestowed upon the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the seal of the prophets. From the lineage of Ishmael (AS)'s step brother, Isaac (AS), the son of Sara (AS), came the lineage to many great prophets, amongst them being that of Moses (AS) and Jesus (AS). (Muhammad: 2001, p.147).

Design rationale: Exhibition 6- Abraham (AS)

Abraham (AS)'s life was characterized by many important incidences. Due to the limitation of space, it was decided that only one aspect of his life should be depicted. It was felt that the turning point in his life was his absolute faith in God, and his disgust towards the idols, which consequently led to him being thrown into a fire. With the divine protection of God, the fire could not harm him. From this point onwards we notice a change in his life: he migrated and was bestowed with the gift of prophet-hood.

The theme for this exhibition space was thus decided to depict the incident of the idols and the fire. For the idols, broken columns were used symbolizing his act of breaking the idols. The columns were decided to be made of concrete with the names of the prominent Gods of the time inscribed onto them. The fire was to be depicted as a void surrounding the entire perimeter of the space. This would highlight the isolation felt when he was being cast into the fire by his own community. The use of visual screens would portray blazing fire, whilst sound would be used to explain the narrative.

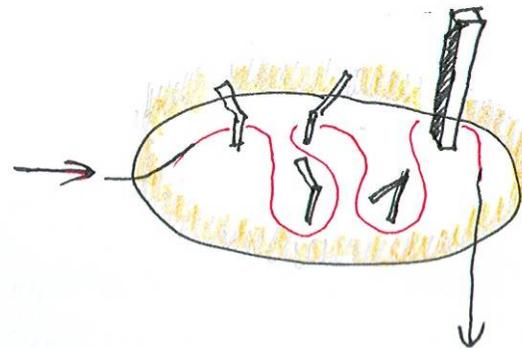


Fig. 13. Spatial rationale: Exhibition 6

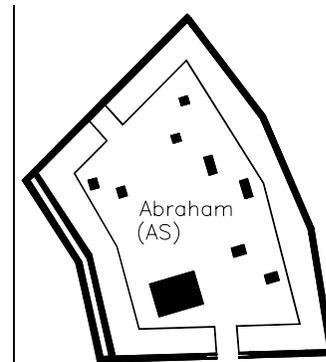


Fig. 14. Final plan: Exhibition 6

Moses (AS):

As indicated above, Moses (AS)'s lineage goes back to Isaac (AS), the son of Abraham (AS).

The Pharaoh of Egypt at the time of Moses (AS) was told by the fortune tellers, that his government would fall at the hands of an Israelite. It was perhaps this that caused him to dislike the Israelites in his land. The Pharaoh, in fear of the prophecy, passed the decree that all the male children of the Israelites should be killed. God assisted Moses (AS)'s mother during this fragile period and divinely inspired her to make a water-tight box and place the child in it, and thereupon to leave it in the Nile River. The box floated along and reached the royal banks of the Pharaoh's palace. The child was taken from the banks and the wife of the Pharaoh, upon seeing the baby, desired to adopt him. Thus Moses (AS) was brought up in the royal palace. He grew up to be particularly strong and brave. He noticed how the Israelites were being persecuted and oppressed, and this greatly disturbed him. (Muhammad: 2001, p.225-333).

Once he saw an Egyptian dragging along an Israelite for forced labor. The Israelite saw Moses (AS) and screamed for help. Moses (AS) in extreme anger punched the Egyptian. The enormity of his blow was so strong, that the Egyptian could not bear it, and died. Moses (AS) felt guilty for his action and supplicated to God to forgive him, since he had not meant to kill the Egyptian. Soon the news reached the Pharaoh, and he ordered the arrest of Moses (AS) for murder. In the meantime, a courtier of the Pharaoh, who had a particular liking for Moses (AS), informed Moses (AS) of the decree. He advised Moses (AS) to immediately emigrate. Moses (AS) accepted his counsel and quietly emigrated to Madyan, the land of his forefathers, without any companions or provisions. (Muhammad: 2001, p.225-333).

When he arrived at Madyan, he found a large crowd of people around a well, giving water to their animals. He noticed two women at a distance, preventing their animals from going towards the water. He immediately realized the oppression at stake: the women were weak, and had to allow the strong and mighty to complete feeding their flocks first. Moses (AS) could not bear this, and pushed through the crowd, lowered the pail into the well, and went to feed the women's flock of sheep. The crowd, although distressed, dared not confront Moses (AS), after witnessing that he had removed the pail of water himself. (Muhammad: 2001, p.225-333).

After the flocks had drunk water, the girls returned home and narrated the event to their ageing father. One of the girls returned shortly and informed Moses (AS) that their father intended to reward him for his services. Moses (AS) met the saintly elder, and after narrating his life story, he was offered a proposal to marry one of his daughters. His dowry would be to work for several years, and he accepted this proposal. (Muhammad: 2001, p.225-333).

"When Moses (AS) completed the period and traveled with his wife, he perceived a fire from the side of Mount Tur. He said to his wife: 'Wait here, I have discerned a fire. Perhaps I may bring a firebrand or I may find some guidance at the fire.'" (Muhammad: 2001, p.252).

Moses (AS) observed that it was a strange fire. Light could be seen on the tree but neither was it burning the tree nor was it being extinguished. Then he heard a voice saying: "O Moses, indeed I am your Lord. So remove your shoes. You are in the sacred valley of Tuwa and I have chosen you. Therefore listen attentively to whatever is revealed. He was the mantle of prophet hood and commanded to go to the Pharaoh of Egypt, to invite towards truth. Moses (AS) returned to his wife who was waiting for him. From here he immediately set off with his family to fulfill the order of God. (Muhammad: 2001, p.257).

Upon reaching Egypt, Moses (AS) secretly made his way home, whereupon he was met by his family. Moses (AS) requested of God to make his brother Aaron (AS) assist him in his mission, and this was accepted. The two brothers then went to the court of the Pharaoh, and Moses (AS) told him: "O Pharaoh, indeed I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds. It is not suitable for me but to speak the truth. I have come to you with a clear proof from your Lord. Thus send the children of Israel with me." (Muhammad: 2001, p.263).

The Pharaoh retorted: "Did we not nurture you when you were a child and did you not spend many years of your life among us? And you committed a crime and were ungrateful."

Moses (AS) responded: "I committed it unknowingly. Then I fled from you when I feared you. My Lord has since granted me judgment and appointed me as a prophet."

(Muhammad: 2001, p.277).

The ruler of Egypt was not only a king but had the position of a deity of the sun. When Moses (AS) spoke about the lord of the universe the Pharaoh became interested to know which other deity there was beside him. (Muhammad: 2001).

"What is the Lord of the worlds?" Moses said: "He is the Sustainer of the skies and the earth and whatever is in between, if you have certainty. Pharaoh said to those around him, "Did you not hear?" Moses continued: "He is your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers." The Pharaoh said: "Indeed the messenger sent to you is insane." Moses said: "He is the Lord of the east and the west and whatever is in between, if you have any intelligence." (Muhammad: 2001, p.278).

These discourses between the Pharaoh and Moses (AS) continued during several sessions. The Pharaoh soon realized that the foundation of his godhood was weak in front of the truth which Moses (AS) propagated. His courtiers also realized this. In order to terminate this situation he said: "O Moses (AS), if you take anyone besides me as your deity, I will imprison you." Moses (AS) replied: "Even if I bring a clear sign to you?" The Pharaoh replied: "If you are truthful then bring it." (Muhammad: 2001).

During the era of Moses (AS), magic was an important constituent of the Egyptian sciences. The magicians held a high status and were consulted on all important aspects. Magic held a religious and lofty status. (Muhammad: 2001, p.279).

Moses (AS) stepped forward in front of the entire court assembly and threw down his staff. It immediately changed into a serpent. Upon drawing out his hand it changed into a shining star. The Pharaoh said to Moses (AS): "We can most certainly produce magic to match yours. (Muhammad: 2001, p.280). An agreement was reached that Moses (AS) and his brother would be given respite and were to appear before the entire community at the day of the 'festival'. (Muhammad: 2001, p.280).

The day of the festive had arrived. On the one side stood the magicians of Egypt and on the other, Moses (AS) and his brother, Aaron (AS). The Pharaoh was extremely confident that he could vanquish them with his magicians, whom he had promised great rewards.

Moses (AS) said to them: "Woe to you, do not ascribe falsehood to Allah. Otherwise He will uproot you with a punishment. Unsuccessful is the one that ascribes lies to Him." (Muhammad: 2001, 299).

It was agreed that the magicians should throw their staffs first. Suddenly their ropes and sticks turned into running serpents. Moses (AS) then threw down his staff, and it became a mighty serpent that swallowed all the other serpents. The magicians on witnessing this openly declared that this was a miracle and declared their faith in God, in front of the entire public community. When the Pharaoh saw that his plan had come to no avail, he became afraid that the Egyptian public would go against him. He defiantly exclaimed that it appeared as if the magicians were working together with Moses (AS) and that he was probably their teacher. The Pharaoh was however ultimately overawed by the spiritual power of Moses (AS), and he feared that Moses (AS) would create havoc in the whole of Egypt. He thus decided that it would be better to assassinate Moses (AS). (Muhammad: 2001, p.302).

Moses (AS) was however divinely forewarned about this, and was commanded to take the children of Israel to the land of their forefathers. Together with the assistance of his brother Aaron (AS), Moses (AS) led the Israelites, at night to the shores of the Red Sea. The Pharaoh's scouts informed him of what had transpired. The Pharaoh took a powerful army and reached the Israeli camp by the morning. (Muhammad: 2001, p.303).

Moses (AS) was commanded to strike the sea with his rod. The water split on both sides, and a road appeared in the middle. When the Pharaoh saw this he exclaimed: "Look at what I have done! Now you can go and capture the Israelites." (Muhammad: 2001, p.303).

Consequently, the Pharaoh and his entire army stepped into the sea. When every individual of the Israelites had reached dry land, the sea then returned to its normal state. The Pharaoh and his army were drowned. When the Pharaoh began drowning he called out: "Now I believe in the Being which the Israelites have believed in..." (Muhammad: 2001, p.304).

Moses (AS) gathered the people and told them to thank and worship God who saved them from a terrible doom. He then took his people on the road to Sinai. (Muhammad: 2001, p.305).

During his remaining life, Moses (AS) was given the Ten Commandments, and the Torah. He performed many miracles, and fought oppressors. According to the Torah, his birth was approximately 250 years after the demise of Abraham (AS), and he passed away at the age of a 120 years. (Muhammad: 2001, p.333).

Design rationale: Exhibition 7- Moses (AS)

The key points in Moses (AS)'s life could be said to be:

His narrow escape at birth

His escape through the sea, which was a turning point in the life of his people

Upon observation it was realized that both these aspects were related to water. This was then portrayed in literal terms, with his birth depicted by streams running adjacent to each other along the ground. This was then picked up by these streams transforming into the third dimension as large rectangular shafts of water enclosed in glass, to depict the parting of the sea. This simple play with water was chosen to be the background setting, whilst the narrative of his life and the 'Ten Commandments' would be explained via the use of sound, and transparent touch-screen media, so as to promote physical interaction with the space.

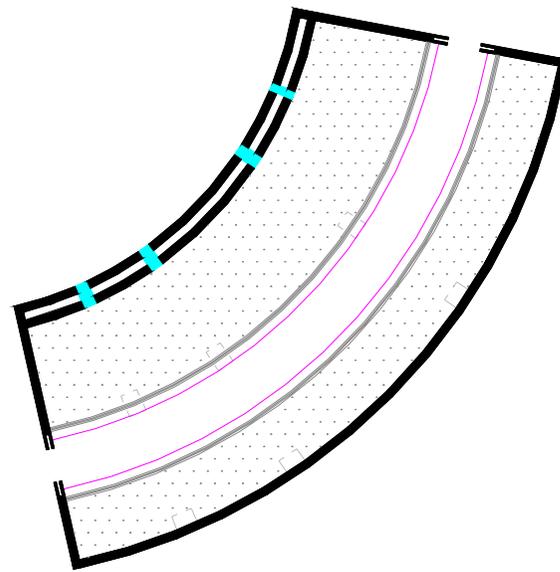


Fig. 15. Plan of Exhibition 7.

The plan depicts a central pathway amidst water, to symbolically relate to the theme of water in Moses (AS)'s life. This abstract display would be in keeping with the theme of abstractness and minimalism portrayed throughout, and symbolically depicts the life of Moses (AS), which was characterized by simplicity.

Jesus (AS):

The Prophet Zechariah (AS)'s wife's sister had a daughter named Hannah. She was married to Imran, a leader of the Israelites. For many years the couple remained childless. She turned to Allah and pleaded with Him for a child. In return, she would offer the child in the service of Allah. Allah granted her request; however, while she was pregnant, her husband passed away, and thus did not live to see his child, for whom he had so longed for. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.332-363).

Hannah gave birth to a girl, and named her Mary. Hannah, in reference to her promise, wrapped the baby in a shawl, and handed Mary over to the temple elders. To ensure that no one had access to Mary, Zechariah (AS) built a separate quarter for her in the temple. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.332-363).

As she grew up, she spent her time in devotion to Allah. Zechariah (AS) visited her daily to see to her needs, and so it continued for many years. One day Zechariah (AS) was surprised to find fresh fruit which was out of season in her room. Since he was the only person who could enter her room, he asked her how the fruit had gotten there. She replied that these provisions were from Allah, as He gives to whom He wills. From this, Zechariah (AS) understood the status of Mary in the eyes of Allah. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.332-363). The Holy Qur'an further supports her lofty status in the following manner: "Behold! The angels said: 'O Mary! God hath chosen thee and purified thee – chosen thee above the women of all nations.'" (Qur'an, 3:42).

One day, while Mary was praying in the temple, an angel in the form of a man appeared before her. Filled with terror, she tried to flee, praying:

"Verily, I seek refuge with the Most Beneficent, (Allah), from you, if you do not fear Allah."

The angel said: "I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son."

She said: "How can I have a son when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste."

He said: "So (it will be), your Lord said: 'That is easy for me: And We wish to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter (already) decreed, (by Allah).'" (Qur'an, 3:47).

The angel's visit caused Mary great anxiety, which increased as the months went by. "How could she face giving birth to a child without having a husband? How could she prevent tongues from wagging about her honor?" (Gemeiah: 2001, p.340).

After some months, she could not bear the mental strain any longer. Burdened with a heavy womb, she left Nazareth, not knowing where to go. She had not gone far off, when she was overtaken by the pangs of labor. She sat down against a dry palm tree, when suddenly she heard a voice: *"Grieve not, your Lord has placed a rivulet below, and shake the trunk of this tree, from which ripe dates will fall. So eat and drink and regain the strength you have lost; and be of*

good cheer, for what you see is the power of Allah, Who made the dry palm tree regain life, in order to provide food for you." (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

After witnessing this, she began to gain calmness, and was sure of her innocence and purity. She decided to return to the city. She was however concerned how to explain this to the people. As if sensing the mother's worries, the baby began to speak, and told her to inform the people that she is fasting, and is thus not allowed to speak. With this miracle, she felt at ease. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.342).

As she had expected, her arrival in the city with a newborn baby aroused the curiosity of the people, who began scolding her: "This is a terrible sin that you have committed." (Jeremiah: 2001, p.344). She indicated that she was fasting and pointed to the child. To their total amazement, the child began to speak clearly, saying: *"I am Allah's servant. Allah has given me the Book, and has made me a prophet, and has blessed me wherever I may be, and has enjoined on me prayers and alms-giving as long as I live. He has not made me arrogant, nor unblest. Peace unto me the day I was born, the day I die and the day I shall be raised alive."* (Qur'an, 19:29-33). The people realized that this was a unique baby, and Mary could now stay in Nazareth without being harassed. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.344).

The following versus of the Qur'an boldly declare the Islamic beliefs concerning Jesus (AS), which might offend sensitive readers; however, one should bear in mind that the Qur'an is bold and straightforward in nature throughout its text, and thus no light-natured text could be found to portray the beliefs regarding Jesus (AS):

"Such is Jesus, son of Mary. (It is) a statement of truth, about which they doubt. It befits not (the Majesty of Allah) that He should beget a son. Glorified (and Exalted be He above all that they associate with Him). When He decrees a thing, He only says to it, 'Be'- and it is." (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

"And they say: 'The Most Beneficent (Allah) has begotten a son. Indeed you have brought forth a terrible evil thing, whereby the heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins, that they ascribe a son to the Most Beneficent (Allah).'" (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

"But it is not suitable for the Most Beneficent that He should beget a son. There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Beneficent as a slave." (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

"O people of the Scripture, do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah aught but the truth. The Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His Word; which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Say not: 'Three (trinity)!' Cease. (It is) better for you; For Allah is (the only) One God; Glory be to Him. (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs." (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

"The similitude of Jesus before God is that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: 'Be,' and he was." (Qur'an, 3:59).

As Jesus (AS) grew, he could tell his friends what kind of supper awaited for them at home, and what they had hidden, and where. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.344-363).

Jesus (AS) had grown up to manhood. It was Sabbath, a day of complete rest: no fire could be extinguished or lit, nor could females plait their hair: Moses (AS) had commanded that Saturday be dedicated to the worship of Allah. However, the wisdom behind the Sabbath and its spirit had gone. (Gemeiah: 2001, 344-363).

Jesus (AS) was on his way to the temple. Although it was the Sabbath, he reached out his hand to pick two pieces of fruit to feed a hungry child. This was considered to be a violation of the Sabbath law. He made a fire for the old women to keep themselves warm from the freezing air: another violation. He went to the temple and looked around. There were twenty thousand priests registered there who earned their living from the temple. Jesus observed that the visitors were much fewer than the priests. Yet the temple was full of sheep and doves which were sold to the people to be offered as sacrifices. Every step in the temple cost the visitor money. Jesus (AS) observed that the poor who could not afford the price of the sheep or the dove were swept away. The priests would burn the offerings, whilst thousands of poor people were hungry outside it. On this night, two noble prophets, John (AS) and Zechariah (AS) were killed by the ruling authority. It was on this night that the revelation descended upon him: He was commanded to begin his call to the children of Israel. To Jesus (AS), the pages of struggle had begun. (Gemeiah: 2001, 344-363).

Like an opposing force, the message of Jesus (AS) came to denounce the practices of the priests, and reinforce the Law of Moses (AS). In the face of a materialistic age, he called his people to a nobler life by word and deed. This exemplary life was the only way out of the wretchedness of his age. His call was marked by its complete uprightness and piety. It appealed to the inner soul, and not to a closed system of rules laid down by society. His calling was based upon the principal that there is no mediation between the Creator and His creatures. His calling was however in conflict with the priests' superficial interpretation of the Torah. He said that he did not come to abrogate the Torah, but to complete it, by going to the spirit of its substance to arrive at its essence. He was thus in conflict with the materialistic nature of his people. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.344-363).

His teachings annoyed the priests, for every word of Jesus (AS) was a threat to their position, exposing their misdeeds. The priests in the meanwhile began to plot against Jesus (AS) in numerous manners to embarrass him. Once they brought to him an adulteress and asked him: "Does not the law stipulate the stoning of the adulteress?" (Gemeiah: 2001). He realized that if he was going to apply the Mosaic Law, he would be destroying his own rules of forgiveness and mercy. He smiled and said: "Whoever among you is sinless can stone her." (Gemeiah: 2001, 344-363). His call was thus based upon mercy for the people, and he continued in this fashion.

Muslims believe that whenever a prophet performs a miracle, then it is not the power of the prophet which allows him to do so, but the power of God, whose permission has to be granted, in order to enable a prophet to perform a miracle. Jesus (AS), like the other messengers of Allah, was no different. The Qur'an further pronounces this fact clearly in the following verses: *"...and will make him (Jesus) a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): 'I have come to you with a sign*

from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's Permission; and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's permission. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe. And I have come confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with proof from your Lord. So fear Allah and obey me. Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (Alone); this is the straight path." (Qur'an, 3:48-54).

Jesus went on with his mission until "vice knew that its throne was threatening to fall". (Gemeiah: 2001, p.357). "The forces of evil accused him of magic, infringement of the Mosaic Law, allegiance with the devil; and when they saw that the poor people followed him, they began to scheme against him." (Gemeiah: 2001, p.357). The highest judicial council secretly met to plot against Jesus (AS). The plan took a new turn: the decision was reached that the best way of getting rid of Jesus (AS), was to kill him. Since they had no authority to pass the death sentence at that time, they convinced the Roman governor that Jesus (AS) was plotting against the security of the Roman Empire and urged him to take immediate action against him. The governor ordered that Jesus (AS) be arrested. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.358).

According to the book of Mathew, Jesus (AS) was arrested and the council of the high priests passed the death sentence upon him. Then, they began insulting and spitting on him. He was then brutally beaten and then handed over to the soldiers for crucifixion. They took off his clothes and kept them. According to custom he carried his cross on his back to increase the suffering. Finally they reached Golgotha, outside the walls of Jerusalem. They then crucified him, together with two thieves. The faith of Islam differs regarding the last portion of Jesus (AS)'s life, and states that they did not kill Jesus (AS), nor did they crucify him. Allah saved Jesus (AS) from his enemies and raised him to Heaven. His enemies killed someone else, who was made to resemble Jesus (AS), through the order of Allah, as is revealed in the following verse:

"...we killed the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah' – but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Jesus was put over another man; and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge; they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely, they killed him not: But Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise." (Qur'an, 4:157-159).

"...then the sects differed; so woe unto the disbelievers from the meeting of a great Day (i.e. the Day of Judgment)." (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

"How clearly will they see and hear, the Day when they will appear before Us! But the polytheists today are in plain error. And warn them (O Muhammad) of the Day of grief and regrets, when the case has been decided, while they are in a state of carelessness, and they believe not." (Qur'an, 19:16-39).

Muslims believe that Jesus (AS) was taken up to the heavens, but has not yet experienced death. Since every soul shall taste death, so too should Jesus (AS). This is then explained in his second coming, when he will come back to the world as a follower of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and will marry, have children, and will remain alive for a period of forty years.

Thereafter he will pass away, and the people will perform his funeral prayer, and bury him alongside the grave of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). (Ali: 1999, p.14).

Aisha (RA), the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says: "I said, O Prophet of Allah, I think that I might remain alive after you, so do permit me to be buried alongside you."

The Prophet (SAW) replied, 'How can I permit such a thing. Here will only be my grave, Abu Bakr's, (the first caliph), Umar's (the second caliph), and Jesus (AS)'s grave'."

(Ali: 1999, p.17).

The Prophet (SAW) is further reported to have said:

"By Him in whose hands is my soul, the time is near when Ibn Maryam (Jesus) will descend upon you; he will rule over you with justice...he will end all battles...," and he will kill 'Dajjal', commonly termed the 'anti-Christ' by the Christian world. (Ali: 1999, p.18).

"Jesus (AS) will descend on the white eastern minaret of Damascus...his hands will be resting on the shoulders of two angels...," and his descension "will be observed by all present there. He will descend from the minaret by means of a ladder...;" after witnessing this, "there is none among the People of the Book but will believe in him before his death."

(Ali: 1999, p.32).

"And remember Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O children of Israel! I am the messenger of God (sent) to you, confirming the law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad."¹ (Qur'an, 61:6).

It wasn't some six hundred years after the ascension of Jesus (AS) that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born in the heartlands of Arabia...the beginning of the seal of the prophet hood. (Gemeiah: 2001, p.363).

Design rationale: Exhibition 8- Jesus (AS)

The space of Jesus (AS) was decided to portray the following four essential Islamic beliefs:

- His miraculous birth: a beam of light shining down from the ceiling to the ground
- His ascension: a beam of light shining up from the ground towards the ceiling
- His second coming to the world: a beam of light shining down from the ceiling to the ground
- His demise: a beam of light shining up from the ground towards the ceiling

This simple manner of depicting the important Islamic beliefs regarding Jesus (AS) was chosen due to its repetitive and abstract nature.

Later in the design stage, the space was divided into two, with the space upon arrival depicting the above mentioned elements, whilst the second space, as an aside, would explain the symbolisms behind the beams of light, as well as offer a more detailed explanation. Sound was avoided in this section due to the sensitive nature of the topic, which could be taken in a negative light. A more subtle approach of using text against walls was thus implemented, bearing in mind that the intention was to welcome dialogue, and not to boldly shout out differences of beliefs.

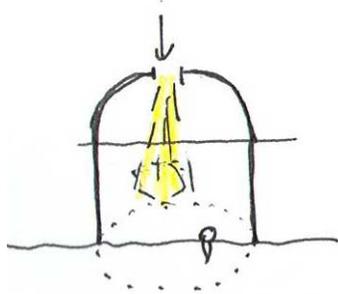


Fig. 16. Sketch depicting the miraculous birth, as well as second coming.

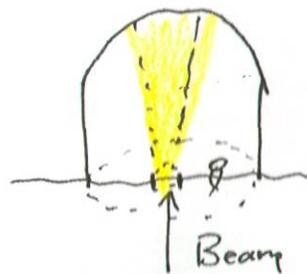


Fig. 17. Sketch depicting ascension and final demise.

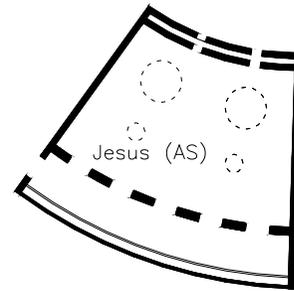


Fig. 18. Plan of Exhibition 8. The dotted circles represent sketches 16 and 17.

Thus a very abstract, minimalistic and simple space was defined as a background, whilst the narrative would be simply displayed along the walls.

Overall form of Building-A towards a later design stage:

The overall form for Building-A was as a result of designing from the inside-out. Noticeable are the heavy walls and volumetric forms which emphasize the Islamic character of the building, as well as make it suitable for better insulation. The resultant form is a plan generated from the central courtyard, which is shut-out from the outside world, and can only be experienced from the inside. The apparent dome façade created hides the sphere embedded within the cube, and thus further emphasizes the theme of designing from the inside-out. The building portrays geometry, repetition, rhythm and an overall spinning motif, within the confines of new materials, thereby depicting a new spirit and form of Islamic architecture.

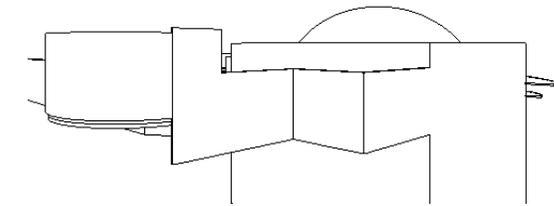


Fig. 19. Sketch perspective- Building A

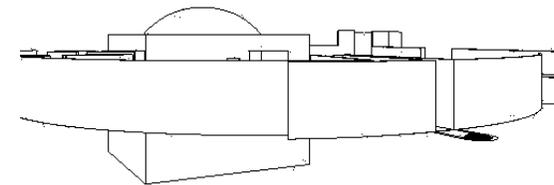


Fig. 20. Sketch perspective- Building A

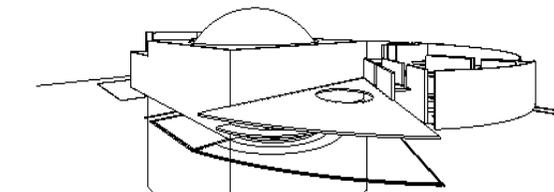


Fig. 21. Sketch perspective- Building A

The life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW):

Acknowledgements of praise

- “He is to me the greatest mind among all the sons of Arabia...” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.1).
- “The personality of Muhammad, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse I can catch...There is Muhammad, the Prophet, Muhammad the General, Muhammad the King, Muhammad the Warrior, Muhammad the Preacher, Muhammad the Philosopher, Muhammad the Statesman, Muhammad the Orator, Muhammad the Reformer, Muhammad the Refuge of Orphans, Muhammad the Protector of Slaves, Muhammad the Emancipator of Women, Muhammad the Judge, Muhammad the Saint. And in all these magnificent roles...he is like a hero.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.16).
- Reverend Bosworth Smith remarks: “Head of the State as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but, he was Pope without the Pope’s pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a police force, without a fixed revenue. If ever a man had the right to say that he ruled by a right of divine, it was Muhammad, for he had all the powers without their supports. He cared not for the dressings of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.19).
- “The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man Muhammad moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.18).
- “...philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he.” (Lamartine, *Historie de la Turquie*, Paris 1854, Vol.11pp.276-277).
- “In an age of barbarism, the battlefield itself was humanized and strict instructions were issued not to embezzle, not to cheat, not to break trust, not to mutilate, not to kill a minor child or a woman or an old man, not to hew down date or palm nor burn it, not to cut down a fruit tree, not to molest monks and persons engaged in worship. His own treatment of his bitterest enemies was the noblest example for his followers.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.21).
- “Muhammad was more than honest. He was human to the marrow of his bones. Human sympathy, human love was the music of his soul. To serve man, to elevate man, to purify man, to educate man, in a word, to humanize man – this was the object of his mission...In thought, in word; in action he had the good of humanity as his sole inspiration, his sole guiding principal.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.31).
- “He was most unostentatious and selfless to the core. What were the titles he assumed? Only two, Servant of God, and His Messenger; Servant first and then a Messenger.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.31).

a. Background and birth

The Ishmaelites, descendants of Prophet Ishmael (AS), renounced the religion of their ancestor and became idolaters. In the course of time they were split into a number of tribes of whom the Quraysh were most celebrated and noble. The Quraysh were delegated as the custodians of the Holy Sanctuary in Mecca, the Ka’ba, and were also responsible for looking after the pilgrims who mustered strong in Mecca every year for pilgrimage. The Quraysh were composed of a number of families, of whom the Hashimites were most prominent. Mecca at that time was along the commercial caravan trade route between Syria in the North and Yemen in the south. (Ashraf: 1999, p.2).

The ancestor of the Hashimites, Hashim, was a leading merchant of Mecca, noted for his generosity and large-heartedness. He was the chief of the town responsible for the administration of the different departments of the State. He had a son, known as Abdul-Mutallib, whom, like his father also rose to fame. As a trustee of the Ka’ba, his duty was to supply water to the pilgrims. He was also known to be the founder of the well of Zam-zam, after it had been buried for centuries by a tribe that was forced to leave Mecca upon their evil ways which they had adopted. (Ashraf: 1999, p.3).

Abdul Mutallib had ten sons, of whom Abu Lahab, Abu Talib, Abdullah, Hamzah and Abbas were famous. Of all his sons, Abdullah was the nearest and dearest to him. When Abdullah was seventeen years of age, he was married to Amina, a girl from the Banu Zahra family, also a clan of the Quraysh. A few months after his marriage, he passed away, leaving his wife pregnant. (Ashraf: 1999, p.5).

Amina gave birth to a son, who was named Muhammad, in the year termed as ‘The year of the Elephant’. The Arabs had termed this year as such, due to the tyrannical intention of Abraha, the Abyssinian governor, who had planned to attack the holy sanctuary via an army of elephants. However, this army was miraculously defeated, testifying to the Arabs, that God had taken action against those who planned to destroy His house, the Ka’ba. (Ashraf: 1999, p.6).

As it was the custom prevailing in Arabia at the time, the babies of noble families were to be brought up and weaned in the desert, away from the towns. Thus, Amina, the mother of Muhammad, gave her baby to Halima, from the Sa’d tribe of the Hawazin. Halima took the baby Muhammad to her village and nursed and brought him up. She returned him to his mother when Muhammad was six years old. (Ashraf: 1999, p.8)

Shortly thereafter, Amina went to Medina with her son, and stayed among her relatives. Upon her return journey to Mecca, she fell ill and passed away. The orphan Muhammad, bereft of father and mother, was then taken under the care of his grandfather, Abdul Mutallib. At the age of eight, his grandfather too passed away. He was then taken under the care of his paternal uncle, Abu Talib. (Ashraf: 1999, p.8)

Design rationale - Exhibition 9- Birth of Muhammad (SAW)

Due to the importance of the Holy Prophet (SAW) attached to the Faith, it was seen as desirable to distinguish his blessed birth from the rest of the Messengers. A dome was thus aptly suited for the task since it would portray numerous meanings from varying perspectives.

In essence the dome would:

- Symbolically portray a link to the spherical space designated to God. In this manner the Prophet (SAW)'s closeness to God would be depicted, thereby emphasizing his special status in the eyes of God in comparison to the other Messengers.
- Physically portray a junction for contemplation and admiration of perfection of form, and thereby make the space special
- Enhance the religious importance of the space
- Continue the legacy of an architectural form associated to the faith, and thereby celebrate the remembrance of the holy land of the Prophet (SAW).
- Link itself to the present dome placed over the sanctuary in Medina, wherein lies the grave of the Holy Prophet (SAW).
- Be the only natural light source in the space, thereby depicting the light of God upon the world with the birth of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

From a technical perspective, the dome would play a role in passive cooling, since it could allow glazed louvers to be placed along the circumference of its base, which could be opened in the summer, thereby perpetuating hot air to rise. From a fire regulation perspective, adequate ventilation for smoke evacuation would be catered for, which could be mechanically operable to open in the event of a fire.

The space was decided to be rather abstract and simple in keeping with the life of the Prophet (SAW), with text and graphics to cover the walls, thereby explaining the historical background of Arabia during the 6th century. Thus the dome would be the only architectural element in focus, thereby emphasizing the birth of the Prophet (SAW) as a key element to influence a sixth of the world's population to date.

Later on in the design phase it was decided that the birth of the Holy Prophet (SAW) should have a link with the reception foyer upon arrival, thereby blessing the individual to symbolically become attached to the Prophet (SAW) from the very onset of the experience.

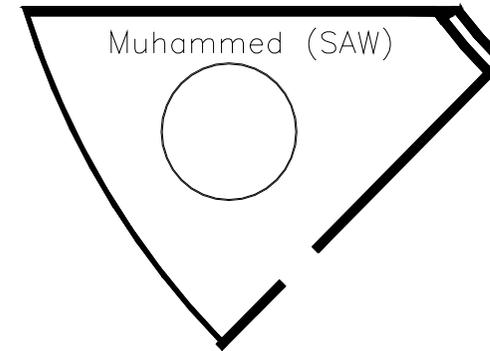


Fig. 22. Plan of Exhibition 9

Since the Muhammad (SAW) is viewed as the most beloved in the eyes of Allah, and is believed to be the last Messenger, his birth is depicted by a glazed dome in the southern sector of Building-A. By using a dome, it would symbolize closeness to God, since God was symbolized by using a spherical form. The space is abstract and bare, thereby emphasizing the effectiveness of the dome placed at centre.

(This section refers to Building-B, and is thus developed in detail, as per brief stipulation).

b. Early life:

Abu Talib loved his nephew dearly, but was not a man of much wealth. Thus Muhammad's early life was not free from the burden of labor, and as a child, he took to tending flocks and herds in order to pay his keep: a familiar path, it seems, to those intended to fulfill the role of prophet hood. When he grew up, he began to take an interest in the business of his uncle, who was a trader by profession. (Ashraf: 1999, p.10).

The people of Arabia were hopelessly divided into a large number of warring camps. They took up arms against one another and continued their hostilities for years together. A simple illustration of this would be the tribes of Bakr and Taghlib, who remained tied up in wars for forty years, without a shadow of justification. Due to these constant tribal feuds in Arabia, none regarded his life and property safe. The weak and helpless were entirely at the mercy of the strong. (Ashraf: 1999, p.12).

During the early life of the Prophet (SAW), the Ka'ba had been severely damaged due to a recent flooding. The inhabitants of the Ka'ba decided to rebuild it. When its construction was completed, members of the different tribes began to quarrel with regards to the placement of the Black Stone, a stone believed to be sent down from heaven during the era of Prophet Abraham (AS): each tribe wanted the honor of placing the Black Stone back in its place along one of the higher corners of the Ka'ba. The quarrel took so serious a turn that a war was imminent. An aged member of the Quraysh proposed that the dispute should be decided by the first one to enter the Sanctuary. The first man to walk in was Muhammad. Every one was pleased that he had entered, for they knew that he was fair and just in his dealings. After hearing the problem at hand, Muhammad affected a compromise among the rival claimants in an amicable manner. He called for a cloth and asked the leaders of the four tribes to each hold a corner of the cloth, onto which the stone was placed. The four leaders together raised the stone, and Muhammad himself eased it into its rightful position. In this manner, he had solved a war-threatening event into a peaceful and united process. (Ashraf: 1999, p.14).

The nobles amongst the Quraysh were generally merchants by profession. As aforementioned, Muhammad gained much experience in trade with his uncle, Abu Talib, and took to commerce. He soon became renowned for his trustworthiness and honesty, and his business thrived with success. In a time when trust was rife, people would trust him more than their own kith and kin, and would leave their valuables and possessions with him for safe keeping. His unflinching faithfulness and stern sense of duty and justice thus won him the title of 'al-Amin', or 'the trustworthy,' both at home and abroad. A rich and noble widow of Mecca, Khadeeja by name, hearing all about his good qualities, decided to hire him for the sale of her commodities in Syria and other places abroad. She found him to do her business so fairly and honestly, that she proposed to him in marriage. (Ashraf: 1999, p.15).

Muhammad, a young man of twenty five, accepted the proposal of Khadeeja, a widow of forty. They were happily married, and Muhammad continued his business for some time, but he gradually began to get inclined towards seclusion and meditation. He was greatly moved by the sad plight of his people who were engrossed in constant quarrels, immoral deeds and inhumane activities. They were a people who had little respect for the weak, the orphans and the widowed. They were addicted to heavy drinking and frivolity. Because of the important status given to sons, many fathers practiced the evil custom

of burying their daughters alive at birth. At the root of all evils lay polytheism, the cult of worshipping idols, which was practiced by almost everyone. The everlasting religion and legacy of Abraham (AS), the worship of one true God alone, had been buried and forgotten. Over the years, some 360 idols and statues had been installed in and around the holy Ka'ba, worshipped as lords and intercessors. "But Muhammad (SAW) was an exceptional figure; he did not take part in any of this," (Ashraf: 1999, p.17-25).

Design rationale: Exhibition 10- Early life

Since many years of the Prophet (SAW)'s early life was characterized by herding sheep, (which was also a familiar trait of the lives of the other Messengers), the theme of this room was decided to emphasize this by employing longitudinal concrete blocks to lie horizontally on the ground to represent the sheep, whilst the background of the internal walls would be characterized by the mountainside whereupon the flocks were herded. A digital screen with surround sound effects would portray the early life, whilst the concrete blocks would serve as seating whilst viewing.

Towards the later stages of the design it was decided to:

- Include pockets of skylights above the concrete blocks, thereby depicting the light of God upon the actions carried out by the Prophet (SAW) during his early life.
- Glaze the space along its internal walls, thereby providing an internalized building, celebrating the internal environment with the Ka'ba as its primary focus within a central void. This theme was then chosen to be characteristic of all exhibition spaces, thereby creating a central journey of pilgrimage around the Ka'ba. This theme was further implemented due to its many technical advantages with specific regards to lighting, internal communication and ventilation criteria, as will be discussed later.

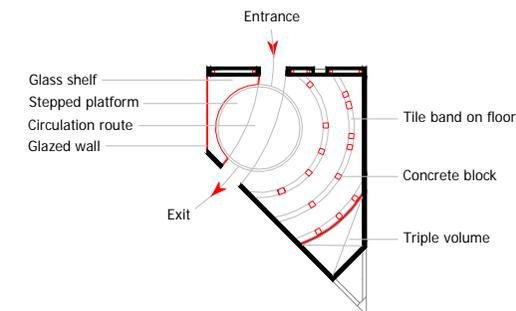


Fig. 23. Plan of Exhibition 10

The plan displays a rhythm stemming from the circular glass shelf, passing through to the floor tiles and circulation route, and onto radial tile bands. Radially placed upon the tile bands are concrete blocks for people to sit on, whilst viewing the transparent screen.

c. The cave of Hira:

It became a custom of Muhammad to spend a month every year in a cave, known as the Cave of Hira, a few miles away from Mecca. One night, whilst absorbed in his meditation in the cave, the angel Gabriel descended upon him with the words: "Read!" Muhammad was so overawed by the sight of Gabriel that he began to tremble and replied: "I cannot read". The angel repeated: "Read!" Muhammad had never learnt to read or write, and once again he replied: "I cannot read". (Ashraf: 1999, p.35). The angel began: *"Read in the name of thy Lord, Who created man from a clot of blood; Read, and thy Lord is the most generous. Who taught man (the use of) the pen. Taught man what he knew not."*

On hearing this divine call, he became afraid and returned home, relating to his wife what had transpired. She consoled him and said; "You help the poor, you support the needy, you relieve the debtors and you do many other good acts, so God will never desert you." (Ashraf: 1999). Khadeeja then she went to her cousin, Waraqah bin Naufal, who had been well versed in the Torah and the Gospel. Hearing the news he proclaimed: "This is the same message that was revealed to Moses." (Ashraf: 1999, p.38-39).

The religion which the Prophet (SAW) preached was Islam, which literally means peace and submission to the Will of Allah. Islam consists of unconditional resignation to Allah and His commands. The following are the articles of faith in Islam:

- Belief in the Oneness of God
- Belief in the angels
- Belief in the Prophets of God
- Belief in the Scriptures of God
- Belief in the Day of Judgment

The fundamentals of Islam are summed up in the declaration: "There is none worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." (Ashraf: 1999, p.43).

Design rationale: Exhibition 11- First revelation

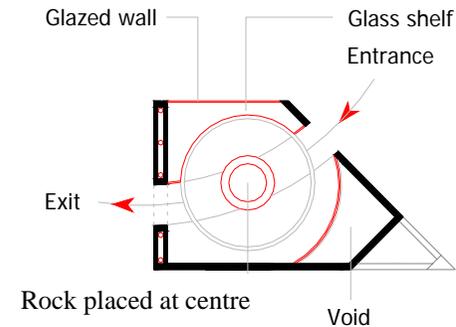


Fig. 24. Plan rationale: Exhibition 11

Since the first divine inspiration was experienced in a cave, it was decided that this space should depict a 'cave-like' experience, with a rock placed at its center. The rock would bear the inscription of the first verses of the revelation, which could glow against the overall darkness and starkness of the room. Thus no natural lighting would accompany this space, thereby allowing the Qur'anic words to illuminate the room, and thereby symbolically illuminate the brilliance of the Qur'an.

d. First believers:

As the Arabs had been shrouded in ignorance and had been addicted to idolatry and all kinds of vices, it was quite natural that they resented the Prophet (SAW)'s call. The first believers were his wife, a few friends and family. Up until now the Prophet (SAW) preached Islam to those closest to him. Thus for a period of three years the religion was preached privately, sometimes with success, and at others times, without. (Ashraf: 1999, p.44-68).

e. Public declaration of the religion:

"O you wrapped up. Arise and deliver thy warning..." (Qur'an, 74:1-2), which woke Muhammad (SAW) from his sleep. Breathing heavily, and sweating profusely, his wife Khadeeja, approached him gently to go back to bed and have some rest. His answer was: "O Khadeeja, the time for sleep and rest is over. Gabriel has commanded me to warn the people and call them to God and his worship. Whom should I call? And who is going to respond to me?" (Ashraf: 1999, p.74).

After three years the Prophet (SAW) was commanded to declare the religion openly and publicly. Standing on the mount of Safa at Mecca, he called out to the Quraysh, and asked: "Would you believe me if I say that there is an army behind the hill intending to attack you." "Yes," was the unanimous reply, "as we have always found you speaking the truth." (Ashraf: 1999, p.75). Then the Prophet (SAW) delivered the message of Islam, and informed them that he was a messenger of God. Hearing this, the chiefs of the Quraysh left the scene, followed by the rest of the gathering. His own uncle, Abu Lahab, had cursed him, saying: "May you perish!" (Ashraf: 1999, p.75). The Prophet (SAW) however continued his preaching, paying no heed to the resentments of the infidels. After years of knowing him as truthful and the most kind and honest amongst them, he was

now subjected to all kinds of persecution by the Quraysh. One has to bear in mind that the message Muhammad preached was the unity of God. The Quraysh on the other hand were involved in polytheism. Thus Muhammad's message was directed against their Gods, their cultural beliefs and ideals. It was this that they could not tolerate. Despite their hatred towards his message, they knew him to be the most truthful and honest, as it can be noted from their remarks: *"O Muhammad we do not call you a liar, but we deny Him who has given you a Book and inspired you with a Message."* (Ashraf: 1999, p.76).

"They thought he was possessed...but the best saw that a new light had dawned upon him and they hastened to seek that enlightenment." (Ramakrishna: 1995).

All the forces of aggression were arrayed against him and the believers, but they stood undaunted in their resolve.

At this juncture, it would be important for me to illustrate the Arabian customs and their policy with regards to chieftaincy. The Quraysh chiefs, as was customarily the practice, could offer protection to any person, and this would render the individual seeking protection to be safe from any type of physical harm. Since the Prophet (SAW) was family to the Quraysh, any of his uncles could stand guarantee for his protection. It had ordinarily been Abu Talib's concern to issue protection for the Prophet (SAW), since the Prophet (SAW) had been under his care from his early days. Since no one could harm the Prophet (SAW) due to his protection by a chief, namely his uncle, no physical harm could befall him. This did not mean that he couldn't be mocked or jeered at, but physically, he was safe. The Qurayshite chiefs, as a last attempt even went in as body to his uncle, Abu Talib, and requested that he disassociate himself from his nephew, or face terrible consequences. However, Abu Talib never withdrew his protection over his nephew, even though it placed him in a difficult position. (Ashraf: 1999, p.89).

Frustrated in their attempts to coerce the Prophet (SAW), the Qurayshite chiefs adopted a new strategy: they tried to induce him. They sent a leader of the Quraysh who addressed the Prophet (SAW) as follows:

"O Muhammad! What is the use of dividing the people of the land? If you desire supremacy and power, we are willing to acclaim you as our leader; if you hanker after riches, we are prepared to place the entire wealth of the town at your disposal; and if you desire to marry a lady of the noblest family we are ready to procure the same for you, provided that you stop preaching your religion." (Ashraf: 1999, p.91). The Prophet (SAW) was not moved by any of these offers and recited some verses from the Holy Qur'an, inviting the people to accept the religion of God.

f. The sad plight of the believers:

Islam was making headway slowly but steadily, and many were touched by Muhammad (SAW)'s message, some of which belonged to notable tribes, but yet most of the chieftains were still hostile to the new religion. When the Qurayshite leaders realized that all their threats and inducements could not deviate the believers from their faith, they adopted more repressive measures against them. The slaves who embraced Islam were the worst sufferers in this respect, as they were entirely at the mercy of their cruel-hearted masters, who would torture them in order for them to renounce their faith. Renowned examples of this sort are the cases of Bilal and Khabab. Bilal, a slave and a new convert to Islam, was made to lie on the burning sand of the desert at mid-day, with a rock placed on his bare chest, yet he would consistently utter, "The One, the One," in order to

indicate that whatever atrocities were placed onto him, he would never renounce his faith in the Unity of Allah. (Ashraf: 1999, p.95).

"Khabab bin Adi was put to death in a cruel manner by mutilation and cutting off his flesh piecemeal. In the midst of his tortures, when asked whether he did not wish Muhammad in his place...the sufferer cried out that he was gladly prepared to sacrifice himself, his family and children and all to save Muhammad from a prick of a thorn...Is not the intense faith and conviction on the part of the immediate followers of Muhammad, the noblest testimony to his sincerity and to his utter self-absorption in the task assigned to him?" (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.28).

"If these men and women...had perceived the slightest sign of earthliness, deception, or want of faith in the Teacher himself, Muhammad's hopes of moral regeneration and social reform, would all have been crumbled to dust in a moment." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.29).

Others, who had no chieftaincy protection, as well as those who were family to the leaders of the Quraysh, were also mercilessly abused to recant their faith.

g. Emigration to Abyssinia: (5th year of the Mission)

When the Prophet (SAW) realized that the plight of some of the believers had become unbearable, he permitted them to migrate to Abyssinia. The King of Abyssinia, the Negus, welcomed them into his land. Being enraged by this, the Qurayshite sent two representatives to the King, sending gifts and requesting him to return the Muslims on the plea that they were culprits. The King asked the believers to explain their position, and was told:

"O King, we were an ignorant people worshipping idols, eating the dead, committing sins and oppressing the neighbors. Brother tortured brother, and the strong swallowed the weak. Meanwhile, one from among us appeared on the scene, of whose nobility, truthfulness and honesty we had been fully aware. He preached the right religion and enjoined on us to worship one God, to give up idolatry, to speak the truth, to abstain from oppression, to stop the misappropriation of the properties of the orphans, to treat well our neighbors, to avoid accusing chaste ladies of infidelity, to offer prayers, to keep fast and to give alms; We acknowledged this man as an Apostle of God, and acted up to his teachings. For this reason our own people have become our worst enemies. They compel us to give up this man and go back to the previous state of affairs." (Ashraf: 1999, p.147).

The King then asked to hear some of the recitation of the Qur'an, to which the opening verses of the Chapter of Mary was recited to him. The King was deeply impressed, and said: "By God, the Qur'an, the Bible are the rays of the same light." (Ashraf: 1999, p.153). He then told the two spokesmen of the Quraysh to return, as he would not deliver the oppressed to them. A few more Muslims, after hearing the kindness of the Negus migrated and took shelter in Abyssinia. (Ashraf: 1999)

h. Abu Talib's pass:

In the seventh year of the mission, all the non-Muslim families of the Quraysh entered into an agreement among themselves cutting off all connections with the Muslims. This agreement was hung up in the Ka'ba. Abu Talib, the Prophet (SAW)'s uncle, together with the believers, took refuge in a pass. As a result of the agreement, all intercourse with the believers was stopped, and many of them went without food or water for days. Some ate the leaves of trees, whilst yet others remained

content with the boiled leather of their shoes. Children in vain cried for milk and food. Thus lived the Prophet (SAW) and the Muslims for three years, when some of the infidels took compassion on the oppressed and cancelled the agreement. (Ashraf: 1999, p.155-188).

i. The year of sorrow:

The believers returned from the aforementioned pass to their houses. After some time, the Prophet (SAW)'s uncle, Abu Talib, passed away. His chieftaincy protection had now been lifted, and his uncle, Abu Lahab, to whom the chieftaincy protection was given to, had not taken to the faith, and was unwilling to protect him. Simultaneous to this, his affectionate wife, Khadeeja also passed away. These two bereavements, coming in quick succession, have given rise to this year, being termed as the 'year of sorrow'. With the death of these two influential supporters, the difficulties of the Prophet (SAW) increased enormously, and the infidels emboldened to molest him openly. (Ashraf: 1999, p.205).

The Prophet (SAW) was once engaged in prayer in the Ka'ba, when an infidel put his cloth round his neck to strangle him. Abu Bakr, his close friend and companion, saved him, but he was beaten profusely for his lending assistance in the defense of the Prophet (SAW). Mud was thrown upon the Holy Prophet (SAW), thorns were spread in his path, obstructions were placed in his daily prayers, and the intestines of a camel were flung over him. Despite these and other atrocities, they could not shake the iron-will of the Prophet (SAW). He remained undaunted and unbending, and his followers did the same, and never flinched in their duty. (Ashraf: 1999, p.207).

j. Visit to Ta'if:

Being disgusted with the treatment of the Qurayshites, the Prophet (SAW) went to Ta'if, forty miles away from Mecca, in the hope of inviting the leaders of the town to the religion of Allah, but none responded. They mocked and jeered at him, and whilst he was leaving, the leaders of the town instructed the young boys to molest him. They volleyed him with stones until he bled profusely. This barbaric treatment continued until he was able to take refuge in a garden just outside the town. In the meanwhile, an angel appeared before him, and informed him that at his command, Allah would destroy the entire town. The Prophet (SAW) responded in the negative, saying that if they do not accept the truth now, maybe their progeny would become believers in time to come. (Ashraf: 1999, p.210).

Design rationale: Exhibition 12- The year of sorrow

This space in essence represents a time when the Prophet (SAW) was saddened by the hostile attitude of the people towards his message and towards those that had accepted the faith, as well as the demise of his anchor pillars of support, namely his beloved wife and uncle. The only ray of hope was the kind-hearted gesture by the King of Abyssinia. The overall theme of this space was thus rationalized as follows:

- The space was to have a downward gradient, in order to reflect the sadness of the Prophet (SAW).
- Two pillars would represent the moral support of the Prophet (SAW)'s wife and uncle. These pillars were later changed to be of glass for his wife, and of solid concrete for his uncle. This stems from the fact that his wife was a believer, and his uncle had supported him, but had not accepted the faith. The pillars would bear the inscriptions of their names, thereby allowing viewers to understand the symbolism behind the columns
- The kind gesture of the Abyssinian King would be the major source of light entering the room, indicating the hope within these gloomy early stages
- The lowest and darkest portion of the room would depict the attitude of the people of Ta'if, and would be characterized by text and graphics on the wall within this sector

Later on this space was altered to a ramp going down, thereby suitably catering for symbolic interpretation as well as the functional requirement of physically moving people from the second floor to the first floor level.

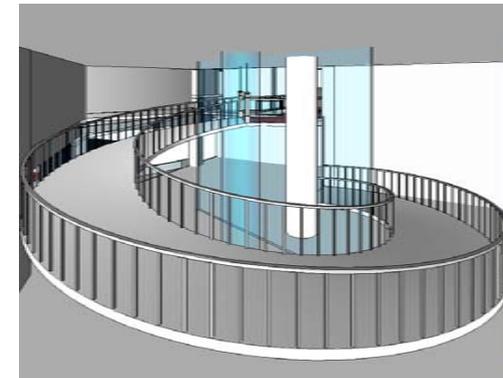


Fig. 25. Internal ramp perspective: Exhibition 12

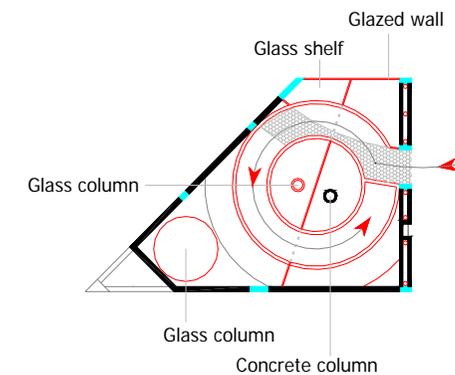


Fig. 26. Plan: Exhibition 12

After the death of his uncle and beloved wife, as well as the recent assault he had faced at Ta'if and the hostility of the Quraysh towards him and the believers, the Prophet (SAW) was greatly saddened. Allah thus bestowed him with a great gift, known as Me'raj. This was a privilege bestowed upon him, whereupon he was taken on a night journey, from the Sanctuary in Mecca, to the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, thereupon he ascended to the heavens, where he met all the Prophets of the past, including, Adam (AS), Abraham (AS), Jesus (AS) and Moses (AS). He was then taken to a point, whereupon the angel Gabriel, who had accompanied him, informed him that he could go no further. The Prophet (SAW) then went past the region of "The Lote Tree," as described in the Qur'an, and spoke to Allah directly. He was then given the gift of five times daily prayers, and then descended back to Mecca within the same night. When he expressed this miracle the following morning to the people, they mocked and jeered him. As a proof of his journey, he told the people of the caravans which he had seen along his journey, which would be approaching the city in the weeks to come, as well as a detailed description of the Mosque in Jerusalem. To his companions he described some details of heaven and hell, as well as the new gift of the prayers. (Ashraf: 1999, p.212-217).

Design rationale: Exhibition 13

This space was decided to portray three elements:

- The firm faith of the believers, maintaining their belief in this miraculous event, for which the disbelievers particularly ridiculed and jeered at them. This firm faith could thus manifest itself into the first pillar of the faith, which distinguished the believers from the disbelievers. A glass column bearing the inscription declaring the first pillar of the faith would thus symbolically reflect their conviction and unbending resolve.
- The gift of the five prayers: unlike all the other Islamic injunctions, this injunction was personally delivered to the Prophet (SAW). Symbolically, the space was decided to reflect this as five glass columns, terminating as protruding skylights, thereby depicting this gift as descending from God. The glass columns would bear the names of each prayer within a thin solar absorbent filament, which would glow in the dark, thereby creating a uniquely different experience at night. The glass columns, arrayed along a circular time dial, would inform the viewer about the particular times allocated for each prayer.
- The link to Jerusalem: this stems from the historical and religious importance of Jerusalem, as well as indicates the first stopping station of the *me'raj*, and the first qibla for the five prayers, which was initially Jerusalem. Symbolically, a glass column was decided to represent Jerusalem, with the name of the Holy Jerusalem Mosque inscribed within it.

In terms of lighting, the space would thus be illuminated via the many glass columns. The luminance of the glowing filament would cater for lighting at night. This theme was later adopted into all glass columns, thereby perpetuating night visits in order to perceive the spaces within a different setting.

In terms of ventilation, the glass columns would be punctured with small circular holes, thereby allowing hot air to vent via the verticality of the columns, and to the outside via a mechanical louver system.

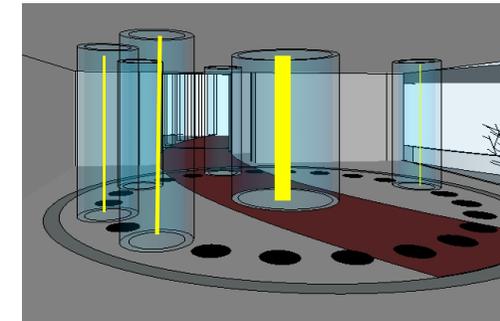


Fig. 27. Internal perspective- Exhibition 13
Illustrates the glass columns arranged along a circular dial in order to depict the times of prayer. The central pillar is symbolic of the first article of faith.

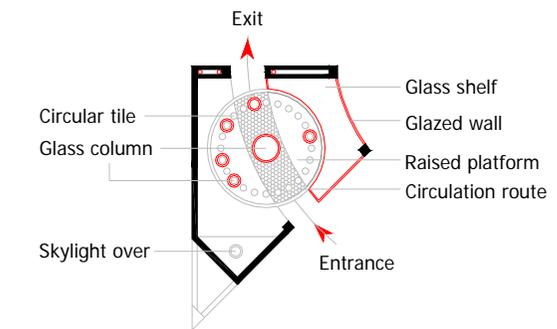


Fig. 28. Plan rationale- Exhibition 13

Aus and Khazraj of Medina:

After the miraculous incident of *Me'raj*, the Prophet (SAW) began to tour among the various tribes of Mecca, to once again preach the message of Islam. On the occasion of pilgrimage, people from all parts of Arabia used to assemble at Mecca, and the Prophet (SAW) availed himself of this opportunity of inviting them to the religion of Islam. The two famous tribes of Medina, the Aus and the Khazraj, were the first people outside Mecca to come under the sway of Islam. They had long been expecting a prophet in Arabia. At the first meeting with these people six men accepted Islam. In the following year, twelve men accepted him as the Apostle of God. The Prophet (SAW) then sent one of his companions with them on their return to Medina, to propagate Islam, and to explain its teachings to the people. Within a period of a year, a considerable number of people accepted the divine message. By the following year, seventy-two men of Medina came forth to declare their faith in him. It was at this meeting, commonly known as the 'Oath of Aqabah,' whereupon the people of Medina offered the Prophet (SAW) to accompany them back to their land, since the situation in Mecca had severely begun to threaten the lives of the Prophet (SAW) and his fellow companions. The Prophet (SAW) thus appointed twelve preachers to preach Islam in Medina, pending his migration in a short while to come. (Ashraf: 1999, p.227-233).

k. Emigration to Medina:

Finding shelter at Medina, the believers began to migrate singly or in groups with the permission of the Prophet (SAW). When all the believers had left, excepting his close and bosom companion, Abu Bakr, as well as his cousin Ali, and some women and children, the Prophet (SAW) intended to leave for Medina. The chiefs of Mecca however became profusely enraged at the successful conclusion of the 'Oath of Aqabah,' and began to plot against the Holy Prophet (SAW) in a manner never undertaken before. All the chiefs elected an assassin from each tribe, with the intention that all twelve assassins would simultaneously attack the Prophet (SAW). In this manner, the blame of the murder of the Prophet (SAW) would be put on the heads of all the chiefs, and anybody waging war would have to fight the entire Quraysh. This would indeed be an impossible task, and according to Arabian custom, the blood money would then be given as a contribution to settle the affair. Through divine inspiration and assistance, the Prophet (SAW) was pre-warned of the plot, and managed to leave Mecca with Abu Bakr. As soon as the Meccans realized that the Prophet (SAW) had already left Mecca, a vigorous search was made, and a reward of a hundred camels was declared upon the capturing of the Prophet (SAW). After many days, the Prophet (SAW) and Abu Bakr safely reached Quba, three miles outside the precincts of Medina, where he was warmly received. Here, the Prophet (SAW) laid the first foundations of a Mosque – the first Mosque in the history of Islam. He then proceeded to Medina. The people of Medina were overjoyed at this blessing which God had graced upon them. The entire town stood in rows, waiting upon his arrival. The women and children began to sing songs of rejoicement as he entered the town. All the people of Medina, young and old, rich and poor, surrounded the Prophet (SAW), each imploring him to be their guest. The Prophet (SAW) however thankfully refused their offers, adding that his camel was under divine instruction, and therefore he would stay wherever it stopped. The camel stopped near the house of an Abu Ayyub, which became the Prophet (SAW)'s place of residence for the next seven months to come. (Ashraf: 1999, p.236-238).

The people of Medina welcomed Islam with open arms to such an extent, that they sacrificed all their possessions and belongings in the way of God. They shared their wealth, houses and families with the Meccan emigrants, and were thus given the title of 'Ansar,' or 'helpers' of the faith by God himself. (Ashraf: 1999, p.238).

After thirteen years of persecution, the Prophet (SAW) and the believers obtained shelter. The first task to be fulfilled was the erection of a Mosque, where everyone could assemble in congregation and say prayers. The Prophet (SAW) himself helped in constructing the Mosque, which became known, until this very day, as 'The Mosque of the Prophet.' The Mosque comprised of a courtyard surrounded by mud walls and covered with the branches of palm trees. Close to the Mosque, a few rooms were also built for the accommodation of the Prophet (SAW) and his family. The Mosque also had a special section in the courtyard for the poor and homeless, known as the 'Ahlus-sufaa.' These people spent a great deal of time in learning, reading, writing and memorizing the sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). They earned their meager livelihood by collecting firewood and selling it to the people of the town.

Initially, the qibla wall of the Mosque faced Jerusalem. This was done in order to create reconciliation and unity with the Jews of Medina, but later, when matters turned unfavorable, the Prophet (SAW) was commanded by Allah to ultimately change the qibla towards the Sanctuary in Mecca. The new qibla wall was accordingly altered. (Ashraf: 1999, p.241-242).

Design rationale: Exhibition 14

It was decided that this space should portray three aspects:

- **The emigration to Medina:** it was initially decided to represent the emigration via a tunnel, which would depict the feeling of moving from one location to another. Later, this was reverted to a glass tunnel, in order to portray the help of God during this journey. Towards the later design stages, it was decided that the movement from one exhibition space to another could be said to be a journey from one aspect of the Prophet (SAW)'s life to another. With this in mind, coupled with the influence of the use of repetition and symmetry, all links between exhibition spaces were characterized via glass tunnels, to depict the overall concept of journeying from one incident towards another. Thus the emigration in particular, depicted via the same medium began to lose its effect as a physical journey in retrospect of symbolically similar spaces. In order to emphasize the physical as separate from the symbolic, an inscription and a change of glass-type was implemented.
- **The welcoming gesture of the people of Medina:** was chosen to be simply depicted via glass columns, arranged in a similar manner as the people of Medina stood when welcoming the Prophet (SAW), in rows side by side, and adjacent to each other. Eight columns were chosen, four on either side, bearing the names of the eight most prominent supporters of the Prophet (SAW). (The columns would follow the general description for glass columns mentioned in Exhibition 13).
- **The erection of the Mosque at Medina:** the erection of the Mosque established the first Muslim community. The importance of the qibla, and the consequent global focus towards one location symbolically represented the unity of the Muslim *ummah*. To symbolically depict the Mosque of Medina, the historical activities and functions of the Mosque were analyzed, and the following criteria assisted in establishing the essence of the space:
 - The Prophet (SAW) housed the poor in the Mosque: This was decided to be represented via columns against the back wall of the exhibition space, with the names of the prominent people amongst the poor highlighted in a text form. The location towards the back portion of the space is not due to their lack of importance, but reflects their actual location within the Mosque of Medina.
 - The Prophet (SAW) held his own quarters within the side flank of the Mosque. His quarters were characterized by small rooms, one for each of his wives. This was decided to be represented in a similar fashion as the above-mentioned example, with the names of his wives, contained between columns backed against the side flank of the exhibition space.
 - The change in qibla resulted in a physical alteration of the Medina Mosque. Furthermore, the qibla remains to this day as the fundamental feature of Islamic architecture, which influences the orientation and ultimately the design of the Islamic world. The essence of the qibla, depicted physically is the resultant *mehrab*. (Please refer to Section A, pg for more details). Thus it was decided that the qibla should be physically represented via a semi-circular wall, as well as a raised platform with a carpet finish, to distinguish the sanctity of the Mosque, as well as to emphasize prayer, and more specifically the associated qibla direction.

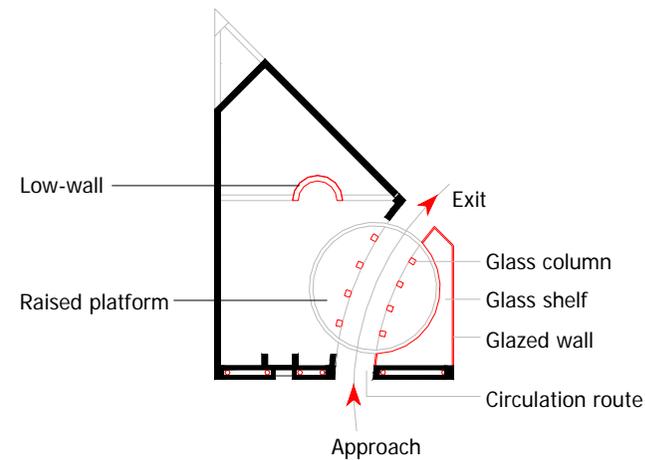


Fig. 29. Plan rationale: Exhibition 14

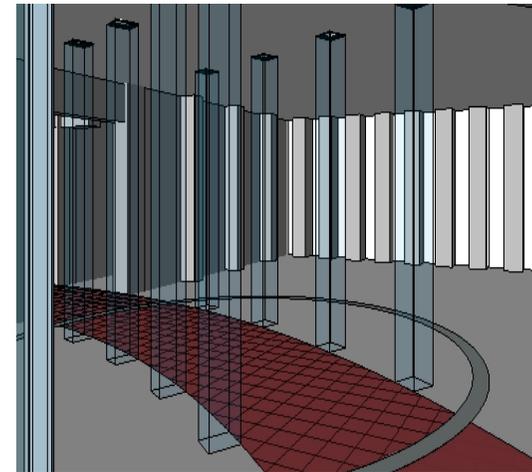


Fig. 30. Internal perspective- Exhibition 14

l. Enemies of Islam:

The Quraysh of Mecca were enraged by migration of the Prophet (SAW). They felt embarrassed and feared that the whole of Arabia would soon come to know what had transpired, and might feel that they were incompatible to maintain the sacred sanctuary, and might face possible replacement via another tribe. The Quraysh also feared that if the religion of Islam flourished, the days of their pagan ways would be washed away. For these, as well as fears of the interruption of their caravan routes bypassing Medina, they began plotting against the believers from within Medina, via other tribes. The believers also faced an internal crisis within Medina: many proclaimed to be believers, but were essentially hypocrites, pending to wait and observe which side their bread was buttered; others were secretly annoyed at the arrival of the Prophet (SAW) in Medina – such being the supporters of Abdullah bin Ubayy, who was previously being contemplated as being declared the King of Medina. Some of the surrounding tribes were also wary of the coming of the Prophet (SAW) with a new religion to restore the 'old ways.' Circumstances such as these resulted in the first battle of Islam, known as the 'Battle of Badr.' (Ashraf: 1999, p.245-269).

m. The Battle of Badr:

Totally in self defense, the Prophet (SAW) and his companions, prepared for battle. They numbered some three hundred men, and were poorly equipped, with a few privileged to have conveyances to ride upon, and a lack of swords. The opposing army mustered a stronghold of a thousand men, fully armed for battle. The opposing army was determined to wipe out this small force once and for all. With the divine help of God, the believers came out victorious. This was indeed a strong blow to the Quraysh, and a strengthening exercise of faith for the believers.

For the first time in Arabian history, the prisoners of war were treated like brothers. The believers provided them with better food and clothes than what they could afford for themselves. The rich prisoners were released on payment of ransom, whilst the poor were set free without any payment, with the literate among them required to teach ten children how to read, before being released. (Ashraf: 1999, p.273-277).

n. The effects of the victory:

"To the Arabs who would fight for forty years at the slightest provocation...the Prophet of Islam taught them self-control and discipline...he taught the Arab barbarians to pray, to pray not individually but in congregations, to God Almighty...even amidst the dust and storm of warfare. Whenever the time of prayer came...the congregational prayer could not be abandoned or even postponed. A party had to be engaged in bowing their heads before God while another was engaged with the enemy. After finishing prayers, the two parties had to exchange their positions." (Ramakrishna: 1995).

The victory at Badr was a turning point in the history of Islam. Not only did it strengthen the position of the Muslims but it also imbued them with a will to fight for the cause of truth and inspired them with self confidence to survive all the ordeals to come. The new religion also began to exert its character as a unification combination of state, church and the spiritual aspects of human life. The believers were now rising in power, and the entire Arabia, witnessing this, began to militarily prepare for the future. (Ashraf: 1999, p.278-279).

Design rationale: Exhibition 15

It was decided to allow this space to abstractly depict the battle-scene, and illustrate the events leading to the battle as a text form, depicted along glass planes. This theme of depicting background information along glass panels was later implemented throughout the entire scheme, so as to create a consistent theme, and thereby allow geometry, rhythm and repetition to take their natural course in the design process.

The battle scene was chosen to be described via the use of columns, continuing the theme of glass columns to symbolize believers, whilst non-believers were to be portrayed via concrete columns. This theory stems from the symbolism behind the hearts of the believers, who were enlightened, in contrast to the hearts of their enemies, whose hearts were hard and cruel. After observing the statistics of the battle in terms of numbers, namely, one thousand against three hundred, it was decided to

depict this in its simplest fraction, that being ten against three. Thus ten concrete columns are arranged facing three glass columns. The proportions of the concrete columns to the glass columns are depicted as the sum of smaller proportions with being larger in number in contrast to the sum of larger proportions being smaller in number. The overall volumetric area of the glass columns would thus be greater than the overall area of the concrete columns, even though the concrete columns are larger in number. This would symbolically depict the spiritual strength of the believers in contrast to the disunited and spiritual lacking of their opposition.

The internal finishes of the room were decided to be raw and exposed, characteristic of the rough texture of timber floated plaster finishes. In essence this was chosen to depict the difficult times at hand, and later on, this theme was chosen to reflect an aesthetic character of all exhibition spaces throughout the scheme. This further plays on the theme of contrasting the internal and external paradigms, the former characteristic of a rough texture, and the external presenting a smooth texture in the form of regular paneling. This theme of contrasting internal and external elements was then further developed throughout various aspects of the design, as will be discussed later.

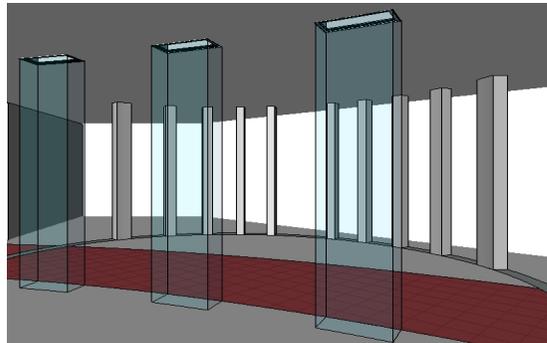


Fig. 31. Internal perspective- Exhibition 15

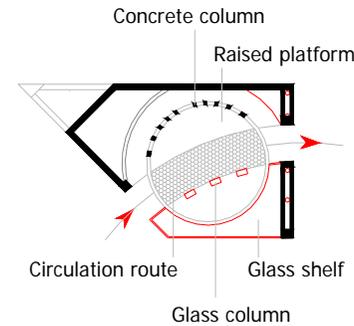


Fig. 32. Plan of Exhibition 15

o. The battle of The Trench:

The Qurayshites were filled with sorrow and shame at their defeat, and swore to take vengeance the following year, resulting in the Battle of Uhud. This battle was not victorious to either side, and resulted in a wide onslaught against the believers, as the Quraysh, together with all their allies throughout Arabia, schemed to annihilate Islam from the face of the earth. Mass preparations were underway, and soon, an army of ten thousand, backed with further reinforcing to come, marched towards Medina. The believers were totally outnumbered, and stood no chance against such a mighty force. An emigrant Persian, Salman Farsi, suggested to the Prophet (SAW) that they should build a trench around the city. The Prophet (SAW) accepted this proposal, and the entire community of Medina assisted in digging this mighty trench. The battle thus became known as 'The battle of the Trench.' (Ashraf: 1999, p.322-356).

The enemies approached, and the believers stood as guards on the opposite side of the trench, attacking anyone who attempted crossing the trench. Since the trench was deep and wide, the enemies were forced to a halt: no horse could bridge this gap, and no human valuing his life dared to cross it. Many attempts were made to cross, but these were in vain, as the boldest of the infidels were immediately put to death. On the believer's side however, there was a limited amount of resources, which soon ran out as they stood guarding the trenches day and night. Eventually, when the hardships became almost un-bearing upon the believers, Allah sent a terrible wind, blowing the desert sand in all directions. The believers took refuge in the town, whilst conditions for the enemies, whom had pitched their tents alongside the borders of the town, became unbearable. This led to them finally giving up hope, and withdrawing from the battle scene, under the harsh desert winds in their midst. It was after this battle that the believers dealt with the hypocrites within Medina, since they had taken sides with the Quraysh during the siege. The hypocrites were consequently expelled or killed, depending upon the nature of their deeds. (Ashraf: 1999, p.322-356).

Design rationale: Exhibition 16

A similar theme of using columns to depict the believers and the enemies was chosen. The further complexities of this battle gave rise to the different orientation of the columns. Within this example, the believers are represented via a single glass column, totally surrounded by concrete columns to depict the surrounding opposition in their large numbers. The single glass column further depicts the unity of the believers, against the seemingly united enemy front, whose actual unity was based upon material strengths, in contrast to the spiritual strength. The help of God in the form of wind is depicted as a skylight above, subtly allowing light to penetrate the space. The boundaries of Medina were decided to be depicted via a special floor finish, in contrast to the surrounding floor finish of exposed screed. An opposition group rose within Medina, consisting of hypocrites and traitors; thus the allocation of the three concrete columns within the boundaries of Medina.

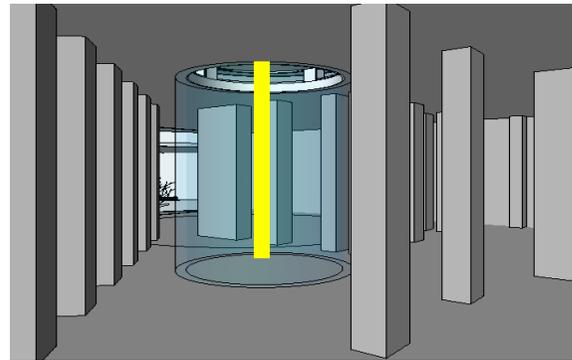


Fig. 33. Internal perspective- Exhibition 16

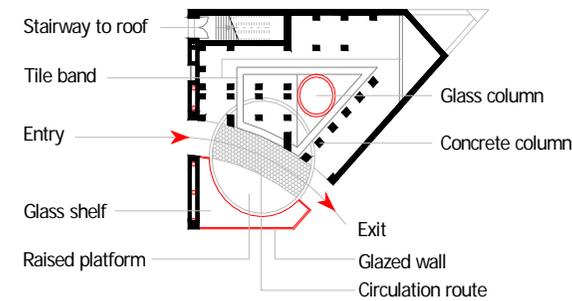


Fig. 34. Plan rationale- Exhibition 16

p. The Treaty of Hudaibiyah:

The sacred month of pilgrimage dawned upon the believers. The Prophet (SAW), together with 1400 men marched towards Mecca, to perform their pilgrimage rights according to the new faith they possessed. The Prophet (SAW) forbid them from carrying any weapons, since they were not going to fight, but to pay homage to the Holy Sanctuary. When the Qurayshites received the news, they hurriedly got an army together. The Prophet (SAW) sent one of the companions to inform the Quraysh that they had not come to fight, but to perform pilgrimage in peace, and that it would be better for them to come to some sort of negotiations as regards to this. A representative, Urwah by name, was sent by the Qurayshite envoy, to negotiate for them. Urwah was so immensely impressed by the companion's devotion to the Holy Prophet (SAW), that he returned to his fellow Qurayshites, remarking: 'O Quraysh, I have seen the great courts of Kisra, Ceasor and the Negus, but by God, I have never seen any man loved by his people as much as Muhammad is loved by his companions. If he makes ablution, they would not let the water fall on the ground, and if he speaks, the entire community remains the embodiment of attention.' (Ashraf: 1999, 362-363).

Carlyle in his book, Heroes and Hero-Worship, states: "They were wild men, bursting ever and anon into quarrel, into all kinds of fierce sincerity; without right worth and manhood, no man could have commanded them. They called him Prophet, you say? Why, he stood there face to face with them; bare, not enshrined in any mystery; visibly clouting his own cloak, cobbling his own shoes; fighting, counseling, ordering in the midst of them: they must have seen what kind of a man he was, let him be called what you like! No emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.19).

For some time negotiations continued, but in vain. The Prophet (SAW) sent another messenger, who was then attacked by the Quraysh; however, he managed to escape. The Quraysh thereafter sent a body of soldiers against the believers, but they were repulsed, and those who were taken prisoners were let off. At last the Prophet (SAW) sent his son-in-law, Uthmaan (RA). It was soon rumored that he had been murdered. The believers were so angered by this, that they took a pledge under a tree, to avenge the death of Uthmaan (RA), and would fight to death. This pledge became known as 'The pledge of Ridwaan.' The rumor, however, proved to be false, but as a result, the Quraysh were impressed at the strong devotion of the believers, and became subdued for peace, which opened the way for the final negotiations, known as 'The Treaty of Hudaibiyah'. This treaty was concluded to be in effect for ten years. The treaty weighed heavily against the believers; the bulk of the believers were dissatisfied, but when the Prophet (SAW) accepted them, they had no choice but to agree. The treaty had one advantage however; it allowed the free intermingling of the believers with the non-believers, and as a result the way was paved for many to become touched by the noble character of the believers and the Prophet (SAW). (Ashraf: 1999, p.364-377).

q. Invitation letters to Kings:

Back in Medina, the Prophet (SAW) addressed the congregation in the Mosque as such: "O people, God had sent me as a blessing to all mankind and now time has come that you should spread this blessing among the people of the world." He then selected some messengers and sent them with his letters, among other rulers, to the Kings of Abyssinia, Persia, Rome and Egypt inviting them to Islam. The Negus, King of Abyssinia accepted Islam. The Kisra of Persia lost his temper and tore the letter to pieces. When the Prophet (SAW) heard this he remarked that Allah would likewise tear his empire into pieces. Maquqas, the King of Egypt, did not embrace Islam, but gave a courteous and polite response and sent gifts back to the Prophet (SAW). Heracleus, Emperor of Rome, on receiving the letter, sent for some Arabs to enquire about the new religion. Coincidentally, Abu Sufyan, the deadly opponent of Islam from amongst the prominent Quraysh, had been there on business. He was sent to the royal court and the following conversation took place:

Heracleus:	"What kind of family does the claimant of prophet hood belong to?"
Abu Sufyan:	"Noble."
Heracleus:	"Has there been any king in his family?"
Abu Sufyan:	"No."
Heracleus:	"Are the people who have embraced his religion, weak or strong?"
Abu Sufyan:	"They are weak."
Heracleus:	"Are his followers on the increase or decrease?"
Abu Sufyan:	"On the increase."
Heracleus:	"Have you ever known him speaking lies?"
Abu Sufyan:	"No."
Heracleus:	"Has he ever gone back on his word?"
Abu Sufyan:	"Not so far. But we are yet to see whether or not he abides by the new agreement made between him and us."
Heracleus:	"Have you ever fought with him?"

Abu Sufyan: "Yes."
Heraclius: "What has been the result?"
Abu Sufyan: "Sometimes we have won, and sometimes he."
Heraclius: "What does he preach?"
Abu Sufan: "He preaches, 'Worship one God: join no partners with Him; offer prayers; remain chaste; speak the truth; and give relations what is due to them'."
Heraclius: "If you have spoken the truth, a day will come when his kingdom will reach the place I tread. I wish I could go to him and wash his feet."

(Ashraf:1999, 383-384).

Several tribes of Arabia accepted Islam. The Abdul Qais of Bahrain and Ash'ar of Yemen embraced the new religion. The tribes of Abu Sulaim, Ghiffar, Juhnayah Aslam, Muzniyah, Ashja and other leading tribes also responded to the call of Islam. As aforementioned, after the 'Treaty of Hudaibiyah,' free intercourse with the believers and the non-believers resulted which consequently gave rise to a great increase in the number of believers within the following two years to come. The hypocrites who were banished earlier from Medina, due to their siding with the opponents at the time of war, went against the agreement that was reached between them and the believers. This resulted in a war between them and the believers, known as the 'Conquest of Khaibar.' By now the strength and numbers of the believers had greatly increased, and it became easy for them to crush any resistance which opposed them. Once Khaibar was taken over, the believers were so fair and just in their treatment to their opposition that even the hypocrites commented in appreciation of such justice. It was this kind of attitude that attracted many towards the call of Islam, since the intention of the religion was not to conquer nations, but merely to act in self-defense when being threatened. (Ashraf: 1999, p.384-389).

r. Pilgrimage to Mecca:

'Umrah' is a kind of smaller pilgrimage, which can be performed at any time during the year. It comprises of circulating the Ka'ba, and performing the ritual of ascending and descending the hills of Safa and Marwa, in the manner in which Abraham (AS)'s wife had done when she was left in the barren desert at that time. The treaty of Hudaibiyah stipulated that the believers could come the following year to perform this smaller pilgrimage. Nearly two thousand companions marched with the Prophet (SAW) for this occasion. The believers disarmed themselves as per agreement, and performed the pilgrimage without any incident. (Ashraf: 1999, p.396-407).

As the ruler of Basra had killed an innocent messenger with the invitation letter of the Prophet (SAW), an army of only 300 men was dispatched to combat this merciless treatment. The Basran ruler, together with reinforcements sent an army of 100 000 men as his defense. A bloody battle began, where the believers were totally outnumbered and were forced to withdraw, and returned to Medina. This battle is termed 'The Battle of Muthah,' and it indicated the will of Islam, as well as the determination of the believers against injustice. It impressed the neighboring tribes to observe that the believers didn't think twice against fighting the mighty tyrannical rulers of the time.

s. Conquest of Mecca:

In violation of the agreement of Hudaibiyah, the Quraysh instigated an ally of theirs to attack the believing tribe of the Banu Khaza'ah. In response to this, the Prophet (SAW) gathered an army of 10 000 and marched to Mecca. The Quraysh, unaware of the action were taken by surprise when they received the news that the believers had just taken camp a few miles away from Mecca. A message was sent to the Quraysh, declaring that all who stayed in their houses, as well as women, children and the aged would not be harmed. Then the believers marched into Mecca, with the instructions of the Prophet (SAW) to offer overtures of peace, unless they were forced to fight. "The city which had tortured him and his followers, which had driven him and his people into exile, and which had unrelentingly persecuted and boycotted him even when he had taken refuge in a place more than 200 miles away, that city now lay at his feet. By the laws of war he could have justly avenged all the cruelties inflicted on him and his people. (Ashraf: 1999, p.410-412).

The Prophet (SAW) went to the Holy Ka'ba, and broke all the 360 idols. He thereafter issued Bilal, the very slave who was persecuted due to his belief in the one God, to call the Muslims to prayer. The office of calling Muslims to prayer was considered to be a position of honor in the early days of Islam and it was offered to this Negro slave, Bilal (RA). Bilal (RA), stood over the roof of the Holy Ka'ba, the most historic and the holiest place in the Islamic world, and called the believers to prayer. (Ashraf, 1999, p.413).

Some proud members of the Quraysh, upon seeing the former slave, Bilal (RA), painfully cried aloud: "Oh, this black Negro slave, woe to him. He stands on the roof of the Holy Ka'ba to call for prayer." (Ashraf: 1999, p.413). As if in answer to this outburst smacking of pride and prejudice, the Prophet (SAW) delivered the following sermon: ***"Allah is to be praised and thanked for ridding us of the vices and pride of the days of ignorance. O people! Note that all men are divided in two categories only: the pious and God-fearing who are esteemable in Allah's reckoning, and the transgressors and hard-hearted, who are lowly and contemptible in the eye of Allah. Otherwise all human beings are the progeny of Adam and Allah has created Adam of clay."*** (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.22).

"Whenever the second caliph of Islam, known as 'Umar the Great' in Islamic history, saw Bilal (RA), he immediately stood in reverence and welcomed him by exclaiming: "'Here comes our master, here comes our lord.' What a tremendous change was brought by the Qur'an and the Prophet (SAW) in the Arabs..." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.23).

"...it was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy; for, in the Mosque, when the Azaan, (the Muslim call to prayer), is sounded, and the worshipers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim, 'God alone is Great'." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.23).

The Prophet (SAW) led the prayers, and after words addressed the Quraysh: "O leaders of Mecca, do you know what treatment I am going to accord to you?" The Quraysh were held in suspense, since they were about to find out what

punishment was to be requited their way. Muhammad's heart overflowed with the milk of love and kindness as he declared: "Go away, you are free. No blame on you this day." (Ashraf: 1999, p.418).

"This was one of the chief objectives why he permitted war in self-defense – to unite human beings. And when this object was achieved, even his worst enemies were pardoned." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.32).

"History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated." (De lacy O'Leary, Islam at the Crossroads, London 1923, p.8).

The Prophet (SAW)'s declaration of general amnesty was so unexpectedly generous, that even the bitterest foes could not help being impressed. "Muhammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.32).

Even the wife of Abu Sufyan, Hind, who had harbored such hatred for the Prophet (SAW), that she chewed the liver of the Prophet (SAW)'s beloved uncle on the battlefield, embraced Islam. Hind declared: "O Prophet of God! Hitherto I did not hate any camp more than yours, but now I love no camp better than yours." (Ashraf: 1999, p.418).

The Prophet (SAW) then addressed the people:

"There is no God but one Allah. There is no partner in his Godhead. He has made good His promise and helped His servant, and He alone has crushed all the forces of disbelief. All pride, all ancient customs of revenge for bloodshed, and all old claims of pagan days are under my feet (i.e. are abolished). Now only two offices (i.e. hereditary) remain: the custody of the Ka'ba and supply of water to pilgrims. O Quraysh! God has effaced all pride of pagan days, and all pride of ancestry. Now all descendants of Adam are equal. You are all descended from Adam, and Adam was made of out of clay. God says: "O mankind! Indeed We have created you from a male and a female and We have made you into races and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most respectable of you in the eye of God is the most pious of you. Allah has declared the dealings in wine and usury as illegal." (Ashraf: 1999, p.421).

Design rationale: Exhibition 17

The key elements in this chapter of the Prophet (SAW)'s life were the Treaty of Hudaibiya and the Conquest of Mecca. The intermediary incidences were decided to be explained in text form along glazed panels.

The Treaty of Hudaibiya as well as the consequent 'Pledge of Ridwaan' or the 'Pledge under the Tree' were initially chosen to be depicted in a background amidst trees, since the final pledge was sworn under a tree. Due to the general theme of implicating elements abstractly, the tree was finally depicted as a glass column capped with a floating glass-top. This arrangement intended to depict the light of sincerity within which the pledge was taken: such sincerity was portrayed to which even God responded his pleasure in the Qur'an. The overall transparency of the structure was intended to depict transparent nature of the believers, as well as the eventual 'light' outcome of the incident in terms of physical battle.

Since the 'Conquest of Mecca' was an entirely different episode preceded by many intermediary incidences, a glass panel was introduced to divide the space into two components. This theme was at a later stage used in other areas which required transparent partitioning in order to relate events within the same era, yet indicate some sort of separation to highlight them as independent exhibitions within their own right. Thus, with the use of glazed panels, visual connection between elements within the same era was maintained and yet simultaneously separated.

The 'Conquest of Mecca' was now allocated along the adjacent side of the glass panel which semi-separated the two spaces. This space was decided to be illustrated by merely allowing clear visual access towards the Ka'ba area within the central core. Text and graphics along the side flanks were utilized to explain the conquest in detail. The fact that the space was just an empty space merely emphasized via a view towards the Ka'ba, was intended to depict the peaceful manner in which Mecca was taken over, with hardly any blood spilt.

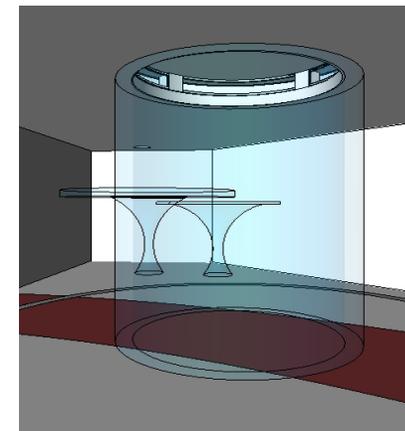


Fig. 35. Internal perspective- Exhibition 17

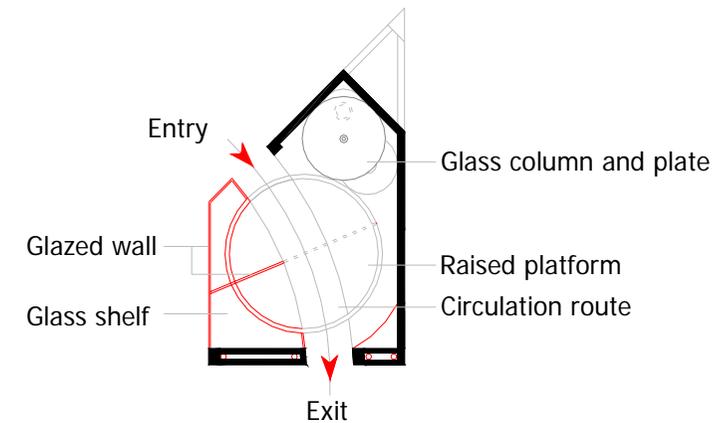


Fig. 36. Plan rationale- Exhibition 17.

of the Ka'ba and supervision of pilgrimage were to remain exclusively in the hands of Muslims. A large number of disbelievers, within a comparatively short period of time, embraced Islam. (Ashraf: 1999, p.445).

t. Battles of Hunain, Ta'if and Tabuk:

Though the Prophet (SAW)'s peaceful conquest of Mecca and his general amnesty and overtures of peace Islamicised a large portion of Arabia, there were still many pagan Arabs who adhered to their ancestral customs and institutions, and retained their hatred of Islam and its new ideals. Of these, the people of Ta'if were the most powerful and warlike, the very same people who had stoned the Prophet (SAW) in his earliest years of prophet hood. While the Prophet (SAW) was still in Mecca, these people began to assemble a huge army in preparation of war against him. The Prophet (SAW), in self-defense, sent an army of 12 000 to oppose the enemy. It wasn't very long when the believers began gaining the upper-hand of the battle. The opposing army retreated and sought refuge in their well protected forts. The believers laid siege to the fort, but could not however break through the fort. Due to the facts that the siege had become too prolonged and costly, the Prophet (SAW) and the believers withdrew. The believers asked the Prophet (SAW) to curse the enemies, but he instead prayed for them in the following words: "O God, guide the Thaqif and bring them to the fold of Islam." (Ashraf: 1999, p.433-436). He further released most of the prisoners taken captive during the battle, which numbered some 6000. Within two years of that, the tribe personally went to Medina and embraced Islam.

In the meanwhile, several Christian Arab rulers, under the suzerainty of the Roman Empire, it was heard that an army was being gathered to march upon Medina. Upon hearing this, the Prophet (SAW) amassed an army of 30 000 to defend Medina, and marched towards the intended battle field. Upon reaching their destination, it was realized that the report was false, but that certain tribes were indeed endeavoring to devise ways to weaken the rising power of Islam. Since the Prophet (SAW) went there not to invade Syria but to defend his own land, he did not pursue the enemy. "This was one of the chief objectives why he permitted war in self-defense – to unite human beings. And when this object was achieved, even his worst enemies were pardoned." (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.24).

He stayed at Tabuk for a period of twenty days, within which he managed to peace treaties with several tribes. The incident is known as 'The Expedition of Tabuk.' (Ashraf: 1999, p.444).

The Prophet (SAW) then returned to Medina, where a right royal reception awaited him. The Tabuk expedition was a great moral victory to the believers, and the enemies of Islam were overawed by their organization, spirit of self-sacrifice and courageous nature, fully challenging the Roman Empire, the then superpower of its times. (Ashraf: 1999, p.445).

Upon returning from Tabuk, the Prophet (SAW) sent Abu Bakr to lead the believers for a pilgrimage. This pilgrimage is recorded in the Holy Qur'an to be the 'Greatest Pilgrimage,' since the Ka'ba was finally purified of impurities. The polytheists were debarred from entering the sanctuary, and the people were forbidden to make pilgrimage in a naked state. The control

u. The year of Deputation:

Slowly but steadily, Islam extended its way over different parts of Arabia. The Ash'ar tribe of Yemen sent their representative to Medina to seek the enlightenment of Islam. The representative was convinced of its truth, and accepted the faith. Upon his return, Islam spread among the people of Yemen. Many from the region of Najran, then occupied by Christians, also accepted Islam. The region of Bahrain, then under Persian rule, also accepted Islam, including the Persian governor at Hijr, after receiving the letter of the Prophet (SAW). In Uman, their two leaders accepted Islam, and through their influence, the entire region accepted the faith. Even in Syria, though under Roman rule at that time, the presence of Islam was steadily rising. (Ashraf: 1999, p.446-447)

In addition to the general articles of faith, the Prophet (SAW) issued a number of injunctions to his followers for the betterment of their social, ethical, political and economic conditions. These injunctions were promulgated gradually and continuously, so that the believers should not feel any hardship in observing them. It can be observed that the first part of the revelations were to bring about a change of heart and outlook, so that the people could study and understand Islam in an enlightened spirit, and later on, versus containing commandments and prohibitions came. (Ashraf: 1999, p.447).

Design rationale: Exhibition 18

This space was decided to have a gradual decrease in floor gradient, so as to indicate that the faith had firmly established itself and the struggle was no longer uphill, but downhill, as most of the *Hijaz* and surroundings had embraced the faith. The downward gradient would also prepare one for the coming demise of the Prophet (SAW), since his mission to establish the faith had been accomplished. Later on, this space was converted into a double volume ramp, with four glazed-panels crossing over the core of the ramp, thereby providing an interesting space, transparently divided into segments. The four divisions would depict the three battles as well as the letters sent to the rulers of the time in text and graphic form along the flanks of the glazed panels.

From the establishment of this space along a circular frame came the overall establishment of all the exhibition spaces, based upon a similar theme being repeated, thereby promoting a rhythm within the internal world.

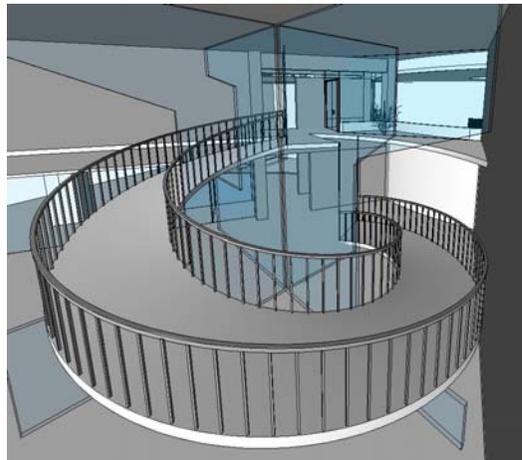


Fig. 37. Internal perspective- Exhibition 18

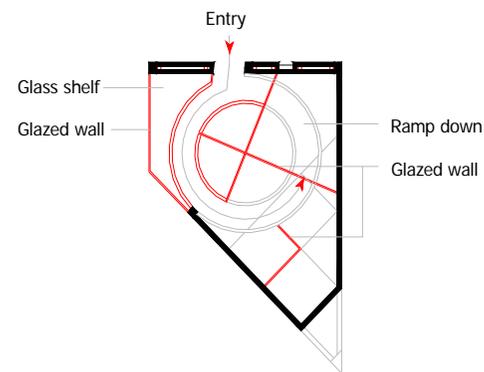


Fig. 38. Plan rationale- Exhibition 18

v. The Farewell Pilgrimage:

The Prophet (SAW) sent messengers to different tribes of Arabia informing them of his intention to proceed to Mecca for pilgrimage. The believers, upon receiving the news, assembled at Medina in tens of thousands. The Prophet (SAW) set out from Medina, and entered Mecca with his pilgrim's garb, riding upon his camel, calling out: *"Here I am at Thy service, here I am, O God. Here I am to declare that there is no partner with Thee. All praise and blessings belong to Thee*

and all sovereignty in Thine. I am here at Thy service, and Thou hast no partner, O God." (Ashraf: 1999, p.452). As the Prophet (SAW) recited this, all the believers followed suite, and this is the same call to which pilgrims declare today. The Prophet (SAW), followed by all the believers, made seven circuits around the Ka'ba, then performed a prayer at the footprint of Abraham (AS), then climbed onto Mount Safa and declared: *"There is no deity but Allah. He has no partner. All sovereignty and praise belong to him. He gives life and He gives death. He is All-Powerful over everything. There is no deity but Allah alone. He fulfilled His promise; He helped his servant, and He alone crushed all the forces (of disbelief)."* (Ashraf: 1999, p.455).

He then left with the entire gathering for Mina. Here he passed the night, and the following morning, after the morning prayers, he set out for Arafat, where he addressed his followers with what is termed, 'The Farewell Sermon':

"All the customs and practices of the pagan age are under my feet (abolished).

All compensation for bloodshed of the old days is abolished...

All usuries of the past are wiped out...

Fear God in respect of women. You men have your rights over your wives and they have their rights over you.

As regards your slaves, be fair to them. Give them to eat what you eat, and wear what you wear.

Your blood and your properties are as sacred for one another as are this day, this month and this place.

Each Muslim is a brother of another. All Muslims form one brotherhood.

An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor has a non-Arab over an Arab. You are all born of Adam, and Adam was made out of clay.

Whoever is entrusted with a thing belonging to another, must deliver his trust to its owner.

The debtors must pay their debts.

I leave behind two things, and you will never go astray if you hold it fast, and that is the Book of God, and my example." (Ashraf: 1999, p.458).

In conclusion the Prophet (SAW) asked the audience, "Have I conveyed my message to you all?" The crowd unanimously shouted: "Yes." Then the Prophet (SAW) looked up towards the heavens and said: "O my Lord! Thou art my witness." He then asked the congregation to convey his message to the world at large. (Ashraf: 1999, p.458).

The Prophet (SAW) then completed the pilgrimage, and hinted at the coming of his death in the words: "Listen to my words and learn the pilgrimage ceremony from me as I do not know if I shall ever be able to meet you in this place again." (Ashraf: 1999, p.466).

w. Demise:

After the fall of Mecca more than a million square miles of land lay at his feet. Lord of Arabia, he milked his own goats, swept the heath, kindled the fire and attended to other menial chores. In these later days of his life, Medina had grown wealthy from all the spoils of war, yet many weeks would elapse “without a fire being kindled in the hearth of the King of Arabia, his food being dates and water. He slept on no soft bed, but on a palm mat, after a long busy day, to spend most of the night in prayer, often bursting with tears before his Creator to grant him strength to discharge his duties.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.28). On the day of his death his only assets were a few coins, a part of which went to satisfy a debt and the rest were given away to a needy person who came for charity: he had told his wife, Aisha (RA), to distribute to the poor the few dinars he had, as he did not like to meet his Lord, leaving any wealth behind. “The clothes in which he breathed his last had many patches. The house from where light had spread to the world was in darkness, because there was no oil in the lamp.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.29).

He fainted with the words, “None but Allah the High.” (Ashraf: 1999). On the following day he was buried. “Thus ended the career of the Greatest Messenger of God, the greatest leader of humanity, the greatest benefactor of mankind and the greatest reformer of the world...” (Ashraf: 1999, p.469).

And his legacy lives on: “(The) one who has founded a great empire that has survived all these 14 centuries. If the devotion that a leader commands is the criterion of greatness, the Prophet’s name even today exerts a magic charm over millions of souls, spread all over the world.” (Ramakrishna: 1995, p.32).

Allah himself praises the Prophet (SAW) in the Holy Qur’an in the following manner:

“And verily you, (O Muhammad), have an exalted standard of character...” (Qur’an, 68:4)

“Indeed, in the Messenger you have a noble pattern of conduct.” (Qur’an, 33:22).

“He (Allah) it is Who sent down clear revelations unto His bondsman (Muhammad), that he may remove you from darkness into light. And Lo! for you Allah is full of Piety, Merciful.” (Qur’an, 57:9).

Design rationale: Exhibition 19

This space had two major components to portray, namely the farewell sermon and the demise of the Prophet (SAW). The space was decided to be more brightly lit than the other exhibition spaces, in order to depict the light of the words of the farewell sermon, as well as the light emanating from the grave of the Prophet (SAW). In terms of a continuing legacy, the light of the faith would be depicted as shining out to the world at large. This created the basis for having placed this space along the southern façade, thereby creating a suitable location for a totally glazed façade. This glazed façade was to have the inscription of the farewell sermon, thereby creating visual contact with the internal as well as the external world, since these were the words to be carried out to the world at large.

Following the theme of glazed panels used to segment spaces, this method was similarly adopted into this space, to promote continuity, repetition and rhythm towards a central theme.

The grave of the Prophet (SAW) was decided to be partially sheltered, and partially exposed, thereby creating a special place of commemoration. The glazed panel was thus decided to be frosted in order to attain a suitable space. The actual demise was decided to be represented within a rectangular glass box, slightly raised above the ground. The raising was to depict his special status, whilst the rectangular glass tomb was to depict his sincerity, humbleness, honesty, or in other words, his totally transparent and open nature. The glass casing would bear his name inscribed in the center of the casing, along a similar filament as adopted throughout all other glazed sections previously described.

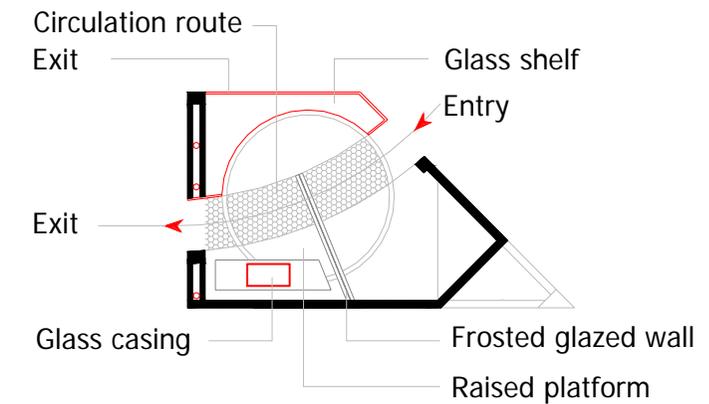
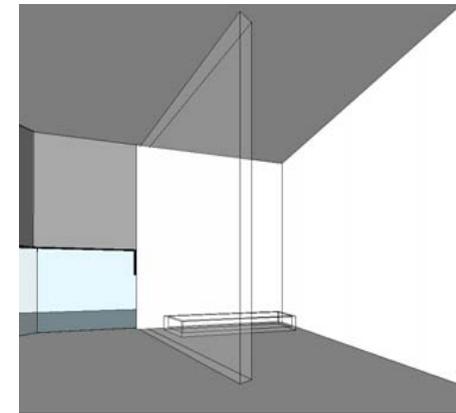


Fig. 39. Internal perspective- Exhibition 19. Fig. 40. Plan rationale- Exhibition 19.