

THE MEDINA CHARTER

622 C.E.

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful.

- (1) This is a document from Muhammad the prophet (governing the relations) between the believers and Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib, and those who followed them and joined them and labored with them.
- (2) They are one community (umma) to the exclusion of all men.
- (3) The Quraysh emigrants according to their present custom shall pay the bloodwit within their number and shall redeem their prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
- (4-8) The B. 'Auf according to their present custom shall pay the bloodwit they paid in heathenism; every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers. The B. Sa'ida, the B. 'l-Harith, and the B. Jusham, and the B. al-Najjar likewise.
- (9-11) The B. 'Amr b. 'Auf, the B. al-Nabit and the B. al-'Aus likewise.
- (12)(a) Believers shall not leave anyone destitute among them by not paying his redemption money or bloodwit in kindness.
- (12)(b) A believer shall not take as an ally the freedman of another Muslim against him.
- (13) The God-fearing believers shall be against the rebellious or him who seeks to spread injustice, or sin or animosity, or corruption between believers; the hand of every man shall be against him even if he be a son of one of them.
- (14) A believer shall not slay a believer for the sake of an unbeliever, nor shall he aid an unbeliever against a believer.
- (15) God's protection is one, the least of them may give protection to a stranger on their behalf. Believers are friends one to the other to the exclusion of outsiders.
- (16) To the Jew who follows us belong help and equality. He shall not be wronged nor shall his enemies be aided.
- (17) The peace of the believers is indivisible. No separate peace shall be made when believers are fighting in the way of God. Conditions must be fair and equitable to all.
- (18) In every foray a rider must take another behind him.
- (19) The believers must avenge the blood of one another shed in the way of God.
- (20)(a) The God-fearing believers enjoy the best and most upright guidance.
- (20)(b) No polytheist shall take the property of person of Quraysh under his protection nor shall he intervene against a believer.
- (21) Whoever is convicted of killing a believer without good reason shall be subject to retaliation unless the next of kin is satisfied (with blood-money), and the believers shall be against him as one man, and they are bound to take action against him.
- (22) It shall not be lawful to a believer who holds by what is in this document and believes in God and the last day to help an evil-doer or to shelter him. The curse of God and His anger on the day of resurrection will be upon him if he does, and neither repentance nor ransom will be received from him.
- (23) Whenever you differ about a matter it must be referred to God and to Muhammad.
- (24) The Jews shall contribute to the cost of war so long as they are fighting alongside the believers.
- (25) The Jews of the B. 'Auf are one community with the believers (the Jews have their religion and the Muslims have

theirs), their freedmen and their persons except those who behave unjustly and sinfully, for they hurt but themselves and their families.

(26-35) The same applies to the Jews of the B. al-Najjar, B. al-Harith, B. Sai ida, B. Jusham, B. al-Aus, B. Tha'laba, and the Jafna, a clan of the Tha'laba and the B. al-Shutayba. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. The freedmen of Tha'laba are as themselves. The close friends of the Jews are as themselves.

(36) None of them shall go out to war save the permission of Muhammad, but he shall not be prevented from taking revenge for a wound. He who slays a man without warning slays himself and his household, unless it be one who has wronged him, for God will accept that.

(37) The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and loyalty is a protection against treachery. A man is not liable for his ally's misdeeds. The wronged must be helped.

(38) The Jews must pay with the believers so long as war lasts.

(39) Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document.

(40) A stranger under protection shall be as his host doing no harm and committing no crime.

(41) A woman shall only be given protection with the consent of her family.

(42) If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise it must be referred to God and to Muhammad the apostle of God. God accepts what is nearest to piety and goodness in this document.

(43) Quraysh and their helpers shall not be given protection.

(44) The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib.

(45)(a) If they are called to make peace and maintain it they must do so; and if they make a similar demand on the Muslims it must be carried out except in the case of a holy war.

(45)(b) Every one shall have his portion from the side to which he belongs.

(46) The Jews of al-Aus, their freedmen and themselves have the same standing with the people of this document in purely loyalty from the people of this document. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. He who acquires ought acquires it for himself. God approves of this document.

(47) This deed will not protect the unjust and the sinner. The man who goes forth to fight and the man who stays at home in the city is safe unless he has been unjust and sinned. God is the protector of the good and God-fearing man and Muhammad is the apostle of God.

This text is taken from A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* — A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1955; pp. 231-233. Numbering added.

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