

Case Studies of Conflict

Incident	What do you think caused the conflict?	Describe what happened	What kind of harm was caused?
Children fighting in the playground over a ball			
People rioting and looting in town			
Violent demonstration about a newspaper article which seems to be anti-Muslim			



The Story of the Black Stone

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was a young man, the people of his home town, Makkah, decided to rebuild the Ka`bah.

Since there were many big families in Makkah, they worked separately, family by family, until the walls were high enough for the black stone to be replaced again into its corner.

A violent argument broke out amongst them as each family wanted the honour of putting the black stone into its place. The disagreement lasted for a number of days and anger had increased to the point that they were ready to fight with arms, when the oldest man present suggested a solution.

He called: 'O people of Quraysh! Whoever is the first to enter through the gates of this sacred place tomorrow morning will decide who shall lay the stone.' They agreed to follow the advice of the old man. The following morning, the first person to enter was Muhammad ﷺ, who had just returned to Makkah after a brief absence of a few days.

This produced an immediate and pleasant feeling that here was the right person for the task, and his arrival was greeted by words of satisfaction. 'This is al-Amin,' said someone. 'We accept his judgement,' said others, 'It is Muhammad ﷺ.'

Muhammad ﷺ asked: 'What is this all about?'

When they explained the matter to him, he asked for a sheet of cloth, which he spread on the ground. Then, he placed the black stone in the middle of the sheet and invited the leader of each family to grab a part of the sheet and lift it up together.

When they had carried it to the corner of the Ka`bah, Muhammad ﷺ lifted the stone and placed it in its position. The rest of the work was completed peacefully.

Islamic Method of Resolving Conflict

Discuss the methods used by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to control anger and resolve conflict:

- ▶ Seek God's protection by reciting the ta'awwudh.
أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم
- ▶ Remain silent. Do not respond immediately. Pause for thought and, when ready to respond, strengthen your argument and lower your voice.
- ▶ If you are standing, sit down and if you are already sitting down, lie down.
- ▶ Perform wudu' if possible – this will help you to calm down.
- ▶ Involve a third party who can help you to resolve the conflict without violence. Such a person is called an arbitrator (independent person who settles disputes or someone who is like a referee). It may be your mother, a trusted friend, an imam or a teacher. Countries that are in conflict with each other often go to the United Nations (UN) to arbitrate.