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TEACHINGS OF ISLAM

Objects of Man's Existence

By HADHRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD, Founder of Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam
There is but one God- Muhammad is the last of the Prophets.

"And strive hard in Allah's way with your wealth and your lives..."(The Holy Qur'-an, 9:41)

Real Object

It is needless to say that different men have, on account of their superficial views on narrowmindedness, set before themselves different objects generally limited to a gratification of low desires and pleasures of this world. But the Almighty has declared a higher aim of man's existence:

"And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me."(The Holy Qur'-an, 51:56)

The real object of man's life according to the Qur'-an is, therefore, a true knowledge and worship of God and a total resignation to His will so that whatever is said or done is for His sake only. One thing, at least, is plain: man has no choice in the matter of fixing the aim of life. He is a creature, and the Creator, Who has brought him into existence and bestowed upon him higher and more excellent faculties than upon other animals, has also assigned an object to his existence. A man may or may not understand it, or a hundred different motives may hold him back from it, but the truth is that the grand aim of man's life consists in knowing and worshipping God and living for His sake. The Lord says:

"Lo! religion with Allah is Islam..."(The Holy Qur'-an, 3:18)

"So set thy face for religion, being upright, the nature made by Allah in which He has created men. There is no altering Allah's creation. That is the right religion.."(The Holy Qur'-an, 30:30)

Endowments

The external and internal endowments of human nature give us clearly to understand that the highest object of their creation is the love and worship of God. True happiness, which is generally admitted to be the goal of life, is not attainable through the diverse pursuits which men follow but only through the Divine Being. Not all the felicities of this world can afford relief from the gnawing grief which attends man's last moments upon this earth. The greatest king, the wisest philosopher, the highest official or the richest merchant does not possess contentment of mind, and departs from this world a prey to poignant regret. His heart unbraids him for his absorption in worldly cares and his conscience judges him guilty of the employment of unfair means to attain success in his worldly affairs.

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LET THE MOSQUES BE MASAJID ALLAH AGAIN!

By Masud Akhtar

“Who is more unjust than he who prevents (men) from the Mosques of Allah, from His name being remembered therein, and strive to ruin them? (As for) these, it was not proper for them to enter them except in fear. For them is the disgrace in this world, and theirs is a grievous chastisement in the Hereafter.” (The Holy Qur'-an, 2:114)

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The above verse of the Qur'-an states the primary purpose of a Mosque and simultaneously warns that barring entry of people for remembering their Allah or its misuse will bring disgrace in this world and a greivous chastisement in the Hereafter. Mosque has played an important role in Muslim society in various periods of its history and still continues to play a significant role in the present day Muslim world. According to the teachings of Islam, a mosque is vested in Allah in an irrevocable trust. It does not belong to any individual or even a sect or group of people. The Qur'-an calls mosques as Masajid Allah. It is most unfortunate that mosques have come to be named after different sects, such as Hanafi Mosque, Shafii Mosque, Maliki Mosque, Wahabi Mosque, Hanbli Mosque, Shiite Mosque, or Ahmadi Mosque, etc. This deviation from the clear teachings of the Qur'-an has resulted in a division in the ranks of the Muslim Ummah. And this has also led to false thinking that a particular mosque belongs to and is meant for a particular sect of Muslims to the exclusion of all other Muslims. Proceeding from this false presumption, they, in exercise of this supposed right of ownership, bar muslims of other sects from entering their mosque. It sounds strange in the face of the fact that all muslims, to whatever sect they may belong, perform and recite the same prayer and verses of the Qur'-an facing towards the same Qibla addressing their prayers to the same Allah. It sounds stanger still that the people who claim to be the Ummah of a Prophet(peace be upon him), who by allowing the deputation of the Christians of Najran to use the Nabwi Mosque for holding their Sunday Church, had set the example of magnanimity in dealings with followers of other religions yet choose to deny entry to mosques to their co-believers for offering their prayers. It is not only blasphemous but it is clear and open rebellion against Allah and His Messenger(peace be upon him). It is an open challenge to Allah's rights in mosques. The sooner the Muslim world can get rid of this blunder, the better, because if this practice continues, the dream of unity of the Muslim Ummah will remain unfulfilled.

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The Promised Messiah Speaks cont.

Let us consider the question in another light. In the case of the lower animals, we see that their faculties are so made as to render them unable to serve a purpose higher than a particular one and they cannot go beyond a certain limit. This leads us to the conclusion that the highest limit which the faculties of a particular animal can reach is also the highest aim of its creation. A bullock, for instance, may be used to furrow the land or draw water or for loading, but with its present faculties it can serve no higher purpose. This is, therefore, also the aim of its existence.

Judging man in the same manner, we find that, of all the faculties which nature has bestowed upon him, the highest is that which awakens him to a search for God and encourages him to the noble aspiration of losing his own self in the love of the Beneficent and completely submitting himself to His will. In the requirements of his physical nature, the lower animals are on a level with him. In art, some animals display more skill than human beings. The bee produces honey from the juice of many flowers with such exquisite skill that man has failed to achieve anything like it. The perfection of man, therefore, does not consist in these matters but something else. It consists in the excellence of his spirituality in his union with God. The true object of his life in this world is that the window of his heart should be opened towards the Creator.

Means of attainment

We are now in a position to answer the second part of the question: how can this object possibly be attained?

The first means towards the attainment of this end is that, in the recognition of the Lord, a man should tread upon the right path and have his faith in the true and living God. The goal can never be reached by the man who takes the first step in the wrong direction and looks upon some stone or creature or an element of nature as his deity. The true Master assists those who seek Him, but a dead deity cannot assist its dead worshippers. The Almighty has well illustrated this in the following parable:

"To Him (Allah) is due the true prayer. And those to whom they pray besides Him give them no answer, but (they are) like he who stretches forth his two hands towards water that it may reach his mouth, but it will not reach it. And the prayer of the disbelievers is only wasted." (The Holy Qur'-an, 13:14)

The second means to attain the true object of life consists in being informed of the perfect beauty which the Benefactor possesses. Beauty naturally attracts the heart and incites love. The beauty of God consists in His unity, His majesty, His grandeur and His other lofty attributes. The Holy Qur'-an draws attention to this point in the following words:

"Say: He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten; and none is like Him." (The Holy Qur'-an, 112:1-4)

The third means of reaching the goal consists in realizing the immense goodness of the Lord. Beauty and kindness are the only two incentives to love. The attributes of God in this respect are described in the opening chapter of the Qur'-an:

"Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent the Merciful, Master of the day of Requit... (The Holy Qur'-an, 1:2-4)

It is plain that the Divine goodness could not be perfect unless the Creator first brought everything into existence from nothing and then gave it sustenance under all circumstances and Himself supported it in its weakness. All aspects of His mercy should come into play for His creatures, and His kindness should have no limits set to it. To this perfect goodness, the Holy Qur'-an says:

"And if you count Allah's favors, you will not be able to Number them..." (The Holy Qur'-an, 14:34)

The fourth means for the desired end is prayer. The Lord of the world says:

"Pray to Me, I will answer you..." (The Holy Qur'-an, 40:60)

It may be noted that frequent stress

has been laid upon this point in the Qur'-an, because man can reach the Merciful only with Divine assistance.

The fifth means is to seek God by spending one's sustenance and faculties, and sacrificing one's life and applying one's wisdom in His way:

"And strive hard in Allah's way with your wealth and your lives..."-9:41.

"(This Book is a guide to those who) spend out of what We have given them..."-2:3.

"And those who strive hard for Us, We shall surely guide them in Our ways..."-29:69.

(Holy Qur'-an)

The sixth means by which a person may safely attain to the goal is perseverance, that is, he should be indefatigable in the way in which he walks and unswerving under the hardest trial:

"(As for) those who say, Our Lord is Allah, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying: Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the Garden which you were promised. We are your friends in this world's life and in the Hereafter..." (The Holy Qur'-an, 41:30-31).

In these verses, we are told that perseverance in faith brings about the pleasure of God. It is true, as the Arabic proverb goes, that "perseverance is more than a miracle." The highest degree of perseverance is called forth when adversities encompass a man all around, when he is threatened with loss of life, property and honor in the Divine path, and whatever is consoling or comforting forsakes him so much so that the Lord tries him even by closing the door of visions and revelations for a time.

It is when a man is surrounded by these dreary sights and the last ray of hope disappears that perseverance must be shown. Under such ills and sufferings a man must show firmness, not swerve from the line, hold on through fire and blood, be willing to suffer every disgrace, wait for no succour or support, not even seek any good tidings from on High and, in spite of his helplessness and the absence of all comfort, he must stand up firmly, submitting himself to the

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Muhammad In World Scriptures



TWO KINDS OF TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTH OF THE PROPHET'S CLAIM

By The Late Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi

"And they who disbelieve say: Thou art no messenger (of Allah) Say: Allah, and whosoever hath true knowledge of the Scripture, is sufficient witness between me and you."(1)

As long as the social development of a nation does not reach a stage which necessitate an organized government to settle mutual disputes, no systematic form is given to law and statutes.

Similarly, the signs of the truth of prophetic claim have been corresponding to the mental development of the people.

In olden days the people used to indicate their veracity by different ways, for instance, by taking a vow, lifting fire in their hands, or diving into it, safely crossing a whirlpool, throwing themselves from a mountain without being hurt(2), soothsaying, magical enchantment, walking on the water, casting evil spirits into the swines, and by showing dexterous tricks. The position of the testifire or the seeker-after truth was, thus, hardly better than a divining machine. No deep thinking was required to essay the genuineness of a claim. In Hinduism, Judaism, Zoroastrians, even in Christianity and ancient cults the veracity of holy personages was judged by suchlike criteria.

The Qur'-an, however, has put forth no such thaumaturgy in support of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's claim(may peace and the blessings of Allah be on him). If the perfection of its law is the criterion of an elevated society, then the Qur'-anic standard laid down for the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim deserves a careful consideration. In the verse quoted at the top, two kinds of testimony have been advanced in support of the Prophet's claim, and these witnesses have been deemed sufficient to establish his truth- the testimony of God Himself and the testimony of the one who knows the Book. "The Book", of course, signifies the previous revelations from God.

In the law of evidence, two factors are particularly notable- the importance of the witness and the relevancy and positivity of the testimony. In the case of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him) the mightiness of the evidence is obvious from the fact that the Lord Himself stands as a witness for him.

The Testimony of the Lord

BY God's testimony is generally meant the evidence of the Book of Nature, the extraordinary celestial power and those heavenly signs which have always characterized the truth of Divinely inspired people. We find in this universe everything governed by a particular law. From the minutest atom to the most gigantic orb, nothing seems in the creation to be working without some principle. "Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it (to its goal)(3). This all-comprehensiveness of Divine Law is a strong testimony to the truth of the holy prophet's claim; for he was the first of all prophets who advanced this argument to prove the universality of Divine revelation, viz., that every leaf in the book of nature and every particle of the creation necessarily stands in need of the laws which God Almighty has vested into it. When the All-Wise God, the Cherisher of the worlds, has vouchsafed a law even unto the tiniest atom, then man, the best handiwork of His Omnipotent power, with a vast field of progress before him, must needs have guidance and heavenly light for his maintenance and progressive development. Says the Almighty in the Holy Qur'-an: "Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High, Who creates, then makes complete, and Who makes(things) according to a measure, then guides(them to their goal)."(4)

To set a human limit to Divine revelation and to confine it to a particular period or people, not only negates the attributes of Love, Mercy

and Beneficence of the Lord, but disparages the very need and essence of Religion. It ceases to be the indispensable essential which must of necessity be imparted to every nation, or if corrupted by the ravages of time, must be revived through a new prophet to make it again the motive power of human life. If all the nations of the world, save a particularly favored tribe, could manage to live on without religion, and could produce, without revelation and Divine inspirations such supreme models of virtue and piety as appeared sometimes in the persons of Zoroaster, Buddha or Abraham, and sometimes in the persons of Moses, Krishna, or Jesus Christ, surely there seems to be no justification for specifying a particular people or place for the guidance and instruction of the rest of mankind. And if it is God Himself, Who with His law of requital, unnecessarily creates a schism among the people, showing His Light only to the chosen few, depriving the rest and condemning them to perdition as if they were not His creatures, then such a God is not worthy of adoration. He will be no better than the fabulous blind king of a sunless realm whose denia is better than acceptance.

This is an immensely extensive and vast subject. The more one ponders over it, the more palpably will it transpire that the need for religion arises only under the circumstances that Islam has presented. Islam maintains that prophets have been raised from time to time in every nation of the world, and the Beneficence of the Most Compassionate Lord has never deprived any of His creatures of the light and lead of True Religion. Again it holds that religion must be found in every age and clime as an established reality; the followers of which must look upon its propagation as the prime purpose of their life. No power on earth, however great, should deter them from their missionary endeavors. Otherwise any

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From Prepage

secrecy in the propagation of religion and whispering of the chants in the ears, lest the others may know of it, is to negate the very purpose of religion.

Belief in the Holy Prophet alone ensures Universal Peace

“And verily We have raised in every nation an apostle saying: Serve Allah and shun false gods.” (5)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, of all the prophets of the world, has been endowed with unique attributes. One characteristic mark of his mission is that he vouched the truth of all the prophets who had gone before him, and made it obligatory on his followers to put faith in all of them, just as in his own Divine mission. This principle of Islam is so magnificent and grand, that it not only forms the very basis of True Religion and universal peace, but the slightest deviation from it would pull the whole structure of religion to the ground. For, according to Islam, religion is a universal reality which is found in every nation of the world. In the present age, men of this view have sprung up in almost every religion, which is a clear sign of the soundness of this creed. But Muhammad was the first inspired teacher to teach this sublime principle to the world. No prophet before him revealed this truth, nor any other religion has made the belief in all the prophets, an essential article of faith.

“The Lord of the Worlds”- a Qur’anic conception only

“Praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.”(6) He is the Lord of the East as well as the Lord of the West. Leaving aside the recognition of the appearance of prophets in every nation, most of the religions are not tolerant and generous enough even to concede that their God is the God and Deity of other nations as well. Brahmanism and the Vedic religions looked upon the Aryans as the only children of God.(7) The cow-mother of the Vedas yielded milk only to the Brahmans, the Kashatriyas and the Vaishyas, and fed and fostered them alone.(8) Jehovah, the God of the Israelites, was to the utter exclusion of

other people, their God alone. Mr. John S. Hayland writes: “The God whom the Jews worshipped had at first been conceived of as the tribal Deity of a nomadic people...for many centuries the Jews continued to conceive this God of righteousness as their God only...But this idea that their own national God was also the God of all other men was never welcomed and adopted by the mass of the Jewish population.”(9)

Divine Testimony in the Form of Celestial Triumph

“Say: Allah sufficeth for a witness between me and you; for He is Aware of His servants, Seeing.”(10)

The testimony of God, in this verse, denotes the triumph of Truth and the discomfiture of falsehood. Truth, notwithstanding its increasing opposition, thrives and prospers; whereas falsehood in spite of its power and privileges, is vanquished, for, the Lord with His Almighty power is Aware and Seeing. This second testimony of the Lord is met with in every phase of the Prophet’s life in the form of astounding success. The heavenly signs that appeared in support of Noah, Abraham, Buddha, Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster and all the prophets of the world, appeared in the most manifest manner in support of the Prophet Muhammad. His great success and preponderance, in spite of bitter opposition, paucity of friends and legions of foes, is a clear proof of Divine support. Even the opponents of Islam have admitted this unique success of the Prophet, and that, as a matter of fact, is his real greatness which is also acknowledged by opponents. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* in the article “Qur’an” describes the Holy Prophet as “The most successful of all the prophets and religious personalities.”(11)

The Promised Prophet

“And when Allah made this covenant with the prophets: Certainly what I have given you of book and wisdom- then an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him, and you must aid him. He said: Do you affirm and accept My compact in this (matter?)

They said: We do affirm. He said: Then bear ye witness, and I will be a witness with you.”(12)

Besides the two above-mentioned testimonies, there is yet another magnificent testimony of God referred to in this verse. A covenant was taken from all the nations of the world through their respective prophets, that when the prophet who would confirm their truth and corroborate their Scriptures, should appear they would accept him with open arms, and render him all possible assistance. This covenant of the prophets is recorded in their Books in the form of prophecies. The Prophet Muhammad(blessed be his soul) brought this supreme truth into the world, which proved the indispensability of religion and then established it on a firm footing. The condition in which the sacred scriptures of the world are found today, is really a harrid one. These are, no doubt, the relics of those great Books that were given to the prophets of yore. No scripture of any religion was to be found in its original form and pristine purity at the time of the holy Prophet’s advent, nor is one found today. Such books, therefore, cannot prove the truth of religion, nay, their own prophets stand in need of vindication. A number of suspicions and misgivings have sprung up about the prophets Zoroaster, Abraham, Krishna and Christ, so much so that they are being looked upon as mere fictitious persons. So many differences are found regarding the name, place, and period of the pre-historic prophets, that their very existence is being doubted. The holy Prophet has, thus, put all the prophets under deep obligation by testifying to their truth. Indeed he had done for them what their own present-day Books or followers could not do. In this way, by the collective evidence of them all, he has also established and evinced the truth of religion. And in this age of irreligion and materialism, a better argument of the truth of religion could hardly be found- an argument on which the wise and fair-minded people of the nations could agree.

We invite the attention of the just-minded people of all persuasions to another very important testimony of

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this kind. Just as the holy Prophet has vouched for the truth of all the prophets of the world, and made it obligatory for a Muslim to believe in all of them, in like manner, all the prophets of the world testify to the truth of the holy prophet and exhort their followers to put faith in him. Not a prophet has passed who did not give the glad tidings of the advent of this Great Prophet who was to appear last of all. The fact that Muhammad certified the truth of the preceding prophets, forms a strong basis for international peace and human brotherhood. But to say that all the prophets of the world confirmed the truth of Muhammad's mission, is a mightier argument still, proving the truth and unity of all religions. The point that some accredited prophet of every clan or clime predicted the advent of the holy Prophet, deserves serious consideration by every seeker after truth. Muhammad was the confirmer of all the prophets, and this tenet, as we have said, is the basis of world-wide peace and amity. The prophets of the world were the confirmers of Muhammad. This, accordingly, forms the holy sanctum of the world of Religion. He who stays without these sacred precincts will soon fall a prey to Godlessness and irreligion.

The Testimony of the People of the Book

"Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and whoever has knowledge of the Scripture."(13)

The sacred scriptures in keeping of other religions have come down from thousands of years, but the Musalmans, during the past thirteen centuries and a half, have never endeavored to learn their languages and give the books a thorough study; although next to the Divine testimony in favor of the Prophet Muhammad comes the evidence of the one who has been given knowledge of the Great Book that was revealed to the prophets in different languages of the world. The present age, there is no gainsaying the fact, is the time when Islam shall prevail and predominate over all other religions, and innumerable arguments proving the

truth of Islam shall be adduced. This is the age of the fulfilment of the Divine promise: "He might cause it to prevail over all religions."(14) This is also the age when the collective evidence of the prophets of different religions, in favor of the Prophet Muhammad, was to be unfolded. With what care and caution the followers of various religions in the past kept their books in concealment and secrecy, is a long long tale. The instance of an eminent scholar Sir William Jones will illustrate our point. Sir William was the man whose assiduous efforts carried Sanskrit to the Western countries, so that Europe today is publishing, for the Eastern people, rare and obscure editions of the Vedas. Sir William came to the Fort William, Calcutta, as a Judge of the Supreme Court in 1783 A.D. He was the man who founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and thus laid this country under an immense debt of gratitude, which can never be forgotten. It was through the untiring effort of this Society that the ancient editions of the Vedas and other Sanskrit literature saw the light of the day. When Sir William made up his mind to learn the Sanskrit language, no pandit, in spite of a handsome remuneration, could be found throughout the length and breadth of the country who would undertake to teach him. Old records, however, show that two or three pandits secretly went to Sir William to settle the remuneration, etc. but the pandit fraternity got a smell of the affair and they were ex-communicated, all manners of social dealings such as interdining, intermarriage, etc., being cut off with them. Such a strict attitude of the Society naturally threw cold water over the aspirations of the pandits and the difficulty remained unsolved.

Shiv Chandra, the Maharaj of Krishna Nagar, was a friend of Sir William. He too tried his best, but could not procure a man to teach 'the unclean' Sir William. At last a family-less pandit Ram Lochana by name, girded up his loins for the risky job. The Pandit lived alone, a man, 'single chose to live and shunned to wed.' Friends, he had, no doubt, but a pay of Rs. 100 a month and the majestic ride of palanquin from his place to Chaurangi, were attractions, which

made the Pandit regardless of his friends. Very hard were the conditions which the Pandit imposed upon his student, but Sir William Jones endured all the severe restrictions and did not swerve a jot from his firm resolution. A room on the ground floor of the bungalow was set apart for the purpose. It was, by the Pandit's order, floored with white marble. Meat of any kind was not allowed to be brought even into the precincts of the house. Sir William was to receive instruction on an empty stomach; but occasionally, when he humbly implored the Pandit, he was allowed to take a cup of tea. Half an hour before the appointed time, a trooper rode to the Pandit's house to inform him that it was time for the lesson. Then would the Pandit condescend to come. An apartment adjacent to the study-room was set apart for the Pandit to remove his pure and sacred robe and put on the one with which he went into the 'Sahib's' presence. A Hindu was appointed to daily consecrate the study-room and its furniture by washing it with Ganges-water. The Pandit was of an irritable temper. He often used to scold Sir William saying that meat-eaters could not learn Sanskrit, for it was not the language of the unclean but of the gods. Sir William Jones brooked all this sarcasm with a smiling face, and at last he did learn Sanskrit. Had there been some one else in Sir William's position, his enthusiasm would certainly have damped within a very few days.

In a word, we are much indebted to the efforts of the people who brought out the scriptures of the Hindus and the Zoroastrians from their den of obscurity and showed them the light of the day. Although these efforts were primarily of a commercial nature, still we owe gratitude to these scholars for their untiring endeavors and the zeal with which they learnt different languages and published old books. Here too, we find a sign of the holy Prophet Muhammad's truth. Jesus Christ was, in fact, the 'Morning Star' who brought the happy tidings of the appearance, on this world's firmament, of the mid-day Sun of prophethood. Similarly the literary and scientific researches of his

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followers have always guided the world to the Prophet's mission and testified to his truth. The indifference of the present day Musalmans towards knowledge, the decay of their civilization and culture, and the destructive forces of their mutual feuds and kafir-making, instead of the propagation work or some constructive program, are really signs of the discomfiture of Islam. But the Prophet Muhammad is not blessed by Muslims alone, as God and His angels also bless his name(15). The Musalmans of today are unfortunately, through their misdeeds, a slur upon the holy name of the Prophet, but the blessings of Allah and His angels are, at the same time, removing all stigmas and clearing the Prophet's character of all false imputations. All the literary and philosophic researches and the volumes published today in Europe on the study of ancient religions, are full of such arguments that support the truth of Islam. If before the advent of the holy Prophet the Christian monks and priests were eagerly waiting for the appearance of Paraclete(Ahmad), and with their continuous prayers, their devout supplications and invocations of blessings, they were giving the world the glad news of the advent of the holy Prophet Muhammad, similarly they are, today, evincing his truth through their critical investigations and literary pursuits. It was no small a favor which the holy Prophet did to Jesus Christ, his mother and their pedigree(16). And this, in fact, is a humble reciprocity of the same kindness, that the Christians today are spending millions and taking so much pains to (indirectly) serve Islam. It is no wonder, if as a result of their labor, they may see the true light of Islam.

No doubt, the inability of the Muslims to render this service to the cause of their religion, deprived them of heavenly rewards, but it was, at the same time, not without a pre-ordained purpose. Had the Muslims been responsible for bringing these ancient scriptures out of oblivion, the blame of corruption in these works must also have been laid on them. Thus, if on the one hand, the non-Muslim followers of these books tried their best to keep

their contents in secrecy, on the other hand, the expositors of their teachings were also non-Muslims and often hostile opponents of Islam. so it was ordained that all the prophecies in those books should remain intact without a shadow of doubt of corruption in them. This is why during the palmy days of Islam, the Vedas, the Dasatir and other ancient scriptures remained in obscurity and the treasures in them were meant to be bestowed on the Muslims in this age of their decline and decay, so that it may prove the fact that Islam has never stood in need of a temporal power for the establishment and recognition of its truth, but that it also possesses such priceless gems, to shed lustre upon the world, which for centuries past were kept buried as a unique Divine gift in the stores of other religions.

A Strong Evidence on the Finality of Prophethood

"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam."(17)

This tenet of Islam, *viz.*, that prophets were raised in all nations of the world and that Muhammad was the Promised Messenger of all the religions, is a very strong evidence on the finality of prophethood with the advent of Muhammad(may peace and the blessings of Allah be on him). Before the appearance of the holy Prophet, people believed only in the truth of their own respective prophets and belief in all the prophets could not be held on account of the continuity of prophethood. But when prophethood came to an end and the last of the prophets, the promised one of all religions, appeared, it was necessary that all the nations of the world should put faith in him and through him all the preceding prophets, thus uniting the scattered and dissenting sections of humanity into a solid whole, and bringing to perfection the thing that was ordained ever since the creation of the universe. This was also to be the proof of the fact that this universe is not an automatic machine of heterogeneous elements, but is being governed by an All-Wise, All-Knowing God, Who carries every object, passing it through the various stages of its development, to its

perfection. This if in the earlier stages of the world's development need was felt, for the unification of a people, of a brief collection of religious laws, still greater was the need, of a perfect religion and an Ideal Prophet to link together all the nations of the world. And this link between nations, religions and prophets, the world saw, in the person of the Prophet Muhammad.

A new prophet after the Finality of Prophethood causes dissension

"And thus We have made you an equitable nation that you may be the bearers of witness of the people and (that) the Apostle may be a bearer of witness to you."(18)

The belief in the advent of a new prophet after the perfection of religion and completion of prophethood is to again rend asunder this solidarity of religions and to falsify the very wisdom of All-Wise God. Such a belief is simply preposterous and is open to various objections. We count three objections to this belief.

The first reflection is on the wisdom of God Himself. He gave such a training to humanity, through a long chain of prophets, that they united into a single whole at an appointed time. After the achievement of this great object, He Himself sent a new prophet to tear away this united body. After thirteen centuries of great sacrifices and strenuous efforts a community of sixty crores of people was prepared to lift the banner of international peace and amity and to evince the truth of all the prophets and break this mighty force into pieces. Thus, the parable of the spinning dame narrated in the Qur'-an will be more applicable to God Himself.(19)

"And be not like her who unravels her yarn, disintegrating it into pieces after she has spun it strongly."

The second objection to this doctrine is that it negates the very aim of religion. The real aim of religion is to unite mankind into a single whole. And if a prophet can appear even after the achievement of this aim, religion not only loses its real purpose but also amounts to an absurdity. Prophets could certainly come, and have been coming, before the appearance of the

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From Prepage

Promised Prophet; but when that expected one has appeared about whom all the preceding prophets had prophesied and enjoined upon their followers to put faith in him and assist him, and when religion was made perfect and the world was given the message "This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion."(20)-Any new prophet or new religion will undo the whole thing and will cause a great disruption.

The third reason why a prophet cannot be tolerated after the finality of prophethood, is, that it falsifies the mission of the Promised Prophet. If prophethood was to continue as before, there was no sense in raising one prophet for the guidance of the entire mankind. Different prophets could have come to guide their respective people. And the appearance of a prophet among the very followers of Muhammad, whose denial turns a man out of the pale of Islam, is an insult to that great eminence of the Promised Prophet and is contrary to the Islamic fraternity. The greatness of Muhammad and the dignity of his mission demand that no other claimant should appear after him whose denial may rend the unity of Islamic brotherhood. This is what was ordained since the creation of this universe, and this is what all the prophets came to fulfil. The edifice of prophethood has been completed and there is no room for a new prophet.

THE prophecies that we shall discuss in this book clearly support the doctrine of the finality of prophethood. Not only the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad illustrate the finality of prophethood, but the unanimous evidence of all the prophets also amounts to the fact that Muhammad is the last of the prophets and any claimant after him is a liar and a kafir. He who steps out of the holy precincts of the final prophethood will surely fall a prey to irreligion and blasphemy.

A word to the Hindu, Christian, Jewish and Buddhist friends

IN the current law of evidence it is an admitted fact that "Documents are superior to oral testimony and are not to be over-ruled by witnesses or by an oath." Now, consider in the light of this, the Divine compositions and written testimonies which are the legacies of holy prophets, *rishis* and *vakhshurs*. Everybody believes that these holy personages never made a false statement for some worldly end or voracity. They were above all men, so much so, that many of them were worshipped as gods or incarnations or sons of God. They infused life into millions of dead people and their followers do not name them before purifying themselves. These great souls have prophesied the advent of a glorious prophet. Belief in this prophet is thus obedience and submission to the will of their own prophets and *rishis*. It is really a strange coincidence and must be well considered by followers of all the religions and even by those who don't believe in a religion- how all the prophets living in remote corners of the world and far away from Arabia, thousands of years before, gave the glad news of the advent of a glorious prophet. And it was not, like the prophecies of Christ, just a piece of news, but it had arguments and clear evidence to support it. Let all the wise men and sages of the world ponder over this. A man ignorant of letters and worldly sciences, knowing nothing of other religions, makes a declaration which none ever before him made, and today the expounders of religion evince his truth and verify what he said centuries before. Today it is proved that prophets have been appearing one after another like the links of a chain. Again it is seen that various prophets appearing in different countries, addressing different nations and speaking in different dialects made a prophecy, thousands of years before, of the coming of a prophet who will be the promised one of all nations. The world knows that the said prophet wil

world knows that the said prophet with all his accompanying signs did appear. And lastly it must also be considered that he brought a message which is unique in establishing peace and fellow feelings among all sections

of humanity and is the only solution of the present world problems.

Some Characteristics of the Prophecies about the Holy Prophet

MIRACLES and prophecies like the missions of the prophets, have lasted only for a time, and have been confined only to the respective scriptures of a people. Thus the prophecies about Jesus Christ and Elijah are found only in the books of the Israelite prophets and in no other religious scripture. If per chance any reference about them is to be met with in the scriptures of other religions, they have no value, for, according to the Christian belief Divine revelation was granted only to the Israelite prophets. This is why we find, in the Gospels, prophecies about Christ made by the israelite prophets only and by none else. Of all the prophets, it was the Prophet Muhammad alone, about whom prophecies were made in all Divine books by all prophets.

Another characteristic of the prophecies made about the holy Prophet is that we find in them frequent mention of the Divine power, celestial triumphs and testimonies of science and learning; whereas in the case of other prophets mention is made only of petty facts relating to everyday life. In the case of Muhammad, however, it is recorded that even impossibilities will be made possible for him and on many occasions his advent is spoken of as the appearance of God Himself. Things that are impossible for man are more than possible for God, and as the holy Prophet was given Divine help at every step and God's Hand was working in his favor, his appearance is metaphorically called the appearance of the Lord.

Some Important Conventions about Prophecies

STUDENTS of every science and art have to bear in mind certain conventions and things agreed upon relating to the art which they want to study or acquire. An artist is at liberty to paint a miles long journey just on a scrap of paper, to describe on a smooth surface not only its length and breadth but also its height and depth. A

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sculptor can make a statue without color or movement. We are generally familiar with such conventions and so we do not object to them, otherwise our case would have been just like those Americans who objected why a photograph had only one side of the face. There are also some accidental conventions just as a sculptor in order to raise his statue, gives it a support. Similarly, there are certain conventions regarding prophecies. We count a few of them:-

1. Prophecy the term is used in theology in its strict sense it means the fore knowledge and fore-telling of future event though it may sometimes apply to past and present hidden things which can not be known by the natural light of reason. Its knowledge must be supernatural and infused by God. It is a Divine light by which God reveals things beyond the natural power of created intelligence. Prophecy is given primarily for the good of others. No doubt text is not always clear and explicit. The prophecies that are to be met with in the Bible, whether they be for Christ or for any other personality, are without any details. Some are full of ambiguity and require interpretation and comment. The result is that their meanings remain hidden from the people of ordinary intelligence, and the learned ones also cannot understand them except with some special context or after the actual appearance and the personal interpretation of the promised prophet for whom they are meant. And according to the Christian view, sometimes even the man for whom the prophecies are made, cannot understand their meaning. Thus John denied being Elijah, while Christ clearly stated that none but John was the promised Elijah. (21)

Both Ramchandra and Parsurama were incarnates of God as believed by Hindus yet not recognizing each other they quarrelled.

2. The name used in prophecies are generally not proper names but attributive names. This is because, in the eyes of God the value of a man is according to his qualities, personal merits and attributes and not on account of his personal name. God multiplies the means of transmitting

these revelations, at one time he makes use of words at another of figures, images, similitudes, and again of both words and symbols together. We find the proper name of Christ was Jesus, but there is not a single prophecy in the preceding scriptures in which mention of Jesus is made. No doubt there are prophecies making a mention of Messiah and this is because Messiah was the qualifying name of Jesus, the Christian prophet.

3. In the language of prophecies a day sometimes means a year (22) and some times one thousand years of our human calculation. "And Surely a day with thy Lord is as a thousand years of what you reckon". (23) Among the Hindus, as well, the year of Brahma and Pitrees are different in duration than that of the common people. (24)

4. A prophecy is interpreted just as a dream. In Vedic term it is *rahasya* or a secret. Words have their usual literal meanings, but they can also be used figuratively. As head had its literal meaning as a part of the body, but is applied to head of a school, or an army, the force of a stream of water, stalk of grain, hammer, club etc. A person may be said a keystone of an arch or a dome figuratively. (25)

5. Not only the names of individuals but the names of countries and places that are mentioned in prophecies are also attributive. For instance Jerusalem stands for Makkah and even for Islam itself. (26)

Similarly 'Ayodhya' (THE unconquerable) in the Veda stands for Makkah, where war is forbidden and not for the Indian 'Ayodhya' which had always been under the sway of some domination. The almond branch shown to Jeremiah is not shown for itself, it is intended solely to represent by its name 'Shaqed' (vigilant) The Divine watchfulness, which will not allow the word of God to be unfulfilled. (27)

It is wrong to say that Isaiah believed that at the end of time the hill Sion would physically surpass all the mountains on the earth. (28)

6. If in some revealed books we come across a double-faced prophecy about the same individual we shall have to take only one of the two aspects. As these books have been in the hands of non-Muslims, it is quite possible that they might have tampered with them

in order to make the prophecy ambiguous. Moreover it is against the truth of the book itself that it may give two contrary facts about one and the same individual.

7. Any part of a prophecy which is contrary to reason and real knowledge will not be worth considering.

8. Parts of prophecies which are full of myths will be accepted only so far as they are corroborated by real facts.

9. The prophecy of the second advent of a prophet would mean the appearance of some one else in the spirit and power of that Prophet. This is how Christ explains the second advent of Elias. (29) Similarly Krishna says, "We make ourselves appear through someone else as need be." (30)

10. In prophecies, the name, place and the years of the advent of the man about whom a prophecy is made is not clearly stated, because, belief in the prophets is more or less of the nature of the 'belief in the unseen.' Had the prophethood of every prophet been quite clear and manifest, there would have been no reward for accepting them, as there is no reward for believing in the Sun which every eye can clearly see. Secondly, deep thinking in religion and investigation of hidden secrets, sharpens a man's intellect, and this is exactly what God wants the rational beings to do. Thirdly, there have always been different metaphors, similes and figurative speeches in different languages, and they have been adding to the ambiguity of prophecies. Moreover, there being no record of geographical and historical conditions of various countries, it is difficult, in spite of research work, to find out the man about whom a prophecy was made.

Lastly, there is another point also which is greatly responsible for the ambiguity of prophecies-i.e., the hostility which the followers of a book bear towards other religions and tribes. A people who consider themselves the chosen ones and children of God will never tolerate, in spite of a clear prophecy in their book, to evince the truth of another prophet. Thus the Israelites refused to believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) because he was a non-Israelite. Rather they tried their

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Correction Of Misleading Statements Made By Pakistani Commentators Re: The Cape Town Judgement



By Dr. Zahid Aziz, DSC

Following the recent Supreme Court judgement in Cape Town, South Africa, which accepted the claim of the Lahore Ahmadis to be Muslims, press statements have been made by some Muslim religious leaders in Pakistan, and even by a law official there, condemning the court verdict in strong terms. Most of these statements contain a total misrepresentation of the actual facts, amounting to falsehood. Some of the dignitaries whose comments have appeared in the Pakistani press were to have been presented as expert witnesses against the Ahmadis in the court case, and they actually visited Cape Town at the previous stage of the hearings in 1984. Hence they are in a position to know the actual facts, and are therefore indulging in quite deliberate, public misrepresentation. Three of the persons who have issued this kind of comment are: Maulana Zafar Ahmad Ansari (ex-head of the Pakistan Constitution Commission), Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Ludhianvi, and Sayyid Riaz-ul-Hasan Gilani (deputy attorney-general of the Punjab). The full text of their statements, along with contributions from some others, was reported in the popular "Jang" in its London edition (2 December 1985, p. 1 and 4 December 1985, p. 8), as well as its Pakistani editions. The news reports added that these three public figures had visited Cape Town in 1984 to participate in the case against the Ahmadis, hence suggesting that they are commenting with accuracy and authority on the matter. Below we refer to the main untruths and criticism contained in their statements, and give the corrections in brief:

1. No Qadianis in the case

The statement which has been splashed in all the "Jang" news reports, and given as the headline, is: "Qadianis declared Muslim by Jewish Judge." This is pure emotive fiction, because the case did not involve any Qadiani, nor was the judge a Jew. The case was brought by

the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore (South Africa branch), a body based in Lahore, Pakistan, whose members are known as Ahmadis or Lahore Ahmadis. It is a well-known fact, certainly to the persons who have made the misleading statement quoted above, that the Lahore Ahmadis are a distinct and different group from those who are called "Qadianis" (based in Rabwah, Pakistan). In the 1974 Pakistan constitutional amendment declaring both groups as kafirs, which was drawn up by these persons and their co-thinkers, they had to recognize the Lahore Ahmadis as a separate group, and had to devise special wording to include the Lahore Ahmadiyya beliefs as being un-Islamic. But they always try their best to ignore, so far as possible, the separate existence and beliefs of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, and to confuse it in the public mind with the Qadianis. And the reason for doing this is simply that it is much easier for them to condemn the Ahmadiyya Movement and its Founder on the basis of the extreme Qadiani beliefs. The Lahore Ahmadis take the stand, and give strong evidence to show, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did not claim to be a prophet, but only a Mujaddid, and that he believed the Holy Prophet Muhammad to be the last and final prophet. As it is totally impossible to denounce the Ahmadiyya Movement as kafir on the basis of these beliefs, the opponents of the Movement would much prefer to publicize the Qadiani belief that Hazrat Mirza was a prophet as representing the real Ahmadiyya position.

This, in fact, was the most compelling reason why the defendants withdrew from the case. They would far rather face the Qadianis. They have no argument whatsoever to prove that the Lahore Ahmadis are non-Muslim and kafir, and given the Lahore Ahmadiyya exposition of the writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, they cannot show a single reason for calling him a kafir.

2. The Judge: A Jew?

One of the major, persistent, and most publicized criticisms is that the judge was a Jew. Besides being irrelevant and ridiculous, this objection is totally false, and really illustrates the mental level of our opponents. If it matters, the learned judge, Mr. Williamson, is a Christian of the Roman Catholic church. It was in his court, on Tuesday 5 November 1985, at the opening of the hearing, that the defendants announced their withdrawal from the case. So being perfectly aware of who the judge was, they are now proclaiming to the world the complete falsehood that he was a Jew! This was splashed as the headline to the "Jang" news items reporting these statements. And in the text of the two reports which appeared in the London edition of this newspaper, it is repeated about a dozen times, after giving the name of the judge correctly as Williamson, that he is a "Jew" and that it was a "Jewish court".

The only reason for spreading this falsehood is to link the Ahmadis with Israel, as can be seen from these news reports, and condemn them as enemies of Muslims. We state categorically that the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement (the only plaintiffs in this case) has no presence whatsoever in Israel, and has never supported the cause of that state. In the years preceding the founding of Israel, our Movement's journals constantly opposed its establishment.

It may be noted that the learned judge in the previous phase of this case, when the hearing was held a year earlier in 1984, was of the Jewish faith. However at that stage, neither the defendants (principally the Muslim Judicial Council or MJC of Cape Town), nor their Pakistani religious and legal expert witnesses who had flown into Cape Town, withdrew on account of the judge being a Jew. Instead, they vigorously argued before the judge the point that the court could not listen to religious evidence. But when that judge

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dismissed their argument, his religion suddenly became relevant! The deputy attorney-general of the Punjab, Mr. Gilani, says in his statement that the defendants withdrew because "justice could not be expected from this Jewish judge". But the judge appointed for the next phase of the case was a Christian, so why did they withdraw? It is obvious that, so long as the defendants could keep the case confined to legal points and technicalities, and prevent any religious evidence being heard, they fully participated in the case, regardless of whether the judge was a Jew or a Christian. But the moment the court agreed to listen to arguments from the Holy Qur'-an, Hadith, and the authorities in Islam, they withdrew due to fear of open humiliation of their arguments in court.

By way of interest, we point out that the particular learned judge in the previous phase of this case, who was a Jew as mentioned above, had in the past been engaged by the MJC as their advocate in a number of cases. Does this show that the MJC are agents and supporters of Israel?

3. Islamic issue in non-Muslim court.

The criticism raised most prominently by the Pakistani experts mentioned above, and also by the MJC in the court case itself, is that "a non-Muslim court or forum is not competent to give a judgement based on Islamic teachings." As regards the question of determining whether someone is a Muslim or not, we actually believe that NO court, legislature, religious institute or theologian in the world, non-Muslim or Muslim, has the authority to give the ruling that a group or individual calling itself Muslim is non-Muslim, or vice versa. It is actually our opponents who believe that certain bodies, as specified by them, are competent to exclude self-professed Muslims from Islam. We are therefore perfectly entitled to challenge these bodies to prove that they derive this authority from Islam. We went to court in Cape Town with the plea that we are Muslims, and that certain organizations who falsely claim to

have the authority to exclude self-professing Muslims from Islam are defaming us by calling us kafir and murtadd (disbeliever or apostate), and are denying us the use of certain facilities which must be open to all Muslims. We asked the court to issue interdicts to restrain these bodies from defaming us and denying us our rights. The following two points must also be noted in this connection:

i) In those non-Muslim countries where there is a significant Muslim population, such as India or South Africa, there have always been legal cases between Muslim groups, in which the court has had to give a ruling based on Islamic teachings. It has not been suggested in those cases that the court, being secular or non-Muslim, was not competent to discuss Islamic matters. In India under British rule, litigation between the Ahl Hadith sect and the Hanafis on the question of whether the former were entitled to enter mosques went up as far as the Privy Council in London, the highest judicature, on three occasions in the late nineteenth century. The court had to decide whether, according to Islamic teachings, the Hanafis could exclude the Ahl Hadith from mosques. There were court cases in which it had to be determined, in various contexts, how a person could be identified as a Muslim. Since independence in India, the courts of that secular country presided over by Hindu and other non-Muslim judges have had to determine numerous cases which involved a discussion of Islamic teachings. In Britain there was a civil case about five years ago between Sunnis and Shias from Woking, in which both sides presented evidence from Islamic history to the court. Lastly, in South Africa itself, a body none other than the MJC has gone to court against other Muslims in disputes having a religious bearing. In none of these situations did the plaintiffs or the defendants suggest that the court was not competent because it was secular or non-Muslim.

ii) If, as they are proclaiming, our opponents cannot accept the judgement of a secular, non-Muslim court, we refer them to the detailed judgement of a court presided over by Muslim judges, and set up by the

Muslim authorities of the independent state of Pakistan, the very homeland of our critics. This was the "Court of Enquiry into the Punjab Disturbances" set up by the Punjab provincial government in 1953 to enquire into the causes of the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation which occurred that year. Its findings are known as the "Munir Report", after Chief Justice Muhammad Munir who presided over the enquiry. In the long and meticulous proceedings of that enquiry, all the leading Ulama were called to be questioned on various religious issues, and in the context of their demands that Ahmadis should be declared non-Muslim by the state, they were asked to define a "Muslim". The Munir report quotes all their replies and reaches the conclusion

"Keeping in view the several definitions given by the Ulama, need we make any comment except that no two learned divines are agreed on this fundamental" (p. 218).

In his recent book, *From Jinnah to Zia*, Justice Munir says of this aspect of the enquiry: "The question 'who is a Muslim' was one of the fundamental questions before us for the simple reason that if, according to the Ulama, the Ahmadis were not Muslims, the Ulama were supposed to know who a Muslim is, ... The term 'Muslim' remained undoubtedly undefined by the Ulama who appeared before us" (p. 69 and p. 72).

Are our opponents prepared to accept the verdict of this Muslim court of enquiry of a Muslim country, viz., that the Ulama who want Ahmadis to be called non-Muslims cannot define who is a "Muslim"?

4. The South African System

Some of the above statements have raised the criticism that this judgement in the Ahmadis' favor has no value because it comes from South Africa which has an oppressive racialist system. The answer to this irrelevant criticism is that the courts in South Africa are independent of the government of that country and its policies, and non-whites use these courts, sometimes even to assert their rights against the government. The

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Some Facts About Marriage In Islam



By Dr. S.A. Khulusi, Phd

There is no other religion in the world that favors women so much as Islam. It is a fact that Islam is women's religion; but unfortunately most of the Muslims today are Muslims only in name. In actual fact they are practising a religion of their own, something peculiar to them.

In the question of marriage in particular, the greatest blunders are being made. This is partly due, no doubt, to the fact that the bulk of the Muslim women are ignorant. If they only study the privileges conferred on them by their religion and stand firmly by them they will be much happier than they are at present.

Islam, for instance, gives a woman the right to propose to a man. It is only human. A woman might fall in love with a man and she wishes to marry him. There is nothing abnormal about that. Men, unfortunately, tend to regard women as a species of animal totally different from them. They feel surprised to know that a woman has fallen desperately in love with a man and they even frown upon such a phenomenon, whereas if a man falls in love with a woman, that is regarded as quite natural. According to Islam, however, women are on an equal footing with men. Due consideration is taken of their emotions and feelings. According to the *Bukhari* (Egyptian ed., Vol. III, pp. 20-21), Khawla bint Hakim was one of those women who proposed to the Prophet. A reference to this is made in the Qur'-an in ch. 23:50-51: "O Prophet, surely We have made lawful to you your wives...and a believing woman, if she gave herself to the Prophet, if the Prophet desired to marry her...The similar incidents of women proposing to the Prophet are related in the *Bukhari*."

Another thing that is quite lawful in Islam is to see the woman before the engagement. In the chapter on looking at a woman before marriage in the *Bukhari* it is recorded that "a woman came to the Prophet and said, 'O Prophet of God, I have come to

present myself to you.' So he raised his eyes and looked carefully at her..."(1)

No father or relative is allowed to marry his daughter or any female relative against her own wish. If he does so, then the marriage is null. The Prophet makes it quite clear that neither a virgin nor a widow, nor a divorcee, is allowed to be married without her consent. On being asked how does a woman express her consent when a man's name is mentioned to her as a prospective husband, he said, "By maintaining silence." (the *Bukhari*).

Now, when Khansa bint Khitham al-Ansariyya was married by her father against her will, she went to the Prophet Muhammad and explained the case to him. He forthwith declared the marriage void." (the *Bukhari*)

Moreover, a father or a relative can ask someone to marry his daughter or relative. There is nothing wrong with it. It is quite in order. When Hafsa's husband died, her father, 'Omar Ibn al-Khattab, went to 'Uthman Ibn Affan and asked him whether he cared to marry his daughter. He replied that he would think it over. After a few days he told him that he was unable to marry owing to certain circumstances. Without feeling rebuffed 'Omar went to Abu Bakr and made the same proposal to him. The latter kept quiet, because the Prophet himself was thinking of asking for her hand. As the matter was, however, confidential, Abu Bakr kept quiet until after the marriage, when he explained to 'Omar why he had not given him a reply at the time (the *Bukhari*).

As for the dowry, which is such a great obstacle to marriage in many Muslim countries today, it seems to me of no consequence at all. We are told that a man offered a few chapters of the Qur'-an as a dowry. He did not even possess an iron ring to offer his bride. (cf. the *Bukhari*)

End: Some facts about marriage in Islam

Cape Town Case Letter

From Prepage

Guardian, the well-known London daily which is strongly opposed to South Africa's policies, recently commented: "South African judges have never shed their capacity for independent thought and have often delivered rulings against the government" (11 December 1985, editorial). This was said in connection with a case in South Africa in which the government had to withdraw its charges against some black political leaders because it could not prove those charges before the independent courts. And on the very day that the Cape Town court gave its judgement in the Ahmadis favor, another court in the same building, on a plea from a non-white trade unionist, issued an interdict against the police, restraining them from interrogating or assaulting him. In view of these well-known facts, it is totally false to suggest that a judgement given by a South African court becomes debased or devalued because of the racist system in operation there. This is just the sort of cheap, superficial propaganda which is typical of the anti-Ahmadiyya lobby.

It may be added that the Pakistan National Assembly in 1974, and the Shariat courts more recently, in which the issue was discussed as to whether Ahmadis are Muslims or not, were all "rigged" and "fixed" forums where no impartiality could be expected, and the outcome was obvious from the start. And it seems that that is the only type of body whose judgement our opponents are willing to accept.

Two Kinds Of Testimony

Continued

best to tamper with the prophecies about the advent of the holy Prophet and made them obscure.

Thus, just as Nature has kept most of its beauties hidden lest they may lose their charm and lustre, in like manner, these gems of prophecies are also kept hidden in the shells of pearl-oysters to keep them secure from the ravages of time just as shells are secure in the tumultuous waves of the sea.



Muslim Concepts of Law, Liberty and Morality

By Dr. S.A. Khulusi, Phd

The whole Muslim social system is based on the conception that God is the only supreme judge, Who cannot be approached by intercessors, be they prophets, saints or images, except by His permission. This idea of non-interference of other beings between God and His creature is one of the strongest points of Muslim morality. Nothing can save you except your good deeds. Neither Jesus nor a cross can save from your sins. It is only your atonement for your bad deeds by good which can provide the sure way to salvation. And as de Santillana so beautifully puts it:

“Alone and defenseless in the presence of the All-seeing Judge, what can man do in order to shelter himself from the power of God, but surrender himself to His mercy, ‘from Him to Him,’ according to the Muslim formula? This surrender of man to God, a surrender full of humility and hope, is true faith, and that is why Islam (i.e., the abandonment of oneself to God) is the only true religion, because it is the only disposition of a religious soul in the presence of God. Man realizes who God is and man’s lowly estate in His eyes.

“...Submission to this law is at the same time a social duty and a precept of faith; whosoever violates it, not only infringes the legal order, but commits a sin, because there is no right in which God has not a share.”(1)

Islam came as a means to soften the rigidity of Judaism and to introduce a break to the otherworldliness of Christianity, and to go back to natural law, which law, eleven hundred years later, France’s great thinker and philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1778 C.E.), made the main theme of his social preaching. One wonders if he had not obtained this through the influence of Islam, for he came into close contact with the Moors, as he mentions in his celebrated *Confessions*.

The new law proclaimed by Muhammad as Islam has made its main

characteristic the understanding of the frailties of man and the necessities of life. It does not treat man merely as a soul. It does not treat him merely as a body. But it treats him as both body and soul! And therein lies the greatness of Islam which makes it a religion that satisfies the requirements of this world and the next.

In the Qur’-an we read: “Upon each man only what he can fulfil” (2:286).

“Ease the way; do not make it rougher,” said the Prophet Muhammad. Such is the spirit of Islam and the society upon which it is built. There may be mysticism in it but not asceticism. “*L’Islam est un religion d’hommes*” (Islam is a religion of men), says the French philosopher Ernest Renan.

The modern concept, that the fundamental essence of law is liberty, is embodied in Islam. But this liberty has its limits; it ends where public interest begins. So if anybody crosses this boundary he shall have the *hadd*, an Arabic word used in the Qur’-an meaning “limit”. Because he who transgresses the “limit” makes himself liable to punishment, the word by transference has come to mean “punishment”.

Islamic law gives the greatest concessions to human freedom of action. One can find various shades of freedom even in things that are not exactly lawful; for apart from the domains of *Halal* (lawful) and *Haram* (unlawful), there are the “things admissible” and the “things reprehensible”, called *ja’iz* and *makruh* respectively in Islamic jurisprudence.

Eleven centuries prior to Rousseau’s proclamation in his *Social Contract*, “Man was born free but everywhere he is in chains,” Islam had declared that Adam was God’s vicegerent on earth. In fact, he was so free that he could eat from the forbidden tree. “Freedom is the inborn right of every man, slaves only being an exception to the rule: ‘Adam and Eve were free’, a proposition from

which jurists have drawn various inferences

- (a) the foundling whose status is undetermined is presumed to be free;
- (b) the freeman claimed as a slave is not bound *prima facie* to prove his freedom until the reverse has been legally shown against him;
- (c) in case of doubt, the presumption is for liberty.”(1)

According to Islamic law we belong to God, who is our only Master; we have no other master but He. Therefore we are only responsible to Him. It is for us to dispose of our person by suicide, or to dispose of our own liberty by selling ourselves to slavery.

All the world’s goods belong to all men. Everybody is entitled to everything until and unless such claim encroaches upon the valid claim of his fellow creatures.

There is nothing unlimited, because limitation is necessary to avoid a chaotic state. Every authority has a scope and limit- the authority of the governor over the governed; the parents over their children; the husband over the wife and the wife over her husband, etc.

The supreme head of an ideal Muslim State is the Caliph, but let it be understood that the Caliph has not, as is so often erroneously stated by Western writers, any priestly character, for Islam has no hierarchy nor apostolic succession(2), and the Caliph is not a divinely appointed person. He has come to his exalted position upon a contract made between him (i.e., the governor) and the people governed, exactly as it is explained in Rousseau’s *Social Contract*. It was on this understanding that the first four successors of the Prophet Muhammad held office. The first Muslim government was in every sense a democratic republic.

One can easily judge how broad and elastic is the Muslim conception of liberty from the fact that practically all

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its precepts have reasonable exceptions; now, for instance, we may stop fasting if we are ill or on a journey; we may suspend our ritual prayers and perform them at a later time in the day if there is an unavoidable cause for doing so; we can do without pilgrimage if we are not men of means.

The greatest Muslim theologian and philosopher who studied the scope of permissibility in Islam was al-Ghazzali (d. 1111 C.E.). He discussed the subject in the following way:

"The concessions made by us are not spontaneous, but necessity makes lawful what is forbidden. We know it is not allowed to feed on a dead animal; still, it would be worse to die of hunger."

Then he passes on to the question of the Caliphate, and says: "Which is to be preferred, anarchy and the stoppage of social life for lack of a properly constituted authority, or acknowledgement of the existing power, whatever it be? Of these two alternatives, the jurist cannot but choose the latter." (1)

Western writers are agreed that Europe borrowed the principles of "equality before the law" and "good faith" from Islam. And here is how Santillana exposes the two principles:

"1. Equality: 'The white man is not above the black, nor the black above the yellow; all men are equal before their Maker,' and the Prophet Muhammad. Equal before God, members of a great family in which there is neither noble nor villain, but only believers; Muslims are equal before the civil law; and this equality was proclaimed at a time when it was practically unknown throughout Christian society.

"2. This law, equal for all, rests essentially on *good faith*. Muslims must keep their pledges... 'Be honest towards those who have confidence in your honesty'; 'do not betray those who have betrayed you'... these traditions... are among the general rules of Muslim law. This conception of good faith is essentially an ethical one, and is elevated to an abstract and

universal notion. It strikes us as being more akin to our mind than the feudal and Germanic conception of good faith springing from personal fealty. The system thus allows a wide scope to the human will, and attaches importance to the spirit rather than to the letter. *Human will*, whatever its expression, is sufficient to create a legal bond....

The distinction between the *rights of God* and the *rights of man* has no more meaning than the distinction between public law and private law.

The Prophet Muhammad enjoins mutual help among Muslims, especially among neighbors. In one of his traditions he says: 'Be kind to your neighbor. Draw the veil over him. Avoid injury... If you see him doing evil, forgive him...'

Islamic law is so very reminiscent of the present-day English law and the English way of life that I sometimes wonder if it is not correct to call the English people Muslims in everything but name. Conciliation and compromise, which are so popularly known as English characteristics, seem to have been preached by Islam long before the English people were known in history. "Conciliation and compromise," says Santillana in connection with Islam, "are everywhere asserted to be most laudable. Reprisals are forbidden. 'No one may take use of his right so as to cause another an evident damage.' It is forbidden, for instance, to hire a beast of burden to a man known for his rough treatment of animals... Everywhere the limit of law and its measures is traced by morality." (2)

Further, Santillana makes the following acknowledgement of European borrowing from the Muslim moral and civil law:

"Among our positive acquisitions from Arab law, there are legal institutions such as limited partnership (*qirad*), and certain technicalities of commercial law. But even omitting these there is no doubt that the high ethical standard of certain parts of Arab law acted favorably on the development of our modern concepts; and herein lies its enduring merit." (1)

"Having as its scope social utility, Muslim Law is essentially progressive, in much the same way as

our own. Being a product of language and logic it is a science. It is not unchangeable and dependent on mere tradition. The great schools of Law agree on this point. 'The legal rule,' say the Hanafites, 'is not unchangeable; it is not the same as the rules of grammar and logic. It expresses what generally happens and changes with the circumstances which have produced it.'

"Law is also liable to change with regard to its application... 'Utility is the rule of the lawyer.' The Arabs have perceived very clearly the reason of this *flexibility* (italics are mine). It is again usage. Societies are living organisms and undergo ceaseless changes during their life....

"We can see that the Companions of the Prophet took different decisions on the ground of their utility, without being authorized by any precept." (1)

The second Caliph, 'Umar the Great, for instance, gave two rulings in two similar cases. When he was asked of this, he said: *Thaka zamanun hakamna bikki wa hatha zamanun nahkumu bikki* (That was a time to suit which we gave a ruling; this is another time to suit which we are giving another ruling).

"Such are the foundations of the great authority given by Muslim jurists to custom. It is a kind of unwritten rule which as the power of making law and even of modifying it." (2)

"Not only does the law admit custom, but it follows in its changes."

"it is a general rule that every law based on use or custom changes with the custom itself... To apply laws which are founded on ancient usage once that usage is changed, is to set oneself against general opinion, and to prove one's ignorance of religion. The truth is that whenever a law is based upon the custom of a particular time, that law must change with the conditions which called it into being have changed." (1)

(1) D. de Santillana, "Law and Society," in *The Legacy of Islam*, p. 287.

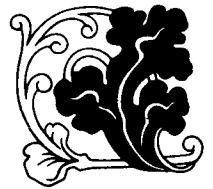
(1) Santillana, op. cit., pp. 292-3.

(2) Ibid., p. 298.

(1) Santillana, op. cit.



Grandeur Of Moorish Civilization In Spain



By Dr. S.A. Khulusi, Phd.

If Islam had no other achievement to its credit but the great civilization of Spain, it has every right to be proud, and indeed its adherents have every right to claim that it is a religion of truth, integrity and power. For you cannot build such a great monument with a false spiritual backing. Spain like the rest of Europe before the advent of Islam was in a miserable state. It reverted to its former chaotic condition and sank into a state of insignificance after the complete expulsion of the Muslims in 1603 C.E.

Though many edifices of the Moors in Spain were demolished simply because they were built by the Arabs or because they were war booty, the remaining few are enough to do justice to the greatness of Islam in Spain.

It will take us beyond the scope of this book if we try to mention all the Eastern and Western admirers of these relics. But suffice it to say that since the downfall of the kingdom of Granada in 1492 C.E. up to the present day there have been hordes of visitors to that forlorn land of Islam. A goodly number of them have recorded their sentiments in elegant verse and quaint prose. Many of them spent several years on end drawing the details of the mosque of Cordova and the palace in Granada.

Many Christians were genuinely sorry for the fall of that civilization under the barbarous hammerings of bigoted Catholics. Even at the present day a conscientious Christian writes the following vein:

"Oh! miserable bells, symbols of so much! Heralds of the darkness when Catholicism with its horde of bigoted priests fell like a pack of wolves upon the fair form of science, her temple desecrated, her votaries destroyed. O! pitiful hour, recalling the more ancient savagery of Judea exemplified in those words, 'Happy is he who dasheth thy little ones against the stones'.

"The simplicity and purity have fled; where a mosque arose now stands the cathedral, where Islam reigned

now Jesuits rule. The past remains in the *patio* alone; one imagines the mosque with the sunlight pouring through the open arches upon the white-robed devotees engaged in their prayers, with that close communion, that real absorption on the infinite, the Cause, God the One, Mighty, Merciful and Compassionate. How exquisite a vision! How different a scene from that which I have just beheld in the dim light of the cathedral where black-clothed worshippers knelt before the altars of saints and images, praying to others than God.

"Do I hear the midday call to prayer? No, for on looking up into the minaret I behold two Spanish army caps; it is but the soldier's voices I hear- and what my thoughts and imagination had evoked is swiftly and rudely shattered.

Oh! how are the mighty fallen, all their works brought to naught! Yet, though I know these soldiers are above me, that within the massive walls of the cathedral Christians are praying to their various gods, there is still a haunting charm, a whisper of souls long forgotten, and of another creed, who forever hover near. They permeate this silent courtyard with their shadowy forms and quiet faith, and still remain unseen owners of this *patio*.

"There are corners in the world which continue to hold through the ages certain characteristics of individuals or of races, however immaterial, that conquer time, and which are, as far as humanity can be, eternal. And in this '*Patio de los Naranjos*', under the shadow of the Giralda, I found the spirit of *Yaqub al-Mansur* and his co-religionists still enduring and predominating through the intervening centuries, still enveloping this place with that sense of surety and peace which pervades the sanctuaries of Islam."(1)

"Cordova in the tenth century was the most civilized city in Europe, the wonder and admiration of the world, a Vienna among Balkan states.

Travellers from the north heard with something like fear of the city which contained 70 libraries and 900 public baths; yet whenever the rulers of Leon, Navarre or Barcelona needed such things as a surgeon, an architect, a dressmaker or a singing master, it was to Cordova that they applied.(2)

"It was Cordova that made the famous 'Moorish Arch' known to the Christians and Muslim alike and made the most original contribution to architecture: the system of vaulting based on intersecting arches and visible intersecting ribs."(3)

I would like my readers to know something of the grandeur of a town built by Muslims of Spain. The name of this city was *Madinat al-Zahra*, or the "City of Splendor". It might be regarded as a poetic flight of imagination if I said that I do not think there was or there will be a city as beautiful as *al-Zahra*(4)(The Resplendent). The description left to us by historians show that it was far more beautiful than *al-Hamra* (Alhambra) of Granada itself- its like will never be seen again! This is no exaggeration at all. Has the modern world, in spite of its great scientific power and atomic energy, been able to build another Alhambra? People who know the modern skyscrapers and see the other wonders of the world look at the Alhambra with wonderment and admiration.

If this be Alhambra, what must *al-Zahra* have been like? It must have been a magic city that was conjured up by magic and vanished by magic- a city, in *The Arabian Nights*!

How did this mysterious city come into existence? The story is told in brief as follows:

'After the death of Prince 'Abdullah Ibn Muhammad, the *Uma y yad*, his illustrious grandson, 'Abd al-Rahman III (912-961 C.E.) was raised to the throne of Cordova. A quarter of a century after his rise to power, 'Abd al-Rahman thought of building the

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city of al-Zahra, to be named after his favorite queen. The site was chosen in one of the suburbs of Cordova which is under the mountain of *al-'Arus* (the Bride). The river Guadalquivir formed a link with Cordova. Later, al-Zahra expanded so much towards the capital that in the end the two cities seemed one.

A man leaving Cordova through the northern gate and following the embankment of the Guadalquivir through forest and luxuriant flower gardens, for an hour or so, will in the end find himself face to face with a huge gate exquisitely decorated; it is the door of the city of al-Zahra. On both sides of the magnificent door were ramparts encircling the city, consisting of three hundred military towers. Entering the city through this door, one finds oneself amidst beautiful parks and spacious squares until one reaches "Bab al-Aqba" (*The Door of Vaults*), which is the first gate of the palace, followed by "Bab al-Sath al-Mumarrad" is in front of all the gardens, overlooking al-Rawdha (*The Courtyard*). On the southern side are the Gilded Halls (*al-Abha al-Mudhahhabah*). On their right and left flanks are the *Fuslan* followed by al-Majlisan (*The Two Assembly Halls*), east and west. The Gilded Halls consisted of innumerable halls and their ramifications. They presented a variety of decorations distinguishing clearly one hall from another. Each of these halls was suitable for the imperial throne. At times it was placed in al-Bahw al-awsat (*The Middel Hall*) of al-Abha al-Qibliyya al-Mudhahhaba (*The Southern Gilded Halls*). When al-Hakam al-Mustansir was proclaimed Caliph in 796 C.E. it was transferred to al-Majlis al-sharqi (*The Eastern Assembly*), known as al-Mu'nis (*The Entertaining*). In the middle of it was the green decorated pool which was gilded and contained decorations, statuettes, and human images imported from Constantinople. Around it were installed twelve statues of red gold studded with valuable pearls made in Dar al-Sina'ah (*The House of Crafts*) of Cordova. These statues represented a lion next to a gazelle and a crocodile, all of

which were facing a serpent, an eagle and an elephant. On the other two sides were a dove, a hawk, a peacock, a hen a cock a kite and an eagle all being of gold studded with jewels, ejecting water from their mouths. In al-Zahra was the palace of the Caliphate. Its bricks were of gold and silver. In the middle was a pool full of quicksilver. On each side of it were eight gates of teak and ebony, studded with gold and jewels. The sun entered through the door and struck the quicksilver pool, the gold and silver walls, thus creating a very strong light that dazzled the eyes.

The palace of the Caliphate had a large mosque consisting of five wondrous halls, with an exquisite pulpit, around which was a marvellous Maqsura (*Niche*) for the Caliph.(1) The library was one of the largest in the world. In this same al-Zahra was the grand lake containing varieties of fish, a large zoo for wild animals, and a garden of all varieties of birds.

Apart from these places of entertainment, there were in al-Zahra many factories for making weapons, ornaments and statues.

Al-Nasir set his son al-Hakam in charge of the building, which lasted twenty-five years, in the Caliphate of al-Nasir, and fifteen years in the Caliphate of his son al-Hakam.

Al-Zahra remained the wonder of the world until the time of Hisham al-Mu'ayyad, the grandson of al-Nasir, when the people revolted against him, looting the palaces and demolishing the buildings. Its inhabitants, fearing the consequences, deserted the city. Later the Berbers and after them the Spaniards completed the destruction of this most beautiful city in the world. Thus within fifty years of its completion it was in ruins. Today, there remains nothing of it but some insignificant foundations of a bathroom and a pond with beautifully colored stones scattered here and there.

During its heyday, this summer palace chiefly struck the imagination of travellers. Even in the sober pages of the historian al-Maqqari (d. 1632 C.E.), writing long afterwards, this marvellous city seems more like a dream palace of *The Thousand and One Nights* than a group of buildings.(1)

One cannot think of andalusia(2)

without thinking of the exalted status of the Andalusian women and the fine system of education offered to them.

The educational system of andalusia provided ample opportunities for female education, and several ladies of high repute are said to have kept schools, not for tiny toddlers but for elder pupils who pursued higher branches of learning. It is interesting to note that some of the girl students were often given as difficult a test as were the boys, were examined orally on *extempore* versification, and appear to have given general satisfaction.

The brightest jewel of this distinguished company was Walladah, a princess in mind as well as in lineage, the daughter of al-Mustakfi, once the Caliph of Cordova, a lady of remarkable literary talents and social graces who will live eternally in the undying verses of her admirer, Ibn Zaidun (d. 1071 C.E.). In Maqqari's words: "...She was the resplendent sum of wit and poetry whose rays illuminated every nook and corner. Her assembly was the resort of scholars and humorists of Cordova and of other towns..." Then there was the noble pair of sisters, the daughters of Ziyad, the bookseller, both excellent poetesses, thoroughly versed in all the branches of science and learning. Their love of learning brought them into the company of scholars with whom they mixed on perfect terms of equality, with great composure and dignity, and nobody could accuse them of forgetting the rules of their sex.

Rumaikiyyah, the wife of the ill-fated 'Abbasid Prince al-Mu'tamid...first attracted the attention of her royal spouse by her prompt skill and originality in capping a verse. Her witticisms, graceful play upon words and poetry, adorn the pages of many a chronicle of Muslim Spain. Her daughter Thubaniyyah was also a poetess of a high order, and her lines to her parents in exile, asking for their consent to her marriage with a merchant, were still remembered with a melancholy interest in the days of al-Maqqari.

Indeed, the poetical talent was so widespread and came so naturally to the Arab that poetry was used as frequently as prose in everyday life,

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REVELATION IN ISLAM



By Maulana Muhammad 'Ali

What is revelation?

I have explained before that a prophet and a messenger is, in fact, a medium between God and man and the real object of the institution of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and messengership (*risalah*) is the purification or upliftment of humanity. I should like to discuss that even the gift of *risalah* and *nubuwwah* is granted to man in such a unique way that a clear difference could be marked between a prophet and a non-prophet. The real object of prophethood and messengership, as we have seen before, is to communicate some Divine guidance (*hidayah*) to men. As far as the conveying of this guidance by the prophet to his people is concerned, it is quite simple to understand, for everybody knows how a man conveys his ideas to his fellow beings. The whole discussion, then, centers around the point, how does a prophet himself receive guidance from God? A prophet is a human being and God the Most High is Unseen of the Unseen and Beyond of the Beyond, how could a man have access to His Creator and how could he get some instructions from Him? The way in which God speaks to men is called revelation (*wahy*) in the religious terminology of the world. The same word has also been adopted by the Qur'-an:

Say, I am only a mortal like you— it is revealed to me that your God is one God(1).

Thus the distinction made here between an ordinary mortal and the Prophet Muhammad is in the recipient of revelation. In other words, revelation is something which distinguishes the Prophet from other people and it was through this that the will of God was manifested to him as has been mentioned in the Qur'-an:

i.e., I follow only that which is revealed to me?

Different kinds of revelation

But, when we study the Qur'-an carefully, we discover that the word *wahy* has been used in the Qur'-an for communicating God's will to other objects as well. At one point, referring to the earth, it has been said:

As if thy Lord had revealed to her(2), which shows that an inanimate object like earth could also receive God's revelation. At another place, it has been stated:

And thy Lord revealed to the bee(4), and this revelation was: *make hives and walk in the way of your Lord,* and then about heaven, it is mentioned:

And (He) revealed in every heaven its affair(5), and about the angels, we find in the Qur'-an:

When thy Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you(6).

Thus these four kinds of revelation are for non-human beings, but from among human beings non-prophets as well as prophets have been mentioned as recipients of revelation (*wahy*). Two instances of revelation to non-prophets have been clearly mentioned in the Qur'-an. Firstly, revelation towards the mother of Moses:

And we revealed to Moses' mother, saying: Give him suck; then when thou fearest for him, cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve; surely We shall bring him back to thee and make him one of the messengers(7). At another place, it has been stated:

And when I revealed to the disciples, saying, Believe in Me and My messenger(8).

Here at both places is mentioned revelation towards human beings and in spite of receiving the revelation, the surest and clearest form of revelation indeed, they were not prophets,

neither Moses' mother nor the disciples of Jesus. If we leave aside the word revelation (*wahy*), then God's speaking with Dhu-l-Qarnain, Mary and Luqman has also been mentioned in the Qur'-an(9). Thus, if the revelation to earth is interpreted as the state in which the earth is and revelation to heaven as measurement (*taqdir*) of heaven, and to the bee as its instinct, even then, among men, there are two kinds of revelation, one which is granted to prophets and the other to non-prophets. Thus, it is not acceptable in any way that a man

acceptable in any way that a man becomes a prophet only by receiving revelation (*wahy*). It is quite possible that a person receives definite and clear *wahy* and is enjoined to act upon it, and he even follows such injunctions, but still he is not called a prophet.

The first distinction: the coming of the Angel Gabriel with prophetic revelation

Thus, it is essential to know whether the Qur'-an has made any distinction between the revelation of a prophet and a non-prophet. For this one should reflect over the verse in which the way of God's speaking to His servants is mentioned. There a limitation has also been imposed that God expresses His actual will or speaks to His servants in three ways:

And it is not vouchsafed to a mortal that God should speak to him, except by revelation, or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases(10).

The commentators and the theological leaders ('ulama') have given different explanations of these three kinds. Because we are particularly concerned with the third kind of revelation, it is unnecessary to prolong the discussion about the other two.

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The primary significance of the word *wahy* is, however, a hasty suggestion, therefore in *illa wahy-an* (except by revelation), the word *wahy* signifies infusing of an idea into the heart, which is technically called *minor revelation* (*wahy khafi*), for the speaking of God in *wahy khafi* is not done in a clear manner but by a hasty suggestion or by infusing something into the heart. As the Prophet has also said:

The Holy Spirit has inspired (this) into my heart(11). The second mode of God's speaking to man is said to be from behind a veil (*min wara'i hijab*), which in fact signifies dream (*ru'ya*), because dream stands in need of interpretation. This includes

The Holy Spirit has inspired (this) into my heart(11). The second mode of God's speaking to man is said to be from behind a veil (*min wara'i hijab*), which in fact signifies dream (*ru'ya*), because dream stands in need of interpretation. This includes vision (*kashf*) also, as it resembles dream, the difference being in clarity alone. In this is included that state (of trance) also in which voices are heard or uttered or in which a thing may appear in a personified form, as, for instance, some writing or a voice. In all these states, the angel, i.e., Gabriel, does not bring a revelation in a particular way. On the contrary, his mention has been made in the third kind where it has been declared: *Or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases.* This is that form in which God sends His special messenger Gabriel with His *kalam* so that he may recite it to His messenger. This is the *revelation* that is recited in words (*wahy matluww*) to the prophet, which Gabriel with the protection of angels brings down on the messengers. It is the highest and most developed form of revelation, which can remove the errors of all kinds of revelations because God makes special arrangements for its protection. Accordingly, al-Raghib writes in the explanation of this:

"The coming of Gabriel with a particular message proves God's

saying or *He sends a messenger and he reveals(12).*"

And this has also been written in its explanation:

"A kind of revelation is through the agency of Gabriel, who is made present and whose person is seen and whose message is heard, such as the communicating of the message of Gabriel to the Prophet in a particular form(13)."

The revelation of Mary was not prophetic revelation

A question will now be raised here that when Gabriel does not descend with revelation on a non-prophet, what is the meaning of the following versus of the Qur'-an about Mary: *Then We sent to her Our spirit(ruhana) and it appeared to her as a well-made man. She said: I flee from refuge from thee to the Beneficent, if thou are one guarding against evil. He said: I am only bearer of a message of thy Lord: That I will give thee a pure boy. She said: How can I have a son and no mortal has yet touched me, nor I have been unchaste? He said: So (it will be). Thy Lord says: It is easy to Me: and that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from Us. And it is a matter decreed(26).* Now generally by the words *ruhana* (Our spirit) is meant *al-Ruh al-Amin* (The faithful spirit), i.e., Gabriel. Therefore, the objection is raised that Mary was not a prophetess but still Gabriel descended on her and even spoke to her, which means that the descent of Gabriel with revelation did not remain confined to the prophets and that he could descend on a non-prophet, i.e., a follower as well, and communicate with her.

It should be understood here, first of all, what is the meaning of Our spirit (*ruhana*). I quote another verse of the Qur'-an, which sheds light on this. As there is a mention of the coming of Our spirit to Mary here, similarly, in the other verse the words used for Messiah have been *ruhan min-hu* (a spirit from Him): *The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only a messenger of God and His word which He communicated to mary and a spirit from Him(27).* The word *ruh* also signifies inspiration or Divine revelation, as is mentioned in the Qur'-an:

And thus did We reveal to thee an inspired Book(ruh) by Our command(28).

It is obvious that *ruh* here means revelation. Now, in the story of Mary and the Messiah, it is mentioned at one place that We sent Our spirit to Mary and, at another place, that the Messiah is a spirit from Him and there is only one way of reconciling these two statements that *ruh* should be taken to mean Divine revelation. This is correct that the Messiah was good news

correct that the Messiah was good news (*basharat*) or a word from God. Thus, in this case, the meaning of *arsalna ilaiha ruhana*— *We sent to her Our spirit(29)*— would be that God sent His revelation to Mary and that revelation appeared to Mary in a vision in the form of a person.

The coming of Gabriel without revelation, or his descent upon non-prophets

Even if it is admitted that Our spirit (*ruhana*) means Gabriel, still it does not make any difference. The peculiarity of prophetic revelation which I have pointed out does not mean that the descent of Gabriel is impossible without the transmission of prophetic revelation. Because this is generally acknowledged that the descent of Gabriel also occurs for the support of the believers. When in a vision a person can see God, then why should the seeing of Gabriel be an impossibility? If in a vision a man can talk with God, why cannot he do so with Gabriel: In the case of Mary, the appearance of Gabriel is just a vision or *mukashafah* in which an angel becomes personified and communicates with Mary. This vision is quite a different matter. It is nowhere written in the Qur'-an that Gabriel descended on Mary with the Divine revelation. Our discussion concerning prophetic revelation is only this, that when Gabriel descends with Divine revelation, this descent of his is only specified for the prophets. The revelation which comes down upon a non-prophet and a follower is not brought by the agency of Gabriel, but

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it belongs to one of the two kinds of revelations about which the reference to the Qur'-anic verse has already been made, i.e., *And it is not vouchsafed to a mortal that God should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind a veil*(30). The ordinary descent of Gabriel could even take place for the support of the believers, as has been mentioned in the Qur'-an that God Strengthened them with a spirit from Himself(31). In the *hadith*, it has been plainly stated that the Prophet had told Hassan Ibn Thabit: *Reply to the satire of the unbelievers and Gabriel is with you*(32). Even Gabriel's talking with the Prophet is established from the authentic reports, but that has not formed a part of the Qur'-an because in fact that descent was not with a revelation. The following report from *al-Bukhari* will illustrate this point:

Abu Hurairah reported that one day the Prophet(peace and blessings of God be upon him!) was sitting outside among the people, when a man came to him and said: What is faith? He(the Prophet) said: The faith is that you should believe in God and His angels and His meeting and His Messengers and that you should believe in life after death(33).

The Prophet was then asked what was Islam, what was *ihsan* (goodness) and when was the Hour to come? After hearing the replies of the Prophet, the man left. The Prophet said: *This was Gabriel who came to teach people their religion.*

In spite of the appearance of Gabriel and in spite of his conversation with the Prophet, it was not the coming of Gabriel with revelation. Therefore, it has not become a part of the Qur'-an. Similarly, it occurs in another part, which is unanimously accepted, that 'A'ishah asked the Prophet whether he had spent any day more troublesome than the day of the battle of Uhud. The Prophet said that the day when he wanted to talk to 'Abdialail(a leader from Taif) and he refused to listen to him, it was indeed a painful day for him. He returned and was extremely grieved. Then he stayed in Qarn Th 'alib :

I suddenly saw, it is thus reported from the Prophet, that there was a cloud which

had overshadowed me. So I looked and there was Gabriel in it. He called me and said: O Muhammad, God has heard the saying of your people and has seen whatever they have done to you and He has sent the angel of the mountains toward you so that you may command him in whatever way you like. Then, I was called by the angel of the mountains, he greeted me and said: O Muhammad, God has heard what your people have said and I am the angel of the mountains and if you like, command me so that I throw on them akhshabain(two rugged mountains). The Messenger(peace and blessings of God be upon him!) said: I hope that God will raise from the backs(progeny) of these people those who will serve God and will not associate anything with Him(34).

How generous was he, the Mercy to the nations of the World! That was the most painful experience of his life which he remembered and which he had at the hands of his people. Its wounds were still fresh and he was yet overpowered by its grief and had hardly time to breath after escaping from persecution of his people. But he never thought that his people should be punished. Even when there an external sign(for their destruction), he did not like them to be destroyed. And he believed that from their generations good people would be raised. What a great faith had he that the mission he brought would certainly succeed. It is clearly established by the *hadith* that Gabriel talked with him and even went to the extent of saying that God had told him so, and undoubtedly we accept it also as Gabriel was not with the proper Divine revelation. Therefore, we do not find any part of it in the Qur'-an. Similarly, there are many other examples like that in the traditions of the Prophet. In the report about his Ascension(*m 'iraj*), Gabriel's keeping with him company and talking to him is mentioned. Again, at the time of the battle of al-Ahزاب (the Allies) when the Prophet wanted to disarm himself, Gabriel appeared and talked with him. Furthermore, there is a *hadith* in *al-Bukhari* that a person asked him about the signs of the last hour, etc., and the Prophet said: *Gabriel has just informed me about these things*(35), though none of these things has been mentioned in the

Qur'-an. Therefore, it was also an inner revelation (*wahy khafi*).

Gabriel's company with the Prophet before his call

This is also an acknowledged fact that even before his advent, the angels remained in the company of the Prophet, and, in fact, they should be with every prophet. From the very beginning, a prophet is protected from every kind of evil and for the obtainment of sinlessness(*'ismat*) he does not stand in need of acquisition(*iktisab*), because from the time of his birth angels are his protectors— though his raising to the status of prophethood and his appointment for the call to the people takes place at a later stage. The angels of goodness or the Holy Spirit, i.e., the Gabrielic influences, must necessarily play their part for every prophet.

The great revolution wrought by the prophetic revelation

After this 'A'ishah narrates that then solitude became dear to him and he used to seclude himself in the cave of Hira, and therein he devoted himself to Divine worship for several nights before he came back to his family and took provisions for himself and he continued to behave in a similar way: *Until the Truth(i.e., Revelation brought by the Angel gabriel) came to him while he was in the cave of Hira. So the angel came to him and said "Read".*

To distinguish the prophetic revelation from the other, here it has been given the name *al-Haqq*(the Truth), and this is the revelation which is brought by Gabriel, as is obvious from the words "the Angel came." It has been unanimously accepted that this *wahy* is the first Qur'-anic revelation; this was the revelation which was first brought by Gabriel. With this is produced a great revolution in the life of the Prophet. No doubt, before this, he had dreams and inspirations, but the coming of this revelation to him brought on him a heavy responsibility, so much so that he gave expression to the consciousness of this great responsibility in the words: *laqqad*

Continued on Next Page

khashitu 'ala nafsi— I fear for myself. This fear was due to the great task which was assigned to him and for which any person alone would have felt worried that perhaps he could not bear all the burden and it might cost him his life or raise such an opposition as might result in the end of his life. In any case, he was neither told in this revelation that he was a prophet, nor that he should invite people, nor that a law (*shari'ah*) would be revealed to him, nor that he was raised for the whole world, nor that he was appointed for the reformation of the people. There was neither abundance of revelation nor warning or good news of great events concerning nations, but it was, however, such a clear and distinguishing lift, such a forceful voice, it carried such an effect with it and opened such doors of knowledge and made such disclosures that he understood all this only from these five short verses:

Read in the name of thy Lord who creates—

Creates man from a clot,

Read and thy Lord is most Generous,

Who taught by the pen,

Taught man what he knew not(21).

With these few verses everything was disclosed to him. He knew as well that he had been raised for the reformation of mankind and that he had been sent to the whole of the world. It was only because of this that he said *Khashitu 'ala nafsi, i.e., I fear for myself.* In other words, he felt this burden so heavy that he feared for his life. And this is not so surprising. The responsibility of prophethood is not a small thing. When Moses was granted this office, he requested God: *And give to me an aider from my family(22).* The mission of Moses' prophethood as compared with that of the Prophet Muhammad was limited. The Mosaic *shari'ah* (law) as compared with this *shari'ah* was inferior, for it was confined to timely and national needs, and still there were prophets who were to come for its completion, But, as for the Prophet Muhammad, the whole burden was laid on his person alone. Everything was disclosed to him, that he was the last brick of the palace of

prophethood, and had been raised for its completion and perfection. The black and the white were his nation; he was raised to the whole of mankind. To this effect, a tradition has been mentioned in *al-Bukhari*, which says: *I said: "O people, I am a Messenger of God to you all," but you said: "You tell a lie," but Abu Bakr said: "You are truthful."*(23) Obviously this hadith refers to Abu Bakr being the first believer because he did not doubt for a moment after listening to the Prophet's message. This incident, therefore, is of the early days of prophethood. Even at that time the Prophet knew that he was appointed for all men.

Continued In Next Issue



Grandeur of Moorish
Civilization in Spain.

cont.

and poetesses indulged in this literary pastime by composing private letters, formal epistles, often hurried notes, petitions and memorials in poetry.

The above-mentioned were the most dazzling stars, but there were a host of lesser luminaries who, though paling into comparative significance, would nevertheless have been an embellishment to any age or any clime. There was 'A'isha of Cordova, whose orations and poems were frequently read in the Royal Academy; al-Ghassaniyya, who wrote eulogies in praise of the Caliph, and Maria, who was honored with the title of "Arabian Corinna".

There were equally renowned figures among scholars and preceptors and there were women scholars at whose feet even great savants were proud to sit. A slave-girl of Abul Mutri, who was styled al-'Ardhiyya, or *The Metrist*, studied syntax and philology from her master and ultimately excelled him in scholarship. Abu Dawud Sulayman Ibn Najah writes that he studied prosody and literature under her. Hafsa bint al-Hajj

al-Rukuniyya(1), a blue-stocking of Granada and a pen-friend of the Vizier, Abu Bakr Ibn Yahya, was a famous preceptor of her age and employed in educating the ladies of the harem in the days of al-Mansur. Mariam bint Abu Ya'qub al-Ansari, of Seville, was a famous poetess and an outstanding literary figure of her age. She used to deliver lectures of literature to female students.

Several women were distinguished for their high attainments in science and philosophy, and at the top stands Labena, of Cordova, well-versed in poetry, philosophy and arithmetic, who was entrusted with the highly honorable post of private secretary to the Caliph al-Hakam.

Others were equally notable in Muslim jurisprudence and law. It is said that the wife of the judge of Losha had surpassed him in the knowledge of the intricacies of law. She sat in the courtroom and the judge often consulted her on the disputed points. When a friend railed him for seeking the advice of his wife, she sent him a crushing reply in verse.

Music was the favorite pastime of the Spanish Moors, and the ripples of the Guadalquivir danced as merrily to the tunes of the *canon* and the *rabab* as the banks of the Tigris was flooded every night with sweet harmony during the reign of the good Harun al-Rashid (809 C.E.). From there, the influence of Muslim music pervaded Europe, toning down the barbarous ferocity of the war dances of the Teutons and the crude music of the primitive races.

It would be unpardonable to ignore the marvellous development of the art of medicine and surgery of LAndalusia, nay, that of Western Europe- and the womanhood of Spain contributed distinguished names to this important branch of philanthropic learning. Umm al-Hasan, daughter of Qadhi Abu Ja'far Tanjali, had received regular medical education and was acquainted with the aims and objectives of the science and the causes and the predisposing conditions of the various maladies. The Christians never knew that (when they expelled the Arabs from Spain) they were sending out along with the last Moor all culture, learning and enlightenment.

Promised Messiah, cont.

heavenly will without wringing his hands or beating his breast.

This is the true perseverance which reveals the glorious face of God. It is this noble quality which the apostles, the righteous and the faithful still exhale. Referring to this, the Lord of the worlds directs the believers to pray to Him in the following words:

"Guide us on the right path"-1:6.

"The path of those (believers) upon whom Thou hast bestowed (Thy) favors-1:7.

"Our Lord, pour out on us patience and cause us to die in submission(to Thee)!"-7:126.

(The Holy Qur'-an)

It should be noted that in afflictions and trials, the Merciful causes a light to descend upon the hearts of His faithful servants, strengthened with which they meet all trials with calmness and dignity and, on account of the sweetness of their faith, kiss the chains they are bound with for walking in the right path. When the righteous servants are under hard trials and sufferings and see death face to face, they do not supplicate their Creator to remove their sufferings. They know that to pray to Him to remove the cup of their hard lot is opposing His will and not in accordance with total resignation to it. The true lover does not recede but takes a forward step when he sees ills and adversities and, looking upon his own life as a very insignificant thing, willingly submits himself to the will of heaven and is prepared to meet the worst. Of such people, the Lord says:

"And of men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is (indeed) Compassionate to the servants"(The Holy Qur'-an, 2:207).

IN short, this is the essence of the constancy which leads to the Divine Being.

The seventh means to attain the object is to keep company with the righteous and to imitate their perfect example. This underlies the need of the appearance of prophets.

Man is naturally inclined to imitate a model and feels the need of it. A

perfect model infuses life into a person and invigorates him to act upon the principles of righteousness, while he who does not imitate a perfect model gradually loses all eagerness to do good and ultimately falls into error. To this end, the Qur'-an says:

"(O believers), be with the truthful"(The Holy Qur'-an, 9:119)

The eighth means is true visions and revelations from God. As the path which leads to the Creator is a secret and mysterious one, and is full of difficulties and dangers, the spiritual wayfarer may depart from the right course or despair of attaining the goal. The Divine grace, therefore, continues to encourage and strengthen him in his spiritual journey, gives him consolation in moments of grief and animates him with a still more zealous desire to pursue his journey eagerly.

Such is the Divine law with the wayfarers of His path that He continues to cheer their hearts and His word and to reveal to them that He is with them! Thus strengthened, they undertake this journey with great vigor. The Holy Qur'-an says:

"For them (the believers) is good news in this world's life and in the Hereafter"(The Holy Qur'-an, 10:64)

It may be added that the Qur'-an has described numerous other ways which assist us in reaching the goal of life, but we cannot describe them here for want of space.



EDITORIAL

cont.

The people who deny entry in their mosques to muslims belonging to other sects, in fact, do so as a punishment for differences of opinion. This is not only against the clear teachings of the Qur'-an but also runs afoul of human nature. Islam is DEEN E FITRAT, that is, a religion suiting to the human nature. Along with the guidance and laws, Allah has granted human beings complete freedom of will and action. Without the right of freedom of thought which is the source of difference of opinion the said

freedoms are rendered meaningless. It is also a fact that the right to differ lies at the root of all knowledge inquiry, investigation, research and progress. Denial of this in turn renders a society into a stinking static pond wherein human beings are compelled to pass their lives more or less in a vegetable state. Islam does not stand for such a stinking society nor does it approve of a police state as most orthodox muslim clerics are out to impose in the Muslim world of today. Muslim world, in order to start its journey on the road to establishment of a dynamic society, the hope of the rest of humanity, must get rid of all influences alien to the teachings of the Qur'-an. Muslims have to choose between the teachings of the Qur'-an and the whims of the clerics.

Most mosques in the muslim world today are being used as a political forum. Since muslim clerics in most muslim countries are engaged in active politics, they are extensively using the mosques as a forum for the achievement of their political thinking and objectives. It will not be fair not to allow clerics to participate in politics but it will also be unfair to allow them to use Mosques as a political forum. It is not only contrary to the primary purpose of the Mosque but it is also unfair to the political rivals of the clerics because of non-availability of this forum to them. Furthermore, it provides a chance for these clerics to exploit the sentiments of simple-minded, uninformed and, in certain cases, the ignorant masses in the name of religion. It tends to subjugate religion to the political thinking and ambitions of the clerics. In the ultimate analysis, it harms both religion and mosque. If at a certain stage of muslim history mosques were used as political forums due to non-availability of other places or forums for this purpose, it does not necessarily follow that these should continue to be used as such, inspite of the availability of alternate forums. It is time muslims should call a halt to the use of the mosques as political forums. Sanctity of the mosque should be restored to turn it into masajid Allah once again, or else muslims should be prepared to face the consequence as stated in the verse of the Qur'-an quoted hereinabove. M. Akhtar

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MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST MAN OF HISTORY

“If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? . . . Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and 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?”

—Alphonse de Lamartine in *Histoire de la Turquie*

QUR'AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

“It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his standing miracle, he called it—and a miracle it is.”

—Bosworth Smith

“Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam. . . . And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world.”

—*New Researches* by H. Hirschfeld

“Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad’s contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history.”

—Dr. Steingass, *Hughes’ Dictionary of Islam*

THE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

“I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the Dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.”

—George Bernard Shaw