

QUARTERLY

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

The Message

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Chapter 96 *Al-'Alaq* — The Clot

by Dr. Basharat Ahmad

(Translated by Imam Kalamazad Mohammed, BA, Dip. Ed.)

(Continued from September issue.)

Surely to thy Lord is the return. In other words, how long will man continue with his negligence and strutting about in pride? He has to die one day and return to his Lord and give an account of his deeds. Wise is the man who before returning to his Lord by force of death, inclines to Him willingly and cheerfully in this very life.

Hast thou seen him who forbids a servant when he prays? The commentators say that the reference is to Abu Jahl who tried to prevent the Holy Prophet (*sas*) from performing *salah* (prayer). This is true, but one must remember that there will always be people who will perform *salah* (prayer) and you will always find, too, those who will try to prevent them. There is no doubt that originally the occasion for this revelation was a specific historical event. However, when this revelation came down, then every incident of this kind, or anything similar that may arise later

on, comes under its rubric. For example, a decision may be given in the High Court and there is no doubt that this decision pertains to the case in question, but this judgement then becomes a standing precedent and assumes the status of law.

Similarly, a verse is revealed in reference to a particular incident, but it then becomes a permanent law and that incident becomes a precedent for all times so that if any event of this kind, or any similar condition comes up later on, this verse can be applied.

There is no doubt that Allah, Most High, has put before us the examples of two classes of men. The first kind engages in *salah* (prayer) in order to build a relationship with Allah and is a manifestation of *ahsani taqwin* (the best make) and the best example of this is, indeed, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*).

The other kind feels that there is no need to form a connection with Allah and he

PASS ON THE MESSAGE

eventually becomes *asfala safilin* (the lowest of the low) and the truest example of this class of man was Abu Jahl.

An evil man is so impertinent that not only does he himself refrain from building a relationship with Allah, but he goes further and tries to prevent and actually persecutes a servant who is striving to form a connection with his Creator.

Thus it is eminently fitting that such a one who is arrogant and insolent, and opposes the lovers of truth and molests and tries to destroy them, should be the recipient of punishment in this very life.

Consider well, who is a greater satan than this person who tries to prevent a servant of Allah from worshipping Him, and persecutes one who is striving to form a relationship with his Lord. Thus it is mandatory that such a person be punished and that he be abased. But the love of Allah is such that before meting out punishment, He always gives advice and exhortation.

Seest thou if he is on the right way, or enjoins observance of duty? Addressing the inordinate one who prevents others from praying, Allah asks: “You are preventing someone from performing *salah* (prayer) and opposing him but have you considered whether he is on the right path and whether he is enjoining others to be righteous? In other words, it is your duty that before opposing a person you should observe whether or not he is following the right guidance himself, and if he is engaged in teaching others, observe whether this teaching is one of righteousness and piety, or one that encourages wickedness and intrigue. In short, consider well his actions and condition

and his advice to others. If that person is indeed a pious and righteous one who is on the right path, and if he teaches others also to be virtuous, then what is the purpose of standing in his way? Instead, one should always try to forbid evil and the teaching of evil. Which religion or which rule permits one to obstruct a person who is himself on the straight path and encourages others to goodness?”

Seest thou if he denies and turns away? Addressing the Holy Prophet (*sas*) and all seekers of truth, Allah informs them that in His sight there are two kinds of persons. Firstly, one who is obedient to Allah and engages in *salah* (prayer) with the sole purpose of attaining union with Him, and the supreme manifestation of this kind is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*). Secondly, one who is a specimen of the lowest of the low who prevents others from praying and from establishing a connection with Allah, the most conspicuous testimony of this kind being Abu Jahl (the Holy Prophet’s paternal uncle who was his most inveterate enemy).

Firstly, the one who obstructs others is addressed and spoken to thus: “Consider well the one whom you are preventing and see if he is rightly guided and if he exhorts others to virtue. Think where you will stand if this is so.”

Then the one who tries to form a relationship with Allah is addressed: “See, if you are on the path of truth and righteousness and you enjoin others to goodness, then why should you bother with the one who tries to prevent you, who belies the truth, who turns his face from righteousness and guidance and withdraws completely?” This, is the best principle for a righteous person to adopt

vis-à-vis his opposers.

Before opposing any person commissioned by Allah, it is the duty of every human being to ascertain whether or not the sent one is on the path of true guidance, that is, whether or not his principles and actions are founded on solid guidance. Secondly, one should observe whether his teachings and instructions are based on righteousness. And if they are, then no one has any right whatever to prevent and oppose him. On the other hand, since the commissioned one and his followers are on the path of guidance and righteousness, it is their duty to pay no heed whatever to anybody’s opposition.

Concerning the man who belies the truth, it is said: *Knows he not that Allah sees?* That is, his deeds are not hidden from Allah – Allah is observing his wickedness, his untruthfulness, his opposition to the truth and his rebellion.

Nay, if he desist not, We will seize him by the forelock. A lying, sinful forelock.

Then let him summon his council, that is, let him call to his assistance his friends to try to save him from Allah’s inevitable punishment of abasement and destruction.

We shall summon the braves of the army. The reference is to those who will administer punishment. This can mean the strong and stern angels of chastisement, and also the soldiers of Islam by whose hands Allah inflicts punishment on the opponents of truth. They are called the braves of Allah.

This spectacle was so clearly seen in the Battle of Badr and so vividly was this prophecy fulfilled that it can make a man bite his thumb in amazement. In

spite of understanding the warning, Abu Jahl did not desist, and his opposition to the truth reached the utmost limit, so much so that even though the Holy Prophet (*sas*) fled from Makkah, yet he persisted in his hatred and together with his friends, he marched on Madinah to destroy him. The battle took place on the field of Badr and such a chastisement of disgrace and destruction did Allah inflict on him, that all that Allah had foretold came to pass in the exact manner as was prophesied. He was seized by the forehead and dragged, and in utter abasement, he was thrown into a pit with the others who were killed in the battlefield. Those who did the dragging and throwing were those soldiers of Allah among whom could be counted the old and even fifteen-year-old children who were strangers to the art of warfare. In fact, they did not even possess proper weapons. Instead of swords, they had with them just short daggers. Furthermore, their number was small – a rag tag bunch of just three hundred and thirteen. However, Allah had honoured them with the stamp of valour so that they excelled in bravery, humiliated the enemies of truth, and made them taste the bitterness of destruction. To all those who ponder deeply there is in this event a lucid example, and for the believers it provides a source of increase in their faith. Therefore, having warned His enemies and foretold their end, Allah addresses the Holy Prophet (*sas*) and through him all the believers and instructs them thus: *Nay! Obey him not, but prostrate thyself, and draw nigh to Allah.*

Here the word *sajdah* (prostration) can mean prostration in the literal sense. It can also mean *salah* (formal prayer) and

also obedience to Allah, Most High. In other words, we should pay no attention to the one who tries to prevent us from *salah* (prayer) or from getting close to Allah. Rather, we are told to perform *salah* (prayer), to try to draw near to Allah and remain ever in obedience to Him. Then we will be among those who are close to Him with the result that we will be honoured in this life and the next. In ordinary life, look how man does everything to gain favour with temporary officers of Government. Imagine for a moment the honour and peace that a person can obtain through closeness to Allah when he remains obedient in His service.

Prayer is a demonstration of submission and a means of seeking help. Emphasis is placed on seeking help in the beginning of the chapter, and in the end prayer is recommended as the perfect way to seek assistance. It is for this reason that there is no prayer without *Suratul Fatihah* for this chapter is indeed in itself a prayer for help. In prayer, the posture of prostration is a manifestation of submission and the best manner of expressing willing obedience to Allah. Is there any better way to humility and meekness than to place one's head at the threshold of the Divine Master? For indeed, it is through humility and obedience that one can attain closeness to Allah. Therefore, we are told in the *Hadith* that at the moment of prostration, a servant is closer to Allah than at any other time, so we should make much petition for *sajdah* (prostration) is the time of closeness to and acceptance from Allah.

Our Holy Prophet (*sas*) possessed deep understanding and insight. Therefore, when he received the command to make prostration, he immediately

complied so that there should be no delay in expressing his obedience. This example we should all imitate.

One should bear in mind that every chapter of the Holy Quran deals with a particular theme and from the beginning to the end that chapter expounds that subject. Whatever other material comes within it all deal with that theme as they touch upon the essential and relevant aspects of it. Thus, all the verses of the Holy Quran are inter-connected and sequential and they possess a peculiar order and style. Firstly, the substantive theme is given and then the details come after. In other words, they will first mention the premise, then arguments will be given, after which examples and historical precedents will be furnished, and thus the theme is expanded. This process of elucidation which we find in several places of the Holy Quran is called *tasrif-e-ayat*. This inter-connection between the verses contain another beautiful aspect in that the beginning and the end of the chapter are so closely linked that it can amaze the mind of a reader.

Accordingly, in the beginning of this chapter, after seeking the help of Allah's attribute of *Rububiyyat* (Providence), the order to read the Quran is given and it is further pointed out that all man's honour and dignity hinge on his having a close relationship with his Lord. In the end of the chapter the perfect manner of seeking that help is given to us in the form of *salah* (prayer). In addition, we are told that if we seek assistance through *salah* (prayer) and if we read the Holy Quran and act according to its commands, we will attain nearness to Allah and be the recipients of honour in this life and the next. ☪

REVELATION AND PROPHETHOOD - II

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(Continued from September 2006 issue.)

Revelation a universal experience of humanity

Not only is revelation in its lower forms, in the form of inspiration or dreams or visions, the universal experience of humanity, but according to the Qur'an, even the highest form of revelation is not limited to one particular man or to one particular nation. Rather, it is emphatically stated that just as Allah has given His physical sustenance to each and every nation, even so has He endowed it with His spiritual sustenance for its moral and spiritual advancement. A repeated doctrine of the Qur'an is that a prophet was raised in every nation. I quote two instances: "And for every nation there is a messenger. So when their messenger comes, the matter is decided between them with justice, and they are not wronged" (10:47); and: "And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them" (35:24).

This teaching is in marked contrast to the attitude of people of other faiths which is quoted in the Qur'an in 5:18: "And the Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones" Indeed the words of the Gospels: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9), are taken by the Christians to apply to themselves, while the Jews consider themselves the favourites because they believe they were the only nation

chosen by God for the gift of Divine revelation to the exclusion of all other nations of the world.

A Muslim, on the other hand, is required to believe not only in the Qur'an but in the sacred scriptures of every nation because every nation had a prophet and every prophet had a book. In the very first section of Chapter 2 (*The Cow*), which outlines the fundamental principles of Islam, it is laid down in clear words: "And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee ..." (2:4).

And again at the end of Ch 2, in verse 285: "The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers; they all believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His messengers."

The Qur'an does not mention all the prophets by their names, for it says: "of them are those We have mentioned to thee and of them are those We have not mentioned to thee" (40:78). It is, in fact, stated in a *hadith* that there have been 124,000 prophets while the Qur'an mentions only about 25 names, among them several non-Biblical prophets like Hud and Salih in Arabia, Luqman in Ethiopia, a contemporary of Moses (called Khidzr) in Sudan, and Dhul Qarnain (Darius I, who was also a king) in Persia, all of which is quite in accordance with the concept of the

universality of prophethood. As the Qur'an plainly says that prophets have appeared in all nations but it has not named them all, a Muslim may accept the great luminaries who are accepted by other nations as having brought light to them as the prophets of those nations. The breadth of the Muslim faith may, indeed, be gauged by the fact that not only is it essential for a Muslim to believe in *all* the prophets, but the Qur'an stipulates on several occasions: "we make no distinction between any of His messengers" (2:136, 285).

Indeed, to believe in some prophets and to reject others is condemned in the Qur'an as unbelief (*kufur*): "Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers, and desire to make a distinction between Allah and His messengers and say: We believe in some and disbelieve in others, and desire to take a course in between — these are truly disbelievers" (4:150, 151).

Nor does the Qur'an claim to mention all the Books by their special names; it only mentions two, the *Tauraat* and the *Injeel*, and mention is made of a scripture (*zabur*) being given to David and scriptures (*suhuf*) being given to Abraham and Moses together. A belief in all the prophets of the world and in the books that they brought is thus an essential principle of Islam, thereby laying down the foundation of a brotherhood as vast as humanity itself and claiming a universality to which no other religion can aspire.

The Qur'an also tells us that each one of the prophets was given three things. The first was the *kitab*, the Book, or

the Divine revelation which the prophet was granted, the messages he received from on High, to guide people aright. The second is called *hukm*, which means authority to judge. This shows that every prophet received authority directly from Allah and it was by Divine authority that he judged his people. The third is *nubuwwat*, which means prophethood or the gift of prophecy. The book contains directions for guidance of the people and *nubuwwat* is the prophetic part that is meant to strengthen the faith. The prophet is not only the bearer of the Divine message but he also shows how that message is to be interpreted in practical life. It is the prophet's example that inspires a living faith in the hearts of his followers and brings about a real transformation in their lives.

It also needs to be understood that no man can rise to the dignity of prophethood by his own efforts; it is Allah Who raises someone to that dignity when He intends to reform men. Thus the unbelievers' question as to why revelation was not sent to them is met with the reply in 6:125: "Allah knows best where He places His message".

Door to revelation is not closed

It is moreover noteworthy that Islam, while making revelation the universal experience of mankind, also considers its doors as standing open for all time. It has been shown that of the three kinds of revelation, the first two are common to both prophets and those who are not prophets, while only one form of revelation, the highest, in which

the angel Gabriel is sent with a message in words, is peculiar to prophets. Since we believe that no prophet shall appear after Prophet Muhammad, the door to the highest form of revelation has been closed, but the granting of revelation to those who are not prophets, remains, and humanity will always have access to this great Divine blessing. This concept of the continuance of revelation is supported by the Qur'an and Tradition. The Qur'an states in 10: 63, 64: "Those who believe and guard against evil, for them is good news (*bushra*) in this world's life and in the hereafter."

According to a saying of the Prophet, the *bushra* granted in this world's life are good visions. Also, *kalaam* or speaking is an attribute of Allah according to the Qur'an and hence, although no prophet will come after the Prophet Muhammad, God still speaks to His righteous servants because it is one of His attributes and His attributes never cease to function.

Furthermore, the saints (*auliya*) not only receive knowledge of the unseen and revelations containing glad tidings and warnings (against wrongdoers), but also commands and prohibitions to the recipient (though not law). The Qur'an gives the following examples: "We sent revelation to the mother of Moses: Give him suck. Then when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear or worry. We shall bring him back to you, and make him one of the messengers" (28:7)

In the revelation to Moses' mother, the words "give him suck" and "cast" are commands, whilst "do not fear or

worry" are prohibitions. Was this revelation not certain and definite, just like revelation to prophets? By acting on her revelation and casting her baby in the river, did Moses' mother not show that she had as much belief in her revelation as the prophets did in theirs? Had this revelation not been from God, the prophecies in it could not have been fulfilled.

Similarly, to Mary, the mother of Jesus, came the revelation: "Shake towards yourself the branch of the palm-tree. Fresh, ripe dates will fall on you. Eat and drink and cool the eye" (19:25). "Shake," "eat," "drink" and "cool" are commands.

Likewise, the disciples of Jesus, who were not prophets, received the revelation: "When I revealed to the disciples: 'Believe in Me and My messenger.' They said: 'We believe. Bear witness that we submit'" (5:111).

Hence it is clear that the revelation of non-prophets is certain and definite, uncorrupted by the devil. This is so that the saints can act as a true model to people, as the prophets used to be models to their people. But as the chain of prophets was cut off with the Holy Prophet, in the Muslim nation his followers have been chosen to call to God. An acknowledged *hadith* recorded in *Bukhari* indicates that there are to be persons among Muslims to whom God will speak: "The Holy Prophet said: Among the Israelite people before you, there used to be men who were spoken to by God although they were not prophets. If there is such a one among my followers, it is Umar."

MUSLIM INTERESTS IN PALESTINE

This *hadith* means to convey that just as there used to be Divine communication with non-prophets in nations before the Muslims, so would it be with the Muslim nation. And all commentators agree that Umar is mentioned as a premier or outstanding example of a recipient of revelation.

It is indeed evident that the continuity of the phenomenon of revelation imparts a force and a strength to the laws revealed for if one is convinced that a particular rule of conduct has its source in the all-comprehending wisdom of God and not in the obscure perception of human intellect, the zeal for its observance becomes ever so much more intense.

Revelation is truly the very soul of religion. Although attempts have been made to raise a structure for religion without any foundation on revelation, all real religious movements in the world are rooted in the idea of revelation. Revelation is the voice of God. It is proof of an ever-Living God and a religion that is alive and vibrant. In conclusion, I leave you with verse 89 of Ch 16: “And on the day when We raise up in every people a witness against them from among themselves, and bring thee as a witness against these. And We have revealed the Book to thee explaining all things, and a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit” May Allah enable us to gain maximum benefit from the gift of revelation that we already possess and continue to bless us with His choicest blessings. *Ameen.* ☪

Views of Muslim and Christian scholars on the creation of the State of Israel in Palestine who foresaw the imminent dangers engulfing the whole of the Middle East in a bloody confrontation way back in the twenties.

(Lord Northcliffe (1855-1922), who was the founder of the British daily newspapers, the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*, and also later became proprietor of *The Times* and *The Observer*, gave an interview to the *Sunday Pictorial* of London. During his interview, in 1922, he expressed his grave concerns over the creation of the proposed state in these words:

“Look at Palestine,” exclaimed Lord Northcliffe. “Do you know that we are on the verge of starting a war in Palestine? There is a population of about 70,000 in Palestine, mostly Arab Muslims, with a comparatively small proportion of Christians and Jews. In former times they all got along very well together, and the Muslims protected the Holy places of Christ...The reason of the need of these military measures is the mistake of the British Government in declaring that Palestine is to be a national home for the Jews.” (For full text of the interview, please see the monthly *Islamic Review*, April, 1922 at <http://www.ahmadiyya.org/uk/light-sep06.pdf>.)

Below we are reproducing the complete text of speeches made by Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall, who later embraced Islam and translated the Holy Qur’an into English, viz. *The Glorious Qur’an*, and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the Founder of the Woking Muslim Mission, Woking, Surrey, England, delivered at a meeting held at Caxton Hall, London on 7 June 1917. – *Ed.*)

Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall’s address

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,— Palestine is a Holy Land for three religions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. All three religions visit it in pilgrimage. Yet in talking of the future destina-

tion of that country I notice that only two are generally mentioned here in England — Judaism and Christianity; and yet Muslims have been the rulers of that country — with the exception of the period when the Crusaders succeeded in occupying it — for some thirteen centuries; and the native population of the country to-day consists of Muslims, Jews, and Christians, each and all enjoying perfect liberty of conscience, having, and having always had, their own churches, monasteries, shrines, and synagogues. Would that have been the case if Palestine had been ruled for thirteen hundred years by Christians or by Jews? All history goes to prove that it would not.

When Palestine was conquered by the Muslims in the seventh century A.D., the population was all Christian; so far as I can learn from history, there were no Jews there. Jews were jealously excluded from the Holy Places. A large Christian population remained after the Muslim conquest, and remains until this day. But how comes it there are native Jews to-day in Palestine? The answer is that, at different periods, Jews fled for refuge to the Muslim Empire from the persecutions they endured in Christian Europe. Now, what is the cause of this greater religious tolerance of the Muslims as compared with Christians in the past? what is the cause of the survival in the Muslim Empire of many millions of native Christians, at a time when Christians thought it righteous to exterminate all whom they accounted infidels or even heretics? For the explanation we must go back rather a long way. Thirteen hundred years ago in Arabia there lived the most wonderful man the world has ever known — the Prophet Muhammad — who made laws so enlightened — and, as we should say, so modern — that the most advanced of

Europe's thinkers are only just beginning to come up with them, and that the Muslims who obeyed them through the centuries are only just beginning to realize their world-significance. Especially in regard to war and conquest. Till Muhammad's time, and among non-Muslim nations for centuries after his time, the mere fact of one race being conquered by another meant that the conquered people forfeited all human rights, and lay entirely at the mercy of the conqueror. Muhammad changed all that. He laid it down as a religious law on all believers that those of the peoples conquered by the Muslims who embraced Islam should be exactly equal with the conquerors in all respects. And what, you will naturally ask, of those who did not embrace Islam? If they agreed to pay an annual tribute for the cost of their defence — for of course they could not be expected to take part in religious warfare, which is the only warfare which the Prophet sanctioned — Jews and Christians, who, as followers, however far astray, of Muslim prophets, were regarded as akin to Muslims, aye, and idolators as well, as you will find in India, were allowed to live on unmolested in their occupations, and secured full liberty of conscience and complete self-government in all internal affairs of their communities. Even in the heat of war, non-combatants were to be unmolested. Fruit-bearing trees and cornfields were to be respected and no cattle killed except in case of urgent need. Muhammad regarded nations as having the same rights as individuals, and every Muslim so regards them at the present day.

To show you how these laws were put in practice by the Prophet's followers: When Omar ibn el Khattab, the second Khalifa or successor of the Prophet, came personally to receive the submission of the Holy City of Jerusalem, which had been taken by his army, the Christian patriarch of Jerusalem led him to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and he was in the church when the hour for Muslim prayer arrived. The patriarch

offered to have a mat spread for him in the church itself, that he might say his prayers there, but Omar refused. "Because," said he, "some ignorant believer in the time to come might take your church and turn it into a mosque because I, the Khalifa, had said my prayers there." He caused his carpet to be spread upon the steps outside the church at a good distance from it, where stands to-day the modest mosque of Omar — the real mosque of Omar, for the splendid shrine so-called by tourists is not a mosque at all, and is of later date.

From that day onward, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre — with many other ancient churches there in Palestine — has been in the possession of the Christians under Muslim rule, except in the time of the Crusading Kingdom, when Latin Christians lorded it in Palestine. The vicissitudes which it underwent were the vicissitudes of the whole country. The buildings were totally destroyed in 1010 by order of the mad Fatemite Caliph, El Hakim bi Amri'llah, whom the Druses to this day worship as incarnate god, but whom the Muslims all regard with horror and disgust. They were rebuilt, as separate chapels, on the various holy sites at present covered by one mass of building; in 1224, the Kharazmians, a fierce Tartar horde, overran Palestine and rifled the church in hope of finding treasure, as they had rifled Muslim shrines and private houses. Harun-er-Rashid, of *Arabian Nights* celebrity, sent to Charlemagne, among other valuable presents, the keys of the Church of the Sepulchre. And the Emperor took advantage of the Caliph's friendliness to found a house of rest for Christian pilgrims to the south-east of the church. It was during the troubles in the reign of the mad anti-Caliph El Hakim, already referred to, that the Christian pilgrimage was interrupted for a time and pilgrims persecuted. The noise of this in Europe was the cause of the Crusades. But by the time the first Crusade came out, order had been restored and the Christians had again free access to the Holy Places.

Now, I do not want to go into the history of the Crusades. To me it seems a ghastly, shameful history, though for the Christian fanatic it is no doubt sanctified. I will merely point out that the Crusaders were very far from showing the same tolerance which the Muslims had evinced for those who differed from them in religion. They had no mercy on the Muslim population, and they dispossessed and even massacred the Eastern Christians when they took Jerusalem. For them, every Jew was the murderer of Christ and every Muslim an infidel.

To pass to modern times. I happen to know Palestine and the adjacent countries fairly intimately, and I must say that I should regard it as a world-disaster if that country should be taken from the Muslim government. Must even that sacred ground be exploited by the profiteer? Must cinema palaces and cafés-chantants be established in Jerusalem and harlots walk the Via Dolorosa? The Muslims have preserved Jerusalem as a holy city, Palestine as a holy country, with all reverence. Would modern Christians, modern Jews, have done the like? No Christian Power could have kept order at the Holy Places so impartially and calmly as the Muslim Power has done; and for this reason: that among the Christian Churches at Jerusalem there is jealousy and even murderous hate, which has become inextricably mixed with European politics. If you want to have a new and terrible storm-centre for the world, hand over Palestine to any Christian Power. I would point out that all the territories hitherto "released," as it is called, from Muslim rule have become a trouble to the world. Jerusalem is more dangerous in this respect than all the Balkan States, with Greece and Macedonia, put together. The Turks have covered up the shame of Christendom. Do Christians want the Jews to see it in its nakedness? Do they want the Jews to become the guardians of those mad fanatics who wish to tear each other's eyes out round the tomb of Christ?

Internationalization here would mean sheer anarchy or else the despotism of a single Power. It is not the native Christians who are most to blame. Here, as elsewhere, the chief fault is with the Powers of Europe, supporting each her special brand of Christian in the East and stirring up fanaticism. The state of things will be made worse by conquest, rousing ambitions where the population is so mixed. Among the recent Jewish immigrants into Palestine — the Jews of the Zionist movement as distinct from the native Jews — there is an extreme and narrow fanaticism which their enlightened co-religionists in Europe hardly, I think, realize. They hate the Christian and they hate the Muslim; and their supremacy would mean oppression for the other elements of the population. Their avowed intention is to get possession of the Haram esh-Sherif — including the Dome of the Rock (the so-called Mosque of Omar) and the Mosque El Aksa, which is the second Holy Place of El Islam — because it was the site of their Temple. In the Quran it is written that the Jews will never be again an honoured nation till they acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as a prophet; which (translated into rationalistic language) means, till they forsake their narrow, racial religious standpoint and adopt the standpoint of humanity. Many of the enlightened Jews of Europe have done this. They do full justice both to Jesus and Muhammad. But not so the Zionist Jewish colonists in Palestine. If the Jews wish to be disgraced in the sight of the world, let them have an independent Jewish State in Palestine at this stage of their development.

The Jews deny both Jesus and Muhammad. The Christians of Palestine deny Muhammad and abhor the Jews. The Muslims, on the other hand, acknowledge Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad as alike true Prophets of the Word of God. They do not hate the Jew or Christian as such, and they have always tolerated those religions in their country. As for the native Jews, as I have

called them — those who of old found refuge in the Muslim Empire from the persecutions of the Western Christians — they are to-day pro-Muslim almost to a man. Indeed, the Zionist Jews might have found a welcome in the Muslim Empire, they might have realized their Zion scheme in all essentials, if the wire-pullers of the movement had allowed them to become Ottoman subjects. Naturally, the Government objected to the importation of hundreds of thousands of Russian, Austrian, or German Jews into a province, as an excuse for diplomatic interference, and with the avowed object of detaching that province ultimately from the Muslim Empire. To the Jews, as pawns of a cruel diplomacy, the Muslims have objected, reasonably; as Jews, never. And the same is true of Christians in the Muslim Empire.

To return to the Christians. When the Turks took the Church of St. Sophia at Constantinople and converted it into a mosque, the Sultan sent a large part of the treasure of that church — if not all of it — to the monks of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, where I was allowed to see it in May 1909. In addition to the jewels and vestments which the Sepulchre already possessed, it made a treasure valued at considerably more than three million pounds sterling. The Armenian Cathedral at Jerusalem has treasure, I am told, of even greater value. In the year 1900 or 1901, a sub-prior of the Holy Sepulchre stole some forty thousand pounds' worth of this treasure and tried to escape to Europe with it. He was caught at Jaffa by the Turkish customs men, taken back to Jerusalem, and, by the Governor's orders, handed over to his fellow-monks for punishment, although he begged to be dealt with by the Turkish law. The Muslim Government, by the constitution of the realm, he was informed, had no jurisdiction over him.

In the autumn of 1908 and spring of 1909 there were very serious riots in Jerusalem. The congregation of the Orthodox Eastern Church rioted against their own

monks of the Sepulchre, and for a curious reason. The Turks and Muslims generally have a great respect for religious foundations. This was well known; and at various times, when the country was in a disordered state and property was insecure, Christians of the Orthodox Communion made over their belongings to the Church of the Sepulchre, on the understanding that the monks should pay the revenue from it to them and their descendants in perpetuity, only deducting a small sum annually for their pains. The congregation of the present day, most of them, can prove that they are the descendants of those men, yet all that property is now the convent's; no money has been paid to the real owners for centuries. Yet — and mark this very curious point — the descendants of those Christians who, more knowing, had in ancient days made over their property to the Mosque El Aksa, as the Muslims did, are still receiving income from such property.

The men who rioted against the monks were not claiming their ancestral property. They knew it was too late to do that. They only asked the monks to do something for the congregation in the way of education and relief out of their enormous wealth, in great part stolen from the congregation. And the monks, from their great solid fortress, poured vitriol upon the upturned faces of the crowd. The congregation appealed to the Muslim Government, as native Christians always do when they are in real distress, and Shamli Nazim Pasha was appointed arbitrator. He obtained the release of the Patriarch, who, for siding with the congregation, was imprisoned by the monks, and patched up peace for a while. But the troubles broke out afresh; and the monks were supported in their greed by the Russian and Greek Governments. The convent was stormed by the congregation, and then the Turks were able to see to it that the congregation got some part of their requirement. The Muslim Empire could have solved all her internal problems happily if Europe had

abstained from hostile interference.

People say the Muslim Empire of late years has been ill-governed. But I think no country in the world has made more progress in the last quarter of a century, and of old it was much better governed and more civilized than Western Europe. The Turkish system seems to Englishmen chaotic; it is, however, well adapted to a region which is inhabited by a great variety of tribes and sects, most of them warlike. Roughly stated, it consists in allowing full self-government to all tribes and communities so long as they behave themselves. Government supervision is directed on the points of contact, and on guarding the settled population of the towns and villages from depredation. For the last fifty years, moreover, there has been a steady growth of order in this system. A friend of mine who is a native of Jerusalem, a man of sixty, tells me that when he was a little boy his parents had a house upon the walls. After the city gates were shut at night, he and a neighbour's boy, for fun, used to let themselves down over the walls in their night-shirts to see how far they could run before they met a robber. He assures me that they seldom had to run more than five hundred yards. Well, such a state of things seems about as remote to the modern dweller in Palestine as do the tales of highwaymen to modern dwellers upon Hounslow Heath. And the change has been made naturally, by the people themselves, without the bitterness and cruelty which always come of foreign interference.

Christian missionaries are in general enemies of El Islam — the greater enemies the less they know about it — yet they, more perhaps than any other sort of people, have been generously treated by the Muslim Government. Three centuries ago the only missionaries in Palestine were the Franciscan friars. There was a terrible epidemic of plague, and the Franciscans distinguished themselves by their charity and self-devotion in the service of the sufferers of all religions.

The Muslim Government, in gratitude, decreed that they should have everything they wanted out from Europe duty-free for ever. The edict was so worded — “Frankish missionaries” — as to include all missionaries from the West of Europe; and English Protestant missionaries in Palestine, up to the present war, enjoyed a privilege which they had never earned, and which they accepted arrogantly as their natural right. That is what is called a capitulation.

Now Jerusalem is, as I have said already, the second Holy Place of El Islam, and if the pledges of Mr. Asquith still mean anything, we have his promise as Prime Minister of England that no non-Muslim Power shall interfere with it. According to the Muslim theory, there are in the world two places which from a remote antiquity have been dedicated to the worship of the One True God. One is the Beytu'llah at Mecca; the other the Masjidu'l-haram at Jerusalem. At the time of the coming of Muhammad, the House of God at Mecca had degenerated to a house of idols; the House of God at Jerusalem was a heap of ruins. Muhammad himself purified the House at Mecca of idolatry, and a few years after his death the Muslims, when they took Jerusalem, restored the House at Jerusalem. Besides the Haram esh-Sherif, there is another very famous Muslim sanctuary at Medinat-el-Khalil (Hebron), built over the Cave of Machpelah, where Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, and other prophets of his house lie buried. The Muslim shrines are all about the country. It is indeed a Holy Land for El Islam. It was a country ever present in the Prophet's thoughts as the country where so many of his predecessors, the sacred messengers of God, had lived and died, had preached and suffered; and particularly as the country of Jesus the son of Mary — Ruhu'llah (the Spirit of God), as Muslims call him — for whom and for his mother the Prophet always had especial love and admiration. The Prophet was carried by night in a vision from the House of God at Mecca

to the House of God at Jerusalem, and thence up through the Seven Heavens to the very Source of Light; and pious Muslims, remembering that grand poetic vision of celestial majesty, think of Jerusalem as the foot of a mystic stairway leading up to the Divine Abode. The early Muslims, in the first days, turned their faces towards Jerusalem in prayer. That Holy Land is dearer to the hearts of the wild, uneducated Muslims of Arabia and North Africa than it is to any Christian here in England, than it is to any Muslim in this room, for education always weakens such attachments. A certain section of the Arabs of Arabia are at present fighting, we are told, in the interests of the Allies against the Muslim Empire. No doubt they have their grievances. But they are Muslims, and fanatic Muslims; and, if Palestine were to be taken from the Muslim Empire, I fancy we should see a striking change in their demeanour.

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din

When I came here I had no idea that I would be called upon to say anything on the subject so ably dealt with by the learned speaker of the day, but I must bow to the chair. I will emphasize one thing only. The other day we were assured by the Royal message, delivered through the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Viceroy of India, that the inviolability of the Muslim shrines will be preserved. We were also assured through that Royal message that this Royal determination had received countenance from other Allies — France and Russia. Now, we know that Jerusalem and the Holy Places therein are sacred shrines to Muslims, so I cannot understand how the idea of Zionism can go with the promised inviolability of our sacred places. Mr. Pickthall has very rightly said that Jerusalem in its holiness comes next to Mecca. The name Bait-ul-Haram, which means the Sacred House, has been given only to two shrines, one at Mecca, and the other at Jerusalem. A Muslim, when

making his pilgrimage to Mecca, is also expected to make the same to Jerusalem. The phrase “Haji-ul-Haramain Sharifain” shows that one has made pilgrimage to two houses, viz. Mecca and Jerusalem. In Muslim parlance, “Bait-ul-Muqaddas” (the Sacred House) is the name given to Jerusalem, so much so that while Jerusalem is quite a strange word to three-quarters of the Muslims in the world, Bait-ul-Muqaddas is a household word in Muslim lands. All this shows that Jerusalem is included in our Holy Places.

Three great nations have their religious interests in Palestine — Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Is it not our first duty, then, to find out which of these three is best suited to guard the interests of the others? History and respective beliefs of the parties concerned can decide this question. Jews do not believe in Jesus, and can by religion have no veneration for places sacred to Christianity. A Christian has no faith in Islam, and cannot be expected to pay the same respect to Muslim Holy Places as a Muslim would do. The case of a Muslim is quite different. Every holy name of importance in Jerusalem is holy to him. Every prophet that was raised in Jerusalem and in its vicinity is his own prophet. There are various verses in the Quran which support my statement, but I will read here only a part of section 10 of chap. vi.: “(84) And this was our argument, which we gave to Abraham against his people... (85) And we gave to him Isaac, and Jacob, each did we guide, and Noah did we guide before, and of his descendants David, and Solomon, and Job, and Joseph, and Moses, and Aaron; ... (86) and Zacharias, and John, and Jesus, and Elias; every one was of the good; (87) and Ishmail, and Elishah, and Jonas, and Lot; ... (88) and from among their fathers, and their descendants, and their brethren, and we chose them and guided them into the right path ... (91) These are they whom God guided, therefore follow their guidance.”

Eighteen prophets are named here, and do they not include every sacred name which has some connection with Palestine? A Muslim is told in the last verse to follow the guidance of all the prophets and respect them as his own, and he has to make no distinction between a prophet and a prophet under the injunction of the Quran (chap. ii. 120).


Think over the names I have stated in the quoted verses. Can you suggest to me any other name whose holy memories have some connection with Palestine and which the Quranic list does not include? A Muslim has to respect them all, and to regard them as his own prophets. Can a Jew entertain the same ideas of veneration for those places which belong to Christians and Muslims, and can a Christian share with the Muslim the respect which the latter cherishes for places hallowed by his traditions and religion? Read the whole of your sacred Scriptures, and point out to me a single verse or a sentence in the whole writing which inculcates such broad-minded respect for the prophets and spiritual teachers of other religions. I would quote another verse from the Quran which enjoins upon a Muslim to accept, not only the prophets of the House of Jacob as his own teachers, but also to accept and believe in the message of every great spiritual leader in any corner of the world who stood in the name of God to give Divine messages to his people, without having regard to the particular denomination or creed he belonged to. True Muslims, according to ii. 4 of the Quran, are those “who believe in that which has been revealed to you (Muhammad) and that which was revealed before you.” This verse lays down the broad basis of faith in all the prophets of the world, and the recognition of truth in all religions is a distinctive characteristic of a Muslim’s faith. Every prophet of the world is his prophet, who can command from him the same homage which he has to pay to his own prophet. I would therefore appeal to your common sense, ladies and gentlemen, and ask you which of the three

nations concerned is best qualified to have the guardianship of their religious interests in Palestine. In fact, Christian and Jewish religious interests are those of a Muslim, but can those interests which are peculiar to a Muslim be styled as Christian and Jewish interests? Muslim, therefore, is the best guardian of Christian and Jewish holy places. I would go further, and say that the interests of the holy places of every religion in the world are only safe in a Muslim hand. Has he not been enjoined in the Quran even to shed his blood in order to protect the holy places of other religions, in these words?— “Those who have been driven forth from their homes, wrongfully, only because they say ‘Our Lord is the God.’ And if God had not repelled some men by others, cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, wherein the name of God is ever commemorated, would surely have been destroyed,” etc. (xxii. 41). A church, a cloister, a synagogue, an oratory, and a mosque have equal right on a Muslim for their protection, and mark the liberality of the Quran in mentioning the mosque last of all. Can any one show in any religious book a similar injunction on its votaries to guard the places of worship of other religions? And these are not mere theories; they have been actualized by us, and history bears testimony to what I say here. Is not Islam the proverbial enemy of idolatry, and notorious killer of all sorts of polytheistic tendencies?— yet millions of temples, pagodas, and shrines consecrated to numberless gods, goddesses, and demi-gods, teeming with valuable golden and marble images and idols, have survived the most successful rule of Islam. They still possess the artistic beauty and sublimity of the ancient workmanship, and excite the wonder of moderns. Does not this fact speak highly of that largeness of soul which the text I have quoted infused in the notorious breakers of idols? But where are the remains of our art and culture and our places of worship in lands which were taken from us by Christians? Who is responsible for the absolute de-

struction and total disappearance of those colossal landmarks of science, religion, and art which existed in Cordova, Toledo, and Grenada? Where are the sacred mosques of Sicily and of Malta? I myself have been to Jerusalem, and what I saw there led me to think that Muslim broad-mindedness in its actual shape, which found its exhibition in every corner of Jerusalem, could not be too much exaggerated. Every place of note in the Old Testament has been preserved and protected with the same care which a Muslim holy place would demand from us. I leave it to you, friends, to find out for yourselves which of these nations has got best claims to the custody and care of these places. We want a Muslim mind; we are not concerned with nationalities. Create a Muslim heart in you, and then your ideas will become liberal and generous. May I tell you what a Muslim has to believe? The Quran tells me to say to you: "Say (O Muhammad), we (Muslims) believe in God and that which has been sent down to thee, and that which has been sent down to Abraham, to Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses, and Jesus, and that which was given to all the prophets from their Lord; no difference do we make in any of them, and to God we are resigned" (ii. 120).

This is the Muslim faith, a faith which every liberal-minded person should believe, and I hope you all do so.

There is another aspect of the question. What is Zionism after all, especially in the religious sense of the word? Are they going to restore the holy shrine of Solomon to its original form? If the Jews have been waiting for Zionism, and have suffered so many persecutions for the last two thousand years, would Zionism count much if it meant Jewish settlement in Palestine without restoration of the holy shrine? Those who have visited Jerusalem can easily understand that Zionism in this sense would entail all those disasters which have been alluded

to by Mr. Pickthall. The great Temple of Solomon at present is below the surface of the ground, with a large and splendid mosque over it, which was built by Abdul Malik. Does not restoration of the Temple of Solomon mean demolishing the mosque and its appurtenances? 



'Ajab nureest dar jaan-i Muhammad

*'Ajab nureest dar jaan-i Muhammad.
'Ajab la 'leest dar kaan-i Muhammad.*

*Zi zulmat haa dilay aan-gah shawed saaf,
Ke garded az nmhibbaan-i Muhammad.*

*Na daa nem heech nafsay dar du 'aa lam,
Ke daared shaukat-o shaan-i Muhammad.*

*Agar khwahi ke Haq guyet sanaa yet,
Bishau az dil sa naa khwaan-i Muhammad.*

*Agar khwaaaa hi daleelay aashiqash baash,
Muhammad hest burhaan-i Muhammad*

*Saray daa ram fid aa- 'ee khaak-i Ahmad,
Dilem har waqt, qurbaan-i Muhammad.*

*Tu jaan-i maa munawwar kardee az 'ishq,
Fi daayet jaa nem ai jaan-i Muhammad.*

There is extraordinary light in the person of Muhammad!
There is such a precious ruby in the mine of Muhammad!

The heart is cleansed of all impurities
When it becomes one of the friends of Muhammad!

I do not know anyone in the two worlds who possesses
The splendour and dignity of Muhammad!

If you wish that God should praise you, then,
Glorify Muhammad from the core of your heart.

If you need proof of his truthfulness, become his lover;
Because Muhammad himself is the proof of Muhammad.

My head lies in the dust of the feet of Ahmad
My heart is every moment an offering in the way of Muhammad!

You have illuminated my life with love!
May my soul be a sacrifice to you, O soul of Muhammad! **Z**

PROOFS FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

A Summary of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Arguments

Edited and translated by Imam Kalamazad Mohammed, B.A. Dip. Ed.

1. Allah, Most High, says in the Holy Qur'an: "*He indeed is successful who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his Lord, then prays. But, you prefer the life of this world, while the Hereafter is better and more lasting. Surely this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses*" (87:14-19).

In these verses, Allah, Most High, presents these arguments to the opponents of the Holy Qur'an that those who subdue their egoistic desires and purify themselves and who, in addition, are sincerely obedient to Him, are the ones who always emerge triumphant in the end. Proof of the truth of this teaching comes from the fact that all religious scriptures unanimously share these principles. As a result, the adherents of the major religions at the time of the Holy Prophet (*sas*), that is, the Christians, Jews and Makkan unbelievers, are confronted by way of argument with the example of Prophets Abraham (*as*) and Moses (*as*) in whom they all confessed belief.

It is pointed out to them that both these prophets taught those very principles. Thus, the Holy Qur'an presents an extremely convincing testimony of the existence of the Supreme Being by demonstrating that all religions share this belief and every nation in the world jointly accepts this basic concept. Consequently, the more one meditates on this principle, the more prominently the clarity and truth of it come to the fore.

It is a well-known fact that every religion is unanimous on the point that there is a Supreme Being Who created the entire universe. On account of the diversity of nations and the changes in conditions over the ages, differences in concepts and creeds have arisen. Nevertheless, no matter how many religions there have been

in history, they all are agreed on at least one major point – that God certainly exists. In other words, they may disagree on the attributes of the Creator, yet all present-day religions, for example, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism, the religion of Zoroaster, all believe in one God, whether He is called Allah, God, Elohim, Parmeshwar, Parmatma, Sat Guru or Yazdan.

However, even in regard to those religions that have become extinct through the veils of worldly and materialistic concerns, there still persist traces of the ancient teachings in that in every one of them people still confess faith in a Supreme Being and believe in Him. It does not matter whether these religions originated in America or the jungles of Africa or whether in Italy or England, Java or Sumatra, Japan or China, Siberia or Manchuria.

How did this unanimity in belief arise and who was it who acquainted the inhabitants of America about Hindustan? In olden times, there was no rail or telegraph or postal system as exists today, nor was there extensive sea-traffic as we have now. People used to travel on horses and mules, and sailing ships used to take months to complete a voyage that would take just a few days today. In addition, there were many regions in the world that still remained undiscovered at that time. Yet, how was there this universal acceptance of this one belief (in the existence of God) among nations that were disparate not only in mental outlook, but in customs and traditions, and who were unknown to one another?

We all know how difficult it is to get even two people to agree on falsely concocted stories. So, does this uniformity in belief amongst tribes and nations who had no means for exchange of ideas amongst them not prove that this matter is indeed

a reality and through some unknown means (which the Holy Qur'an has disclosed) this truth was imparted to every nation and every people?

Students of history all agree that if historians of different nations concur on a certain point, then there is no doubt as regards its authenticity. Thus, why can people not accept that if hundreds of thousands of nations all agree on a particular matter, then it is certain that they must have seen some manifestation of it, and so they are all in unison in their acquiescence of it?

2. The second proof is contained in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an: "*And this was Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. We exalt in degrees whom We please. Surely thy Lord is Wise, Knowing. And We gave him Isaac and Jacob. Each did We guide; and Noah did We guide before, and of his descendants, David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. And thus do We reward those who do good (to others). And Zacharias and John and Jesus and Elias; each one (of them) was of the righteous, And Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot; and each one (of them) We made to excel the people*" (6:84-87).

After these verses, the Holy Qur'an exhorts us: "*These are they whom Allah guided, so follow their guidance. Say: I ask you not for any reward for it. It is naught but a Reminder to the nations*" (6:91).

The Holy Qur'an asks us in whose word we should believe: in the truth of the evidence that pure and righteous people present to us, or should we take the word of others who are ignorant of the existence of God and whose conduct is in no way comparable to that of the pious ones? The sensible thing to do is to honour the word of those whose exemplary conduct and

deeds, and whose chastity and nobility as well as their rigid self-discipline and abstinence from sin have been already established in the world. It is therefore binding on each person to imitate such people and to reject the assertions of those who stand in opposition to them.

So we observe that all those who spread goodness and high morals on earth in the past and who established their nobility in the world through their good deeds have all given testimony to the fact that there is a Supreme Being Who, in different ages, has been referred to as Allah, God or Parmeshwar. These righteous ones include Ram Chandra and Krishna of India, Zoroaster of Iran, Prophet Moses of Egypt, the Messiah of the Christians (Prophet Jesus), Baba Nanak of the Punjab. Lastly came the Prince of all the righteous ones, the Arabian Prophet, Muhammad (*sas*) who, since his youth, was renowned among his people as a truthful one who expressed his veracity to them in the following rhetorical question: “*Have I not lived a lifetime among you (without telling a lie)?*” (10:17), to which his people could offer no rebuttal.

In addition to these, more than a hundred thousand prophets and messengers who came to the world from time to time all proclaimed the same message – that there was only one God. Even more than that, they claimed to have met Him and to have conversed with Him.

Many very eminent philosophers there were on earth and they all performed some beneficial work, but not one of them could have accomplished even one thousandth part of the task of a prophet. As a matter of fact, if we were to compare the lives of these two groups – the philosophers and the prophets – we will find, if we go beyond the words of the philosophers that their deeds seem very scanty. We may well ask: Why could they not display the same kind of truth and sincerity as the prophets?

The reason is that they taught people to

be truthful but were themselves unable to avoid falsehood. On the other hand, those righteous people, some of whom have been mentioned above, had to endure hundreds of thousands of painful and heartbreaking calamities solely in their effort to establish the virtuous quality of truth, yet they never swerved an inch from their principles. Plans were made to kill them, they were driven out of their homes, attempts were made to tarnish their character in every street and lane and bazaar and they were socially ostracised, but yet they never gave up their mission nor did they resort to lying out of fear of people in order to save themselves from the persecution of men. Their good deeds, their aversion for worldly possessions or honour, their distancing themselves from ostentation, all served to establish the fact that they were completely altruistic in their work and never undertook any task for personal gain. Indeed, they were ever truthful and trustworthy and unanimously proclaimed that they had met their Maker and had heard His words and witnessed a manifestation of His glory and splendour. So what reason is there for anyone to doubt their testimony?

We have all heard certain people telling lies. Yet when a few of them join together to attest to the truth of a matter, we are forced to believe them. People, of whose character and circumstances we know nothing at all, publish their findings in newspapers and we respect their views, yet if there is one thing we are ready to reject outright, it is the testimony of those virtuous ones. For instance, people tell us that London is a city and we accept it as true; geographers write that America is a large continent and we believe them; travellers relate that Siberia is a vast, unpopulated region and we do not deny it. Why don't we? The reason is that a very large number of people have attested to the truth of these matters and so we are inclined to believe them even though we are ignorant of these witnesses, that is, whether they are true or false.

On the other hand, the people who give eyewitness testimony of the existence of

Allah, Most High, are those whose truthfulness shines brightly like the midday sun: they sacrificed their wealth and their lives and left their beloved homelands in order to establish truth in the world. So how can it be a sign of honesty and integrity to believe travellers and geographers and to reject the word of such purified ones? If the existence of London can be established on hearing the testimony of a few witnesses, why can we not accept the existence of Allah, Most High, after hearing the testimony of hundreds of thousands of virtuous and noble people?

In short, the testimony of hundreds of thousands of upright people who have given firsthand evidence of the existence of God can in no way be lightly rejected. It is amazing that those who fall in this camp all asseverate with one voice that God exists, whilst those without an ounce of spirituality urge people to contradict the evidence of the prophets and to accept their assertion that there is no God. This is especially astonishing since, according to the canons of evidence, if two men of comparable probity should offer testimony in a certain matter and one should say: “I have seen such and such a thing,” and the other should deny seeing it, preference will be given to the former over the latter. The reason is that it may well be that the eye of the latter may not have witnessed the scene whilst it is impossible for the first-mentioned righteous one to make a false claim of seeing it and that it was only a figment of his imagination. Thus, the testimony of those who have seen God is at any rate proof against the deniers.

3. The third proof that is disclosed by the Holy Qur'an is that man's very nature bears testimony to the existence of God, for there are many kinds of sins that are totally repulsive to man's inner self, for example, fornication with one's mother or daughter, lying, or coming into contact with faeces or urine or similar kinds of filth. These kinds of pollution even an atheist avoids. Why is

this so? If there were no God, why does he discriminate between his mother and sister and other women, and why does he consider falsehood an evil? What proofs are there to show who caused these above-mentioned abominations to be considered evil in his eyes? If there is no fear of a Supreme Being in his heart, why does he abstain from such sins? In his mind, there should be no distinction between truth and falsehood, injustice and fairplay, and he should follow whatever pleased his heart. What law is there that governs his passions? It is the sovereignty of God that holds sway over his heart, and although an atheist may deny with his tongue any such overriding power, yet he cannot escape from the ambit of the nature in which God has created him. And so, turning away from sin or at least from manifesting it publicly, serves as evidence, in his case, that there resides in his heart the fear of accountability before a Supreme King even though he may go on denying the existence of such an all-powerful Being.

As further proof, the Holy Qur'an tells us: "*Nay, I swear by the day of Resurrection! Nay, I swear by the self-accusing spirit!*" (75:1-2).

In other words, people may think that there is no God and therefore no punishment. This is not so. Instead, in support of these matters, two pieces of evidence are put forward in the above verses.

Firstly, a day of resurrection has been appointed for every affair, when a decision is given and goodness is rewarded with goodness and evil with evil. If there were no God, how could righteousness and sinfulness be rewarded according to their just deserts? In fact, those who deny the

eventuality of a day of accountability should open their eyes and see that resurrection begins in this very life. For example, adulterers sometimes suffer the calamity of syphilis and gonorrhoea. Even though they may not be married yet they perform one of the functions of married life.

The second testimony is the conscience of man (*nafs-ul-lawwamah*), that is, "the soul that complains." In other words, man's inner self or conscience warns him that a particular thing is evil or impure. Even an atheist looks upon adultery and falsehood as evil behaviour, and frowns upon pride and envy. Why is this so? The reason is that although he does not possess or adhere to a moral code yet his inner self warns him against these actions and guides him, as it has been inherently granted the instinct that it will be punished by a Higher power, but it could not express it in words. In support of this, there is another verse of the Holy Qur'an which states: "*So He revealed to it its way of evil and its way of good*" (91:8). Thus, the instinctive perception of good and evil in man's heart is a very powerful testimony of the existence of God, for if there is no God, there is no reason for man to consider a particular thing as good and another as evil, and in that case, he will follow whatever impulse arises in his heart.

4. The fourth proof is in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an: "*And that to thy Lord is the goal: And that He it is Who makes (men) laugh and makes (them) weep. And that He it is Who causes death and gives life. And that He creates pairs, the male and the female, from the small life-germ when it is adapted*" (53:42-46).

In these verses, Allah, Most High, draws man's attention to the fact that for every action there is a doer just as it is also

essential for there to be a worker for every task. Thus, if we should ponder over the whole of creation, our investigation will lead us to discover that to God, Most High, is the final end of all things and it is only according to His direction that everything takes place. Thus, Allah, Most High, asks man to consider his original stage: how he was created from a life-germ, and if he looks back on his evolution he will see that every preceding stage of his life was one of greater weakness. So how can he be his own creator?

Without a creator, there can be no creation and man cannot be his own maker because however deeply we contemplate his condition we will find that he has progressed from a very weak and insignificant stage to his present condition. Now, since even in his present position of strength he still cannot be his creator, how could he have been so when he was in a helpless state (in his early evolution)? We are thus forced to admit that man's Creator must be some other Being Whose powers are beyond measure and Whose omnipotence is infinite. In short, if man should ponder deeply on his steady evolutionary growth and advancement, the causes of his growth become more subtle, abstruse and infinitesimal and his contemplation finally reaches a point where all worldly knowledge and sciences confess that they cannot advance further and that they do not know why all this has come into being. That is the point where Allah's Hand is at work behind the scene and every scientist ultimately has to bow to the fact that "*to thy Lord is the ultimate goal.*" That is, the end of every single thing is to such a Being Who is beyond the intellect of the scientist to comprehend and that Being is Almighty God. This is such a powerful and significant proof that even the most ignorant of men can comprehend it.

It is related that once someone asked a Bedouin Arab what proof he had of the existence of God. He replied that there was a large heap of camel dung lying in the forest and when he saw it he said to himself that a large camel had passed that

way. After having seen this large creature, how could he help concluding that there must be a Creator of such a huge beast? Indeed, this answer is a true one quite in keeping with human nature and if man were to examine the creation of these creatures, he will surely have to believe that there is a Being Who has brought all these things into existence.

5. The fifth testimony of the Holy Qur'an is along the same lines as the above but the argument is more powerful and of a higher order. Accordingly, Allah, Most High, says: *“Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Kingdom, and He is Possessor of power over all things, Who created death and life that He might try you — which of you is best in deeds. And He is the Mighty, the Forgiving, Who created the seven heavens alike. Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent. Then look again: Canst thou see any disorder? Then turn the eye again and again — thy look will return to thee confused, while it is fatigued”* (67:1-4).

Many people aver that the whole universe came into being by chance and all this was formed by an accidental arrangement of matter. They have even called upon Science in their attempt to prove that it is possible for the world to come together all by itself and to be working automatically and that there was no Hand in the background operating the machine. However, Allah, Most High, answers these base assertions in the above verses by saying that things that are assembled haphazardly do not possess a cohesive or an orderly system but are instead disconnected. For example, different kinds of colours are used in painting a picture but can one just splash all kinds of colours on a piece of paper and come up with a complete or meaningful picture? Again, houses are made of bricks, but if one just throws bricks together randomly, will a well-fashioned house come into being? Let us accept for argument's sake

that many events happen accidentally, yet if we look at the perfect order operating in the world, no man in his right senses can claim all this happened by itself. Let us admit that matter came into existence spontaneously and further that the earth was automatically created out of this matter and let us go further and accept that man, too, came into being by chance. However, if we look carefully at the creation of man, can we accept that this magnificent creation came into existence all on its own?

When we see a splendid picture, we immediately think that a famous painter must have created this beautiful work. Similarly, a well-crafted piece of writing bespeaks a brilliant writer and the more we concentrate on it the more our minds begin to appreciate the beauty and grandeur of the maker or writer's creativity. So, how can we ever imagine that such a perfectly well-ordered world can just come into being all by itself?

We must ponder a little on this point: since faculties are provided to man for progress, he has been given an intellect to enable him to put his ideas into practical use, and

his body is likewise fashioned in accordance with this same pre-ordained arrangement. For instance, he has to work hard for his livelihood so he has the ability to move about in order to procure his sustenance; if the sustenance for trees lies in the earth, roots are provided in order to draw full nourishment for them; if meat is needed as food for a lion, it is endowed with claws for hunting and capturing its prey; if grain is the designated sustenance for horses and bulls, they are given long necks to help them to reach their food, and if camels need to feed off the leaves and thorns of trees, they are created with long necks. Did this elaborate arrangement come about by chance?

According to atheist philosophers, chance had already made it known that a camel be given a long neck, a lion should have claws, trees must have roots, and man be given legs. Let us accept these things as true, but can we imagine that whatever work was accomplished all by itself was also blessed with such an intrinsic, elaborate and pre-planned system?

(To be concluded in the March 2007 issue.) ©

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Hazrat Ameer's Eid ul Adha Message

(10 th Zilhaj 1427, 1 st January 2007)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٠﴾

“O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families, that you may know each other. Surely, the noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.” (Al-Hujuraat, 49:13)

This verse of the Holy Qur'an ad-

dresses the whole humankind and not just the Muslims; it is a message for all in this global village and sets a gold standard for nobility and nearness to Allah - that is being dutiful to Him. This verse forms the basis of ultimate peace on earth which humanity is striving for in these days of war, hate and bloodshed.

This time Eid ul Adha has fallen at the start of the year 2007. As we celebrate this spiritual event and also welcome the start of a new year we have a great opportunity to reflect into our inner selves and ask what we are doing as Muslims to make this day a happy one for ourselves as well as the rest of humankind. The coinciding of our day of celebration with that of the New Year by all the peoples of the world gives us an opportunity to resolve firmly that the happiness we share with the rest of humankind should be there to stay.

Eid ul Adha is an occasion on which we should resolve to have a convergent approach rather than a divergent approach to get the peoples of the world to gather under the banner of love and respect for all human beings who have been created from a single soul by Almighty Allah. We should have more of 'WE' rather than the 'I' and 'ME' in our approach so we may foster unity amongst people without consideration of class, colour and creed. We should be accommodative in how people see

Allah and form that as a basis of uniting and conversions rather than by persecution, hatred, bigotry and shunning and excluding people out of the 'inner and artificial circles' that we have created for ourselves.

If this approach were not acceptable to Allah then He would have created us from numerous Adams and Eves. Prophets would have been sent to us who would not have brought the message of unity from one God but a message with specific teachings for a specific people and others would have not been allowed to join the 'the elite club'.

If it were so we would not have today been celebrating the advent to mark what Prophet Abraham did to establish a peaceful world. We celebrate and revere him in his life and sacrifices and he stands out as the patriarch of all the three major religions of the world.

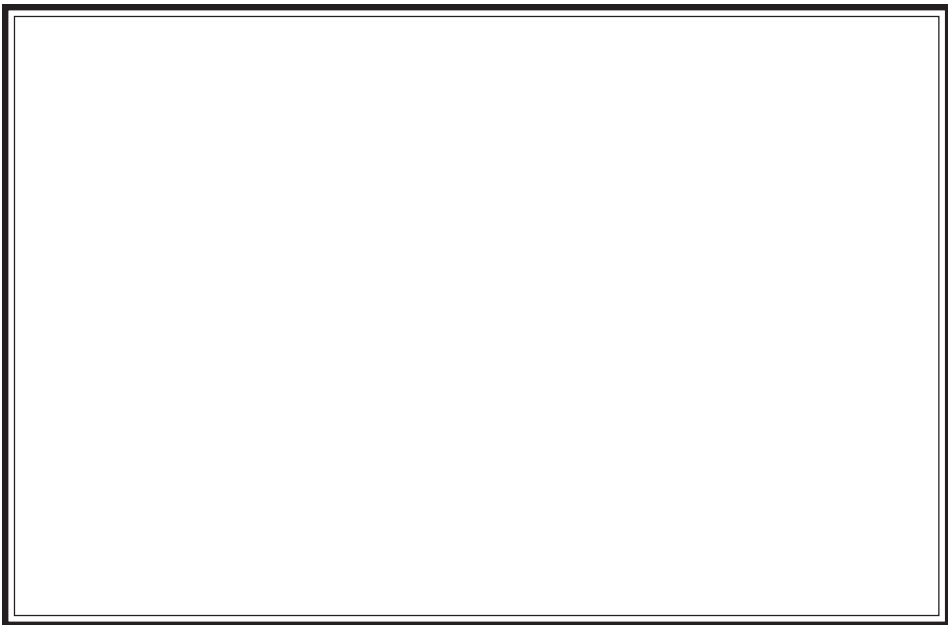
Let us today resolve that we will do our best to bring happiness to the world and start following the golden rule, 'treating others as we wish to be treated'. If we

can do that then we will be in a position to bring real happiness to the world and that will be the real EID, which literally means 'recurring happiness'; failing which it will be back to business as normal with the sunset of 1 st January, 2007.

Let us, as we sacrifice the animals, also lay a knife on the throat of egos within us, and pour out the blood of hatred in our souls and replace it with the true spirit of Islam: PEACE FOR ALL.

I take this opportunity to wish all peoples of the world A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2007 and to all the Muslims of the world A HAPPY EID ULADHA.

Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed
Ameer and President
The Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya
Movement ☪



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