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Value of Love

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The excellence of man lies in his love and mercy for others: one person is pricked with a thorn but another person feels the pain. Man is gifted with tears which fall from his eyes when he sees a widow's head uncovered in helplessness, a poor man's kitchen unlit, and a sick man in distress. If such a drop of tear is put in a sea of transgression, it will cleanse it. If it falls on a forest of sins, it will burn it and fill the space again with the effulgence of virtue. The angels can bring forward anything, but they cannot present this drop of tear. The angels do not sleep due to their cognizance of Allah's being and attributes, but their vigil does not have the excellence of man's inability to sleep due to the sufferings of others.

The quality of love permeating through the human heart is a very precious gift of God. When something stirs it, it assumes a strange power. It rises above the considerations of religion, community, nation, and motherland. It then only sees another man's heart and feels its suffering and is drawn to it by nature as is pulled an iron chip toward a magnet. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

“The people of the pit were destroyed with fire abounding in fuel, while they sat around it, and were witnessing what they did to the believers. Against these they had no grudge except that they believed in Allah, the Most Mighty, the Most Praiseworthy, to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Allah witnesses everything. Surely those who tormented the believing men and the believing women and then did not repent, theirs shall be the chastisement of Hell, and theirs shall be the chastisement of burning. As for those who believed and acted righteously, theirs shall be Gardens beneath which rivers flow. That is the great triumph. Stern indeed is your Lord’s punishment.”

(Al Qur'an– 85:4-12)

Believers have been subjected to tyrannies many a time in history. Suhaib Rumi relates from the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) how a king, having come to know that a boy and later other people had believed in the Unity of God, he was filled with rage. Consequently, he got pits dug out along the roads, got them tilled with fire and ordered all those who refused to renounce the new faith to be thrown into the fire. The people who feel displeased at one’s believing in Allah are wicked and unjust. They subject the believers to tyrannies of sort as they have no grudge except that the latter believed in Allah, the Most Mighty, the Most Praiseworthy. In the Day of Judgement they will be subjected to utmost humiliation in the form of the chastisement of Hell. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Messenger Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said, “Allah, the Exalted, says: I declare war against one who bears enmity towards a friend of Mine. When a servant of Mine comes closer to Me, with a thing which I love, out of things which I have prescribed; and he seeks My favour through Optional Prayers (Nawafil), I start loving him and when I love him, I become his ear with which he hears and his eyes with which he sees and his hand with which he grasps and his foot with which he walks, and when he requests Me for anything, I grant him and when he seeks protection, I give him protection.”

(Bukhari)

This hadith under study brings into light the importance of Optional Prayers (Nawafil). Saying Prayers is one of the best means of man’s coming closer to the Lord. The believer does not content with saying only obligatory prayers, which is a must for him. In view of the great blessings of Optional Prayers he loves to say Optional Prayers as well. The Holy Messenger says Allah loves Optional Prayers. That is why the believer says Optional Prayers besides Obligatory Prayers. He is not duty bound to say Optional Prayers. But just to seek the pleasure of Allah he spares at least some time from his schedule to remember Allah in Optional Prayers. When he does so, Allah begins to love him. When such a blessed person asks Allah for something, He grants him his prayer. ■

Editor's Note 

Eid Celebrations

Towards the end of Islamic Calendar some important festivals are observed. In Ramzan Muslims are ordained to keep fast and observe restraint from all undesirable practices. The whole month is heavily loaded with special prayers and recitation of the holy Quran. Apart from keeping fast and observing other rituals they are also required to set apart a certain percentage of their savings to be distributed amongst pors. All those Muslims who are well off must pay 2.5% of their savings of the year to pors. This is called 'Zakat' and it is one of the five tenets of Islam.

After a month of fasting and extensive prayers comes “Eid-ul-Fitra”. This is a big occasion for Muslims. They celebrate it with their families and friends. Greetings are exchanged and sumptuous dishes are also served to guests. In India Eid is celebrated not by Muslims alone but their non-Muslims friends and neighbours also join them in their happiness. They embrace each other and instill a feeling of love and brotherhood.

This year Eid falls in the middle of June, a very hot month, but vagaries of weather are not going to effect the festivity. ■

S.A.

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The Message of Idul Fitr

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. [He wants that] you must complete the same number of days and that you must magnify Allah for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him. And when My slaves ask you [O Prophet] concerning Me, then [tell them] I am indeed near. I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me. So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led alright.

(al-Baqarah 2:185-186)

This passage relates to the blessed month of Ramadan. The Qur'anic account of fasting marks the opening of this passage which states that fasting is prescribed as a religious duty for Muslims, as it was for the believers of an earlier date. It is prescribed so that they may become pious. It is further clarified that the Qur'an was sent down during this month and that the Qur'an is guidance for all mankind. Contained in it are signs as guidance and criterion.

In this passage Allah tells Muslims that He intends ease for them. He does not want to put them to any difficulty. Fasting for twenty-nine or thirty days during Ramadan is not an impossible task. Muslims are asked to fast for a limited number of days. This is followed by the directive that they

should celebrate Allah's praise in that He has guided them. They are obliged to praise Him for having blessed them with His guidance. They are also exhorted to thank Allah and express gratitude to Him.

Allah mentions implicitly 'Id in the above passage. Although the festival of 'Id is not specified, the passage states the objective, spirit and function of 'Id. As Allah enables a Muslim to fast during Ramadan and pray at night, he should celebrate Allah's glory. This should be by way of thanks for the bestowal of His guidance. A Muslim stands indebted to Him for blessing him with faith and Islam. Without His leave he could neither fast nor pray. For there are numerous communities besides Muslims in the world. They know well that Muslims celebrate Ramadan in a particular way. Yet it makes no difference to them. Ramadan does not carry any meaning and message for them.

We should be grateful to Allah for having guided us. We should be equally grateful for being blessed with Islam. Moreover, we should be thankful to Him for granting us health which enables us to fast. Above all, Allah grants us the ability and strength to fast. For one may possess everything yet not receive divine guidance to fast. One may be an

adult, with sound physique and other resources yet still not fast. It amounts to disobedience on his part.

That Allah alone grants the ability is the real thing. It is He Who inspires man to fast during Ramadan and to pray to Him. In sum, He guides us to fast. Yet there are those who possess the facilities and resources to fast but who do not do so. This is because Allah does not inspire such a person to fast. A believer is obliged to celebrate Allah's praise for having provided him with the requisite resources and ability to fast. Since there is nothing to prohibit one from fasting, it is imperative for one to fast. The directive to celebrate Allah's praise is on account of the same - the ability granted by Him to fast.

It is part of the *Sunnah* that on the day of *'Id al-Fitr* one should celebrate Allah's praise on one's way to the mosque. On *'Id al-Adha* one should chant such praise aloud: "Allah is great. Allah is great. There is no god besides Allah. Allah is great. All praise is for Allah." It is also part of the *Sunnah* that one should use two different routes for going to the mosque to offer prayer. This results in circulating Allah's praise throughout the whole town. The inhabitants of the town will hence receive this message. While waiting for the *'Id* Prayer to commence, one should keep on praising Him for His guidance and this out of gratitude. For Allah has granted one the ability to fast. One will

be pardoned for missing a fast on account of ill health.

It is common knowledge that festivals are an occasion for expressing joy. One is relieved of one's duties, enabling one to enjoy the festival. Islam is, however, the only faith that *obliges* its followers to perform extra duty on the day of festival. Nonetheless, this duty is not very burdensome. Rather, it accrues more blessings. It instructs the believers in 'Self-restraint and decency. On *'Id* day Muslims are obliged to offer two additional rak'ah of prayer. They are not exempted from discharging their religious duty on this day, as they have to offer extra prayer in between the compulsory *Fajr* and *Zuhr* Prayers. This is the Islamic way of expressing gratitude to Allah.

The Muslim community is thus consistently instructed in thanking Allah. No other religious community is particular about this. The Muslims alone try to perform this. They discharge their duty and thank Allah for enabling them to do so.

Other religious communities do not offer extra prayers or charity on their festival days. Rather, they enjoy life, engrossed in eating and drinking. In Islam, however, the focus is on giving - charity to the poor, gratitude to Allah and celebrating of Allah's praise. This is done in order to thank Allah for His guidance. It expresses Muslims' gratefulness to Him. ■

Western Propaganda Against Islam and Our Responsibilities

-S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

Efforts made to draw the attention of Muslims towards their religion, culture, civilization and to remind them of their radiant past resulted in all-round awakening since the middle of the last century. Its effects were felt to great extent. It began to augur well that somebody said the next century would be the century of Islam. Accordingly when new century of Islamic calendar commenced, a hue and cry was raised that this century is the century of Islam and Muslims would lead the world sooner or latter.

LO! There is a great national awakening in such and such places; hosts of people embraced Islam. Somewhere Islamic movements have gained momentum. Some body said 21 st century is coming. It will be the era of elevation and rise of Islam.

Europe is going to be smashed. Now Muslims will take the leadership of the world. Some one looked at Turkey, some to Pakistan, some to Egypt, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. To visualize such a situation was not wrong as outward impressions and conditions appeared so. Some Islamic governments created a lot of expectations and hopes in their respective countries.

Islamic press raised voice in this regard and Islamic movements got activated. But unfortunately amongst Muslims tendency developed to earn name and fame instead of striving hard to spread their mission. It has been the second nature of Muslims to propagate the work rather than accomplishing it. They warn their

enemies much before taking them on and inform them about their plans and mode of strategy. No doubt, it is a major shortcoming of Muslims.

But naturally a man publicizes his virtues and success, also expresses his grief and woes. But leaders of the community can control this psyche and urge for fame and divert it to those conditions of Muslims in which they taught the world morality and humanity and extricated nations and generations from beastly life' into human life. They took out oppressed ones from their atrocities condition. They bestowed upon slaves friendly and equal footing by extricating them from their pitiable condition. They provided women their rights and restored their dignity. They saved girls of their living burial. What to speak, of human beings, lesson of good treatment with all living beings were imparted.

Lessons of equality were demonstrated in such a way that people were astonished and accepted virtues of this religion. Accordingly they flocked into Islam in a crowd.

Ponder over it, where such instances are found that Muslim youths conquered a territory. The inhabitants complained to the Caliph and asked that Muslims should not have attacked suddenly. First they could have extended their invitation to accept their creed. If opponents would not have dishonoured their invitation then they could have attacked. But Muslim army did not do so. It appealed to the caliph who ordered Muslim armies to withdraw from the occupied land and return. Caliph advised Muslims to invite

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their enemies towards Islam with sagacity and shrewdness and settle the issue amicably. Muslims quit the occupied country and obeyed the instructions. With the result that the whole country was so much impressed that they embraced Islam with pleasure.

Ponder over it, who taught that you have reward in treating well with every living being and gave glad tidings of heaven for offering water to a thirsty dog and gave the news of chastisement in the life Hereafter for killing a cat after cornering it in a room.

Ponder over it, where it is found that at the time of agonies of death advice given to worship Allah and treat slaves well.

Ponder over it, where it is found that son of a Muslim Ruler of Egypt lashed an Egyptian due to lagging behind in a horse race. The Egyptian complained to Caliph. The son of the king with his parents were summoned and Egyptian was asked to lash them. He said to the Ruler you have made human beings slaves while Almighty Allah has created them free. Ponder over it, that this event is of that time when slaves and prisoners were burnt for enjoyment of the guests in the developed countries of world and in the cradles of civilization and culture.

Where we can find such sort of example that Prophet Muhammad made the son of his ex-slave commander of a Muslim expedition. Prophet Muhammad passed away before the army set out. Prophet's successor Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr was advised by some people that since a good number of Tribal Chiefs of Arab would participate in the expedition a senior person be asked to lead it instead of this young man. The Caliph said the Prophet's wish would be honoured. This young man should lead the expedition. Accordingly it was accepted by all and nobody raised any objection.

Islamic history is replete with such hundreds and thousands incidents. But it is unfortunate that we are not aware of these occurrences. Its is imperative that we mention such incidents before non-Muslims also so that they may comprehend that Muslims are not cruel as they think of them.

If any Muslim commits theft, it does not mean that Islam permits stealing. If any Muslim oppresses someone, it does not mean that Muslims have been allowed to commit atrocity.

Strangely both print and electronic media present Islam in a distorted form. That is why the opponents of Islam only know that Muslims always quarrel with each other. They are involved in unholy activities and in violating the law. They are not good citizens. They are untrustworthy and disloyal.

Today whole Islamic world is confronted with various trials, oppressions and atrocities. Muslims are being crushed everywhere. Whether it be Europe, Asia or America everywhere Muslims have to face scores of difficulties. Under these circumstances we must come forward to combat these menaces. For this we first amend our nature, build up strong character, cultivate sublime qualities and norms and create closeness with Allah. Moreover they have to lead their lives according to Islamic Shariah. Almighty Allah says: So lose not heart. Nor fail into despair for ye must gain mastery if ye are true in faith." (3:139)

We will have to carry out importunities and requisites of faith only then we will be able to restore our lost glory and achieve eminence and exaltation. ■

(Translated by : O.R. Nadwi)

Ethical Code Of Islam

- S. Athar Husain*

ISLAM IS not only a spiritual attitude of mind or a code of sublime precepts but a “self-sufficing orbit of culture” and a social system of well defined features. “It not only undertakes to define the metaphysical relations between man and his creator and prescribes beliefs but it lays down rules of personal conduct and social behaviour.” In fact, it is an all-embracing code of life establishing, on a systematic and positive base, the fundamental principles of morality and precisely formulating the duties of man not only towards his Creator but towards himself and towards his fellow-beings. It offers a complete co-ordination of the spiritual and material aspects of human life, lays down a practical code and demands a righteousness well within the realm of practicability. Its concept of life does not exclude the notion of happiness in the shape of material welfare in this world. It demands no renunciation of the world nor does it prescribe austerities for spiritual purification. Its motto is enunciated in the Quran:

“Our Lord gives us the good in this world and the good in the Hereafter.” (Q. 2: 201)

At the same time it does not subscribe to materialistic trends but rouses in man a consciousness of moral responsibility in everything he does. There is no sphere of life, no conscious activity of man, which may be outside the pale of Islamic morality. If it falls in line with the

divine prescriptions and the ethical code almost every temporal act is given a spiritual touch and raised to the status of worship (Ibadat) attracting rewards and the pleasure of God. At the same time, Islam cautions man, with fear of God, the judgment after resurrection, and hell fire as well as material sanctions, against committing evils and transgressing the bounds set for him. For this purpose, it classifies evils and faults into two broad categories: those committed against the rights of God (unbelief, neglect of worship, etc.), and those against the rights of men. Man is particularly warned against the second category of faults for they constitute a double crime: one against the immediate victim and the other against God, violating as they do His prescriptions.

It is beyond the scope of this book to enter into the details of the ethical code of Islam. The present object is primarily to give some idea of the preachings of the Prophet so as to enable one to have a glimpse of his stature and personality and the cause for which he had so steadfastly striven. This code is laid down by Quranic exhortations and injunctions and the sayings and practices (Hadith) of the Prophet. They are so numerous that a typical selection is no easy task. In citing below some of them under various captions by way of illustration, I rely upon the selection made by Dr. Syed Abdul Latif in his book, *Bases of Islamic Culture*. The dual responsibility of man, one in relation to himself and the other in relation to his

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external world, is summed up in the words of the Prophet:

“Respect the ways of God and be affectionate to the family of God.” (Bukhari)

To discharge this responsibility, cultivation of certain traits and virtues has been insisted upon as indispensable for righteous living.

SENSE OF GOD

“Say: My prayers and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for God, Lord of the worlds.” (Q. 6: 163)

ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE

Al Quran

“Recite thou’

For thy Lord is the most Beneficent, who hath taught the use of the pen; Hath taught man that which he knew not.” (Q. 96: 3-5)

“Say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.” (Q. 20: 114)

“Say: Shall they who have knowledge and they who have it not, be treated alike?” (Q. 39 : 9)

Said the Prophet:

“To acquire knowledge is binding on all believers, both men and women.” (Ibn Maja)

“The best form of devotion to God is to seek knowledge.” (Kunzul Haqaiq)

“Acquire knowledge. It enableth the possessor to distinguish right from wrong. It lights the way to heaven; it is our companion when friendless; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in adversity; it is a weapon against enemies, and an ornament among friends. By virtue of it, Allah exalteth communities, and maketh

them guides in good pursuits, and giveth them leadership; so much so, that their footsteps are followed, their deeds are imitated, and their opinions are accepted and held in respect.” (Ibn Abdal-Bar: Fadail-ilm)

“A learned man is like the stars in the firmament which in darkness light the way over land and sea. It is likely that the wayfarer will miss his way when the stars disappear.” (Ahmed: Musnad)

“A piece of knowledge from wherever gained is like lost property recovered: let him take it as if it is his own.” (Tirmizi)

“Religion will lose its value when men versed in religious knowledge live in sin.” (Hakim)

JUSTICE AND UPRIGHTNESS

Al Quran

“Verily, God enjoineth justice and the doing of good and gifts to kindred; and he forbiddeth wickedness and oppression. He warneth you that haply ye may be mindful.” (Q. 6 : 92)

“O Believers! Stand up as witnesses for God by righteousness; and let not ill-will at any induce you not to act uprightly. Act uprightly. Next will this be to the fear of God, and fear ye God: Verily, God is apprised of what ye do.” (Q. 5: 11)

“O you who believe, Be you staunch in justice, witnesses for Allah, even though it be against your own- selves or [your] parents or near relations—whether he be rich or poor, Allah has a better right over them both. So follow not [your] low desires, lest you deviate. And if you distort or turn away from (truth), surely Allah is ever

aware of what you do.” (Q. 4: 135)

Al-Hadith

“The best of Jihad is of him who speaks a just word before a tyrannical authority.” (Tirmizi, Abu Dawud, Ibn Maja)

“Verily the just shall be near God on pulpits of light, on the right hand of the Merciful God: those who are just in the exercise of their authority, and to their people, and to those over whom they are made guardians.” (Muslim & Nasai)

FULFILLING OBLIGATIONS

Al-Quran

“O you who believe, fulfil obligations.” (Q. 5: 1)

Al-Hadith

“Those who do not fulfil promises made, they will meet with dire consequences.” (Abu Dawud and Baihaqi)

“Give me to understand that six things exist in you, and I will guarantee you paradise; namely be truthful when ye speak, fulfil when ye promise, restore what ye have received in trust, and guard yourself from immodesty, lower your eyes to the ground, and withhold your hand [from doing what is wrong].” (Baihaqi)

TRUTH

Al-Quran

“Truly God guideth not him who is a transgressor, a liar.” (Q. 40 : 29)

Al-Hadith

“Whenever you speak, speak what is true.” (Bukhari)

“Asked what is Islam, the Prophet replied: Sincerity in speech and courtesy.” (Ahmed: Musnad)

GOOD MANNERS

“And distort not thy face at men; nor walk thou loftily on earth, for God loveth no arrogant vainglorious one.” (Q. 25: 63)

Said the Prophet:

“The best of you are those who possess the best of manners.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“The best of believers in God are those who display in their daily life the best manners.” (Abu Dawud and Darimi)

“He is not of us who is not affectionate to those younger than himself and respectful to those who are older, and does not give to his relations and friends what is due to them.” (Tabrani)

THANKFULNESS

Al-Quran

“O ye who believe! eat of the good things with which we have supplied you, and give God thanks if Him it is that ye serve.” (Q. 2 : 166)

“Of old we bestowed wisdom upon Luqman and taught him thus Be thankful to God, for whoever is thankful, is thankful for the good of his own soul; and if any shall be ungrateful-God truly is self-sufficient, worthy of all praise.” (Q. 31 : 11)

Al-Hadith

“He who is not thankful to man is not thankful to God.” (Tirmizi)

CHARITY

Al-Quran

“Ye shall never attain to goodness till ye give alms of that which ye love.” (Q. 3 : 91)

“If ye lend God a generous loan, He

will double it to you and will forgive you, for God is 'All-thankful, All-Clement.'" (Q. 64 : 16)

Al-Hadith

Charity is incumbent upon every Muslim. If he has nothing to give let him do a good deed or abstain from an evil one. In the matter of disbursement of Charity, Islam makes no distinction between a Muslim and a non-Muslim and treats alike the poor, the needy, the orphans, the neighbours and travellers in distress of all religions and creeds.

"And serve Allah. Ascribe nothing as partner unto Him. [Show] kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbours who is kin [unto you] and the neighbour who is not of kin, and the fellow travellers and the wayfarer and [the slaves] whom your right hands possess. Lo! Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful." (Q. 4 : 36)

"They ask thee, [O Muhammad], What they shall spend. Say: 'That which Ye spend for good [must go] to parents and near kindred and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. And whatever good Ye do, lo! Allah is aware of it.'" (Q. 2: 215)

DEVOTION TO PARENTS

Al-Quran

"Thy Lord hath ordained that ye worship none but Him; and to show kindness to your parents, whether one or both of them attains to old age with thee: and say not to them; 'Fie!' neither reproach them; but speak to them both with respectful speech; and defer humbly to

them out of tenderness; and say, 'Lord, have compassion on them both, even as they reared me when I was little.'" (Q. 17: 24, 25)

Al-Hadith

"Said the Prophet: 'God will reward with high places in heaven him who serves his parents devotedly.'" (Dailami)

"Said the Prophet: 'Heaven lies under the feet of the mother.'" (Muslim)

TENDERNESS AND GENTILITY

Al—Quran

"Our Lord! Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge." (Q. 40: 7)

Al-Hadith

"God is compassionate and likes compassion in his creatures." (Muslim)

"He who is bereft of tenderness is verily bereft of every goodness." (Muslim)

"A heartless man will be farthest away from God." (Dailami)

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

Al-Quran

"There is not an animal in the earth, or a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are peoples like unto you. We have neglected nothing in the book [of Our decrees]. Then unto their Lord will they be gathered." (Q. 6: 38)

Al-Hadith

"God is specially kind to those who are kindly in disposition and feel for others. O ye who dwell on earth; be kind to the creatures of God subsisting on earth; God will be then kind to you." (Abu Dawud, Tirmizi)

“There is salvation in removing the pain or suffering of every living object possessing a liver.” (Bukhari)

GOODWILL AND KINDNESS

“Said the Prophet: ‘Ye people! Do not grow neglectful of exercising goodwill towards others. For an offering of goodwill is indeed an offering of prayer to God.’” (Tab-rani)

“None of you is a believer if he does not like for his brother exactly that what he likes for his own self.” (Bukhari)

“Always observe humility and show kindness to everyone, as this is pleasing to God. God does not like pride in anyone.” (Abu-al-Shaykh)

“Said the Prophet: ‘It is a command to me of my God that I shall show kindness to him who has ceased to be kindly to me and to give his due to him who has refused to give me my due.’” (Kitab-ul-Riqaq)

SELF-DENIAL

Al-Quran

“Who though longing for it themselves, bestow their food on the poor and the orphan and the captive [and say],

“We feed you for the sake of God: We seek from you neither recompense nor thanks.” (Q. 76: 8-9)

“Said the Prophet: ‘God says: If you are anxious to receive kindness from Me, offer kindness to My creatures.’” (Dailami)

PATIENCE IN TRIALS

Al-Quran

“O ye who believe! seek help with patience and with prayer, for God is with the patient.” (Q. 2 : 148)

Al-Hadith

“A believer is put on his trial by the loss of wealth and children.” (Malik and Tirmizi)

“If the person who is treated unjustly bears injustice for the sake of God and declines to retaliate, then God honours him by way of recompense in this and in the life to come.” (Ahmed: Musnad)

SELF - RESTRAINT AND FORGIVENESS

Al-Quran

“Who master their anger and forgive others! God loveth the doers of good.” (Q. 3: 133)

“And whoso beareth wrongs with patience and forgiveth-this verily is high-mindedness.” (Q. 42 : 40)

Al-Hadith

“Verily it is better that the leader should err on the side of forgiveness than on the side of retaliation.” (Tirmizi)

“Considerate action is godly in quality and hasty one is satanic.” (Tirmizi)

REPENTANCE

Al-Quran

“But whoever shall turn to God after his wickedness and amend, God truly will be turned to him, for God is oft-Forgiving, Merciful.” (Q. 5: 43)

“Those who shall repent and believe and do good deeds, for them God will change their evil deeds into good deeds for God is Gracious Merciful.” (Q. 25: 70)

“O my Servants, who have transgressed to your own hurt, despair not of God’s Mercy, for all sins doth God forgive. Gracious, Merciful is He.” (Q. 39: 54)

Al-Hadith

“Feeling unhappy over a wrong thing done is a clear sign of repentance.” (Dailami).

“As far as possible, continue to seek divine forgiveness. It is not meet for a believer in God to despair of Him.” (Dailami)

“Should one sin and repent and continue to sin and repent, his repentance will have no value.” (Baihaqi)

PURITY

“Verily God is pure, and loves the pure, is cleanly and loves the cleanly, is beneficent and loves the beneficent, is generous and loves the generous.” (Tirmizi)

MODESTY

“Said the Prophet: ‘Modesty is an ingredient of faith.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“Modesty and faith are so closely inter-dependent that one ceases to exist without the other.” (Baihaqi)

“They have no religion who have given the go-by to modesty.” (Dailami)

REGARD OF NEIGHBOURS

Al-Hadith

Abu Sharib Khazai states that the Prophet swore by God three times and said:

He is not a true believer whose neighbours are afraid of his wickedness and mischief.”

Abdullah bin Abbas says that the Prophet said:

“He is not a true believer who eats to his fill and his neighbour is suffering the pangs of hunger.” (Bukhari)

Besides the cultivation of these positive virtues, Islam exhorts a believer to abstain from evil and definitely prohibits the doing of certain acts. These acts also fall into two categories: those against which a material punishment is provided in addition to condemnation on the Day of Judgment and those which are condemned without providing a sanction other than that of the Hereafter. In the first category fall murder, injury to body, fornication and adultery, theft and robbery, calumny against chastity, and lastly consumption of alcoholic drinks.

Among the prohibited things we may take up only a few:

UNLAWFUL FOOD

“Forbidden to you is that only which dieth of itself, and blood, and swines’ flesh and that which hath been slain in the name of any other than God: but if any be forced and neither lust for it nor wilfully transgress, then verily God is forgiving Gracious.” (Q. 16: 16)

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

“O ye who believe! Surely wine and games of chance, and idols, and the divining arrows, are an abomination of Satan’s work. Avoid them that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh only to cast among you hatred and strife by means of wine and games of chance, and turn you aside from the remembrance of God, and from prayer, will ye not, therefore, abstain from them.” (Q. 5: 92, 93)

Al-Hadith

“Drink no intoxicants for, verily, it is at the head of all filthy actions; and beware of sinning; for verily with sin alights the

displeasure of God.” (Ahmed: Musnad)

“All intoxicants are forbidden.”
(Bukhari & Muslim)

“The mother of all evils is wine. It is more harmful than the most harmful of sins.” (Tabrani)

“The taking in of wine cannot cure a disease, for it is by itself a disease.”
(Muslim)

“The sale of wine and the proceeds therefrom both are haram.” (Dailami)

“Do not take wine even in a moment of forgetfulness; for it is a key to every mischief and wickedness.” (Ibn Maja)

The Prophet administered forty stripes to those who violated this injunction and, later on, Caliph Omar doubled the punishment.

FORNICATION AND ADULTERY

Al-Quran

“Have nought to do with adultery; for it is a foul thing and an evil way.” (Q. 17: 33)

Al-Hadith

“Observed the Prophet: ‘Whenever a calamity befalls a centre of population, take it for granted that immorality is rampant in that place.’” (Dailami)

“Said the Prophet: ‘A grievously heinous sin in the estimation of God is to commit adultery with a woman living in one’s neighbourhood.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“He or she who casts a lewd glance at another and allows himself or herself to be attracted likewise, both meet the displeasure of God.” (Dailami)

“There is nothing which God abhors more than adultery.”

This sin and social evil so much debases a man or a woman, so wrecks homes and family happiness, induces and results in so many other vices like falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy, treachery, hate, indecency, defection, unfaithfulness, etc. that Islam has prescribed the extreme punishment of death, and that too a painful death by stoning in order to cleanse society and maintain the dignity of the individual. To diminish temptations, Islam has taken certain precautions: prohibition of promiscuity, of easy and unsupervised meetings between the young of opposite sexes if they are not near relatives; disfavoured unbecoming dresses designed more to reveal than conceal; prohibition of intoxicants; recommendation of the veil to cover the face of a woman if she goes out or meets strangers; and permission to man, who usually takes the lead in this matter, to marry more than one wife if his conjugal life is unhappy for reasons like temperamental differences with his wife, her continued ill-health, etc. The punishment of death by stoning may not be inflicted in States where the Islamic penal code is not followed but the gravity of the sin and the punishment therefor remain nevertheless.

CALUMNY AGAINST CHASTITY

Al-Quran

“Those who bring the charge of adultery against chaste women but cannot produce four witnesses to prove the charge, give them eighty lashes and their testimony should never be believed.” (Q. 24: 4)

Al-Hadith

“O believers-the life, property and honour of every Muslim is as sacred as is the Kaaba in the sacred precincts in this sacred city.” (Bukhari)

USURY

Al-Quran

“O ye who believe! devour not usury, doubling it again and again! But fear God, that ye may prosper.” (Q. 3 : 136)

“Those who swallow usury cannot rise up save as he ariseth whom the devil hath prostrated by [his] touch. That is because they say: Trade is just like usury; where- as Allah permitteth trading and forbiddeth usury-Allah hath blighted usury and made almsgiving fruitful.” (Q. 2: 275, 276)

“O ye who believe! Observe your duty to Allah and give up what remaineth [due to you] from usury, if ye are in truth believers-And if ye do not, then be warned of war [against you], from Allah and His Messenger. And if ye repent, then ye have your principal [without interest]. Wrong not, and ye shall not be wronged.” (Q. 2: 278, 279)

OTHER VICES AND SINS TO BE AVOIDED

WEAKNESS OF THE TONGUE—

Falsehood, reviling, slander, back-biting, cursing, etc.

Al-Quran

“O you who believe! let not any people laugh at another people, perchance they may be better than they, nor let any women [laugh] at [other] women, perchance they may be better than they, and do not find fault with your people, nor call one another by nicknames. Evil is a

bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust.” (Q. 49: 11)

“Truly God guideth not him who is a transgressor, a liar.” (Q. 40: 29)

“Woe every backbiter, defamer.” (Q. 104: 1)

“Neither let the one of you traduce another in his absence. Would anyone of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother. Surely ye would loathe it.” (Q. 49: 12)

Al-Hadith

“Said the Prophet: ‘If one stands surety for his tongue and his private parts, I shall guarantee his entry into heaven.’” (Bukhari)

“A backbiter will not be able to enter heaven.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“A believer in God never employs his tongue against another. He neither curses him, nor scolds him, nor abuses him.” (Tirmizi)

“Keep your tongue under proper control. A good many people have come to grief on account of it.” (Timizi) “A pleasant Islamic quality is the inclination to avoid idle talk.” (Malik & Ibn Maja)

ANGER

Al-Quran

“Those who restrain their anger and pardon men. And Allah loves the doers of good [to others].” (Q. 3: 133)

Al-Hadith

“Verily, anger is of Satan.” (Abu Dawud)

“He is not strong or powerful who throws people down, but he is strong who masters his anger.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

PRIDE

Al-Quran

“And walk not proudly on the earth, for thou canst not cleave the earth, neither shall thou reach to the mountains in height. All this is evil, odious to thy Lord!” (Q. 17: 39-40)

Al-Hadith

“He who steps along proudly shall not enter Paradise, nor shall a boaster.” (Abu Dawud and Baihaqi)

“Pride is rejecting the truth, and despising men.” (Muslim, Tirmizi)

SUSPICION AND JEALOUSY

Al-Quran

“O Believers! Avoid frequent suspicions, for some suspicions are a crime; and pry not, neither let the one of you traduce another in his absence. Would anyone of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Surely ye would loathe it. And fear ye God: for God is ready to turn, Merciful.” (Q. 49 : 12)

Al-Hadith

“Abstain from suspecting the motives of others; for, suspicion is a very mean thing. Do not try to detect weakness in others nor steal the confidence of others only to spy on them. Neither be jealous of others, nor be envious. nor bear ill-will. Do not turn away from others. On the other hand, O! Servants of God, even as God wishes, be brothers unto one another.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“Jealousy burns out the virtues of a man even as fire burns out wood.” (Abu Dawud)

“Should you find anyone superior to

you in anything, do not be envious of him. On the other hand, look at those less favoured than you and feel thankful to God for what you have.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“Never try to detect weaknesses in others, nor give them publicity, lest God should bring to light your own weaknesses and bring you disgrace.” (Tirmizi)

DECEIT AND HYPOCRISY

Al-Quran

“And plead not with us for those who are self-deceivers, for God loveth not him who is deceitful, criminal.” (Q. 4: 107)

“Announce to the hypocrites that they shall have a painful chastisement.” (Q. 4: 138)

Al-Hadith

“The signs of hypocrites are three. Although he fasts and prays and thinks that he is a Muslim, when he speaks, he is false; when he promises he fails; and when he is trusted, he plays false.” (Muslim)

“In the days to follow, there will arise men who will deceive the world in the name of religion. Clothed in sheep-skin for a sign of gentility, and with a tongue sweeter than sugar, they will possess the hearts of wolves.” (Tirmizi)

HARD-HEARTEDNESS

Al-Hadith

“Do not express joy at another’s sufferings. Who knows God might free him from it and instead impose it on you.” (Tirmizi)

MISERLINESS AND GREED

AL-Quran

“And let not those who are niggardly

of what God hath vouchsafed them in his bounty think that this will be good for them-Nay, it will be bad for them-That of which they have been niggardly shall be their collar on the day of Resurrection.” (Q. 3: 175-76)

Al-Hadith

“Greed and miserliness and faith do not subsist together in a heart.” (Nasai & Abu Dawud)

“What I fear most for you are passion for wealth, greed, immodesty, and mischief-making. They will lead you astray.” (Razin)

DISHONESTY, ETC.

Al-Hadith

“He who claims what is not his is not of us. Let him take his place in the fire [of Hell].” (Muslim)

“One who takes as well as one who offers a bribe, would both go to Hell.” (Abu Dawud)

UNBECOMING DRESS

“Said the Prophet: ‘The woman who puts on a dress through which the contours of her body are open to another’s gaze, she will rise on the day of resurrection in a naked form.’ ” (Bukhari)

“Said the Prophet: ‘I look with repugnance on a man who puts on the dress of a female, and a woman who puts on the dress of a male person. Beware! Do not let such people enter your house.’ ” (Bukhari)

CLASS OR RACIAL PREJUDICE

Al-Hadith

“He is not one of us who incites class prejudice or fights for class interest

or dies in its pursuit.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“The worst type of class prejudice is to support one’s community even in tyranny.” (Baihaqi)

“He who knowingly lends support to tyranny is outside the pale of Islam.” (Tabrani)

“Seek refuge from the curses of the oppressed to whatever community he or they may belong, for the portals of God are always open for the oppressed.” (Abu Dawud, Nasai & Tirmizi)

In a very succinct passage; the Quran exhorts the believers to tread the path of virtue and to abstain from evils and vice:

“And serve God; ascribe nothing as partners unto Him; [show] kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbour who is of kin [unto you] and the neighbour who is not of kin, and the fellow-traveller and the wayfarer, and [the slaves] whom your right hands possess; lo! God loveth not such as are proud and boastful, who hoard their wealth and enjoin avarice on others, and hide that which God hath bestowed upon them of His bounty; for disbelievers, We prepare a shameful doom. And [also] for those who spend their wealth in order to be seen of men, and believe not in God nor the Last Day, who so taketh Satan for a Comrade, a bad Comrade hath he.” (Q. 4 : 36-38)

Such is the ethical code of Islam which the Muslims are directed to follow. It is not as tall an order as may appear to some. As the Quran has said:

“On no soul do we lay a

responsibility greater than it can bear” (Q. 2: 286)

One has only to reflect upon the purpose of his life and his end, and resolve to lead a pious and chaste life and seek God’s assistance. In the words of the Prophet:

“If one goes one step towards God, God comes two steps towards him,” and “the endeavour to live a life free of sins is the best of endeavours.” (Tabrani).

Observance of these and other injunctions and orders of the Prophet is incumbent upon every Muslim. Says the Quran:

“And whoso opposeth the messenger after the guidance [of Allah] hath been manifested unto him, and followeth other than the believers’ way, We appoint for him that unto which he himself hath turned, and expose him unto hell- a hapless journey’s end!” (Q. 4 : 115)

“Say, [O Muhammad] to mankind: ‘If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Allah is forgiving, Merciful.’” (Q. 3: “31)

The Quran gives the clarion call:

“So set thy purpose resolutely for the right religion, before the inevitable day cometh from Allah.” (Q. 30: 43)

and in an anxious note questions:

“Has not the time come for those who believe that their hearts should engage in humility in remembrance of God and of the Truth which has been revealed that they become not like those who received the Revelation aforetime, but the term was prolonged for them and their hearts hardened, and many of them are

evil-doers.” (Q. 57 : 16)

If wickedness and sins are not punished instantaneously or in the life of this world, it should not engender any sense of complacency or a feeling of impunity, for says the Quran:

“Deem not that Allah is unaware of what the wicked do. He giveth them respite till a day when eyes will stare [in terror].” (Q. 14-42)

“On the Day, when every soul will come pleading for itself.” (Q. 14: 111)

“And each of the servants shall come to Him on the day of Resurrection as a single individual.” (Q. 19 : 96)

“O mankind! keep your duty to your Lord and fear a Day when the parent will not be able to avail the child in aught, nor the child to avail the parent. Lo! Allah’s promise is the very truth. Let not the life of the world beguile you, nor let the deceiver beguile you, in regard to Allah.” (Q. 31 : 33)

Muslims are expected to set the standard in uprightness, piety, decency and God-fearing for the world:

“My Messenger is an example for you, that ye may be example for mankind.” (Q. 22: 78)

And, therefore, they must recapture the lost ground and endeavour to rise up to expectations:

“And strive for Allah with the endeavour which is His due.”

“That person has grasped the most trustworthy handhold, which never breaks, who rejects evil; and, believes in God. And, God hears and knows everything.” (Q. 2: 256) ■

(Continued from page 38)

away from the concept of materialism and humbly look up to the Divine guidance for peace and prosperity in the world. Choice between destruction and survival must be made some day sooner the latter.”

It is imperative that we must keep away from inhuman and terroristic acts. No religion allows such sort of atrocities and offences. If anyone commits such kind of heinous crimes and wrong doings, he is not true follower of his faith. He is reprobate, malevolent and not loyal to his religion.

The need of the hour is that we should abide by the teachings of our respective religion in letter and spirit. Moreover, we must develop humanitarian attitude and come forward to render welfare and charitable services for the poor and down-trodden sections of the society irrespective of caste, creed, colour and region.

In a nutshell, it is time we mould our behavior and conduct and carry ourselves in the hue of ethical values and moral virtues. Besides we should avoid all sort of anti-social activities which demoralize us and lead us to the path of devastation and ruin. No doubt only morality can prevent us from committing heinous crimes and unholy acts. It is such an asset which distinguishes between human beings and beasts. ■

(Continued from page 39)

democracy can contribute to improving the situation. Social justice must be reflected in a fairer distribution of wealth. Democracy must also be reflected in the provision of a wider range of civil liberties and the provision of public participation in decision-making processes. There is, therefore, a need for inter-ethnic cooperation and interdependence in various economic and political activities, as well as the establishment of institutions and sectors across ethnic barriers at all levels.

In order to achieve inter-ethnic harmony, the Malaysian government has developed a program called I Malaysia, a challenge to create inter-ethnic unity within a multi-religious, and multicultural state. Unlike similar countries, Malaysia has chosen a different path of unity within diversity and inclusiveness, while ensuring justice for all. This concept embraces the diversity of religions, races and beliefs, building mutual respect and acceptance on a solid foundation of trust and cohesion. (Malaysia 1 Government Transformation Program: the roadmap, 2010).

The Malaysian model was able to create social harmony as a condition for the stability of the political system, thereby demonstrating the maximum potential for diversity within the framework of unity. This may be due to its success in establishing flexible institutional structures that respond to the requirements of the social system, as well as the ability to utilize the country's resources and potential through conscious development policies that have created solutions to social and political conflicts. ■

Source :

*<https://www.dosm.gov.my>

The Eternal Life of Jannah (Heaven)

- Ahamad Wahaj Al-Siddiqui

Many renegades denied that how the life of the Heaven can be eternal while human life is faced with various complexities. As a matter of fact they do not know, the life of Heaven (Jannah) will be quite different from this worldly life. To throw light what is their in Jannah, I refer to some traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) so that the readers may know about the life of Jannah referring modern science proving its eternity.

Allah said: And give them glad tidings (O Muhammad) Unto them who believe and do good works That for them are gardens (Jannah) beneath which, rivers flow The more they are endowed with fruits. They say: That is that which was given us afore time And shall be conferred upon with things con-similar There for them are pure wives And they shall abide therein forever. (Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 25)

Glad tidings are given to those who are steady on the deeds guided by the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

a) Abdullah bin Omar said: Allah's Apostle (peace be upon him) was asked about Jannah (the Heaven), He said: Every living who entered the Heaven will never die. Will be blessed with eternal comforts, his garments will never wear out, and his

youth will never decay. When asked about its buildings he said: They are made of a brick of gold and a brick of silver in mortar with odor of Musk and its gravel are pearls and rubies and its soil (smells) saffron. (Al-Tabrani Bin Mardawi- yyah)

- b) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said; The soil of the Heaven is white, its fields have camphor rocks with sand of Musk. It has ever flowing rivers. All the people of the Heaven, the foremost and the last ones will assemble for a general introduction with each other. Allah will send an air of mercy smelling musk over them. The man will go back from the assembly to his wife. She will find him more elegant and good looking. She will say to him, you left me adoring; now I am taken aback by your splendid grandeur. (Al-Dur Al-Manthur from Abu Hurairah)
- c) The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: Allah has fenced the Heaven with a brick of gold and a brick of silver and gushed forth in the rivers and planted trees. When the angels saw its beauty they said: Blessed for you dwellers kings palaces. (Al-Dur Al-Manthur from Al-Khudri)
- d) The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: The rivers of the heaven

- gush forth from mountains of musk. (Al-Dur Al-Man- thur from Abu Hurairah)
- e) With regard to the verse: 'There for them are the pure wives and they shall abide therein forever'. Abu Hurairah narrated the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: The faces of the first group who enter heaven will shine like full moon. They won't spit; won't blow nose, won't excrete, their combs will be of gold and silver, their perfumes will be aloes wood and musk. Everyone of them will have two wives, they will be so excelling in beauty that he will see their bone marrow through their flesh, never there will be any opposition between them and their heart will never have any animosity but their heart will beat together. They will glorify Allah at the break of Day and fall of night (Agreed tradition).
- f) A man came to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) and said O! Abu Al-Qasim you say that the people of Heaven will eat and drink. He replied by the One who owns my life. Every man will be given the strength of hundred men in eating, drinking copulation and passion, he will feel to emaciate but the Jannah is free from defiling and harmful matter. The Apostle of Allah continued: His emaciation will be through sweat smelling musk, that will be the emaciation for his belly (Al- Nasai, Al-Munzir, Bin Abi Hatim)
- g) Abu Umamah said: A man asked the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) Will the people of the Heaven copulate? He said they shall copulate but there is no male or female semen. (Al-Tabrani)
- I will discuss some facts from modern science that how the life of Jannah will be eternal.
- Health means to enjoy the comforts of life with a sound mind in a sound body. Disease means the impairment of health or normal functioning of an organ or the failure of an organism to respond adaptively to its environment. Now we shall see the exogenous and endogenous causes of the diseases and go through the Qur'an and Sunnah if they are eliminated from the Heaven.
- Among the exogenous causes are burn, fracture or dislocation of a limb etc. The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: The vigorous in faith are for the Heaven (Jannah) Verily here is no danger whatsoever in the Heaven (Al-Baihaqui from Usama bin Zaid)
- A major causative agent for a large number of diseases is bacteria or micro-organism. Let us see if this if this organism is found in the Heaven:
- A similitude of the Jannah which the righteous are promised
- There are rivers of water not contaminating, and rivers of milk of unchanging taste, and rivers of wine

delicious to the drinkers. And rivers of honey pure and clear, therein for them is every kind of fruit with pardon from their Lord.

We know scientifically that existence of bacteria pollutes water but the Quran tells that the Heaven has rivers of water not contaminating. It means there is no existence of micro-organism in the Heaven. Similarly we know that the taste of milk changes due to the presence of lacteous bacilli. But in the Heaven are rivers of milk of unchanging taste, it indicates that the Heaven is free from water borne, and milk borne diseases. Further the Qur'an said that the wine in Heaven: 'No aching of the head, therefrom they get nor they will suffer any intoxication' (Surat Al-Waqi'ah Verse19)

These facts negates alcoholic diseases in the Heaven. As for honey it provides wonderful food and it is used as preserver of medicines among Arab physicians. And it is used in the treatment of quite few diseases. Allah mentioned its curing quality saying:

Wherein is healing for mankind.
(Surat Al- Nahil Verse 69)

Moreover soil of Heaven is quite different from soil of earth. It smells saffron, its field have camphor rock and sand dunes of musk.

All the above facts make it crystal clear that no room is left for any organism or microbes to have their existence in the Heaven.

The change in human body in the Jannah will be due to heavenly diet as we observe in the bee when it takes juice of flowers its emaciation is honey.

Quite few diseases are caused due to radiation or sever cold but Heaven is not a place for radiation and severe cold. Allah said:

It said: that several dusts that have local action on respiratory tract and cause pulmonary disease but the soil of heaven has no dust of earth, it smells saffron and full of greenery. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: A rider can't cover in Heaven a shade of tree in hundred years, if you wish you recite' And spreading shade' (Al-Bukhari) The deepening shades with flowering beauty runs hundred of miles in the Heaven.

We know that Ginger is digestive and used in the treatment of Flatulence and Colic. That is to say that the people of Heaven will be given digestive drinks.

'And He created that, which ye do not know. (Quran-16/8)

The invention of microscope in the 17th century did make us to observe the tiny organism called microbes.

This denies the Jewish and Christian scholars who claimed that the Qur'an is written by Muhammad, he could never know the modern science. Hence this is the Book of Allah Omniscient of all knowledge. ■

Muslim India in the Eighteenth Century

- Mohiuddin Ahmad

By the beginning of the eighth century of the Christian era the Arabs had conquered the frontier province of Sind and made it a part of the Islamic empire. The Arabs, however, never carried the standard of Islam far beyond the Indus, and India, in general, remained untouched by the faith of the Prophet. The Muslim impact on Northern India came over from the north-west, in the beginning of the eleventh century. But, by that time the faith had lost its political unity as well as its original simplicity, pure morality, contentment and the spirit of justice and generosity—the corner-stones of Islamic polity. The conquests were now not meant to rid the humanity of the serfdom of man and to bring it within the kingdom of God, as an Arab envoy had once told the Persian General; but, for extending the frontiers of powerful kingdoms which had sprung up after the caliphate turned into monarchy. Close to the western borders of India, the kingdom of Ghazni was founded by the Turk Sabaktagin, which was then a flourishing centre of Islamic culture and learning. Mahmud, the son of Sabaktagin, made his first expedition into India in 1001, and defeated Jaipal, the Raja of the Punjab. Ghaznavids were succeeded by the princes of Ghor. The Ghorids, under Muhammad of Ghor, were the first to extend the permanent rule of Islam beyond the frontiers of the Punjab and Sind. Bengal was rapidly conquered and frontiers of Islamic kingdom extended towards the south under the Turk rulers, who also defended India against the

successive onslaughts of the Mongol hordes. The Moghul rule was finally established in India by Babur in 1526, which lasted, but for a brief interval during the reign of Humayun, for more than three hundred years.

The sultans of Delhi prior to the Moghuls, recognised Islam as the state religion but they occasionally departed from the law to suit their convenience. The sultans enforced shari'ah as the law of the land, appointed Sadr- us-Sodur and Diwan-i-Qaza to supervise the working of shari'ah courts, to keep a watch on the public morals and to extend financial assistance to the Muslim divines, scholars and men of piety. Yet there was never a truly Islamic State, nor did the sultans constantly strive to make the state policy conform with the shari'ah. Barni, who closely observed the working of these monarchies, noted that duniadari (worldliness) of which the kingship was the climax in those days was absolutely opposed to dindari (religiosity). After, tracing the process by which the pagan institution of monarchy had crept into Islam, he reached the conclusion that sovereignty was never possible without practising non-Islamic customs and usages. The common people thought that the sultans really existed for protecting the faith and upholding the shari'ah; but, in reality, the decisive factor in the policy pursued by the sultans was the law of force and expediency. Barni says that very often capital punishment to the Muslims for political offences, which was contrary

to the sacred law, was resorted to. Similarly, the law of inheritance, the strict distinction between halal and haram, between the permissible and the disallowed, and many other well-known injunctions were violated; the ecclesiastics protested but were very frequently constrained to put up some excuse for such practices. The well-known prohibition of the shar'ah regarding usurious transactions was openly disregarded. In fine, to suit the sultans' convenience even the religious duties were sometimes sought to be confined for them to such matters as leading the prayers, making endowments for the religious establishments and dispensing justice, while the most flagrant breaches of the shar'ah rules were condoned.

Upon the heels of Muslim invaders, specially after the Mongols had overrun the Muslim lands from Central Asia to Syria, innumerable poets, artists, theologians and sufi saints sought refuge in the safety of Islamic realm in India. The influx of refugees from Iran, Turkistan, Iraq and several other lands continued unabated for a long time, which, in due course, made Delhi the central metropolis of Islam, a seat of Islamic culture and learning, art and architecture, surpassing even Baghdad and Cordova. Barni has given a long list of erudite scholars and men of piety who had come down to India, settled in smaller principalities, and engaged themselves in spreading learning and righteousness amongst the people through educational institutions, mosques and monasteries established by them in far off places. These learned men, a number of whom were initiated into one

or the other mystic orders, were loved and respected not only by the populace but they also exercised considerable influence on the autocratic rulers, kings and provincial governors. Historians have given many instances of the salutary effect produced by these doyens of spirituality on the state policies and public morals. Sheikh Nasir-ud-din Chiragh Dehli approved the election of Firoz Shah (1351-1388) as Sultan, after the demise of Muhammad Tughlaq, only when he had solemnly promised to rule the kingdom with justice and mercy. Similarly Sheikh Burhan-ud-din refused to take an oath of allegiance to Sultan Muhammad Bahmani (1358-1375) unless he gave up drinking, reformed his conduct, and enforced Shari'ah as the law of the land. Yet another instance, showing the strong influence of Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Auliya over the kings and the populace of Delhi is the detailed description given by Barni, -"Sultan (Ala'-ud-din Muhammad Khilji (1296- 1316) along with the members of his household was devoted to the Sheikh. The nobles and the laity had betaken the path of righteousness, and during the last few years of (Ala'-ud-din's reign nobody even talked of wine and beloveds, immorality and laxness, gambling and wantonness; in short, the major sins had ,come to be regarded as almost synonymous with infidelity."

By the time the Moghul rule had set its foot firmly on the Indian soil, Akbar (1556-1605) promulgated his new religion, the Din Illahi or "Divine Faith". The king had suffered himself to be flattered by the courtiers like Sheikh Mubarak, Mulla Shiraai, Hakim Abul Fath and Abul Fadhi into the belief that Islam had had its day,

after a thousand years of its inception, and that it was the duty of the King to assume his place as the spiritual as well as the temporal sovereign of his people. He concocted a seemingly eclectic creed likely, as he thought, to syncretize all religions but it ended up in the emergence of just one more religion. As Wolseley Haig says: "Islam was the one faith excluded from the benefits of Sulh-I-kull, or 'Universal toleration', on which Akbar continually descanted. The names 'Muhammad' and 'Ahmad' were disused and one foolish ordinance required that all words containing letters peculiar to Arabic, the sacred language of Islam, should be misspelt, the nearest equivalents of such letters being substituted. For the ordinary Muslim salutation, 'Peace be on you', and the reply 'And on you be peace', the disciples of the new faith were required to substitute Allah Akbar (God is most great) and Jalla Jalaluhu (May His glory be extolled), and the cavillers were not slow to note that each formula embodied one of Akbar's names." The prayer, fasting during Ramazan, Haj and other religious observances were discouraged. Study of religious sciences was banned, drinking of wine was made lawful, hogs were to be revered and numerous mosques were closed down for service or even ordered to be demolished." It became quite customary in those days to speak ill of the doctrines of Islam and even revile against the Holy Prophet. "The whole gist of the regulations was," according to Dr. Vincent Smith, "to further the adoption of Hindu, Jain and Parsi practices, while discouraging or positively prohibiting essential Muslim rites. The policy of insult

to and persecution of Islam, which was carried to greater extremes, subsequently, was actively pursued, even in the period from 1582 to 1585."

There are certain historians who hold the view that Badauni took every opportunity, to rake up the notion of Akbar's apotheosis for the purpose of renewing attack upon the great Emperor. There is, however, overwhelming evidence left by Akbar's contemporaries to show that the ridiculous vanity of the Emperor had caused unbearable miseries to the followers of Islam. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, a contemporary of Akbar, wrote in a letter that during the reign of Akbar "the infidels promulgated anti-Islamic laws in the realm of Islam, while Muslims were not allowed even to express the rules of shari'ah, and if one ever did so he was put to sword. Alas! What a pity! What a plight! Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be on him) was loved and adored by God but his followers were humiliated and crushed, and his detractors were honoured and praised! Muslims bemoaned the fallen state of Islam with a heavy heart while infidels used to poke fun at them for adding insult to injury. The sun of guidance had -been beclouded by the veil of irreligion and the light of truth enshrouded by gloom of falsehood."

Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624), better known as Mujaddid Alf Than! (Renovator of the second millennium), strived to rehabilitate Islam in India. The energy with which he controverted the un-Islamic practices and tried to bring back the influential ruling circles back to the path of Islam rendered him particularly odious

to certain Shi'a Chiefs who represented his activities as dangerous to the State. Jahangir (1605-1627), was, however, soon reconciled to Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, ordered his release from confinement in the Gwalior fort and awarded a robe of honour to him. It was chiefly owing to the persistent effort of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi that the government's attitude towards the religious injunctions gradually became tolerant and respectful. The reformatory endeavour of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi was not confined to the ruling circles alone. Although he was connected with a prominent sufi order, he avoided the extravagance of the mystics of his time and opposed their pantheistic tendencies exhibited through a wrong interpretation of Wahdat-ul-Wahud (Unity of Existence), by presenting the alternative doctrine of Wahdat-us- Shahud (Unity of Manifestation). The benign Influence exercised by the Sheikh and, after him, his Son Khwaja Muhammad M'asum Sirhindi, brought up Aurangzeb in the best of Islamic traditions, who later rose to become the preserver of true faith. The religious experiment of Akbar was bound to fail, as it did, but only after inflicting a severe wound in the body politic of Islam. The respect for religion and its observances had suffered a lot during this interregnum. It was easy to destroy; but rather difficult to restore the moral health of the masses.

Indeed, it was due to Akbar's immaturity, who had nearly destroyed Islam that Aurangzeb had to adopt certain measures for the reassertion of Islam which alienated the sympathies of his non-Muslim subjects. Personal virtues, simple

and saintly life and reformatory zeal of Aurangzeb cannot be denied even by his worst critics; nevertheless, his rigid dogmatism-which included its saving merits as well as its defects-earned a bad name for him. Akbar, on the other hand, failed to realise that Islam and Hinduism were not only religions in the ordinary sense of the term; but that the social, economic, spiritual and political lives of their adherents were intertwined with their religious beliefs and practices. These were not merely cultures but different ways of life, based on different ideologies. It was just not possible for such cultures to coalesce to produce a unified culture as Akbar had in view. On the contrary, the most practicable way to achieve integration and unity among the two communities lay in genuine tolerance and respect for each other's religious beliefs and taboos, modes and manners.

After Aurangzeb (d. 1707) the central political authority gave place to court intrigues, and ceaseless wrangle for succession. The emergence of three independent provincial chiefs-Asaf Jah Nizamul-Mulk in Deccan in 1713, Sa'adat 'Ali Burhan-ul-Mulk in Oudh in 1723 and 'Aliwardi Mahabat Jung in Bengal in 1740-sealed the fate of the great Moghul empire by the close of the eighteenth century. The disappearance of the central authority enabled three more predatory powers to raise their heads which were often utilised and strengthened by the mutual rivalry of the provincial governors. Of these, the Marathas were the first and the foremost who made endless encroachments; and, by degrees, seized upon several districts in the provinces of Agra and Allahabad and

plundered even the imperial capital of the great Moghuls, The second were the predatory tribes of Jats who ravaged the country between Delhi and Agra; while the third, the Sikhs in the Punjab, united as a separate sect to establish a kingdom under Ranjlt Singh. In 1738, descended Nadir Shah like a hurricane, seized the imperial treasure and effects, destroyed Delhi through indiscriminate massacre and pillage and returned to Afghanistan after detaching all the provinces to the west of Indus from the dominion of the Moghuls. The Emperor still ruled at Delhi but without any power except over the imperial capital. The whole of India appeared now about to be swallowed by the Marathas. Then came down Ahmad Shah Abdali who joined by the Rohila chiefs, Najib-ud-daula, S'adullah Khan and Hafiz Rahmat, crushed the Maratha: power in the third battle of Panipat fought in January 1761. Had Ahmad Shah Abdali, whose empire was in its youth and vigour, not left India like Nadir Shah, he might have extended his dominion from Afghanistan to Bengal. But, his hasty retreat from India, with innumerable princelings warring amongst themselves paved the way for gradual emergence of the British as the supreme power in India.

In this period of travail and transition, when every Indian chief was trying to consolidate his own power and prestige at the cost of others, the only Indian prince who had the foresight to correctly gauge the increasing political power and ambition of the British was Tipu Sultan of Mysore. He endeavoured to organise his 'Sultanat-i-Khuda- dad' on the Islamic principles of social justice; trained and equipped his

armies on the Western lines, warmed the blood of his soldiery with the fervour of jihad and attempted to secure alliances with the Marathas, Nizam and the French in order to expel the British from India. He sent emissaries to Kabul, Constantinople, Versailles and Mauritius to enlist the help of powerful allies against the British. Lord Wellesley, however, got the scent and started preparations for final assault. His martyrdom on the 4th May, 1799, brought about through treachery and intrigue, sent General Harris, the British Commander, to take a sigh of relief and remark exultantly: "From today India is ours."

The Muslim masses had, by that time, lost the sense of border lines demarcating the spheres of Islam and un-Islam: undue veneration of the saints and their tombs, ostentatious and wasteful expenditure on the occasion of births, deaths and other ceremonies, ban on the re-marriage of widows and numerous other customs and usages inter- woven with polytheistic cults prevalent amongst them were as irrational as economically ruinous. No longer actuated by the spirit of true faith, the people had fallen a prey to the 'strong passions with unrestrained appetite for sensual pleasures for the gratification of which they could incur any hazard.'" Saiyid Insha's *Darya-i-Latafat* vividly depicts the dissoluteness of Muslim aristocracy of the time. The mathnavis of Shauq (1783-1871) reveal that the search for delights of love were not unknown among the women of respectable families. A number of Muslim women like the famous Begum Samru (1751-1836) of Sardhana and Hayatun- nisa Begum of Benaras had married the Europeans.

Intoxicants like opium, wine and hemp, then in common use, had undoubtedly contributed to idleness and other bad habits. All this was because the then political system, in particular, undermined the possibility of planned, frugal living.

Internal decay of the ruling powers and latitudinarian attitude of the masses were not a peculiar feature of Indian Islam in the eighteenth century. The entire world of Islam had, it seems, absorbed numerous innovations, accretions and exotic beliefs and practices which had sapped its vitality and capability to cope with the changing times. The stage it had reached everywhere-as in India-has been graphically described by Lothrop Stoddard:-

By the eighteenth century the Moslem world had sunk to the lowest depth, of its decrepitude. Nowhere were there any signs of healthy vigour; everywhere were stagnation and decay, Manners and morals were alike execrable. The last vestiges of Saracenic culture had vanished in a barbarous luxury of the few and an equally barbarous degradation of the multitude. Learning was virtually dead, the few universities which survived had fallen into dreary decay and languishing in poverty and neglect. Government had become despotism tempered by anarchy and assassination. Here and there a major despot like the Sultan of Turkey or the Indian 'Great Moghul' maintained some semblance of state authority, albeit provincial pashas were forever striving to erect independent governments based, like their masters, on tyranny and extortion. The pashas, in turn, strove

ceaselessly against unruly local chiefs and swarms of brigands who infested the countryside. Beneath this sinister hierarchy groaned the people, robbed, bullied, and ground into dust. Peasant and townsmen had alike lost all incentive to labour or initiative, and both agriculture and trade had fallen to the lowest level compatible with bare survival.

As for religion, it was as decadent as everything else. The austere monotheism of Mohammad had become overlaid with a rank growth of superstition and puerile mysticism. The mosques stood unfrequented and ruinous, deserted by the ignorant multitude, which, decked out in amulets, charms, and rosaries, listened to squalid fakirs or ecstatic dervishes, and went on pilgrimages to the tombs of 'holy men', worshipped as saints and 'intercessors' with that Allah who had become too remote a being for the direct devotion of these benighted souls, As for the moral precepts of the Koran, they were ignored or defied. Wine-drinking and opium-eating were well nigh universal, prostitution was rampant, and the most degrading vices flaunted naked and unashamed. Even the holy cities, Mecca and Madina, were sink-holes of iniquity, while the 'Hajj' or pilgrimage ordained by the Prophet, had become a scandal through its abuses. In fine: the life had apparently gone out of Islam, leaving naught but a dry husk of soulless ritual and degrading superstition behind. Could Mohammad have returned to earth, he would unquestionably have anathematized his followers as apostates and idolaters.

The fundamental malaise of eighteenth century Islam in India was clearly perceived by Shah Wali Ullah (1703- 1762) who saw the empire of the Great Moghuls crumbling before him. The Shah had drawn up not only detailed plans for social, fiscal and political reforms but also strenuously endeavoured to restore a central authority in India in order to curb the forces of disorder and strife tearing the country apart. It is erroneous to assume, as does Wilfred Cantwell Smith, that the Shah's political ambition was to restore Muslim power in India more or less on the Moghul pattern. Shah Wali Ullah had, no doubt, invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to India before the third battle of Panipat and also urged upon Najib-ud-daula to put an end to the unbridled confusion then prevailing around Delhi, but that was primarily to save the Muslims undergoing unbearable hardships at the hands of predatory powers raising their head on the heels of vanishing Moghul empire and, secondly, because there was no power left in the country which could stem the tide of rising chaos and establish law and order on a firm footing. Nevertheless, the letters and treatises of Shah Wali Ullah leave no doubt that he had clearly perceived that the days of kingship were gone forever. He accordingly pleaded that political stability and economic prosperity of the country depended on a political set-up based on wider principles of humanitarianism, social justice and economic well-being of the people.

Shah Wali Ullah condemned the autocratic kingship, the luxurious living of the nobility and the oppressive social order which saddled the peasantry and

artisan classes with unbearable financial burden, Shah Wali Ullah believed that whenever any section of the society was reduced to the position of beasts of burden by an inequitable social order, God invariably paved the way for a revolution signalling the death of that oppressive system. He advocated to get rid of the parasites like poets and mendicants who lived by sponging on the kings without performing any useful work, to reorganise the armed forces and to make regular payments to the troops, to reduce the number of jagirs or fiefs and to abolish the system of farming out agricultural lands to assignees (Ijaradars) at fixed rents by the proprietors. Shah Wali Ullah also advised to promote economic well-being through cooperative effort and to develop the means of producing wealth like agriculture, irrigation and animal husbandry. Shah Wali Ullah declaimed against the evils to which different sections of the Muslims had fallen a prey in his time. To the 'Ulama, his criticism was directed against their excessive dogmatism and lack of independent thinking, particularly, their refusal to reinterpret the shari'ah in a way more suitable to the changing circumstances. Although initiated in the Naqshbandiyah order, he rejected the over-emphasis of the then mystic thought on other-worldliness. He appealed to the Muslims to discard their ignorance, indolence and selfishness as well as all accretions and innovations so as to build up a vigorous and united society on the basis of fundamental purity of Islam. He gave the call to his co-religionists to shake off their languor and resist the oppressors. He

advocated the use of 'ijtihad', rising, if necessary, above the four juristic schools, to re-interpret the shari'ah laws afresh in accordance with the Qur'an and the sunnah.

Shah Wali Ullah presented the Scripture and Prophetic Traditions as eternal sources of guidance in the changing world, as the living guides for humanity and not lifeless models or rituals. He maintained that there was nothing unintelligible in the creed of Islam or the injunctions of the shari'ah. He translated the Qur'an for the first time in India into Persian which was looked with horror by the theologians of his time. He was also one of the few scholars who endeavoured to spell out the wisdom behind the different religious injunctions to satisfy too intellectual curiosity set in motion during the eighteenth century as a result of Western impact, in the world of Islam. Shah Wali Ullah, thus based his concept of reform and regeneration of the Muslim society on Intellectualism of the shari'ah, but he did not discard the humanism or spiritualism of mysticism. And, this was, perhaps his unique contribution to modern Islam in the Indian sub-continent. It can be asserted that all the later fundamentalist reformist movements, like those of Shah 'Abdul 'Aziz and Saiyid Ahmad Shahid and the Deoband and Nadwatul 'Ulama schools, as well as the liberalist currents represented by Saiyid Ahmad Khan have drawn inspiration from him. Shah Abdul 'Aziz, his son and spiritual successor, initiated Saiyid Ahmad Shahid in his mystic order; the writings of Shah Muhammad Isma'il bear the imprint of Shah Wali Ullah's style and thought; the

founders of Deoband and Nadwatul (Ulama movements, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotawi (d. 1879), Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Maulana Muhammad 'Ali Monghyr and Maulana Shibli Na'omani, all were connected with his school; while Saiyid Ahmad Khan, too, unmistakably showed traces of Shah Wali Ullah's influence' in his commentary on the Qur'an and Athar-us-Sanadid.

The eighteenth century Muslim society in India was thus marked, on the one hand, by internal decay and external threat and, on the other, by the resurgent thought of Shah Wali Ullah pleading to discard latitudinarian indifference to the Islamic creed and to build up a healthy society which could forge ahead with renewed vigour and enthusiasm. Strange though it may seem, another marked phenomenon of the eighteenth as well as nineteenth century Islam in India was the efflorescence of intellectual and literary endeavour, unmatched by the days gone by, in the surrounding gloom of lax public morals at the bottom, and political confusion, at the top. Shah (Abdul (Aziz (d. 1824) author of Fath-ul-'Aziz, the famous commentary on the Qur'an and a collection of juristic opinions (fatawa); Maulana Shah Muhammad Ismail (d. 1831), the renowned reformer and author of 'Abqat, Taqwiatul-Iman and Mansab-i-Imamat; Qazi Thana Ullah of Panipat (d. 1810), writer of Tafsir Mazhari and Mala Budda Minhu; Shah 'Abul Qadir (d. 1814), the famous exegete who penned Muzeh-ul-Qur'an; Maulana Salam Ullah Muhaddith (d. 1813), the author of Muhalla; Maulana 'Abdul Ha'i Burhanwi (d. 1827), the author of Fatawa Sheikh-ul-Islam and

Shah Is'haq Dehlawi (d. 1845) are some of the religious scholars who need be mentioned here.

In discursive sciences valuable contributions were made by Maulana (Abdul 'Ali Bahr-ul-Uloom of Lucknow (d. 1810), Shah Raf'i Ud-din of Delhi (d. 1817), Maulana Fazi Imam of Khairabad (d. 1827) and Maulana Haider 'Ali of Rampur (d. 1856). In the science of mathematics, Shuruh-i-Makhrutat and Rasa'l Jabr-o-Muqabilah were written by Nawab Tafaddul Husain Khan (Allama (d. 1800), Al-Sittata- ul-Jebriyah by Qazi Najm-ud-din of Kakori (d. 1813), Fewa'd-ul-Atkar and Tuhfah-i-N'umaniyah by Khwaja Farid-ud-din (d. 1828), Shams-ul-Handisah and Sitla-i-Shamsiyah by Nawab Fakhr-ud-din of Hyderabad (d. 1862). The famous lexico- graphers of the age were Mufti Isma'l Landani, Maulana Auhad-ud-din of Bilgram (d. 1834) and Maulana 'Abdur Rahim of Safipur (d. 1850). Nafai's-ul-Lughat and Maftah-ul lisan by Maulana Auhad-ud-din and Munt'ha-al- 'Arab by Maulana 'Abdur Rahim are still deemed as authoritative works on the subject. Another learned man of the time was Tafaddul Husain Khan, the Wakil of Nawab Asaf-ud- daula at Calcutta (1788-1792), who knew Latin and Greek besides oriental languages. He had translated Newton's principia from Latin into Arabic. He had also translated several works on Algebra, Mechanics, Conic Sections and Logarithms. Mirza Abu Talib Khan of Lucknow had under- taken an extensive tour of western Asia and Europe during 1799-1803 and written an intelligent and entertaining account of the countries

visited by him. The book, which was later rendered into English by Charles Stewert, gives a picture of the English society in his time, its complex legal system, freedom and equality enjoyed by the women and commonalty as well as the limitations under which the two suffered, in comparison to their counterparts in India, under the veil of apparent freedom enjoyed by them.

We also come across reputed pedagogues like Mulla Mubin Firangi Mahli (d. 1810), Maulana Nurul Haq of Lucknow (d. 1822), Maulana Haider 'Ali Sandilawi (d. 1810) Maulana (Abdul Basit of Kannauj (d. 1819) and Maulana Ghulam Jilani (d. 1819); prolific authors like Maulana Baqar of Madras (d. 1805), Mufti Ilahi Bakhsh (d. 1829) and Maulana Rashid-ud-din Khan (d. 1827) ; the doyens of Urdu classical poetry like Mir Hasan (d. 1886), Mir Taqi Mir (d. 1810), Saiyid Insha' Allah Khan Insha ' (d. 1817), Ghulam Hamdani Mushafi (d. 1824), Sheikh Imam Bakhsh Nasikh (d. 1838), Khwaja Haidar 'Ali Atish (d. 1846), Momin Khan Momin (d. 1851), Sheikh Ibrahim Zauq (d. 1854) and Asad Ullah Khan Ghalib (d. 1869); and also several celebrated saints and men of God diffusing moral health and godliness among the people. Some of them, worth mentioning, were Shah Ghulam 'Ali of Delhi (d. 1824), Maulana Na'im Ullah (d. 1803) of Bahraich and Shah Murad Ullah (d. 1832) of Thanesar at Lucknow, Shah Muhammad Afaq (d. 1835) at Delhi, Shah Husain 'Ali Makanwi in the Punjab, Shah Darqahi Naqshbandi (d. 1811) at Rampur, Shah Ra'uf Ahmad Mujaddidi (d. 1833) at Bhopal and Maulana Ahmadi Kursawi,

Shah Amin-ud-din (d. 1837) and Qazi (Abdul Karim and his disciple of the same name in Oudh. Besides mystics of Mujaddidiyah order, the torch of Chishtiyah order was held aloft by Maulana Qutb-uddin (d. 1817), Sheikh Sabir Bakhsh (d. 1821), Shah Mir Muhammadi (d. 1826), Shah Niaz Ahmad (d. 1834), Shah (Abdul Sari Amrohwi (d. 1811) and numerous others in the Punjab, Bihar and Oudh. These mystics exerted benign influence over the masses and their monasteries attracted hundreds of devotees from far off lands, such as, Samarkand, Tashkent, Bukhara, Qandahar, Kabul and Ghazni. Likewise, educational institutions capable of affording a high degree of intellectual training and polish turned out thousands of scholars every year but in the absence of any central political authority and confusion and disorder then prevailing in the country, the stray and uncoordinated efforts of the ecclesiastics, scholars and mystics had failed to produce any appreciable impact on the masses who could not be galvanised to fight the forces of evil and decadence.

Medieval India was what the Muslims had made it. They had attained a stage of civilization- higher and to a certain degree unique, in this part of the globe. Persians and Turks coming from the western part of Asia possessed an elegant dialect, were celebrated for prosecuting the sciences, and had evolved a sociological structure which was egalitarian in its make up and productive of moral virtues like courage and manliness, graciousness and decorum, deference for religion, .rectitude and integrity. Kingdoms and

dynasties had come and gone but the social structure built by the Muslims had sustained their rule for eight hundred years. It looked to the Muslim rulers for its political unity but was guided by the 'ulama' and the pure- hearted mystics in its intellectual and moral pursuits. With the confusion and disorder prevailing everywhere in the eighteenth century the links that coordinated its material, cultural, intellectual and spiritual moorings had been suddenly rent asunder leaving the people perplexed and abashed without any sense of purpose or a higher Ideal. Nevertheless, the average Muslim had not entirely lost the qualities of his forefathers. He still had reverential regard for religious institutions and moral precepts. Even those who had fallen a victim to the failings of human desire had not lost the shame to flaunt their misdoings and very often expressed feelings of humiliation excited by consciousness of their guilt. Independence and manliness, courage and valour marked their character and manners, but their efforts not being directed to any higher ideal, these qualities were normally pressed into service for the defence of personal or family honour, or for the achievement of petty personal ends and, not infrequently, for personal aggrandisement. The more lofty in spirit oftentimes embarked upon spiritual travails and self-mortification under the influence of misguided mystics. The Muslims were also not bereft of creative zeal and finer instincts but these were misdirected towards niceties in food and dress and poetic extravagance in the form of ghazals and mathnavis. Last, but not the least, the Muslims had still not lost their

enthusiasm, their warmth of spirit, nor had the sense of pride and self-confidence gone out of them and they were, thus, still capable of being aroused to make a final effort for regaining their lost glory.

Emergence of a mercantile nation as a formidable force on the political scene of India posed as much threat to the age-old economic system of the country as to the values cherished by the Muslims of India. Many of the higher posts, in the army, in the administration and in the learned professions had been in the hands of the Muslims. Closure of these avenues of employment had begun to sink the Muslims into poverty and to submerge their higher classes in the lower social strata. The demobilization of the armed forces of Indian states, mostly manned by the Muslims, meant not only the loss of livelihood but also seemed to diminish their martial spirit. In the judicial and revenue departments, where the Muslims held their own, the reforms of Warren Hastings introduced in 1772, gradually replaced the qazis, mir-'adis, nazims and diwans by magistrates and deputy collectors of revenue. Jagirs were not abolished, but the jagirdars or land-holders found themselves under the British, subjected to "critical scrutiny, detailed inquisition and frequent resumption and commutation to pension. Another class of land-holders who suffered greatly under the British rule was the holder of revenue-free lands granted by the Muslim rulers to support learning and education. In order to maximise receipts from the land revenue the East India Company issued, from 1793 onwards, regulations for investigation and

resumption of such holdings as did not possess unimpeachable title-deeds properly registered with the Collector. Muslims of Bengal where the East India Company acted as the revenue farmer for Shah Alam were worse hit than others by these resumption proceedings. Then, the Permanent Settlement in Bengal virtually closed the doors to landlordship for the Muslims. But this was not all. The Muslims had in their hands many of the finer and more skilled industrial arts which were ruined by the fiscal policy of the East India Company. These measures of the new rulers of India had the effect of reducing the Muslims of the higher and middle classes into beggars; educational standard of the madersas began to contract both in quality and quantity; Muslim nobility began to be caught in the moss of harmful influences ; and, their intellectual and religious leadership began to show signs of deterioration. The baneful effects of the changing socio-political pattern of the country were visible even to the common man in the street; a seething discontent filled the air, but there appeared to be no one who could take the revolutionary message of Islam to the masses, rid them of their sorry plight, make their lives more meaningful and awaken them from the deep slumber of sloth and indifference in order to shape their destiny once again. Indian Islam in the eighteenth century was thus in search of a hero, a man of the hour, who could impart it again the sense of its role and identity, and it did find him in Saiyid Ahmad Shahid, at the turn of the century when it most needed him. ■

Moral Virtues

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Today most of us have sunk into sins, vices, crimes, corruptions and anti-social activities. Humanity has touched its lowest ebb. The sanctity it carries has vanished. Existing laws have failed to infuse fear in nefarious elements. Law enforcing agencies have become ineffective. It is unfortunate that the whole world is in a state of turmoil. Materialism has over shadowed the finer aspects of life. Corruption of all kind has now become a way of life.

Recent spate of rape cases seem that the moral fabric of the society has been torn to shreds. It has become hollow from within; its life- springs have dried up. In this context we may recall T.S. Eliot one of the greatest poets of twentieth century who composed a famous poem named "The Waste Land" after observing the then prevailing moral degradations, abjections, abasements, and beast-like behavior in Europe. He described Europe as waste land on account of the sins committed by its people. He further threw light on the disillusionment of a whole generation pointing out spiritual degeneration and prevalence of lust in contemporary Europe. The poem "The Waste Land" has been divided into five sections:

1. The Burial of the Dead
2. The Game of Chess
3. The Fire Sermon
4. Death by Water
5. What the Thunder Said.

In all five sections the poet refers to the loss of spiritualism from the world. He explains that the people of the modern world have become materialistic.

It is heartening to note that the Fire Sermon is the third section of the poem. Its idea came to Eliot from the sermon of Lord Buddha. In Lord Buddha's sermon the world is seen burning in lust and passion. There are hundred of sins that accompany it. Lust has been condemned in both East and West but the modern Waste Landers were lost badly in lust. There is no love. Hence they are suffering into immortal and everlasting pain. Eliot explains it through different scenes and images.

Today such is the condition in India. The nation is passing through stage degeneration. It has lost all the respect for spiritualism. Moral values of life are dead. Women have been the victim of masculine lust and exploitation.

Under these circumstances it is religion which instills into us fear of God and moral strength. It lays down for us the marg which we have to conduct ourselves. Besides it teaches us human values and sublime norms. It also leads us towards the path of salvation, progress and prosperity. Human values are more characteristic of mankind. If we don't have them, we are not real human it is, therefore, essential for every human being to develop the quality of considerateness, ethical values, kindness and compassion.

Without these qualities we are only human animals, nara pasu, not more than that.

The sphere of human values is not only confined to human beings but it extends to all the things of the world created for the benefit of mankind. The rights of parents, the rights of children, the rights of husband and wife, the rights of relatives, the rights of neighbours, the rights of orphans, benevolent treatment with the widows, the rights of the poor, the rights of patients, the rights of slaves and servants, the rights of guests, the rights of a Muslim upon a Muslim, human relationship, the rights of animals and the like are under the human values.

In his book "True Knowledge" Dr.S. Radhakrishnan says: "It is a small dialogue in an Upanishad that a question is put: what constitutes the essence of the good life? The teacher replies: "Didn't you hear the answer"? There was a thunderclap: da da da. Immediately the teacher explained that these were the essence of good life. - dama, dana, daya. They constitute the essentials of the good life. You must have dama or self control, restrain, which is the mark of human being".

Jawaharlal Nehru says: "Religions have helped greatly in the development of humanity. They have laid down values and standards and have pointed' out principles for the guidance of human life."(The Discovery of India, P.511)

He further says: "No man can live without religion," Gandhiji has written somewhere. "There are some who in the egotism of their reason declare that they

have nothing to do with religion. But that is like a man saying that he breathes, but that he has no nose." Again he says: "My devotion to truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humanity, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."(An Autobiography, p.379)

It should be noted that the essence of all religions is humanity which revolves around righteousness, action, creation, sustenance, happiness and ultimate self realization as to who am I and who is He. Human is called a social animal. But it forgets its purpose in life by its overcoming greed and other ills. Animals are more grateful than man. All of you know the story of "Alexandra' the slave and lion'. On being treated of his wound, lion though hungry of days has not eaten Alexandra. Religion everywhere serves the purpose of supporting the moral & social principles which have made men civilized. (Enlightenment through Humanity and Spirituality, p.57)

A noted scholar has rightly said: "As an outcome of the materialistic concept of life mankind today faces crisis, which perhaps has no parallel in history. This crisis, pervading all the spheres of human life, has taken the form of universal revolt against religion. A psychological analysis of this situation reveals that it is the end-product of a basic feeling of insecurity. The world today stands at the edge of destruction. The threat of atomic war hangs over our heads. This humanity, if it wants to survive, has no option but to break

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Malaysia : The Unity in Diversity

- Osman Muhammad Osman

Malaysian society consists of three major ethnic groups, Malay “Bumiputera or indigenous Malay origin” 68.8% Chinese 23.2% Indians and some small groups such as the Japanese, Minangkabau, and Bugis 7%. Malays are indigenous people, while Chinese, Indians and more are brought by colonialism as laborers to work in various fields such as rubber plantations, tin mines, real estate, railways, postal services, and others.

The ethnic status of the Malays before independence took on the character of multiple societies. British colonialism ruled in the formation of the economic conditions of different ethnic groups in Malaysia through a “divide and conquer” policy that was in favor of the colonizer, which did not provide an opportunity for interaction between these ethnic groups. But moulded templates as specified in the field of work, the category of farmers, mostly Malay, and businessmen, mostly Chinese, but the workers are mostly Indians. Of course, the Chinese and the Indians have different cultures and religions than the Malay, and they have settled in areas far from the Malay villages, forming a social barrier between Indians and Chinese on the one hand and between them and the Malay on the other. After independence, they mingled with the Malay, and their presence was more concentrated in resource-rich cities such as rubber plantations and tin mines with opportunities to work in trade and factories.

The 1957 Constitution is an initial attempt to reach formal power arrangements between Malays and non-Malays. These arrangements were largely made at the elite level between the Malay and non-Malay

members of the ‘ruling coalition known as the National Front. These arrangements were seen as a compromise reached through negotiations, under which the Malays had political hegemony, while non-Malays were guaranteed their rights with respect to religion, citizenship, and language. The Malaysian Constitution, enshrined a special status for Malays and indigenous people in both Sabah and Sarawak states, taking into account the interests of other communities, by article 153.

Despite the obvious differences between Malaysia's ethnic groups in terms of religion, language, culture, accommodation, economic activities, political trends and educational choices, which constitute a social gap between these ethnicities, they are not completely isolated from one another. There is coexistence among them. In this regard, it is important to note here that the national language plays a very important role in promoting this coexistence. Although the Chinese and Indians speaking their native language, which is culturally distinct, they use the Malay language in public life and in government institutions as well. This situation is clearly visible in villages and cities of ethnic diversity, and it appears at different levels, such as friendships at the level of individuals, common relationships in markets, clubs, membership in some political parties, and non-governmental organizations, thus strengthening interaction between these different ethnicities.

However, in the context of the Malaysian situation, social justice and

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