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Value of Love

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

But there is an exceptional glare of love in man's eyes which is not found in any other creature. His heart is characterized with softness and melting quality inspired by love and quivers with the touch of pain and suffering for others. Such a heart is not in the treasures of the angels and surely man alone can present to his Lord a heart full of sincere love for others.

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

"Tell them: 'Call upon those whom you fancy to be [your helpers] beside Him! They have no power to remove any affliction from you, nor can they shift it.' Those whom they call upon are themselves seeking the means of access to their Lord, each trying to be nearer to Him. They crave for His mercy and dread His chastisement. Surely your Lord's punishment is to be feared."

(Al-Qur'an-17:56-57)

These verses throw a challenge to the unbelievers and polytheists to call upon their self-made deities whom they consider to be their helpers beside God to come to their rescue at times of affliction. They assert that these deities have no power to remove any affliction.

Not only prostrating oneself before someone other than God but also praying to and invoking anyone other than God amounts to associating others in His Divinity, i.e. to polytheism. Prayer and invocation are modes of worship and anyone who invokes someone other than God is as guilty of polytheism as an idol-worshipper.

Nor can anyone other than God avert a calamity or alter anyone's plight. If someone entertains such beliefs about anyone other than God, then such beliefs are false and betray the fact that he associates others with God in His Divinity. How ironic that those whom the polytheists invoked and whom they sought to intercede with God on their behalf were themselves in need of God's mercy, dreaded His punishment, and were constantly on the look-out for the means which would bring them close to Him. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas that Muadh said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) sent me (as governor of Yemen) and (at the time of departure) instructed me thus: you will soon find yourself in a community one among the People of the Book; so first call them to testify that there is no god but Allah, that I (Muhammad) am the messenger of Allah, and if they accept this, then tell them that Allah has enjoined upon them five prayers during the day and the night, and if they accept it, then tell them that Allah has made Zakat obligatory for them that it should be collected from the rich and distributed among the poor, and if they agree to it, don't pick up (as a share of Zakat) the best of their wealth. Beware of the supplication of the oppressed for there is no barrier between him and Allah.

(Sahih Muslim)

The People of the Book never denied the existence of God. Their belief however was not correct as it was alloyed with wrong conceptions and mistaken notions. This shows that mere faith in God is not enough. Therefore, the Holy Messenger asked Muadh to call the People of the Book to testify God, first and foremost. Calling to the prophethood of Muhammad is indicative of the fact that belief in his prophethood is an integral part of the faith. This hadith highlights the practical wisdom with which Dawah should be imparted to the fellow beings. ■

Editor's Note 

Scapegoats

The covid-19 which has now engulfed the whole world showed its head in India in February 2020 beginning from Kerala. Now whole nation is in its grip and there are no signs of its diminishing effects. It is unfortunate that even after seeing its devastating sights no remedy has so far been found. Claims of various countries of the successful efforts in making vaccine to ward of this pandemic are still in doldrums.

In India it is said that this virus was brought from foreign land first in Kerala and has gradually spread in other parts of the country. Incidentally by the end of February it reached Delhi and at the same time Tablighi Jamat was holding its annual congregation at its Nizamuddin situated Markaz. Thousands of Jamatis from India and abroad had collected there. In early March the congregation concluded and groups of the Jamatis were asked to disperse in various directions to perform their reformative mission amongst Muslims. A large number of participants were held back in Markaz because of the lockdown imposed in the country. One Jamati in Srinagar and 2 in Hyderabad were found affected with covid-19 and died. Their journey history was traced that ended at Nizamuddin. That provided the tool to government

and right-wing parties to blame Jamatis for spreading the virus. A reign of terror was let loose and Muslims particularly Jamatis were made targets of their ire. No Section of Indian Penal Code and other Acts were spared to tighten the knot around their necks.

A good number of foreigners who had come from 80 countries along with Indian Jamatis were imprisoned. However, recently Bombay High court has pronounced a judgement saying that foreigners and others are virtually persecuted.

“A political government tries to find scapegoats when there is pandemic or calamity and the circumstances show that there is probability that these foreigners were chosen to make them scapegoats,” said a bench of Justice T.V. Nalawade and Justice M.G. Sewlikar. The court further said that the “Material of the present matter shows that the propaganda against the so-called religious activity was unwarranted.” The court dropped criminal cases against Jamatis.■

S.A.

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Hajj

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Hajj is another religious duty incumbent on every true Muslim if he has the means to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. Islam attaches so much importance to the institution that a Muslim is liable to be declared an apostate, in accordance with the injunctions contained in this regard in the Qur'an and the Traditions, if he possesses the means but does not perform the haj. The pilgrimage is performed with certain fixed rites at Mecca, which have to be gone through from the 8th to the 12th of Zil-Hijja, the last month of the Muslim lunar year.

The Rites of Hajj

The ceremonies of Hajj have to be performed on the sacred precincts of Mecca and the two neighbouring places Mina and 'Arafat on the fixed dates. These ceremonies being an integral part of the pilgrimage, and having been specified by the holy Scripture and the practice of the Prophet of Islam, cannot be performed at any other place or on any other date, The Muslim tradition connects it with the two most venerable Prophets of God, Abraham and Ismael, who, when commanded by their Lord, willingly laid their lives at the altar of God. It was at these places, on these very days that the father and son, with concerted will, came out successful from

the supreme trial of self-sacrifice in the service of God. It was indeed a great and arduous trial to test the love and affection, ardour and devotion of the two men whose ennobling example shall ever continue to inspire mankind and inflame their hearts with the Divine love. The commemoration of this noblest sacrifice accompanied with the repetition of the rites performed by these two Apostles of God, allows the believers, on the one hand, to partake the spirit of adoring affection for God felt by them and, on the other, links them all, belonging to different countries and nationalities, in the common heritage of Abrahamic belief and culture and the way of his life. The pilgrimage, of a fact, has been the greatest factor in preserving the religious and cultural solidarity of the Muslims spread all over the world by forging a common link between them as well as with the centre of Islam, the House of God.

It would be out of place to describe in any detail the rites performed at the time of Hajj. These rites are fairly long and consist of numerous details which can be seen in the writings of Muslim legists, and can be understood only by undergoing all these rituals under the guidance of the expert guides known as mutawwif. Here we shall try to accompany the intending Hajees in

order to give a broad idea of the way Hajj is performed.

Travel for the Pilgrimage

The Indian Muslims are known for their genuine feeling of religious enthusiasm for the Hajj and their number exceeds that of any other country where Muslims are in a minority. There is great rejoicing when the pilgrims set out from their villages or towns for the Hajj; they are given a send-off with the most distinguished marks of respect; the friends and relatives beg the pilgrims to remember them in their invocations to God at the Holy of Holies and wish them god-speed success in their journey. The elderly Hajeess entertain a subconscious wish to die on the sacred soil of the holy cities. With this end in view, it is customary for the pilgrims to take with them a shroud which they bring back dipped in the water of Zamzam, to be used as a burial garment when they ultimately give up the ghost.

Engagements at the Port

At the ports of embarkation where the pilgrims have normally to spend a few days before the ship takes off on its journey, the pilgrims can be seen studying the rites of the pilgrimage. Those who are educated try to gain acquaintance of the geography and historical importance of the places to be visited by them. Normally all the pilgrims engage themselves in pursuits which may be helpful in the performance of the

Hajj and in deriving the maximum benefit out of the journey undertaken with considerable cost and inconvenience. In the ships too, arrangements are made for daily discourses on the haj, its importance and the ceremonial rites connected with it in order to keep the hearts of the pilgrims smitten with the love of God.

Ihram

When the ship reaches Yaulamlam' a siren is sounded to inform the pilgrims that it is the place where they should put on the special pilgrim garments (ihram). This is the miqat for the pilgrims coming to Mecca from the north. There are different miqats for people coming from different directions, the farthest from Mecca being the one for those coming from Madina. It signifies that the pilgrim should prepare himself mentally as well as in his outward appearance and attires for presenting himself before the Lord of the worlds.

The pilgrims take a bath for ritual purification and change into two seemless white sheets of cloth. The women do not have to put on the pilgrim's garment (ihram) but they cannot now cover their faces until the Hajj is completed. They offer a two Rak'at prayer and express the formal intention (niyat) of performing the Hajj. Now they shall have to abide by all the regulations prescribed for the Hajj the clothes they

had been wearing so long are now prohibited for them; they must now move bare-headed and must not cover their heads and faces ; and, finally, remain in these special shroud like clothes till the day of the great sacrifice on the tenth day of Dhil Hijja. Now no distinction remains: the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the white and the black are all in the same garments. Even the difference of languages spoken by the pilgrims hailing from different parts of the world is obliterated for everyone has the same song of love on his lips.

“Here I am at Thy service, O Allah! Here I am at Thy service; Here I am at Thy service; There is no partner unto Thee; Here I am at Thy service; To Thee belongs all praise, the riches and the sovereignty of the world. There is no partner unto Thee.”

The whole ship resounds with the chanting of the faithful who are now lost in the ecstasy of love for the holy land and its Lord Henceforth marital relations, mutual acrimonies, insolent behaviour and abusive language—all are prohibited and shall remain a grievous sin until the pilgrim’s garment (ihram) is put off. The Qur’an ordains: “Whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage, therein there is (to be) no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage.”

Some of the pilgrims appear to be restless ; while there are others-who

seem to be lost to the world—in an unearthly sea of happiness. For some the travelling must have been the first journey of their life—and what a journey, towards what an exalted goal! It had been their life-long wish to see the holy city, once, even if they had to die after it. They had always offered the prayers facing the Inviolable House of God, never slept with their feet on the side of Ka’aba nor answered the call of nature facing that direction ; and, now this goal of their life is drawing near!

The Ka’aba

And lo ! the pilgrims find themselves, suddenly, within the limits of the Haram. The fast moving vehicles take the pilgrims to the Holy Mosque in no time. Now they are within the inner square of the sanctuary having a large cube of about forty feet high, covered with black brocade with a broad band of gold-embroided verses from the Qur’an running around the upper portion of the covering. At its southeast corner, the black stone (Hajr-al-Aswad) surrounded by a silver frame is embedded in the wall which has been kissed hallow by many generations of the pilgrims simply because this only remnant of the original House of God built by Abraham was kissed by the Holy Prophet. This is, then, the Ka’aba : without any definite ornamentation, without any structural beauty of line and form ; it stands there in utter simplicity man could conceive of as no

architectural beauty could he create befitting the Lord, Most High.

There is an indescribable joy when the pilgrims first see the Ka'aba, the goal of their longing. A few seem to be in a transport of delight, some shed tears of joy while there are still others who are dumbfounded as if captivated by the glory of God before their eyes. Now the pilgrims will walk round the Ka'aba seven times, kiss the black stone and offer prayers facing it from any side they desire. There are also the hillocks of Safa and Marwa, at a short distance, which still mark the places between which Hagar ran seven times in search of water for her little Ismael. Her frantic search for water was so liked by God that every pilgrim must now traverse the track, in imitation of Hagar, increasing and slowing his paces like her, for the Hajj will not be complete without undergoing this sa'ee.

In the Plain of Arafat

This is now the eighth of Dhil Hijja. The pilgrims will proceed to Mina, some four miles out of Mecca and camp there. On the ninth morning, they will proceed to Mount Arafat, about eight miles still further on. Here they shall fulfil the basic demand of the pilgrimage of Hajj for this is the ceremony of ceremonies to be performed during the pilgrimage. But, after all, what is this rite? Recollection of God for the whole day, repentance over one's past sins, a cry of anguish in

the form of labbaik, labbaik, and a solemn promise to lead a virtuous, pious life in future!

The Supplication at Arafat

We give here the supplication once offered by the Prophet of Islam in the plain of Arafat, and now repeated by the pilgrims to express their renunciation and self-surrender, humility and helplessness on this solemn occasion.

'O Allah! Thou hearest what I say; Thou seest where I am; Thou knowest what I keep secret and what I express. Nothing that I do can remain concealed from Thee. I am an afflicted and helpless and a distressed soul. I seek Thy refuge for I am appalled and horrified. I acknowledge my mistakes, my sins; and I implore Thee like one forsaken and forlorn; I cry to Thee as one humiliated and abased; I call upon Thee as one miserable and crushed; I fall on my knees like one whose head hangs in shame before Thee, whose eyes shed tears, who has thrown himself at Thy feet and is crouched before Thee. O Allah! cause me not to fail in supplicating before Thee. Thou art Most Gracious and Most Merciful for me. Verily, Thou art the Best of all who are implored, the Most Bountiful of all givers."

This is the plain of Arafat, a city of tents: no houses, no buildings; people of all races and languages clad in the

all-equalising ihram, beseeching God, shedding tears; sobbings and murmurings fill the air. Where acquaintances meet, they exchange greetings, people eat and drink, but all are burdened by the care to atone for their past sins and prepare for a virtuous life henceforth. The prayers of zuhr and Asr have been performed at their appointed times and it is now the time for maghrib (sunset) prayer: this orison has been performed throughout one's life exactly at the time fixed for it, but today it has to be offered late at Muzdalifah, for there is no virtue in any prayer offered by force of habit or of one's own accord—the merit lies in doing what God ordains, the prayer is for Him and all are His slaves.

Back to Mina

As soon as the sun goes down, a cannon shot announces the warning to leave the plain of Arafat. The tents are at once rolled and the thronging crowd' moves on to Muzdalifah, at a distance of about six miles. The pilgrims again pitch their tents to take rest for the night and proceed early next morning to offer supplications at Mash'ar-i-Haram. They pick up pebbles from here to cast these at the Devil (Jamra). This is the rite called rami reminding one how Ibrahim had rejected the promptings of Satan to dissuade him from sacrificing his only son in the way of God. Now they again return to Mina. The pilgrims had left it when the Master had so desired and

now they again wended their way back to it at His call. Obedience of God is the essence of all customs and rituals; of a fact, the Hajj itself.

Now, the pilgrims will remain at Mina for two or three days. On the 10th of Dhil Hijja they will offer the sacrifice, stone the Devil again and then circumambulate the Ka'aba at Mecca. This circumambulation is the most important and more meritorious than all those performed before or after. The pilgrimage proper is now over, and the Hajees wash and shave and change over to their ordinary clothes. The pilgrims must, however, spend three days at Mina. On the next two days after the Hajj is over they must stone the Devils again. No other rituals now remain and the pilgrims are free to pay social visits, make friends with the Muslims hailing from the farflung world of Islam and create the bonds of mutual understanding and common weal.

In the city of the Prophet

The pilgrims are now impatient to pay a visit to Madina, if they have not already done so on the upward journey. It is not incumbent, only meritorious, to betake oneself to Medina; nevertheless, who can deny that but for the beloved Apostle of God, on whom be the blessings and peace, there would have been no circumambulation of the Ka'aba, no namaz, no Hajj ! One is naturally anxious to make one's

salutations to the greatest benefactor of humanity, offer prayers in his mosque which increases its merit fifty thousand times, see the houses and the lanes and the paths where the Prophet once lived and walked and preached, and witness the land on which are still visible the imprints of the sacrifices and achievements of the Prophet and his companions.

Having completed the Hajj, the pilgrims return to their homes. This is again an occasion for rejoicing in the towns or villages at the safe arrival of the pilgrims back to their relatives. The neighbours makes it a point to pay congratulatory calls on the returning pilgrims, who, on their part, bring some small present for all the friends and

relatives. It may be a rosary, a few dates or a bottle of zamzam water, but even the poorest pilgrim will bring back his modest little gift purchased in the city of Bait Allah (House of God) for all his friends.

This is how the Hajj, the fourth most important duty incumbent on every Muslim possessing the means is performed. The pilgrim is now entitled to be known as a Hajee. The prayer (namaz), fasting (rozah) and the poor-due (zakat) are all incumbent on him as ever, as on other Muslims, but he is now burdened with an additional responsibility to prove himself worthy of the honour conferred on him by the new title attached to his name. ■

Muharram

Muharram is the first month of the Muslim lunar year. Before Islam and after its advent too, Muharram has been regarded as a sacred month entitled to veneration of the faithful. Many important events occurred on the 10th of this month. One of these was the deliverance of Moses and the Israelites from the tyranny of Pharaoh. Moses and his followers had crossed over to Sinai from Egypt on that day and Pharaoh was drowned in the Red Sea along with his legions. It is related that a few months after his immigration to Madina, the prophet observed the Jews keeping fast on the tenth of Muharram. The Prophet enquired why they did so. On being informed that it was a memorial of the deliverance of Moses and the children of Israel from the hands of Pharaoh, the Prophet said, "We have a greater right in Moses than they". So he fasted and commanded his followers to fast also. Thus the fast on that day came to be regarded as obligatory before it was made optional with the advent of the Ramadan fast. Even now many Muslims given to religious observance among the Sunnis keep the fast on the 10th of Muharram. ■

Preaching And Propagation

- Mohd. Manzoor Nomani

Essential as it is for us to affirm faith in God and the prophet and to follow with righteousness and sincerity the straight path of Islam, it is also of no mean importance that we strove earnestly to guide the others, too, to the path of Faith who are ignorant of it or who may be unwilling to adopt it on account of prejudice or spiritual malaise. As God has placed on us the duty of being His pious, devout and faithful servants so also has He made it obligatory for us to work among His other creatures as well towards the same end, that is, towards making them also His pious, devout and faithful bondmen. That is what is meant by the service of Faith and its preaching and propagation.

This work is so great in the sight of God that for it He sent down thousands of Prophets into the world. The Prophets bore tremendous hardship and went through the severest of trials and privations to carry out their mission. They worked for the moral and spiritual reform and uplift of mankind. (May the eternal blessings of God be on them and their companions and supporters).

The glorious chain of Prophecy and Apostleship ended with the last of the Prophets, the Prophet Mohammad (Peace and Blessings of God be upon whom). Through him also God proclaimed to the world that no more Prophets would now be raised up for the guidance of humanity. The celestial mission shall now be carried

on by those who have accepted his guidance and the religion he had brought with him into the world.

In sum, after the termination of the luminous line of Apostles the responsibility for preaching and propagation of Faith and religious instruction and reform of mankind has fallen wholly upon the shoulders of the followers of the sacred Prophet. This honour, indeed, is unique. In the Quran, the very object of the raising up of Muslims has been defined as nothing but this:

You are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and, believing in God.
(111 : 110)

The Muslims were, thus, superior to all other peoples and communities for the simple reason that they, in addition to adopting for themselves the path of Faith and righteousness, were charged with the special duty of striving to bring others also to practice what was right and to avoid what was wrong. It was because of this that they were given the distinction of being the Best of Peoples'. It is, also, evident from the above verse that should the Muslims fail to discharge the function they would not only forfeit the claim but also render themselves liable to be punished by God for neglecting the duty He had assigned to them. Let us take an illustration: suppose a company of sentries is posted in a town by the Government to check the immoral activities of its citizens

and the sentries not only fail to perform their duty but, what is more, they themselves begin to indulge in the transgressions they were required to suppress. Now, will they be retained in service and rewarded by the Government or taken severely to task by it for their negligence and it will, certainly, not be improper or unjust if they were punished more severely than the other offenders.

The conditions prevailing in the entire Muslim World today are so extremely deplorable that, what to speak of the preaching of Faith and correction and reform of others, not more than five or ten per cent of Muslims themselves are true to Islam and do good deeds and abstain from what is evil and prohibited. In these circumstances, it becomes our primary duty to carry out the mission of moral and spiritual reform and guidance among our own people- among such sections of them as have drifted mournfully away from the path of Faith and moral uprightness.

One of the reasons for it is that those who call themselves, or are known as Muslims, whatever be their practical state, have, after all, forged a link between themselves and God and His Prophet and Faith, and become members of the Muslim brotherhood or Ummat, through the acceptance of Islam. Solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being is our first responsibility, in any case, in the same way as the responsibility of looking after the welfare of his own children and near relations is greater on a man than that of looking after the welfare of others.

And, secondly, before everything else, it is the actual condition of Muslims from which the world will generally judge about Islam, and the spectacle of degeneration that Muslims, on the whole, present these days is such that it cannot be expected to make a very favourable impression on anyone in respect of their Faith. The non-Muslim World is not likely to think very highly of the excellent teachings of Islam as long as Muslims remain what they are today. On the other hand, it is a feeling of revulsion and dislike which non-Muslims usually get about Islam when they look at the moral and spiritual depths into which the Muslims have sunk. It has always been like this. People have always formed their opinion, good or bad or indifferent, about a religion from the actual moral and social state of its followers.

In the past when Muslims used to be truthful Muslims, observing strictly the postulates of their Faith, people were attracted towards Islam simply by seeing them. Whole nations and communities were converted to Islam in this way. But since the Muslims sank so low that the majority of them remained Muslims only in name their conduct and morals grew un-Islamic and their hearts got bereft of Faith and righteousness the world has developed a prejudice against Islam itself.

In fine, we should realise the truth of it clearly that the daily life of Muslims, their social and moral and spiritual conduct and behaviour, is the biggest testimony and the chief measuring rod with regard to Islam.

If the practical life of Muslims is good the world will form a good opinion about Islam and, if it is bad, the opinion the world will acquire about Islam will also be bad. In latter case, the preaching of Islam among non-Muslims is destined to be fruitless. Hence, the success of all the efforts aimed at the propagation of Islam among non-Muslims as well is dependent on the condition that Islamic life, i. e. the life of Faith and righteous action became the chief attribute of the entire Muslim community. From this point of view, also, it is necessary to strive first for the guidance and reformation of Muslims and to launch the struggle with all our might for popularizing the values of Islamic life among them before we turned our attention to others.

The Quran has given the task of religious preaching, reform and guidance the name of Jihad-i-Akbar, the great Jihad. If it is undertaken in the right spirit, with sincerity and selflessness, and solely for the sake of winning Divine approbation, this work, definitely; is a very great Jihad in the sight of God.

Many people suppose that Jihad means only a war which is waged in the path of God and according to the rules and instructions laid down for it in the Shariat. But it is not correct. The truth is that whatever endeavour that can be made at a particular time for the preaching and propagation of Islam and moral and spiritual correction and guidance of mankind is Jihad of that age.

The holy Prophet remained in Mecca

for about twelve years after the mantle of Apostleship had fallen upon him. During this period Jihad of the Prophet and his Companions consisted altogether in adhering steadfastly to Faith in spite of the terrible persecution unleashed on them by the enemies of Islam, and in doing all that lay in their power, openly as well as secretly, to spread the Divine message of Islam, and reform, morally and spiritually, those who lived around them.

To devote oneself to the noble task of guiding the ignorant, the wayward and the thoughtless to the straight path of Islam, and of bringing them nearer to God, to spend one's time and money on it, to sacrifice one's comfort, all this, in any case, is Jihad in Divine estimation. In fact, it is the Jihad of the present age.

The rich reward that awaits those in the Hereafter who engage themselves in the lofty endeavour as well as the dreadful punishment that is going to fall to the lot of those who neglect it and do not participate in it can well be imagined from the Traditions we give below:

“A person who guides another to a deed of virtue shall receive the same recompense for it as the doer of the deed and there will be no reduction in the reward of the doer himself because of it.”

What the Tradition means is that suppose ten persons, or even five, were reformed through our efforts and they came to believe in God and the Prophet and to observe the Divine commandments they began to offer Namaz and carry out

other religious duties and avoided what was wrong and forbidden—then the reward they will earn on it jointly will be granted to us alone also. A little thought will show that there is simply no other way in which a person can win so much reward—the reward of the prayers and other pious and virtuous deeds of hundreds of men.

Another Tradition of the holy Prophet says:

“By the Almighty, if only one man receives guidance through you, it is better for you than red camels.”

As we have said earlier, the endeavour for mankind’s moral and spiritual guidance and reformation is a service of Faith of the highest order and a thing of outstanding merit and excellence. It is the special heritage left to us by the Prophets. It means their deputyship; it means their vicegerency. What worldly gain, what earthly glory, can compare with it?

The holy Prophet, in the under-mentioned Tradition, has made use of a simple example to impress upon us the importance of the work of religious reformation and guidance.

He said, “Suppose there is a double storied boat in which the passengers of the lower deck have to fetch water from the upper deck. This causes inconvenience to the occupants of the upper deck and they do not like it. Now, if in their foolishness the passengers of the lower deck decide not to go to the upper

deck and for their supply of water and begin to bore a hole in the bottom of the boat, and the passengers of the upper deck do not stop them from doing so, the entire boat, with all the passengers, will sink. But if the occupants of the upper deck, somehow, manage to dissuade the occupants of the lower deck from boring the hole, they will save occupants of the lower deck as well as themselves from being drowned. The same is true with wickedness and sin. If a community, as a whole, dwells in a state of ignorance and sinfulness and its enlightened and virtuous section do not take steps to reform and to bring it on the right path then Divine punishment will be sent down upon it because of its sins and transgressions and the pious and virtuous members of the community will, also, be caught in it. On the other hand, if an endeavour is made by them to reform the sinners and wrongdoers, the whole community will be saved.”

Again, the Prophet is reported to have said:

“By the Almighty in whose power lies my life, do not neglect the duty of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Remember if you neglected your duty, it is quite possible that God sent down His punishment on you, and, then, all your prayers and supplications will be in vain.”

Brothers,—Some of the most enlightened and spiritually evolved divines of our day are of the view that the disasters and humiliations that have been visiting Muslims for a long time, and the troubles

and difficulties they are caught in universally these days and which do not seem to abate or relent a bit in spite of all their pathetic petitions to God and prayers etc., are due mainly to the very reason that they have ceased to discharge the function they were raised up for and for which they were made wholly responsible after the termination of Prophecy and Apostleship. Evidently, when a watchman fails to

perform his duty he is dismissed from service and castigated sternly for his negligence.

Come, let us resolve solemnly that we shall be found wanting no more in the discharge of our duty. God's help will be with us, He has promised:

God, certainly, will aid those who aid His Cause. ■ (XXII : 40)

The Disturbing Story From India's Prisons

The latest (2019) data on prisons released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shows that Dalits, tribals, and Muslims continue to be jailed in numbers disproportionate to their share in the total population of India, according to a report in The Indian Express. The NCRB data shows that while people from Scheduled Castes (SCs) accounted for 21.7% of convicts and 21% of undertrials; those from Scheduled Tribes (STs) accounted for 13.6% of convicts and 10.5% of undertrials; and Muslims, 16.6% of convicts and 18.7% of undertrials.

While it is not the case that the demographic mix in prison must be a reflection of the demographic mix in society, the NCRB data underlines a deeper sociological truth about India — of the historic marginalisation of these communities. Their socioeconomic indicators are weak; they are unable to access opportunities for livelihoods; their encounters with the legal machinery are common and often brutal; and if they are implicated in cases, even ordinary crimes, they often have to battle discriminatory attitudes and are unable to access effective legal support. It is not surprising that African-Americans constitute a disproportionate number of prisoners in the United States (US). It is not because Blacks in the US, or the Dalits, Muslims or tribals in India, violate the law more often than others — it is because structural conditions in both society and the State force a certain life on them.

While there is a larger battle that must be fought to change this discriminatory structure, an immediate priority must be providing urgent legal help. A State-run free legal aid system was introduced in 1995 with the establishment of the Legal Services Authorities Act. But, legal experts suggest that the system has been ineffective because of daunting procedures, low remuneration from the State, and corruption discourage lawyers from taking up these cases. Ensuring access to justice must be the first step to correcting the imbalance in India's prisons. ■

(Editorial Hindustan Times, 31-08-2020)

Foreigners Made Scapegoats

The Bombay high court's Aurangabad bench on Friday struck down criminal cases registered against 34 people, including 28 foreign Tablighi Jamaat members, in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district, saying foreign nationals were virtually persecuted.

"A political Government tries to find scapegoat when there is pandemic or calamity, and the circumstances show that there is probability that these foreigners were chosen to make them scapegoats," said a bench of justice TV Nalawade and justice MG Sewlikar. "The material of the present matter shows that the propaganda against the so-called religious activity was unwarranted."

The Jamaat hit the headlines in March when authorities blamed a congregation at its headquarters in New Delhi's Nizamuddin area for a jump in Covid-19 infections. The headquarters was sealed and thousands of attendees, including foreigners from countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and the US, were quarantined. Police initially filed a case against Jamaat chief Maulana Saad for violating a ban on big gatherings. He was later booked for culpable homicide, which carries a maximum punishment of 10-year imprisonment.

The Jamaat, which has followers in over 80 countries, maintained many visitors at its headquarters were stranded after the government declared a lockdown to check the pandemic spread. The Centre blacklisted around 1,500 foreign Tablighi members for violating their visa norms and multiple cases were registered against them across the country, including in Maharashtra. The high court said foreigners having valid visas to enter India cannot be prevented from visiting mosques if they go there to observe religious practices.

"It is true that in view of wording of Article 19 [the right to freedom of speech and expression] of the Constitution of India, the

freedoms given under this Article are not available to foreigners, a person who is not the citizen of India," it said.

"However, it needs to be kept in mind that when permission is given to the foreigners to come to India under visa, Article 25 [freedom of professing religion] comes in to play. Then Articles 20 and 21 [that relate to fundamental rights] are also available to the foreigners."

All the foreigners, who petitioned the high court, had participated in the Nizamuddin congregation and thereafter gave religious lectures at mosques in Ahmednagar district allegedly in violation of lockdown norms in the last week of March.

Initially, cases were registered against the trustees of mosques where the foreigners had stayed.

All the 34 accused, including the foreigners, moved the high court seeking quashing of the criminal cases registered against them. The foreigners contended they came to India on valid visas and argued they were here mainly to experience Indian culture, tradition, hospitality and food. They said on their arrival at airports, they were screened for Covid-19. The foreigners argued they were struck in Ahmednagar after the imposition of the nationwide lockdown because of the suspension of the transportation services. They said that is why they stayed at mosques.

Ahmednagar police maintained the Jamaat members were found preaching and so cases were registered against them. They added the foreigners were arrested after institutional quarantine and subsequently five of them were found to be infected.

The police insisted there was sufficient material to indicate the accused had breached lockdown norms and visa conditions.

The court cited guidelines and added foreigners visiting India on tourist visas are prevented from engaging in preaching activity. ■

Payam-e-Insaniyat

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

The grandeur and prestige of a nation is built upon the sacrifices that its worthy sons give for its establishment and progress. The history of a nation and civilization is made from such accomplishments which also determine the standing of a nation in the world.

Sheikh Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi worked tirelessly on three fronts — educational, social, and religious. His services to mankind, especially to Muslims in improving their educational and religious condition, were widely recognized both inside and outside India. In the academic world, he distinguished himself as an outstanding scholar and accomplished writer. In the social arena, he was seen as a reformer and guide. In religious circles, he was revered as a spiritual mentor and gifted speaker.

He was very patriotic towards his country (India), was always eager for its prosperity and progress and was always mindful of fulfilling his obligations towards it. In his books, he has lavishly praised India for the progress that it has made in education and culture and introduced India to the world in a glowing way. It can be seen in his speeches and books such as *Al-Muslimoon fil Hind* (published in English as *Muslims in India*) and *Ad Dawatul Islamiyah wa Tataw-wura-tuha fil Hind*

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through which he introduced to the Arab world great Islamic personalities and movements of India and their contributions in the field of education and culture. His father Sheikh Hakim Syed 'Abdul Hai Hasani had done the same before him.

Sheikh Nadwi consistently reminded his fellow countrymen to live by high moral standards and whenever he noticed a failing in the society, he made a concerted effort to eradicate it. For this very purpose, he started the movement known as *Payam-e-Insaniyat* (Message of Humanity) in 1974. From this platform, he used to convene large public gatherings in major cities of India and remind people about moral values which were universally espoused by all religions and societies. He also used to mention teachings of Islam and cite examples of illustrious Muslims of the past. This movement created very positive effect in the society and helped in promoting mutual understanding among different communities. Its accomplishments were recognized by the leaders of different religions, prominent judges, university professors, etc. The speeches that he delivered on different events of this movement are available in the form of booklets. In these speeches, he also pointed out moral vices and inhumane practices that had become pervasive in the Indian

society.

Sheikh Nadwi was very distressed to see rapid decline in the moral character and behavior of people in the country. He often lamented that there had been a sharp decline in the number of individuals who were actively engaged in reminding others about good character and high moral values — a great loss to the country. The strength and greatness of a nation come from its character. If the character of a nation deteriorates, it means that the nation is heading towards its downfall and demise.

Sheikh Nadwi had studied history with great dedication. He had studied the history of India, Europe, Arabs, Muslims, and other religions. From those studies, he had understood causes of the rise and fall of nations and developed a burning desire in his heart to see the glorious periods of history revived — a theme that he expressed very passionately in his writings. He considered the era during which the Islamic culture and civilization were thriving and the entire humanity was benefitting from Muslims as the most coveted period of human history.

In his writings and speeches, Sheikh Nadwi used to emphatically remind Muslims that since Allah has made them the benefactor for the entire mankind, they ought to do their best to bring humanity towards good character and virtuous living. He stressed that Islam is religion of peace and

compassion and Muslims have been enjoined by Quran and hadith (traditions of Prophet Muhammad) to strive for these noble and lofty goals. Thus Muslims should be more eager to benefit others than to receive benefit from others.

Whenever he met Indian political leaders or influential people, he encouraged them to adopt high moral values and serve the country. When Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi was in power, he advised her to be lenient to people instead of being oppressive. Later, when she came to visit him at his home after failing to win the re-election in 1977, he again reminded her that she as a leader should adopt the policy of justice and fairness for all.

Regarding the Hindu—Muslim communal riots, he explained to the political leaders that the riots were like fire which, upon not getting any more fuel, would consume itself and harm everyone. This example of Sheikh Nadwi was highly appreciated by Prime Minister V.P. Singh whom Sheikh Nadwi often counseled.

During the regime of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, Sheikh Nadwi met him and reminded him that those who had fought for the independence of the country were very concerned about building the moral character of people, but that concern had now disappeared. Now everyone is running after power and wealth which is a very bad omen for the country, He advised

Narasimha Rao to take necessary measures to stop this decline. He also advised him to reach common people and remind them about the importance of high moral values so that we could grow into a great nation.

During Sheikh Nadwi's last sickness, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee came to visit him. It was quite difficult for Sheikh Nadwi to speak because of weakness. Yet, he spoke to Vajpayee, expressed his concern that the country was in great danger because the lust for power and wealth had overcome all other aspirations and implored him to rescue the country from this peril.

Whenever a new prime minister came in power in India, Sheikh Nadwi met him and advised him about the moral and human responsibilities. He wrote letters of advice to those whom he could not meet personally.

In the conventions of Payam-e-Insanivat also, Sheikh Nadwi reminded people to rise above the greed of power and wealth and live by high moral standards. He used to bemoan that people had stopped differentiating between right and wrong and everyone was only concerned about his own personal benefits without any feeling or concern for the country.

Sheikh Nadwi's concern for eradicating evils and promoting goods was not limited to India only. As a scholar of Islam, he was especially concerned

about the condition of Muslims all over the world and reform among them. Through his speeches and writings, he used to admonish Muslims that they were abandoning Islamic values and character and they needed to wake up because they, in addition to taking care of themselves, were also responsible for protecting the entire mankind from going astray. He used to explain it by means of examples of history that whenever Muslims drifted away from virtuous life, they were afflicted with humility and disgrace and whenever they adopted the right path, they gained respect and saved other nations from destruction as well.

Muslims should be the torchbearers of morality and high character. That is what Prophet Muhammad taught and this is what Quran has commanded again and again. Allah is the Master of everyone and everything that we possess belongs to Him. It is thus incumbent upon everyone to recognize his Creator and Master, have love and affection for fellow human beings and live an obedient, prosperous, and happy life. It is the responsibility of community leaders and men of understanding to strive to establish these values among people.

He spread his message and mission to people through books, speeches, and dialogs. He wanted both Muslims and non-Muslims to live as good neighbors and care for each other.

To make people aware of this need, he used to arrange large public gatherings, invite leaders of different communities, and religions and allow them to express their views. It enabled leaders of different religions to come to a common platform and understand each other. It also helped ease communal tension between Hindus and Muslims. Such effort is still continuing from the stage of Payam-e-Insaniyat.

There were several individuals who fully co-operated with Sheikh Nadwi in these efforts. Sheikh 'Abdul Karim Parikh was the most prominent among them. Sheikh Parikh was well acquainted with the temperament of different communities and Sheikh Nadwi had full faith in him. The other notables were Sheikh Ishaq Jalees Nadwi, Qazi 'Abdul Hameed Indori and Prof. Anees Chishti of Pune. Prof. Chishti is still carrying on this effort.

Sheikh Nadwi was so accommodating and eager to patch differences with others that people of different viewpoints saw him as a well-wisher and conciliator and accepted him as their common leader and representative. This perception about him was more widespread among non-Muslims (of India) than Muslims, Not only did most of the community leaders of India have good opinion about him, but they also looked at him with great respect and reverence. The government officials also kept him in high esteem and paid attention to his

opinion. Despite being so accommodating, he was very strict in his religious beliefs and practices and never compromised in matters pertaining to the core Islamic principles.

Sheikh Nadwi always preferred negotiation and mutual dialog to confrontation which he considered counterproductive. This approach enabled him to get a number of difficult and complicated issues resolved amicably. Due to his non-confrontational and non-controversial nature, he had emerged as a leader who was acceptable to all factions of Indian Muslims. If there was an issue that concerned Muslims at large, all the factions used to agree on him as their representative and the government also gave due recognition to his representation.

Sheikh Nadwi's vision about the welfare and progress of the country was very clear. He viewed the country as a common garden whose protection and prosperity was the responsibility of every citizen. The country does not belong to the majority community only. The minority communities also have equal stake in it as has been guaranteed by the Constitution of India. The progress and strength of the country lie only in adhering to these principles and people must cooperate with each other for the common good of the country. It will be disastrous if individual communities become selfish and care only about themselves with no concern

for others and the country. Unless both the majority and minority communities co-operate with each other, the country will be weakened and devastated.

Not only did Sheikh Nadwi fully understand the importance of mutual co-operation and understanding, but he also presented it with full force to leaders, intellectuals, and government authorities of the country. He told them that they should not be concerned only about getting votes and gaining power. Corruption had become rampant and everyone was looking for his own interest without any concern for the country. He asked leaders and authorities to out and work among masses to stop corruption and promote good moral character. Otherwise, the country would be destroyed. The leaders who had fought for the independence of the country had worked very hard on social reforms of the country also. It is sad that their efforts had been abandoned today.

Sheikh Nadwi had started the work of Payam-e-Insaniyat as early as 1954, although it was formally launched in 1974 in the city of Allahabad. He used to convene large gatherings and deliver stirring speeches urging people to strive for the welfare and reform of the mankind and society. Some of those speeches have already been published. The following excerpt from the speech that he delivered in Mau, Uttar Pradesh, India, on 24 January 1954 may help in understanding the message and

purpose of the movement of Payam-e-Insaniyat:

We consider this message to be essential for every [political] party. Our existence is more essential than that of any party because if we succeed, the beautiful bouquet of humanity will come into existence. Thorns are coming up everywhere but humans are rare. We came here to call you to revive and beautify humanity. Today, thorns and bitter fruits are coming out of the human tree. We call you to make this tree bear sweet fruits of humanity. We did not come here to create obstacles for you. We came here to remind you that you need to take care of the humanity. We came here to create in your hearts the concern and pain for this spoiled world. May this feeling of empathy develop in you! This was the message and mission of prophets and we have come here to revive their mission. Some of us limit our efforts to intellectual debates, some to tackling hunger, and some to securing cloth and shelter. Religion fosters faith and love for the Creator in hearts and removes deception of eyes. It was the work of prophets to remove the curtain of darkness from eyes and bring peace and tranquility to hearts.

We tell Muslims that you have devalued the message and work of prophets. You are guilty of being negligent. You have abandoned this

treasure and become an agent of the greedy people of the world. You have become a mere bargainer and developed the mentality of a selfish businessman. You were not supposed to be a mere trader. You had come here as a da'i (one who calls people towards Allah and His divine religion). But you forgot your position and purpose for which you had come. Had you been living with the message of and love, you would have enjoyed a life of respect and success. Now your success lies in regaining your lost position. Your success of this world lies in valuing the work of prophets. Political parties and other outfits,

instead of fighting for power and control, should strive to mend the broken structure of humanity. Instead of working only for their own interests and those of their friends and relatives, they should work for the welfare of the entire mankind. Without this reform, no one can attain peace and success.

Sheikh Nadwi's concern and worry was such that Muslim as well as Hindu intellectuals looked at him with great respect and reverence. Thus when he passed away, people of all religions and political affiliations expressed deep grief, love and affection for him and felt that it was a great loss to the nation and country. ■

THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

The Muslim Era began with the Great Event of the Hijrah from Mecca to Medina or the Emigration of Prophet Muhammad and his Companions from Mecca to Medina. The adoption of this Event as the beginning of the Muslim Era took place in the Caliphate of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the second Caliph after Muhammad.

The Muslim calendar is Lunar, and its months are determined by the various positions of the moon. In every year there are twelve months, and each month is either thirty or twenty-nine days depending on the position of the moon. These months are: Muharram, Safar, Rabee' Al-Awwal, Rabee' Al-Thani, Jumada Al-Oola, Jumada Al-Thaniyah, Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadan, Shawwal, Thul-Qa'dah, and Thul-Hijjah.

Every week has one special day to remember and observe. This is Friday, and its significance stems from the noon congregational prayers which must be observed by every Muslim who can attend. There are other significant occasions which should be remembered with a special observance.

1. The Hijrah which falls on the Eve of the first day of Muharram.
2. The Prophet's Birthday which falls on the Eve of the twelfth day of Rabee' Al-Awwal.
3. Ramadan, the Month of Fasting, in which the Qur'an was revealed.
4. The Night of Power of Qadr which may be celebrated on the eve of the twenty-third or the twenty-fifth or the twenty-seventh of Ramadan.
5. 'Eedul-Fitr (Feast of Breaking the Fast of Ramadan) which falls on the First day of Shawwal.
6. 'Eedul-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) which falls on the tenth day of Thul-Hijjah. ■

My Allah - Sufficient For Me

- Saeedur Rahman Azami Nadwi

Today, all forces of the world with its varied devices and strategies are prone to root out Muslim world from the history of world map. They leave no stone unturned to shatter the unity and integration of Muslim world by adopting their age-long policy "Divide and Rule". That is why Muslims are the most vulnerable and insecure people in the present world scenario.

No doubt, their main plank is to deprive Muslims of their spiritual and material assets so that their powers and ascendancies may easily dwindle. And thus they may never flourish and survive anymore. To achieve their sinister design, they sow seeds of panic, fear, unrest, anxiety and despondency in the hearts of Muslims and also hatch numerous strategies to destroy them.

To begin with, they themselves began to wage war on Muslim countries carrying out their aggressive expansionist policy and started thinking other properties and riches as their own. This led the Muslim world to bleak future. These war-Monger Nations assess that their dreams will come true soon. The main point is that some perfidious and treacherous people within Muslims have

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sold their conscience and venal at other hands on meager profits and false promises. These dishonest and unloyal people proved more faithful than expectation to their temporary masters. Consequently, Muslims are confronted with a variety of issues and problems and often observe different events of destruction and annihilation. It is an ordinary phenomenon of it. The crux of the matter is that every Muslim who wants to carry out Islamic Shariah in letter and spirit, has to suffer retribution of their doings sooner or later.

It is well-known that opponents of Islam have united for the completion of their end. An international conspiracy is being hatched to obliterate Muslim world from the surface of the globe. Similarly, in India Muslims face same problems due to the widespread pejorative stereotypes about Muslims as well.

At this juncture, if we don't awake from our deep slumber and become unmindful of this nasty tricks and evil intrigues and don't get ready to confront the situation the day is not far, the fascist forces and war-monger nations of the world will forcefully suppress us and grab our properties and seize all our possessions.

The need of the hour is that we must gird up loins and take the bull by the horns to overcome them. Besides we must strengthen our faith and belief and also always remember Allah. We cannot succeed without His help and reinforcement. The Holy Quran says, "Therefore flee unto Allah: I am from Him a warner to you, clear and

open."(S.51,A,50)

In short, it is imperative for us to repose full faith in Allah and seek everything from Him. He will surely solve all your problems and bestow us victory and Triumph. "Our! Lord gives us good in this world and good in the hereafter and save us from the torment of the fire. ■

(English rendering by Obaidur Rahman Nadwi)

Tipu Sultan's Crusade

Tipu Sultan made a valiant bid to unite the Indian princes against the British usurpers. He even wrote to Sultan Salim III of Turkey to join hands with him for the expulsion of the British. His whole life was spent in the struggle. He came on the verge of success, the English were about to be swept out of the land, but they managed to achieve through diplomacy what they could not gain by arms. They cleverly obtained the support of some rulers of the South and by the use of other methods of treachery and deceit brought to nought the patriotic ambitions of that gallant son of Mysore. Tipu Sultan was finally killed in the thick of battle on May 4, 1799. He preferred death to a life of servitude under the British. His famous, historic, words spoken a little before he met his death were: "**To live for a day like a tiger is far more precious than to live for a hundred years like a jackal**". It is reported that when the British Commander, General Horse, received the news of the Sultan's death and went to inspect his corpse, he cried out, in exultation: "From today India is ours".

The history of India does not tell of a braver patriot and a more uncompromising enemy of foreign rule than him. In his life-time he was the most hated man among the English. To give vent to their spite, Englishmen in India even went to the extent of giving to their dogs the name of Tipu. It continued to be like this with them for a long time. ■

Importance of Media

- S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi*

The word 'media' means to disseminate information about day-to-day happenings. Hence writing, journalism, and the modern means of communication like radio, television and internet are all included in media.

Media, in a way, is similar to 'literature' which aims at constructing a moral based social fabric, building up and nurturing human values and shaping mindset, constructive and virtue oriented. This meaning of the term 'literature' is conveyed by the word itself. But with the growing impact of culture and civilization, its meaning assumed wider dimensions; 'entertainment' became the dominant aspect of the meanings of literature and due to the exaggerations as writers' such things got incorporated into literature that otherwise had least relationship with its meanings and all that it stands for. However, those writers who opposed and devalued the set morals and social values were always disliked in society while those who upheld and glorified such commendable values through their writings were always welcomed and respected.

Similar to 'literature' is 'Culture' which basically means civility, decency, courteousness and also includes

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meanings of intelligence and of those virtuous qualities that are responsible for their possessor's respectable position in society.

Initially knowledge was a fundamental part of culture. That is why the word 'cultured' was often being used for a knowledgeable person. Whereas a 'cultured' means educated, knowledgeable means one who has nothing to do with base mentality and rude behaviour; his character and attitude is based upon high morals. That means rogue people like thieves, liars and cheaters, however witty and intelligent they may be, cannot be called 'cultured'. Similarly all those people who do injustice to others, commit indecent deeds, resort to character assassination, do not respect other people's sentiments, can never be regarded as cultured (no matter how much great their achievements in the field of science, art and literature be).

Experts, literatures and scholars agree with the above mentioned terms and their respective definitions and meanings and as a result, the common mind also understands them as such.

Unfortunately, Europe, in the contemporary age—the age of rebellion against the religion and morality misused these terms. This process of misinterpretation started

when first of all the word 'knowledge' was used out of its context.

Despite making tremendous progress in the field of science and technology and doing great research, despite making tall claims of impartiality and objectivity, European scholars deliberately corrupted, distorted, misinterpreted and misrepresented art, literature, culture and civilization of the Muslims. Research centres and institutions were established wherein eminent European scholars and historians made dubious researches on Islam, They wrote such books on the life of the prophet of Islam (May Allah's Peace and blessings be upon him), Islamic History, and Islamic Culture and Civilization all of which contained poisonous and baseless statements about the Muslims and their religion.

They mentioned Allah's Messenger in such a dirty language that otherwise could not be used to mention even dacoits, rascals and notorious people.

One more injustice, which Europe committed, is that it exploited literature for spreading chaos and confusion and for distorting realities. Students of European literature know that it is now being utilized as sole means for spreading mischief, destruction, immorality and mass rebellion against moral and ethical values.

The narrow self-centred vision of

Europe has rendered every aspect its life selfish and self-centred, although, "Collectivism" is now-a-days its slogan.

West has its own understanding of life and values. The western concept of life and values. The western concept of life that whole of it is sin and vice, can be understood by reading the story of a youth who left his native village for Paris where he took admission in Law College. In the mean time, having less experience of life's ups and downs, he becomes victim of the luxurious and hectic life of Paris. He becomes very fond of earning money and thus earning name and fame. One day he meets a man who has run away from prison. The fugitive instructs this youth thus:

You are one among those fifty thousand youths who can pay any price for earning money. So you must know that you have a very tough competition and at times, high risks to face. You must also keep in mind there can arise great animosity among all of you for it is practically impossible for one of you to his goal. Listen! Don't you know that people go to any extent and resort to any action, lawful or unlawful, for achieving their end?

O young man! People resort to cheating, fraud, deception and cunningness and reach highest levels of meanness to get "success", So rise and set fire to life; explode yourself to wipe out all others from the face of earth; Spread among people like contagious

plagues dignity and honour have no meaning. O young man! If you succeeded in reaching highest degrees of such traits as debauchery, fraud, deception, vulgarity and continued your march, fearing people's accusations, then everyone will bow before you in submission. Of you want wealth, and then there is no alternative to bad deeds and immoral behaviour. But at the same time you must know how to project yourself as godly. That is the crux of the "morality" of our time about which I have told you so many things because I am myself acquainted with all this. And that is what life basically is, and nobody, even the religious preachers and the reformers could bring any change in it.

A British thinker and writer says that basically man is a wolf whose work is to cut to eat; that is his nature which he follows be it capitalism or socialism.

This concept was also strengthened by Machiavelli's political philosophy which he presented in his book "The Prince" in which he has emphatically stated that what is important is the end not the means to achieve it goodness or badness of means has no meaning at all, what is important is the end itself.

Today Europe is acting upon the same cunning and unscrupulous advice of Machiavelli in both social and political fields of life.

Media, being a mixture of

knowledge, art and literature, gets directly influenced by the changing concepts of life and its priorities. Since selfish interests and individual good have dominated modern man's way of thinking, he uses media as a means to spread false information and fake news to mislead people. This is natural to happen. When people think it legitimate to adopt any kind of means, good or bad, to achieve their goal (of course selfish and Machiavellian), then they see nothing wrong in exploiting media for projecting killers, oppressors, criminals and butchers as saviors, benefactors and upholders of peace and justice.

When we analyse our media, right from the time of foreign domination upto this time, we find everywhere examples of distortion of meanings and transposition of signification of words. This practice has always been subjecting tyrant nations to sheer injustice and barbarity. Lie aired through media and propagated through historically unsound books rendered nations economically and morally bankrupt and entangled them in dilemma and tension.

The contemporary media is all concerned about the interests of its launchers. It has no ethics or morality same to fulfil the selfish desires of its owners no matter if the very truth becomes scapegoat.

The fact that most part of media

information is based upon lie, deception, fraud and distortion is substantiated by Noam Choamsky who exposes the ugly face of media like this:

In our time the state sponsored propaganda started first of all in the USA during the President ship of Wilson. He was elected President in 1916 when World War-I had already begun. At that time the American people were highly peace loving. They did not see any justification in taking part in any European war. On the other hand Wilson government had its own political reasons with respect to the war and needed the American public to get involved in war. So a committee was framed at the state level who successfully informed the feeling of hatred find animosity among the American people against Germany.

Among the means that were used to change the peace loving attitude of the American public and militate them against Germany were drama and fiction. Fictitious stories were invented to project Germany as a nation barbarous and savage. For example, pictures of Belgian children with hands and feet deformed were published. Similarly people skillful in fabricating transparent lie were hired for this purpose. These people prepared such horrifying reports which inspired fear among American masses. Exactly the same policy was adopted by American after the First World War against

Communism on one hand and against Khilafah Uthmaniyyah (Ottoman Caliphate), the “sick man” of Europe on the other. Conspiracies were hatched to excite peoples of Africa, Europe and Asia in rebellion against the Uthmanis (Ottomons). Arabs and Turks were divided by teaching lesson of nationalism which had been foreign to them as pure Muslims. And all this was carried out through media.

It was the magic of media that projected communism as dreadful as anything and a threat to the Western Europe and it was the same media that was used by the socialists when they countered back.

After the fall of Soviet Union, Islam became the target. And the information media is being used as the sole weapon in the campaign of demonizing the Muslims and their religion, and in marauding their land. Media plays the role of justifying all what is otherwise unjustified according to human standards. But for the propaganda of media, aggression against Iraq would be to all sheer barbarism and people as wretched as Jews would not be considered as the most oppressed class.

Anything untoward is natural to happen any time anywhere in the world. But what is surprisingly astonishing about it is that without conducting any

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Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan

- Sultan Shakir Hashmi

The first student of the world famous Madarsa Darul Uloom Deoband, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was born in Deoband in 1851.

It was only with the sincere efforts of some people like his father Zulfiqar Ali Khan that Darul Uloom could be established at Deoband. Both Maulana Zulfeqar Ali Khan and his brother Maulana Mahtab Ali Khan were the very senior leader of the freedom movement of Shah Waliullah.

Maulana Mohammad Qaseem had recognized the ability and talent of Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan and held him in a very high esteem. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan took over the command of Shah Waliullah movement after the death of Haji Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi in 1905. In fact, he had started working for the Freedom Struggle and the organization working for the freedom struggle and the organization of Shah Waliullah long ago when he was only a student. Both Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and Maulana Mohammad Qaseem had infused in his veins the blood of patriotism.

Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was one of the five students of the first batch who was awarded degree of Darul Uloom in 1874 and started teaching in the Madarsa on an honorary capacity after successfully completing his studies

he was the fourth teacher in the Madarsa on a meagre salary of Rupees 25 per month in 1875 and Maulana Mohammad Qaseem loved him like a son. It was a great shock to him when Maulana Mohammad Qaseem expired in 1876. During his principal ship the student increased numbers from 200 to 860 and some of the great scholars, he taught were Maulana Sayed Manazir Ahsan Gilani, Maulana Mohammad Ahmad Ibrahim, Maulana Mohammad Ayaz Ali Amrohi, Maulana Sayed Fakhruddin Ahmad, Maulana Sayed Asghar Hasan, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Mufti Kifayatullah Dehlvi, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni, Maulana Mausam Ansari, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi and Maulana Sayed Mohammad Anwar Shah Kashmiri.

After the death of Maulana Qaseem, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan and some teachers and students of the Madarsa Darul Uloom established "Samaratut Tarbiyat" in the interest of the Madarsa. Luckily for him, a very senior leader of the Shah Waliullah movement Haji Imdadullah who was alive at that time was in Makkah. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan left for Haj pilgrimage and met the great freedom fighter, Haji Imdadullah in Makkah and sought his advise about his new organization and working of Darul Uloom Deoband and then returned to

India after performing Haj.

It was this time when India was passing through a very difficult phase. There was unrest all against the British government. The freedom fighters were desperate to dislodge the British government from India. The Britishers were alarmed. Their greatest worry was that the Hindus too were joining the freedom movement and had started taking active part in the "Freedom Struggle" movement.

This was the time, when there was vast and wide-spread drought in South India which had the toll of over 50 lacs Indian lives. The indifferent Viceroy Lord Lytton, was not moved. Lacs and lacs of people died of hunger. Instead of taking any concrete steps to help the needy hungry people and the dying citizens. The Viceroy attacked Afghanistan and at the same time started making arrangements for a great "Darbar" at Delhi. This was too much for the Indians to bear. At first, the people were extremely furious and stood up in revolt against the Britishers in Punjab and south India for their atrocities.

Although, these risings were crushed yet it was amply clear that, are still some people who can undertake, an armed revolt against the British government.

Alarmed, at this, the British government started making all efforts to

defeat and discourage such attempts of Indians. They enforced harsh laws for snatching the arms and imposing harsh press censorship. Simultaneously, they were following their deplorable policy of "Divide and Rule". This proved to be a great success as a number of people were roped in and became loyal to the British government. In fact they became British agents and spies. Such elements were greatly harming the efforts of the freedom struggle movement at several places in south India, Punjab and Bengal.

Although, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan continued his efforts, he had realized that armed struggle was now very difficult to be accomplished Indians had been forcibly disarmed. He then thought of obtaining help from outside to successfully carry on the freedom struggle. He also thought of obtaining the help of some independent tribes living at Indo-Afghan border for this purpose. It is worth mentioning that some of the followers of Shah Waliullah organization and freedom struggle movement had shifted to the North-Frontier Province. With the help of some of his students Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan he was able to establish contact with some of the tribesmen Qabilas, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan succeeded in his efforts.

Amir Habibullah was the King of Afghanistan at that time. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan started

correspondence with him and some of the powerful and influential Sardar of Afghanistan and the brothers of the king Prince Nasrullah Khan was prominent among them. He had travelled to England in 1898 and met the Members of Parliament, government officials and asked them to stop all the intervention of the British government in Afghanistan. But the British government paid no heed to him. He then started establishing "Jamiat-e-Siyasiya" Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was successful in establishing relationships with that organisation also.

After these efforts in many directions Maulana Mahmood-ul Hasan once again started making all-out efforts to strengthen his organisation in India. As Maulana was a very lovable personality and a true patriot, he very sincerely devoted his whole life for the noble cause of achieving the independence of India. He was held in very high esteem by one and all. He had a charisma about him. He had a great following. His hands were pillars of strength when people like Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Mohammad Miyan Ansari and Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari too became his sincere followers.

While Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was making all-out efforts to strengthen the movement for freedom struggle, the management of the Madarsa Darul Uloom had repeatedly

refused any financial help from the British government to avoid any governmental interference in its affairs. But the British government agents too were making all efforts to know about the activities of the Madarsa Darul Uloom at Deoband, as they suspected that some rigorous conspiracies were being hatched by the people running the Madarsa.

In 1910, on the proposal of Sahebzada Aftab Khan the management of Darul Uloom decided to send some student of the Madarsa to Aligarh for studying English and likewise some students of Aligarh were to be admitted to the Darul Uloom Deoband. As per this decision, the students from Aligarh reached Darul Uloom. One of them, named Amir Ahmad, somehow won over by the British agents to act as an information agent about the activities of Darul Uloom. He began to start activities going on at Darul Uloom against the British regime. In those days, Maulana's special meetings were held underground in secret basements where Maulana met the people coming from the frontier region and from Afghanistan. Although, Amir Ahmad was not aware of those meetings nor about their meeting places, he kept the British agencies informed of the people coming at Darul Uloom and supplied their photographs to them. Thus, although the British government could

not know anything about what was going on in the secret meetings. They however very well knew that the Maulana was trying to hatch conspiracies against the British government.

After sometime, Haji Fazle Wahid Turangzai started establishing Madarsa in the Frontier region. This was in fact, a tradition to popularize and propagate the Movement and Philosophy of freedom struggle movement of Shah Waliullah. Haji Fazle Wahid was successful in obtaining the services of a very bright young man Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, in his efforts to establish the Madarsa.. This bright sincere and denoted young man later on became very famous all over India and was called "Sarhadi Gandhi" (Frontier Gandhi). It was Haji Fazle Wahid Turangzai who brought Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan into politics.

The British government took prompt action in forcibly closing down the Madarsa and tried its best to arrest Haji Fazle Wahid but he could not be arrested as he shifted foreign lands across the border. Beyond there jurisdiction where he started establishment of organisation of Afghans, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan later. After meeting Haji Fazle Wahid Turangzai, he made all efforts to strengthen the Afghans. Later on, Maulana Saifur Rahman left Afghanistan on the same mission but after some

time, had to abandon his mission under the great pressure from the British government.

The idea of Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was to organize and strengthen his freedom struggle movement in Indian and also unite and simultaneously strengthen the Afghans and establish a powerful army to attack the British forces in India and provide support to them within India through his organisation for the purpose of defeating the Britshers and ousting them from the Indian soil. By this time, Maulana Mamoodul-Hasan was also successful in establishing another Madarsa "Nazarat ul-Maarif" in Delhi, which was, in fact, a branch of the Shah Waliullah freedom struggle movement. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was deputed to run the Madarsa. He was being actively helped in his efforts by Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan etc, who were close friends and followers of Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan which was started between Turkey and the Balkan States Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan sent a medical mission to Turkey headed by Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari sometime after war started in European countries. Maulana Mahmoodul-Hasan saw his opportunities and accelerated his efforts to strengthen his organisation 'Nazarat-ul-Maarif' was in fact a revolutionary branch of his freedom struggle.

At the same time, another Maulvi

Abdul Haq in Indian gave the “Fatwa” that it was all right to help the Britishers against Turkey. This Fatwa was also signed by some other Maulvis. This Fatwa reached Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan too. Normally the Maulana was a very cool headed person and avoided expressing his opinion on crucial matters before his students but when the “Fatwa” was presented to him for his opinion in an open function before the public, he criticized the “Fatwa” in very harsh words and threw it away. It was indeed very courageous of him that he very fearlessly expressed his opinion on the Fatwa in public under the prevailing conditions and circumstances. As everyone knew that any one opposing the British government would be crushed. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan too very well knew that it was really dangerous to remain silent at that time on the “Fatwa” which could throw a fear into the hearts of Indians. Thus, knowing too well the dangers he fearlessly denounced the “Fatwa” and spoke against the same that it was absolutely wrong to support the British government against Turkey. All his colleagues and followers were stunned and were apprehending Maulana’s arrest any moment. But the British government decided against arresting him to avoid mass violence and unrest but the government did harass and humiliate Maulana as much as they could.

Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan had

been doing a great deal of work in Afghanistan too when the close associate and right hand man of the Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was sent by him to Kabul in the year 1915 and met General Nadir Khan there. He became very much surprised to know that General Nadir Khan knew him very well. People hardly know that the puppet of the British government in Afghanistan, Amir Habibullah could only be ousted with Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan’s efforts and help and the staunch opponent of the Britishers. Amanullah Khan was later on installed to cleanse Afghanistan of British influence. Thus, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan and his followers also played an important role in the independence of Afghanistan.

The British government through their spy Amir Ahmad, a student of Darul Uloom, was constantly getting news about Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan and his activities and used to convey the same to the British authorities for proper action. Some time after Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi was sent by him to Kabul. He along with some of his followers left for his Haj pilgrimage on 18th September 1915. This naturally alarmed the British government. They tried their utmost to stop the Maulana going for Haj pilgrimage and arrested him in Bombay but the arrest warrant reached Bombay very late. The captain of the ship was then ordered to arrest the Maulana on the ship but, somehow,

that too could not materialize and thus Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan could reach Hejaz quite safely along with his followers. In Hejaz, Maulana met the Governor, Ghalib Pasha and apprised him of the situation prevailing in India. The Governor was very impressed after meeting Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan and gave him a letter addressed to the independent Qabilas conforming that the Turkish government was sympathetic to Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan. It was an appeal to the Sardars of the independent Qabilas of the borders to unitedly fight against the British government for the good of Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan. This important letter was brought to India by Maulana Mohammad Miyan Ansari, a close follower of the Maulana before handing it over to the Sardars of the Independent Qabilas on the borders. He later on left for Kabul Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan then reached the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah (Saudi Arab) and met his devoted followers and disciple Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni alongwith the Turkish War minister Anwar Pasha and Jamal Pasha, a military commander. Anwar Pasha who knew him very well promised him all help of the Turkish government but emphasised that Indians alone could achieved their independence. This invaluable piece of advice greatly impressed Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan and he immediately sent words to his followers in Kabul to include Non-

Muslims too in the movement for freedom struggle, to give them important positions and take them in confidence and assure them that the objective behind achieving independence was achieving the independence of the entire country for all the Indians and not establishing and imposing Muslim Rule again on Indians. Following his advice Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh was made the president of the first government in exile established in Kabul by Maulana Obaidulah Sindhi and his colleagues.

Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was preparing to wish the Qabilas of borders and all arrangements had been made when he was arrested on 17th September, 1916 and kept in the military prison at Malta for a period of four years along with a number of his followers. The hardships experienced over there by the Maulana and his followers are beyond description clouds of death were hovering over their heads and all of them believed that they would be hanged to death although they were not sentenced to death. One of his followers Hakim Nusrat Husain died in Malta where a memorial still reminds of the patriot and freedom fighter.

After four years of strict and complete confinement, Maulana was released in 1920 and reached Bombay (Mumbai) along with his followers. By that time the famous "Khilafat movement" had started and the British

government had every apprehension that Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan may join the movement. Therefore, he was advised by some of his followers to keep away from public functions in Bombay by in the ship on his way to Bombay and he proceeded to the madarsa at Deoband first. But Mualana allowed the Reception Committee at the "Khilafat" movement for his reception, although, personally, he did not like to attend the public functions. He was given a rousing welcome everywhere till Deoband. This was, indeed, a very bold and fearless step on the part of Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan as he knew very well that this was totally against the British government. He, in fact, wanted to reveal to the British administration that even four years of harsh and strict confinement had not deepened his, spirits, in spite of the fact that he had become very weak physically. In Deoband, Maulana Mahmoodul-Hasan started afresh with his efforts and renewed the activities of his freedom struggle. However, with a difference as he then wanted the general public included in the sacred movement for Freedom. He knew that only the conspiracies hatched against the British government were not going to yield any fruitful result. The harsh four years of confinement and immense hardships faced by him had played a toll on his health. He was suffering from a number of ailments. Consequently, he had become very weak. Maulana

Mahmood-ul-Hasan had realized the importance of public participation in the freedom struggle much before other revolutionaries started organising labour workers and formers to involve them in the freedom movement.

By this time, "Jamiat-ul-Ulema" had been formed in the year of 1919 with a mission to put before the masses an open programme for the Independence of the country. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan had liked the idea and made all-out efforts to strengthen the new organization along with his own activities. Great physical and mental stress was telling upon his poor health and doctors had warned him against strain and extensive touring. But he did not pay any attention to the doctor's advise and continued with his activities although by this time he was suffering from T.B. and other ailments Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan was unable to walk and move from one place to another when the students of Aligarh University requested him to preside over their function. But he reached the station lying on a stretcher and travelled up to Aligarh. He presided over the function of 29th October 1920. This was his last speech to the Indians in which there was an emotional appeal to make every sacrifice for the independence of the country. This function was organised by the student who had left the Aligarh Muslim University as it was being run with the financial help of the government.

At that very moment “Jamia Millia Islamia” was founded by Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan which to this day is still a famous centre and seat of learning in India like Madarsa “Darul Uloom Deoband” The golden chapter in the history of Indian freedom struggle movement came to an end when the great freedom fighter and this brave soldier died in 1920.

The great 200 years old freedom struggle movement of Shah Waliullah

was given a new lease of life when Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan added two new elements to the movement by including and taking with him the Non-Muslim in the movement and seeking and obtaining the Co-operation as well as the help of the masses which made the 200 years old movement a “Grand Success”. Thus, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan had given a new direction to the movement, which infused new blood in the freedom struggle. ■

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investigation, Muslims are declared as the culprits. What about Oklahoma episode? A European Christian and not any Muslim was behind all that. But the Muslim image remains all the same. Why? Because the media continues to be hell-bent on projecting ‘terror in the name of Islam’.

Now, Huntington hypothesis of ‘Clash of civilizations’ has assumed the position of a divine scripture in the political circles of the west. Islam is being projected as the only threat to the western civilization - Muslims are savage and barbarous, if you leave them free, they will kill others freedom and spread chaos and mischief, is almost the common sense of west now. What is why even after getting freedom from Soviet Union, the Muslim states of the region are still slaves for to the west ‘their freedom is a threat’.

The contemporary world media is Jewish controlled whose antagonistic approach towards Islam is known to everybody. The Jewish policy with respect to media is enunciated in Protocol XII wherein the elders of this race clearly maintain that in order to become the world’s richest people they needed to have their full control over the Press. Their designs have been not to let other non-Jewish people in control of any such newspaper through which the later could express their opinion effectively; they have been scheming that not a single announcement could reach the public without their (The Jews’) control. For their selfish ends, they can even encourage criminal editors and media correspondents and support cheat politicians. The protocol clearly confesses that for achieving their ‘illegitimate’ interests the Jews can make “heroes” out of nothing and can defame and degrade nothing by exposing those ill-deeds of theirs that they had earlier glorified, when they smell that such ‘heroes’ act against their agenda. ■

Muslims In India

- Murtahin Billah Jasir Fazlie

The Muslim community of India, with its major segment having indigenous Indian origin, is more Indian than the descendants of Aryan invaders, who had their origin somewhere in the Central Asia.

The Country and the People

India is the seventh largest country in the world, and the second largest in Asia. Before the advent of Muslims, the country was fragmented into small warring states and there was no concept of Indian nationalism. The Muslim rulers, especially the Mughals, unified the country and gave it a central administration. They called the country Hind and Hindustan, i.e. a country of the Hindus (non-Muslims). The name 'India', a distortion of Hind, was given to her by the British rulers. Before the establishment of Muslim rule, there was no history of India. People of particular locality recorded some events of certain rulers vaguely. The Muslims took special care to record historical events and appointed historians to do that job. The British administration reconstructed their accounts and gave the Hindus a history of the distinct past not without their self interest to play one community against the other.

In respect of population, India with about 900 million people is second only

to China. It is a country with people of multireligious, multilingual and multiethnic people. Because of large variety of the ethnic origin of her people, the country often called an ethnic museum. The racial groups include the adi vasis (original settlers), the Dravidans, the Aryans, the Semites and the Mongols. There are 845 dialects and 225 distinct languages spoken in the country. Hindi, the language of the cow-belt region of the north, is the official language of the country but there are several others which are recognized as State languages. Sanskrit, though a dead language not spoken by anybody, is also recognized by the Indian Constitution because it is the religious language of the Aryan Hindus.

The main religious communities of India are Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Christians. These groups are divided into two broad groups: Hindus and non-Hindus. Among the non-Hindu population, the Muslims are 11.19 percent, the Christians 2.16 percent, the Sikhs 1.67 percent and the Buddhists and the Jains 1.14 percent. These non-Hindu communities together make 16.16 percent of the total population. The Muslims are the second largest religious community.

The Hindus are broadly divided

into two groups, namely, high caste Hindus- descendants of the Aryan invaders, known as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas- and low caste Hindus, the original inhabitants of India (Shudras, Dalits, Other Backward Castes and Tribesmen). Among the low caste Hindus, Dalits are 15.05 percent, Backward Castes (including Shudra) 43.70 percent and Tribesmen 7.51 percent. In fact, these groups who together make 66.26 percent of the total population are not Hindus. Only the high caste Hindus (those who are Aryans by race) are Hindus. M.K. Gandhi says, "Hindus (Aryan high caste Hindus) are not considered to be original inhabitants of India." For this very reason, no member of the low caste Hindu is allowed to enter a Hindu temple, join the high caste Hindus in worshipping their gods or even mix with them in social life. The religious activities, rituals, way of social and economic life of the low caste Hindus are completely different from those of the caste Hindus and are permanently determined by the rules and codes prepared by the Brahmins in the name of religion .

Hindu is a Persian words which was first used by the Muslims for all the non-Muslim inhabitants of India. "The Hindus never used it in any Sanskrit writing, that is those which were written before the Mohamedan invasion." Swamy Dharma Theertha says, "The Mohammadans called all the non-

Muslim inhabitants, without any discrimination, by the common name 'Hindu', which practically meant non-Muslims and nothing more. This simple fact contributed to the unification of India more than any other single event, but also at the same time, condemned the dumb millions (low caste Hindus) of the country to perpetual subjection to their priestly exploiters. Indians became 'Hindus', their religion became 'Hinduism' and Brahmins their masters."

India was under the rule of different nations from time to time. The Aryan invaders conquered the sub-continent in about 1500 B.C. and remained in power for about one thousand years. This foreign minority subjugated the indigenous peoples through the most barbaric and demoralizing practices. They compelled and conditioned these peoples to ready submission to the ethics and laws of the Hindu caste system and thus, in the name of Dharma (Religion), they made a permanent arrangement for denying the indigenous peoples human dignity. The first revolt against the Aryan tyranny and oppression came about in the form of Buddhism founded by Goutom Buddha. The Buddhist rule was established in 500 B.C. and continued up to 800 A.D. The Muslim rule was initiated by the conquest of Sind in 713 A.D. by Muhammad Ibn Qasim al-Thaqafi and ended in 1858 A.D. when

the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah, was deposed by the British colonial power. The British rule came to an end in 1947 A.D., with the partition of the sub-continent which gave way to the emergence of two independent states, namely India and Pakistan.

The Muslims

The Muslims of India, over 120 million, constitute about 12 percent of the total population and are the second largest religious community in the country. They are about 10 percent of the total Muslim population of the world and are nearly one third of the total Muslim minority population in the world. India has the largest concentration of the Muslims outside the member countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the second largest (after Indonesia) in the world.

The Muslim immigrants, mostly Arabs, Turks, Afghans and Mughals, made the sub-continent their own homeland. Scattered in different cities, towns and villages, they became indistinguishable from the original inhabitants of India. The Muslim scholars and religious leaders propagated Islam among the original inhabitants and a large number of them converted to Islam. The vast majority of the present-day Indian Muslims are the descendants of these converts. It is therefore not correct to say that Indian Muslims are not Indian but outsiders as

it is wrong to say that they are all descendants of the converted Muslims. As far as the question of Indian origin is concerned, there is no difference between the descendants of the Aryan invaders (Brahmins, Kshatryas, Vaishyas) and the off springs of the Muslim immigrants. In fact, the Muslim community of India, with its major segment having indigenous Indian origin, is more Indian than the descendants of the Aryan immigrants who had their origin somewhere in the Central Asia.

The Muslim Rule

The invasion of Sind by Muhammad Ibn Qasim al-Thaqafi in 713 A.D. was precipitated by the failure of Dahir, the ruler of Sind, to punish the pirates who had interfered with Muslim shipping near the coast of his province. The Muslim kings and emperors who ruled over India for over one thousand years were not colonial rulers. Those who had gone there from other countries made the sub-continent their own home. They did not make any discrimination between religious communities but gave equal opportunity and ensured social justice to all irrespective of their religious affinity. In fact, the Muslim rulers the Khaljis, the Lodis, the Syeds and the Mughals- kept the indigenous Muslims, who constituted the bulk of Indian Muslims, at a safe distance from the apparatus of power. In the words of

Iqbal Ansari, "It is the greatest travesty of facts to call this period of dynastic rule of Persian and Turkish origin as Muslim rule. Islam did make its presence felt during this period on Indian social and cultural life. But Islam did not play a dominant role in statecraft. The conquest of India by Islam was again not on the agenda of the Muslim kings. Islam and its promotion was not even a major factor in state policies." This is well-established by the fact that although Delhi remained the capital of Muslim rulers for 647 years (1211-1858 A.D.), the Muslims were a small minority there throughout the period. According to the 1971 census, the Muslims of Delhi constituted only 7.8 percent of the total population of the city. The bulk of the indigenous converted Muslims-artisans, craftsmen, and tillers- did not enjoy any privilege under the system of Muslim rule. Rather high caste groups from among Hindus enjoyed greater privileges under the patronage of the Muslim monarchies. In many cases, the most important jobs like those of ministers and chiefs of army were given to non-Muslims, especially Hindus.

During Muslim rule, there was complete social peace and harmony all over the country. This is aptly proved by the fact that history fails to produce even a single instance of communal disturbance which took place during the period of Muslim rule. Communal disturbance is a phenomenon which

came to be known in the sub-continent only during the British rule. This menace has emanated from the 'divide and rule' policy of the British colonial power.

The British Rule

The process of colonization of India by the British colonial power began in 1757 A.D. with the downfall of Siraj-ud-D the ruler of Bengal. This was the outcome of a staged drama' known as the Battle of Plassey, where the main actors were the British East India Company, a group of Hindu aristocracy and their stooge, named, Mir Ja'far (commander-in-chief of the government army). The British emperor took up the reign of the sub-continent in 1858 A.D. following the abortive revolution of 1857 led by the Muslims against the colonial forces. The new colonial power regarded the Muslims as a potential threat to their political power as it were the Muslims from whom they had snatched the power. The Muslims, naturally, were hostile to the alien rule and showed their apathy to the new administration. The Hindus, on the other hand, welcomed the new masters, began flirting with them and reoriented themselves with the blessing and sympathy of the ruling class.

From the very beginning therefore the foreign rulers adopted a discriminatory policy, hostile towards the Muslims and sympathetic towards the Hindus. The privileges earlier

enjoyed by the Muslims in terms of property rights, etc., were withdrawn, government jobs were denied to them and trade facilities were made restricted for them. They remained backward also in education as they did not like to accept the new education system to the detriment of the traditional one. All these factors combined together relegated them to a lower cadre in the new social order of the country. The pioneer role played by the Muslims in the struggles waged from time to time against the colonial rule made the government more and more anti-Muslim.

The Hindus, especially the Brahmins, readily cooperated with the new rulers and did not fail to seize any opportunity upgrade their status in every sphere of life. It did not take much time for them to become dominant in various spheres of the society. The spread of education gradually made a new renaissance movement started in the Hindu community who had made a lot of progress in the areas of education, trade and commerce. When the Muslims realized that their noncooperation with the new administration was only adding to their miseries and backwardness, it was too late and they were much behind the conscious Hindu community.

As a part of their 'divide and rule' policy, the colonial power tried to instill communal feelings among the two

major communities, Hindus and Muslims. As a result of this, it did not take much time for parochialism and anti-Muslim feelings to overtake the Hindu leaders. Gradually, they became so communal in their attitude and behavior that it became clear to the Muslim leadership that in a united independent India dominated by Hindu majority, the religion and culture of the Muslims would be in jeopardy and socially and economically they would be relegated to a level of second-class citizens. This feeling among the Muslims led to the demand for separate independent states for Muslims constituting the areas where they were in majority. However, a section of Muslim leaders were against the partition of the sub-continent, may be, keeping in view the fate of the Muslims who would remain within Indian territory. Among them was a towering figure like Moulana Abul Kalam Azad who was among the top-ranking leaders of the Congress Party. Another eminent Muslim scholar and freedom fighter, Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani, the then President of Jami'at among them. They decided to throw the lots of the Muslims with the Hindus expecting that in course of time sanity and reason would prevail upon the latter. In apprehension of the far-reaching consequences of the partition of the sub-continent, Moulana Azad put forward his formula of federated India,

but it was out rightly rejected by Jawaharlal Nehru (leader of the Indian Congress), although it was acceptable to Muhammad Ali Jinnah (leader of the Muslim League).

The Partition

In the wake of the partition of the sub-continent in 1947 which led to the creation of Pakistan and India, hundreds of thousands of Indian Muslims lost their lives and property in the hands of Hindu hooligans. The educated Muslim middle classes migrated in large number to Pakistan. The migration of a major portion of the elite to Pakistan created a large vacuum in the leadership of the Indian Muslims. The vast majority of them who could not forsake their ancestral homes, became weak in the economic, political, social and cultural arenas. Moreover, the Hindu chauvinists made it a fashion not only to question their patriotism and loyalty to the state but also to dub them as agents of Pakistan. The Muslims were constantly under pressure to prove their patriotism, as if they were new settlers in India.

Having developed India for about a millennium side by side with other communities, now the Indian Muslims discovered in agony that they had been made strangers in their own country. In the medieval period, particularly the Mughal era, they forged a united India and made it the biggest world power of

the time. They made significant contribution to enrich Indian culture and civilization. They initiated freedom movement, fought the British and made immense sacrifices until the freedom was achieved. Just having won the battle for long-cherished independence, they, to their dismay, found themselves in a situation forcing them either to shed their cultural identity or leave the country. It is indeed difficult to conceive such a human tragedy!

Discriminatory Policy of the Government

Since the dawn of independence, the Government of India dominated by the Aryan Brahmins, adopted discriminatory The Constitution of India, drafted by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, guarantees fundamental rights to all communities of India. Article 15(1) says, "The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them." "The records of the Central and State Governments during the last half a century of independence aptly prove that the constitutional provisions have been honoured more by their violation than by their observance. That the Hindu leaders were not sincere in giving fundamental rights to the non-Hindus was evident from the fact that no sooner had these and other rights been given than checks and obstacles were created through the Directive Principle

added to the Constitution. The Directive Principle says that Government will strive for 'National Integration' and for which a common Civil Code will be adopted. This Civil Code meant only Hindu Code as it became evident from various acts of the Government. In other word, to the non-Hindu communities, the Common Civil Code meant only a measure for Hinduisation of all the citizens of the country.

It is a well-known fact that the Indian Muslims are being systematically and increasingly marginalized in their own homeland. Soon after the independence, various states and territories were reorganized splitting the minority dominated areas in parts and absorbing them in different states with a view to reducing their influence and making it difficult for them to win in any election. In an effort to further reduce their political strength, the names of Muslims are sometime deleted from the electoral rolls. The names of 138,000 Muslim voters, for example, were deleted from the electoral rolls prepared in Hyderabad and Sekanderabad for the election of December, 1994. Deliberate and concerted efforts are being made to change the composition of population in areas where non Hindus, especially Muslims, are in majority. As a result of this policy, the Sikhs in the Punjab have been relegated from absolute to a simple majority status only with a slight

margin (52 percent of the total population). In Jammu and Kashmir, the only state where Muslims are in majority, there has been a continuous fall in the Muslim population and simultaneous rise in the non-Muslim population. The percentage of Muslims in that state fell from 70 in 1951 to 62 in 1991. If this trend continues for a few decades more, the Muslims of the State of Jammu and Kashmir may be reduced to a minority community.

India is a vocal advocate of secularism but nowhere else in the world secularism was so blatantly betrayed. It was expected that in an independent India, Hindu fanaticism will completely evaporate. Long before independence, Moulana Azad said, "I firmly hold that it (communal frenzy) will disappear when India assumes the responsibility of her own destiny." In so-called secular India, Azad's hope was not only belied but Hindu fanaticism gained enormous strength and that also under the direct patronage of the government. The Congress party, which ruled India for over four decades, instead of making any effort to contain Hindu fundamentalism, did everything for its nourishment. Just after becoming the first President of independent India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad removed from the Rashtrapati Bhavan (President's House) all the Muslims who were working there. There are thousands of examples which show how secularism

is being betrayed in India. Secularism was betrayed by the federal government by covertly becoming a party to the demolition of the Babari Masjid. Secularism was betrayed by the Bombay police by openly participating in the killing of thousands of Muslims in the aftermath of the demolition of the Babari Masjid. The jails of Bombay are still packed with scores of innocent Muslims rounded up in the wake of the blast (12 March, 1993) but not a single brute involved in the massacre of the Muslims was brought to book. Those

who are held under the notorious Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) are 90 percent Muslims, although the Muslims constitute only over 12 percent of the total population of the country. The instances of how the Muslims have been made target of all kinds of discrimination and subject of perennial persecution are endless. These all have resulted in a process whereby the Indian Muslims are fast moving towards ruination culturally, educationally, economically, socially and politically. ■

Mass Execution of Muslims

After Delhi had been subdued and the British control was firmly established over it, there began the public executions. Scaffolds were built on the thoroughfares and such places were treated as centres of entertainment by the Englishmen. They would collect there in groups to 'enjoy' the executions. Several localities of Muslims were totally wiped out. **"Twenty-seven thousand Muslims were executed, to speak nothing of those killed in the general massacre.** It seemed that the British were determined to blot out of existence the entire Muslim race. They killed the children and the way they treated the women simply belies description. It rends the heart to think of it." ■

The Contribution of Urdu Journalists to the First War of Independence

- Shafey Kidwai

India's awe-inspiring evolution from a fragmented, nascent and peripheral country to an invincible world power owes much to its inhabitants, who, notwithstanding their different religious, ethnic, linguistic and geographical affiliations, espoused the cause of nation building. Much ink has been spent over the invaluable contribution of different religious, social and linguistic groups and also the political parties who put up a fight against subjugation and exploitation but the stupendous contribution of the Urdu speaking people, especially Urdu journalists, has hardly been made the object of in-depth analysis. This chapter is aimed at supplementing what has been ignored deliberately or unwittingly, since long.

Seldom does the Muslim-dominated, protest-prone Urdu press awake one's memories of the sterling role that it played during India's first war of independence. The contemporary Urdu press, the third largest numerically, has largely been perceived as a body of casual writing that borders on the highly sentimental 'kitsch'. The debatable nature of such a widely-held view could only be deflated, if the role of the Urdu press, during the eventful

period of the freedom struggle, is made the object of a close study. It looks pertinent to turn one's attention to Urdu journalists who wielded their pens to rouse feelings against the alien rule, as a result of which the British took severe punitive measures against them.

Contrary to the well-established and dominant English newspapers of the nineteenth century, such as *The Englishman*, *The Friend of India*, *Bengal Harkaru*, *Delhi Gazette* and *Bombay Times* that invariably described the first attempt to overthrow the British as 'Mutiny', 'Rebellion', "Sedition", 'Sepoy Revolt', 'Insurgency' and 'Uprising', the nascent Urdu press had provided much-needed stimulation to the armed struggle by describing it as 'The first War of Independence', a 'Popular Uprising', a 'Freedom Movement', a 'People's Movement' and a 'Natural Revolt against Subjugation'. The Urdu newspapers, published from all parts of the country, extended wholehearted support to those who made an attempt to raise their voice against the oppressive rule by publishing news reports, editorials and articles in favour of the armed struggle launched by Indians.

Urdu journalism of the nineteenth century holds the unmatched distinction

of producing the first journalist who laid down his life for engendering patriotic feelings by exposing the misdeeds of the deceitful alien rule, which unleashed an unprecedented reign of terror on the helpless Indians. The journalist, Moulvi Mohammad Baqar, Editor, Delhi Urdu Akhbar, faced death at the hands of a firing squad, as soon as the British conquered Delhi (20 September 1857). It is shocking to note that the protagonist of freedom, who happened to be the editor of a widely circulated Urdu daily, was put to death without a formal trial. He became the first martyred journalist of India.

Moulvi Baqar's supreme sacrifice aside, a number of Urdu newspapers such as Sadiqul Akhbar (Delhi), Tilism-e-Lucknow, Seher-e-Samri (Lucknow), Kohinoor (Lahore), Akhbar Murtazai (Peshawar), Desi Akhbar (Multan), Habibul Akhbar (Badaun), Umdatul Akhbar (Bareilly) and the like, made all efforts to bolster the torchbearers of the freedom movement. Devoting almost all highlighting the valour of Indian soldiers who took on the mighty British army, the newspapers urged people to extend their unflinching and constant support to the armed struggle. Urdu newspapers published hard-hitting editorials, articles, news reports and verses, aimed at raising passions against the foreign dispensation.

The first Urdu newspaper of North

India, Delhi Urdu Akhbar was brought out by Moulvi Mohammad Baqar, in February 1837, from Delhi (Khan, 1991). It was a weekly, printed on four page of 12 X 8 inches, published every Saturday. Its issues of 1857, available at the National Archives, Delhi, unfailingly highlight the social and cultural milieu and political life of Delhi, where a complete decline and degeneration had set in. It carried a plethora of news items related to international events, the affairs of Native States, the Royal Court and the East India Company. Further, the activities of a helpless ruler, confined to the four walls of the castle, are narrated in a permanent column, Huzoor-e-wala (His Excellency).

The range of news coverage was extremely wide and the newspaper was rightly regarded as a complete newspaper, fully compatible with its English contemporaries. It appointed correspondents at various cities of the country, to obtain the latest news. Moulvi Mohammad Baqar had put premium on authenticity and objectivity and asked the correspondents not to make use of hearsay and unattributed information and rumours. Delhi Urdu Akhbar was always held in great esteem by both Indians and the British, though its circulation hardly ever crossed the three digit mark.

Delhi Urdu Akhbar, through its

selective publication of news reports, articles, and editorials, instigated its readers against the British rule and when Indian soldiers stormed Delhi on May 11, 1857, it devoted its entire front page to highlight their unprecedented gallantry. Delhi Urdu Akhbar, known for its restraint, had given up its detached point of view and showed little sympathy for the victims of the Indian soldiers' violence. The issue of May 17, 1857 carried a detailed first hand report of the incomparable violence that erupted in Delhi. It was perhaps the first example of 'spot reporting' (i.e., directly reporting from the place where an important event occurred) in Urdu journalism.

The report, written in first person narrative, instead of the usual third person, says:

The present scribe too came out of his house to see things for himself, inspired as was by a regard for the glory of his Faith and hearing the sound gunfire, was confronted by strange Sight: people were running from Kashmiri Gate side into the market. Personal safety was no doubt in danger, but dearer to me than my personal safety was the desire for unusual sights and the other equally strong desire to give a faithful eye-witness account of events to my readers. As I moved forward, I heard gunshots at a

place a little ahead of me. Soon, I saw the Sahib Bhadur running away for his life, sword in hand and a native following him with gun, close at heel. In the rear was a crowd of common people some with sticks in their hands, others with bamboos, chasing the beleaguered Englishmen at hot speed. They hunted down from Zeenat Bara towards the canal.

(Delhi Urdu Akhbar, May 17, 1857)

Moulvi Mohammad Baqar was an avowed enemy of those who were loyal to the British and he would come down heavily upon them. According to him, their support to the alien rule essentially betrayed their own faith and it also made it clear that they hardly cared for their motherland:

It has often been heard that quite a large number of Hindus and Muslims are still loyal to the Christians and have thus betrayed their own faith. Such traitors are the well-wishers of the British and wish to see them victorious. They give them vital information secretly. It is obligatory on the part of all Muslims and Hindus to beware of them, to learn about their activities and to bring them to book so that others might learn from their example.

(Delhi Urdu Akhbar, May 24, 1857; quoted in A History of Urdu Journalism, p. 97)

Delhi Urdu Akhbar never shied away from joining the issue with the English newspapers who always supported the British, and when Indians got the better of the Englishmen, it published an editorial of refutation:

Where have gone the Englishman and the Friend India their unflinching and unequivocal support to awe-inspiring administration and discernment of the British? Make them see how the poverty-stricken, impecunious and indiscreet Indians from cities and villages have ripped the edifice of their empire to nothing.

(Delhi Urdu Akhbar, May 24, 1857; quoted in A History of Urdu Journalism. P.97)

In order to thwart the march of the freedom fighters, the East India Company tried to create a rift among Indians on religious grounds and it circulated proclamation which described the rebellion as the handiwork of Hindus. It urged the Muslims to get themselves dissociated from the rebellion as they were men of faith and shared a lot in common, with the Christians. They were not supposed to be overwhelmed by infidels. The British announced a number of steps including general clemency and release of attached properties to assuage the feelings of the beleaguered Muslims. Moulvi Baqar warned his co-religionists

not to believe the British.

In a cogently argued editorial on the rebellion, Moulvi Baqar raised a pertinent legal question. He stated that if the Indian soldiers revolted against the company, the company should have the emperor. Who had given the British the right to wage war against the emperor?

With a view to arresting the attention of the compatriots and also to keep their morale high, Delhi Urdu Akhbar changed its name. The issue of July 12, 1857 carried a new title — Akhbar ul Zafar. The new name, Zafar, means 'victory' and it was also the pen name of the emperor — Bhadur Shah. The newspaper mentioned that the new title was suggested by the emperor himself. The newspaper started appearing on Sundays instead of Saturdays, in defiance of the Christian decree that stipulates no newspaper be issued on Sunday.

This aside, Delhi Urdu Akhbar published a poem by Mohammad Hussain Azad, son of Moulvi Baqar, who was also a famous poet, Stylist and scholar of Urdu, Persian and Arabic. The poem vividly portrayed the gradual but decisive decline of the British at the beginning of the armed struggle. It also reflected the popular sentiments aroused by the first war of independence; It begins with an incisive comment:

It was only yesterday that the
Christians

Were the championed ones and the
world providers

But today all their prudence melted
away

And their conquering army proved
ineffective

(Delhi Urdu Akhbar, May 24, 1857)

The euphoria of the freedom struggle drew its sustenance from the pen of Moulvi Baqar who was eliminated as soon as the Company gained control over the situation. Some historians have erroneously linked the execution of Moulvi Baqar to the killing of Taylor, the principal of the Delhi College. They alleged that the famous journalist first gave shelter to Taylor and later handed him over to the rebels. This is not true, as Moulvi Baqar published the first hand account of the dance of death in Delhi, in his newspaper. The spot report did mention the killing of Mr. Taylor. The report gives a first-hand account:

... I was soon overwhelmed by a sound of such magnitude that I had thought to be the Doomsday trumpet. I soon realized that the magazine had been blown away. A cloud of dust covered the atmosphere; huge stones and pieces of masonry were blown apart like birds and leaves of trees in a dust storm. Later, it was learnt

that a few of the Holy Victors had climbed the wall of the magazine in order to kill Englishmen, their wives and children, who had enclosed themselves within the building for safety. Those imprisoned within did their best to defend themselves, even fired a couple of shots but in vain. In the confusion, however, following the blowing up of the underground tunnel, some of those surrounded did manage to escape but perished later. It is heard that Mr. Taylor, the Principal of the College, was among those surrounded inside the magazine. His days were not perhaps numbered, so he lived on to die the next day in the vicinity of the same police station. His dead body remained naked and covered with blood lying on the ground throughout the day. Spectators said he then truly looked like a dervish-beggar with a face laden with dust.

(Khan, 1991)

The account of the killing of Mr. Taylor conclusively proves that Moulvi Baqar was in no way connected with it. Had he been involved in it, he would have certainly mentioned it in his report, as his editorials showed his indomitable courage to take on the British.

An arrest warrant was also issued against his son Mohammad Hussain

Azad, who published a revolutionary poem in the newspaper. Mohammad Hussain Azad fled to Sonapat but his family was thrown out of Delhi.

Another Urdu newspaper published from Delhi, Sadiqul Akhbar played a pivotal role in moulding public opinion against the foreign rule. The newspaper was launched by Syed Jameeluddin Khan 'Hijer' in July 1854 (Khan, 1991). He championed the cause of freedom struggle and wrote extensively to expose the misdeeds of the East India Company. The importance of Sadiqul Akhbar could be gauged from the fact that the public prosecutor referred to it frequently during the trial of Bhadur Shah Zafar. Syed Jameeluddin harped on patriotic and nationalistic feelings in his editorials.

Jameeluddin Khan 'Hijer' urged the Indians, especially the Muslims, to wage a holy war against the oppressive government and he hoped that Iran would extend support to the Indian freedom struggle as it was also against the British. In its issue of 6 July 1857 Sadiqul Akhbar published a religious decree, signed by thirty five Islamic scholars who described the armed struggle as 'Jihad' (Holy War). It published a number of editorials, articles and news stories aimed at highlighting the gallantry of freedom fighters. As soon as the struggle subsided, the

company arrested Jameeluddin Khan. He was sentenced to jail for three years.

Public Prosecutor, Major F.G. Hornet, in his long statement, tried to prove that the mutiny of 1857 owed much to a conspiracy plotted by the Urdu press, in collaboration the Royal Court. Jameeluddin Khan served a sentence for three years but the imprisonment did not put a brake on his journalistic zeal. Having been released from jail, he launched another newspaper, Lawrence Gazette, from Meerut in 1864. (Masood, 2002)

The annexation of Oudh led to widespread discontent against the British rule and many newspapers launched a vociferous campaign for the restoration of Oudh. Moulvi Mohammad Yakoob Ansari launched a weekly, Tilism-e-Luck-now, on 25 July 1856. It appeared every Friday and it exploded the myth that Wajid Ali Shah's rule was bogged down by complete administrative disorder. A marked disenchantment with the British rule could be glimpsed through the pages of the Tilism-e-Lucknow.

Since the day the English began to rule this city, the mischief mongers have come into ascendancy. There is deceit and mischief everywhere. Suits were filed against the Mahals and Begums in civil and criminal court. (Khan, 1991)

Tilism-e-Lucknow vehemently denounced the so-called constructive reforms launched by the Company and it described the steps as repressive and coercive, dinned at gaining ascendancy over the native population, by roping in deceitful and dubious methods. It published a number of editorials and articles when the armed struggle for freedom began. It persuaded people to wage a religious war against the alien rule and tried to boost the morale of the oppressed people of Oudh. A news report appeared in the newspaper, saying:

Someone has again lighted the flame of rioting and violence (at Lucknow); the Mandyvan cantonment was set on fire; the puzzle has not been solved. Strange are the tricks played by fortune? It is said the (the trouble began) since the day the new type of cartridges arrived. These cartridges arrived. These cartridges led to rioting in cantonments of Achanak, Ambla and Ferozepur. These riots caused discomfort to many and deprived others of their jobs. Such rioting seems to have started here in our native city too. Everywhere people are talking about what happened recently. (Khan, 1991)

With the outbreak of violence

against the British, the paper discontinued its publication. Its last issue appeared on 8 May 1857.

Umdatul Akhbar (Bareilly) stood firmly behind Fateh Bhadur Khan who took up arms against the Company. By following in the footsteps of Delhi Urdu Akhbar, it also changed its title. It became Fatehul Akhbar which served as an organ of the freedom fighters. When Bareilly was recaptured, the company ordered the closure of this newspaper and its press was subsequently impounded. (Khan, 1991)

Habibul Akhbar (Badaun) wrote extensively in support of the First war of Independence and as a result, its editor was sent to jail -and the press was removed for breaking the law, (Aligarh Institute Gazette, March 19, 1875)

Akhbar Murtazai (Peshawar) also extended whole-hearted support to the freedom struggle and its editor was arrested on the charge of publishing provocative and seditious material. (Sabri, 1952)

Since the files of early Urdu newspapers have become extinct, one cannot make an objective assessment of the contribution of Urdu journalism to India's first War of independence but some issues of the above-mentioned Urdu newspapers, preserved at the National -Archives and Aligarh Muslim University, did throw light on the invaluable contribution of Urdu

journalism. The revolutionary character of Urdu newspapers prompted the British public prosecutor to accuse Urdu newspapers of persuading people to fight against the British.

In 1866, Sir Syed launched his famous multilingual weekly, The Aligarh Institute Gazette and four years later, he 'started Tahzibul Akhlaq.

Not infrequently, Sir Syed has been fallaciously stigmatised by many as a sycophant of the British rule. There is no denying the fact that Sir Syed sometimes praised the British rule extravagantly but he also did write with pugnacity, against British officials who subjected their Indian subordinates to cruelty and barbarity.

Sir Syed, through his writings, made it clear that self-respect was the most venerated and invaluable possession. He never compromised on this count and whenever an attempt was made to tarnish the image of Indians, the Aligarh Institute Gazette was quick to protest. It tried to thwart the attempts of some haughty British officers who unleashed a reign of terror. As a sequel to the first war of independence, some ruthless and cruel British officers took pride in physically assaulting the low-ranked Indian employees. Their fiendish and inhuman attitude resulted in the merciless killings of many Indian employees.

In 1875, a Peshawar based British official thrashed an Indian waiter to death; the Aligarh Institute Gazette published a well-argued denunciatory article, Sir Syed found it appropriate to publish a highly censorious article, as the self-respect of Indians was in jeopardy. He also deplored the attempt of the English newspapers to justify the killings:

In Peshawar, Lieutenant Garrison Saheb Bhadur has inflicted a lethal blow to an Indian waiter and as a result that poor fellow died instantly. Curiously, the doctors declared that prolonged illness had made him weak and led to his death. The English newspapers reporting the incident pointed out that the officer pushed him lightly but he died. The light blow used by the English journalist, clearly indicate their dishonesty.

(Aligarh institute Gazette,
April 23, 1875)

The author referred to many such instances and asserted this was a testament to the fact that the blood of an Indian was considered inferior even to the water used for cleaning the guns of Sahibs. He regretted that whenever the British officials killed an Indian, a fit of provocation was always cited as the justification of their acts.

Sir Syed points out that when an

Englishman got assassinated, the English newspapers would publish the tales of brutality of the Indians and the stories of mercifulness and generosity of the Sahib would start appearing. For him, their attitude was in no way compatible with the announcement of the Queen, who invoked the principle of impartiality by describing her white and black subjects as her two eyes and also that no one was entitled to get preference over the other.

Sir Syed hardly minced words in asserting that he did not recall any instance where an oppressed Indian got justice enough to suffice the Indians. Deeply regretting judicial discrimination, he calls attention to the fact that no Englishman was hanged for killing an Indian; on the other hand, however, if a Britisher's dog got killed at the hands of an Indian, a hefty fine and at least a one-year imprisonment was imposed on the Indian. Provocation was always cited as the cause of attack and the Indian invariably charged with disobedience and malice. He raised a pertinent question by asking the Queen whether she sent her countrymen out to protect and impose the law or to put their lives into further misery and hardships.

The above-mentioned article was no exception; whenever an attempt was made to besmirch the self-respect of Indians, the Gazette unfailingly

published penetrating articles.

The Government of the N. W, Province took offence at the publication of such an article and issued warning to the Gazette. The official memo no. 69999, dated April 20, 1875 was subsequently issued:

Undersigned is directed to invite the attention of the editor of the Aligarh Institute Gazette to the impropriety and injustice of the criticism hazard at page no, 181 and 182 of the issue of the 19th March 1875, and to remind him that the paper is taken by the government for distribution among schools but that Government cannot be expected to subscribe to any paper which expresses opinion as those in the article in question.

The intimidating tone of the letter did not deter Sir Syed from continuing the berating and reproving campaign against the arrogant and self-conceited British officials. How can a person who published such spiteful articles be described as an apologist for the British rule? The warning also absolves the Aligarh Institute Gazette from heaping fulsome praise on the British rule in India. Since no serious attempt was made to turn attention to such articles, Sir Syed is still branded as an ally of the British. ■

(Cont. from page 99)

to deliver to mankind the Will and the Commands of the Creator.

It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And it was not (vouchsafed) to any mortal that Allah should speak to him unless (it be) by revelation or from behind a veil or (that) He sendeth a messenger to reveal what He will by His leave Lo! He is Exalted, Wise. (25:51)

Although it is not possible for any man to become a Prophet through his personal efforts as it is a special God given gift, almost all the Prophets spent most of their time in meditation and other acts of devotion before the beginning of the revelation. They used to go to some far off place away from the noise of this world to purify their hearts and souls through meditation, prayer and worship concentrating on the realities of this world, and the purpose behind the creation of man and the universe. It has been said in the Torah that Musa (Moses) (peace be upon him) remained in a state of fast for one month on the Mount of Tur till the Divine Book was revealed to him and it has been stated in the Bible that 'Isa (Christ) had spent his time in worship and fasting in a lonely desolate jungle. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go to the cave of Hira and stayed there for months together spending his time in meditation and other acts of devotion the beginning of the revelation. It is recorded on the authority of Allah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the beginning of revelation for Messenger of Allah was proceeded by true visions (.....) which used to come like breaking of the dawn.

Even after the commencement of the revelation he stood from in the night prolonging his prayers reciting lengthy Surahs so that there was sweeling on his feet Allah, the Exalted addressed him in the Holy Qur'an saying:

Ta Ha We have not revealed unto thee (Muhammad) this Qur'an that thou should be distressed. 20:1.2

As the prophet is to be a model personality for mankind, he is an embodiment of excellent virtues. He has well-balanced temperament and behaviour. He has been brought up in a pious healthy environment. He belongs to a noble descent. His honesty and integrity are beyond doubt. He is brave, courageous, straightforward and truthful. He is endowed with all the best virtues and qualities of head and heart and is free from all sorts of evils, sins meanness and triviality. He is kind-hearted and magnanimous and outlooks the faults of others. He forgives those who hurt and annoy him. He is kind and generous even to his enemies. He has utmost regard for his relatives and neighbours. He helps the downtrodden and the needy. Hatred for evil and sin and love for virtuous deeds is ingrained in his very nature. He is free from all sorts of errors. It has been said in Holy Qur'an:

Your comrade erreth not. Nor is deceived; (53:2)

The eye turned not aside nor yet was overbold. ■ (53:17)

(Extracted From Sirat-Un-Nabi By S.Sulaiman Nadwi Vol. No. IV, Page,120-126)

Impact of The New World Order on Contemporary Islam

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

The end of the WW II (1939-1945) is a landmark in the contemporary world politics and history, and how it subsequently shaped the changes in the global world politics. The end of the WW II was also the beginning of the Cold War, as a result of which the US and USSR emerged as two super power rivals to each other, both in terms of the ideology and political system.

The two super powers, therefore, threatened to divide the entire world into two camps. The Western Europe sided with the US and the Eastern Europe joined the Soviet camp, called the western and eastern alliances. The western alliance was formalized into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which came into existence in April 1949. It was an association of twelve states, which declared that armed attack on any of them in Europe or North America would be regarded as an attack on all of them. Further, each of these states would be obliged to help the others. The eastern alliance, known as the Warsaw Pact, was led by the Soviet Union. It was created in 1955 and its principal function was to counter NATO's forces in Europe.

Both the American and the Soviet Bloc were hostile to each other. Their hostility posed a threat to the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa

and South America, which could progress and stabilise only under peaceful circumstances.

In order to keep themselves away from the two super blocs and to live in peace the newly independent countries of the third world set up the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961. India's role in founding and supporting the NAM could not be ignored in history. Without the strenuous efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the NAM perhaps would not have seen the light of the day.

Consequently, the world was divided into three blocs; capitalist, Communist and the Non- Aligned blocs. Similarly, the world may be divided into three different worlds First World/ Capitalist World, Second World/ Communist World and Third World/ Non-Aligned World.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) came into being after the Socialist revolution in Russia in 1917. The east European countries that the Soviet army had liberated from the western forces came under the control of the USSR. This group of countries was called the Second World or the socialist bloc. The Warsaw Pact held them together. The Soviet economy was at that more strong and industry developed than the rest of the world, except the US.

In the course of time the Soviet system, however, became very bureaucratic and authoritarian, making life very difficult for its citizens. Lack of democracy and the absence of freedom subdued people who often expressed their dissent through jokes and cartoons.

The one-party system represented by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had tight control over all state and society institutions and failed to meet the aspirations of the people in the fifteen different republics that formed the Soviet Union. Due to internal differences and a host of drawbacks, the Soviet Union began to dwindle. Moreover, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 weakened the system even further, both militarily and economically.

Mikhail Gorbachev sought to reform this faltering system. Unfortunately, Gorbachev, was unable to manage the party strongly and ultimately the Soviet system collapsed. Boris Yeltsin emerged as a national hero, taking the former Soviet Union republics back to the path of prosperity and political and social change. In December 1991, under Yeltsin, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, three major republics of the USSR, declared that the Soviet Union is disbanded. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was banned, ultimately drawing curtains to the old Soviet Union forever.

It is interesting to note that disintegration of the Soviet Union and thus the end of the cold war left a profound impact on the world politics. The end of the cold war left the US without any serious rival in the world. The truth is that the US hegemony took a new upswing on world politics in 1991 after the Soviet power disappeared from the international scene.

In August 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. Exploiting the situation the US gathered 660,000 troops from 34 countries to fight Iraq. Eventually, they defeated Iraq and termed it as the First Gulf War. The then, US President, H.W. Bush hailed it as beginning of a new world order. Since then the concept of the new world order came in vogue. We may easily understand the deceitful intent of H.W. Bush as despite winning the First Gulf War he lost the next US Presidential elections of 1992.

Frankly speaking, after the fall of the Soviet Union, and disappearance of the biggest enemy of the western world: the Communism, the western powers and Israel made Islam their target and started projecting Islam as a greater threat not only for the US, Europe but also for the rest of the world. Jewish thinkers like Bernard Louis and Samuel Huntington propagated the concept of clashes of civilizations, which later became the war slogan of Zionism against Islam.

September 11, 2001 attacks on

the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were the outcome of a conspiracy that was hatched by Jews in collaboration with their American masters. It is said that the mastermind of this tragic event was Usama bin Laden and his organization "al-Qaida". But "the American intelligence agencies (mainly those operating inside America) have denied Usama bin Laden and his organization al Qaida's role in September 11 attacks. Even the French and American scholars have proved beyond doubt that none but America itself is responsible for those attacks. The gist of the evidences provided by these scholars is that the propaganda made by America and the world media about the attacks is a transparent lie, a big fraud. It was, in fact, a mutiny of the high military officials themselves with the agenda to compel President G.W. Bush to change his policies". (Western Media and Its Impact on Society, p, 149, Publisher details)

No doubt, the attacks of 9/11 in the US opened a Pandora's box and interpretations and questions about Islam. Since then Islamophobia gained wide momentum throughout the globe. Accordingly, they started destroying Islamic countries one by one. First they raided Afghanistan suspecting that Usama bin Laden, the mastermind of the 9/11 was there.

Later on, as part of their larger

sinister plan, on 19 March 2003, the US launched its invasion of Iraq under the codename "Operation Iraqi Freedom". The ostensible purpose of the invasion was to prevent Iraq from developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD). While no credible evidence of WMD has been unearthed in Iraq, so far. It has led to destroying not just Iraq but the whole region, there are conservative estimate that 60,000 Iraqi civilians were killed in the US-led invasion. The similar situation continues in Syria, Libya including Palestine, taking a huge toll on human lives.

Ironically, since its inception the Zionist State of Israel has been exercising all kinds of oppression and atrocities on Palestinians and Lebanese. Despite this, America has been extending both financial and military aid to Israel. It should be noted that after Hitler's destruction UNO came into existence to maintain international peace and security besides increasing cooperation in solving international, political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems as well. Strangely, America has attacked more than 21 countries from Vietnam to Nicaragua, after UNO came into being. Despite that, the UNO has helped the US by keeping mum or adopting useless and ineffective resolutions. The UNO has failed in implementing its charter under the influence of the US.

To sum up, the main plank of the

US and Israel is to root out Islam from the surface of the earth. But a question arises here, will America succeed in achieving its goal? The answer will indeed be in negative.

Recently, the US like the erstwhile USSR, had to pay a heavy price in Afghanistan after continuous military reverses and financial drain. Ultimately, the US withdrew its troops from there. It can be said with certainty that time is

not far off when the USA too would face the same fate as the USSR. As the enemies of Islam can't survive for long. In his book (details of the book) Akbar S. Ahmad has summed up sagely, saying: "The 21th century will be the century of Islam. The events of September 11 saw to that." Indeed it would be gratifying for every Muslim to see these words become the reality in the near future. Amen. ■

Call to Prayer

Let us take the Azan or the calls to prayer first. There is hardly a city, a town or a village throught the world where the echo of this call is not heard five times a day. We are giving here both the words of Azan and their meanings as people are generally conversant with the call but not with its purport.

Allahu-Akbar (four times)	Allah is Most Great.
Ash-hadu al la-illaha ill-Allah (twice)	I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah.
Ash-hadu anna Muhammadar Rasoolullah (twice)	I bear witness that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah.
Hayya alas-Salah (twice)	Come to prayer.
Hayya alal-Falah (twice)	Come to success.
Allahu-Akbar (twice)	Allah is Most Great.
La ilah- ill-Allah	There is no deity but Allah.

Introduction to Holy Qur'an From Scientific Perspective

- Mohd. Shihabuddin Nadwi

Material World is Divine

Manifestation

Many people harbour many mistaken notions about the holy Qur'an. Certain circles consider it purely as a code of Shariah and think it has no bearing whatsoever on any other problem or branch of knowledge. On the other hand some others associate it with Science and award a secondary position to principles and rules of Shariah present therein. Both are at the extremes. Hence it is imperative to adopt a realistic approach and realize its true and proper place. Here an attempt is made to introduce the reader to the basic branches of Qur'anic knowledge and to lay down certain principles and rules following which scientific study of these branches becomes productive. It will then prove its validity from the material and spiritual aspects which are generally overlooked. That most of the references are the works of ancients is a relevant point to make here. But before hitting the nail on the head, let us determine the subject matter and its scope and application of the holy Qur'an.

Subject Matter of Holy Qur'an and its Application

Showing the right path in life ideologically is the main theme of holy Qur'an. This guidance is not confined

merely to Shariah Code. It extends to shaping and reforming the thinking and understanding of the man also. The holy Qur'an exhorts thus:

The Qur'an (is the) guidance for mankind and Clear Signs for the guidance and the Criterion (between right and wrong).

Baqara: 185)

This verse clearly indicates that the holy Qur'an is not guidance for Muslims only but it provides ideological and practical guidance to the entire mankind. The following verses point out this aspect:

Say: 'O you mankind! Now Truth (i.e. the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammed) has come to you from your Lord'. (Yunus: 108)

(This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammed!) in order that you might lead mankind out of darkness into light (Ibrahim: 1)

Which are the intricate problems and different aspects of life, thought and action the holy Qur'an has taken up for guiding mankind? The apt answer to the question is, it has guided mankind in all such aspects that constitute its topics of discourse. Then the question arises about these topics dealt in the Book. According to Shah Waliullah Dehlavi

(1176 A.H.), there are five branches of knowledge that constitute the main study in the holy Book. They are the following:

1. Commandments — wherein clear instructions about the permitted and prohibited actions, things etc. are given.
2. Polemics — wherein instructive deliberations with non-believers are suggested.
3. Admonition through Divine Signs — wherein purification is sought through the study of the Benefits and Signs of the Lord.
4. Admonition through Days of Allah — wherein purification is sought through the description of the conflicts between the Prophets and their disobedient followers.
5. Admonition through Life After Death — wherein purification through description of death, Resurrection Day is advocated.

The arguments and themes centre around these five topics alone. The description of the Commandments is the obligation of the Muslim jurists and that of the polemics is the duty of the scholastics.

The first two of these branches of knowledge deal with the beliefs, worshiping and the general affairs of life. The remaining three are reformative in nature, and they awaken the men through admonition. The polemics

covers such topics which were adopted by heretics and their false beliefs were refuted through logical arguments. Thus these discussions were responsible for removing all doubts that might have arisen in the theological beliefs and philosophies. The holy Qur'an constitutes a comprehensive treatise on these branches of knowledge and guides the mankind throughout, like the light house in the vast sea. I have selected the second and the third of these branches for discussion. They are Polemics and Admonition through Divine Benefits. These pertain to the blessings of Allah and His Power of maintaining and bringing up all His Creations.

Reformation of the Waylaid Nations

In what is described as polemics, the false beliefs of the astray nations are discussed and the concepts of the Unity of God, Prophet-hood and Resurrection Day are logically and objectively established. These constitute the fundamental basis of the preaching of all prophets. In fact these are the foundation stones of the divine code of life.

In the earlier periods Islam had to deal with infidels and polytheists. But now it has to meet the challenges of heretics and materialists. The holy Qur'an comprises of logical and scientific arguments that can convince the minds in every epoch. The actual purpose of references to modern

sciences and problems is nothing but to meet the requisites of perfect guidance to all men at all times.

Divine Creations Lead to Knowledge of God

Knowledge through the blessings of Allah includes a fuller description and appreciation of His favours, His Signs and His creations and leads one to recognise His characteristics, particularly of His providential powers and divinity. According to Imam Ghazzali (505 A.H.) the best and the exalted knowledge is the knowledge of Gods. All the other sciences are only secondary and incidental. The existence and characteristics of Allah alone is the basis and quintessence of all sciences. Hence for the realization of His existence and characteristics, a study of His actions becomes essential. Since this whole universe and its revelations are nothing but another form of His actions, the study of the material substances reveal His characteristics. And this study of His characteristics lead one to His Personality. And thus the understanding of His Existence rests on the study of His characteristics and His actions.

Imam Ghazzali has compiled all such verses of the holy Qur'an wherein there is direct reference to His Existence, Characteristics and Actions and titled the compilation as Jawahirul Qur'an or "The Quintessence of the Qur'an". The number of these verses

pertaining to His creation is 763. From the scientific point of view these are the very verses that deal with material substances and the phenomena governing the functioning of the whole universe. A deep study of these verses will clearly point to the divinity, exaltation, providence, compassion, nourishing and protective capacities, unique sagacity and planning of Allah. Considering this view, a detailed study of the matter in the light of all modern sciences fundamentally constitutes the study of the functioning of Allah or Divine Activities. Imam Ghazzali views nothing but the Almighty Allah and His functions (activities) in this whole universe.

Manifestations of Divine Characteristics

As one studies intrinsically the working of this universe, one comes across irrefutable proof of the existence of One God and His perfect characteristics. It is only Unity of God that is experienced at every step with every new manifestation. Whether this study comprises that of the tiniest atom or gigantic planetary system, colorful or highly incensed flowers or integrated systems of termites, ants or bees, everywhere will be found the highest, smartest and finest craftsmanship. Even the singularly exquisite functioning of the human body and the multifarious biological systems are no exception. All of them reveal that someone is behind the veil who possesses extraordinary powers. Otherwise how can one explain

the continuity of the creations with varied characteristics? Mystically this can be termed as Omnipresence of One God. This means, overlooking the external features, if one delves deep inside, one can witness the unitary system that governs the complete administration. Then can one realize and witness the comprehensive qualities of the God. It would be as if one is witnessing God standing in front of Him.

The divine characteristics are grouped under two heads according to Faith. 1. Personal Characteristics, and 2, Functional Characteristics. Life, capacity, knowledge, logic, listening, witnessing and deciding constitute the Personal Characteristics. Creation, providing food, death, resurrection etc. all are included as Functional Characteristics.

If these divine characteristics are studied critically in the light of modern sciences, a new chapter for guiding mankind will open up. Hence there is need for exposing fully all the characteristics of Allah so that the facts as revealed and supported by the sciences become evident.

Confirmation of Basic Beliefs

As for as theology and fundamental beliefs are concerned the holy Qur'an lays stress on Unity of God, Prophet-hood and the Life Hereafter. As proof it presents the whole universe and its unique administration which in turn reveals how precisely and orderly this

material world is functioning. The way the whole system is functioning clearly indicates how wonderfully orderly, the Administrator and Coordinator is. He says:

... you can see no fault in the Beneficent One 's creation, then look again: 'Can you see any rifts?' Then look again and yet again, your sight will return to you in a state of humiliation and worn out.

(Mulk: 3-4)

The universe comprising of minerals, plants, living beings, heavens and everything is so fascinating, illuminating and unique that even the scientists are perplexed and fail to delineate the whole functioning. The holy Qur'an, time and again, draws the attention of the man and advisedly on the functioning of the universe so that man can arrive at conclusions logically, rationally and experimentally that confirm the existence of God, His omniscience, His being One and Only One, His providential powers and the supremacy, leaving no place for man to revolt any time any place against Him. From this point of view there is no contradiction whatsoever between the holy Qur'an and the universal administrative system or between the Holy Qur'an and the science! In fact the comprehensive references in the Book to the universe and its system of administration are all being confirmed and details are being unraveled through

the sciences. The only difference between the two is about the details. Modern researches have not disproved even a single reference of the holy Qur'an, while many of the theories, inferences, philosophies and ideologies have undergone repeated changes due to advancement in science. This fact clearly points to the incontrovertibility of the holy Qur'an at the same time proving that it is from the Omniscient Allah.

Brief Qur'anic Account of Certain Sciences

A number of such exquisitely original references to definite phenomena are found in the holy Qur'an which are now being studied in detail and fresh documentary evidence is being produced by researches in the field confirming the validity and truth of the Qur'anic statements. This is a new dimension of the revealed Text. There is no end or limit to it. For example, let us take one verse from the Book and see what Imam Ghazzali has to say about it. The holy Qur'an says:

O men! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Most Generous, Who created you, fashioned you perfectly and gave you a due proportion, in whatever form He willed. He put you together,; (Infitar; 6-8)

Imam Ghazzali comments that the true interpretation of these lines can be done only by such a person who is proficient in the knowledge of anatomy and who has fuller knowledge of the

external and internal organs, of their number, their functioning and their utility.

These are such functions as ordained by Allah that are related to the mysterious working of the human body. The study of the human body is done these days through sciences like biology, anatomy, physiology, medicine etc. Still what the learned Imam had interpreted a few centuries ago proves to be a reliable prediction. In spite of compilation through all these sciences, still the working of human body has not been completely and precisely understood. Although it is a masterpiece of the Providence, from purely scientific point, it is still a mystery. In fact so shallow is our knowledge that Dr. Alexis Carol thought it fit to write the book entitled *Man The Unknown*. The whole thing appears to be true to the last word as described in the following verse:

...(And) of knowledge you (mankind) have been given only a little.

(Bani Israel: 85)

Among the 'functions' of Allah are the revolutions of the Sun and the Moon and the recognition of their movements in fixed constellations. This movement is the predetermined one. The holy Qur'an says:

The Sun and the Moon follow courses (exactly) calculated.

(Rahman: 5)

It is He who made the Sun as a

shining thing and the moon as light, and measured out its stages, that you might know the number of years and the reckoning.

(Yunus: 5)

He merges the night into the day (i.e. the decrease in the hours of the night are added in the hours of the day), and He merges the day into the night (i.e. the decrease in the hours of the day are added in the hours of the night). (Fatir: 13)

Quoting these verses, Imam Ghazzali opines that the revolutionary motion of the sun and the moon, the movement in different constellations, the solar and the lunar eclipses and the turnover of the day and the night can be understood by the person who has a fuller knowledge of the heavenly bodies. This in itself is an important science.

The holy Qur'an is an abstract and a brief Book. Its explanation and commentary is a formidable job for the man. Consider the following verses which have their own majesty and marvel:

And on the earth are Signs for those who have Faith with certainty. As also in your own selves, Will you not then see? (Dhariyat: 20-21)

These two verses can be explained giving full description of the planet earth and human bodies with special reference to geological and

geographical features, botanical characteristics, zoological, biological and psychological aspects of man. In this connection the work of Allama Ibne Qayyim (751 A.H.) is exemplary. His collection is entitled as At-Tibyan Fi Aqsamil Qur'an. Truly speaking even if the entire scientific literature is cited as explanation of these verses; the exegesis will not be completed. This is also confirmed by the following verse:

Say (O Muhammed Sallam!) to mankind: 'If the ocean were ink (with which to write) the Words of my Lord, surely the ocean would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord exhausted, even if we brought (another ocean) like it for its aid.

(Kahf: 109)

Holy Qur'an — A Boundless Ocean

A number of references from the holy Qur'an can be quoted to indicate direct relevance to facts of sciences that have either been enunciated or in the process of defining. This clearly points to the fact that this divine Book consists of such secrets and facts about the universe and its contents that need sustained research efforts of the man. One obvious feature of this work is that the principles and facts as defined by the holy Qur'an are so defined that they are not at all affected even if the theories were to be proved erroneous or amended at a later stage. In fact every new revelation enhances the validity of the divine statements already defined.

Not even a single Qur'anic statement has been either questioned or proved wrong by any of the most advanced and recently developed scientific theories or techniques. This, in itself, is a great proof of the holy Qur'an being from All-knowing Allah.

Two Types of Facts

Two types of scientific facts have been stated in the holy Qur'an which concerns these material manifestations. The first of these are the brief statements, the nature of which has already been referred above. The second of them are such secrets or providential mysteries which are figuratively spoken and which can be deciphered correctly only after advanced techniques are evolved in the field. For example, consider the fact of the presence of male and female parts in the plants. 'Pairs' is the conventional word that refers to them. Zauj is the word that has been used in the holy Qur'an. Right in the beginning although really means husband and wife or male and female, it was figuratively taken to indicate a species or kind. Anyhow the holy Qur'an is quite explicit in declaring:

Glory to Hint Who has created all the pairs of that what the earth produces as well as of their own (human) kind (male and female) and of that which they know not,

(Yasin: 36)

That male and female parts are

present in the plants is a recent discovery. But the holy Qur'an had declared it 1,400 years ago alone. Sagaciously a great principle and fact has been defined in this verse which is a challenge for the whole world of science and invitation to make a thorough study. It says that in this material world there are, besides the animals and plants, innumerable units which are in the form of pairs and about which man has no knowledge. In spite of determining a number of such units, man will still be short of completing such discovery. This will be a truth which stands like a carved line on the stone. No one can refute the truth of this divine statement.

Holy Qur'an — The Treasure chest of Knowledge

The revealed divine book is such a comprehensive scripture that there is no comparison in the whole world of literature. It is the custodian of all sciences, arts and mysteries of the universe right from the beginning to the end. Thus the Lord says:

We have neglected nothing in the Book ... *(An'am: 38)*

And We have sent down to you the Book (Qur'an) as an exposition of everything. *(Nahl: 89)*

Even a Hadith confirms it thus:

Allah's Book contains information of what has happened before you, news of what will happen after you,

and a decision regarding matters which occur among you.

Hazrath Ibne Masood narrates: "Whosoever is in search of learning, let him pursue, positively the holy Qur'an for it contains information of people of the past and latter periods.

Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti (911 A.H.) writes that the Book of Allah contains information about everything. It does not lack information about any aspect or problem of any particular branch of knowledge. It contains information about peculiarities of sciences and all the mysteries of the universe.

Imam Ghazzali had given a thought-provoking idea in the fifth century itself, that there might be many more sciences that have not been found out now but which are not beyond the efforts of human beings. There might be even such sciences that human wisdom might not dream of. However Qur'an is one book where do we find a mention of all such sciences. It is an endless sea whose shore is not at all visible. It is a vast ocean of knowledge about God and His activities.

Providential Manifestations

The holy Qur'an exhorts men to reflect on the creation of the earth and heavens, the alternation of day and night; systems of winds and rains, mysteries of animal and plant lives, and the movements of the sun and the moon.

He advocates deep study of everything of this world and every manifestation of nature very keenly. All this will lead you to infer that there is highest order of discipline, planning, unity, beauty, craftsmanship and technical expertise in all these manifestations. You will be forced to arrive at the existence of the best creator, great administrator, farsighted planner and qualified statesman. Without this it is not possible to explain this whole Phenomena of planning.

The Material World is the Arena for Divine Activities

Conclusively it can be said that this whole universe as well as all its manifestations are indicative of "divine activities", whose study will take you to an observation of divine characteristics. This review of the characteristics of Allah will lead you to His existence. It is He Who is ruling over this universe. Not a leaf or an atom can move without His order. This whole universe is the sum total of the Divine Activities, which is inviting men to reflect and study the functioning of the universe and arrive at a fuller understanding of its Creator and Guardian. Even if the heart of an atom is cut open, it will disclose such facts and make such revelations that prove beyond doubt the existence of God and His nourishing and cherishing capacities. An Arabic poet points out, "The dynamic and static states of everything bear witness to the presence of Allah. Every material object of the

world is pointing to the Unity of Allah.”

New Form of Polytheism

History repeats itself. It means whatever progress do times make, the past incidents repeat themselves in different garbs. Matter will be -the same but it takes up new forms. Polytheism is appearing before us in an entirely new form. It has now adorned the garments of materialism. The polytheists of yore and the modern non-believers or materialists have one trait in common. The polytheists assign the divine characteristics to other bodies while the atheists and materialists of modern times assert that ‘matter’ itself is the cause of its existence. It is this womb from which all other materials are appearing themselves. It can perform itself without any interference of God. So both of them stand in the same line. The only difference is that the polytheists believe in one supreme God in spite of their belief in multiple gods, while the materialists consider that matter is the only unit which is the greatest God’.

From this angle the conflict between monotheism and polytheism still exists. To crush the onslaught of this polytheism, we have to equip ourselves with the knowledge of science and its appliances. To face this assault the holy Qur’an has time and again exhorted the believers to reflect on the manifestations of Allah, extend their sphere of the studies and thus perform their role of offering true guidance to the

whole mankind.

Status of the Jurist and the Philosopher

To inquire into and clear up the Commandments is the job of the jurist (Faqih). Explanation is the duty of the scholar-philosopher. Imam Ghazzali asserts that both the jurist and the scholar enjoy almost the same status. The difference is that while the requirements of the jurist are general, those of the scholar-philosopher gain gravity at times. From the theological needs, of course, both of them are indispensable. The jurist has to settle special issues relating to partaking of food, performing marriage etc., while the scholar has to save the believers from the harm caused by the misguided and heretical persons as well as to contradict their beliefs through discourses and discussions with such heretics.

Qur’an — The Comprehensive Book of Shariah and Physical World

The holy Qur’an does not enlist merely Shariah problems but it guides mankind in explaining and understanding many physical aspects of the universe as well. In fact it is a comprehensive programme of Shariah and material world that has to be utilised in its proper perspective so that the mankind is guided properly and in the right direction. With this purpose in view alone, the Muslims have been referred as “The Best of Peoples”. Since the

nations of the world are all intoxicated with superior knowledge of modern sciences, they cannot be made to accept the guidance unless we are also equipped with the knowledge of these very sciences, and offer them the best criteria to discriminate between the right and the wrong. There is, thus, a clarion call for the Muslims to become proficient in all the modern sciences so that they can fulfil their fundamental task of guidance in the light of the Qur'anic instructions.

Need for a Fresh Ideological Revolution

The first duty of the believers in Islam these days is to take up the study of modern sciences with special stress on research and eliminate the germs of atheism and materialism polluting the society and prove the providence of Allah through godly discussions and explanation of these sciences. Failing which this world would not come out of the oblivion. It must not be forgotten that even many scientists are baffled by the phenomenal functioning of certain systems and they are not at all satisfied by the materialistic explanation and exposition of these phenomena. No alternative based on these godly guidance has reached them. This great task can only be taken up by none other than the Muslims who alone have the lofty divine manual of the holy Qur'an to guide them. They have to fully realize their true status and strive practically.

Then only can they take up reformatory tasks. And this achievement of creating a revolutionary outlook among the nations of the world is possible when they are intrinsically revolutionized themselves. Hence there is need for co-ordinating together and preparing such a team that can take up this lofty aim. This is an obligation which must be fulfilled. Otherwise they will be held responsible for neglecting their duty. The need of the hour is a scientific crusade for which the Muslims must prepare themselves without losing any time or effort. They have to prepare themselves for making supreme effort in the lines as per the directions given in the following Qur'anic verses:

You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind. You enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong. (Ale-Imran: 110)

There is also a message for the mankind in this direction in this great and unique divine Book:

This (Qur'an) is a Message for mankind, in order that they may be warned, thereby and that they may know that He is only One God (Allah) and that men of understanding may take heed. (Ibrahim: 52)

And indeed We have put forth for men, in this Qur'an every kind of parable in order that they may remember. (Zumar: 27) ■

Religious Thought of Maulana Azad

- S.G. Mohiuddin

Muhiuddin Ahmad, later known to the world by his pen-name Abul Kalam Azad, was born in Mecca in 1888. His mother was an Arab belonging to a high esteemed family of scholars, though his father was an Indian who had migrated to Arabia after the British had consolidated their hold over India. Azad's mother tongue was Arabic; piety and learning were his heritage. He grew up in the tradition of an old style theological family. He was taught by his own father and a few of his trusted scholars according to the traditional curriculum, the Dars-i-Nizamiah, which was completed by him by the time he was 15 years of age.

Abul Kalam Azad was precocious and possessed of an independent and critical mind. By the time he was 14 years of age, he began to be assailed by doubts in his traditionally inherited faith. His father was furiously hostile towards the Wahhabis, intolerant of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's modernism and disliked even the study of English by his son. Azad's critical mind could not put up with the shackles of such unyielding orthodoxy. In spite of his great reverence for his father, Azad developed sympathy for the Wahhabis and Sir Syed's rationalism, and developed a great respect for the great medieval scholars and reformers Al-Ghazzali and Imam Ibn Taimiyah who were not very popular in the then religious circles of India.

Both had been great critics of Greek logic and philosophy which were regarded as the bases of Islamic theological dialectics.

"This was a period of great mental crisis for me", writes Maulana Azad in the *India wins Freedom*. "I was born into a family which was deeply imbued with religious traditions. All the conventions of traditional life were accepted without question and the family did not like the least deviation from orthodox ways. I could not reconcile myself with the prevailing customs and beliefs and my heart was full of new sense of revolt. The ideas I had acquired from my family and early training could no longer satisfy me. I felt that I must find the truth for myself. Almost instinctively I began to move out of my family orbit and seek my own path.

"The first thing which troubled me was the exhibition of differences among different sects of Muslims. I could not understand why they could be opposed to one another when all of them claimed to derive their inspiration from the same source. Nor could I reconcile myself with the dogmatic assurance with which each sect branded the other as mistaken and heretical. These differences among the orthodox schools began to raise doubts in my mind concerning religion itself. If religion expresses an universal truth, why should there be such differences and conflicts among men professing different

religion? Why should each religion claim to be sole repository of truth and condemn all others as false?

“For two or three years, this unrest continued and I longed to find a solution of my doubts. I passed from one phase to another and a stage came where all the old binds imposed on my mind by family and upbringing were completely shattered. I felt free of conventional ties and decided that I should chalk out my own path. It was about this time that I decided to adopt the pen name ‘Azad’ or ‘Free’ to indicate that I was no longer tied to my inherited beliefs.”

The scepticism of Azad led him to undertake a critical examination of not only the creed of Islam but the validity of religions itself. At first he was inclined to reject it altogether. As stated by him in his biography, the *Tadhkira*, his mind was enveloped with doubts about the truth of a higher unseen controlling power of man’s emotions and mortality correlated with the natural phenomenon. He himself says that he had reached the stage of heretics, wandering in the dark valley of scepticism and disbelief and bearing the burden of unrelieved mental anguish and spiritual restlessness. The period of his mental crisis lasted for four or five years.

At last his mental uncertainty and spiritual struggle gave way to faith and conviction. It was a new found certitude through his own efforts, studies and contemplations. His faith in Islam was now more firm which was never be shaken

again throughout his life. Azad says that he had reached the stage “where nothing is acceptable except abundance of pain, dedication of heart and renunciation and consecration of life.” Azad’s inimitable style of expression combining elegance with poetic imagery in describing the periods of his spiritual unrest as well as its recovery can mislead anyone not conversant with that form of expression. Azad was, however, now satisfied both intellectually and emotionally about the truth of Islam from which he drew inspiration in all trials and turbulants, no matter to what sphere of life they belonged. It was an ‘emotional transformation which had roots in the deepest recesses of the soul’ for it was not based merely on reason which can always be shaken. His independence of mind has enabled him to take an objective, broadminded view of religious truths and respect for all religions as enshrined in the teachings of the Qur’an.

Azad wrote about his re discovery of Islam.”

“I am a born Muslim but you would be surprised to know that I was not content with the religion inherited by birth from my ancestors. I cast it away as soon as I was mentally mature enough to discard what I did not want, and tried to search out my own way impartially and with an open mind. I had to pass through different stages and had to successive intellectual crises. As last I found what I wanted, and this is where I now find

myself. Undoubtedly this is Islam but not the Islam that was made up of customs and usages and following the lead of others that which I had inherited as one born in a Muslim family. I am not a Muslim just because I ought to follow the path of my parents, but I am a Muslim because I have discovered it through my own efforts and researches. The credence, conviction and peace of mind I was after, I have now found for myself.”

Azad undertook a journey abroad in 1908, after the death of his father, and traversed Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Turkey. There he came in contact with the reformatory religious and political movements initiated by Jamaluddin Afghani, Shaikh Muhammad Abduh, Saeed Pasha and the young Turks. He returned to India filled with the aspirations of revival in religion, political revolution and liberation of the country. But he was still interested chiefly in religion and literature. He had also been conceived that the independence of Muslim world depended on independence of India, the brightest jewel in the crown of British Sovereign. Before Azad went abroad, he had made a place for himself in Urdu journalism through his own papers like *Nairang-i-Khiyal*(1899), *Al-Misbah*(1900), *Lisan-us-Sidq*(1903) and the articles written for *Makhzan* and *Ashan-al-Ikhar*. Maulana Shibli had by that time started bringing out *Al-Nadwa*, as the official organ of famous seminary, Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama. He invited Azad to join the editorial board

Al-Nadwa. Azad was perhaps seventeen at the time when he responded to the call of Shibli. Azad worked with Shibli from October 1905 to March 1906. Most of the article he wrote for *Al-Nadwa* were of literary character, yet a few of them like *Al-Mirat Al-Muslimah* and *Al-Qadha fil Islam* clearly indicate his religious learnings. He took moderate and rational view in these articles.

Azad seems to have been undergoing another inner struggle, an intellectual unrest, which demanded something more from him than pursuit of literature. He had been deeply impressed by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan but never agreed with his political views. Sir Syed had been a witness to the great hardships of Indian Muslims had to undergo at the hands of British rulers who had held the Muslims, particularly the religious-minded among them, whom they had nick-named Wahhabis, responsible for the uprising of 1857. After the rebellion was over, a witch-hunt of all those associated with the reformist movement of Saiyid Ahmad Shaheed had been initiated all over India. Then followed the great trials of 1864-71. A mere suspicion of anybody being a Wahhabi was then considered enough to implicate him in some treason or conspiracy case. Indian Muslims had, in these circumstances taken to heart the advice of Sir Syed to remain quiescent, aloof from politics and devote their energies to educational uplift of the community, although there was still an

influential section of religious scholars which had never reconciled itself to the alien rule.

Azad had thus never subscribed to the political views of Sir Syed. He had, at one stage, even established contact with the terrorists. But the time was fast approaching which afforded Azad an opportunity to utilize his religious learning and literary talents for the service of his country. Disillusionment of the Muslims with the British government was boosted by a renewed surge of emotion by the attacks of colonial powers upon the Muslim countries. The Italians attacked Libya, then a part of Ottoman empire, in 1911. The French declared a protectorate over Morocco in the same year and the Balkan war of 1912 practically extruded the Ottoman empire from the European mainland. The British and the Russians had already divided Persia into their spheres of influence by the Anglo-Russian agreement in 1907, and in 1912 the Russians bombarded Meshad. Azad took the lead in calling for the support for the Ottoman Caliph, not merely as the head of the greatest surviving independent Muslim state, but also as the caliph of all Muslims. He commenced publication of his famous Urdu journal *Al-Hilal* in 1912. Azad was then only twenty-four years of age. His greatness lies in catching a glimpse of the positive character of the age which was coming. Though younger in years, his decision was mature for he had realised that freedom could be had only by creating

a mass upsurge in the people rather than by terrorism or hatching conspiracies. He was also perhaps the first man to proclaim that his goal was to liberate his country from the foreign yoke, cost what may.

He denounced the British rule, urged the Muslims to fight it to the finish; but the reasons he gave for it were purely religious. He appeared to be holding the Quran in his hand, instead of the sword. The community which acknowledged One God and His Prophet Muhammad, argued Azad, must model its life on the pattern prescribed by them. Muslims should take obedience to the mandates of Islam their only aim in life. Islam will open the way to political life for Muslims and transform their conduct and morals. He normally began his articles with some verses of the Quran or used them in support of his arguments. In one of his articles he wrote: "For the Hindus struggle for freedom may be a patriotic demand, but for Muslims it is religious obligation, a *Jihad* in the way of God. Muslims are obliged to fight for God and it includes every effort made for restoration of truth and justice and breaking the bonds of slavery." Again he wrote: "O you who claim to be believers and followers of Islam, mere assertion on your part is not enough. If you want to live (righteously) enter into Islam completely and follow not in the foot-steps of Devil, for he is an open enemy into you." In yet another article he exhorted Muslims in these words: "O Muslims, your friend is Allah, His Apostle and those who have given their faith to Allah

and His prophet, who establish prayer, spend their wealth in His way and, what is more, submit to the commands of Allah.”

“*Al-Hilal* was primarily devoted,” writes Safia Muzzammil, “ to the interpretation and promotion of the appreciation of the Qur’anic ideology. A portion of it was dedicated to the elucidation of Qur’anic verses and for the discussion of various problems, in the light of the Qur’an. All the articles were supposed by quotations from the Qur’an and in each and every matter it projected the Qur’anic view. ‘Al-Hilal’ was also equally interested in the struggle for national freedom. Maulana was convinced that it was religious duty of every Indian Muslim to strive hard for it.” At the same time, Azad provided justification for Muslim cooperation with non-Muslims on the ground that the Qur’an disapproved of only those disbelievers who committed aggression, harassed them or created obstacles in the performance of their religious obligations. He argued that the Britishers had usurped their freedom while Hindus were their friendly neighbours who bore no ill-will to them. The Qur’an permitted cooperation with those who were not inimical to them. Azad went further and cited the practice of the Prophet in support of common citizenship in a country jointly owned by the Hindus and Muslims. He reminded that in the first Islamic state of Medina established by the Prophet, he had recognised equal rights and obligations of the Jews and Muslims

and those tribes which were allied to them, whether Muslims or not. Earlier Muslim jurists has based their political theories on the concept of *Dar-ul-Islam* (the land of Islam) and *Dar-ul-Harab* (the land of war) to which some had added the concept of *Dar-ul-Aman* (the land of peace) where Muslims could live undisturbed according to their faith, Azad put forth a new concept of common citizenship of Muslims and non-Muslims and provided it the validity of religious law which was necessary for the satisfaction of the community which recognised sharia as the sole standard of its individual and common behaviours,.As a matter of fact, such a justification was necessary not for the Muslims alone but also for Azad himself since his political philosophy shows unmistakable sign of having its roots in his religious conviction on which he remained firm to the end of his life. Take for instance the issue of non-cooperation. Azad first presented this concept in his presidential address to the Khilafat Committee held in the Town Hall of Calcutta early in 1920. In June 1920, after an all parties Hindu-Muslim conference at Allahabad, he formulated a detailed programme of non-cooperation with the government along with other national leaders. Azad drew inspiration from the Qur’anic command “enjoin upon each other” with “truth and steadfastness” and a *hadith* of the Prophet which said: Stop the evil being committed with force, but if do not possess the strength to do so, condemn it openly. If you do not even

have that much courage, consider it an abomination for this is the last stage of faith." It was in pursuance of this pronouncement that the Khilafat conference passed a resolution in July 1921 that it was religiously unlawful for Muslims to serve the British. As a matter of fact, we find this consistency in Azad's life even in purely political matters; there may have been apparent shifts in the stand taken by him on different occasions according to the exigencies of the situation, in his chequered political career, yet the underlying thought and motive can be traced to his religious beliefs and concepts.

Azad's new idea of drawing inspiration from religion even in political matters must not be confound with the western experience of papal system which was based on the supremacy of Roman Catholic Church in the whole of Christendom. Azad only meant to deny metaphysical dualism of spirit and matter inherent in the concept of separation of Church from the state. It meant affirmation of moral values in all matters whether political or not. Islam was from the very beginning a civil society with laws civil in their nature though believed to be revelational in origin. Islam had never brought into existence any organised church to supervise the state but required all affairs to be conducted in accordance with the moral consciousness of the people. In reply to an objection raised by someone to the mixing up of religious and political issues, Azad wrote in the *AL-HILAL*:

"You have raised a fundamental issue of which we want to raise the entire edifice of Al-Hilal. Were you to suggest that the arch is not attractive, we might consider altering its design, but if you demand that the very foundation stone be replaced, then excuse me, this is not at all possible. We cannot abide by your wishes. Whatever be the aspect of human behaviour, we have to consider it from the view-point of religion. If we have anything with us, it is the Qur'an only, for we do not know anything besides it. We have closed our eyes to everything else; shut our ears to every voice. If we require light to see anything, then believe me, we have the light coming only from that luminous lamp. If you take it away from us, we would become blind.

This is a scripture which we have revealed unto thee that there by thou mayst bring forth mankind from darkness to light. (Q. 14: 1)"

In fact, Azad's commitment to nationalism was the sequel of this conviction that Islam was sent down by God for establishing equality and unity of man, freedom of conscience and extermination of all types of exploitation. He expounded his theory of nationalism in a pamphlet entitled *Islam aur Nationalism*. He discussed in it the evolutionary process of social development. The society, he says, passes through three main stages. In the first stage it comes into existence on the basis of matriarchy which is later

transformed into paternalistic family, clan and tribe. The second stage of society begins with its organisation on the basis of territory, which replaces kinship, and unites the groups into a state of a region or country to which allegiance is paid by the nation. The third and the final stage is that of universalism on the basis of a common ideology. This is, his view, the stage of religious ecumenication or Islam and world-wide humanism. Azad pleads that before society reaches the religious universalism and humanism it must pass through the stage of nationalism. Thus, he says, both religion and sociological evolution of society indicate the necessity and desirability of nationalism. He rejects aggressive nationalism and favours one that has the material and moral welfare of the individual as its objective. He also justifies his view by insisting that the principle underlying faith in God is brotherhood and unity of mankind, not differences and hatred amongst them.

It is not surprising that Azad drew inspiration from his religious convictions since a number of political leaders of the time, both Hindus and Muslims, were profoundly religious. Mahatma Gandhi, Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurbindo Ghosh, Madan Mohan Malviya and Lajpat Rai were all deeply religious men who had tried to awaken the zeal of the people for freedom through religion. Mrs. Annie Besant, who founded the Theosophical Society and exercised much influence on Hindu youth led the Home Rule movement in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Al-Hilal marked a turning point in Urdu journalism. It achieved unprecedented popularity within a short time. The people were attracted not only by Azad's amazing resource of literary expression and its superior printing but even more by the new lot of religious zeal in purified Islam and nationalism preached by it. It urged Muslims either to live in freedom or to destroy themselves for there was no third alternative in Islam. It kindled a revolutionary stir among the Muslim masses and its demand was so great that within the first three months, all the old issues had to be reprinted as every new subscriber wanted the entire set. The British rulers were taken aback by the clarion of *Al-Hilal*. Cash securities were first demanded and then *Al-Hilal* press was confiscated in 1915. Azad started a new press called *Al-Balagh*. The British Government unable to stop Azad, externed him from Bengal under the Defence of India Act; Punjab, Delhi and U.P. had already prohibited his entry and so he went to Ranchi where he remained till the end of 1919.

Azad's activities at Ranchi have been thus described by Syed Sulaiman Nadwi;

“During his stay at Ranchi, Azad delivered lectures in Jama Masjid of Ranchi for one year in which he elucidated and explained the Quranic verses. He spent a greater part of his time in writing and completed the *Tarjumanul Quran* or the exagetical

translation of the Scripture during that period. Another comprehensive commentary on the Quran by the name of *Al-Bayan* covering 23 parts of it was also written by him. He also wrote different brochures like *As-Salat*, *Az-Zakat*, *Al-Haj* and *An-Nikah* on Islamic fiqh in which he explained the issues impartially, disregarding the views of different schools of jurisprudence, keeping in view only the Quran and the *sunnah*. He also wrote biographical accounts of eminent renovators of faith like Ibn Taimiyah, Ibn Qayyim and Shah Waliullah. He also wrote a brochure on logic and a few other literary articles.”

It was at Ranchi that Azad also wrote a part of his biography, *The Tadkhirah*, in which he shed light on Akbar's Decree of Infallibility, Makhdum-ul Mulk Abd-un-Nabi, Shaikh Dawud, Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri, Shaikh Niyazi, Shaikh Alai and Shaikh Ahmad Mujaddid Alf-Thani. He also wrote brief biographies of Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, Imam Malik, Imam Dhahabi, Hafiz Asqalain, Imam Abu Haiyan, Shaikh Abu Hafiz and Hafiz Asli in which he undertook a critical review of different theological issues of medieval thinkers. He held the view that philosophical discussions which give rise to scepticism find a most satisfying answer in the Quran itself.

Azad had announced his intention of writing the *Tarjumanul Quran* in the *Al-Balagh* of 26th November, 1915. By that time he had already completed the work upto the fifth part of the Quran. When he

was externed from Calcutta in March, 1916, all of his writing were seized. He again worked on translation which was completed by 1918, but once again his arrest and confiscation of paper by the police, which were either destroyed or returned in a torn and shabby shape, frustrated his efforts. He again started work on it by the end of 1927 and completed it by July 1930, but it could not be printed beyond the 18th part. Later on, he further revised the work and after his death in 1958, Sahitya Academy published four out of five volumes in which he had divided it. The first part contains the exegesis of the opening chapter of the Quran, consisting of only seven brief verses but its elucidation by Azad covers 460 pages. The remaining give an explanatory translation of other chapters in Urdu with notes, where necessary.

In the introduction to this work, Azad stresses the need of recapturing the original meaning of the Quranic idiom by skipping the unwarranted comments of later exegetes or resorting to one's guesswork. Although Azad was a rationalist like Sir Syed, with whom he was greatly impressed, he rejected Sir Syed's view that the revelation should be compatible with scientific discoveries. Scientific knowledge was, according to Azad, based on ephemeral findings which could undergo a change at any time, but the revealed truth was abiding, everlasting. The spheres of the two were also different; one was concerned with the observable

facts, the other with those mute realities which were beyond the ken of human perception. Azad's commentary, in fact, opens the way to new theological dialectics (*ilm-i-kalam*) which relies on *tafakkur* (contemplation) rather than on quibbling and ratiocination. "His was an approach", writes Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "characterised by rejection of hairsplitting and caustical philosophic disputations and artificiality (*wazi'al*) in exegetical studies and dogmatic exclusivism in the theological approach. He believed in direct, unsophisticated approach to religion which he interpreted in terms of humanism, benevolence, charity and human origin. His discussion of the divine attribute of *rububiyat* (benevolence) is extremely fascinating and from the basis of his approach to religion."

In his exegesis of the first chapter of the Quran, the *Surah Fatihah*, Azad shows a remarkable knowledge of comparative religions. He cites from the scriptures and scholars of different religions to substantiate his view that all great religions insist on the belief in one God. His treatment to divine attributes contains a wealth of knowledge on the subject. His concept of Unity of God leads to other two unities: the unity of all religion in the faith in God and unity of Mankind. Some of his comments on other verses, as, for instance, about Dhul-Qurnain, are pieces of original research and show his extensive knowledge of world history. However, certain passages of Azad's commentary

raised the controversy that he did not subscribe to the finality of the Prophet Muhammad, considered the *shariah* as unimportant or did not consider the *ahadith* as one of the ingredients of Islamic law. Azad, however, rebutted these allegations and said that when he speaks of faith, he means conviction in God, His Prophets, the Date of Judgement, the Quran and all its commandments, Azad propounded the Quranic view of religion; God revealed His guidance to the people of other countries through His Prophets. The faith was common to all, for truth is one and ever-abiding. When in the course of time people corrupted the message another prophet was sent, Muhammad being the final messenger of God. Azad also explained that besides the faith (*din*), the Quran also laid down the law (*shariah*) which regulates man's behaviour and morals. It also prescribes the moral standard to discriminate the good from the evil. The law of the earlier prophets was according to their social circumstances and capability of the people, but the faith has always remained the same. Therefore, there ought to be on ground for dispute in the matter of rituals and worship so long as the faith in oneness of God remains intact. God could have made all to follow one religion, if He had so wished. The Quran expressly says that God has made for every group and nation a different law and standard so that He may put them to test. "The principle underlying faith of God", wrote Azad, "is brotherhood of the human race, not

difference and parted. All the prophets of God who appeared on earth gave to the same teaching i.e. all human beings are one people, and the Lord and Provider of all of them is one God." And again: "The way of belief is to accept the truth of all the prophets and not to deny any one of them. The way of falsehood lies in denial of any one or all of them."

Azad, in fact, never denied the validity of either the hadith or the shariah. He continued to give juristic opinions even when he held the charge of Ministry of Education, which go to show that his opinions were based on the Quran and the hadith. The questions referred to him pertained to a variety of issues like prerequisites of creed, religious performances marriage, divorce, inheritance, awqaf, meaning of any passage of the Quran or particular hadith, views of different schools of jurisprudence on any specific issue, mysticism etc. Azad promptly sent replies to the questions. His answers were always concise yet clear. These juristic opinions indicate that he was able to find time amidst his multifarious responsibilities for the study of religious literature. Azad, however, did not subscribe to one or the other recognised juristic schools, but preferred to formulate his own solutions to legal problems in the light of the Quran and the sunnah. He was fully capable of it, owing to his extensive study and insight into the sources of Islamic law. Some of the replies given by the Azad on the questions posed to him are interesting enough to be

mentioned here.

In a letter dated November 16, 1965 he writes "It is true that religious conviction should be based on one's own researches rather than blindly following others or inherited ideas. But the question is what would be the deciding factor of such a quest. Human knowledge has not yet crossed the stage of negation, that is, the science tells us that it knows nothing about God, not it is the sphere of its exploration. In other words, it is unable to say anything positive, while we need a positive affirmation to get rid of the restlessness of our heart and soul. And this positive stand can be had from the religion and revelation. It is abiding also. Religion does not say that it does not know: it says it has been bestowed certitude by its Lord. It affirms that it possesses the knowledge, it hears, sees a Being beyond the phenomenal world who can guide humanity by His light.

"Now the question is whether we should respond to one which acknowledges its ignorance or the other which lights the way to knowledge and certitude.

"Great thinkers of the modern times had to adopt this very course. You might go through the latest writings of Bertrand Russell."

One, Dayanand Sharma of Delhi, enquired whether the concept of human equality was God-given or product of human mind. Azad wrote in reply: "What

one finds from the Quran is that it stresses human equality and brotherhood and opposes the idea that any group of persons can claim any superiority on the basis of race or culture. The concept of human equality is a natural human tendency which has been endowed by God. As for the effort to attain this ideal, it depends on man's intellectual faculties. The natural tendency inherent in man has shown him the right path, and it now depends on him to betake it or not."

After Gamal Abdul Nasir took over the reins of government in Egypt, the chief jurisconsult of Al-Azhar University gave the opinion that it was not permissible for women to take part in politics. A press reporter approached Azad to express his views about the juristic opinion of the Egyptian scholar. Azad replied: "I do not think that Islam imposes any such restriction." He further said that Aisha, the widow of the holy Prophet had led her army in battle of Jamal, but nobody has questioned her right to leadership during the past fourteen hundred years, nor raised the question for permissibility of her leadership. He elucidated the point further by pointing out that if Islam permits a woman to engage in business, she can earn her living, purchase and sell property, manage her estate, travel and accept an employment, take part in the development and defence of her country, teach and participate in reformatory endeavours like men and fight for her rights without infringing the laws of Islam, then how can

she be debarred from taking part in politics? Why should then the doors of parliament be closed to her and why should she be deemed unfit for holding any administrative or ambassadorial post simply because she happens to be of the fair sex?

Azad's juristic opinions (*Fatawa*), his *Tarjumanul-Quran*, *Tadhkira* and numerous other articles written for *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh* leave no doubt that he was a reformer and revivalist from his early life and remained so to the end. The noted religious scholar Syed Sulaiman Nadwi who wrote an article on Azad in the *Ma'arif* of March 1919, remarked that while describing the literary works of Azad he was led to think as if he were writing about Ibn Taimiyah and Ibn Qayyim or Sarakhshi and Ummiyah B. Abdul Aziz Andlusi. Azad tried to present the true content of faith and practice in Islam, which in his view, taught good behaviour and morals, perfection of conscience, good relationship among the people, regard for one's neighbours, kindness to the poor and needy, liberty, equality and fraternity to man irrespective of differences of colour, creed and race, opposed discrimination and exploitation in every form and fostered justice and fairplay, both at the individual and social levels.

Azad has never conceived Islam as a static religion. His world-view was based on the Quran and the Sunnah and a sincere commitment to it. He endeavoured to understand the integral interrelatedness

of the traditional *aqli* (intellectual) and *naqli* (transmitted) branches of knowledge in order to evolve a new tradition out of that so to be able to solve the new problems of life: he analysed Man and Man relationship and Man and Nature relationship with reference to God-Man relationship given in the Quran and the *sunnah*. He interpreted Islamic values in a way that other religious groups also realised the universality and essentiality of absolute values common to all religions and formulated a system whose basis was faith in God and expressed it through eternal values signified by the Absolute Qualities of God. At the spiritual level his referential frame-work was *iman* whose constituent elements were *tawhid* (Unity of God, Unity of Creation and Unity of Religion), *risalat* (prophethood) and *akhirah* (accountability of man in the hereafter). It is true that his concept of *tawhid* included *risalat* and *akhirah*. He stressed the Quranic concept of Divine Unity in a way which could draw man to worship of the Unique, Incomparable God and thus deliver him from the bondages of the self, home, community, country, race and colour. He derived his moral values from Divine Qualities and considered truth, justice, righteousness, mercy, and creativeness to be absolute and not changing phenomena determined by society. His faith in *risalat* (prophethood) provided him with the perfect human frame of reference. The belief in *risalat* implied belief in the scriptures sent down by God

and hence ultimate belief in the Quran, which was for him *huda* (guidance). It also implied belief in the *sunnah* (the practices and instructions of the last Prophet) as the elucidation of the Quran and the ultimate norm of conduct. In the interpretation of Shariat Azad's approach was to apply the Quran and *sunnah* through reason and spiritual-cum-intellectual insight. He was, however, never, dogmatic on any issue and preferred reinterpretation of the Quran and *sunnah* in the light of modern life.

Azad's religion was to him his faith as well as patriotism. He was zealous to protect the frontiers in his faith. He declared: Islamic education, Islamic history, Islamic arts, Islamic sciences and Islamic culture constitute the elements of my wealth, and as a Muslim, it is my duty to preserve it. "But, he possesses the intellectual breadth and spiritual expansion inculcated through the Quranic dictum that "Mankind were but one community," which enabled him to appreciate and esteem all forms of faith other than his own. As he had himself said: The soul of Islam is not a barrier to this belief; in fact, it guides me in this path. I am an integral part of this unified and impartial nation." This was in fact the inevitable outcome of the religious thought of a spiritually powerful man who had realised that the only way to Indian nationalism lay in a genuine tolerance and respect of all cultural entities of the country through the interaction of which alone India could evolve a rich and enduring culture. ■

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi on the Rise and Fall of Islamic Society

- M.I.H. Farooqi

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi on the Rise and Fall of Islamic Societies

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was one of the most prominent Muslim personalities in India during twentieth century and one of the most noted personalities of the World of Islam during the period. He ranked very high amongst scholars in the Islamic world. His eloquent exposition of basic concepts made the comprehension of Islam intelligible to western-educated people. He was one of the most prolific writers and original thinkers of recent times.

Maulana was an enlightened alim, an eloquent preacher and a wise reformer. Common man's love and respect for him has been unequalled in recent decades. This was because of his composure and avoidance of fanatic posturing. It pained him to note that at a time when the western technological progress was adulated in academic circles. Muslims lagged behind after remaining leader in the field of Science and Technology for more than eight hundred years. In his famous Book on the conflict between Islam and the West, Maulana observed.

"Humanity has greatly suffered (in recent past) because of severing the ties of Knowledge (Science) with religion and this separation has caused great harm to Islamic Society.

Some of the other important

utterances and writings on the subject of Decline of Islamic societies are as follows:

"Science (Ilm) progressed very fast in the West (last century) and Religion (Iman) got the boost in the East. Today Iman needs the company of the Knowledge and Knowledge needs the patronage (Sarparasti) of Iman (Belief)".

"After sixteenth century Muslims lost the interest in Enquiry and Physical Sciences and engaged themselves more in Metaphysical Sciences with the result they could not produce great men of knowledge (genius)."

"Muslims forgot their own scientific thinking and followed only traditional knowledge. They therefore lagged behind in Science and Technology and thus became slaves of the West".

"Muslims lost to feel value of TIME and they wasted centuries in unnecessary activities whereas European nations felt the true value of TIME and traveled (made progress) in years that could be done in centuries."

"The period of Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries is highly important because it was during this time Europe got up from it's LONG Sleep and started making progress with great vigour and emotions in order to compensate the lost period of their Jihalat (ignorance) and Ghaflat (indifference, negligence). They

made fantastic progress and left no field of physical activity untouched.. Made discoveries and inventions. Produced many genius as inventors and Mujtahids.”

“For Muslims this was the period of Total Fall from grace and not only in the field of knowledge and industry.”

“The defeat of Muslims in the conflict with the West during eighteenth and nineteenth centuries could be predicted well in advance in sixteenth century which was the period of Tannanzul (Decline) and Jamud (Inaction) for them.”

“If the Islamic world wishes to renew it’s active life and get away from domination and exploitation, then it is incumbent for them to make new inroads in the field of modern knowledge under the leadership of Sarbrah Asri Uloom (modern scholars). For this purpose new Organizations and Institutes have to be established with the help and cooperation of those who are well versed in all the modern subjects.”

“It is indeed the need of the hour that Muslims restart their investigative activities and make progress in scientific development and encourage scientific knowledge.”

“At the time when the West was making great scientific development, a section of Ulema was unaware of the fast changing time and opposed new initiatives. They were ignorant of the threats of the West and opposed those steps by the Turkish administration which were necessary to face the Western challenges.”

“The first message of Allah to our Prophet started with the word ‘Iqra (Read) and that means that the Ummah was joined with knowledge from the very beginning. This clearly implies that the Ummah cannot survive without Knowledge.”

“History teaches us that whenever there is a conflict between religion and knowledge or the religion feared knowledge, there appeared darkness all-round.”

“Historian Gibbon has stated that during Middle Ages in Europe, Church considered Knowledge as the danger for religion and this view resulted in slowing the process of progress by several centuries. However, Islam never considered Knowledge as it’s enemy and therefore made great strides in the field of science and technology (during Middle Ages).”

“It would be case of shortsightedness on the part of Muslims to ignore the scientific advancement of the West and consider it as Shajar — e-Mamnua (Prohibited Tree). Such attitude will cause great harm and Ummah will be isolated from rest of the world”.

“If any country prefers to be indifferent with the changing times, it cannot remain peaceful for long. People will revolt. Conflicts and disobediences will rise. After all it is just natural that people wish to look forward and desires new Manzil (Destinations).”(The above excerpts are mainly from his writings like ISLAMIAT Aur Magrabiya (Islam and West) and Speeches at Urdu Scientific Society)■

The Miracle of Prophet Yunus and the Sperm Whale in the Light of Modern Knowledge

- Sher Mohammad Syed

1. INTRODUCTION:- Both the Quran and the Bible describe in some detail the miracle of Prophet Yunus (Jonah) and the Amber (sperm) whale or the "BIG FISH." Biblical scholars and western rationalists as well as some Muslim exegetes of Quran, with new-fangled rationalistic ideas of the West deny the occurrence of the miracle. But marine scientists, physiologists and whalers have often observed that sperm whales (Amber) have swallowed whole objects without mastication, larger than the size of a man and later, when injured or seized with panic, and pangs of death, have ejected the whole, thereby establishing scientific feasibility of the miracle. We propose to discuss here the occurrence of the miracle in the light of science.

2. The Quran narrates briefly the miracle of Prophet Yunus having been swallowed by a huge marine mammal which subsequently ejected him ashore with the result that the Prophet survived the supernatural experience though he was stricken with illness resulting from the extraordinary event. We reproduce hereunder Pickthall's translation of Verses 139-145 of Surah As-Saffat (XXXVII) which bear on the subject:

"And lo: Jonah verily was of those sent (to warn)

When he fled into the laden ship,

And they drew lots and he was of those rejected;

And the fish swallowed him while he was blameworthy;

And had he not been one of those who glorify (Allah)

He would have tarried in its belly till the day when they are raised;

Then We cast him on a desert shore while he was sick."

Verses 48 and 49 of Surah Al-Qalam (LXVIII) also deal with the subject. Their English translation by Pickthall is reproduced below:-

"But wait thou for thy Lord's decree, and be not like him of the fish, who cried out in despair. Had it not been that favour from his Lord had reached him he surely had been cast into the wilderness while he was reprobate."

Prophet Yunus who is called Sahib-ul-Hut and Dhun-Nun is also mentioned in verses, 87 and 88 of Surah Al-Anbia (XXI) which are reproduced below as translated by Pickthall:-

"And (mention) Dhun-Nun, when he went off in anger and deemed that We had no power over him, but he cried out in the darkness, saying: There is no God save Thee. Be Thou glorified! LO! I have been a wrongdoer. Then We heard his prayer and saved him from the anguish. Thus We

save believers”.

How truly has Tennyson said: More things are wrought by prayer than these world dreams of.

3. Some scholars of Quran, influenced by the new-fangled ideas of western rationalists and scientists have denied the occurrence of the miracle. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Ghulam Ahmad Pervez and Maulvi Muhammad Ali of Lahore are three such scholars. They have tried to put far-fetched meanings on verses 142 and 144 of Surah As-Saffat (XXXVII), for instance, the last mentioned has translated verses 142 and 144 as under:-

142: So the fish *drew him with its mouth* while he did that for which he was blamed.

144. He would certainly *have tarried in his tribe* to the day when they are raised.

The italicised portions of the above translation are obviously misleading and inapt, because (batan) has been wrongly translated as tribe. Sir Syed Ahmad stated that the fish (whale) caught Prophet Yunus in its mouth and thereafter let him go, while Pervez averred that Prophet Yunus was caught by the fish between its teeth and he escaped the grip after much struggle. Both these scholars were ignorant of the anatomy and functions of the jaws of the sperm whale which is not designed by nature to catch its prey in this manner. Their views were thus quite wrong and untenable.

4. Our studies have led us to identify the marine animal mentioned as:

a) Hut and Nun in the Quranic verses referred to in the preceding paras 2 & 3, and

b) “The great fish”, according to verse 17 of chapter 1 of the Book of Jonah of the Old Testament.

“The Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights”. Thereafter as reported in verse 1 and 10 of chapter 2 *ibid*, in answer to Jonah’s prayers made out of the fish’s belly, the Lord “spoke unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.” There is an echo of these narrations in verse no. 40 of chapter 12 of St. Matthew’s Gospel where Christ is stated to have said: “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”. Western rationalists and scientists have subjected the Biblical account of the miraculous experience of Jonah and of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ to scathing criticism. Prominent among the scientists is Thomas H. Huxley who questioned the feasibility of the occurrence lasting 3 days and 3 nights which he regarded as against the law of Natural Science. In this connection perusal of pages 208—209 of his *Science and Hebrew Tradition* is requested. Even laymen have been skeptical about historicity of the event and have regarded the miracle of Jonah as a

parable though some Christian exegetes of the Bible are of the opinion that since Jesus Christ reaffirmed the account of Jonah's wonderful experience, it must be taken as true.

Besides the scholars of the Quran referred to in para 3 above, there are some modern educated young men, who have no faith in the story of Jonah (Prophet Yunus) as will be clear from a perusal of p. 102 of *Inside India* where a young Turk is stated to have said, "I cannot call myself a Muslim any longer, because I cannot explain how Jonah lived in the whale's stomach".

5. The marine leviathan involved in the miracle was a sperm (Amber) whale which combines special physical features and natural habits and characteristics that admirably qualify it for our choice. Among whales, the Sperm whale is the only whale which has a throat or gullet large enough to swallow a man whole and can then under special circumstances vomit him out. "Naturally," says Beddard at p. 201 of his *Book of Whales*, "the Cachalot, (i.e. the sperm whale) has been identified with the whale of Jonah". We describe below the main features and special characteristics and natural habits and tendencies of the sperm whale: —

a) The sperm whale is a mammoth of a marine mammal which would ordinarily grow to a length of 60 to 70 feet though some scientists and experienced whalers have reported having seen much larger sperm whales. For

instances, Ashle (1926) mentioned a 90 foot specimen (taken by the Bark *Desdemona* in the late seventies of the last century). Dr. Beale (1899) said that a full-grown male may be about 84 ft. while Bullen (1899) wrote of a sperm hunted by the ship 'Cachalot' which was 70 ft. long. A Sperm whale may weigh up to 90- 100 tons. A blue whale may, on the other hand, be as long as 100 ft. with a weight going up to 150 tons, but it cannot swallow or vomit out anything of the size of a man. Beale indicated at page 27 of his book that the depth of the body of a 80-84 ft. long sperm may be 12—14 ft. and its circumference may go up to 36 ft. while the depth and breadth of its head may respectively be 8—9 ft. and 5—6 ft. Its head (nose) is usually 1/3 of its total length, but as mentioned at p. 818 of Volume XIX of *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1981 ed.) it may be up to 1/2 of its total length.

It has a large lower jaw which alone is fitted with widely spaced teeth that erupt sometime after weaning or maturity when the animal is between 28—31 ft. long. "Neither the teeth nor the lower jaw", states Berzin at p. 266 of his book entitled the *Sperm Whales*, "need to participate in obtaining food and in the digestive process". Its staple food consists of squids and fishes. Besides these items of its food, it swallows whole various other sea animals' e. g. seals, sharks etc. Clarke found (1955) in the stomach of a 47 ft. bull sperm

whale a squid measuring 34.5 ft. and weighing 400 lbs. which had no tooth marks. In 1956 he reported having recovered from the belly of a sperm whale a basking shark that was 8.2 ft. long. The sperm is known to have cut into large pieces with its jaws not only giant squids but even boats. At pages 99-100 Bullen has recorded that once he found afloat a huge semitransparent piece of a squid about 8' X 6' which had been earlier swallowed by a whale but had been ejected on the eve of its death.

- b) It has been observed by experienced whalers and scientists that the sperm whale swims about with its huge jaws open and, 'the lower jaw hung down' while all that comes its way goes down into its gullet and then into the first chamber of its complex multichambered stomach and that its food undergoes slow and prolonged digestion in the 2nd and 3rd chambers. When the whale is inclined to feed", observes Dr. Beale at p. 35, "he descends to a certain depth below the surface of the ocean, and there remains in as quiet a state as possible, opening his mouth until the lower jaw hangs down perpendicularly..... The roof of his mouth, the tongue, and specially the teeth being of a bright glistening white colour must present a remarkable appearance, which seems to be the incitement by which his prey are attracted, and when sufficient in number are within the mouth he rapidly closes his jaws and swallows the

contents". Other scientists like Prof. Slijper and Prof. Gaskin have confirmed this observation relating to similar stratagem resorted to by the sperm whale.

- c) Another characteristic or natural habit of the sperm whale that has been observed by various authorities is that when chased and harpooned and dying, a sperm whale usually ejects the unchewed and undigested food from its huge gullet or from the first chamber of its specialized stomach. In this connection reference is invited to pp. 62—63 Of the Cruise of the Cachalot by Bullen. Also as mentioned by Richard Ellis, in the Book of Whales, Robert Cushman Murphy (1933) saw a "dying sperm whale belching up squids barrellful after barrellful of the tentacled creatures". Berzin has recorded at p. 205 of the Sperm Whale: Clarke (1955) thinks that although very large mollusks rarely found in sperm whale stomachs, they are swallowed more frequently than assumed, "but during its death throes the whale regurgitates them". Clarke confirmed this with two personal observations. Whalers in the Far East have also reported similar observations.

Sperm whales are reported to have swallowed various foreign items also besides food items e. g., high rubber boots, toys, tubes and jars of cosmetics, big hunks of wood and stones etc. (Berzin p. 207). As reported

by the same author at p. 208, Nemoto and Nasu (1963) found stones in the first compartment of the stomach, and also several in the 2nd compartment. (According to V. S. & A. S. Yablokov), the sperm whale rids itself of stones only by belching or regurgitation. At p. 66 of Whales (1900) Beddard also stated: "Whales when captured usually allow some undigested, even unlacerated, food perfectly whole and intact to escape the mouth"- Prof. Gaskin also made similar observations.

- d) Another important point that needs must be specially mentioned is that sperm whales have been observed to have beached at river banks or sea shores in various parts of the world. Berzin has given a long list of the places at which sperms have been found stranded singly or in schools. It may be stated in particular that such beaching's have been reported to have occurred inter alia also near Alexanderia, Palestine, Gibraltar, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Corsica, the Emirates in the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the adjoining waters which incidentally proves the appearance of sperms in areas where Jonah is likely to have undergone the miraculous experience. Sperm whales are, however, found in oceans, seas, gulfs, rivers and even lakes.
- e) We would like to add a few more observations made by experienced scientists about the functions of the respiratory system and the tongue of

the sperm whale, the respiratory system of the sperm is peculiar. It has only one blowhole. "After submersion" in the water either during swimming or diving, "all communication between the epicranial passages and the lungs ceases, since the opening of the bony nasal passages and of the Plato pharyngeal sphincter are closed, and air cannot travel from the sacs into the lungs and back". Moreover, the peculiar structure of the laryngeal tube, the pharyngeal passage, the bony nasal passages etc. protects "the air passages from the entry of water through the mouth when the animal feeds under water.

For further details in this respect, perusal of pages 111 and 115—116 of Berzin's book on sperm whales will be useful. This is explained also at p. 861 of Walkers' Mammals of the World. As for the functions of the tongue, they include orientation of the captured prey into the oral cavity thrusting the catch into the pharynx with simultaneous expulsion of water from the oral cavity. In short, little or no water can enter the lungs or stomach of the sperm whale when it swims about at the surface or under water with its mouth open. Moreover, according to Scheffer whales are seldom thirsty and as such they need drink little or no water like other animals.

- f) There are a few more habits and characteristics of sperm whales which we would also like to describe here. In

his article: the Lives of Whales, Dr. Scheffer wrote: "The mammalian deep-diving record is held by a sperm whale. Its tragic remains were found twisted in a sub-marine cable off South America at a depth of 3720 ft. Tracking of sperm whales with sound detectors indicates that they may dive to twice that depth. Clarke, the world authority on sperm whales, estimated that a sperm could dive to a depth of about 10,000 ft. The longest known time of a deep or prolonged dive by a sperm is about 20 hours. One would wonder how a breathing giant could survive such a deep and long dive! Jonah's whale would, however, have been in comparatively shallow waters and as such its dive would not have been so deep and prolonged.

A perusal of pages 212—215 of Vol. 21 of the 1981 edition of Collier's Encyclopaedia would show that the muscles of a sperm whale store much more oxygen than of other mammals. After a dive the whale must take several breaths to re-charge the tissues with oxygen before diving again. It may also not be out of place to mention that according to Clarke the spermaceti stored in a sac in the huge head of a sperm whale absorbs nitrogen.

The last though not the least characteristic reported by Prof. Slijper is that sperm whales have been observed to sleep soundly at the surface for very long periods.

In short, it may be asserted that the Prophet Yunus could inhale enough oxygen in the gullet and anterior stomach of the sperm whale which swims about with its mouth wide open. He would not be drowned there because as already explained above little or no water can enter the gullet or the first part of the stomach of a sperm whale. Moreover the temperature, there would not be too high for his survival. According to Wilson it would be 104.67° f. while according to Schelfer it would be about 91° f. Human beings are known to have survived even at higher temperatures in the great African desert during adventurous explorations there.

6. One would imagine that when Prophet Yunus was thrown Overboard the ship which had been caught in a sudden and unprecedented storm, there happened to swim about in the turbulent waters a sperm whale with its huge jaw, open as is its usual natural habit and it swallowed Prophet Yunus whole. Crash floods or bores or unprecedented high tides or waves are not an infrequent Occurrence in the watery areas where Prophet Yunus is likely to be involved in the terrible experience. The whale must have beached when the flood receded and Prophet Yunus must have been regurgitated by the sperm. The exact place where all this happened has not been mentioned either in the Bible or the Quran. It is likely to have taken place in a river or lake or gulf or bay or sea between Nenevah and Tarsus. Naturally in the

overwhelming circumstances, the penitent Prophet spontaneously prayed to the Almighty Allah to help him out of the ordeal which he confessed to have resulted from his own sins of omission and commission.

The All-merciful Allah answered the fervent prayer of his penitent Prophet. The flood subsided suddenly and the sperm whale was seized with panic and under its own stupendous weight, its chest gave way and its lungs began to collapse with resultant death throes. It was at this juncture that the whale naturally ejected Prophet Yunus on the sandy beach and he survived the terrible experience through the miracle wrought by the Almighty Allah. The occurrence of all these events is of course providential and miraculous and is anything but a normal natural phenomenon.

7. It is pertinent to add that famous books of the tradition of the Prophet, Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim report traditions to the effect that a huge hillock of a giant sperm whale named Amber was found stranded on the Shore of the Red Sea in the 8th year of Hijra by 300 ghazies led by Abu Ubaidah during the Seif-ul-Behar campaign. This happened at the time when the ghazies were on the verge of starvation after having run short of their rations and when they had been living on boiled leaves of trees. They fed upon its meat for 18 days or more and massaged their emaciated bodies with its fat oil with the result that they grew healthy and robust. On return to Medina they took with

them some of the meat left over with them which was eaten also by the Prophet Muhammad (P.B. U.H.). An idea of the size of this giant of a marine mammal can be formed when it is borne in mind that at the instance of Abu Ubaidah, a tall ghazi riding on a full grown camel comfortably crossed under its ribs fixed on ground.

8. A valid question that arises is whether any human being has ever had an experience like Prophet Yunus? In his article entitled the "Sign of Prophet Jonah and its Modern Confirmation" published in the Princeton Theological Review, Vol. 25 of 1927, Prof. A. Wilson of Oxford described the experience of a British sailor named James Bartley who was reported to have been swallowed by a huge sperm Whale and lived to tell his tale which was publicised first in the French periodical Journal Des Debars of 14th March 1898 according to which the whaling vessel "The Star of the East" was in the vicinity of Falkland near Argentina when the lookout spotted a large sperm. Two long boats were launched in order to hunt down the whale and eventually the harpooners managed to hit the giant. The injured whale then furiously charged at the offending boat and crushed it into two pieces, hurling the occupants including Bartley into the sea. Accepting Bartley, the other men were soon picked up by their comrades, but Bartley was swallowed up by the sperm whale. A short time after this the sperm was killed and brought alongside the ship and the crew busied themselves with axes and spades, removing the blubber. They

worked into the night and the next morning they hoisted the carcass aboard. When the whalers cut open the stomach of the giant, they were aghast to find their missing comrade who was unconscious but alive. Bartley was given a sea-water bath and some treatment after which he recovered consciousness and made a statement to the Captain relating his awful experience. Bartley is reported to have recovered fully except that the skin of the exposed parts of his body had been bleached and he seemed to have recurrent nightmares of his terrible experience.

Although some scientists have doubted authenticity of the story, Prof. Wilson asserted that there was nothing incredible about it. The Prof. also related another incident of this nature in his article referred to above.

9. Unlike the Bible, the Qur'an has made no mention of the period for which Prophet Yunus remained in the gullet or the first compartment of the multi-chambered stomach of the whale, from which he was ejected alive by the sperm. It can be reasonably surmised that he did not pass into the 2nd or the 3rd compartment of the stomach where due to presence of gastric juices, the prolonged process of digestion commences. We are, therefore, afraid that it would not be feasible for him to have been in the belly of the "BIG FISH" for as long as three days and three nights as mentioned in the Bible and then to have been ejected alive and hence the severe

criticism of scientists like Thomas H. Huxley which tantamounted to prove non-feasibility "and hence incredibility" of the Biblical narration. The Quranic version, on the other hand, is generally consistent with the phenomenon of nature and in accordance with the observations of experienced whalers and scientists where encounters between a whale and a human being are involved. The exegetes of the Quran have hazarded various guesses to the duration of Prophet Yunus' stay in the stomach of the whale. They have stated it to have been 3 days, 7 days, or even 40 days, but would agree with Ibn-i-Abbas, Abu Malik, Ibn-i- Juraij and Ikramah according to whom the ordeal of the Prophet lasted only a part of a day, which is most reasonable to allow of his ejection and escape alive. On the other hand the Biblical account appears to be far from possible and against the laws of nature though Prof. Wilson of Oxford tried to prove in his article entitled "The Sign of the Prophet Jonah and its Modern Confirmation", already cited in the proceeding para 8, that it was possible for a man (Jonah) to have come out alive from the belly of the "BIG FISH" after a stay therein of three days and three nights otherwise Jesus Christ would not have affirmed it. An article published in the Urdu Digest of February, 1962, which was unfortunately quoted by Maulana Maududi at page 308 of Vol. IV of his Tafhmul Quran, was replete with errors and could not carry conviction.

10. On the strength of what we have

stated above, we are firmly of the view that if Thomas H. Huxley had been aware of the peculiar characteristics and natural tendencies with which God has endowed the sperm whale as explained by us on the authority of observations of eminent scientists and experienced whalers, he would not have subjected the Biblical account to such scathing criticism provided that the Bible had not specifically stated that the phenomenon lasted as long as three days and three nights.

It should be borne in mind that knowledge of science is progressive and dynamic and no scientist howsoever great can be audacious enough to assert at any given time that he knows all that is there to be known or that scientific knowledge is complete at any one time. One has to share humbly the views expressed by Sir Isaac Newton when he said: don't know what I may seem to the world, but, as to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea shore, and diverting myself now and then in finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." Earlier, similar views had been expressed by Hakim Bu Ali Sina (Avicenna).

Human endeavors and perseverance are ever expanding the frontiers of knowledge and are unraveling the mysteries of nature and explaining the miracles wrought by Allah in His mysteries. There is no denying the fact that what was propounded as a theory or law by an outstanding scientist of an earlier age after

his scientific experiments and observations was modified and even upset by subsequent experiments and observations by his eminent successors. It is thus that the evolution and development of scientific knowledge, which is the precious heritage of mankind, has taken place. Not unoften it is the revelations made in sacred books that have provided food for thought to scientific researchers. But sometimes great discoveries and inventions are known to have come about just by His grace.

11. It must all the same be borne in mind that there are limits to human intelligence and knowledge and that some wonders and miracle may be supernatural; the how's and whys of which are beyond human comprehension unless and until he Omniscient Allah in His Grace grants their knowledge to whomsoever He wills and when and to whatever extent He wills. It is noteworthy that even prophets may not be vouchsafed knowledge of all miraculous and extraordinary occurrences which by themselves they are not competent to work and which are wrought only by the Almighty Allah as and when He so wills. In olden days miracles were believed to be credentials of a prophet, but the line of prophets having come to a close with Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.), the question of the of such credentials now no longer arises. All the same, Allah has not ceased to work miracles and wonders which occur at various places under different sets of circumstance to remind mankind of His providence.

12. As for marine mammals like the sperm whale, we can assert that though quite a good deal has been learnt about this mysterious mammal, much still remains to be investigated on scientific lines. Despite all the knowledge at our disposal we cannot help praying in all humility to the Omniscient Allah, "Oh Allah increase my knowledge."

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Pages From Islamic History

The Holy Qur'an Embodies the Teachings of all the Prophets

The fountainhead of the knowledge of all the prophets was the same, all the Prophets delivered in essence the same message to humanity but it is through the Last of the Prophets that the message of God was revealed to mankind in all its perfection. The Holy Qur'an says.

Today have I made perfect for you your religion and fulfilled My favour on you, and chosen Islam as your religion.

(5:3)

The above verse signifies that the Holy Qur'an embodies the teachings of all the Prophets who had been sent from time to time to reveal the Will of the Lord to mankind and along with this, also contains all those principles, doctrines of faith, rituals the human beings require or Will require at any stage of human existence. In the same way as the Holy Qur'an being the Last of the revealed Books, is perfect in every manner, so is the Shari'ah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the Last of the Prophets, who was raised for the guidance of the entire human race till the end of time. As we have already mentioned, the teachings of the earlier Prophets were either not fully preserved or were obliterated or interpolated. Hence Allah, the Exalted and Glorified, in HIS Infinite grace and

mercy, sent Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the Last of the Prophets and revealed to him the Last of the Divine Books for the guidance of the humanity.

The Finality of His Prophet hood

We have already explained that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the Last of the Prophets commissioned by Allah to deliver His message to humanity. His teachings are, therefore, comprehensive, final and perfect. His sacred life, in all its details, has been preserved. Humanity can confidently look to him for guidance; The Holy Qur'an says:

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you and have chosen for you a code of life — Al-Islam. (5:3)

Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of God and the Last of the Prophets.

(33:40)

The finality of Prophet hood in Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has also been stressed in authentic Ahadith.

My relation to the (long chain of) Prophets (can be understood) by the parable of a palace; the palace was

most beautifully built superb and fine. There was left, however, the space of a brick. The people went round the palace and asked in amazement. Why is it that this space was not tilled up? I have filled in this gap and I am the Last of the Prophets.

'Abd-al Rahman Ibn Jubayr said. I heard 'Abdullah b 'Amr Ibn al-AS saying this: One day the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to us. The expression of his face indicated as if he was going to depart from us and said. I am Prophet Muhammad who can neither read nor write (he repeated those words three times) and there is no Prophet after me. There is no Prophet after me and there is no Ummah after my Ummah.

This belief is so fundamental and pervasive and there is such a complete unanimity about it that it had never been controverted. It has always remained an undisputed article of faith—a bedrock on which was built not only the metaphysical structure of Islam, but also its cultural edifice. That is why any person laying claim to prophet hood after Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was unhesitatingly condemned as apostate. The 'Ulama' did not even like to enter into argumentation with such a person.

It is recorded that during the time of Imam Abu Hanifah, a person claimed to be a prophet and requested the Imam to allow him an audience to discuss the

validity of his claim. The great jurist of Islamic Law rightly remarked:

Anyone who would demand from him any proof (of his Prophet hood) would become Kafir since the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) emphatically said: No Prophet will come after me.

Imam Ghazali has said: There is complete agreement in the whole of Ummah on this injunction (There is no Prophet hood after me). It signifies the fact that no prophet is to be raised after Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

This injunction is so clear and unequivocal that it leaves no scope—not the least for any other interpretation. Anyone who interprets it in any other way is an unbeliever, his writing is nonsensical and his interpretation is fit to be called a here say and its writer a Kafir: since he is falsifying that very fundamentals on which there is consensus in the Ummah.

Intercession of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

Anas b. Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said Allah would gather people on the Day of Resurrection and they would be concerned about it and Ibn Ubald said. If we would seek intercession with our Lord, we may be relieved from this

predicament of ours. He (the Holy Prophet) said: They would come to Adam and say. Thou art Adam, the father of mankind. Allah created thou With His own Hand and breathed unto thee of His spirit and commanded the angels and they prostrated before thee, so intercede for us with thy Lord so that He may relieve us from this position of ours He would say: I am not in a position to do this; go to Noah (peace be upon him), so they would come to Noah. He would say I am not in a position to do that, (and would say): You better go to Ibrahim (peace be upon him) with whom Allah conversed and conferred the Torah upon him. He (the Holy Prophet) said: So they would come to Moses (peace be upon him). He would say: I am not in a position to do that for you, you better go to Jesus, the spirit of Allah and His word. He would say I am not in a position to do that for you, you better go to Muhammad (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), a servant whose former and later sins have been forgiven. He (the narrator) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed, So they would come to me and I would ask the permission of my Lord which would be granted to me and when I would stand before Him and would extol Him With praises which I am not able to do now but With Allah would inspire me: I would fall down in prostration and it would be said to me:

O Muhammad, raise thy head and say, it would be listened to; ask it would be granted; intercede and it would be accepted Then I would raise my head and extol my Lord With the praise which my Lord would teach me I shall then Intercede and it would be accepted I shall say; My Lord, my people, my people. It would be said: Go and bring forth from it (Hell) him who has in his heart faith equal to the weight of a wheat grain or a barley seed.

I would go and do that; then I would return to my Lord and extol Him with those praises (taught to me by Allah), then I would fall in prostration it would be said to me: Raise your head. O Muhammad, say and you would be heard: ask and it would be granted, intercede and intercession would be accepted. So I would say My people, my people. It would be said to me: Go take out from it (Hell) him who has in his heart faith equal to the weight of a mustard seed. I would go and do that. I would again return to my Lord and extol my Lord with those praises. I would then fall in prostration. It would be said to me: O Muhammad, raise your head, say, and you would be listened to; ask and it would be granted; intercede and Intercession would be accepted. I would say: My Lord, my people, my people. It would be said to me: Go and bring out of the fire him who has in his heart as much faith as the smallest, smallest, smallest grain of Mustard seed. I would go and do that.

Allah's Special Favours and Blessings on the Holy prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the Life to Come

Besides the excellent qualities with which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was endowed by Allah as the prophet, teacher, guide, and propagator of the Divine Faith and as the leader of his Ummah, he is also recipient of Allah's special favours and blessings in the life to come.

Abu Huraira reported that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: I would be the leader of mankind on the Day of Resurrection.

Anas b. Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: I would be first to intercede in the Paradise and amongst the prophets I would have the largest following (on the Day of Resurrection).

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: There is for every Prophet a special prayer with which he would pray. I wish I could reserve my prayer for intercession of my Ummah on the Day of Resurrection.

Prophet hood

The biographies on the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of

Allah be upon him) generally contain lengthy details about the wars and battles which he had to fight. But all these wars and battles were of purely defensive nature. He had no aim to subjugate the people. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) called the people to Islam. They not only refused to listen to his call but tried all ways and means to suppress the voice of Islam. They persecuted him and his followers and expelled them from their homes so that they were compelled to leave their native city, and migrate to the other city to save their lives. After migration they heaved a sigh of relief and a large number of people affirmed their belief in the truth of his (Holy Prophet's) mission. But the enemies could not see this onward march of Islam.

They joined hands and attacked him from all sides. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had to encounter them in self-defence and he showed utmost patience, perseverance and farsightedness in resisting their intrigues and attacks. At last he won the battles and succeeded in restoring peaceful atmosphere and law and order.

These conquests were astounding, unique and indicative of Allah's infinite grace and mercy. But the most outstanding achievement of the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) life is that he brought

about a great spiritual and moral revolution in the lives of the Arabs. He is a perfect model for the whole human race in every phase of life and Allah, the Exalted and Glorified, as fulfillment of His favour on him, perfected for his Ummah the religion of Islam a perfect self-contained ideology, a programme of life, a spiritual guidance, a socio-economic code based on the Qur'an and its implications as explained by the last of the Prophets, called the Sunnah; one of the essential bases of the Shari'ah. The concept of Tauhid (monotheism), the outcome of voluntary and whole-hearted submission to the guidance received through the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and love and respect for each other dispelled the deep and dismal darkness of ignorance, doubts and suspicions and illuminated the whole world. He (the Holy Prophet) put those who were led astray on the right path and reminded those who had forgotten the aim and object of their lives. He told men as to the nature of their relation with their Creator and Sustainer. He taught them piety and excellent virtues and repentance from sins. He warned the people against the wiles of Satan and against worldly allurements and made them pious and virtuous. He preached love, benevolence and brotherly treatment for all. He taught wisdom, prudence, civilization and culture. He exhorted them to lead a pious and righteous life. He revived the spiritual

values which had lost their significance with the passage of time. He illuminated the minds and hearts which having lost their goal were groping their ways in darkness. In short, the last of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave a perfect, excellent and abiding Shari'ah to men in order to reform their moral conduct and behaviour and it was through him that the Will and Commands of the Creator were delivered to mankind.

No doubt a Prophet shares with other human beings their humanly qualities, but he has a special distinction (of prophet hood) which makes him stand far above the common race of mankind. It is Allah's special gift which cannot be acquired through human efforts however strenuous they may be. Ibn Taymiyah has written: The prophet, of necessity, occupies the higher and the wider, wide enough to comprehend the whole life, immeasurably valuable point of View, because it is through him that such realities are revealed to us which we cannot get at with the help of our own faculties, whether mental or emotional. His revelations are most perfect and consistent because prophetic consciousness is not derivative, made up of a multitude of inherited tendencies, each of which may deflect or distort the intellectual or the mystic. Prophet hood is a special gift of Allah by which a man is commissioned

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