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Religion as Guardian of Life

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Time is a proportionate and balanced mixture of stability and change, stagnation and movement. If it loses either of these characteristics, it will lose its relevance. Islam as a religion accepts this fact and is ready to make necessary accommodations, but it holds the position that as religion it has to guide life, not simply follow it. Religion, as Islam pleads, does not have to passively approve all changes. It is not lifeless like the needle of a barometer which moves up or down mechanically to measure the pressure of the atmosphere, or a weather-cock fixed on the top of a building which moves to show the direction of the wind. The function of religion is not simply to acknowledge and show the changes which are occurring at a time. Its obligation is to check whether a change is healthy or unhealthy, constructive or destructive. It has to evaluate the effect of a change on mankind at large and on its promoters in particular. It judges all pros and cons of a change before it approves it. It, therefore, will discourage a change if it is destructive. It may even oppose the latter kind.

At this point we can see a clear difference between religion and morality. Religion feels obliged to oppose wrong inclinations, whereas morality simply identifies them. ■

CONTENTS

- 1- Role of Muslims in the Struggle for Freedom - *S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi* 7
- 2- Deep-Rooted Link Between Shariah and Knowledge -*S.M.Rabey Hasani Nadwi* 17
- 3- The Difference Between The Bible and The Quran -*Gary Miller* 19
- 4- Piety - *Mohd. Manzoor Nomani* 27
- 5- Mercy - A Boon -*Obaidur Rahman Nadwi* 33
- 6- History of Eid-ul-Fitr -*Mohammad Zakir Hossain* 35

Wisdom of Qur'an

“What will such people do on the Day when the Lord will say: ‘Now call upon all those whom you believed to be My partners.’ Thereupon they will call upon them, but they will not respond to their call; and We shall make them a common pit of doom. And the guilty shall behold the Fire and know that they are bound to fall into it, and will find no escape from it.

(Al-Qur'an -18:52-53)

This is a recurring Qur'anic theme that to follow someone's command and guidance other than God's amounts to associating others with God in His divinity. It is irrelevant whether one verbally brands such a being as a partner in God's divinity or not. Even if a person curses someone while following his commands in disregard of God's, he is guilty of associating him with God in His divinity. This point is best illustrated with reference to satans. As we know, everyone curses satans but at the same time follows them. The Qur'an charges people with associating satans with God. The Qur'an denounces it as a form of polytheism. In the Day of Judgement polytheists will be asked to call upon those whom they believed to be the partners of God, But what they will see with their naked eyes that the friendship which they enjoyed among themselves during the worldly life will change into severe enmity in the Hereafter. And then both will be made 'a common pit of doom'. The Fire of Hell will be their place, and they will find no escape from it. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Ibn Masud relates that the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said, “If anyone is in need and asks people to meet it, he will not be permanently relieved of his trouble. But if he asks Allah for help, he will soon be relieved or he will meet his death if the appointed time is at hand or Allah will give him prosperity some time later.”

(Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi)

Islam has blessed man with human dignity and self-respect by telling him to ask for anything he needs from Allah. This hadith encourages man to present all his needs to Allah alone, for only He is the Reliever of those who are in trouble and Provider of all their needs. The supplication of Prophet Moses in the Qur'an (28:24): “O my Lord! Truly am I in (desperate) need of any good that Thou dost send me.” - continues to be a true guide for the believers. The Qur'an mentions that Allah did give him good support.

One who looks to others for relief, in fact, loses his dignity and self-respect, and as such can get but only some temporary relief. He will continue to beg all his life from the people who are not so large-hearted as to meet his needs or so generous as to relieve him from the indignity of begging. So his self-respect will certainly get injured. And when he has no self-respect, why should Allah save him from indignity. But if he turns to Allah at the time of need, he will soon be relieved. ■

UNREST IN ISLAMIC WORLD

Beginning from Egypt, Iran and Afghanistan where monarchy was crushed and so called democratic governments were formed the Muslim dominated nations are in turmoil. Taking advantage of some inherent local problems anti-Islam forces jumped into the ring and forced themselves as saviour of democracy and secularism. More than 50 Muslim countries and about 20 countries where Muslims are the largest minority are at the target line of western powers who wish to de-stabilize them.

A noted columnist Meghnad Saha in a recent write up in the Indian Express (July 7,) has analysed the crisis of the Muslim World. Here the article is reproduced. On certain points we do not agree with his argument still the article is worth reading.

There was the unrest in Istanbul against a non-secular government. Now there is a repetition of mass demonstrations in Cairo and the Army has taken it upon itself to remove a legitimately elected president. Was it because he was from a non-secular party or because unemployment and economic stagnation tipped the balance for the crowds in Tahrir Square? The dismissal of Morsi is a setback for Arab Spring. Elsewhere in Syria, the civil war has now lasted two-and-a-half years with over 1,00,000 dead, chemical weapons used, arms flooding in financed by Saudi Arabia and Qatar for the Sunni opposition armies and from Hezbollah and Iran for the government (Shia) armies.

There is no end in sight. The Iraq experience has frightened off the US and UK from rushing in too quickly. Russia and China have stalled the Security Council. Lebanon is already being dragged into the war since Hezbollah is involved. Jordan and Turkey are receiving massive floods of refugees. Iraq with its Shia majority is playing along with Iran on Assad's side. Russia has supplied strategic missiles to Assad, which worry Israel. There is, for the first time in many years, a prospect of general conflagration involving the great powers in the Middle East.

There are two overlapping crises. The old, long-running saga of the demise of the Ottoman Empire has been alluded to in these columns. But, add to that the crisis of legitimacy, which has haunted the Middle East since 1973 when the Arab armies suffered their third and most decisive defeat at the hands of Israel. The region abandoned secularism and socialism as panaceas and turned back to religion. Sunni and Shia identities were reinforced; in Iran after the Khomeini revolution and in Saudi Arabia with the revival and international propagation of Wahhabism.

The revival of orthodoxy threw back the reform process in Islam which had been progressing for some decades. The other two Abrahamic faiths—Judaism and Christianity—have had their reform movements and continue to have their accommodation with modernity. The old texts have been reinterpreted and liberal values have been encouraged even in face of the old texts, which argue against liberal values. Thus misogyny and homophobia are being debated in Christian churches. The Scriptures are no longer held to be literal truths. There are some Creationists in the US but, by and large, the truth of Darwin's findings has been absorbed.

Not so in the recent revival in Islam. Here the literal truth of the text has been reaffirmed. There is an absence of the textual criticism to which the Bible has been subjected. The challenge of modernity has been met by its rejection and insistence that nothing has changed and the word of God is literally true as it always was.

But orthodoxy, however sound theologically, is no help in coping with the challenges of modernisation and globalisation. Jobs have to be found, incomes have to be earned, education is vital, especially for women. The luxury of a medieval lifestyle, which keeps women under wraps, unable to participate in modern life, is no longer affordable. Some Arab countries have had oil as a cushion for a while. But as we see from the anxiety in Saudi Arabia and Oman, local youths who are unemployed and unskilled need jobs and the immigrants who were useful for doing the dirty work are no longer affordable.

The Taliban wants to shoot women who go to school and the al-Qaeda is no better. This way half the population is confined and lost as an asset to the nation. But when oil is no longer enough to sustain a medieval lifestyle at the current price of \$100, how will the countries cope when the oil price collapses, thanks to shale gas, to \$50 and lower? The countries without oil are already struggling and hence the riots all over the Middle East and the Maghreb.

The war will take many more lives over many more decades before we see any real reform. But then Europe did the same, except that it was centuries ago. Islam has come to the task rather late in the day. ■

S.A.

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ROLE OF MUSLIMS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

-S.Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Muslims in the Forefront

Muslims have played a very significant role in the national struggle for freedom. They have been in the forefront of it. It was, after all, from their hands that the British had wrested power in India. When British Imperialism was spreading its tentacles over the country and devouring one province after the other, the first man to realise the gravity of the danger was the lion-hearted Tipu Sultan of Mysore. He saw clearly that unless, determined efforts were made in time to thwart the nefarious designs of the greedy aliens, the whole of India would ultimately be swallowed up by them. With this resolve, he unsheathed his sword and jumped into a fierce, life-and-death struggle against the British exploiters.

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 Harris, 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 it 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.

War of Independence

The Indian sepoy, in May 1857, rose in open revolt against the oppressive misdeeds of the British masters, the contemptuous treatment meted out by them to their Indian subordinates and their insatiable lust for money and persistent violation of the religious sentiments of Hindus and Muslims. The sepoy uprising quickly

developed into a national war with Hindus and Muslims fighting shoulder to shoulder for the emancipation of the motherland. The rebels marched towards Delhi, the seat of the last of the Mughal Emperors, Bahadur Shah Zafar, and proclaimed him to be the spearhead of their struggle and symbol of national resistance. Battles were fought all over India under his flag. He was the unanimous choice of the people and their rightful leader and ruler, and Delhi, the nerve-centre of patriotic India.

Share of Muslims

Though the War of Independence was truly a national war in which Hindus and Muslims had participated freely and equally and India had not yet seen a more stirring spectacle of popular enthusiasm, unity and patriotism, its leadership was predominantly in the hands of Muslims. More often than not, the leaders of the movement, at various levels belonged to the Muslim Community.

Vengeance of British

After the failure of the movement, for reasons that are well known, the British took a savage revenge from the Indians and let loose a spate of fury which revived the memories of Chengiz Khan and Halaku. The rebels were ruthlessly pursued, caught and punished. There was ruin and desolation everywhere. The three young sons of the Emperor, whom the British themselves had given asylum, were killed by them so ruthlessly that it made even the Englishmen shudder. Thirty-three other

members of the imperial family, including the old and the infirm, were, also, slain along with them. The aging Emperor himself was put to severest indignity. He was tried for treason in excessively humiliating circumstances and would have certainly been put to death had a high English army officer not guaranteed the security of his life. He was exiled to Burma to spend the rest of his days in utter poverty.

Death and Desolation

As the victorious British army entered the city of Delhi the terrible havoc it wrought there provided eloquent commentary to the Quranic verse:

Kings, when they enter a country
despoil it, and make
the noblest of its people the meanest:
thus do they behave.

(XXVII: 34)

The troops were given a free hand to plunder the city for three days and they made use of the opportunity with such enthusiasm that an English officer, Lord Lawrence, felt compelled to write to General Penny, who was the General-in-Command, in such strong words about the whole affair, "I believe we shall lastingly, and indeed, justly be abused for the way in which we have despoiled all classes without distinction.

For three days death and destruction reigned supreme in Delhi. People were slain indiscriminately, shops were looted, houses were burnt. Men, women and children fled the town in thousands. In the end, the city which, till

yesterday, was the seat of Muslim splendour was reduced to shambles. A graphic account of the general ruin and spoliation is furnished in his memoirs by Lord Roberts who had led the English army from Kanpur to Delhi. This entry bears the date, September 24, 1857, which means that it was made soon after the Red Fort of Delhi had fallen to the British. Wrote Lord Roberts:

“That march through Delhi in the early morning light was a gruesome proceeding. Our way by the Lahore Gate from the Chandni Chowk led through a veritable city of the dead; not a sound was to be heard but the falling of our own footsteps; not a living creature was to be seen. Dead bodies were strewn about in all directions, in every attitude that the death-struggle had caused them to assume, and in every stage of decomposition. We marched in silence or involuntarily spoke in whispers, as though fearing to disturb those ghastly remains of humanity. The sights we encountered were horrible and sickening to the last degree. Here a dog gnawed at an uncovered limb, there a vulture disturbed by our approach from its loathsome meal; but too completely gorged to fly, fluttered away to a safer distance. In many instances, the positions of the dead bodies were appallingly life-like. Some with their arms uplifted as if beckoning, and, indeed, the whole scene weird and terrible beyond description. Our horses seemed to feel the horror of it as much

as we did, for they shook and snorted in evident terror. The atmosphere was unimaginably disgusting, laden as it was with the most noxious and sickening odours.”

Islamic Rebellion

It was, indeed, a general massacre, but the wrath seemed to be directed particularly against the Muslims, for many among the higher British authorities associated the uprising with an Islamic Jihad and believed that the moving spirit behind it were Muslims. To quote Henry Mead: “This rebellion, in its present phase, cannot be called a sepoy Mutiny. It did begin with the sepoys, but soon its true nature was revealed. It was an Islamic revolt.

Another narrator of the dreadful drama says: “An English officer had made it a principle to treat every Muslim as a rebel. He would enquire from everyone he saw if he was a Hindu or a Muslim, and would shoot him dead right there if he turned out to be a Muslim.”

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."

Lord Roberts writing to his mother on June 21, 1857 remarked, "The death that seems to have the greatest effect is being blown from a gun. It is rather a horrible sight, but, in these times, we cannot be particular." The purpose of this "business" was to show "these rascally Musalmans that, with God's help, Englishmen will still be the masters of India."

Price of the Struggle for Freedom

The Muslims, thus, had to pay most heavily for waging the struggle for freedom. The British held them to be the major offenders and decided that their future generations should also be made to bear the burden of their guilt. The attitude of the British bureaucracy can well be gauged from the following quotation from Henry Harrington Thomas of the Bengal Civil Service in his pamphlet, 'Late Rebellion in India and Our Future Policy' written in 1858, i. e. only a year after the rebellion:

"I have stated that the Hindus were not the contrivers or the primary movers of the 1857 rebellion and I now shall attempt to show that it was the result of a Mohammadan conspiracy.
. Left to their resources, the Hindus never would or could have compassed such an undertaking.

. . . They (the Mohammadans) have been uniformly the same from the times of the first Caliphs to the present day, proud, intolerant, and cruel, ever aiming at Mohammadan supremacy by whatever means, and ever fostering a deep hatred of Christians. They cannot be good subjects of any government which professes another religion; the precepts of the Quran will not suffer it."

Exclusion of Muslims from Public Services

This attitude towards the Muslims continued to be the cornerstone of British policy in India for a long time. The Muslims were debarred from lucrative government jobs and were ejected from all other gainful occupations, their trade was ruined and the endowments from which their schools used to be maintained were confiscated. A system of education which ran counter to their cultural and intellectual ideals and aspirations was introduced deliberately in the country.

It was, sometimes, openly stated in official notifications for government vacancies that only Hindus would be considered for appointment. Thus, Sir William Hunter has reproduced the following extract from a Calcutta Persian paper (*Durbin*), dated July 14, 1869.

"Recently, when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner, that official in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus.

Commenting on the above complaint, the author goes on to say:

“ the Muslims have now sunk so low that, even when qualified for Government employment, they are studiously kept out of it by government notifications. Nobody takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities do not deign even to acknowledge their existence.”

Unconcealed Vindictiveness

The British made no attempt to conceal their ill-will against the Muslims. They caught hold of them at the slightest excuse and showed no mercy. They waged a fierce war against the small band of *Mujahids* (Crusaders) beleaguered in the tribal belt of the North-West. Whoever was suspected by them to be in league with the *Mujahids* or with the party of Syed Ahmed Shaheed was arrested and legal proceedings were started against him. Innumerable religious leaders, merchants and noblemen were tried on these grounds at Patna, Thanesar and Lahore, and sentenced to heavy terms of imprisonment. Some of them were branded as Wahabis and punished on that account. Symptomatic of the boundless British hatred towards the Muslims was the judgement delivered by an English judge while condemning the three alleged Wahabi leaders, Maulana Yahya Ali, Mohammad Jafar Thanesari and Mohammad Shafi Lahori to death. The learned Judge, in the course of his judgement remarked:

“You will be hanged till death, your properties will be confiscated and your corpses will not be handed over to your relatives. Instead, you will be buried contemptuously in the jail compound.”

After the sentence of death had been passed, parties of English men and women visited the jail to see condemned prisoners in their cells and take delight in their sighs and groans. But when they found that the prisoners, instead of being sad and dejected, were actually exulting in their state and looking forward expectantly to the martyrdom that had so blissfully fallen to their lot, they felt cheated and urged upon the government for the revision of their sentence to one of life-imprisonment. Ultimately, it was announced by the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala to the unfortunate men that the Chief Court had altered the death penalty passed against them to transportation for life. He said:

“You rejoice over the sentence of death and look upon it as martyrdom. The Government, therefore, have decided not to award you the punishment you like so much. The death-sentence passed against you has been changed to that of transportation or life.”

The three prisoners along with two others, Maulana Ahmadullah Azimabadi and Molvi Abdul Rahim Sadiqपुरi were, then, deported to the Andamans in 1865 where Maulana Yahya Ali and Maulana Ahmadullah died. The entire property of the family of Sadiqपुर in Patna was seized by the Government, their houses were

ploughed down and official buildings were constructed on their sites. The tombs of their ancestors were demolished. All this was done to quench the mad thirst for vengeance.

Several other noted Ulema were sent to the Andaman Islands to serve life-sentences in banishment. These included Maulana Fazl-i-Huq Khairabadi, Mufti Inayat Ahmad Kakorwi and Mufti Mazhar Karim Daryabadi, of whom Maulana Fazl-i-Huq met his death in exile while the other two returned home on completing their sentences.

This policy of unmitigated spite and revengefulness was responsible for the political and educational backwardness that came over the Muslims during the earlier stages of British rule and from which they have not yet been able to recover.

The Formation of the Indian National Congress

The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1884. It was attended by some prominent Muslim representatives. The fourth session at Madras, in 1887, was presided over by a Muslim, Mr. Badruddin Tayyabji, and Muslim delegates drawn from different walks of life participated in it in sufficient strength. A donation of Rs. 5,000/- was announced in that session to the Congress by Mr. Humayun Jah.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Disagreement

Initially, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a supporter of a common political platform, but he later changed his mind.

His contention was that the political and educational backwardness of Muslims demanded that they should dissociate themselves from the national movement and avoid incurring the displeasure of the British Government by joining hands with the extremists of Bengal and other Hindu agitators. He felt that a separate non-political organization would serve the interests of Muslims better; the other course, that of political collaboration with the Hindus in opposition to the British was fraught with the danger of reviving old wounds and creating fresh difficulties for them.

The Support of the Ulema to the Congress

Notwithstanding Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's opposition, a large number of independent Muslims, under the leadership of the Ulema, extended full support and cooperation to the nationalist activities and the Congress. They did not consider politics to be the 'forbidden fruit' for Muslims. In 1888, a whole set of religious decrees was published by Maulana Mohammad Saheb of Ludhiana urging upon Muslims to ally themselves with the Congress. These decrees were signed not only by prominent religious leaders of India like Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and Maulana Lutfullah of Aligarh but of Medina and Baghdad as well.

The Balkan War and its Repercussions in India

A wave of repugnance and anger arose among Muslims against the

European Powers-particularly Britain which was, then, their spearhead-with the outbreak of the Balkan War in 1912. The Islamic political consciousness, gaining in strength as it had been steadily, reached its climax and burst in the East like a boil that had been suppurating for a long time. It was during these days that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad started publishing his fiery weekly paper, *El-Hilal*. It became popular immediately and acquired a readership among Muslims running into lakhs. Its trenchant criticism of Britain and the West was followed eagerly throughout the country. In addition to it Maulana Mohammad Ali's English weekly, *Comrade* (which made its appearance originally from Calcutta and was, later, shifted to Delhi) and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar* (Lahore) and a host of other Muslim newspapers and periodicals helped to produce a vigorous anti-British feeling among the educated sections of the community. In the upshot, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Hasrat Mohani were arrested and put behind the bars.

Maulana Mahmud Hasan of Deoband

The Principal of the Muslim religious institution of Deoband, Maulana Mahmud Hasan (who later came to be known as Sheikhul Hind) was a sworn enemy of British Imperialism. No greater antagonist of the British had, indeed, been seen in India since the time of Tipu Sultan. A staunch ally of the Ottoman Empire-since it symbolised the power of

Islam in the world and also held the Muslim Caliphate-and an indefatigable fighter in the path of India's freedom, he had dedicated his whole life to the liquidation of the British Empire. He did not stop even at establishing secret contacts with Afghan Government and with the revolutionary leaders of Turkey like Anwar Pasha. He was taken into custody in 1916 by Sharif Husain at Medina in Arabia who handed him over to the British. The Maulana and his associates, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Uzair Gul, Hakim Nusrat Husain and Molvi Waheed Ahmad, were deported to the Mediterranean island of Malta in 1917 where they remained till 1920.

Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal

So was Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal a tireless champion of India's freedom. He organised the Jami'at-i-Ulema-i-Hind to bring the religious leaders of Muslims on a united platform in the struggle for national independence and took a leading part in Khilafat agitation. During his lifetime the Firangi Mahal in Lucknow functioned as the key-centre of Muslim politics.

Rowlatt Report

Came the Rowlatt Report in 1918, which made the Muslims the main target of its attack and laid the blame for anti-British activities largely at their door. It further brought matters to a head.

Khilafat Agitation and Hindu-Muslim Unity

The Ali Brothers-Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali-were released a year

later. A wonderful spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity was seen thereafter everywhere in India. The two communities gloriously forgot their dissensions and linking their destinies with each other marched forward like a single body to do or die for the attainment of national freedom and the preservation of the Ottoman Empire. The country's atmosphere was, electrified with rare revolutionary feeling.

India had witnessed a stupendous political awakening. It was ablaze from end to end with resentment against the British masters. Such was the setting in which Gandhiji made his debut on the political stage of the nation. He undertook a countrywide tour in the company of Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, addressing mammoth public gatherings from place to place and arousing the masses for the national struggle. Such a tremendous popular upsurge had never been seen in India before.

Non-cooperation Movement

In 1920, Gandhiji and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presented before people the two-pronged programme of non-cooperation with the British Government at all levels and boycott of foreign goods. The proposals found ready acceptance with the masses as the major weapons of their movement and they proved to be so effective that the Government was compelled to take full note of them. The British were threatened in India with a complete breakdown of the administrative

machinery and a general insurrection. The inherent weakness of foreign rule was thoroughly exposed.

British Atrocities on Moplas

During the struggle for freedom, the severest loss in terms of life and property was suffered by the Mopla Muslims of Malabar. Provoked by unmitigated tyranny and coercion, the Moplas rose in armed revolt against the British Government on August 21, 1921. The rebellion, which lasted for a little over six months, assumed such massive proportions that the Government had to call in even a warship to deal with it and fifty-one lakhs of rupees were spent by them on its suppression from August to December alone. Thousands of Moplas were killed. As an instance of the ghastly atrocities perpetrated by the British, Mopla prisoners were herded together like cattle in the compartments of a railway train which three doctors had unanimously declared unfit for human transport, with the result that a great many of them perished in the way. The British paid no heed to their loud cries of anguish and pathetic requests for water. The detenus were kept under strict vigilance and subjected to all kinds of humiliation after the rebellion had been quelled, and, for a long time, the Moplas, in general, were denied the enjoyment of ordinary civil liberties. The Committee of Inquiry appointed in 1922 by the Special Commissioner of Malabar reported that "there are at least 35,000 Mopla women and children whose condition is extremely miserable and

unless proper measures are taken for their relief, many of them are likely to die of disease and starvation."

The Last Resort

The British Government in their desperation took resort to the most favourite strategy of imperialists everywhere-that of 'Divide and Rule'. They sowed seeds of communal discord in the land. The then Viceroy took a prominent Hindu leader into confidence and impressed upon him the need for starting a powerful missionary movement to bring back into the fold of Hinduism those who had embraced Islam. The Viceroy also advised him how essential it was to organise his community on a militant basis after the Khilafat agitation had demonstrated beyond doubt the strength, religious fervour and organisational capacity of the Muslims-the Hindus having foolishly allowed the initiative to pass into the hands of Muslims by making common cause with them on the issue of Khilafat which was wholly a Muslim affair.

Shuddhi, Sanghatan and Tabligh Movements

This was the starting point of Hindu revivalist activities which under the twin names of *Shuddhi* and *Sanghatan* spread all over India. As a reaction to them the Muslims also came forward with the *Tabligh* movement. An unending series of religious polemics, debates and conferences ensued, culminating, not unexpectedly by any means, in violent communal disturbances. The country was caught in the grip of terrible Hindu-

Muslim riots.

The Congress man fully stuck to its task in the midst of that fearsome madness. It continued to hold its annual sessions regularly. A special session to take stock of the tragic turn of events was summoned in 1922 under the Presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad while the regular annual session in the same year was held at Cocanada and presided over by Maulana Mohammad Ali.

Country wide Communal Conflagration

The communal frenzy remained unchecked till the peak was reached in 1927, when as many as twenty five riots were recorded within the space of a few months. The nationalist sections of both the communities were profoundly distressed at this state of things but there seemed to be nothing they could do to restore communal peace and harmony. The gulf between Hindus and Muslims grew wider and wider. Ultimately, the malady began to cast its sinister shadow on the minds of the leaders of the two communities, also, till the parting of ways between Hindus and Muslims came up before the world as a reality from which there was no escape..

Parting of Ways

A general impression was created among the thinking classes of both Hindus and Muslims that the patriotic fervour of the leaders of the nationalist movement was cooling down quickly and they were getting divided more and more openly into separate

communal camps. The basic impulses of their thought and ambitions being communal in essence, they could not be looked up to standing fast by the ideals of Indian nationalism in the hour of trial and opportunity. The Muslims felt in their hearts that the Hindu leaders (whose guiding spirit now was Gandhiji) had failed lamentably to take adequate steps for combating the communal menace. They had not brought forward that open-mindedness, impartiality and determination which was expected of them. By virtue of belonging to the majority community they wielded greater power and influence in the country, and could, therefore, have succeeded in putting down the riots had they shown greater courage and objectivity of outlook and denounced the communalists, whoever they were, openly and without fear or favour.

May be, this view was wrong or exaggerated but it did alienate the sympathies of many Muslim leaders, who had been in the vanguard of the nationalist movement, from the Congress. The Muslims, in general were persuaded to believe that in order to safeguard effectively their rights and interests they would better rely on their own strength.

Separate Muslim Front and the Demand for Partition

In consequence, Maulana Mahammad Ali resigned from the Congress along with his friends and associates and joined the Muslim political camp. The separatist instincts

among Muslims became sharper and stranger with the passage of time. Mr. Mahammad Ali Jinnah revived the Muslim League in 1937, and in a few years, it rose to be the most powerful representative organisation of Indian Muslims. After the League had consolidated its position, it raised the demand for Pakistan. Thanks to the anomalies of Indian social existence, the bitter experience of communal discrimination in official circles, political immaturity of the people, and intercommunal fears and suspicions, the country was eventually partitioned in 1947.

Maulana Husain Ahmad and Jami'at-ul-Ulema

Muslim religious leaders connected with the Jami'at-ul-Ulema stayed firm in their loyalty to the Congress till the end. They did not waver, in the least from their traditional nationalist stand. In the forefront of them was Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani who by his uncompromising hostility towards the British and extraordinary patriotic zeal and sincerity of purpose proved himself to be a worthy successor of his teacher and mentor, Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi. These Ulema cheerfully bare the concentrated opposition and disfavour of their co-religionists, a large majority of whom had come to share the views of the Muslim League. Maulana Madani strove to the best of his ability, during the fateful years, to make the Muslims realise the folly of

(Continued on page 39)

DEEP-ROOTED LINK BETWEEN SHARIAH AND KNOWLEDGE

-S.M.Rabey Hasani Nadwi

That the very first Revelation that descended on him (SAW) was commenced with '*Iqra bismе Rabbikn*' (Read in the name of thy Lord) itself contained an explicit indication towards the fact that the education and exposition of the true religion that was getting started to be made through the agency of this Prophet of the last phase had a profound connection with knowledge and its main tool, the pen. Up-till then, knowledge and the tools of its propagation, the pen and the paper, had been kept consistently exploited by man for self-gratification, fulfillment of his megalomania, self-glorification, furtherance of his knowledge in search of maximum earthly pleasures, enslavement of the weak human beings and showing off one's grandeur. These tools of knowledge, the pen and the paper, were now to be used for the deification of mankind, making them act in accordance with the Divine injunctions, and carrying out the task of bringing reform and righteousness and guidance that man was assigned to do by his Lord in his capacity of the vicegerent of Allah on the earth, the greatest means of which is knowledge and the pen. By means of these very things, knowledge and its tools, mainly the pen, this task is to be performed by the humanity, under the guidance that was to be received by it from its Prophet. Thus, the entity of the Prophet (SAW), who was illiterate, that is: did not know reading and writing and had only the knowledge that

could be attained by natural and empirical means was made the preceptor of not only the people that was illiterate like him, but of all the educated human beings, rather, the greatest of great educationists. He was, thus, made the sole communicator of the heavenly instructions and imparter of the complete religious guidance to mankind.

And, thus, the Revelation that kept descending on this unlettered Prophet, whether *Matlu* (the one which is recited), that is the one contained in the holy Quran or *Ghair Matlu* (the one which is not recited), that is the one expressed by him (SAW) in his own language and that is the one contained in the holy Tradition, happened to become the fountainhead of the knowledge and sciences that were beneficent and rewarding, in true sense of the word, for the humanity. And, thus, this Revelation was made to serve as a spur for the protagonist of the Truth and Guidance to delve into academic research, persistent educational efforts, probe and progress. Due to impact of these two injunctions, '*Iqra*' (Read!) and '*Allamallnsan-a-Ma lam yalam*' (He taught the man what the latter was unaware of) imparted by the Revelation, such springheads of knowledge burst open for the humanity as the like of which are not traceable in the human history. The previously existing stockpile of knowledge that was there was not deemed enough to be content with. Instead, along with

further precious additions made in it, many valuable sciences were brought into being which were not there before: Moreover, in these new Sciences, such nuances and niceties, and in-depth deliberations, got created as brought laurels to the humanity. New sciences with bearing on the holy Quran and additional, diversified sciences with bearing on the holy traditions, and several others got created. Libraries after libraries of works in these new sciences got produced. And, thus, the *Ummah* of this last-phase Prophet happened to be the *Ummah* of knowledge and wisdom. Simultaneously it happened to be the *Ummah* of the knowledge that shows the path leading to the weal and welfare of the humanity.

This first Revelation that descended on Allah's Prophet (SAW) revealed unto its believers the very magnificent path of knowledge and wisdom which was made to stand guarantee for the weal of the humanity. In it, by the addition of '*Bismе rabbika*' (in the name of thy Lord) to '*Iqra*' (Read) a great fundamental fact has been enunciated. It is that man's act of reading has been linked with the name of the man's Creator. That means the knowledge that man acquires by means of his contemplation and deliberation, study and research, should be acquired by having it linked with his Creator and Master so that he does not get deviated to wrong path. It is because he has his own wishes and desires, likes and dislikes; that is, he is man, he can go wrong and take to wrong path: In case he had his knowledge linked with his Providence, he would be secure

against getting deviated. Moreover, he would then know those facts of knowledge, too, which are known to only his Providence and can be made known to him by Him only and which cannot be known unless He tells them. Those facts can be known only by means of Divine Revelation. Then He made the pen the instrument of knowledge; since it was by means of it only that knowledge could be preserved and its benefit could be made persistent till the world remained extant. Thus, knowledge stands divided in two branches. One: that deals with merely the mundane demands and requirements. Taking care of them is permitted, too, by the Providence of the world. The other one is the knowledge that imparts guidance about the long, everlasting life of the Hereafter that begins with the end of the present life and which exists in a hidden form in the earthly life. For the guidance towards the knowledge of the material gain and loss of the worldly life, it is man's intellect and his experience that is made its source by Allah Almighty. And the knowledge for the guidance about the Hereafter which is not visible in this worldly life can be had only when it gets imparted by the man's Creator. Man is apprised of it by his Creator through his chosen bondman, that is the Prophet. Man is now apprised of it for all times to come up till the world's end through his last chosen bondman, Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah (SAW). He has been entrusted by Allah Almighty the charge of conveying and enunciating the vast, comprehensive and immutable knowledge which

(Continued on page 38)

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND THE QUR'AN

-Gary Miller

The Bible is a collection of writings by many different authors. The Qur'an is a dictation. The speaker in the Qur'an - in the first person - is God talking directly to man. In the Bible you have many men writing about God and you have in some places the word of God speaking to men and still in other places you have some men simply writing about history. The Bible consists of 66 small books. About 18 of them begin by saying: This is the revelation God gave to so and so... The rest make no claim as to their origin. You have for example the beginning of the book of Jonah which begins by saying: The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Elmitaeh saying... quote and then it continues for two or three pages.

If you compare that to one of the four accounts of the life of Jesus, Luke begins by saying: "many people have written about this man, it seems fitting for me to do so too". That is all... no claim of saying " these words were given to me by God here they are for you it is a revelation", there is no mention of this.

The Bible does not contain self-reference, that is, the word 'Bible' is not in the Bible. Nowhere does the Bible talk about itself. Some scriptures

are sometimes pointed to in the Bible, say: Here where it talks about itself, but we have to look closely. 2nd Timothy 3:16 is the favourite which reads: "All scripture is inspired of God" and there are those who would say, here is where the Bible it talks about itself, it says it is inspired of God, all of it. But if you read the whole sentence, you read that this was a letter wrote by Paul to Timothy and the entire sentence says to Timothy: "Since you were a young man you have studied the holy scriptures, all scriptures inspired by God" and so on... When Timothy was a young man the New Testament did not exist, the only thing that stems he was talking about are scriptures – which are only a portion of the Bible - from before that time. It could not have meant the whole Bible.

There is at the end of the Bible a verse which says: "Let anyone who takes away from this book or adds to this book be cursed". This to is sometimes pointed to me saying: Here is where it sums itself as a whole. But look again and you will see that when it says: Let no one change this book, it is talking about that last book, number 66, the Book of Revelation. It has too, because any reference will tell you that the Book of Revelation was written

before certain other parts of the Bible were written. It happens today to be stacked at the end, but there are other parts that came after, so it can not be referring to the entire book.

It is an extreme position held only by some Christian groups that the Bible – in its entirety - cover to cover is the revealed word of God in every word, but they do a clever thing when they mention this, or make this claim. They will say that the Bible in its entirety is the word of God; inerrant (no mistakes) in the original writings. So if you go to the Bible and point out some mistakes that are in it you are going to be told: Those mistakes were not there in the original manuscript, they have crept in so that we see them there today. They are going on problem in that position. There is a verse in the Bible Isaiah 40:8 which in fact is so well known that some Bibles printed it on the inside front cover as an introduction and it says : “ The grass weathers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever”. Here is a claim in the Bible that the word of God will stand forever, it will not be corrupted, it won't be lost. So if today you find a mistake in the Bible you have two choices. Either that promise was false that when God said my word wont fade away, he was mistaken, or the portion which has the mistake in it was not a part of the word of God in the first place, because the promise was

that it would be safeguarded, it would not be corrupted.

I have suggested many times that there are mistakes in the Bible and the accusation comes back very quickly: Show me one. Well there are hundreds. If you want to be specific I can mention few. You have for example at 2nd Samuel 10:18 a description of a war fought by David saying that he killed 700 men and that he also killed 40,000 men on horsebacks. In 1st Chronicles 19 it mentions the same episode saying that he killed 7000 men and the 40,000 men were not on horsebacks, they were on foot. The point be what is the difference between the pedestrian and not is very fundamental.

Matthew 27:5 says that Judas Iscariot when he died he hung himself. Acts 1 says that no he jumped off a cliff head first. If you study Logic very soon you will come in your course to what they call an “undecidable propositions” or “meaningless sentences” or statements that can not be decided because there is no contextual false. One of the classic examples sited is something called the Effeminites paradox. This man was Cretan and he said “Cretans always lie”, now was that statement true or false? If he was a Cretan and he says that they always lie is he lying? If he is not lying then he is telling the truth then the Cretans don't always lie ! You

see it can not be true and it can not be false, the statement turns back on itself. It is like saying "What I am telling you right now is a lie" would you believe that or not? You see the statement has no true content. It can not be true and it can not be false. If it is true it is always false. If it is false it is also true.

Well in the Bible at Titus 1:12 the writer is Paul and he is talking about the Cretans. He says that one of their own men – a prophet - said "Cretans always lie" and he says that what this man says is true. It is a small mistake, but the point is that it is a human mistake, you don't find that if you carefully examine the true content of that statement. It can not be a true statement.

Now I come back to the Qur'an, and as I mentioned the speaker in the Qur'an is - in the first person - is God. The book claims throughout that it is the word of God. It names itself 70 times as the Qur'an. It talks about its own contents. It has self-reference. The Qur'an states in the first Sura after Fatiha that "This is the book, there is no doubt in it, it is a guidance for those who are conscious of God" and so on and so on... It begins that way and continues that way stressing that. And there is one very amazing statement in the Qur'an when you come to the fourth Sura 82nd Ayah which says to those who say Qur'an is something else than the word of God. It

challenges them saying: "Have they not considered the Qur'an, if it came from someone other than God they will find in it many mistakes". Some of you are students, would you dare to hand in a paper after you completed a research work or something at the bottom you put down there "You wont find mistakes in this". Would you dare to challenge your professor that way? Well the Qur'an does that. It is telling: If you really think you know where this came from then starts looking for mistakes because you wont find any. Another interesting thing the Qur'an does is that it quotes all its critics. There has never - in hundreds of years - ever been some suggestion as to where that book came from but that the Qur'an does not already mention that objection and reply to it. Many times you will find the Ayah saying something like: Do they say such and such and so, say to them such and such and so. In every case there is a reply. More than that the Qur'an claims that the evidence of its origin is in itself, and that if you look at this book you will be convinced.

So the difference in Christianity and Islam comes down to a difference of authority and appeal to authority. The Christian wants to appeal to the Bible and the Muslim wants to appeal to the Qur'an. You can not stop by saying: This is true because my book say it is, and somebody else would say

something else is true because my book says differently, you can not stop at that point, and the Qur'an does not. The Christians may point to some words that it is recorded Jesus said and say this proves my point. But the Muslim does not simply open his book and say: No, no the Qur'an says this, because the Qur'an does not simply deny something the Bible says and say something else instead. The Qur'an takes the form of a rebuttal, it is a guidance as the opening says (Huda lil muttakeen). So that for every suggestion that the Christian may say: My Bible say such and such, the Qur'an will not simply say: No that is not true, it will say: Do they say such and such then ask them such and such. You have for example the Ayah that compares Jesus and Adam. There are those who may say that Jesus must have been God (Son of God) because he had no father. He had a woman who was his mother, but there was no human father. It was God that gave him life, so he must have been God's son. The Qur'an reminds the Christian in one short sentence to remember Adam - who was his father ? - and in fact, who was his mother ? He did not have a father either and in fact he did not have a mother, but what does that make him? So that the likeness of Adam is the likeness of Jesus, they were nothing and then they became something; that they worship God.

So that the Qur'an does not demand belief - the Qur'an invites belief, and here is the fundamental difference. It is not simply delivered as: Here is what you are to believe, but throughout the Qur'an the statements are always: Have you O man thought of such and such, have you considered so and so. It is always an invitation for you to look at the evidence; now what do you believe ?

The citation of the Bible very often takes the form of what is called in Argumentation: Special Pleading. Special Pleading is when implications are not consistent. When you take something and you say: Well that must mean this, but you don't use the same argument to apply it to something else. To give an example, I have seen it in publications many times, stating that Jesus must have been God because he worked miracles. In other hand we know very well that there is no miracle ever worked by Jesus that is not also recorded in the Old Testament as worked by one of the prophets. You had amongst others, Elijah, who is reported to have cured the leper, raise the dead boy to life and to have multiplied bread for the people to eat - three of the most favourite miracles cited by Jesus. If the miracles worked by Jesus proved he was God, why don't they prove Elijah was God ? This is Special Pleading, if you see what I mean. The implications are not

consistent. If this implies that then in that case it must also imply the same thing. We have those who would say Jesus was God because he was taken up in the heaven. But the Bible also says the a certain Einah did not die he was taken up into the heaven by God. Whether it is true or not, who knows, but the point is if Jesus being taken up proves he is God, why does not it prove Einah was God? The same thing happened to him.

I wrote to a man one time, who wrote a book about Christianity and I had some of the objections I mentioned to you now. And his reply to me was that I am making matters difficult to myself, that there are portions in the Bible that are crystal clear and that there are portions that are difficult, and that my problem was that I am looking at the difficult part instead of the clear parts. The problem is that this is an exercise in self deception - why are some parts clear and some parts difficult? It is because somebody decided what this clearly means, now that makes this very difficult. To give you an example, John Chapter 14 a certain man said to Jesus: Show us God, and Jesus said: If you have seen me you have seen God. Now without reading on the Christian will say: See Jesus claimed to be God, he said if you have seen me you have seen God. If that is crystal clear then you have a difficult portion

when you go back just a few pages to Chapter 5 when another man came to Jesus and said show us God and he said you have never seen God you have never heard his voice. Now what did he mean there if on the other occasion he meant that he was God? Obviously you have made matters difficult by deciding what the first one meant. If you read on in Chapter 14 you will see what he went on to say. He was saying the closest you are going to seeing God are the works you see me doing.

It is a fact that the words "son of God" are not found on the lips of Jesus anywhere in the first three Gospel accounts, he was always calling himself the Son of Man. And it is a curious form of reasoning that I have seen so often that it is established from Bible that he claimed to be God because - look how the Jews reacted. They will say for example he said such and such and the Jews said he is blaspheming, he claimed to be God and they tried to stone him. So they argue that he must have been claiming to be God because look ! - the Jews tried to kill him. They said that's what he was claiming. But the interesting thing is that all the evidence is then built on the fact that a person is saying: I believed that Jesus was the son of God because the Jews who killed him said that's what he used to say ! His enemies used to say that, so he must

have said it, this is what it amounts to. In other hand we have the words of Jesus saying he would keep the law, the law of Moses and we have the statement in the Bible, why did the Jews kill him ? Because he broke the law of Moses. Obviously the Jews misunderstood him, if he promised he would keep the law, but they killed him because he broke the law, they must have misunderstood him, or lied about him.

When I talk about the Bible and quote various verses here and there I am often accused of putting things out of context, to say you have lifted something out of what it was talking about and given it a meaning. I don't want to respond to the accusation as such, but it doesn't seem to occur to many people that perhaps those who wrote portions of the Bible in the first place were guilty of the same thing. Maybe they – some of those writers - believed a certain thing and in order to prove it quoted from their scriptures – the Old Testament, the Hebrew writings - quoted out of context to prove their point. There are examples of that kind of thing. In Matthew 2 it said that a king wanted to kill the young child Jesus so he with his family went to Egypt, and they stayed there until that king died, and then they came back. When the writer of Matthew, whoever he was, because the name Matthew wont be found in the book of Matthew; when he described this event saying

that he came back out of Egypt, he said: " This was to fulfil a prophecy which is written" and then he quotes Hosea Chapter 11 "Out of Egypt I called my Son". So he said because Jesus went to Egypt and then came back out of Egypt and we have this passage in the Hebrew scriptures "out of Egypt I called my son" Jesus must have been the son of God. If you look and see what he was quoting, Hosea 11:1 he quotes the second half of a complete sentence, the complete sentence reads: "When Israel was young I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son". Israel the nation was considered as the son of God. Moses was told to go to Pharaoh and say to him: If you touch that nation of people, you touch my son; warning him, warning Pharaoh: don't touch that nation, calling the nation "the son of God". So that this is the only thing talked about in Hosea 11:1. "Out of Egypt I called my son" can only refer to the nation of Israel. I mentioned this point some months ago here in another talk, to which a young lady with us objected that Israel is a symbolic name for Jesus. You will have a hard time finding that anywhere in the Bible because it isn't there. You can take an index of the Bible and lookup the word "Israel" everywhere the word occurs and you will find no where in any place that you can connect the word Israel with Jesus. But never mind - suppose it is true, read on, the second verse

says "and after that he kept on worshipping Bal", because this is what the Israelites were guilty of, very often they kept falling back into Idol worshipping. So if that "Israel" really meant Jesus and it means that Jesus is the son of God that came out of Egypt they must also mean that Jesus from time to time used to bow down to that idol Bal. You have to be consistent, and follow through on what it says. So the point is whoever wrote Matthew and Chapter 2 was trying to prove a point by quoting something out of context, and he undid himself, because if you follow through on it, it can not be so.

Now I can come back to the claim the Qur'an makes that it has internal evidence of its origin. There are many many ways that you can look at this. As one example, if I single out somebody here and say: *You know, I know your father* - he is going to doubt that, he has never seen me with his father. He would say, how does he look like, is he tall short does he wear glasses? and so on, and if I give him the right answers pretty soon he will get convinced, "Oh yes, you did meet him". If you apply the same kind of thinking when you look at the Qur'an, here is a book that says it came from the one who was there when the universe began. So you should be asking that one: So tell me something that proves it. Tell me something that

shows me you must have been there when the universe was beginning. You will find in two different Ayahs the statement that all the creation began from a single point, and from this point it is expanding. In 1978 they gave the Noble prize to two people who proved that that is the case. It is the big bang origin of the universe. It was determined by the large radio receivers that they have for the telephone companies which were sensitive enough to pick up the transmissions from satellites and it kept finding background noise that they could not account for. Until the only explanation came to be, it is the left over energy from that original explosion which fits in exactly as would be predicted by the mathematical calculation of what would be this thing if the universe began from a single point and exploded outwards. So they confirmed that, but in 1978. Centuries before that here is the Qur'an saying the heavens and the earth in the beginning they were one piece and split and says in another Ayah : "of the heavens we are expanding it".

Let me tell you about a personal investigation, it occurred to me that there are a number of things you can find in the Qur'an that give evidence to its origin – internal evidence. If the Qur'an is dictated from a perfect individual; it originates with God, then there should not be any wasted space,

it should be very meaningful. There should be nothing that we don't need that you can cut off, and it should not be missing anything. And so that everything in there should really be there for a specific purpose. And I got to thinking about the Ayah which I mentioned before, it says, the likeness of Jesus is the likeness of Adam. It is an equation, it uses the Arabic word (mithel), it says Jesus, Adam, equal. You go to the index of the Qur'an, you look up the name ISA it is in the Qur'an 25 times, you look up the name Adam it is there 25 times. They are equal, through scattered references but 25 of each. Follow that through and you will find that in the Qur'an there are 8 places where an Ayah says something is like something else, using this (*Mithel*), you will find in every case and take both sides of it whatever that word is look it up in the index and it will be let's say 110 times and look up the other word and it will be said to be equal to the same 110. That is quite a project of co-ordination if you try to write a book that way yourself. So that everywhere you happened to mention that such and such is like such and such that then you check your index, filing system, or your IBM punch cards or whatever, to make sure that in this whole book you mentioned them both the same number of times. But that's what you will find in the Qur'an.

What I am talking about is built on a thing that is called Logic: Use

and Mention of a Word. When you use a word, you are using its meaning. When you mention a word, you are talking about the symbol without the meaning. For example, if I say *Toronto is a big city* - I used the word Toronto as I meant this place Toronto is a big city. But if I say to you *Toronto has 7 letters*, I am not talking about this place Toronto, I am talking about this word - Toronto. So, the revelation is above reasoning, but it is not above reason. That is to say we are more up not to find in the Qur'an something that is unreasonable, but we may find something that we would have never figured out for ourselves.

The author of this sentence said if this book came from someone besides God then you will find in it many *Ikhtalafan* (inconsistencies). The word *Ikhtilaf* is found many times in the Qur'an. But the word *Ikhtalafan* is only found once in the Qur'an. So there are not many *Ikhtilafan* in the Qur'an, there is only one - where the sentence is mentioned. So you see how things are put together perfectly. It has been suggested to mankind: Find a mistake. Man could not get hold of a mistake, and he is very clever, because this sentence could also mean: Find many *Ikhtilafan* and so he quickly goes to the index to see if he can find many of them and there is only one... Sorry clever person ! ■

(Dr. Gary Miller (Abdul-Ahad Omar) - a former missionary, who has embraced Islam)

Piety

-Mohammad Manzoor Nomani

Piety forms part of the basic essentials of Quranic guidance. After belief in God, the Prophets and the Hereafter, the most important duty in Islam is that one should fear God and observe piety. The Quran has described it as an indispensable condition to man's deliverance and salvation.

Piety means that while believing in the Great Requit of the Last Day and fearing the anger and displeasure of God, one should conduct oneself in a responsible and conscientious manner in all the walks of life.

It is related that once Caliph Omar enquired from an eminent Companion of the holy Prophet, Ubai-bin-Ka'ab, who was known for his understanding of the Quran, what piety was. The noted Companion replied, "Have you ever chanced to walk on a thorny path?" "Of course", remarked the Caliph. "Quite a number of times". "What did you do then?" asked Ubai-bin-Ka'ab. Hazrat Omar said, "I bore myself with due care, held my clothes tightly and did all I could to pass through it safely". "This is just what piety means," observed the venerable Companion.

It is not easy to improve on the

above definition of piety. Some of the Quranic verses in which people are called upon to cultivate it read as follows:

O ye who believe! Fear God as He should be feared, and (observe your duty to Him throughout, your life till) death comes to you in a state of Islam, (III:102),

God who is the Creator and the Cherisher of the world and to whom belongs the entire pattern of life and death and Whose Anger and Punishment also are as unbounded as His Mercy and Benevolence-the believers ought to fear Him as such a master should be feared by his slaves, and remain loyal to Him till the end of their lives.

So fear God as you can, and listen and obey (His commands with your heart and soul). (-LXIV:16)

O ye who believe! Fear God, and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent for the morrow (the Hereafter). Yes. fear God! Lo! God is well acquainted with all that ye do. (-LIX:18)

O ye who believe! Fear God, and seek the way of approach unto Him, and strive in His way in order that ye may succeed. (-V:35)

In all of these verses emphasis

is not merely laid in a general way on the observance of piety but its implications are also brought out candidly for the benefit of those who believe. In the first verse, the believers are told to remain faithful to God till the end of their time; in the second the commandment, "Listen and obey" signifies the same thing; in the third, they are enjoined to keep a close watch on their conduct and prepare earnestly for the life to come; in the fourth, the exhortation is given that the path of nearness unto God should be pursued unflinchingly; and, finally, the assurance of "success" is held out to men of piety which includes both the worlds.

In hundreds of other verses the nature and significance of the good fortune that is going to crown the strivings in this world, as well as the next, of those who believe, and, also, practise piety has been explained, in detail, in the Quran.

For those who fear God and keep from evil, with their Lord, are Gardens underneath which rivers flow, and pure companions, and good pleasure of Allah. Allah keeps a close watch on His bondmen. (He knows well who is pious and who is not). (-III:15)

In addition to a place in Paradise, the very special tidings of the "Good pleasure of Allah" are, also, contained in the above-mentioned verse for the believers who lead a life

of piety and uprightness, which is a far more enthralling prospect that all the blessings one can think of in the present as well as the future existence.

Pleasant, indeed, will be the home of those who ward off evil-Gardens of Eternity which they enter, underneath which rivers flow, wherein they have what they will. Thus Allah repayeth those who ward off evil. (-XVI:30-31)

Lo! the righteous will dwell among gardens and rivers (in the Hereafter), firmly established in the favour of a Mighty Sovereign. (-LIV:54-55)

How enviable, indeed, is the lot of the servants of the Lord who, together with all the celestial luxuriousness of the Gardens of Eternity, will, also, be rewarded with a place of exceptional nearness to Him.

In the verses we have discussed so far, the believers who fear God and observe their duty to Him are given the joyful tidings only of the favours they will be requited with in the Hereafter. But there are other verses which tell that there is a special favour of God on them in the existing world also, as for example:

O ye who believe! If ye keep your duty to Allah, He will give you discrimination (between right and wrong) and will rid you of your evil thoughts and deeds, and will forgive you. Allah is of Infinite Bounty. (-VIII:29)

The word, *Furqan*, in the above

verse, Which literally means the *Criterion*, commands a wide range of significance. The English translators of the Quran have generally, used phrases like, 'power of discrimination', and. 'quality of distinction', to explain its meaning. The instinctive perception of good and evil and the ability to draw a line between what is allowed and what is not as well as the extra-ordinary grace and dignity which characterises the personality of the devout servants of the Lord and evokes love and reverence for them in the hearts of others, and the very special help of God which enables them to be miraculously successful in their endeavours-all these are covered by it. The Lord Creator has promised these matchless rewards to His virtuous slaves in this life in addition to forgiveness in the Hereafter.

And, in *Sura-t-A'araf*, it is set forth:

And if the people of the, townships had believed and kept from evil, surely, We would have opened for them blessings from the sky and from the earth. (VII:96)

It is the practice of God that if the people of a place or country take to a life of faith and righteousness. He opens for them the doors of the blessings of the heavens and the earth. The blessings that are related to the heavens pour down upon them from the heavens while the blessing that are related to the earth spring forth for them from the earth.

And for those who fear God, He (ever) prepares a way out (from difficulties and hardships), and He provides for him from sources he could never imagine. (-LXV: 2-3)?

The Quran, again, reveals that those who lead a life of faith and righteousness become the "Friends of God", and then, there is neither fear for them nor shall they grieve.

Behold! Verily, on the friends of God there is no fear nor shall they grieve, those who believe, and (constantly) guard against evil,-for them are Glad Tidings, in the life of the Present and the Hereafter. (-X:62-64)

To be a "Friend of God" is, by all means, a very great honour, but even a greater honour is that God Himself has declared that He is their Friend.

Allah is the Friend of those who ward off evil. (XLV:19)

Lo! Allah is with those (and their Friend) who keep their duty unto Him and those who are doers of good. (-VI:128)

What greater glory can there be for anyone than that God Himself may declare that He is his Friend and constant Companion?

PIETY IS THE ESSENCE OF VIRTUE

The Quran maintains that piety is the essence of virtue and the measuring yard of all goodness.

But the righteous man is he who fears God and wardeth off evil. (-II:189)

Hence, when the ceremony of the slaughter of animals (at the time of the Haj pilgrimage) is prescribed in the Quran, it is made abundantly clear that it is not the flesh and blood of the slaughtered animals that matters but the spirit of sincerity and devotion (i. e., piety) behind the act. The flesh and blood of the animals does not reach God; only the earnestness with which the ritual is performed reaches Him, and it is all that counts.

The flesh and the blood (of the animals you sacrifice) does not reach God, but the devotion from you reacheth Him. (-XXII:37)

We are assured that God accepts only the deeds that are performed by men of piety and in a spirit of piety, that is, they are motivated solely by the desire to earn His good pleasure and an earnest solicitude for the Hereafter.

Allah accepteth only from those who observe piety and ward off evil,(-V:27)

The Quran makes use of both the persuasive and the dissuasive methods while giving the call of piety. It encourages men to cultivate the fear of God by holding forth, at one place, happy assurances of Divine benevolence, forgiveness and Paradise, and, at the other, by dilating, at proper length, upon the fearful

happenings of the Last Day and the Great Requit. To refer, first, to a few verses belonging to the latter category:

O mankind! Fear your Lord! for the convulsion of the Hour will be a fearful thing! the Day ye shall see it: every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling-babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load unformed! thou shall see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk! But dreadful shall be the wrath of God. (-XXII:1-2)

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

In both of these verses the frightful events of the Day of Final Reckoning have been narrated so clearly and forcefully that if we still remain unaffected by them and these Quranic revelations fail to inspire in us a genuine fear of God and an earnest anxiety for the Hereafter, our hearts must, surely be dead. In a number of other verses, attention is drawn, with the same object, to the immensity and boundlessness of the Power and Authority of God, and of His Anger and Punishment.

Fear God and observe your duty to Him; and know that God is severe in Punishment. (-II:196)

Keep your duty to Allah! Allah is severe in Punishment. (-V:2)

Observe your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is swift to take account. (-V:4)

Keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah knoweth what is hidden in the breasts (of men). (-V:8)

Observe your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is informed of all that ye do. (-V:8)

Furthermore, we are told that all men shall one day be gathered before God who is Aware of all things. Such being the case, we should not be heedless of keeping our duty to Him so that we may not be in the loss when the fateful Hour strikes.

Be careful of your duty to Allah, and know that unto Him ye will be gathered. (-II:203)

Fear Allah, and know that ye will (one day) meet Him. (-II:223)

Next, we will take up the verses in which the happy tidings of Divine Munificence and Forgiveness of heavenly bliss of the Gardens of Eternity are given to those who fear God and practise piety, and, through them, people are aroused to observe their duty to God and keep away from evil.

If ye do good and keep from evil; Lo! Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful. (-V:129)

And keep your duty to Allah; Lo! Allah is Relenting. Merciful. (-XLIX:12)

Observe your duty to Allah that haply ye may obtain mercy. (-XLIX:10)

Along with Mercy and Forgiveness, the love of God is also promised to those who observe virtue and uprightness.

Nay, but the chosen of Allah is he who fulfilleth his pledge and wardeth of evil; for, lo! Allah loveth those who ward off evil. (-III:76)

Verily! Allah loveth those who keep their duty unto Him. (-IX:4)

The Divine Munificence spoken of in the above verses will reveal itself in the Hereafter which is the world of Requital, but a part of it can be experienced in this life too. We have already seen a few verses appertaining to it. Here is one more.

But if ye persevere and keep from evil their guile (and evil dosigns) will never harm you (for Allah is your Protecting Friend). Surely, Allah is surrounding what they do. (-III:120)

For such men who are patient and persevering and abstain from what is prohibited the assurance of the Quran is that God will be their helper against their enemies and keep them safe from their intrigues.

Moreover, when the devout servants of the Lord die, their souls are at peace and the angels that come to cause death first salute them and convey to them the tidings of the eternal Abode of Paradise.

Thus Allah repayeth those who ward off evil. When the angels come to them to cause death, they say: Peace be unto you! Enter the Gardens of Eternity because of the good deeds you used to do. (-XVI:31-32)

Men of piety will be received with great honour and ceremony at the gates of Heaven. The warders of the Celestial Gardens will greet them with open arms and ask them to enter and make in them their eternal home.

And those who keep their duty to their Lord are driven unto the Gardens in troops till, when they reach it, and the gates thereof are opened and the warders thereof say unto them: Peace be unto you! You are good, so enter ye (the Garden of Delight) to dwell therein. (-XXXIX:73)

Amidst this celestial pomp and ceremony, the pious and the virtuous will inherit the Kingdom of God, and, as they will step into it, their hearts will be overflowing with gratitude and they will exclaim:

Praise be to Allah, Who hath fulfilled His promise unto us and hath made us inherit the land, sojourning in the Garden where we will. (-XXXIX: 74)

All said and done, no one in this world can know exactly what wonderful boons and pleasures are going to be conferred on those, in the future existence, who fear God and observe their duty to Him. Nevertheless, the

verses we have reproduced above are quite sufficient to impart a rough idea of them and to inspire in us a sincere desire to lead a life of unalloyed devotion and loyalty to God. Let us refresh our faith with yet another verse of a similar import.

And, lo, who ward off evil is a happy journey's end, Gardens of Eden whereof the gates are opened for them, wherein reclining they call for plenteous fruit and cool drink that is therein. That it is what ye are promised for the Day of Reckoning. Verily, this is Our provision, which will never waste away. (-XXXVIII:50-55)

The Quran goes on to make another important observation. It says that piety is the sole criterion of honour and superiority with God. A man, in the estimation of Allah, is as good and noble as he is advanced in piety, and as base and worthless as he is wanting in it.

Verily, the most honoured in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous of you. (-XLIX:13)

The reason is not far to seek, for piety is the quality which holds back a man sinful and prohibited acts in the shunning of which lies the good pleasure of God, and promotes in him the moral and spiritual virtues with which His loving kindness is associated. ■

Mercy - A Boon

-Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Today in spite of tantalizing achievements and contributions of science and technology the entire world is in a state of turmoil.

Needless to say that we have broken all norms of tolerance, peace and tranquility, involving in communal violence and inhuman acts. Violation of chastity, corruption and adulteration have entered our blood. Killing each other on trifling things has become our second nature. Fear of God has vanished as if we have moulded ourselves with the hue of the beasts

It is unfortunate that we have forgotten the real worth of man and his dignity. The Holy Qur'an says: "We have honoured the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure: and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our creation". (S.17, A70) That is why the holy Qur'an vehemently prohibits killing human beings. "On that account We ordained for the children of Israel that if anyone slew a person-unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land-it would be as if he slew the whole people: And if anyone saved a life. It would be as if he saved the life of the whole people". (S. 5, A 32)

It goes without saying that the great tyrants like Alexander, Changiz,

Hitler, etc, who massacred people, were ignorant of human values. The present mind boggling situation poses the problem as to how we can curb such heinous activities.

In this context we may recall thought-provoking words of noted Islamic scholar late S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi: "The excellence of man lies in his love and mercy for others: one person is pricked with a thorn but another person feels the pain. Man is gifted with tears which fall from his eyes when he sees a widow's head uncovered in helplessness, a poor man's kitchen unlit, and a sick man in distress. If such a drop of tear is put in a sea of transgression, it will cleanse it. If it falls on a forest of sins, it will turn it and fill the space again with the effulgence of virtue. The angels can bring forward any thing, 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 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 pilled an iron chip toward a magnet.” He further says: “If man loses the ability of sharing other’s sufferings, he will become bankrupt. Even if a nation is blessed with the wealth of America, administration of Russia, and petrol wells of Saudi Arabia, even if wealth showers over its land like rain, it will still be truly pauper if its stream of love is dried. The blessings of Allah will not descend on it. It is a matter of great satisfaction that man’s eyes can still shed tears and that his heart can still suffer with the pain of others. The heart which loses this quality is not a heart; it is just a piece of stone. Such a heart has no value in the sight of Allah, no matter whether it is the heart of a Muslim, or a Hindu, or a Christian. The value of the human heart, in fact, lies in its quality to long, shiver cry, and love. The human heart should be greener than the land, broader than the universe, more affluent than the waterfall, and more bountiful than the heavy clouds ready to stream down. The eye which does not become wet is not a human eye; it is the eye of a daffodil. The heart which does not feel pain of others is not a human heart; is the heart of a lion. The forehead which does not become wet with the perspiration of penitence is not a human forehead; it is a piece of rock. The hand which does not move forward to serve humanity is virtually paralysed and lifeless. The claw of a lion is better than that hand of a person which cuts the throat of another human being. Had the Creator wish man to live to kill. He

would have created man with swords in place of hands. If the aim of man’s creation were to store wealth’ he would have been born with an iron safe in place of a throbbing heart. If man had been created to plan destruction he were born with a devil’s mind instead of man’s”. (Islam-An Introduction, p. : 152-153

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

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

To sum up the argument it will be apt to quote the prophet “God shows His mercy on those who show mercy to others.” Maulana Hali has beautifully and ably composed the above tradition of the Prophet in this couplet.

“karo Mehrabani tum Ahle Zami par
Khuda mehraban hoga Arshe-Barin
par”

(Be kind to man on earth God will be kind to you on the Empyrean) ■

History of Eid-ul-Fitr

-Mohammad Zakir Hossain

Celebrated at the end of the most sacred Islamic month Ramadan, Eid-ul-Fitr is a three-day long festival that is enthusiastically celebrated by all the Muslims of the world. But how did this exciting festival originate?

According to the Islamic tradition, it was in the year CE610 that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), while meditating in Mount Hira one night during the month of Ramadan had a vision of the Angel Jibril (or, Ga-briel) appearing before him, and declaring that Muhammad was the messenger of God. Jibril said to him: "*Iqraa*" (meaning "read" or "recite") .

To this Muhammad replied that he could not read. Jibril embraced him and after releasing him repeated: '*Iqraa*'. "I cannot read." Muhammad (peace be upon him) answered again. *Jibril hugged him for a third time and asked him to recite what he said. He told him: "Recite in the name of your Lord Who creates. Creates man from a clot. Recite: And your Lord is the Most Bountiful Who teaches by the pen, He teaches man what he does not know."*

Though the angel informed him that he was the messenger of Allah

and was going to be a Prophet for his people, Muhammad (peace be upon him) was greatly disturbed at this bizarre incident. It is believed that he at first considered the angel as an evil spirit. It was his wife Khadijah who allayed his fears reminding him of his good conduct until then and that it was impossible for him to be visited by a demon.

Even her much learned old cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal convinced him that he was indeed a messenger of God and the angel who visited Muhammad was the one who had also visited the Hebrew prophet Moses. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was of forty years of age at this time.

In the next 23 years, Muhammad (peace be upon him) was visited many times by Jibril who taught him the holy knowledge in verses. This sacred knowledge consists of the code of conduct that Allah wants his people to maintain on earth. It is inscribed in verses which are compiled in the holy Qur'an, the most sacred book in Islam.

It is said that the sacred knowledge was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) during the month of Ramadan. As a mark of respect to Allah and to show

gratitude to him for the true knowledge that he gifted to his sons and daughters, the Prophet asked his followers (and therefore the followers of Islam) to pass the month of Ramadan in fasting, prayers and other austerities and end the month-long non-indulgence with festive celebrations.

This is how Eid-ul-Fitr was born. This three-day long celebration ends the ninth month, and marks the beginning of the month of Shawwal with absolute happiness and contentment for the ability to sacrifice for Allah. The aim of this festival is to promote peace, strengthen the feeling of brother-hood and bring oneself back to the normal course of life after a month-long period of self-denial and religious devotion.

The revelation of the Qur'an in this month was a great success in that amidst the surrounding darkness of the *Jahiliyah* period, this Book brought the light of ethical behavior, kindness and end of cruelty of burying female children alive. It erased the blot of tribalism and replaced it with the unity of a single ummah. Bani Israel squandered the blessing of the prophets from Ishak's progeny and the Almighty in His infinite wisdom turned over prophethood to the progeny of Ismail and the scene shifted from Mount Sinai to Mount Abu Qubeis, and Syrian greenery was abandoned in

favor of the arid Hijaz for the new mission.

Sunnah of Eid

Wake up early

- * Prepare for personal cleanliness, take care of details of clothing, etc.
- * Take a *Ghusl* (bath) after Fajr.
- * Brush your teeth.
- * Dress up putting on best clothes available, whether new or cleaned old ones.
- * Use perfume (men only).
- * Have breakfast on Eid-al-Fitr before leaving for prayer ground. On Eid-al-Adha, eat breakfast after *Salaat* or after sacrifice if you are doing a sacrifice.
- * Pay Zakaat-al-Fitr before *Salaat-al-Eid* (on Eid-al-Fitr).
- * Go to prayer ground early.
- * Offer *Salaat-al-Eid* in congregation in an open place except when whether is not permitting like rain, snow, etc.
- * Use two separate routes to and from the prayer ground.
- * Recite the following Takbir on the way to *Salaat* and until the beginning of *Salaat-al-Eid*: Allaho-Akber, Allaho-Akber. La ila-ha ill-lal-lah. Allaho-Ak-ber. Allaho-Akber. Wa-lillahill hamd. (Allah is great. Allah is great. There is no god but Allah. Allah is great. Allah is great. And all praises are for Allah).

How to offer Eid prayer

Ibn Abbass reported: "I participated in the Eid-ul-Fitr prayer with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. and all of them said the Eid prayer. and then the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) delivered the sermon." (Muslim)

On how Eid to be celebrated. Ali, advised to give fitra of the individuals and their dependants. Ali of the obligations they have towards Allah (Ibadaat). Then he admonished them to refrain from making allegations, to shun evil deeds, to abandon drinking, to stop shortchanging to eschew false testimony and to stop running away from the battlefield.

Ali pithily outlined those strengths of obedience to Allah that enhance the great civilization of Al-Islam and those weaknesses that destroy individual and collective dignity.

"Remember Allah and He will remember you", said Ali and explained that one adhering to the commandments of Allah is protected by Him.

He defined Eid as any day that is free of rebellion against Allah. He is quoted saying "Eid is for those whose fasts have been accepted and whose *salaat* are worthy of reckoning and

every day when one does not commit a sin it is 'eid". Eid al-Fitr, therefore, is the day of success attained in the month of Ramadan: fasting, revelation of the Qur'an and *Laylatul Qadr* etc. being some of those successes.

Who should go to the prayer ground & offer Eid Prayer

Umm Atiyah reported: "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) commanded us to bring out on Eid-al-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha, young women, hijab-observing adult women and the menstruating women. The menstruating women stayed out of actual Salaat but participated in good deeds and dua (supplication), I said to the holy Prophet: Oh! Messenger of Allah, one does not have an outer garment. He replied: Let her sister cover her with her garment." (Muslim)

On the Eid day, every believing man, woman and child must go to the prayer ground and participate in this joyous occasion.

Structure of Eid prayer

Eid prayer is wajib (strongly recommended. just short of obligatory). It consists of two rakaat (units) with six or 13 additional *takbirs*, It must be offered in congregation. The prayer is followed by the sermon,

The sermon is part of the worship and listening to it is Sunnah. During the sermon, the Imam must remind the community about its

responsibilities and obligations towards Allah, fellow Muslims and the fellow human beings. The Imam must encourage the Muslims to do good and ward off evil. The Muslim community must also be directed to the state of the community and the Ummah at large and the feelings of sacrifice should be aroused in the community. At the conclusion of the prayer the Muslims should convey greetings to each other, give reasonable gifts to the youngsters and visit each other at their homes. Muslims should also take this opportunity to invite their non-Muslims neighbors, coworkers, classmates and business acquaintances to Eid festivities to expose them to Islam and Muslim culture.

The message of Eid al-Fitr is that no Muslim remains hungry on this day. It is a day that the rich and the poor enjoy happiness of the day, as the haves give the *fitra* to the have-nots. The *fitra* ensures acceptance of the fast as the fasts remain suspended between the earth and the heavens until *fitra* is executed. The emphasis on *fitra* is so much that a family capable of giving just one person's *fitra* can rotate that self-same *fitra* among every member of that family and fulfill this obligation. Indeed, a poor man receiving charity too should pay *fitra* from the *sadaqaat* he receives. Thus, the rejoicing on the day of Eid is to obey Allah and serve humanity, the twin purport of Islam that the Prophet (peace be upon him) defined. ■

(Continued from page 18)

guarantees for man the triumph in this world as well as in the Hereafter, too.

Allah Almighty has apprised man of the details of this knowledge through His Book, the holy Quran, and then through other Revelations unto His Prophet. Once he is apprised of it, man stands duty-bound to believe in it and comply with it. Its enforcement up to the Doomsday has now conclusively been settled by Allah Almighty. On its denunciation and non-compliance with it, man is held liable to severe punishment from Allah Almighty, his Creator and Master. Hence, under such a circumstance, it is conclusively held

imperative to get conversant, up to the extent of the actual need, at least, with the knowledge conveyed by the Prophet (SAW). It is this very commandment which is accorded the sobriquet of *Shariah*. It has been a regular practice to make the inhabitants of this earth conversant with such sort of knowledge through the Prophets. Only that the spheres of the former Prophets and Apostles used to be, however, regional, and the tenure of a Prophet lasted only up to the arrival of the other one. But, this last Prophet was designated for the entire specified duration of the world and as the conveyor of the all-inclusive knowledge. ■

(Continued from page 16)

the Pakistan demand. He undertook extensive tours of the country, preaching the gospel of unity from town to town and village to village. Morally and religiously, his conduct remained absolutely stainless and above suspicion throughout that period of trial and crisis, and friend and foe are unanimous in their praise of his integrity and sincerity. After the independence, too, when unlimited opportunities had opened up for personal gain, he sought no favours for himself, so much so that he politely declined to accept the title of Padma Vibhushan, which was conferred upon him by the President of India in 1954, saying that it was against the traditions of his precursors to receive honours from the Government. It is tragically true that the high hopes he had entertained from freedom remained largely unfulfilled and he felt frustrated and heart-broken, but during the struggle he remained firm like a rock, and even after the independence had been won there occurred no change in his political views and convictions.

Another leader of the Jami'at-ul-Ulema whose services cannot be overlooked in the course of the present narrative is its General Secretary, Maulana Hifzur Rahman. The courage, resoluteness and enthusiasm with which he strove for the freedom of the motherland before 1947, and has since then been displaying in the safeguarding of the rights and interests of Muslims will not easily be matched by other contemporary Muslim leaders. His heroic services during the post-independence communal riots will always be remembered with gratitude and admiration. He has never hesitated to expose the bitter truth in connection with these outbreaks, in the Parliament and elsewhere, and in criticising the local administration where it was found to have conducted itself unjustly towards the Muslims during a communal disturbance.

Maulana Azad

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had the distinction of serving as the President of Congress for the largest number of years and at the most critical junctures of the nation's history. Two important British official missions—the Cripps' Mission and the Cabinet Mission—visited India during his ultimate term of office to negotiate with the Indian leaders. The Maulana, as the President of the Congress, took an active part in the negotiations. The delegates, including Sir Stafford Cripps, were deeply impressed by his keen political foresight and acumen.

It was during the Maulana's Presidentship of the Congress that India attained freedom. His memoirs, published shortly after his death, show that his was the role of a luminous mind in the machinery of the Congress. He commanded universal respect for his sagacity and political insight. His contribution to the cause of freedom has been as profound as that of anyone anywhere. ■

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