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Islamic Morality

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Among the moral attributes which have particularly influenced the Islamic culture are hospitality, liberality and open-handedness. These qualities, again, are a heritage from Hazrat Ibrahim about whose generous reception of guests there has occurred the following verse in the Quran :

Has the story reached these of the honoured guest of Abraham ? (LI : 24)

Pilgrims and foreign chroniclers who had the occasion to 'live, for any length of time, among communities, tracing their descent 'from him either racially or spiritually, have recorded most pleasant memories of their stay in this respect. They have invariably been impressed by their warm hospitality and friendly feeling towards guests and strangers. One can still notice in the countries of the Middle East, which have not yet been swept off their feet by the mounting tide of Western Civilization, glimpses of the hospitality that had enabled globetrotters-like Ibn-e-Batuta and Ibn-e-Jubair to enjoy the comfort and warmth of home during travel. The Indian Muslims in spite of their being placed so far away from the natural seat of Islamic Civilisation and the fact that Islam had reached their, country long after it had passed the peak of its glory, also are conspicuous for their cordial treatment of the guests. Hospitality is a part of the tradition of Muslim homes, and although modern economic conditions have put a 'curb on it, Muslims still feel happy on the arrival of a guest and consider it a source of good fortune and an Islamic virtue to entertain him open-heartedly. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

1. Freedom from (all) obligations (is declared) from Allah and His Messenger () to those of the Mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah), with whom you made a treaty.
2. So travel freely (O Mushrikun - see V.2:105) for four months (as you will) throughout the land, but know that you cannot escape (from the Punishment of) Allah, and Allah will disgrace the disbelievers.
3. And a declaration from Allah and His Messenger to mankind on the greatest day (the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah - the 12th month of Islamic calendar) that Allah is free from (all) obligations to the Mushrikun (see V.2:105) and so is His Messenger. So if you (Mushrikun) repent, it is better for you, but if you turn away, then know that you cannot escape (from the Punishment of) Allah, And give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful torment to those who disbelieve.
4. Except those of the Mushrikun with whom you have a treaty, and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor have supported anyone against you. So fulfill their treaty to them to the end of their term. Surely Allah loves Al-Muttaqun (the pious - see V.2:2).
5. Then when the Sacred Months (the 1st, 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islamic calendar) have passed, then kill the Mushrikun (see V.2: 105) wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and prepare for them each and every ambush. But if they repent and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and give Zakat, then leave their way free. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
6. And if anyone of the Mushrikun (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allah (the Qur'an), and then escort him to where he can be secure, that is because they are men who know not. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Umar ibn Al-Khattab reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Verily, deeds are only with intentions. Verily, every person will have only what they intended. So whoever emigrated to Allah and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever emigrated to get something in the world or to marry a woman, then his emigration is for whatever he emigrated for.

Abdullah ibn Masud reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Verily, the creation of each one of you is brought together in his mother's womb for forty days as a drop, then he is a clot for a similar period, then a morsel for a similar period, then there is sent to him the angel who blows the spirit into him and he is commanded regarding four matters: to write down his provision, his life span, his deeds, and whether he is happy or miserable. By Allah other than whom there is no God, one of you acts like the people of Paradise until he is but an arm's length from it, and what is written overtakes him so he acts like the people of Hellfire and he enters it. Verily, one of you acts like the people of Hellfire until he is but an arm's length from it, and what is written overtakes him so he acts like the people of Paradise and he enters it.

An-Nu'rnan ibn Basheer reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Verily, the lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear, and between the two of them are doubtful matters about which many people do not know. Thus, he who avoids doubtful matters clears himself in regard to his religion and his honor, and he who falls into doubtful matters will fall into the unlawful as the shepherd who pastures near a sanctuary, all but grazing therein. Verily, every king has a sanctum and the sanctum of Allah is his prohibitions. Verily, in the body there is a piece of flesh which if upright then the entire body is upright, and if corrupt then the entire body is corrupt. No doubt it is the heart. ■

COMING OF THE PROPHET

In Islamic calendar month of Rabi-ul-Awal has great significance. The last messenger of God, Prophet Mohammad (PBH) was born on the 12th day of this month in Mecca (Saudi Arabia).

The birth of Prophet Mohammad (PBH) was a prelude to great ideological revolution ahead. The coming of a baby was a matter of great joy in the family of Quraish, a prominent tribe of the society. In his boyhood days and thereafter Prophet Mohammad proved himself an honest, truth-speaking and trustworthy person. He was called 'Amin' (faithful) and people around loved him and held him in high esteem and regard.

An awful situation prevailed in that part of the world. There was no rule of law. Society indulged in hateful practices. Newly born female babies were buried alive. Different tribes fought with each other to gain supremacy. Murder and other heinous crimes were the order of the day. People worshiped self carved stone idols. Prophet Mohammad lost his father almost at his birth. His mother too passed away very early. His grand father who was almost of 100 years old brought him up under his supervision. Since he was the son of his youngest son, Abdullah, he loved him immensely.

Mohammad (PBH) as he grew up accompanied his uncle on trading journeys. This helped the lad to see the world around, the miseries, corruption, mistrust, rivalries among tribes pained him a lot.

There was no system of education in that dessert land so Prophet could not get any formal education. He could not read or write. But he was mentally alert and possessed high sense of intellect from the early age, he had been remarked as a thoughtful man. At the age of forty he went to a cave on a hill called 'Hira' for meditation. It was the month of Ramazan and he was deep in his thought when an angel came and bestowed him as Prophet of God. Angel asked him to say "Al-Iqra". From here starts the revelation of verses of the holy Quran. That by the unspeakably special favour of Heaven he had now found it all out; was in doubt and darkness no longer, but saw it all. That all these idols and Formulas were nothing, miserable bits of wood and stone, that there was one God in and over all; and we must leave all idols and look to Him. That God is great and that there is nothing else great. He is the Reality. Idols are not real. He is real. He made us at first, sustains us yet, we and all things are but the shadow of Him, a transitory garment veiling the Eternal splendour. 'Allah-o-Akbar', God is great and then also 'Islam' that we must submit to God. That our whole strength lies in submission to Him. We observe the birthday of the Prophet year after year to infuse the spirit of Islam and aware the young generation about the life and time of Prophet so that they may get the insight of Islam. ■

S.A.

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on:
e-mail: shariq_alavi@yahoo.com
along with a hard copy, duly signed, by post.

Are New Born Babies Thorns or Flowers?

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The advent of every new born child in the world is a message from the Creator that He is not yet disappointed in man and that He wants the world to remain populated. It is evident from the fact that in spite of two devastating wars in which most up-to-date and scientifically developed weapons of destruction were indiscriminately used resulting in unprecedented loss of human life (and property) there has been no appreciable impact on world population. It signifies that the creative function of nature is vastly superior to the senseless destruction often let loose by man. The world is as populous with all its fascination and grandeur as before.

It is an indication of the Divine Will that a bright future is in store for mankind. If the Creator is displeased the skies and the earth and all that lies in between them can be destroyed within a twinkling of an eye.

If any record is available of the persons responsible for inestimable loss of human life and national property in places like Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Aligarh, etc., I would go and enquire how many wild beasts have been killed by these enemies of man. I can say many of them would not have killed a fly. There is thus direct confrontation with the Will

of God. The people of Muradabad are proud of their excellent products. Will not the Creator like it if His noble creation live with mutual love and affection? He created this vast and beautiful universe for the sake of man and sent him as a trustee in this world.

I ask you why silver, Muradabad wares, electronic gadgets and gold fetch such a high price? It is the 'magic' of our look. We looked at this yellow metal with appreciation and it became valuable. If we call an International Convention and resolve that hereafter we will have nothing to do with gold, it will lose much of its charm.

There are many professional men here. They know that the price of an article goes up when there is demand for it. If we decide that we will not buy a certain quality of cloth or any other article, its price will come down. What about certain styles of fashion? When we are told that it is from London or Paris it becomes a craze with fashionable persons. Then after a little time it loses novelty and becomes out of fashion. Man remains supreme and much above everything else in the world. He occupies the centre of its stage.

But we prove by our behaviour that there is nothing more contemptible than man. We are thus not prepared to act in

accordance with the Wish of God. He wants us to live in amity but we create enmity. We are religious-minded people and we believe in certain religious truths. My friends will excuse me if I say that we prove by our deeds that we are at cross-purposes with the Creator.

LOOK AT THE PATIENCE OF GOD :

If you go to any shop and disturb the arrangement of articles in the show-window, the shopkeeper may be a gentleman, but he would not tolerate it. Look at the patience of God. We are working against His Wishes but all His creations, the sun, moon, clouds, water, land etc., which have been created to serve man are performing their assigned functions for aeons. We lose our temper at the slightest incitement though we ought to treat our fellow beings with the same patience with which God is treating us.

WHAT BENEFITS HAS KNOWLEDGE BESTOWED?

We have been crying hoarse about the advancements made in science and technology. But have they really solved all the problems of mankind? What our predecessors used to do at a slow pace and in a crude way, we do it with speed and technical skill. Formerly the weapons of death and destruction were slow-moving now they strike with the speed of lightning. If attacked from outside the people under attack used to prepare for defence.

Science and technology have made the death-dealing weapons today swift and devastating as never before. What happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki? The unfortunate civilians could not do anything to protect themselves. No doubt we have made great strides in science and technology and they have helped us in many ways, but these powerful weapons of mass destruction are like placing a sword in the hands of a drunken person. He will kill a child or injure a neighbour or himself. The power intoxicated persons and nations are doing the same thing with their neighbours and others. Man is thus constantly living under fear of annihilation by his own inventions.

WE HAVE TO TAKE RISKS

Truth, sincerity and simplicity still have their intrinsic values. That is why so many persons belonging to different professions and shades of opinion have come together here. When there is any disturbance at any place all the residents do not get fits of hysteria or get mad. We have no dearth of men of education and culture. Yet they are hesitant to come forward to assert themselves in moment of such crises. The anti-social element always takes full advantage of such situations. We have to take risks and stop these inhuman and anti-national activities because these evils proliferate in the masses eventually taking the shape of mob fury

which once unleashed becomes uncontrollable.

AN EXAMPLE:

Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) has cited an example of a ship in which some people are berthed on the upper deck and some on the lower. The storage of water is on the upper deck. The people from the lower deck come up to fetch water which causes inconvenience to the people there and they are annoyed. The people on the lower deck take ill and decide to bore a hole in the bottom of the ship to get water. If the people in the ship would not stop them, the ship will sink and with it everybody on board.

I am not talking about any particular country at the moment. The human society has come so close during the current century that the entire humanity is practically in a ship.

There is bribery, corruption, hoarding, black marketing, dishonesty, work-shirking almost everywhere. There is constant confrontation between employer and employee. It is the duty of the intellectuals, scholars and patriots to stop all these antinational activities. It does not behove them to shut their eyes. This ostrich-like behaviour will not help the nation and the country.

OUR SOCIETY IS UNSTABLE:

I want to impress upon you that our society today has lost its coherence.

Most of the people are concerned with feathering their own nests at the cost of national interests.

There is a story of a ruler who built a tank and he wanted it to be filled with milk. He made an announcement that the citizens may put a bucket of milk in the tank at night, and collect its cost. The tank was full of water and there was not a drop of milk in the morning. Because everybody thought that if he puts a little water nobody would see and know about it. These days most of us are thinking on these lines. We think it is prudent to grab as much money as possible without any consideration of the means adopted. What will happen to the society if these vile practices of acquisitiveness and malfeasance continue and spread? We can be happy when we help others to be happy. But majority of us want to make themselves happy at the cost of others. This way the society would become decadent one day and as a result living conditions in it would be unbearable.

IS DEATH BETTER THAN LIFE?

If we make an enquiry from among the weaker section of society about their living conditions, it is feared that most of them would say that life has lost much of its meanings for them. The degeneration of our society has reached a stage where law and order are openly flouted by some persons with impunity and the struggle for existence

for law-abiding persons has become more acute.

There is a general complaint that those who are not prepared to compromise their conscience in official work are not popular with their colleagues who are amenable to extraneous approaches and influences.

The present conditions as they are impose a great responsibility on all of us. We have to be vigilant. There should be no place for persons who perpetrate inhuman and anti-national activities nor we can afford to ignore such conduct.

If we are not alert the future historians will condemn us for letting down the country. No people can prosper after committing oppression and persecution. Do you think the English people were to leave our country so easily? Were they ordinary people? They used to boast that sun never sets in British Empire. During the War of Independence they hanged hundreds of freedom fighters in Muradabad. But they had to leave lock, stock and barrel.

Tyranny committed under any circumstances whatsoever must invite its own retribution. No inhuman activities can be carried on indefinitely. Humanity demands that man should show more tolerance towards his fellow-beings.

There have been numerous instances where innocent persons who happened to be at a certain place, by

chance, and were the only bread-winners of their families, became the victims of fanatical fury. Thus they not only lost their lives but left their dependents to face the challenges of life unprotected and unprovided.

These atrocities are not in the interest of the country and do not give it a fair name. I usually go abroad, when questioned about these disturbances, I hang my head in shame. I find no answer except to say that it is out of ignorance. When our people will get the light of true knowledge and imbibe fear of God, all these misdeeds will stop. But I ask you when will that much awaited day come? There have been so many reformers in our country at all times. There was a time when there was love and amity in between different sections of the population. I wish that spirit had endured. The country would be a big power. The British policy of divide and rule succeeded in driving a wedge in between different communities and we did not afterwards witness those scenes of amity and love except for a few glimpses at times. I see a gleam of it today when so many persons pursuing different professions and belonging to different schools of thought have come together in this meeting.

I devoutly wish that this lapse on the part of our countrymen is merely a temporary phase and some day, in not too distant a future, there is bound to be a shift from darkness towards light. ■

Prophet's Mission and Message

-S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

All the Prophets who were raised, right from Hazrat Adam (AS) up to Hazrat Mohammad (SAW), strictly enjoined the renunciation of *Shirk* and adoption of *Tauheed*, because, it is Allah Almighty who is the Creator of the entire universe. It is He who has furnished the universe with all kinds of goods that might be needed. It is He who has made these goods fully usable by, and easily available to, man as a result of which every one draws mamum benefits from them throughout all his or her life and fulfils his/her needs. In fact the life of man itself is sustained by these very goods and their usability and availability. How is it, then, if the man forgets His Magnanimity and, abandoning Him, adopts some odd objects lying hither thither which he fancies can benefit him or pose a threat of causing some harm to him and starts saying: we are helped by so-and-so, our needs are fulfilled by so-and-so and such and such object is inaganimous to us? How is it then that the man attributes the Magnanimity conferred exclusively by his Creator and Master, Allah Almighty, on him to others and asks them for fulfillment of his requirements and, abandoning his real Benefactor who is the greatest of all the benefactors and grants all kinds of beneficence, calls other petty objects his benefactor and master? How will, quite obviously, Allah Almighty, who has created each and everything and bestowed man with each and everything and continues to do so incessantly, allow all that to be perpetrated and be not angry? Hence it is the *Shirk* which Allah Almighty gets extremely displeased with. And that is something absolutely realistic, sensible and just.

That is why all the Prophets and reformers interdicted, first of all and most of all, the *Shirk*. Thereafter and along with it, they kept calling for the removal of the rot, whatever and wherever it could have got generated in the human character and morals. For example, if there was in some populace, along with the *Shirk*, some sexual depravity, as was the case with the people of Lut (AS), or some other kind of malpractices were there in vogue amidst the peoples, their Prophets prohibited them from them. In some populace, along with the *Shirk*, the practice of making pilferage while measuring and weighing was rampant as was the case with the people of Madiyan. Their Prophet prohibited his people from doing that. In some populace, along with the *Shirk*, the hauteur and the habit of harrowing the weaker sections was in vogue as was the case with Fira'aun's folks of Egypt. There Hazrat Musa (AS) was made the Prophet. He tried hard to make Firaun see the reason and put the fright of retribution from Allah in him and forbade him to indulge in *Shirk* and tyranny. In some habitations, a fondness, along with *Shirk*, for persecuting the weak and usurping the rights of others had taken root. The Prophet there prevented them from doing that, too. Likewise, whatever other vices, along with the *Shirk*, were there in the peoples, their respective Prophets restrained them from all these vices, too, along-with giving the call to adopt *Tauheed* (the Faith in Unity and Oneness of Allah) in its unassimilated form: that is to worship Allah Almighty alone who is sole Sustainer of the entire universe and all the creatures therein. ■

* Rector, Nadwatul - Ulama, Lucknow.

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali As A Historian

-Sheikh Abdullah*

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi is essentially a historian. His writings, including those on religion, bear distinct historical roots and reflect an in-depth study of the subject, Islamic history in particular. His thought and philosophy reflect significant influence of the subject; and his writings, tempered with the cold logic of history, are replete with citation of lessons that it holds out in abundance. The scholar and philosopher of Islam that he is, Ali Mian in more places than one introduces himself "as an humble student of history."

May it be the penning of a martyr's biography; or a thesis recounting the rise and expansion of Muslim power; or lamentations on civilizational maladjustments following the waning fortunes of Muslims; or the multi-splendoured achievements of the Musalmans in India; or the obligation to pay literary tribute to the Spiritual Orders, Maulana derives an inherent satisfaction in heaping himself with the debris of history. He delves into it and digs with the alacrity of a research scholar, substituting pen for shovel and spade, until convincing proof is forthcoming to clear the haze on 'views' taken for granted and to report on 'events' of history hitherto ignored by the historians at large.

With the dexterity of a logician he is out to prove that mud and mortar alone do not the edifice make. It is, infact, those who build, those who tend and preserve, those who are beacon-lights and keep guard, those who live and die for it, and now rest beneath the debris are the men of history. This certainly is far from "hero worship" and Maulana stands distinctly apart from the cult of Carlyle, though undoubtedly, he successfully blends the contribution of the

builder, the preserver, the guardian and the Shaheed" with the alternating ebbs and tides of history.

Maulana invariably treats his topics and theses their historical perspective, preparing his readers to assimilate the message with conviction. His writings, relating to Islamic subjects in particular, are made richer through absorbing anecdotes and contextual narrations from world and Islamic history. In analysis, his works history and related studies may broadly be classified as relating to-

- 1- Writing of micro history
- 2- His method of documentation through historical biographies
- 3- His perception of history as revealed from his thought and philosophy.

Micro History And Historical Biographies

He made his debut as a historian through the gateway of biography, remaining well within the ambit of historiographer's classification of scholars researching and contributing to political, historical and religious biographies as historians in their own right. His monograph on:

Syed Ahmed Shaheed made an instant success and received wide acclaim, both within and abroad. Written originally in Arabic, then Urdu the book, as if, through intuition was published at a time (1939) when the intellectual revolution was taking shape among the Muslims of India. Their urge for independence, their struggle for regaining political power, their resolve for sacrifice, their endeavour for restoring a lost heritage, all stood personified in the person of 'the martyr'- the Shaheed.

* Indian Revenue Service (Retd.)

As a piece of objective writing, the book written after a painstaking research added to the literary shelf of Indian history. The biography qualified as an authority on the life and times of Syed Ahmed Shaheed, pioneer and pivot of the resistance against an alien hegemony in 19th century. Well researched and painstaking portrayed, the book was extensively read as a story of a hero falling victim to reactionary odds. The author masters the details with such perfection that it raises the readers' intellect to the level of the Shaheed's own person and mission. Syed's geneology, spiritual attainments, plans and' preparations, places en-route, movements under shadow of death, battles won and battles lost and finally the glory of his martyrdom capture the imagination and become part of the readers' soul. The manner in which the story of Ahmed Shaheed has been told, with real life episodes revealing his fiery zeal, his self-abnegating leadership and finally his supreme sacrifice fired the imagination of the intellectual elite, inspiring leaders and masses alike, to replace their complacency with new resolutions.'

The twin biographies of two saints

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, 'Tazkirah', and that of Maulana Mohammed Zakariya 'Biography of Zakariya', fall in the same category of writing Islamic history through the media of biography, each book proving a valuable source of information for the reader and research scholar alike. The biography of Shah Abdul Quadir Raipuri is Maulana's spiritual as well as a literary tribute to the great divine of the era. A parallel publication, covers the "life story of Maulana Ilyas", pioneer of the 'Tablighi Jamaat' whom he held with high reverence. Ali Mian not only records the copious details of the simple life style of Ilyas, the preacher-saint, but remains the witness to the growth of the movement, from its humble beginnings, into a voluntary mass of roving evangelists, who

steering clear of the temporal track, spread out in all directions carrying the word of Allah.

Al Murtaza

When Ali Mian's monograph~ 'Al Murtaza' was Published in 1988 it was well received, satisfying the aspirations of all groups, especially those who hold Syedna Ali in special veneration. With no ripples caused , literary critics, gasping for their breath, ran skelter for an in-depth exercise in semantics only to be further convinced of the author's ability to interpret events dispassionately and to narrate history spontaneously without fear or favour of the critics' pen.

Chapter by chapter 'Al Murtaza' unfolds events in their relevant context, providing for no clash of views; each word appropriately chosen, each phrase, each sentence a specimen of truthful regard and faithful veneration for personalities, conditions and events that entered into shaping of history. Gradually, but surely, the reader is led into a maize of sensitive events; and satiated he walks out in full admiration of the author as an Islamic historian. It was this venture which elicited Maulana's observation that:

"Authoring of literature apart, writing of history is like treading a path thinner than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword."

Hindustani Musalman — "Muslims In India"

Surveying Muslim presence in India, Ali Mian keeps political aspects separated from social and cultural history which is central to his theme. He surveys the panorama closely, analyses the currents and reviews the output of centuries with a calculated calm, leaving the reader in no doubt about such fair handling of the subject and objective writing emerging thereon, acting as both example and model for contemporaries. In his book "Muslims In India", which is made up of a series of articles, he

portrays the Muslim genius that has gone into the making of Indian history and culture. Their presence at every forum of life throughout the most important period of Indian history drew out the best in them, laying the foundations of a broad-based and composite culture. The contribution of Muslims at all levels of life and society left its multi-dimensional impress on almost all human activity, including state-craft and land management. Their assimilation with fellow citizens set into motion common objectives- at national levels; and aided by healthy influence exercised by the Spiritual Orders, the saints and the sufis, over the minds and beliefs of the multi-thronged, multi-religious masses history gave birth and brought into existence a people proud of a common culture, common customs and manners with Muslim presence as a catalyst base.

Their genius is evident in all fields of human activity such as administration, art, architecture, culture, music, poetry, social customs and manners, food and dress, notwithstanding a spiritual cohesion that followed as a national gift.

The book was published in precise time, 1953, when Muslims in India were in desperate search for such objective writing, as would project the real image with accuracy to help ward off senseless onslaughts on their identity and existence in their very homeland. This work was well received at all levels and especially welcomed by the enlightened opinion makers and academicians.

All India Radio, after serialising the articles topic-wise, broadcast the series on the national network; and soon it was translated into English as "Muslims in India" corresponding to "Hindustani Musalman," written in Urdu.

Beaconlights (Purane Chiragh)

In "Purane Chiragh" the author counts the lamp posts down memory lane, ascertains their identity, recognizes each by name - some dead, others not so dead, each a beacon light in his own right. These - these very ones, Ali Mian asserts - are also men of history; each one of them, for the smallest of the small job accomplished and his mission fulfilled is worthy of finding his rightful place in history. A plaque? A tribute? A cenotaph? No, not enough; certainly not in conformity with the honour done to them by Time. Lest their rightful place be denied by the ignorant chronicler, Maulana hastens to record what he genuinely feels should be preserved and passed on to posterity; the present generation qualifying as beneficiaries and heir to both past and contemporary 'lights', if only they cared to keep their chiraghs(lamps) well-oiled and burning.

The author terms his selection as "Purane Chiragh" (old lamp posts) and records facts and information conveyed down memory lane; he assesses at length their respective talents and specific achievements in their fields in strict order of output, dedication and excellence. In the three volumes of "The Beacon-lights" We come in direct contact with the saint, the philosopher the preacher, the poet, the writer, the editor, the pacifist, the revolutionary, the teacher, the social worker, the statesman and the administrator, each reviving nostalgic memories, keeping the reader abreast with the unbroken chain of history. The author has classified his subjects in a manner such as will aid the scholar of future years to easily assimilate his material, for this period of history, through each flicker shimmering down the author's memory lane.

His perception of history: Evolution, Growth, Analysis

An appreciation of Ali Mian's perception of history will be profitable and rewarding, both for the reader and critic, if we initially examine

his vision of the components of history viz the governing factors, the process of change, the perennial cross-currents, the mysterious hands shaping the 'rise' and engineering the 'fall', the intervening movements and the men providing succor and sustenance. His vision, as we will see, was incompatible with the approach of the traditional history writers. He makes a clean breast of it by reciting a couplet:

Not the path of Qais nor of Farhad shall
I tread

I am my own;

new thoughts, new visions shall my
tidings spread.

On factors, he is in unison with traditional writers; On interpretation of events, his views carry transparency as evident from "Syed Ahmed Shaheed" and "Al Murtaza". On steering clear of controversy, his advice to fellow historians is clear-cut as viewed from messages conveyed through "Payam-e- Insaniyat". On documentation of history through contemporary sources, which he considers as both original and trust-worthy, makes an example by writing biographies, as illustrated in preceding paragraphs, which will not only serve as record on lives surveyed but also act as good source material for the student of the future years.

The 21 years from 1936 to 1957 form an important period In Maulana's life, as it is this period which witnessed the best of his works on Islamic History.

"Seerat Ahmed Shaheed" was commenced in 1936 and completed in 1939;

"Maaza Khasaral Alam" was commenced in 1944, completed in 1950;

"Tarikh-i- Dawat-o-Azeemat" was commenced in 1952, the first volume completed in 1954, the second in 1957 and subsequent volume following as a matter of course in 1963

and 1980.

In "Maza Khasaral Alam" he examines the phenomenon causing the decline. He is not prepared to believe that a people endowed with an invincible faith could succumb to worldly temptations and, divesting themselves of the Book, get lost in maizes of their own creation. The chapter entitled "The Ebbs and Tides in the History of Islam" makes some tragic reading as the author seems reluctant to pen down what he sees and what his sense of history seems to perceive. Nevertheless, the realities of time and history must prevail. He is prepared to concede the toll taken by time, paralleled by an evolutionary process; but he does not prima facie believe in the continuance of this phase for all time. What concerns him most, however, is the track record of the followers, which is a sordid story of desertion of values and precepts handed down the generations. Of faith he is certain, of the followers he is not. For them, he has his own doubts. For, it was not alone their inability to gauge the cross-currents of history but also failure in the mission entrusted to their care. Yet, history has its own built-in reserves.

Maulana is in no danger of getting lost in abstract and meaningless generalisations. As a historian he is in love with the Past, especially his Islamic and humanitarian heritage, on which the Present flourishes. He is therefore, not prepared to take the Future as a speculative commodity. He is guided by a sense of perception to prove that the Future is as the Present makes it, to which the followers of Islam, the world over, are no exception. The years intervening the publication of "Maaza Khasaral Alam (1950) and of "Terikh-i- Dawat-o-Azeemat" (1954) was a period when a new optimism dawned, visibly replacing the despondency that dominated the former work.

He introduced a new outlook in the latter publication, pin-pointing the students' attention to the perennial change that was yet underway at each step of Islamic civilization and redeemed successfully through the efforts and foresight of the Saviours. In this marathon thesis running into four volumes (1954-1980) Ali Mian is at his best whilst illustrating from the life and times of Saints, Seers, Scholars and Islamic thinkers that it was adherence to faith alone which helped reinstate the believers to their original status. For them it was ever a changing scenario at each crucial phase and each time a Saviour, a Saint, a Seer, a theologian, a scholar was at hand to confront the powers and movements designed to keep their tracks blocked. Each such period has had its share of men destined to provide succour and sustenance. From the days of Khalifa Umar-bin- Abdul Aziz in Syria to the saints of Basra and Baghdad and events moving Imam Taimiah into action, followed by the Saintry Orders in India (Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia, Yahya Maneri, Ahmad Mujaddid al Sani), right down to the exhortations of Shah Waliullah, Islamic resurgence made itself felt whenever the "Umma"(mass mind), reacting to the winds of change turned to their faith for survival and relief. And never did the divine will fail them. These in short, are the observations of the master historian on the synthesising of the adversities, suffered by a Faith and its people, with their spiritual and intellectual effervescence that forged a continuing chain of their religious, ethical, social and cultural identity. "History", if we may choose to label it technically, was in operation.

A Critical Appreciation.

Firstly, forsaking Islamic scenario for a while, if we turn to world history, the foremost name of Edward Gibbon appears for scrutiny. In his "Decline and fall of Roman Empire", he

recounts the story of one People- the Romans, and their one Empire. The might attained over a period spanning a thousand years (approx) came to naught within a few generations which Gibbons attributes to "the triumph of barbarism and religion". He holds Christianity responsible for the disaster oblivious of the truth that the in-built mechanism of the System proved unequal to the strength of the new Faith and hence it failed to stem the Fall.

Maulana's view is diagonally opposite that of Gibbon's. He is not in agreement with the proposition that religion can be bracketed with barbarism or else the power of the State would be rendered futile. He believes that faith is a cementing force and aids the continuity of History, citing Islamic history as an example where bad periods, amidst crisis and strain have been overcome by the will to survive; to continue, regardless of prevailing odds.

Secondly, he believes that faith which is absolute stands in no need of Renaissance. What, contrarily is needed, is the infrastructure of civilization (as Tonybee rightly believes) which must have the strength to resist in order to survive. Muslims, at critical phases of their history, have later regained what they had lost earlier primarily through their dependence on restructuring by men with foresight and builders endowed with the spirit of humanity.

Thirdly, as a component of the same continuity of history, no system, however perfect, has ever been able to counter opposition without the soothing touch of religion. Religion is integral to historical growth and, devoid of it, systems and civilizations ostensibly invincible have collapsed and faded into oblivion.

This, in short, is a critical evaluation, based on a few works of Ali Mian on History from a list running into as many more as presently reviewed. ■

We Need Maulana Azad's Values More Than Ever

- Syada Hameed

In 2008, November 11 was designated as the National Education Day to commemorate the birthday of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first education minister. But today everyone seems to have forgotten not just the day, but also Azad, one of India's tallest leaders. Even the University Grants Commission (UGC), which was established under his tenure, does hardly anything noteworthy to remind the nation of Azad's contribution to the education sector of the country. Other than the UGC, the first Indian Institute of Technology, Indian Institute of Science, School of Planning and Architecture were set up when he was the education minister (1947 to 1958). He was also the architect of the sahitya, sangeet-natak and lalit kala akademis and Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the science councils.

Other than spearheading India's education sector, Azad must also be remembered for his political thoughts that stressed on Hindu-Muslim unity. In 1923 as the youngest Congress president, Azad spoke at the Indian National Congress' special session in Delhi. "Today if a Farishta were to descend from Heaven and declare from the heights of the Qutab Minar that India would get Swaraj within 24 hours, provided the relinquishes Hindu-Muslim unity, I will relinquish Swaraj rather than give up Hindu-Muslim unity. Delay in the attainment of Swaraj will be a loss for

India, but if our unity is lost it will be a loss for entire mankind," he said. The nation has also forgotten that Azad gave the first call for Swaraj in 1912 when he launched *Al Hilal* from Calcutta. In 1988, however, the nation celebrated his birth centenary with a lot of energy and enthusiasm. It recalled his literary masterpieces, which includes magnum opus *Tarjumanul Quran*, the best translation, and explication of *Koran*.

The speeches he made before Independence and in Parliament are still the best examples of statesmanship and elegant prose. He made incisive points without compromising his or opponent's dignity. He, however, never wrote or allowed anyone to write his biography. But he did write letters from Ahmednagar prison where he was incarcerated with Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders.

The English media has forgotten him; only the Urdu media remembers him: Public gatherings were held in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Delhi this year but unfortunately only in Muslim pockets. One news photo in an Urdu paper showed two Muslim leaders (one each from the Congress and the BJP) offering flowers at his grave. In the last few months, there have been several attacks on Muslim by cow vigilantes. If there is a time we need Azad's secular political credentials, it is now. ■

(Courtesy: Hindustan Times, 22-11-2017)

Gender Justice And Education

- Qazi Muhammad Miyan

Gender justice is often used with reference to emancipator projects that promote women rights through legal changes and women's interest in social and economic policy. One of the greatest fallacies advocated by the feminist movement is that the woman will have to behave like a man, work like him in order to achieve equality.

It is remarkable that the Qur'an makes absolutely no statement about the inherent ethical or intellectual superiority of men over women. All human beings are equal in the sight of Allah.

"O mankind, We created you from one man and one woman, and then divided you into nations and tribes so that you may recognise one another. Indeed, the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious of you. Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Wise." (Qur'an 49:13)

Allah gives equal opportunities for both to pursue achievement with the firmness of faith realised by good deeds.

The Qur'an is the divine book, which gives dignity to women as human beings when they are harassed and discriminated against by the great civilizations. The Qur'an gives many

rights to women in marriage, divorce, wealth, inheritance, education etc. The time of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) was the most ideal as far as the rights of women are concerned.

Education is a right that the husband or society cannot deny a woman. Ignorant mothers means ignorant youths and later ignorant citizens. The starting point of progress and development is education.

In Islam, there is no priority for men over women to acquire education. There was no ban on women pursuing education and they made significant contributions to the field of knowledge and learning. Islam encourages its followers to enlighten themselves with the knowledge of their religion as well as other branches of knowledge. Islam holds the person who seeks knowledge in high esteem as the Qur'an is full of *ayahs* which praise those who are learned.

Islam is the only religion, the first ayah of which was revealed with the instruction of reading. The first *ayahs* of the Qur'an begin with the word, *Iqra*; it is a command that means Read in Arabic, and that implies the concept of 'learning', 'exploring' and 'seeking

enlightenment'. This demonstrates that reading (knowledge) is the way to approach the Creator of all that exists.

"Iqra (Read) in the name of thy Lord who created; [He] created the human being from blood clot. Read in the name of thy Lord who taught by the pen: [He] taught the human being what he did not know." (Qur'an 96: 1-5).

At another place the Qur'an says: "Are those who have knowledge equal to those who do not have knowledge?" (Qur'an 39:9)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: "Seeking of knowledge is a duty of every Muslim, (male and female)" (*Ibn Majah*)

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said, "Acquiring knowledge in company for an hour in the night is better than spending the whole night in prayer." (*Tirmidhi*)

Islam affirms the right to education for all without gender discrimination. Islam has a holistic view of human development, which views education and knowledge as central. It encourages the acquisition of knowledge and its use for the benefit of humanity.

Education system plays a very important role in making the world a better place to live in a very civilized way. Today, co-education system is there in almost all the countries of the world.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, "In co-education boys and girls shall be taught the same courses at the same time, in the same place, by the same faculty with the same methods and under the same regime."

Islam doesn't encourage co-education in many cases but it is allowed in certain circumstances. Co-education is discouraged in Islam due to several reasons. Islam prohibits intermingling of opposite sexes, and different roles are prescribed for men and women in the Islamic society. It is to ensure the moral health of society.

Let us see what an Islamic scholar says on whether co-education is right or wrong for the proper development of society:

"Those reports which came last year in 'The World this Week'... and it gave the survey of the schools, both Unisex schools and Co-Ed. schools in the U.K –And the surveyor said that... 'The overall result of Unisex schools was much better than Co-Ed. Schools'... And the last point of that survey was the UK government was thinking of setting up more Unisex schools in the country.

According to the American report, it said that... 'Girls in school, spent more time in picking up illicit sex techniques from the classmates, than acquiring knowledge from the teachers.'

In India, the same thing is happening... to a greater or lesser extent. ... According to a report of *News Week*, the sexual assault of the women in the universities is given. And it said – ...Lecturers and professors – they forced the lady into sexual harassment, in exchange for a better grade. Same thing is happening in India,... According to the report of *New York Times* –It said that... '25% of the ladies that go to schools and universities in America, are raped'. My basic question is... 'Do you want to send your child to a school to get educated, or do you want to send your child to the school, to pick up illicit techniques, or be sexually harassed?' If it is the first, I would advise you to put them in Unisex schools... and there are several of the kinds in the city."

Co-education schools could be run with a few Islamic laws and regulations such as it may be allowed to female students on the condition that they put on proper Hijab, otherwise there must be separate girls and boys classes. Under Islamic law it is forbidden that opposite sexes meet and move freely as we see them sitting and gathering in grounds in educational institutions.

Education has become an extension of the capitalist system. Its purpose is to provide qualified workforce for its machinery of production and eager consumers for its

products. This linking of education to financial goals is extremely unfortunate. It degrades education and through it the society. Today we find many internal problems like corruption, injustice, oppression, and crippling poverty. These problems are largely traceable, directly or indirectly, to the education system that has produced the people who perpetuate the problems.

Islam is a very dynamic and practical religion which is totally different from other religions of the world. It wants very active and dynamic persons in the social order. Islam wants to grow persons fully informed about social, political and economic affairs of the contemporary world in order to play their respective roles in collective affairs.

By education in Islam, man can know his place, condition of himself, his family, his people, his community and his society. The purpose of education is the same as the purpose of human creation, to worship Allah. The potentials possessed by men and women are the gifts from Allah, which must be cultivated through education by referring to the function of humans as servants of Allah and His vicegerents on earth. ■

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(Courtesy: Radiance)

Tipu : Evaluation of His Religious Policy

- B.N. Pande

While I was doing some research at Allahabad in 1927-28 on the "Religious Policy of Tipu Sultan", I came across a Matriculation Text-Book of History by Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Har Prasad Shastri, Head of the Sanskrit Department of the Calcutta University. I opened the chapter on Tipu Sultan, the following sentence struck me deeply:

"There thousand Brahmins committed suicide as Tipu wanted to convert them forcibly into the fold of Islam."

Immediately, I wrote to Dr. Shastri for the source of his information. After many reminders came the reply that he had taken that fact from the Mysore Gazetteer. The Mysore Gazetteer was not available either at Allahabad or at the Imperial Library, Calcutta. So I wrote to Sir Brijendra Nath Seal, the then Vice-Chancellor of Mysore University seeking confirmation of the statement of Dr. Shastri. Sir Brijendra Nath Seal forwarded my letter to Prof. Srikantia who was then busy editing a new edition of the Mysore Gazetteer.

Prof. Srikantia informed me that "the episode of the suicide of 3000 Brahmins is nowhere in the Mysore Gazetteer and he, as a student of history of Mysore was quite certain that no such incident had taken place." He further informed me that the Dewan of Tipu Sultan was a Brahmin, named Poornaiah and his Sipah Salar was also a Brahmin, named Krishna Rao, Prof. Srikantia supplied me with the list of 156 temples to which Tipu Sultan used to pay

annual gifts. He sent me Photostat copies of Tipu Sultan's 30 letters addressed to the then Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Sringeri Math with whom Tipu Sultan and his father Hyder Ali had very cordial relations. Tipu Sultan, as was customary with the rulers of Mysore, daily visited the temple of Lord Ranganatha, located inside the fort of Srirangapatnam, before taking his breakfast.

Dr. Shastri's book was approved as a course book of history for High Schools in Bengal, Assam, Orissa, U.P., MP and Rajasthan. I approached the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University and sent him all the correspondence that I had exchanged with Dr. Shastri, with Mysore University Vice-Chancellor Sir Brijendra Nath Seal, and Prof. Srikantia, with the request to take appropriate action against the offending passages in the text-book. Prompt came the reply from the Vice-Chancellor that the history book by Dr. H.P. Shastri has been put out of course.

In early 1930 Mahatma Gandhi published this note in his Young India endorsing the liberal religious policy of Tipu Sultan:

"Tipu made lavish gifts to Hindu temples, and also to the temples dedicated to Shri Venkataramana, Shrinivas and Shri Ranganatha located in the vicinity of Tipu's palaces still bear testimony to his broadminded toleration, and indicate that great martyr at any rate - for a real martyr he was in the cause of liberty - was not disturbed in his prayers

by the Hindu bells calling people to worship the same God whose devotee he was. Tipu died fighting for liberty treating with contempt the suggestion that he should surrender to the enemy. When Tipu's corpse was recovered from among the heap of "unknown soldiers" whose fate he proudly shared, it was found that even in death his hand had still clutched the sword which was his instrument for the vindication of liberty. Let us remember the following memorable words of Tipu :

"Better a lion's life for two days than a Jackal's life for two hundred years" and also the lines repeated at the end of each stanza of an elegy composed in his honour: "Ya Allah, it is better to die beneath the clouds of battle raining blood upon our heads than to live a life of shame and degradation"

"One of the principal and oft-repeated accusations is that Tipu was a bigoted Muslim who oppressed non-Muslims. We would point out that accusations of bigotry against the Muslim rulers in India have ever been pressed into service for promoting hatred and hostility between the Hindus and Muslims. That Tipu was a devout Muslim is true, but there is a world of difference between bigotry and devotion to one's own faith."

We may say that an objective study of the sources would reveal that Tipu was an enlightened ruler, and was secular in outlook. If he crushed the Hindus of Coorg, the Christians of Mangalore and the Nayars of Malabar, that was because they wished to undermine his authority by joining the English. Nor did he spare the Mopillas of Malabar or the Mahadvi

Muslims when he suspected such tendencies in them. He attacked the Nawabs of Sawanur, and also of Cuddapah and Kurnool, and was more hostile towards the Nizam than towards the Marathas. His harshness at times was under political compulsions. Again the records show that he never allowed pleasure or sloth, bigotry or conservatism to interfere in his administration. Despite his differences with the English, he desired to profit himself by western science, and western art of Government. The result of his policy is well-summed up by his own contemporary, an English man, Edward Moore in 1794, who was by no means friendly to him; "When a person travelling through a strange country finds it well-cultivated populous with industrious inhabitants, cities newly founded, commerce extending, towns increasing and everything flourishing so as to indicate happiness, he will naturally conclude it to be under a form of Government congenial to the minds of the people. This is a picture of Tipu's country, and our conclusion respecting its Government." Tipu belongs to that category of men who live and die for a mighty cause. He is the solitary figure of the eighteenth century, so innovative, so enlightened, so dynamic and so patriotic, but so much maligned.

Tipu was born and brought up as a prince. He was named Tipu after the well-known Pir at Arcot Tipu Mastan Auliya and also Fateh Ali after his grandfather. Unlike his father, Haider Ali, Tipu was highly educated person. More than all, he was cultured and urbane monarch who could speak Persian, Kannada, Marathi and French languages. He had read deeply the

humanities and sciences. That the diversity of his interests and his insatiable thirst for knowledge were amazing had been vouchsafed by his library adorned with rich and brilliant volumes covering many subjects like history, philosophy, theology, sufism, ethics, jurisprudence, philology, literature, Turkish prose and fables, Hindi and Deccani prose and poetry, arts, sciences, mathematics, astronomy, physics, medicine etc, and also by the manuscripts and books in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit and other languages. He had read avidly the French Philosophers and discussed seriously with his French friends the new political social and economic ideas that were flooding the world at that time. In 1794 Doveton expressed his amazement at Tipu's comprehension of world affairs and his awareness of international events. With this background he succeeded his father as the Sultan of Mysore. But his position was by no means an enviable one. For he had to preserve his authority against the onslaughts of his allegiant Polivars and governors and the disobedience and treachery of his courtiers, and to maintain his independence against the three mighty powers which were ever on the move to attack him and crush him. Thus from the day he occupied the seat of royalty, during the seventeen years following, to the end of the century he was constantly engaged in an exhausting external war and often harassed by the mischief of malcontents within. It is highly creditable that in spite of such ceaseless and ruthless struggles for the survival and maintenance of his authority against the implacable foes, Tipu

found time for the business of politics, trade and commerce, industry, religion and all other matters relating to the people and his approach and the regulations he issued on all matters were always egalitarian.

Tipu's approach to social and religious issues was certainly characterized by egalitarianism. He abolished the cruel custom of human sacrifice to Kali temple near Mysore, banned the use of liquor and the cultivation of bhang, punished the faqirs administering intoxicating drugs to the inhabitants and travellers by banishment, made prostitution and the exploitation of female slaves illegal and took measures to safeguard the honour and modesty of the Nair women by decreeing that they should come out of their houses fully dressed and the practice of polyandry should be given up. As K.M. Panikkar rightly puts it, in imposing prohibitions against such obscene habits of the Nairs, Tipu believed that he was undertaking a mission of civilization. It is the reformer's mind, anxious for the moral and material welfare of the people and not the fanaticism of a bigot desirous of converting the Kafir, that speaks in this proclamations. His concern for the women's welfare was clearly expressed when he ordered that the orphaned and abandoned girls should not be taken into the temples, nor to be sold abroad, but collected together to be looked after by the Government. He infused self-confidence in the physically disabled like the lame and the blind, by providing them work in the workhouses. He also took steps to feed and train the orphans and other uncared

for persons for works in military and civil branches. He provided for the maintenance of the widows and children of soldiers who died in service and on the battlefield. He also ordered his officers that whenever a peon died, they had to appoint a fit member of his family in his place give him the land and if the latter died heirless, they should get that land cultivated by some able bodied persons. Under him such public works as the reconstruction of the villages that suffered at the hands of the poligars and the rebuilding of places that were in ruins were undertaken. All these go to show that Tipu was a social reformer having a great concern for the weaker sections of the society.

Religiously also Tipu was an enlightened and egalitarian Sultan. But the British writers like Charles Stewart have painted him as a bigoted Sultan who practice religious discrimination and intolerance and carried on forcible conversions, religious genocide and wars. All the records refute these allegations. The equal taxation imposed on all subjects regarding land, trades and professions; the existence of a Qazi and a Pandit in each province and two judges, one Hindu and the other Muslim in the High Court of Appeal at Srirangapatnam; his calender which was acceptable to both the Hindus and the Muslims; the figure of elephant, the Hindu insignia of royalty found on his copper coins; the large number of Hindus holding posts of distinction in his administration like Purnaiah, Appaji Ram, Srinivas Rao, Moolchand, Sujan Rao and others; a section of the official quarters in Srirangapatnam reserved for housing Brahmin families; the peaceful co-

existence of Hindus, Muslims and Christians in his land showing the prevalence of social harmony, all these testify that he never practised religious discrimination, nor he was for class domination of the Muslims. He was not an idol breaker or a temple destroyer. On the contrary, he saw to it that all the Hindu temples flourished in his kingdom by extending to them active encouragement and financial support. His correspondence with the Jagadguru of the Hindu muth at Sringeri I; the protection he gave to it and money, grains and clothes presented to it and the steps he took to set right the ravages caused by Hindu raiders; the presentation of the 12 elephants, jewels, gold and silver vessels to Sri Narayanswami temple at Melukote; the silver cup to Sri Srikanteswara temple at Nanjangud and the famous 'Padshah linga' made of green jade installed there; seven silver cups and a silver incense burner to Sri Ranganatha temple at Srirangapatnam he made; the temples he raised in honour of Sri Venkataramana and Tirumala at Ratnagiri ; the donations he gave for the building of an bode of god at Conjeevaram, his participation in the chariot festival and the money he gave for the fire-works display on that occasion; the rent free lands he offered to the temples in South Malabar and other places; the expenses of the Pushapagiri muth, the Anjaneyaswami temple of Gandikote, the Narasimhaswamy temple of Gattupet, the Chennakesavaswami temple of Manchuur, the Prasanna Venkateswara temple in Matur and Sri Ranga temple in Prevali he met; the discontinued Puja he restored at the Anjaneswara temple at pullivenda; the inam lands he gave to

Brahmins like Maharaja Hariappa; the regular cash allowance he gave to the Pujaris of Rayakottai temple; his impartial judgement over a temple dispute between the two sects of Sri Vaishnavas called Vadagalai and Tenkalai in Melukote; all these are a silent but a solid proof that the Hindus received help and encouragement from him and lived in peace practising their dharma. Even with regard to the Christians he followed a policy of egalitarianism. He looked after the welfare of the Syrian Christians and the Armenian Christians, requested the Archbishop of Goa to send Catholic priests for the service of the Christians in Mysore and got a Dutch bell which he brought down from a local church.

Tipu Sultan was an enlightened ruler. He knew that he was a Muslim ruler of a non-Muslim country in which Muslims formed only a small segment of the population. He knew the limitations of his power and that he could not administer the state on principles unacceptable to his non-Muslim subjects. The treatment meted out to the reactionary feudal aristocracy of Malabar and Coorg should not be torn out of context to indicate that Tipu had any 'religious mission' nor the expulsion and captivity of the Canara Christians should be viewed as religious persecution. They were administrative actions dictated by political considerations for the safety of one of the most strategic regions of his kingdom. Similarly, he expelled the Mahdawis not because they were a non-conformist sect of Muslims, but because he found them to be conspiring against him and acting as compradors of hostile forces pitched

against him.

Unlike his father, Tipu was well educated and possessed sound knowledge of Islamic religion. But he never allowed his personal belief to come in the way of his administration and remained secular throughout in the discharge of his duties as head of the State. Once, by way of a complaint, a faujdar reported to him that, "a Hindu had married a Muslim lady causing tension in the locality. As such a marriage was not permitted in the shariat, what action should he take to punish the culprits". Tipu immediately sent a reply admonishing the faujdar with direction not to interfere in or meddle with the personal affairs of the people and that as an officer of the government his duty was to safeguard the life and property of the people and ensure law and order.

Tipu was a learned man and was fond of scholars. His Darbar was graced by many learned Hindu pandits and Muslim divines. His extensive library was filled with valuable and rare books. He lived a simple, clean and disciplined life. His daily meals consisted mostly of almonds, milk and fruit. He never touched liquor or any other intoxicants.

Tipu had great respect for women and did everything to safeguard their honour and virtue. In his battles he took every possible precaution against molestation by his soldiers of the women of vanquished foe and came down with a very heavy hand on anyone found misbehaving in this respect. Twice in his battles with the Marathas, a number of Maratha women, some of them wives of Maratha Sardars, fell into his army's

hands. On both the occasions, he treated them with respectful consideration, put them up in separate tents, and although the war was still on, sent them to the Maratha camps in palanquins escorted by his soldiers .

A brave and able military commander, Tipu was the worthy son of a worthy father. He won his first battle when he was only seventeen. He could never get over his defeat in 1792 by the combined forces of the English, the Marathas and the Nizam. The odds against him were heavy but 'he felt the defeat and the humiliating treaty which followed it, so much that as a sort of penance, he gave up sleeping on a bed and used to lie down on the bare-floor with an odd piece or two of rough canvas under him. He had "come to a serious determination by every reasonable means in his power to regain what he had lost" (Malcolm). Of the many epitaphs on Tipu's tomb, one of the aptest is "Shamsheer Gum Shud" (the sword is lost). According to the numerical value assigned to the Persian alphabet, the phrase Shamsheer Gum Shud give the Hijra year of Tipu's death. Lost indeed was the sword wielded by a selfless patriot and ardent lover of freedom who, like his father, refused to have any truck with enemies of his country's freedom.

It was sometime in 1774, around the time of Tipu's marriage, that his father, Hyder Ali, asked him what he wanted. He asked for a library but not one limited to the ideas and knowledge of the East. The young prince wanted to know all there was to know, and it was as part of this

project that some time at the end of 1776 Count Vergennes, the French Foreign Minister, approached that contemporary of Voltaire and author of both the Barber of Seville and Figaro, Pierre Caron de Beaumarchais, to provide books that were both outstanding and learned for the Mysore library.

Among the works that he included was a Persian translation of the American Declaration of Independence drawn up by Thomas Jefferson and adopted by the Congress of the United States of America at Philadelphia on 4 July, 1776. Initially what must have drawn the young prince to the document was the similarity of experience of both the American colonists and the Indians, of British tyranny, for the document says of the English king: "He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns and ravaged the lives of our people ... In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury, a prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be ruler of a free people".

Later, he was impressed by the idea that: "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to

these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government laying its foundation on such principles and organising its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.”

Tipu's interest in the American Revolution persisted and he acquired such respect of the genius of Benjamin Franklin then that he paid a large sum of money to the Prussian charlatan, Schwartz, posing as a missionary, to be sent on to the American revolutionaries. Schwartz, who later became a British spy, of course, used the money himself and never sent it on. Again on 4th July, 1783, Tipu fired a 108-gun salute to the victory of the United States of America over the British.

Nor the young Tipu was superficial in his outlook. He knew the works of Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau and Voltaire, among others. Also his study of Arthashastra, the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda, with their understanding of monarchy as the result of a social contract and entailing social responsibility, enshrined in the king's oath that “May I be deprived of heaven, of life, of offspring if I oppress you. In the happiness of my subjects lies my happiness, in their welfare *my welfare*; whatever pleases myself I shall consider as not good, but whatever pleases my subjects I shall consider as good,” helped him assimilate the new thinking with that emanating from indigenous roots.

Tipu 'became a member of the Jacobin Club, addressed letters to the Jacobins as “Citizen Tipu” and planted a

tree of liberty at Srirangapatnam. The extent of his assimilation of new thinking can be judged from an address to his Council of Ministers in 1789, refusing forced labour to build the Darya Daulat Palace. In his address he said ; “The Pharaohs built the pyramids with the labour of their slaves. The entire route of the Great Wall of China is littered with the blood and bones of men and women forced to work under the whip and lash of the slave-drivers. Countless millions were enslaved and chained and thousands upon thousand bled and died to make it possible that the magnificent structures of Imperial Rome, Babylon, Greece and Carthage should be built. To my mind every great work of art and architecture be it in countries to the west or to the east of India, is a monument not so much to the memory of those who ordered them to be built but to the agony and toil, blood and tears of those unfortunates who were driven to death in the effort to built it. What does such a monument standing impassive in brick or stone commemorate? I believe its message is that here around it is the ruin of an empire founded on tyranny and anguish of the people driven from their homes, chained and enslaved, so that a vain and haughty emperor might harbour illusions of his glory. There can be no glory or achievement if the foundation of our palaces, roads, dams are mingled with tears and blood of humanity.

In 1785, Tipu pre-dated the breast-cloth struggle in Malabar by more than a century. Tipu felt horrified that women of certain castes were not allowed to cover their breasts. When informed that this was

the custom, he asked, "Do customs of this tribe impose any corresponding disability on males also? If not, such a disability on women alone is contrary to principles of justice and is, therefore discriminatory."

With regard to the administration of justice, in a decree of 1786, Tipu says, "Flogging and whipping - be they to extract confessions or as punishment - are repugnant to humanity and reason. They do not achieve their purpose. They degrade victim. They dishonour the person in whose name they are ordered."

His "Code of Conduct", both in war and peace, was based on the same humane principles. His code of Law and Conduct of 1787 states: "To quarrel with our subjects is to go to war with ourselves. They are our shield and our buckler; and it is they who furnish us with all things. Reserve the hostile strength of our empire exclusively for its foreign enemies."

Even with regard to fighting foreigners, in repeated decrees of 1783, 1785 and 1787, he states : "Looting a conquered enemy enriches a few but impoverishes that nation and dishonours the entire army. Wars must be confined to battlefields. Do not carry them to innocent civilians. Honour their women, respect their religion, and protect their children and the infirm."

In 1783, when Mangalore was about to fall to him French withdrew as a result of the Seven Year War. He did not hold it against them. He told them: You served my interest as long as you could. Now your interests call you elsewhere. I bid you farewell. We part as friends. I have nothing but kind words, kind thoughts for you. I

rejoice over an event wherein you should rejoice more, for it was your arms, your ships, your soldiers who fought for the cause of liberty in America."

One of those who had been present at Tipu's farewell to his French soldiers in 1783, Gourgaud, was among the men and women who stormed the Bastille. As he lay there dying mortally wounded by bullets of the royalist troops, he said, "Let Tipu Sultan know that I died for a dream that he inspired." Through him, Tipu was part of the French Revolution in its finest hour.

River Kaveri was the life-line of the kingdom of Tipu Sultan. The river encircled and embraced their capital, Srirangapatnam, a safe Island lying between its two branches. It was the main source of irrigation in the length and breadth of the state. It had its strategic value all around the fort of Srirangapatnam as a natural defence barrier. In addition, it supplied water to the city. Tipu Sultan had always realised its value and importance, and had great regard for it. A study of his letters, farmans, records etc., throws light on the above facts and substantiate them. As a boy and as a ruler he had lived by the side of Kaveri and had used its waters, rather had lived on it. He constructed anicuts and founded dams on it though he could not complete them in his life time, and he caused channels to be dug out of it for irrigation purposes. His agrarian reforms and developments were based mainly on the waters of Kaveri. He sacrificed his life and gained martyrdom by the side of Kaveri fighting at its famous water gate.

Tipu Sultan was killed fighting on the 4th May, 1799 by the English invaders and

his capital was plundered for three days. Thousands of citizens were murdered brutally and even those who took refuge in mosques and temple were not spared. Sacred places were desecrated. The drunken English soldiers carried away everything valuable. Buildings and houses were demolished in search of buried treasures. Not only valuables like gold, silver, pearls, jewels, silk etc., but also books of the Sultan's library, letters, records and all writings were looted and transported to Calcutta and England. Sanads given by the Sultan were withdrawn and instead fresh certificates were issued.

It was one hundred and thirty years later that Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, the great philosopher poet got the inspiration and threw new light on the close relationship of Tipu Sultan with the River Kaveri in his master-piece JAVAID NAMA. He had heard about Tipu Sultan and had read about him, and he had studied the development of British domination in India. He was a revolutionary poet, and the poet of the East who had always represented the excellence of the cultural values of the East against the dominance of the West. He had found the ideal embodiment of this philosophy in the person of the great Tipu Sultan. He had been eager to see with his own eyes his capital where the drama of sacrifice on the one hand and barbarism on the other hand had been played, and to visit the tomb of the great martyr Sultan and pay homage. At last Dr. Sir Iqbal's long cherished desire was fulfilled. He reached the Sultan's tomb with all devotion and enthusiasm on the morning of 11th January, 1929, like a pilgrim visiting a

sacred shrine. He entered the tomb, closed himself inside it and remained there for about an hour. When he came out his eyes were blood-red for having wept long. He was still shedding tears.

Iqbal's visit to the tomb of Tipu Sultan did not go in vain. His long journey from Lahore to Srirangapatnam, in spite of his ailment, bore a rich fruit. His devotion to the martyr king reached its zenith at the Sultan's tomb and it was here that he was inspired to write his masterpiece JAVAID NAMA in which he placed the Sultan at the highest rank in paradise. He was deeply impressed by the atmosphere of the mausoleum, the inscriptions on its walls and doors. The ruins of Srirangapatnam, the paintings at the Darya Daulat palace and the river Kaveri. What more was needed for a poet and philosopher. As such he conceived the theme and plan of his masterpiece JAVAID NAMA.

On reaching back Lahore he wrote the following couplets

I have lighted a different fire in the heart,
I have brought a tale from the Deccan.

I have a shining sword on my side;
I am drawing it out gradually from the scabbard

I speak a subtle point about the Martyr
Tipu Sultan

I fear the festival day might turn bitter.

I proceeded to kiss his dust,

There I heard from his holy grave;

If one cannot live a manly life in this
world.

Then to sacrifice life, like a man, is life. ■

Human Rights Day

— Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

U.N. General Assembly has declared December 10 as Human Rights Day. So it is observed on December 10 all over the world. The Assembly proclaimed the declaration as a "common standard of achievement for all people and all nations". It defines social discrimination as "any distinction based on race, colours or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying the recognition, exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural or any other fields of public life".

None can gainsay the achievements and contributions made by the UNO in eradicating racism and racial discrimination, racist policies and racist regims. We may recall the atrocities and oppressions perpetrated by the whites of ruling class in South Africa. But under the pressure of the UNO, the ruling party had to give up the age-long policy of apartheid or racial discrimination. Consequently Nelson Mandela, the most popular leader of the African people had been released from jail in February, 1990. Later on the South African Government had to conduct the first multi-racial elections in South Africa on April 27, 1994. Wherein the African National Congress (ANC) got 252 seats out of 400 and formed the first democratic Government in South Africa under Nelson Mandel the first president of the new Government. Thus imperialism came to an end in South Africa and so did apartheid.

But it is unfortunate that the U.N.O's services are one sided. Since the Second World War, the US has attacked 21 countries from Vietnam to Yugoslavia to Niaragna, killing millions of innocent people. Gulf countries have faced three wars in 1956, 1967 and 1973 after the Second World War and creation of Israel. The recent attack on Iraq dethroning Saddam Husain is most deplorable.

Today the Islamic world including Syria and Palestine is passing through an ordeal. No country raise voice against the atrocities and oppressions being meted out to the people of the Islamic World. It is an open secret that despite all its brutalities, Israil gets all-out support of America.

It is time the UNO should get the issues of the Islamic world including Palestine solved friendly and amicably only then celebration of the "Human Rights Day" will be meaningful and appropriate. ■

The Concept of World Peace: Islamic Perspective

- Busari, K.K.

In this paper, an attempt is made to correct any wrong impression or misinformation about the religion of Islam as described by some laity as a religion of terrorism, violence, force and war. This work traces the origin of Islam and its meaning vis-a-vis its concept of peace, violence and war. The true position on the doctrine of Islam is also traced in order to shed more light on the concept of world peace.

THE BEGINNING OF ISLAM

Islam is said to have started since the beginning of the creation. That is Islam is as old as man. The reason for this assertion is that, Islam means total submission to the will of Allah. It is the wish of Allah the world and everything therein should exist, and this come to pass. Human beings are also the handiwork of Allah, therefore, it is left for a man to decide whether to follow the commandments of Allah or do the opposite. He who follows His commandments has submitted himself to His will and vice versa. Allah has decreed that we should worship Him and this is the essence of our creation.

Formally, Islam as a religion started in the Arabian peninsula in the 7th century, precisely in 610AD. This was when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was called to his mission during one of his usual periods of meditation at the cave of Hira. It was at this point that he received the first revelation as contained in the Holy Qur'an (Q 96:1-5). He was further commanded to start a clarion call and not to seek seclusion but to arise and warn a people sunk in vice and immorality. He was told to make others

perfect by warning them of the evil consequences of their evil deeds. The Prophet began to preach the religion of Islam from that time onward, to the Arabs who were then predominantly polytheists, worshipping many idols as opposed to the teaching of Islam which is the religion of monotheism.

ISLAM - ITS MEANING AND EARLY PROPAGATION

The word Islam is from the root-word salm or silm, both signifying peace. Islam also means submission, that is total submission of oneself to the will of Allah. It is also from the word Aslama which signifies entering into peace meaning he entered into peace. Infact, the idea of peace is the dominant idea in Islam and the goal to which Islam leads is called the abode of Peace. A Muslim is therefore one who leads a life of peace, peace with God, which is complete submission to His will, and peace with man which means that he causes no injury to any man as the meaning of Islam connotes.

The peaceful co-existence can be observed from the way Muslims salute themselves when they say: 'as-Salam alaykum' which means: 'peace be unto you'. The name Islam is specifically mentioned in the Holy Qur'an where Allah says:

".... This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed my favour upon you and I have chosen for you Islam as a religion" (Q 5:3).

Also, Allah says:

“surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam” (Q 3:18).

Islam is a revival and restatement of the religion of Jesus and of all other Prophets. The religion revealed to the Prophets of various nations was the same, but in the course of time it had been misinterpreted and became mixed up with superstitions and degenerated into magical practices and meaningless rituals. The basic principle of all religions taught by the Prophets has been one and the same in all ages and all countries, that Allah is the Lord of all and He alone must be served. Therefore all Prophets are declared to be one community in the Qur’an, and they all led people to virtue through service of God, but their followers broke off this unity.

Islam is a religion without a mythology. Its teachings are simple and rational. Its appeal is to human reason and conscience. The truth of the Islamic doctrine of the Unity and Goodness of God is brought to us by the study and contemplation of the cosmos, where we find the all-pervading unity behind the manifest diversity, by the teaching of all the Prophets, by the experience of the mystics of all religions and nations, and finally by the apologies of the Trinitarians, who, despite their belief in three Divine persons - The father, the son and the holy spirit, declare that there is but one God.

The truth of the other Islamic principles follows logically from the belief in the unity and goodness of God. If God is one, all human beings are the creatures of the same God and are equal in His sight - and hence the Islamic belief in the equality and brotherhood of all men and women. If

God is the creator and nourisher of all the worlds, He must provide not only for the physical needs of man, but also for the moral and spiritual needs by revealing to man the path of truth and righteousness - and hence the Islamic belief in Divine Revelation. Moreover, the Divine Revelation must come wherever and whenever needed, and for revealing His message, God must choose men who are completely devoted to truth, are leading godly and sinless life and can inspire others to follow the true path - and hence the Islamic belief in the Prophets of all nations. And finally, if God is the God of Goodness and His plan in creating the world and making man a free moral agent is not frivolous and meaningless, there must be the life-after-death, where men may reap the fruits of their beliefs, intentions and actions and continue their blissful journey to God and in God - and hence the Islamic belief in the Hereafter.

Islam is the universal message of unity the unity of God, the unity of the Prophets of all the nations, and the unity of all mankind.

The teachings of Islam are in a sharp contrast to the religious beliefs of the Arabs. This was the basis of the hostilities being encountered by the Prophet at the initial stage of the introduction of Islam to the inhabitants of Makkah. They were deeply rooted in polytheism. They also found it difficult to shun the religious beliefs of their progenitors and embrace a new one based on monotheism. Some of them opposed Islam just because they felt the new religion was a threat that would eventually destabilize their political structure. The divine appointment claimed by the Prophet

(peace be on him) indirectly meant that he was the most honourable among them.

Members of the Qureish family where Prophet Muhammad descended from, who were the ruling class in Mecca at that time initially thought that the Prophet was attempting to usurp the leadership. They were the custodians of the Ka' abah (the then house of idols) and that placed them at a good political vantage position. All the preachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) at that time centered on condemnation of idol worship. This made some members of Qureish uncomfortable thinking that if he (the Prophet) were to be allowed to continue with his mission, their position might be put in jeopardy. Further, he also preached that the blood should be replaced by a faith bond. Thus, making faith stronger than the blood tie.

Moreover, the Arabs in Mecca believed that the acceptance of the new religion would erode them of the economic gains which they used to derive during the annual idol pilgrimage to Makkah when idol worshippers from the Arabian land would come to worship their gods whose shrines were in Ka'abah at Makkah. The Qureish tried to persuade the Prophet to stop preaching against idol worship in exchange for any-thing he might desire. When they could not convince him, they started persecuting him and his followers. The cumulative effect of these series of persecutions to the Prophet and his people forced him to embark on a flight from Makkah to Madinah which is popularly known as Hijrah to which the Muslim calendar dated back to.

TERRORISM AND THE POSITION OF ISLAM

Terrorism is an outrageous attack carried out either by individuals, groups or states against the human being (his religion, life, intellect, property and honour). It includes all forms of intimidation, harm, threatening, killing without just cause and everything connected with any form of armed robbery, banditry, every act of violence or threatening intended to fulfil a criminal scheme individually or collectively, so as to terrify and horrify people by hurting them or by exposing their lives, liberty, security or conditions to danger; it can also take the form of inflicting damage on the environment or on a public or a private utility or exposing a national or natural resource to danger.

All these are manifestations of the mischief in the land, Allah has prohibited Muslims from committing. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"And seek not occasions for mischief in the land, for Allah loves not those who do mischief" (Q, 28:77)

Hence, Allah did not only enact deterrent punishment against terrorism, violence, corruption and aggression, but described these acts tantamount to waging war against Allah and His Messenger. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"The only punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive to make mischief in the land is that they should be murdered, or crucified, or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides, or they should be sent into exile from the land. This shall be

a disgrace for them in this world, and in the hereafter, they shall have a grievous chastisement” (Q, 5:33).

The words used here imply originally all those opponents of Islam who waged war on Muslims and made mischief in the land by causing loss to the life and property of innocent Muslims who fell into their hands. But it has generally been accepted as including all murderers who cause disorder in a settled state of society. In fact, when war came to an end in Arabia and the kingdom of Islam was established over the whole Peninsula, the enemies of Islam, being unable to oppose its authority openly, resorted to murder to disturb the peace which was now established in the land. Hence, though it is such enemies that are primarily spoken of here, the words are general and include all cases of murder.

Terrorism also involves acts of violence and threats. Violence means behaviour that is intended to hurt other people physically. It also connotes an angry way of reacting or speaking or resort to the use of extreme force. Muslims all over the world are the vanguard of all righteousness. They are not to engage in anything that will drive terror into the mind of the people, hurt anybody, nor reacting violently to any issue. Muslims have been described as the best community ever evolved from mankind and have also been cautioned not to abuse the idols of other people though their worship is condemned in the strongest terms. This is just to tell Muslims to shun violence and aggression. It may be added that the clearing of the Ka'abah of idols when Makkah fell into the hands of the Holy Prophet, does not in any way contradict the warning, for to abolish the worship of idols

and to abuse them are not the same.

From the foregoing, therefore, one would realize that Islam as a religion based its teachings on the recommendations of the Holy Qur'an which had made provisions that would ensure world peace. In Islam, Muslims can only resort to war or violence only in self defence and not offense fully. This is according to the dictates of the Holy Qur'an which says:

“Fight in the course of Allah only those who fight you, and do not transgress; Allah hates the transgressors” (Q 2:190).

If the Muslims follow the guidelines as stipulated above, it can be rest assured that the world peace would be guaranteed through Islam.

THE CONCEPT OF WAR IN ISLAM

The overwhelmingly way Islam had treated the concept of peace could no doubt make one wonders why there were records of wars in the history of Islam. It should be recognized that Islam is a complete way of life. The Holy book of Islam left no stone unturned in the matter of the religion of Islam. It is in view of this, that war has not escaped Muslim legislations. Islam has jurisdiction on all facets of human activities. This is why war is allowed when it becomes highly inevitable. The Christian view of turning the other cheek if someone strikes the right cheek as contained in the Bible looks more hypocritical, realizing the various forms of provocations that may confront man in the practical world.

Muslims are only allowed to embark on a Jihad. Jihad is Islam is not synonymous with war. Jihad us derived from the Arabic

root word Jahada meaning: he strove or exerted himself against anything that is evil. Technically, it means striving in the cause of God. To raise one's voice against manifest wrong doings is one of the foremost duties of a Muslim and particularly when the wrong doer is an established authority in which apparently there is a great danger of losing one's life.

In the Qur'an, mention is made of war as part of life as long as there is injustice, inequality, oppression and intolerance in the world.

This is the reason why some verses of the Qur'an give allowance for war but with conditions. The Qur'an says:

"Permission to take up arms is hereby given to those who are attacked because they have been wronged. Allah has power to grant them victory" (Q, 22:39-40).

The Prophet welded his followers into a single brotherhood called "The Ummah" while in Madina. Enemies were soon discovered by Muslims from both within and without. About this time, the Prophet was commanded to fight those who fought him; but the Qur'an gave warning on the prosecution of such wars when it says:

"... but if the enemies incline towards peace, do thou also incline towards peace and trust in God" (Q, 8:61).

This Qur'anic verse advocates that Muslim should sue for peace even during war periods.

Moreover, when the expedition to Syria was ready to take off, Caliph Abu Bakr visited the force at Jurf. He escorted them legged for some distance and admonished them. The instruction, since then became

a warfare policy of Muslims in their subsequent encounters in the battle fields. It is a lofty tone of humanity in war fare, and the admonition goes thus:

"Avoid treachery and deceit. Depart not in any wise from the right. Thou shall mutilate none, neither shall thee kill any child, aged man, nor any woman. Damage not the date palm, neither burn it with fire not cut down any tree wherein is food for man or beast. Slay not any flock or heards or camels except for needful sustenance. Ye may partake of the food/meat which the men of the land shall bring up to you in their vessels, making mention there on the name of the Lord. Spare the monks with shaven head who spend their lives in monasteries, if they submit, leave them in their christer unmolested. Now march forward in the name of lord and may he protect you from sword and pestilence'.

This is the condition of warfare in Islam. War is not a mission nor a normal course for the Muslims.

THE CONCEPT OF PEACE IN ISLAM

Peace could be defined as the absence of conflict and freedom from violence, contention and war. Islam as described above, is a religion of peace. Considering the meaning of the word, Islam, is the way of peace. The Ummah, (Muslim Community) is considered to be the community of peace which should surrender itself to the will of Allah. This submission includes the confession of Faith, believing in the Revealed Books other than the Qur'an, i.e. Zabur (Book of Psalms) revealed to Prophet Daud, Taorah (Torah, Pentateuch, Old Testament) revealed to Prophet Musa and Injil (Gospel)

revealed to Prophet Isa, (Jesus, Ch.) and believing in all the Prophet sent to the world other than Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) including Prophet Isa (Jesus, Ch.).

Islam strives to bring peace to the entire universe by urging its adherents to proclaim the message of Islam peacefully to all people, inviting them into the abode of peace as clearly stated in the Qur'an that there is no compulsion in religion. Peacefulness is one of the greatest moral values in Islam. Muslims are to live peacefully with one another, avoid inflicting injury on another person. They are equally enjoined to establish peace with adherents of other religions as commanded in the Qur'an which says:

"Be not weary and faint hearted crying for peace when you should be uppermost in search for it ... " (Q, 47:35).

This spirit of peaceful co-existence was demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad himself on his arrival in Madinah. It was an established fact that there were Jews who were Christians when the Prophet (peace be upon him) got there. He, realizing their position in the politics of Madinah, quickly took some steps to reconcile with them without the intention of converting them to Islam forcefully.

The same motive of maintaining peaceful co-existence with the Jewish Christians also underlines the divine concession given to the Muslims that they could eat the food of the people of the Book (Christians) and marry their females as contained in the Holy Qur'an which says:

"This day all things good and pure are made lawful unto you; the food of the people of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them. Lawful unto you in Marriage are not only chaste women who are believers but chaste women from among the people of the book" (Q, 5:5).

It can therefore be observed that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) put up all these measures as enumerated above to establish peace, with all and sundry. It is evident from the foregoing that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) contemplated a religion and a political arrangement that would ensure a measure of unity and peace which is the absence of violence, war, hatred, terrorism, and not necessarily demanding from the Jews any renunciation of their faith or acceptance of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a Prophet.

During the caliphate of Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, Damascus, then a Christian city was defeated during the battle of Yarmuk in 635 A.D., Khalid b. Walid, the hero of the battle gave the Christians of Damascus, a term which served as a model to ensure peaceful co-existence. The agreement runs thus:

"This is what Khalid ibn Al-Walid would grant to the inhabitants of Damascus if he enters therein; he promises to give them security for their lives, property and churches. Their city walls shall not be demolished, neither shall any Muslim be quartered in their houses".

This shows that Islam recognizes that there should be no terrorism, violence, raiding, wrangling, swindling as well as

infringing on another man's right unlawfully.

In the same vein, righteousness is highly emphasized in Islam. It is recommended that all human beings are equal and can only be equal than themselves in righteousness, irrespective of colour and race. The Qur'an unequivocally says:

:"O! mankind, we created you from a single pair of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may despise each other. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of God is he who is most righteous of you" (Q 49:13).

CONCLUSION

It has to be understood from this attempt that there is nothing wrong with the tenets of Islam. This has been discussed extensively and objectively. It is believed that Islam is a guidance for its adherents to follow. Any disorderliness that may be discovered is not in the religion but in the ways and manners the adherents have interpreted the tenets and put such into practice.

Some have fought for personal motives such as material gains or to acquire positions in life. However, the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad makes a categorical statement on this when it says:

"Action shall be judged according to intention ..."

Terrorism in any form among adherents of different religions within our society is uncalled for. If the Qur'an allows Muslims to eat the food of the Christians and marry out of their women those who are chaste, and in Christianity, if the major teaching is based on love of even the

enemies, there is no reason why adherents of the two religions should engage in violence at anytime. This shows, definitely, that the problem is not in accordance with the teachings of their respective religions but they are creating those problems out of their own volition.

I therefore, through this article, wish to call on all religious groups throughout the world in general and in Nigeria particularly to be more tolerant in the practice of their faith.

Muslims should realize that Islam preaches peace and we should always, as we have been doing, maintain peace. It is a misconception to regard Islam or Muslims as lover (s) of terrorism. This is not strange to one's hearing, as Islam has been described as a misunderstood religion. However, some adherents of Islam constitute greater obstacles to the right perception of Islam due to their lack of knowledge which is a serious disease. Because of their ignorance about what Islam is, they do not behave in the right manner and do not put Islam into practice principally, practically, morally, economically and socially. To this effect, they misinterpret the teachings of Islam, discourage and block the way of making others appreciate the Islamic principles, concepts and values. Conclusively, it is not a pre-occupation of any Muslim to engage in terrorism, violence or war, as it is not part of the objectives of Islamic Faith which centres on the world peace. The Clarion call for peace being preached through the religion of Islam is realizable, if the Muslims are neither provoked religiously nor cheated politically or economically and marginalized socially. ■

Payam-e-Insanayat Forum

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Having been impressed with diabolical juncture of the country and deprivation of human qualities and norms late Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's restless soul felt an urgent need to launch a movement in the name of "Payam-e-Insaniyat (Message of Humanity) to foster love and amity between different sections of the society, The idea of Payam-e-Insaniyat originated at Siwan (Bihar), where Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi had gone to address a large congregation, subsequent to a holocaust which took heavy toll of Muslims lives. An abominable image of Muslims aggravated by media had been formed in the minds of the majority. Maulana's speech elicited following comments from a Hindu senior citizen in the audience: "Maulana, I have listened only, to two speeches, one by CR Das (Deshbandhu) and the other is yours. Muslims and non-Muslims alike have a right over you. I urge you to visit this city once again."

The initiation of this auspicious and noble mission was set in Allahabad. The, reason of which in Maulana's own words: "We have started this humble work from Allahabad because the city is associated with "Allah"

Maulana Bilal Hasani Nadwi under the patronship of Maulana S. M. Rabey Hasani 'Nadwi, Rector Nadwatul Ulama and President All India Muslim Personal law Board is still closely associated with the movement to steer the message all through.

AIMS & OBJECTS

1. To create mutual good-will and an atmosphere of affection and kindness purely on human and national levels founded on BROTHERHOOD and WELL-BEING of MANKIND generally; to put an end to violence, lawlessness, anarchy, moral degradation and create FELLOW-FEELING towards each other; and to hold Public meetings and Seminars for promoting and spreading the sense of sharing sorrows and sufferings of human beings.
2. Publication of useful cultural/moral literature in various National, Regional and widely spoken languages; to bring together through service and sacrifice, people belonging to different classes and communities; to restore confidence amongst people who have become sick of life ; and restore and revive love for life in spiritually sick souls and to give them a virtuous AIM of life.
3. To weed-out from the society and human race:
 - (i) Bribery and illegal gratification;
 - (ii) Nepotism and favouritism;
 - (iii) Misconceptions arising out of hatred;
 - (iv) Hoarding, profiteering and black-marketing;
 - (v) Sectarianism;
 - (vi) Disparity in economic and living standards and
 - (vii) Full-fledged crusade against sub-

standard behavioural inclinations and obscenity.

4. To eradicate ill-founded rites, rituals and cruel conventions.
5. To uplift irrespective of caste, creed, colour and sex the poor, the backward, the neglected, the down-trodden, and the agonised people.
6. To create a sense of sobriety, social service, submissiveness, self-respect, self-restraint, self-confidence, self-vigilance, and to raise cultural and intellectual levels of the STUDENT COMMUNITY and the up and coming GENERATION thereby helping them to grow into better and useful citizens.
7. To extend all possible help in personal sphere and on the levels of a locality, village and town and finally, in the Country for creating, FEELINGS OF LOVE, AFFECTION and BROTHERHOOD.

Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH) says, "Sharing others suffering are man's highest virtue. 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 rivers of gold and silver flow in it, and even if wealth showers over its land like rain, it will still pauper if its stream of love is dried. The blessings of Allah will not descend on it. It is a matter of 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 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, it is a heart of 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."

Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee condoling the demise of Ali Mian had said. "Ali Mian, as he was respectfully known, was also a great humanitarian. In his last message he strongly condemned the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Plane, stating, "Nobody, having respect and love for human beings can ever approve of such action."

Needless to add that for the fulfilment of his mission, Maulana did not flinch from speaking the truth on the face; be it Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, V.P. Singh, Narsimha Rao or Atal Bihari Vajpae. His sole purpose was to convey what, in his opinion, was good for all classes is good for the country as a whole.

Maulana is no more today with us but his message and teachings are here to guide us. We should do our best to spread it in every corner of the country so that an atmosphere of brotherhood, fraternity and love may perpetuate amongst us. ■

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