



THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

Vol. XVIII No. 6

June, 2016

Post Box No. 93,
Nadwatul Ulama
Tagore Marg,
Lucknow -226007

Ph. No. : 0522-2740406

Fax : (0522) 2741221 E-mail: nadwa@sancharnet.in

Rs. 15/-



The Fragrance of East

Founder:

Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH)

Patron:

S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

Advisory Board :

S. M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi

Shah Ebadur Rahman

Mohd. Hamza Hasani Nadwi

Shamsul Haque Nadwi

Editor:

Shariq Alavi

Asstt. Editor:

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Islamic Culture

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The Prophets of Allah do not only call people to the religion of Islam by presenting tenets of the Islamic Faith and its codes of law; they also pioneer a new culture, a new civilization, and a new way of life. Such a culture can aptly be called "Ibrahimi Culture". This culture has certain fundamental principles and characteristics which distinguish it from other cultures based on ignorance. This distinction may be seen in its spirit and principles as well as in its outward manifestations and details.

The first distinctive characteristic of the Islamic culture is the authentic religious beliefs, social ethics, and moral values on which it is based. This factor is commonly shared by Muslims all over the world, irrespective of their nationality, language, and dressing style. Due to this common feature Muslims from different parts of the world look like members of a family, easily identifiable as representatives of the same culture. Thus, the Muslims of the world have a specific culture of their own which could be best called the "Ibrahimi Culture". ■

CONTENTS

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----|
| 1- The Message of Ramazan | - <i>S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi</i> | 7 |
| 2- Zakat | - <i>Syed Sulaiman Nadwi</i> | 10 |
| 3- Prophet's Sermon on Ramazan | - | 22 |
| 4- Mosques as Community Centres
for Meditation, Creation and
Radiation | - <i>Syed Habibul Haq Nadvi</i> | 23 |
| 5- Moral Virtues | - <i>Manzoor Nomani</i> | 27 |
| 6- The Ulama As Guardians
Community Behaviour | - <i>Abdul Kader Choughley</i> | 31 |
| 7- Needed: Real Democracy | - <i>Obaidur Rahman Nadwi</i> | 34 |
| 8- Women: Towards Reconciliation
and Liberation | - <i>Tariq Ramadan</i> | 37 |

Wisdom of Qur'an

"They say: 'If we were to follow this guidance with you, we should be snatched away from our land.' Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary to which fruits of all kinds are brought as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know."

(Al Qur'an – 28:57)

This is what the Qurayshite unbelievers used to say as an excuse for not accepting Islam. When we reflect on this, we realise that this was indeed the main reason for their denial. In order to appreciate it fully, we should bear in mind the position of Quraysh in those times, a position which they felt would be undermined if they were to accept Islam. "What initially lent eminence to the Quraysh in Arabia was their descent from Ishmael. When, thanks to the sagacity of Qusayy ibn Kilab, the Quraysh became the custodians of the Ka'bah and settled down in Makkah, their importance grew." "Here is God's first answer to the excuse the Quraysh offered. This response amounted to saying: "Is it not because of God's special favour that it is looked upon with respect and veneration by all, and every year thousands of people come to it as pilgrims? It is thanks to this favour that you have become the leaders of Arabia and the major beneficiaries of the flourishing international trade of your time. Do you think that by rebelling against God Who, in the first place, bestowed this favour on you, you will prosper, and that you will be instantly destroyed if you follow God's Religion?" ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

"Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: "A person who calls people towards doing good deeds will get the same reward as those who follow him and do good; and nothing will be diminished from the requital of the latter. Similarly, those who call the people towards vice will have the same punishment as those who follow him without any diminution in the punishment of the perpetrators."

(Muslim)

Our deeds are either good or bad as no deed can be both good and evil. And people, in given circumstances, are tempted to do either good or bad deed. This hadith gives good tidings to a person who not only does good deeds but invites others to do so. It also warns a person against inviting his/her fellow beings to vice. Calling people towards doing good deeds is in itself a virtuous act. It wins the pleasure of the Lord Almighty as well as provides an opportunity for the invitee for doing good deeds. Contrary to it, the act of inviting people to commit some evil is in itself a vicious act. It earns the Divine wrath as well as puts the invitee in a position that earns the Divine wrath. "God is All-Powerful. He can give reward and award punishment to whom He wills. He knows perfectly well the deeds done by His servants as well as the intention lurking behind the commission of the deed. Hence His judgement is based on human actions. He however can forgive whomsoever He wills." ■

The Blessed Month of Ramazan

Ramadhan is the month of peace, tranquility, piety, righteousness, generosity and bestowal. Of the five tenets of Islam, fasting in the month of Ramadhan is a must every year. During fast one must abstain from eating, drinking and smoking including inoculation and injections from dawn to dusk. In this context the verses of the Holy Quran which ordain for fasting, as an obligatory duty for Muslims are as follows:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that ye may (learn) self restraint." (Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number should be made up from later days. For those who can do it (with hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that indigent, but he that will give more, of his own free will, it is better for him, and it is better for ye that ye face, if ye only knew". (S.2,A.183-184)

Ramadhan's significance can be gauged from the fact that "the Quran was revealed to prophet Muhammad(PBUH) in this month as a guide to mankind, also clear (signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present at his house during that month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later. God intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties. He wants you to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance ye shall be grateful. (S.2,A.185)

Needless to add that like Salat (Prayers), fasting has been an essential duty for the followers of earlier Prophets. The Bible says that Jesus Christ fasted for forty days (Matthew 4: 1-4, Mark 1:12-13 and Luke 4:1-4). In Peter 2:21 the followers of Christ are enjoined to fast as the Prophet did. Even the Vedas and the Puranas prescribe fasting. Thus earlier peoples fasted though with a difference in the number of days and the prescribed time of fasting.

It should be kept in mind that this particular month has been considered sacred even from pre-Islamic days too. Ibn-Hisham states that the Qurayesh in the days of ignorance spent one month a year on Mt. Hira, practicing penance (Tahannuth). Before instituting fasting of Ramadhan Muhammad (PBUH) evidently observed fast on the tenth of Moharram". (History of the Arabs, p. 133)

During Ramadhan evil conceals itself while good comes to the fore and the whole atmosphere is filled with piety and purity. The holy prophet says: "The deed of son of Adam is' increased several times (in Ramadhan) and the reward is increased by ten times. But Allah says that fasting is exclusively for Him and He himself will deliver its reward (to His bondsmen) as he abstains from eating and controls his desires only for Him. There are (two instances) of happiness for the fasting Muslim, one is at the time of breaking his fast and the other at the time meeting his Lord. And verily to Allah, the smell of fasting person's breath is the best and cleanliest. "The prophet of Islam also says: There is a door of paradise called Rayyan towards which only the fasting will be called. Only the fastings will be called. Only the fastings will enter it and those who enter it will never feel thirsty.

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of Allah said: "when the month of Ramazan' comes, the Gates of Heaven are thrown open, and the Gates of Hell are shut, and the devils are put behind the bar." (In another report, the "Gates of Mercy" are mentioned in place of the "Gates of Heaven." (Bukhari and Muslim)

"Salman Farsi narrates that the Apostle of Allah delivered a sermon on the last day of Sha'ban in which he said:'

"O my people! You are on the threshold of a month of great solemnity and blessings. It is a month whose one night is better than a thousand months. God has prescribed fasting in this month and make Taraweeh prayers optional Whosoever willingly and with good intentions does one good act in this month will have the merit of having done an obligatory act in other months and one who does a prescribed act in this month it will be equal to seventy prescribed act of other months. This is the month of endurance and the reward of endurance is paradise and this the month of sympathy with and care of the needy men of the community". (Mishkat)

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of Allah said: "Whoever omits even a single fast of Ramazan without the legal concession of a journey etc. or (a valid excuse like that of illness), amends cannot be made for the thing that is omitted even though he observes fasting throughout the life." (Tirmizi)

It is needless to add that fasting is a shield against sins, crimes, vices and other un-Islamic acts. The prophet says: "Fast is like a shield for protection from satan's attack. Therefore, when one observes fast he should use this shield and abstain from quarreling. If anybody abuses him or quarrels with him, he should simply say: Brother, I am fasting do not expect me to indulge in similar conduct (Bukhari & Muslim)

To restore real spirit of fast, it is incumbent to observe it with prescribed rules and regulations. The noble prophet said: "If one does not give up speaking a lie during fast, God does not require him to give up eating and drinking (Bukhari).

On another occasion, he said: "Many are the people who fast but who "gain nothing from their fasts except hunger and thirst: and many are those who stand praying all night but gain nothing except sleeplessness (Darimi)"

To sum up the fasting according to Islam, is a spiritual discipline and as a consequence it inculcates moral discipline. It imparts moral strength and leads to the promotion of" virtues of piety.■

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.

The Message of Ramazan

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

O Believers! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you. That you may become pious. (Al-Baqarah 2: 183)

The above Qur'anic verse lays down that fasting is a religious duty incumbent on all Muslims. Until the last Day the command embodied in this verse remains valid. Embedded in the verse is thus much food for thought.

First, the command is addressed to believers. For the command involves doing something which is difficult. It calls for courage and patience to fast. Accordingly, mention is made first of faith. The believers are asked to discharge this duty. For they have pledged their servitude to Him, affirming that He is the Master and Ruler-interest. For they are obliged to perform whatever He commands of them. This is because of their servitude to Him. Being His servants they are expected to behave thus. They are at His beck and call. Allah being All-Wise begins the command in the above fashion. Otherwise, secular laws are promulgated without any reference to one's gain or safety against some loss. Although Allah is the absolute Ruler, Creator of the heavens and earth who exercises total control over everyone's life, honour and property, He invokes the conviction of believers. Muslim are exhorted to act on the dictates of their

faith. They are expected to respond vigorously and positively to His call. Against this backdrop they are told that a month-long fasting is prescribed for them as a religious duty.

Allah is thoroughly conversant with human nature. For He is man's Creator. At the same time, He makes certain allowances for man out of His wisdom and mercy. Whenever He enacts a command, He prepares man mentally for it, enabling him to obey His command willingly. Man is instinctively repulsed by something new and odd. However, on realising that something is a standard practice, followed down the ages by many generations, man is drawn towards it and feels no hesitation in obeying such a command.

Believers are informed that fasting was a duty obligatory upon earlier generations as well. One learns from the history of world religions and nations that fasting has been a religious obligation in some form during all periods of time. Its details may be found in religious and historical works. One learns the exact form and duration of fasting among different religious communities. Finer points about the restrictions and the starting and concluding times of fasting may also be gleaned. Constraints of space prevent us from exploring this point any further.

The important truth home though

is that fasting helps man attain piety. The Qur'an employs the term taqwa in this context. Generally speaking, words are invested with different meanings with the passage of time. A pious person is taken to be one who is constantly engaged in worship, and who sleeps little. One who does not fall asleep at all is recognised as a perfectly pious person. He is expected to offer prayers all the time and is very cautious about each and every issue, be it religious or mundane. In the original Arabic, however, taqwa does not carry these shades of meaning. It does not imply that one blessed with taqwa is given wholly to worship, stays awake throughout the night and fasts round the year. Instead taqwa signifies in the original Arabic a state of mind and consciousness. It encompasses one's temperament and way of thinking, Ramadan helps man attain piety. Yet it does not mean that with the passage of Ramadan, piety comes to an end. Piety is not some temporary condition.

Piety represents a constant state of self-control and restraint. It a child is brought up well, he imbibes the value of respecting his elders. He does not indulge in any act in the presence of his elders which may be offensive to them. By the same token, he refrains from mocking or insulting them. Piety signifies such a training of the mind which guides one to practice moral values all the time. A pious person thinks carefully before taking any action whether his act is permitted by the

Shari'ah or not. This reference to the Shari'ah at every step is a pointer to one's piety. Take the illustrious examples of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, holding exalted rank among the Prophet's Companions. They were witness to the revelation of the Qur'an. Furthermore, they possessed mastery over the Arabic language and idiom. They were born and brought up in Makkah and used the local language fluently. As true Companions they never felt shy of seeking clarification from the Prophet (PBUH). Once they asked 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud to define taqwa. To this he replied: "O Commander of the Faithful! Have you ever walked on a path with thorns on either side?" When 'Umar replied in the affirmative, he asked as to how he walked on that path. 'Umar replied: "I walk cautiously, ensuring that body and clothes are safe against thorns." 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud exclaimed: "This is the definitions of taqwa - to lead life in a way with our doing anything which may displease Allah. One's deeds should not be discordant with the Shari'ah."

Those not familiar with Arabic idiom think that fasting is prescribed for making believers pious. It is not however the point that one who fasts for twenty-nine or thirty days in Ramadan will turn into a pious person at the end of the month. One who fasts, recites the Qur'an often and prays to Allah at night, including offering Tarawih Prayers, does not turn automatically into a pious person. This is not the end of his

test. It signifies, at most, that he did not eat or drink during the daytime in Ramadan even what is lawful and wholesome, and he did so at Allah's command. Even a drop of water was not consumed by him. Needless to add, water is one of the greatest divine bounties. Allah has created every living being out of water. A true believer does not eat food during the daytime of Ramadan, though he was provided with food by Allah. He had food items at home bought out of his lawful earnings. Yet he did not take food or water, though he needed these as a human being. Only in deference to Allah's command did he not touch these otherwise lawful and wholesome things from dawn to dusk. Not a drop of water should pass his lips. Since one does all this in accordance with Allah's command, one should make a point of living by His directives after Ramadan as well. One should discern between the lawful and the unlawful. We are very sensitive to any impurity. Let us bear in mind that disobedience to Allah is the most damaging impurity.

As we forego lawful and wholesome things during Ramadan in deference to Allah's command, we should not draw near any sin after the month of Ramadan is over. We should not do anything which may displease him. Nor should we ever tell a lie. By the same token, we should not give false testimony or hurt any fellow Muslim's feelings. We should

not deny anyone his due or indulge in slandering. We should refrain from stealing, injustice, violence, and hurting others. Piety consists in shunning all that is sinful, impure and immoral. A constant effort to keep away from evil constitutes piety.

There is some difference an act of worship and piety. The latter represents an outlook and temperament. One may perform acts of worship. However, in a state of anger and in mundane transactions one may disregard the spirit of one's worship. This underscores a lack of piety. One's mind should be permeated with piety. Fasting is prescribed for Muslims for instilling piety into their minds and hearts. One should think all along of one's ultimate return and accountability to Allah.

Piety signifies God-consciousness. One should weigh up before doing anything whether this act will please or enrage Allah. One should ascertain first whether such action is in accord with the Shari'ah or not, and whether it is lawful or not. One's action should follow the command of Allah and His Messenger. Becoming habitual about this constant checking infuses piety into one. This is the rationale behind declaring fasting in Ramadan as an obligatory duty. For it may bless one with piety. ■

(Guidance from the Holy Quran by S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Page 80-84)

Zakat

- Syed Sulaiman Nadwi

“And pay the poor-due”. (2 : 83)

The word *Zakat* is derived from the word *zaka* which means “it (a plant) grew”. The second derivative of this word carries the sense of purification, e.g. *qad aflaha man zakkaha* (He is indeed successful who purified himself). The other word used for *Zakat* both in the Qur’an and the *Hadith* is *sadaqa* which is derived from *sidq* (the truth). Both these words are highly significant. The spending of wealth for the sake of Allah purifies the heart of man of the love of material wealth of this world.

Islam proclaims that the true owner of everything is not man but Allah, Who bestows wealth on people out of His beneficence as He sees fit. Hence those to whom He has given more have an obligation to spend from His bounty on those who need help. The payment of *Zakat* which is the share of Allah and the Muslim community in the Muslims’ wealth, purifies his remaining possessions and makes his ownership of them legal and permissible. It also purifies the heart from greed and selfishness. In any society there will always be people in distress and want for one reason or another: due to some calamity, war, a disabling condition, the inability to find work or orphans, widows and the aged who are unable to work and who have no one to provide for them. Obviously there must be some permanent, workable provision for them which is also

compatible with human dignity and which simultaneously eliminates bitterness and envy between the rich and the poor. It is to be remembered that in spite of the modern advances in economic systems, method of distribution of wealth, and concern for the rights of the human beings to have their basic needs met, no ideology or economic system has been able to develop any institution comparable to *Zakat* for dealing with the problem of poverty while at the same time offering a solution to class rivalries and hatred.

Zakat is the most effective means to improve the economic condition of the have-nots. It is not a mere tax, but a form of worship whereby a man comes close to his Lord. The Muslims have, therefore, been enjoined to pay *Zakat* with the same sense of earnestness and devotion in which the seeker of the pleasure of the Lord observes the prayer.

It should also be remembered that *Zakat* or *Sadaqa* in Islam is an obligatory act which every Muslim is enjoined to perform if he is sincere in his belief in Allah and the Hereafter. Thus there is no burden of obligation on one who receives *Zakat*, but a sense of thankfulness and gratitude on the part of the giver, since he has been enabled by the recipient to discharge his obligation which he owes to Allah and society.

The importance of *Zakat* can be understood from the fact that it has been

mentioned at eighty two places in the Holy Qur'an in close connection with prayer. The companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) knew its basic importance in Islam. It is a known fact that after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) some of the tribes who believed in Oneness of God and observed prayer, refused to pay *Zakat*, and the first Caliph Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) in an answer to the advice of Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) to show tolerance towards them, said in explicit terms "By Allah, I would definitely wage war against them who separate prayer from *Zakat*."

Jabir b. 'Abdullah (Allah be pleased with him) reported: I gave the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for offering prayer perfectly, giving *Zakat*, and giving good advice to every Muslim.

Ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) reported: A delegation of the tribe of 'Abdul Qais came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: O Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) we are from the tribe of Rabi'a, and the infidels of the tribe of Mudar stand between us and you; so we cannot come to you except during the sacred months. Please order us to do something (religious deeds) which we may take it from you (carry out) and also invite to it our people whom we have left behind. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: I order you to do four things and forbid you

four others: (I order you) to have faith in Allah, and confess that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, (and the Prophet) gestured with his hand like this (i.e. one knot) and to offer prayers perfectly and to pay the *Zakat*, and to pay one-fifth of the booty in Allah's cause. And I forbid you to use *Dubba'*, *Hantama*, *Naqir* and *Muzaffat* (all are utensils used for preparing alcoholic drinks).

Ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent Mu'adh (Allah be pleased with him) to Yemen and said: Invite the people to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and I am Allah's Messenger and if they obey you to do so, then inform them that Allah has enjoined on them five prayers in every day and night, and if they obey you to do so, then inform them that Allah has made it obligatory for them to pay the *Zakat* from their property and it is to be taken from the wealthy amongst them and given to the poor. In the fifth year of the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mission, the life became so utterly unbearable for Muslims at Makkah that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) advised them to leave the city and go to Abyssinia. A group of Muslims, therefore, migrated to the Kingdom of Negus who asked about their religion.

In reply Hadrat Ja'far (Allah be pleased with him) said besides other things: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded us to serve God and join no one in His service,

and he commanded us to pray; give alms and to keep fast. Ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) said: Abu Sufyan narrated to me the *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the conversation which happened between him (Abu Sufyan) and Heraclius and quoted from it: "He (the Prophet) ordered us to pray perfectly and pay the *Zakat*, to keep good relations with kith and kin and to be chaste."

The Rate of Zakat

Zakat is paid on the surplus of wealth which is left over the passage of a year. Leaving aside merchandise, animals and agricultural yield; *Zakatis* paid at almost uniform rate of 2% percent.

The minimum standard of surplus wealth over which *Zakat* is charged is known as *Nisab*. It differs with different kinds of wealth, the most important being 200 dirhams or 52½ tolas (nearly 21 oz.) in case of silver, and 20 *mithqals* or 7½ tolas (nearly 3 oz.) in case of gold. The *Nisab* of cash is the same as that of gold and silver.

A basic principle has been laid down for the *Sadaqa* (*Zakat*) in the agricultural produce. If the land is irrigated by artificial methods, one-twentieth part of the yield is to be paid as *Zakat*, but if the land irrigated by rainfall, streams, rivers, fountains or by the moisture of the earth, i.e. by the natural resources of water, then one-tenth (*usher*) is to be paid as *Zakat*. There is some difference of opinion whether 'usher is levied on all types of agricultural yield or some particular types.

Imam Shaukani and Amir Muhammad Isma'il are in favour of the second opinion, i.e. it is to be paid on wheat, barley, dates and raisins and Imam Malik and Shafi'l believe that *Zakat* is payable on that yield which can be dried and stored for food.

According to Imam Abu Hanifa, *Zakatis* to be paid on all types of agricultural yield, provided the aim of cultivation is to improve upon the land and make it useful for growing of crops. Thus only fuel, bamboo, grass and those trees which bear no fruit are exempted for *Zakat*. He considers *Zakat* to be compulsory even on vegetables and fruits, which, according to some *Ahadith*, are exempted from *Zakat*. The scholars have reconciled the two views saying that the exemption granted in case of vegetables implies that the proceeds of the *Zakat* are not to be sent to Bait-ul-Mal, but the owner may himself distribute it among the poor. (Maulana Anwar Shah, *Faid-ul-Bari*: Vol. III p. 46).

The horse which is used for fighting in *Jihad* is exempted from the payment of *Zakat* but on horses which are reared for trade *Zakat* is levied. Similar is the case of slave. Now when slavery is abolished, the question of payment of *Zakat* on slaves does not arise. *Faid-ul-Bari*: Vol: II, p.39)

A women must pay *Zakat* out of her ornaments. A trader is also required to pay *Zakat* on his goods. In case of treasure trove or minerals one-fifth (shall be taken by the State).

In case of booty (gains of the battle) one-fifth (shall also be taken by the

State). It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And know that whenever ye takes as spoils of war, lo! a fifth thereof is for Allah and for the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and for the kinsman (who hath need) and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, if ye believe in Allah and that which We revealed unto Our slave. (8 : 41)

Zakat (Sadaqa) Fitr

The prescribed *Sadaqa* of Ramadan is a compulsory payment which every Muslim is required to make as a token of thankfulness to Allah for having enabled him to observe fasts. It is preferable and, according to some jurists, obligatory to pay *Sadaat-ul-Fitr* before going out for prayer, because its early payment would enable the poor to participate in the rejoicing of 'Id-ul-Fitr. But if one missed to pay it before, one can offer it after their. It is binding on every Muslim whose possession come up to the *Nisab* of *Zakat*. The general opinion of the scholars in that *Sadaqat-ul-Fitr* is equal to one sa of dried dates or barley per head (A sa' is equal to 112 ounces or 3½ seers), Imam Abu Hanifa is of the opinion that in case of fine wheat it is equal to half a sa'. The grain or barley or wheat may be converted into cash and then payment made. So far as children and slaves are concerned, their parents and guardians are required to pay the *Sadaqa* on their behalf. The *Sadaqa* of wife is to be paid by her husband.

The following table shows the *Zakat* prescribed on cattle by the Holy

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and sent in writing to the Governors for collection. The illustrious companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also sent the copies thereof to the collectors of *Zakat* to collect it as ordained therein.

Name of cattle	Number	Rate of Zakat
Camel	1 to 4	Nil
Camel	5 to 9	One goat or sheep
Camel	10 to 14	Two goats or sheep
Camel	15 to 19	Three goats or sheep
Camel	20 to 24	Four goats or sheep
Camel	25 to 35	Yearling female camel
Camel	36 to 45	A two years old female Camel
Camel	46 to 60	A three years old female camel
Camel	61 to 75	A four years old female Camel
Camel	76 to 90	Two camel's female two year old colts
Camel	91 to 120	Two camel's female three year old colts
Camel	Above 120	The <i>Zakat</i> is to be calculated by the aforesaid rule
Goat or sheep	1 to 39	Nil
Goat or sheep	40 to 120	One goat or sheep
Goat or sheep	121 to 200	Two goats or sheep
Goat or sheep	201 to 300	Three goats or sheep
Goat or sheep	Above 300	One goat or sheep on every hundred
Cow, bull, buffalo	1 to 29	Nil
Cow, bull, buffalo	30	A one year old calf

Cow, bull, buffalo 40	A calf of two years
Cow, bull, buffalo Above 40	The <i>Zakat</i> is to be calculated according to the aforesaid rule
Cow, bull, buffalo 60	Two yearling calves
Cow, bull, buffalo 70	One-year old calf and a calf of two years
Cow, bull, buffalo 80	Two calves two years old
Cow, bull, buffalo 90	Three calves one-year old
Cow, bull, buffalo 100	Two calves one year old and one calf two years old
Cow, bull, buffalo More than Hundred	Upon every ten head of cattle, a calf two years-old alternatively. Thus upon one hundred and ten kine the <i>Zakat</i> is two calves, two years old and a one-year-old and a one-year-old calf; and upon one hundred and twenty, four calves one-year-old. The method, however, of calculating the <i>Zakat</i> on large herds of cattle is by dividing them into thirties and forties

imposing upon every thirty one-year-old calf and upon every forty one calf two years old.

The minimum limit of surplus wealth after the passage of one year on which *Zakat* is charged is known as *Nisab*. In case this surplus wealth falls short of this limit no *Zakat* is payable thereon as indicated below:

Name of Possessions	The Minimum limit below which <i>Zakat</i> is not Payable
Grain and fruits	Five <i>wasqs</i> . <i>Wasq</i> is nearly equal to 5 mounds and 2½ seers. Thus five <i>wasqs</i> would mean 25 mounds and 12½ seers.
Camels	Five number
Cows, bulls, buffaloes	Thirty number
Goats, sheep	Forty number
Gold	Twenty mithqals or 7½ tolas (nearly 3 oz)
Silver	Two hundred dirhams or 52½ tolas (nearly 21 oz)

Zakat upon Articles of Merchandise

Articles of merchandise should be appraised, and a *Zakat* of 2½ percent should be paid upon the value, if it exceeds two hundred dirhams in value. *Zakat* is not due on the necessaries of life, such as dwelling houses, clothes, household utensils or furniture, or cattle kept for

immediate riding or slaves employed as actual servants, or armour and weapons designed for present use, or upon books of science and technology used by scholars or upon tools used by craftsmen.

Zakat upon Horses

When horses and mares are kept indiscriminately together, feeding for the greater part of the year on pasture, it is the option of the proprietor to give a *Zakat* of one dinar per head on the whole, or to appreciate the whole and give five per cent on the total value. No *Zakat whatever* is due upon droves of horses consisting entirely of males, or entirely of mares. There is no *Zakat* due upon horses or mules, unless they are articles of merchandise, nor it is due upon war horse, or upon beasts of burden, or upon cattle kept for drawing ploughs and so forth.

The *Zakat* is payable to the Muslim State or some other authority; it must be collected at some central place and then distributed. One-third or one-fourth of the *Zakat* may be kept in the hand of the person who pays the *Zakat*, for distribution according to his choice. The Qur'an (4:5) recognizes that wealth is the basis and essential means of the subsistence of the humanity. Therefore, it should not be surprising that payment of *Zakat* is one of the fundamentals of Islam. In Islam one does not pay a tribute to the chief of the city for his personal luxury and vanity, but the primary motive of *Zakat* is religious and spiritual and growing and purifying one's

self. It is in fact a good means of ameliorating the hard lot of the poor and the needy and enabling them to stand on their own legs. Its social significance is that it awakens in man the sense of brotherhood with less fortunate members of society. From the economic point of view it discourages hoarding and concentration of wealth and helps its steady and constant flow from the rich to the poor. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: The chief of a people is in fact their servant. In order to demonstrate the truth of this saying, and the absolute selflessness with which he assumed the direction of his people both as spiritual guide and the head of the State, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) formally declared that the revenues of the Muslim State, coming from *Zakat* payers, were religiously forbidden to him and to all the members of his tribe. If the head of the State does not abuse public confidence it follows that his subordinates cannot but be more scrupulous in the performance of their duties.

The Expenditure out of Zakat

The Qur'an speaks in detail of the expenditure of the State and the principal heads of government budget:

The *Sadaqat*(*Zakat*) are only for the poor and the needy, and those who work (for these State revenues), and those whose hearts are to be won, and

for (freeing) the necks and the heavily indebted, and for the cause of God, (for) the wayfarers; a duty imposed by God, and God is the Knower, the Wise.

(9: 60)

In the first category of beneficiaries come the poor (*fuqara*), and the needy (*masakin*).

Those who work for the revenues are the collectors, accountants, those in charge of the expenditure, controllers, auditors, who practically embrace the entire financial administration, both civil and military, of the State. As for those whose hearts are to be reconciled they are of four kinds:

- 1) Non-Muslims who are hostile toward Islam in order to pacify their anger by spending on them and bringing them over to the aid of the Muslims.
- 2) In order that they abstain from doing harm to the Muslims.
- 3) Those new converts from whom there is danger that due to their past enmity against Islam or lack of steadfastness they would revert to their former religion if it was not spent on them.
- 4) Those by whose means conversion to Islam becomes possible for the members of their tribes.

The term, freeing the necks, implies the emancipation of the slaves and the ransoming of the prisoners of war.

Aid to those who are heavily indebted or have too great charge may be realized in different ways. We see the

caliph 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) organizing a service of interest-free loans also.

For the cause of God includes every charitable act and deed to promote the cause of Islam and the jurists have not hesitated to start with the military equipment for the defence of Islam, since Islam struggles solely for the establishment of the Sovereignty of Allah.

As for the "wayfarers", one can help them not only by hospitality but also by assuring them health and comfort, security of routes and every other measure for the well-being of those who pass through a place other than their own, be they countrymen or strangers.

The Persons who Deserve Zakat More than Others

Before the advent of Islam it was generally thought that the reward for payment of *Zakat* to the strangers and unknown persons was greater than the payment to one's own relatives but in Islam the order in which we should spend our wealth is: First on one's own self then on one's wife and children, then on relatives and friends and neighbours and then on others. So the *Zakat* on the surplus wealth which is left over after the passage of year should be preferably paid to the relatives, friends or neighbours as they deserve most. It is, however, not correct to say that if preference is given to the relatives than others, then who will help the poor and the needy. It is not so as everyone of us has his relatives and if we

look to the need of our relatives, it would mean fulfilling the needs of the whole humanity. It does not at all mean that however small be the need of the relative than others preference in paying the *Zakat* will always be given to the relative. Nothing is farther from the truth. Only in that case where the needs are equal the relative or the friend or neighbour will be deserving more for *Zakat* than a stranger or an unknown person. In other words, this factor of need being equal shall be kept in mind before giving preference in payment of *Zakat* to the relative or friend or neighbour or others.

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: *Miskin* (poor man) is not the one who goes round to the people and is dismissed with one or two morsels, and one or two dates. They (the Prophet's companions) said: Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then who is *miskin*? He said: He who does not get enough to satisfy him and he is not considered so (as to elicit the attention of the benevolent people), so that charity may be given to him, and he does not beg anything from people.

Here we have been given the true definition of *miskin* and told about the people who may be regarded as the true recipient of charity. The professional beggars are not *miskin*, but those self-respecting poor men who exert their utmost to find an honest living and stand

on their own feet, but they do not get means enough to do so. Moreover, they want to preserve their dignity and do not like to disclose their poverty to the people. Such persons deserve charity. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And of them is he who defameth thee in the matter of the alms. If they are given thereof they are content, and if they are not given thereof; behold they are enraged.

(How much more seemly) had they been content with that which Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had given them and had said: Allah sufficeth us, Allah will give us of His bounty, and also His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Unto Allah we are suppliants. (9 : 58,59)

Once a person asked the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to give him something out of *Zakat* He said: O man! None of the human beings, even the Prophets, has the authority to distribute the *Zakat* of his own accord; it rests with Allah. If you come under the category of eight beneficiaries of *Zakat* as ordained in the Holy Qur'an, I can give (*Zakat*) to you.

These eight categories of expenditure out of *Zakat* budget include all types of good and virtuous acts and deeds for the well-being of others; expenditure on those *fuqara'* and *masakin* (poor and needy) persons who exert their utmost to find an honest living and stand on their own

feet, but they do not get means to do so or on those aged, ailing, blind, crippled and disabled persons who are unable to do any work or on widows and orphans who have none to support. Besides these, those on whom Zakat can be expended are: preachers of Islam, religious scholars, writers, soldiers defending the borders of the Islamic State, persons detained by the enemies etc., of whom no exhaustive list can be prepared, and who have devoted themselves entirely to the cause of Islam that they find no time to earn their livelihood. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

(Alms are) for the poor who are straitened for the cause of Allah, who cannot travel in the land (for trade). The unthinking man accounteth them wealthy because of their restraint. Thou should know them by their mark. They do not beg of men with impunity. And whatever good thing ye spend, lo! Allah knoweth it. (2 :273)

Practical Measures to Improve the Economic Condition

Almost all the religions of world have talked of the blessings and rewards of sympathizing with the poor and the needy. Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the first and the last of the Prophets who has taken practical measures to ameliorate the hard lot of this less fortunate class enabling them to stand on their own legs as the bitterness of their life cannot be cured by mere sweet words and attractive

promises of the future. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) himself led an extremely simple life and had none of the luxuries and comforts. Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: O Allah, make for the family of Muhammad the provision which is a bare subsistence. 'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. 'As (Allah be pleased with him) said: He heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: Destitute amongst the emigrants would precede the rich emigrants by forty years in getting into Paradise on the Day of Resurrection. Poverty of a person is not a matter of disgrace or low social status in the sight of Islam nor is the wealth of a person a standard of his dignity and excellence as the Holy Qur'an has set this standard in the following words:

Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct.

(49: 13)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) often said in supplication: O Allah let me live as *miskin* (poor man) and let me die as *miskin* (poor man) and let me be with them on the Day of Judgement 'A'isha (Allah be pleased with her) said: O Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) why? He said: Because they will enter Paradise before the rich persons. He then said: Do not send away any *miskin* disappointed and give him something,

may be half a date. O 'A'isha (Allah be pleased with her), love the poor, Allah will love you. *Ashab-us-Suffah* were poor strangers, without friends or place of abode. They implored the Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for protection. They learnt the Islamic way of life and also worked to earn their bare necessities of life. As they were poor persons, when Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went to meals, he used to call some of them to partake with him; and he selected others to eat with his companions.

Neither wealth makes the man evil nor poverty makes him an angel. Just as wealth is the cause of many evils, in the same way poverty is the cause of many evils and sins. The tremendous task of Prophethood was to save the humanity from these evils and sins by purifying their hearts from all evil thoughts and fancies. Although Islam has exhorted his followers to work hard and has placed no restrictions on earning by honest and lawful means it is against avariciousness and greed and craziness for collecting wealth through unfair and illegal means. Whereas Islam talks of wealth as *Khair*,¹ and *Fazl*,² good thing and bounty of Allah, it discourages hoarding and concentration of wealth and helps its steady and constant flow from the rich to the poor. In the *Ahadiith* too, wealth has not been deprecated.

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) visited S'ad

(Allah be pleased with him) as he was ill. He (S'ad) said: Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), I own a large property and I have only daughter as my inheritor. Should I not will away the whole of my property? He (the Holy Prophet) said: (Yes) one-third, and one-third is quite substantial. And what you spend as charity from your property is *Sadaqa*. and your spending on your family is also *Sadaqa*, and what your wife eats from your property is also *Sadaqa*. and that you leave your heirs well off (or he said: prosperous) is better than to leave them (poor and) begging from people. He (the Holy Prophet) pointed this with his hand. There were poor as well as rich among his (Holy Prophet's) followers. He treated them alike and made no distinction between them. The poor amongst the emigrants came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: The possessors of great wealth have obtained the highest ranks and the lasting bliss. He (the Holy Prophet) said: How is that? They said: They pray as we pray, and they observe fast as we observe fast, and they give charity but we do not give charity, and they set slaves free but we do not set slaves free. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Shall I not teach you something by which you will catch upon those who have preceded you, and get ahead of those who come after you, only those who do as you do being more excellent than you. He (the Holy Prophet) asked them to recite a *dhikr*. The

poor amongst the emigrants returned to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: Our brethren, the possessors of wealth have heard what we have done and they did the same. So the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: This is Allah's Grace.

Hakim b. Hizam (Allah be pleased with him) reported: I asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and he gave me, and then again I asked him and he gave me and he then said: This wealth is (like) green and sweet (fruit), and whoever takes it without greed, Allah will bless it for him, but whoever takes it with greed, Allah will not bless it for him, and he will be like the one who eats but is never satisfied. And the upper (giving) hand is better than the lower (taking) hand.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) strictly forbade all illegal and unlawful means of acquisition of wealth and property such as deceit, fraud, forgery, dishonesty, looting, usurping, aggression, gambling, usury etc. The most effective and easiest means of exploiting and looting the poor and the needy i.e. usury is considered in Islam as synonymous with war against Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as has been said in the "Holy Qur'an:

O ye who believe! Observe your duty to Allah, and give up what remaineth due to you from usury. If you are (in truth) believers.

And if ye do not, then be warned of war (against you) from Allah and His Messenger.

In the inherited property all the relatives who are its legal heirs according to the *Shari'ah* have their fixed right. The captured country is not the personal property of anyone in Islam but is a public property. Similar is the case of the bounties of nature such as water, pastures, grass, mines, mineral and other treasure troves falling to the lot of a country without any labour or struggle. The lands of the enemy coming into possession without waging war is not the right of the chiefs of clans or tribes nor of rich and wealthy persons but the poor and the needy and the helpless persons deserve them most. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an: That which Allah giveth as spoil unto His Messenger from the people of the townships, it is for Allah and His Messenger and for the near of kin and the orphan and the needy and the wayfarer, that it become not a commodity between the rich among you. (59: 7)

Miserliness, avarice and greed are the worst of evils in the sight of Islam. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And whose is saved from his own avarice such are they who are successful. (59 : 9)

Lo! Ye are those who are called to spend in the way of Allah, yet among you there are some who hoard. And as for him who hoardeth, he hoardeth only from his soul-And Allah is rich, and

you are poor.

(47 : 39)

O ye who believe, render not vain your charity by laying an obligation and by hurt, like him Who expends his wealth to be seen of men and he believes not in Allah and in the Last Day. (2 :264)

The man who spends not for the cause of Allah, but for laying an obligation and hurting one's feelings and for showing off his generosity is one who is devoid of sincere belief in Allah and trust in Him for His granting of reward to him in the Hereafter.

There were such persons among the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who considered it unlawful to withhold anything for the next day and not to give it away for the sake of Allah like Abu Dharr (Allah be pleased with him) and there were persons like Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) who spent all their wealth in the cause of Islam when the need arose and there were also such persons who gave over their whole merchandise in the path of Allah like 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) and there were also those who fed the hungry and themselves went without food and comforted the poor and the needy, suffering the pangs of hunger themselves like 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) and some of his (Holy Prophet's) companions from Ansar. The Holy Qur'an has praised them in the following verses:

And feed with food the *Miskin* (poor) the orphan and the prisoner for love of Him. (76 : 9)

Those who entered the city and the faith before them love those who flee unto them for refuge and find in their breasts no need for that which hath been given them, but prefer (the fugitives) above themselves though poverty become their lot. (5:9)

Disapproval of Begging

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: It is better for one among you to bring a load of firewood on his back and give charity out of it (and satisfy his own need) and be independent of people, than he should beg from people, whether they give him or refuse him. Verily the upper hand is better than the lower hand, and begin (charity) with your dependents.

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying that Allah said to him: Spend. I will bestow on you. He (the Holy Prophet) said: Richness does not lie in the abundance of (worldly) goods but richness is the richness of soul (heart, self). ■

Prophet's Sermon on Ramazan

Baihaqi reported on the authority of Salman Al-Farsi ® that Prophet (PBUH) delivered a sermon on the last day of the month of Sha'ban and said:

"O people! The month of Allah (Ramadhan) has come with its mercies, blessings and forgiveness. The days of this month are the best among the days and the nights are the best among the nights and the hours during Ramadhan are the best among the hours. This is a month in which you have been invited by Him (to fast and pray). Allah has honoured you in it. In every breath you take is a reward of Allah, your sleep is worship, your good deeds are accepted and your invocations are answered.

"Therefore, you most invoke your Lord in all earnestness with heart free from sin, evil, and pray that Allah may help you to keep fast, and to recite the Holy Qur'an. Indeed! Miserable is the one who is deprived of Allah's forgiveness in this great month. While fasting remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgment. Give alms to the poor and needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be in towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing (forbidden and your ears from sounds that should not be heard.

"Be kind to orphans so that if your children may become orphans they will also be treated with kindness. Do repent to Allah for your sins and supplicate with raised hands at the times of prayer as these are the best times, during which Allah Almighty looks at His servants with mercy. Allah answers if they supplicate, responds if they call, grants if He is asked and accepts if they entreat, a people! You have made your conscience the slave of your desires.

"Make it free by invoking Allah for forgiveness. Your back may break from the heavy load of your sins, so prostrate yourself before Allah for long intervals, and make this load lighter. Understand fully that Allah has promised in His Honour and Majesty that, people who perform salat and sajda (prostration) will be guarded from Hell-fire on the Day of Judgment.

"O people! If anyone amongst for *iftar* (meal at sunset) for any believer, Allah will reward him as if he had freed a slave, and Allah will forgive him his sins. A Companion asked: 'but not all of us have the means to do so' The Prophet (PBUH) replied: 'Keep yourself away from Hell-fire though it may consist of half a date or even some water if you have nothing else.'

"O people! Anyone who during this month cultivates good manners will walk over the Sirat (bridge to Paradise on the day when feet will tend to slip. For anyone who during this month eases the workload of his servants, Allah will make easy his accounting, and for anyone who doesn't hurt others during this month, Allah will safeguard him from His Wrath on the Day of Judgment. Anyone who respects and treats an orphan with kindness during this month, Allah shall look at him with kindness on that Day. Anyone who treats these kinsmen well during this month, Allah will bestow Him on that Day, while anyone who mistreats his kinsmen during this month, Allah will keep away from His Mercy.

"Whoever offers the recommended prayers during this month, Allah will save him from Hell, and whoever observes his obligation during this month, his reward will be seventy times the reward during other months. Whoever repeatedly invokes Allah's blessings on me, Allah will keep his scale of good deeds heavy while the scales of others will be tending to lightness. Whoever recites during this month an ayat (verse of the Holy Qur'an in other months.

"O people! The gates of Paradise remain open during this month. Pray to your Lord that they may not be closed for you. While the gates of Hell are closed, pray to your Lord that they never open for you. Satan has been chained, invoke your Lord not to let him dominate you."

(The Muslim Word League Journal)

Mosques as Community Centres for Meditation, Creation and Radiation

- Syed Habibul Haq Nadwi

The message of the mosque is the message of Islam. The Qur'an defines the mosque as a place for the remembrance of Allah and remembrance is not possible without the knowledge of Allah, and the knowledge is not possible without meditation, reflection and contemplation, which require peace and tranquility in the mosque as well as a complete ideological harmony and cohesiveness in the society:

"Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might, (able to enforce His Will)." (XXII, 40).

Being the first community centre for knowing, research and the remembrance of Allah the mosque cannot be used for the division of the community, theological squabbles and doctrinal disputes. It will negate the real role and the message of the mosque in the social life of the community. Mosques are the centers of Taw'hd, (Unity of God), unity of thought and

expression, the necessary ingredient for physical and spiritual piety and purity. Rival mosques symbolize division and disunity. Such rival mosques were established right at the time of the Prophet in order to create division. The Qur'an cautioned the Prophet of such people and prohibited him from praying in such mosques whose foundations were laid on hatred and prejudice. When the hypocrites erected a rival mosque at Quba, a suburb of Medina, for creating division by Allah. Allah made it clear to His Prophet that He loved the purifiers and not the hypocrites. Neither can it serve as the centre of 'Ilm, Tarbiyya and research.

"And there are those who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity to disunite the Believers. And in preparation for one who warned against Allah and His Aposle aforetime. They will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good; nut Allah doth declare that they are certainly liars. Never stand thou forth therein. There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on peity; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer), therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loveth those who make themselves pure. Which then is

est?- he that layeth his foundation on
piety to Allah and His Good Pleasure?
- or he that layeth his foundation on an
undermined sand-cliff, ready to crumble
to pieces? And it doth crumble to pieces
with him, into the fire of Hell. And Allah
guideth not people that do wrong. The
foundation of those who so build is never
free from suspicion and shakiness in
their hearts, until their hearts are cut to
pieces. And Allah is All-knowing, Wise”
(IX, 107-110).

The dissenter and the hypocrites
were exposed and their vices were
defined and enumerated by the Qur’an.
How can a hypocrite, an unbeliever, a
defier of Zakat, pay homage to the
mosques and look after them? Such
men, in the words of the Qur’an, visit the
mosque only to create division and to
instill hypocrisy in the congregation.

“It is not for such as join gods
with Allah, to visit or maintain the
mosques of Allah while they witness
against their own souls to infidelity. The
works of such bear no fruit. In fire shall
they dwell.”

“The mosques of Allah shall be
visited and maintained by such as
believe in Allah and the last Day, establish
regular prayers and practice regular
charity, and fear none (at all), except
Allah. It is they who are expected to be
on true guidance.” (IX, 17-18).

The Prophetic tradition in regard
to the sanctity of the mosques breathe

the same spirit. The first house built for
the remembrance of Allah on earth was
the Ka’ba and the second was the
mosque of Aqsa in Jerusalem:

“It is reported by Abu-Dharr that
he asked the Prophet of Allah about the
first mosque built on earth. The prophet
replied: Al-Masjid al-Haram. I asked:
After it? He said: Al Masjid al-Aqsa.
“Sahih. “Kitab al-Masjid.”

People were asked by the
Prophet to visit the three Great
Mosques; the Ka’ba, the Mosque of the
Rasul and the Aqsa Mosque for they
were founded on the basis of piety, and
were the centres of Divine immersion
and illumination.

“Do not make journey except
towards three mosques: al-Masjid al-
Haram, Masjid ar-Rasul and Masjid al-
Aqsa.” Bukhari, Sahih.

Since the mosque was an
epitome of Taw’hid, piety, purity and of
Divine sanctity, the Prophet would take
refuge in the mosque for peace of mind
and peace of heart:

“Ka’b b. Malik reported that
whenever the Prophet came back from
a journey, he would begin from the
mosque and would pray therein.” (Ibid).

The best parts in a city. In the
eyes of Allah, are its mosques. The
Prophet says:

“Abu-Huraira reports that the Prophet of Allah said: The spots dearest to Allah in the cities are their mosques and the most abominable are their markets.” (Muslim).

The Prophet asked the Muslims to develop their mosques as centers of knowledge and teaching for the remembrance of God. A person who learns and teaches the sublime morals has been therefore described by the Prophet as a warrior (Mujahid) in the path of Allah for he fight against false values and instills belief in religious and spiritual norms of social life.

“Abu-Huraira reports that whoever enters this mosque of ours to learns good or to teach, he is like a warrior in the way of God. And who enters for something else, he is like a person who looks towards a thing which does not belong to him.” (Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, 11, 350)

The functional dimension of mosques in early islam

The history of mosques in Islam, in fact, begins with the Hijra of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina in 622 C.E. the first memorable act of the Prophet after the Hijrah was to build a mosque on a piece of land which he bought from two orphans for ten dinars. The Muslim community along with the Prophet commemorated the name of Allah in this mosque which is now known

as the Mosque of the Prophet. It seems that the philosophy of Hijra and the commemoration of Allah’s name go together and they are inseparable. The mosque of the Prophet, in addition to prayer and to the remembrance of God, became also the first seat of the Islamic Government and served as the centre of administration and education where teachers and Imams were trained and deputed to various tribes for teaching. The Suffa in the mosques served as the first residential university, dormitory and seminary for the Islamic training programmes of the companions. The mosque also served as the National Parliament where political and military decisions were taken and strategies were planned. Ambassador and foreign Deputations from Kings and neighbouring tribes were received here. It also served as the Treasury (Bait-al-Mal) as well as the Court of Justice where legal disputes were settled. Being also the centre of various socio-religious activities the mosque rejuvenated the Umma.

The same character of the mosque was maintained by the early four caliphs of Islam.

All political, administrative and other major decisions with regard to war and peace were taken in the same mosque. The Chief Justice of Medina administered justice in the same mosque. Being the great centre of

learning, the teaching of the Qur'an, and the Sunna continued here. No change was introduced during the Umayyad period, although the Islamic Empire had grown immensely. The role and the function of the mosque remained unchainged. The Caliph himself was the appointed Imam for prayers and he would deliver Khutba (Sermons) on social, political and educational issues facing the community from time to time. Moreover, he was installed as a Caliph in the mosque where the results of war and peace were announced. The Provincial Governors were delegated the same privileges in their areas. Thus the Mimbar (the pulpit of the mosque) enjoyed great social, political, religious and academic status. The Imam, either the Caliph of his nominee, being highly educated or most enlightened on current affairs, would address the congregation and give guidance to the countrymen. Thus his khutba (Sermons) had relevance to his time. This tradition will give us an idea to the reader as to what sublime function the mosque had to fulfill in the Umma and what major role it had to play in the social life of the community.

It was under the 'Abbasids that the role of the mosque was gradually changed because the palace at Baghdad had now become the seat of government and the centre of attraction and radiation. But the Caliph was still the guide, the Imam and the Khatib of

the Umma. He would deliver his key sermons and policy statements in the grand mosque (Jami Masjid) of the city in addition to the Sermons of the two 'Ids and other occasions of national importance.

As a centre of learning and education, the role of the mosque remained unchanged. It was still used to eliminate illiteracy in the society, and served as the tower of light and learning. The great Imam (Jurists) would teach and offer courses on Islamic Jurisprudence in mosques. Imam Shafi offered his courses in the third century A.H. in the Mosque of 'Amr b. al 'As, which promoted many teachings and instructional groups by 326 A.H. (939 C.E.) The Shafi'is and the Malikis had fifteen groups while the Hanafis had three groups receiving academic instruction in the same mosque. Other sciences (Ulum), like Tafsir, Hadith, language, philology, poetry and philosophy were also offered at the mosques. The mosque of al-Mansur was noted as the seat of higher learning. Professors and research scholars would reside in the mosque for it contained large and rich libraries with provisions of lecture theatres, hostels as well as town or city halls.

The mosque was thus the lighthouse of knowledge and a centre of spiritual progress. ■

Moral Virtues

- Manzoor Nomani

Morality, like worship, forms an important branch of religion. In a way, it is more important than the other branches because it is here that man has within his grasp the opportunity of functioning as God's deputy and vicegerent. Good morals are Divine attributes and it is demanded of us to produce them in ourselves as far as our humanity allows. A Tradition of the Prophet says, "Let the virtues of God be your virtues."

To appreciate fully the distinctive merit of good morals it is of advantage first to know as a basic principle that human deeds that are capable of earning God's pleasure and on which there is a reward from Him are divided into four groups.

The first group includes acts a man performs to express and affirm, while paying his tribute to the Glory and Worshipfulness of God, his own utter helplessness before and completes submission to Him. The acts of worship fall within this category.

The second includes acts a man is compelled to perform by the very nature of his being and the material wants of his earthly existence but if they are performed according to the wishes and dictates of the Lord they become worthy of His approbation and reward. For instance, a man engages himself

in an occupation for the purpose of earning his daily sustenance or gets married because there is a natural urge to be fulfilled but God has laid down certain rules in respect of these activities; now, if he pays due regard to the Divine ordinance while pursuing his profession or in the conduct of his married life everything that he does in these spheres becomes an act of religion and entitles him to a reward from God. This aspect is characteristic of acts we sum up under the two headings of Mu'amalat (money affairs) and Mu'asharat (social conduct).

The third includes functions like the propagation of faith, religious preaching and instruction, the rendering of assistance to the Sacred Cause, the acceptance of trial and suffering in its path, the making of sacrifices for its victory and the forbidding of evil and ordering of good deeds which are in reality the province of the Prophets, and when men other than them make these duties their own they get elevated to the status of the deputies and agents of the Divine Apostles. They, then, operate as successors to the holy mission of those chosen servants of God. These deeds are very pleasing to the Almighty and there can be no doubt about the great reward that is on them. What is more, they engender in the doer a resemblance with the Prophets which

cannot be acquired in any other way.

The fourth includes deeds which are associated with the vicegerency of God. This is the grand distinguishing feature of the moral virtues. For example, mercy is a virtue which is essentially a Divine attribute. It is because of this attribute that He is glorified as the Most Benevolent, the Most Compassionate, and His wish is that His servants should also cultivate the noble quality and behave with mercy and compassion towards His deserving creatures. Similarly, forgiveness and the hiding of the faults and sins of others are Divine virtues and we are required to produce them in ourselves as well. The same is the case with the other excellent moral qualities, modesty, temperateness, beneficence, charity, generosity, justice and fair-mindedness, and the capacity to admire what is good and to despise what is wicked. All these are Divine qualities which we are called upon to furnish ourselves with.

In brief, in the field of morality alone, among all the fields of human endeavour, does a man operate as the vicegerent of God – in its domain he does what God himself doth do. This distinction is shared by no other department of man's existence. Hence, the intrinsic superiority of morals over the rest of the aspects of human conduct.

We will now see what great importance has the Prophet attached to moral virtues. He says –

“The Lord has sent me down as His Apostle that I may evolve moral virtues to highest perfection.”

“Muslims who possess better morals are the most perfect in faith.”

“On the Day of Judgment the moral virtues of a Muslim will (prove to be) the heaviest item in the Scales of Deeds.”

Yet in spite of these clear pronouncements, a majority of even those among us who may be said to be men of religion present a most disappointing picture: they do show some awareness of the importance of worship but where the Divine commands governing social and moral behavior and the conduct of monetary affairs are concerned, they pay little heed to them. Many of them, indeed, seem to labour under the impression that these commands are meant for those who aspire for exceptional spiritual advancement while for salvation only *Namaz* and *Roza* are enough although moral rectitude is as much necessary for deliverance in the Hereafter as worship.

In the Quran and the Traditions the same stress is laid on good morals as on worship and moral transgressors have been given the warning of a chastisement as equally severe as that promised to the defaulters in the matter of prayer, fasting etc. For instance, stinginess is a moral fault. Now, see how strongly has it been condemned in the

Quran:

“And let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which God hath given them of His Grace think that it is good for them: soon the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks like a twisted collar, on the Day of Judgment.” (Quran: Al-i-Imran, 18)

In like manner, in Sura-i-Hamaza, the Quran gives the tidings of hell for moral diseases like excessive love of wealth, contemptuous upbraiding, double-dealing, scandal-mongering and malicious backbiting.

“Woe to every (kind of) scandal-monger and backbiter who pileth up wealth and layeth it by thinking that his wealth could make him last forever! By no means! He will be sure to be thrown into that which Breaks to Pieces.” (Quran: Humaza, 1)

So, also, does the Prophet. Of a number of moral vices he has emphatically stated that they are sure to plunge one into the all-consuming fire of the hell. Take vanity. About it he says:

“He who harbors vanity in his heart even by an atom shall not enter heaven.”

Or, read these Traditions of his:

“Anyone who engages in malicious fault-finding or pries into the secrets of others and gives publicity to them shall not be admitted into

Paradise.”

“ On the Last Day the biggest loser will be the hypocrite, who, when he goes to ones party talks in one voice, and, when to the other party, talks in another voice.”

“ God will show no compassion to him who shows no compassion to his fellow-beings.”

“ A woman will find her way into hell simply for the reason of her cruelty to a cat which she had held in captivity and gave it not a morsel of food till it died of starvation.”

“God will have mercy upon them that are merciful. Show compassion to those who dwell on the earth. He who dwells in the heavens will show compassion to you.”

In another Tradition we are informed that “a woman was granted remission of her sins because her heart melted at the sight of a dog who was dying of thirst and she saved its life by drawing water from the well at great pains to herself and giving it to drink.:

Apart from the Traditions giving the warning of dreadful chastisement in the Hereafter to those who cherish wrong moral ideals and behave accordingly there are others in which it is plainly stated about certain moral vices that their presence in a man is enough to disqualify him from being a Muslim. Thus, it is related that once the Prophet declared with great feeling that

"I swear by God in whose power lies my life that no one can be a believer unless he attains the state of desiring for his brother what he desires for himself."

On another occasion, it is reported that the sacred Prophet spoke out the following words: "By God he is not a Muslim, by God, he is not a believer, by God, he is devoid of the wealth of Islam." "Who?" the Companions inquired. "The ill-fatted man", the Prophet replied, "from whose mischief his neighbours are not secure."

There also occurs a Tradition to the effect that "that callous, unfeeling person is not a Muslim who eats to his satisfaction while his neighbor, by his side, goes without a meal."

Now, in these Traditions the vices for which the chastisement of hell has been promised or which have been described as destructive of faith or inimical to salvation all belong to the realm of morality. This will show in what great value does Islam hold good ethical conduct To quote from Ibn-i-Taimiyah in *Kitab-ul-Iman*, "The position of things about which it is said in the Traditions that whoever is guilty of them will not be admitted into heaven or that he is devoid of faith is, at the minimum, that they are prohibited in the *Shariat* and it is the duty (of a Muslim) to abstain from them."

Be that as it may, moral virtues are not the ultimate objectives one may strive after only if the aim should be to

become a saint or a spiritual luminary. They are an essential condition of faith, it being as much indispensable for the saving of the soul to develop moral qualities and avoid moral evils as are the offering up of prayer and the observance of fasts. Particularly necessary is the acquirement of virtues on which special stress has been laid in the Quran and the Traditions like fortitude, the reposing of trust in the will of God, truthfulness, honesty and integrity, the keeping of promises, sincerity, genuine and whole-hearted love of God and the Prophet, wishing well and thinking nobly of others and maintenance of secrecy over their faults and misdeeds, and compassion, forgiveness, suppression of anger, generosity, justice, fair-mindedness, humility and meekness and love and hatred not for self-satisfaction but for the sake of God. In the same way, it is of utmost importance to purge oneself clean of the reverse qualities known, in common parlance, as vices.

The Quranic verses and the sayings of the holy Prophet relating to moral behavior have been discussed at some length by the author in his book entitled, *Islam Kya Hai*, and, still more thoroughly, in the second volume of his *Ma'arif-ul-Hadees*. He will, therefore, content himself with this brief chapter here and pass over to an examination of Islamic teachings concerning monetary dealings and social conduct. ■

The Ulama As Guardians Community Behaviour

- Abdul Kader Choughley

A Salient feature of the 'ulama's religious authority was their development of their constituencies in the Muslim society. This leverage allowed them "to police the boundaries of behavior." In other words, the 'ulama produced biographical and malfuzat (conversations by Sufis) literature to benchmark what they considered to be appropriate conduct of Islamic behavior. The scripturalist and prescriptive nature of the method created sectarian bias with other rival group. I was however in the twentieth century that the 'ulama's presence was felt in the public sphere. They became advocates of Islamic causes on a broader spectrum. The Tabligh Jama'at for example was as offshoot of the Deobandi's pro-active role in the Muslim society.

'Ulama In The Political Arena

The establishment of the Jami'at—ul-'ulama Hind (JUH) in 1920 added a new dimension to the role of the 'ulama as political activists. The JUH had a voice and a political programme in Indian politics. It was however after the Partition of India in 1947 that JUH abandoned politic to concentrate on the spiritual, moral and educational upliftment of the Muslim community. It continued to maintain its link with the Indian National Congress party which

espoused secularism and nationalism for a multi-cultural society like India. In contrast the establishment of the 'ulama body, the Jami'at-ul-'ulama Islam (JUI) maintained a stronger political presence in the nascent Pakistan. The JUI's Deobandi orientation was evident in the large network of madarasas linked to its alma mater in India. Its political influence in challenging state powers since its inception underscored is religio-political activism. A vocal critic of Indian politics, it rejected secularism as an expression of western and Indian hegemony designed to subdue the Islamic forces in Pakistan. This approach gradually set the two Jami-ats apart in their vision of an Islamic society. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, for example, supported the JUH's stand in encouraging Indian Muslims to use democratic structures to ensure their corporate Muslim identity. The rationale of such an approach by Maulana Nadwi and his Indian contemporaries is examined.

Ulama In The Tajdidi Tradition

The foregoing pages have outlined categories of reformist movements and their respective contributions to the tajdidi tradition. A close examination of these movements illustrates their divergent responses to

Islamic resurgence. A combination of factors, historical and political, shaped these movements' intellectual contributions. The Islamic position is a case in point. Although the Islamists draw on their understanding of Islam from the foundational texts their articulation is different from the 'ulama. According to Zaman, the 'ulama's understanding of the foundational texts is linked to a historically articulated interpretive tradition. In other words, there is continuity in a traditional understanding of Islam. Thus this form of discourse is distinctive to the culture of 'ulama. This does not imply that the 'ulama remained immune from the massive transformations that modernity forced on to their institutions and discourse. Rather they appropriated specific forms in reaching out to the Muslim masses. The adoption of print was the first stage in the democratization of knowledge. The 'ulama used the print to make sources of knowledge accessible to the Muslim community. Not surprisingly this new freedom of access to Islamic knowledge challenged the authoritative interpretations of the 'ulama. The writings of Islamists as a corollary provided important sources of contemporary understanding of Islamic reformist thought whose influence continues to this day.

Maulana Nadwi, on the other hand, is unique among the modern 'ulama in his ability to address a broad and diverse Muslim audience. It is precisely the language of discourse that has earned him popularity among scholars and institutions with diverse orientations. Maulana Nadwi's career highlights the possibility of a sustained intellectual engagement with 'ulama, Islamists and modernists. It is this interaction that shows that the firmness of boundaries between them is largely overdrawn. Maulana Nadwi's own career suggests some of the ways in which 'ulama and Islamists came together in the course of the twentieth century. To illustrate this point: the concept of Jahiliyyah which refers to the "age of ignorance" has been a salient feature in Qutb's writings. Maulana Nadwi too is credited to have developed his own reading of this concept which was introduced in the Arab-Islamist circle. In fact, Qutb wrote a foreword to Maulana Nadwi's best-known book, *Islam and the World* which explains the latter's cordial relations with many Arab Islamists. These caveats are reminders that classifications like the 'ulama and Islamists are not by and large monolithic and these groups may have significant commonalities with their respective worldview. Maulana Nadwi may be considered a forerunner in this emergent trend.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of Islamic resurgence in the last two centuries is rooted in the tajdidi tradition. Reform and revival served as identity markers in the chequered history of tajdid. Context played a significant role in determining the flux of events associated with the reformatory movements. The changing and transformative character of Islamic resurgence has been conspicuous during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It possessed the dynamism to reconfigure as a response to socio-political circumstances.

Maulana Nadwi's understanding of tajdid is an example of its dynamic character. According to him, Islamic resurgence functions in an Islamic authenticity framework without ignoring existing realities facing the Muslims. The Islamists' vision of Islamic resurgence lacks a coherent presentation in view of their conflicting views on a pristine Islam and the challenges posed by the West. There is no reference to a rapprochement or at least a tacit endorsement of the challenges that shape their understanding of Islamic resurgence. Islamic modernists have reformulated their understanding of tajdid on a scientific and rational grounds. Their views offer useful insights to the regressive spirit that characterized the scientific and

intellectual legacy of Islam.

At the same time its rhetorical slogans have assumed new challenges. The intellectual discourse shaped reformist vision and carried it through for centuries. The impact of Ibn Taymiyyah is a case in point. Another noteworthy feature of the movements (especially from the nineteenth century onwards) was its emphasis on "back to original Islam" (al-'awda ilal Islam)- an implicit reference to the Islam practiced by the *salf-al-salih*. Qutb and Maulana Maududi's views are representative of this trend. Their responses to modernity and Western civilization in a sense epitomized their predicament and ambivalence towards this phenomenon. The political dimension of the resurgent movements receives brief mention as it falls outside the scope of this study. However, a recent study by Nina Voges, *The Development of Islamic Resurgent Movements in Egypt* provides a detailed account of the various movements that shaped the current debate on Islamic resurgence. Of significant interest is her analysis on the growth and development of the *Ikhwan* in Egypt which spawned a number of Islamic movements with various political agendas. The study is useful in drawing parallels with other contemporary Islamic movements across the Muslim world in their pursuit of an Islamic order. ■

Needed: Real Democracy

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

India is a democratic country. Here parliamentary form of the government is based on democratic principles. It is one of the largest democracy in the world. The term democracy is derived from the two Greek words 'demos' and 'kratia'. These two together mean 'authority of the people'. Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of USA, has precisely defined democracy. He held democracy as 'the government of the people, by the people and for the people'.

Being citizens of a democratic country our role becomes highly crucial. Moreover, we have a pluralistic society, people of different caste, creed, religion, language and culture live together as one nation. A vast country, India's main plank is its national integration: all initiatives in the country should, therefore, focus on this reality and be done irrespective of any parochial consideration.

In the wake of a rash of provocative remarks after the lynching of a man in Dadri over rumours of beef consumption, President Pranab Mukherjee underlined that diversity, tolerance and plurality are core values that have kept India together and must never wither away. "We should not allow the core values of our civilisation to wither away. Over the years, our civilisation has celebrated diversity, plurality and promoted and advocated tolerance. These values have kept us together over the centuries," "Many ancient civilisations have collapsed

but the Indian civilisation has survived because of its core civilisational values and adherence to them. If we keep them in mind, nothing can prevent our nation from forging ahead. Indian democracy is a marvel and we must celebrate, preserve and promote its strengths."

He further said: "The real dirt of India lies not in our streets but in our minds and in our unwillingness to let go of views that divide society into 'them' and 'us', 'pure' and 'impure'. We must make a success of the laudable and welcome Swachh Bharat Mission. However, this also must be seen as just the beginning of a much larger and intense effort to cleanse minds and fulfil Gandhiji's vision in all its aspects," Given the current raging debate over intolerance in India, Mukherjee cited Gandhiji's vision of India as "an inclusive nation where every section of our population live in equality and enjoy equal opportunity" and "the essence of being human is our trust of each other".

In his book "*India's Foreign Policy*" Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India writes: "The Preamble of our constitution states: we, the people of India, having solemn resolved to constitute India into a sovereign Democratic Republic and to secure to all its citizens: Justice, social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality them all fraternity assuring the dignity of among them all

fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation”.

Despite this fact minorities are confronted with a host of difficulties and problems regarding their religious issues and affairs. In a democratic country, if people's feelings are hurt and they are deprived of their fundamental rights and basic amenities of life, it is nothing but a travesty of democracy.

Being Indians, it is imperative for us to maintain its unity, integrity, and democratic values and norms by fostering national integration and propagating the message of humanity throughout India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has rightly said: “I am proud of being an Indian. I am part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. I am indispensable to this noble edifice and without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete. I am an essential element which has gone to build India. I never surrender this claim”. (Presidential Address, Indian National Congress. Fifty third Session, Ramgarh, March 1940) He further said: “If an angel were to descend from the high heavens and proclaim from their heights of the Qutub Minar, “Discard Hindu-Muslim unity and within 24 hours Swaraj is yours”, I will refuse proffered Swaraj but will not budge an inch from my stand, the refusal of Swaraj will affect only India while the end of our unity will be the loss of the entire human world”.

M.K. Gandhi says: “My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except

through non-violence”. (Harijan, 18-5-1940)

He further says: “True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village”. (Harijan, 18-1-48)

Needless to add that members of Parliament (MPs) are expected to play a leading role in bringing about democratic values in the country. They are representatives of their respective constituencies. They should be honest, straightforward, candid and bold.

Interestingly, politicians try to surpass each other as to how to reach the spot of incident to gain political mileage. Instead attention should be paid by them as to how combat terroristic and disruptive forces which threaten the country's unity and integrity and try to rip the social fabric of the country to shread. Every party strives to strengthen its own vote bank instead of taking interest on national issues.

It should be kept in mind that India has far lagged behind due to corruption, scam and other so-called unfair and unscrupulous acts economically and financially. We know well who are responsible for it.

The most unfortunate part is that political parties exhibit disloyalty and dishonesty and show negligence and lethargy in country's progress and prosperity. Arvind Kejriwal former Chief Minister of Delhi has precisely stated:

Time has come to question representative democracy and move towards direct or participatory democracy in some measure. On critical issues, an MP should consult the people of his constituency through Gram Sabhas and Mohallah. He should present the voice of his people in parliament and not his High Command's wishes. People should be able to recall him if he did not do that. On many occasions, there is a serious conflict between the desires of the people and the wishes of the party High Command. Today, it is the wishes of the party High Command that prevail. In true democracy, it is the wishes of the people of India that would prevail".

No doubt, to a great extent the future of the country depends of our legislators and politicians. If they mend themselves and perform their duties with integrity, the country will make progress. No development will occur in the country sans their integrity and honesty.

We may recall here late Rafi Ahmad Kidwai. M.H. Kidwai writes: "Till the first general election of 1952 the country was facing the worst food problems. There was acute shortage of food-grains. The Food Portfolio was the most difficult one and had proved to be the graveyard of reputation of many stalwarts in the past. Rafi Ahmad was given this portfolio in May 1952 and he performed the miracle within a short time. Instead of shortage there was a plenty and abundance of food-grains, prices began to fall and control was withdrawn and the whole situation was

miraculously changed. The solving of the food problem of the country was the greatest achievement of Rafi". (*Muslims and India's Freedom Movement*, P.160)

Let us recall the pray of noted poet Rabindranath Tagore for building up India a true nation.

"Where the mind is without fear
And the head is held high
Where the world has not been broken
up
By narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth
of truth.
Where tireless striving stretches its
arms towards perfection.
Where the mind is led forward by thee
into ever widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom my Father
Let my country awake."

It is unfortunate that India's democratic values and norms are fading day by day. Regionalism, castisms, favouritism and groupism raising their ugly heads to distort the social fabric of our beloved mother land. No doubt, these are negative tendencies that cause conflicts, clashes and communal riots in the country. Besides they diminish national feelings and damage our national cherished desires. In short, we can not achieve all this, until and unless we work together to make India a democratic country in true sense. ■

Women: Towards Reconciliation and Liberation

- Tariq Ramadan

What sometimes favoured open and flexible interpretations in Islam related to people's common good and interest (Al Maslaha) may, in the case of women, have had exactly opposite consequences: when taking into account the often static customary practices of the societies for which law scholars issued rulings — and by which they naturally were often influenced — it became natural to issue restrictive, sometimes partial and biased interpretations of the Texts. This was because of the influence of cultural context on the reading itself. The Texts' higher, universal ends were then restricted by the closed prospects of cultural singularity, which drew on the latitudes offered by constant awareness of customs and of the Al Maslaha in support of its own legitimacy. Access to the power of knowledge, to intellectual and financial autonomy, to the job market, and to political choice and commitment, was often restricted and denied, not in the light of the Texts alone, but through the decisive refraction of cultural contexts. Male and female fuqaha' (experts in Islamic jurisprudence) as well as anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and ethnologists (again, both women and men) must work together in an extensive process of critical studies, reinterpretations, and analyses of the societies for which, and in which, the Texts are to be understood and implemented. A corpus of higher objectives (and the corresponding applied ethics) must be established before any

circumstantial analysis of Texts and environments to avoid running the risk of being misled by the letter of some texts or the cultural shackles of past or contemporary societies. Only in this way can the deductive work of implementing injunctions become meaningful: being faithful to the message without fearing to disturb social frameworks, power relationships, and the traditional roles placed on women as a result of partial understanding of the message.

One should begin by clearly defining the fundamentals and order of discourse about women. The approach through objectives does not allow us to overlook speaking about women's being, their spirituality, autonomy and responsibility, and the essential and social meaning of womanhood. Men, fuqaha', can sometimes touch on those dimensions, but it is women who must, from within, refuse to accept that religious discourse about them should be merely legal and, in effect, curtailed, since it deals with interpersonal relations without elaborating anything about womanhood. Therefore, the first liberation that should be worked out, and that can lead the whole community of believers the world over to evolve, consists of producing a discourse on womanhood that restores the link with meaning rather than single-mindedly focusing on norms. The spiritual awakening and revival that run through Muslim majority societies and elsewhere, and in which women are particularly active

agents, require new discourse about the meaning of faith, worship, freedom and social commitment.

This is why the discourse must rely on in-depth studies of all the dimensions of women's being. This means, beyond norms, raising such issues as the acquisition of knowledge (about Texts and all the other sciences) for women; the meaning of their dignity and welfare in all that has to do with their minds, hearts and bodies; their inalienable autonomy and the essence of their freedom in the mindscape of social representations as well as in group structures, without overlooking the question of the essence of womanhood and related factors. The initial liberation process is demanding.

Even before turning to the issues of social discrimination and power structures in human groups, earlier reflection about faith, spirituality, and the quest for meaning is required. Nothing, or very little, is said and worked about the issue of the meaning of the quest and of the encounter with a spirituality that should be a promise of liberation and autonomy. The higher objectives of ethics, about the inner being, require educating the conscience, respecting the being's dignity, and seeking inner balance, love, sincerity, humility and contemplation. This is an invitation to elaborate a fundamental, feminine philosophy of being, of autonomy and of freedom likely to deal with both the most rigid traditional representations and the most modern subjective projections.

Reflection about women as subjects must be combined with

fundamental reflection about women's being itself. The latter determines the essence of womanhood in its dignity, while the former grants women the means to be free. The point is not only to fight discrimination, although this struggle is imperative, but also to make society change in the light of the questions today's women ask about themselves and ask societies about the quest for meaning, their welfare and the freedom of their being.

Much has been said in the West about Muslim women's dress, intended by the latter as an expression of modesty and by some, in modern societies, as a sign of discriminatory submission. Often in reaction, Muslim institutions or scholars have been seen to offer dress as the ultimate expression of faith or as an act of resistance against western cultural imperialism. In all cases, the debates have reduced the meaning of modesty itself in the order of means and ends. In the spiritual order, in reflection about being and freedom, understanding the meaning of modesty (whether for men or for women) cannot be limited to the issue of visible modesty in dress. The latter must be part of a much more fundamental approach integrating the meaning of spiritual, psychological and intellectual modesty along with modesty in dress. At a time when women are too often confined to either strictly normative or mainly aesthetic representations, this reflection about the essence and meaning of modesty smacks of protest and liberation. Resistance begins in such depths.

This does not prevent fundamental reflection about social questions; quite the

opposite. For reasons that have to do with being, conscience, but also simply physiology, women relate quite specifically to life, commitment, children and education. Never have our societies been in such urgent need of this feminine input in approaching some issues that are indeed broader than the "mere" question of women. Yet one of women's major contributions to their cause may well lie, not merely in resisting the discriminations and alienations that directly affect them, but in their specific way of approaching the social crises that involve all of us. Here again, the issue should be approached from the source, which may result in a new way of defining the priorities of social and political commitments. This means starting by refusing to enter men's political universe by approaching politics in the same way as men do.

From the point of view of the fuqaha', of men and of women themselves, the priority is to get rid of social and media representations about the "West", which restrict debates to the issues of models or forms. Thus, the western cultural model is seen to require resistance through emphasis on an "Islamic answer" essentially relying on the formalism of social roles or of dress. The answer is insufficient; it can be observed every day. Far from any formalism, then, or rather in opposition to all formalisms, commitment for the recognition of women's being and involvement must start by questioning goals and not only perceptions. Prior to any collective, social or political commitment process, women must, along with men, determine the

outline of a religious and humanist understanding and discourse reconciling women with their function as free, autonomous and responsible spiritual agents. By relying on this approach, which rereads the Texts in the light of higher goals, it becomes possible to think about women's presence and major contributions to the development of contemporary societies while undertaking reforms of the discriminations they continue to suffer. We must clearly refuse to accept that a woman with the same training and skills as a man should experience job discrimination or be paid only 70 per cent of a man's salary, that she should be barred from responsible posts because of being a woman, that pregnancy should be considered a handicap or that she should be compelled to submit to the male imagery that still dominates the job market. Fuqaha' legal councils including women scholars, specialising in Texts as well as in the study of social logistics, must speak out on those questions of rights, justice and equality. Women must struggle against all formalist dictatorships: both those that impose the headscarf without belief in the practice coming from the heart and those that imagine all objectified female bodies fit into a size six dress; those that compel women to stay at home for religious reasons and those that send them back home after the age of 45 for aesthetic reasons. ■

(Tariq Ramadan is Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University)

(Islamic Voice)

OUR REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD

Britain	:	Mr. Akram Nadwi O.C.I.S.St. Cross College Oxford Ox 1 3 TU (UK)
Dubai	:	Qari Abdul Hameed Nadwi P.O. Box No. 12525 Dubai U.A.E.
Pakistan	:	Mr. Ataullah Sector A-50, Near SAU Qrs. Karachi 31 (Pakistan)
Qatar	:	Dr. Aftab Alam Nadwi P.O. Box No. 1513 Doha, Qatar
Saudi Arabia	:	Mr. Tariq Hassan Askari P.O. Box No. 842 Madina-Munawwara (K.S.A.)
South Africa	:	Mr. M. Yahaya Sallo Nadwi P.O. Box No. 388 Vereninging, (South Africa)
U.S.A.	:	Dr. A. M. Siddiqui 98-Conklin Ave. Woodmere, New York 11598

Annual Subscription:
Rs. 120 (per copy Rs. 12) in India
\$ 30 (USA, UK, Asian Africa and European Countries)

Cheques and Drafts may please be marked to:
"The Fragrance of East"
and sent to, Nadwatul Ulama, P.O. Box 93, Tagore Marg, Lucknow-226007, U.P. India
Out-station cheques will not be accepted.