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Value of Love

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

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

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

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Wisdom of Qur'an

"The 'Ad gave the lie to the Messengers. Recall when their brother Hud said to them 'Have You no fear? I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allah and obey me.'

(Al Qur'an - 26:121)

In order to understand this oration from the Prophet Hud, we should bear in mind some details about nature of his people who are frequently mentioned in the Qur'an:

- i. It was the 'Ad who were given extraordinary power and eminence in the world after the destruction of Noah's people: "And recall to mind when He made you successors after the people of Noah" (al-A'raf7:69).
- ii. They were physically strong and sturdy: "He... amply increased you in stature" (al-A'raf7:69).
- iii. In that age, no nation could rival them: "The like of which was not created in the lands" (al-Fajr 89.8)
- iv. Theirs was a splendid civilisation especially famous for its tall buildings with lofty columns: "Have you not seen what your Lord did with the 'Ad of Iram of lofty columns?" (al-Fajr 89:67).
- v. Their material progress and physical prowess had made them haughty and arrogant: "As for the 'Ad, they deviated from the right way and became arrogant and said: Who is mightier than us in power?" (Ha Mim al-Sajdah41:15).
- iv. Their political power was concentrated in the hands of a few tyrants against whom none could raise a voice."And they followed the bidding of every tyrannical enemy of the truth" (Hud 11:59).
- vii. Their real malady was their polytheism. (ref.: al-A'raf7:70. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah bin Mas'ud that the Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) observed: "He who has in the heart the weight of a mustard seed of pride shall not enter Paradise." A person (among his listeners) said: "Verily a person loves that his dress should be fine; and his shoes should be fine." He (the Holy Messenger) remarked: "Verily, Allah is Graceful and He loves Grace. Pride is disdainning the truth (out of self-conceit) and contempt for the people."

(Sahih Muslim)

Pride is the offspring of conceit, and this is the very negation of faith. Pride and faith cannot thus go together. It was pride that made Iblees reject Allah's command. While Iman inculcates in man the spirit of humility and submission to Truth. Pride is the expression of vanity which is the greatest hurdle onto the path of Truth. The self-conceited man accepts nothing which does not satisfy his vanity and, therefore, he cannot be a true believer. He is worshipper of his own self.

Islam does not teach asceticism and, therefore, does not blunt the aesthetic sense of man. It is with Beauty and Grace that the Lord has created this universe, and man, by his very nature, has a love for these two qualities. Islam makes no attempt to deprive man of his natural urges but directs his aesthetic sense to fruitful channels. It exhorts its followers not to lead a life of renunciation but to use the bounties of the Lord according to His Command. ■

Democracy and Secularism

The preceding century and more than a decade of the present one presented a very testing time for many nations. Disintegration of USSR diminished the raging cold war between the two powerful Countries of USA and USSR. Most of the Islamic nations saw the worse time of their existence. Monarchy in Iran and Egypt gave way to the democratic form of governments. Powerful dictator of Iraq Saddam Husein to whom credit of establishing a stable and developed nation, Col.Gaddafi of Libya and Husne Mubarak of Egypt suffered humiliating treatment. The events which were unfolding in the sub continent and Muslim countries caused concern to those whose perception of a peaceful society was upper most. The increasing threat of a nuclear war is the most disturbing factor in the present situation. In India a great Islamic scholar, historian, laureate, thinker and a man of vision Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (d. 1999) used to closely observe and analyze the events in the light of his studies and experiences. He decided to approach leaders and public with his advice and did whatever was within his reach to improve the situation. So long he lived he strived hard to prevail upon the evil designs of rulers of various nations and persuaded them to work for peace on earth. Because of his high stature he had access to almost most of the rulers of Islamic countries and also political

high ups in India. Most of the Prime Ministers of India right from Jawaharlal Nehru to Atal Bihari Vajpayee often met him and listen to his advice. To each of them his persistent urge used to be : “Please strengthen democracy and firmly hold the secular values. It is democracy and secularism which would make India strong and prosperous.”

The falling Islamic values in Arab countries were also causing pain in his heart. He persistently advised rulers of Saudi kingdom “Do not spare any effort in planting the seed of “deen” in this deserted land. Don’t leave any stone unturned. Work day and night. Burn your heart. Melt your body. Shed your blood and tears to such an extent that Tigris and Euphrates feel sorry for being too tiny. “

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH) spent most part of his life in asserting the values of “ deen” and strived hard to establish a society free of evils and devoted to the ordains of God and His messenger Prophet Mohammad (SAW). He was an ordent advocate of democratic and secular government. ■

S.A.

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The Collective Mindset and the Spirit of Sacrifice

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Do not throw yourselves into destruction.

(al-Baqarah 2:195)

We Muslims should develop a collective mindset. We should never think of our personal interests at the expense of our faith and community. An approach based on selfishness is highly destructive. In the verse above the Qur'an warns us against this. An instance in point is the partial reading of the verse which tells us not to approach prayer when we are drunk. Were one to misread this only partially, one might maintain that the Qur'an asks us not to offer prayer.

Some misinterpret the Qur'anic directive: "*Do not throw yourselves into destruction*" in the sense of avoiding any danger or loss in the cause of faith. If they are asked to go out to preach their faith, while risking their business and trade, they cite this verse in order to evade their duty. This is a total misreading of the verse, for rather, its stance runs counter to such claims.

Once Abu Ayyub al-Ansari came across some discussion along the above lines. He clarified that the verse under discussion was sent down regarding the Ansar. He then explained its circumstantial setting. When Islam reached Madinah the Muslims were weak. The believing Madinans, however, reinforced Islam with their lives and belongings, disregarding altogether their

personal loss and suffering. They pledged their lives to the cause of Islam. They were ever ready to go out for its cause whether it be in a battle context or visiting places outside Madinah to preach Islam. Likewise, they generously spent all that they possessed in the cause of Islam. They turned blind to all else besides Islam. For the sake of Islam they neglected their agricultural fields, orchards and shops. After a few years however Islam had gained much strength; it could no longer be considered as weak. Yet in the meantime the Ansar were aware that their businesses, trades, fields, shops and property had all suffered losses. They therefore sought leave for a short period of time, thinking that they were entitled to this. It is common knowledge that soldiers, teachers and students get leave on a regular basis. While the Ansar so thought of taking such leave, the verse under study was sent down, asking them not to incur self-destruction. They were thus told to devote themselves, as in the past, to the cause of faith. No leave was granted them. Rather, they were warned that such leave would lead them to self-destruction. They were thus asked to spend in Allah's way and not to indulge in self-destruction. For Allah loves those who do good. This places the verse in its proper historical context.

At a point in time it was very difficult for Indians to perform Hajj. This was further

compounded by Bedouin Arabs who were given to robbing pilgrims. In view of this menace some 'Ulama' decreed that Indian Muslims need not go on pilgrimage, citing the above verse in support of their ruling. May Allah reward and confer exalted rank upon Shah 'Abd al- 'Aziz and his disciples who rose against this ruling. They issued an altogether different decree. Some of Shah 'Abd al- 'Aziz's disciples and family members themselves performed Hajj so setting the general anxiety at rest. This was necessary in order to persuade Indian Muslims as to their safety, otherwise they would have mistakenly thought they need not perform pilgrimage. This, in turn, would gradually have led to the abandoning of other religious duties such as *zakah*, fasting and prayer. For one may even cite the above verse saying that in extremely cold weather one cannot perform *wudu*. Nor is one able to offer prayers in summer when the nights are short. If one misinterprets this verse in the sense of sustaining any discomfort, this puts an end to the performance of all religious duties, for there is often some slight inconvenience in discharging these. Muslims then should be characterised by a collective spirit, ensuring the welfare of the whole *Ummah*. If everyone behaves selfishly, the cause of faith cannot be well served.

It is our collective duty to take care of the religious needs of our locality and town. We should maintain our mosques and *Madrassahs* and impart religious education and training to the young. We should be equally concerned about the

conduct of our fellow Muslims. Allah's mercy is after all withheld on account of Muslims' misdeeds and it is they who fail to reap any benefit because of their own weaknesses. It is common knowledge that today Muslims are guilty of many unjust acts. If we fail to realise our role as a faith community, our survival in a non-Muslim majority country such as India will become very difficult.

Without collective thinking we cannot achieve much. For then everyone would be engrossed in meeting their own personal needs, in bringing up their children only with a view to getting a good job for them, and this would spell disaster for the community as a whole. This is a pernicious mentality which should be checked. For it kills community spirit. If such a mentality flourishes, no effort for social reform or community welfare can be successful. It is regrettable that such a mentality is on the rise in our country. We have become a highly selfish people, concerned only with our own petty interests, our own prosperity, our own success in trade and industry and with our own material well-being. Prompted by such individual interests we act and do nothing beyond this.

This mindset must change. We should feel a genuine concern for the issues confronting our faith and community. This is an important need. Without this realisation no organisation no preacher or writer can lead us to the path of success and glory. I pray to Allah that Muslims grasp this truth at the very earliest. ■

Understanding And Exegesis of Qur'anic Text

Abdullah Al-Shami

Abstract

The question of understanding and then clarifying the meaning of the Qur'anic text is a subtle one, especially because a piece of profound literature can often be read in more than one way. Arabic is rich in figurative language and can lead to variety of meanings, sometimes in ways that either adhere closely or diverge far from the 'original' meaning.

In order to understand a fine literary text in Arabic, one must have a comprehensive understanding of the issue of exegesis together with the concept that multiplicity of meaning does not necessarily lead to contradiction. This paper surveys the opinions of various literary critics and scholars of rhetoric *balaghah* on this issue with a brief discussion of the concepts of interpretation *tafsir* and explanation *sharh*, which sometimes overlap with exegesis *ta'wil*.

Introduction:

At the beginning, I would like to offer preliminary remarks on the historiography of *tafsir* in Arabic and its history of the book approach. As all the extensive histories of the *tafsir* genre published so far are in Arabic, a close analysis of the historiography of these

works is difficult. In this article, I will argue that there are three major categories of historiography, the traditional *tafsir*, different Islamic schools, and the modernist approach. Identifying these camps is essential if we desire to understand the manner in which *tafsir* studies has been approached so far, since the proponents of all three have produced, and continue to produce, the editions of *tafsir* works that are the basis of most histories in Western academia. It will also allow us to investigate the history of the all-present term '*al-tafsir bi'l-ma'thur*' which has come to play a key role in the categorisation of the Qur'anic commentary *tafsir*. Charting the historiography of (*tafsir*), moreover, is here under-taken in conjunction with discussion of the history of publications of editions of *tafsir* in the Arab world. In other words, a history of the editions themselves as eventful mile-stones in a historiography of *tafsir* is the primary means through which I will endeavour to understand this self-same historiography.

Tafsir is a literary genre with definable formal characteristics. The most fundamental of these is the presence of the complete canonical text of the Qur'an (or at least a significant portion of it), segmented for purposes

of comment, and dealt with in canonical order. In a work of *tafsir*, passages of comment invariably follow canonical segments. Canon and segmentation, lemma and comment: where these are not systematically present, then a work is not an example of the central tradition of *tafsir*, though it may belong to the margins of that tradition. This formal structure is so fundamental as to require no exemplification. In this paper, two further structures are proposed as constituting, together with this one, a sufficient description of *tafsir*. Description is of course a mode of interpretation. The interpretation which I set forth in this paper is intended to be general, at least for the period under consideration, namely from the early time before Tabari onward. Exemplification is restricted to commentary on verses which relate to juristic explanation and the elaboration of argumentation. This does not impair the generality of the description, for, as will be evident, Qur'anic narrative provoked more than merely narrative responses: in the hands of a skilled and sensitive exegete any Qur'anic verse might be found to have implications ranging across the scholastic disciplines. In this paper, also, the distinctive achievements of different genres illustrated by juristic scholars, like al-Qurtubi, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi and Ibn Kathir which are demonstrated in the light of the structural description, are

concerned primarily with rules in their *tafsir*. I maintain that this must be recognized as a significant deviation from the norms of the genre; perhaps as a major turning-point in its development. The structures which I propose as constitutive of the genre, and the tensions revealed by the varied manipulation of these structures, were recognized at least to a degree by participants in the tradition. Demonstration of this in the section below permits also of some concluding remarks about the dynamics of the genre and its limits.

Why the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic?

Obviously, the Qur'an is the only holy book revealed in the Arabic language to the Arab Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was primarily sent to the Arab people. Arabs were very lexical in their speech and Poetry. The Qur'anic style was very new for them. Indeed, they can understand it; but their style was lagging behind. Since the Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language, there were no excuse for the Arabs not to understand it.

The special characteristic of the Qur'an is that its words and thus its meanings are from God, that the words were revealed by God to the His messenger, and that the messenger was only a reciter of the Qur'anic words.

An interpretation of chapter (surah) or verse in Arabic terms synonymous with the words of the Qur'an, is not a Qur'an even if it was identical in significance and meaning, because the words of the Qur'an are sacred and revealed Arabic words coming directly from God. Surah or verse translation from Arabic into a foreign language is not considered a Qur'an, no matter how accurate the translation is. An interpretation or translation of the Qur'an may be based upon religion, knowledge, honesty and carefulness, validating the claim that this is the explanation or translation of what is meant by the Qur'an.

However, is not considered if the Qur'an does not prove his rulings, not protesting format and phrase to the word because his words and his words are not words of the Qur'an, no words, no valid prayer and worship read.

Thus, in many verses the Qur'an clearly states the reason behind its revelation in Arabic:

Indeed We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an so that you may apply reason. Yusuf 12/2

(Thus We have sent it down for Arab discretion. If you followed their whims after the sort of knowledge which has come to you, you would have no protector nor any shield against God.) Ra'd 13/37

(Thus have We sent this down - an Arabic Qur'an and explained therein in detail some of the warnings, in order that they may fear Allah, or that it may cause their remembrance (of Him) Ta Ha 20/113

An Arabic Qur'an possessing no ambiguity so that they may do their duty. Zumar 39/28

A Book, whereof the verses are explained in detail; a Qur'an in Arabic, for people who understand; Fussilat 41/3

Thus We have inspired you with an Arabic reading so you may warn the Mother Town and anyone around her, and warn about the Day of Gathering there is no doubt will take place. A group will be in the garden while another group will be in the Blaze fire. Sura 42/7

We have set it up as an Arabic Reading so that you may (all) use your reason.) Zuhuf 43/3)

And before this, was the Book of Musa as a guide and a mercy: and this Book confirms (it) in the Arabic tongue; to admonish the unjust, and as Glad Tidings to those who do right. Ahkaf 46/ 12

Interpretation (Tafsir) and exegesis (Ta 'wil)

The Qur'an, according to Ustadh Mahmud Ta ha, has two semantic dimensions: the near or apparent

meaning; and the deeper or hidden meaning. The Qur'an has been re-vealed in various levels, stage upon stage, from God in His absolute to Man in flesh and blood. Every verse or even every word in the Qur'an has endless levels of meaning.

Say: "If the sea were to become ink to record the Words of my Lord, indeed the sea would be all used up before the Words of my Lord are ex-hausted, and it would be the same even if We were to bring an equal amount of ink." Kahf (18:109).

Taha used the term tafsir in the same way other scholars use it. It refers to the apparent meaning as implied by the language. So, tafsir depends on understanding the Arabic language. Even non-believers can understand the apparent meaning of the verse as long as they understand a good level of Arabic.

The hidden or the further meaning is not given by the Arabic language alone. To understand the hidden meaning of a verse you need to be a diligent worshiper in accordance with *tafsir* and *Ta 'wil* as God--given through self-illumination.

.. And fear God; God teaches you, and God has knowledge of everything). (2: 282).

Many Muslim scholars and interpreters of the Qur'an think that ta'wil

is only known by God.

But no one knows its meaning except God. Those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say, "We believe in it: it is all from our Lord." But only the wise take heed.) (3-7).

Taha disagrees with the above notion. For him between the peak and the base of the Qur'anic pyra-mid of meanings, there are endless levels of knowledge that are avail-able to the knowledgeable according to their attainment of piety. The peak of ta'wil is only known by God. Descending from that peak towards the base there are various levels of ta'wil for individuals to know.

Ta'wil is not a thought venture into the Qur'an. It has its own rules. To be able to practise ta'wil you have to go through a stage of meditation and religious self-discipline to achieve a purity level, through which you can understand and receive the word of God

Ta 'wil should not contradict the apparent meaning of the same verse; but it transcends to a higher level of meaning. Both, tafsir and *ta'wil* of the same word or verse will remain right and correct, yet they are different.⁶

Requirements for Tafsir:

The interpolator mufasir should master the Arabic language. He should be able to set up proofs and the

conditions related to proofs. He also needs to know something of grammar and language so that he is capable of understanding the speech of the Arabs. [He needs sufficient knowledge of Arabic language] to distinguish the sarth direct, the *zahir* apparent and the *mujmal* ambivalent in speech, also the *haqiq* true and *majazah* the metaphorical, the general *amm* and the particular *khas*, the secure *muhkam* and *mutashabih* the doubtful, *mutlaq* the absolute and *muqayyad* the qualified, *nass* the denotative and *fatwah* the connotative, *'ilm al-sarf* the morphological and the semantic *mafhumi*.

Examples of Quranic legal terms:

1. Direct sarth, like:
(God has made trade lawful and made usury unlawful) (1:275)
2. The apparent *zahir* like:
(Believers, retribution is prescribed for you in cases of murder.) (2: 178)
3. The ambivalent *mujmal* in speech, like:
(Attend to your prayers, give the zakat [prescribed alms] and bow down with those who bow down). (2:43)
4. The true *haqiqi*, like:
(Do not take life which God has made inviolate- except by right). (6:151)
5. The metaphorical *majazah*, like:

(Inquire of the people of the city where we lodged, and of the caravan with which we travelled. We are telling you the truth). (12:82)

6. The general *'amm*, like:
(Divorced women should wait for three menstrual cycles.) (2:228)
7. The particular *khas*, like:
(But if he lacks the means, then let him fast three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days after his return.) (2: 196)
8. The secure *muhkam*, like:
(Do not accept their testimony ever after, for they are transgressors.) (24:4)
9. The doubtful *mutashabih*, like:
(The hand of God is over their hands.) (48:10)
10. The absolute *mulaq*, like:
(But if he lacks the means, then let him fast three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days after his return) (2: 196)
11. The qualified *muqayyad*, like:
(And the daughters of your wives with whom you have consummated your marriage; but if you have not consummated your marriage then you will not be blamed [if you marry their daughters.]) (4:23)
12. The denotative *nass*, like:
(Cut off the hands of thieves, whether they are male or female,

as a [deterrent] punishment from God for what they have done. God is almighty and wise). (5:38)

13. The connotative fatwah, like:
(say no word of contempt to them and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them) (17:23)

14. The morphological 'ilm al sarf, like:
(when that Day comes, every suckling mother shall forsake her infant and every pregnant woman shall cast her burden and everyone will appear intoxicated, although they are not: the punishment of God will be severe indeed). (22:2)

The semantic mafhmuh, like:

(Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you be in strongly built towers." If some good befalls them, they say, "This is from God," and if ill befalls them, they say, "This is from you." Tell them, "All is from God." But what is wrong with these people that they fail to understand anything?) (4:78)

Conclusion:

Finally, interpretation tafsir and exegesis ta'wil are used by some scholars as Synonymous. While h, and the sfs regard it otherwise. Ta'wil understood to be of extra knowledge. But it should not contradict the apparent meaning of the Qur'an. Legislation is

always based on tafsir and not on ta'wil, because tafsir can be agreed upon while tafsir is always controversial as it is individual language. h, also, believes that, "humanity today does not need tafsir al-Qur'an. It rather needs its ta'wil." That is because Islam is into our lives very soon and with the help of God and under His guidance. "Islam is returning because the Qur'an is still virgin and the ancestors did not break its seals except the seal of its cover." That means the hidden meanings of the Qur'an still remain unexplored. Islam is ready to come back because humanity needs it and is capable of practising it.

The rethinking of Islam will better be served by exploring ta'wil. In the past centuries scholars explained Islam according to their understanding, which was limited to their knowledge about the universe and they did a great job by giving answers and solutions to the problems facing societies then.

Time has passed and our societies are now more complicated than ever before. Our problems are different but they can still be solved within Islamic legislations. Here comes the importance of rethinking. Ta'wil will teach us the hikmah rationale and reasoning ta'lil behind legislation and will enable us to derive new solutions from the Qur'an that suit our time. ■

Basic Pillars of Islamic Shariah

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

1. The common and central point in the *Shariats* of the previous Prophets and that given to the last Prophet, Muhammad (SAW), is the point of *Tauheed* (Unity and Oneness of Allah). According to it, Allah Almighty alone is to be believed to be the Creator, the Master and the Sustainer of humans and all other creatures, and that He is the One Who has created this heaven and this earth and the entire universe and operates them. To believe in Him and keeping His worship exclusively to Him only is a must. To consider anyone else His associate and/or deeming anyone else a God, is tantamount not only to revolt against that God Who is the Master and the Sustainer but is, rather, an act that infuriates Him. No one, whoever he may be, whether human or belonging to any other genus of creatures, is allowed to associate someone or be associated himself to the One and the Only God. It is this very *status of Tauheed* which every Prophet has given a call to. And, its message is contained in all the Books Revealed by Him and given to Prophets through Revelations. Torah was descended on Musa (AS), Zaboor on Dawood (AS), Ingeel (Gospel) on Isa (AS) and Quran on Muhammad (SAW).

2. Then, in order to tell the people

the need to have these very commands of Allah Almighty believed in, there used to be the people, raised as the Prophets and designated by Allah Almighty, to do this job. Their words and acts used to be prompted by Allah Almighty Himself. Hence, to believe in them, too, is a must. For, anything told by them is but something told by the Lord of the worlds Himself and is nothing but a Divine message. It is communicated by every Prophet on behalf of his Lord. He says: I am an Apostle sent by Allah and whatever I say is on behalf of Allah. So believe in it. Hence, having Faith in the Prophet and whatever he says is the second basic point.

3. The third basic point is belief in the Hereafter. That is, there is going to be, after this worldly life, another permanent and eternal life, the life of the Hereafter, which every human being has to be transferred to. In that life, the man would have only as much comfort or ease as he would have complied with his Prophet's command in this earthly life.

4. After having believed in these three basic points, it is also made imperative to believe in the fact that there is a creation, the Angels, of Allah

Almighty also and that they are celestial beings who are not visible to human eyes. They generally come down to earth in their invisible guise and convey their Lord's message to Prophets. They are absolutely allegiant slaves of Allah Almighty and act exactly in accordance with their Lord's Will. They are always engrossed in glorification of, and devotion to, the Lord of the worlds.

5. Likewise, this fact is also to be believed in that the entire creation and all the worlds are solely created by that Only God, Himself, and that He has not created them just at random with no thought or purpose. Instead, the purpose of their creation and the details of their post-creation life were all ordained in advance. Hence, whatever takes place, whether good or bad, does so in accordance with it. It is what is called fate. And, after this worldly life, there would be the everlasting life of the Hereafter in which the deeds committed in this worldly life would be assessed and would have to be accounted for. That would be followed by the reward or punishment as per the assessment.

These are those foundations' of the religion which, after having believed in, have to be acted upon and complied with. The instructions and directives regarding putting them into practice is what is called *Shariat*. And it is this creed and this practice which is called the religion prescribed by the Lord of

the worlds or, rather, the religion of Islam. He says:

(The religion that has Allah's consent is Islam.) (*Al-e-Imran: 19*)

The declaration of Faith in the above mentioned points is expressed in these words:

(I believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His Prophets, the Day of judgment, the Hereafter and the fact that whatever happens. whether good or bad, is all as per Allah's Bidding and Destiny and that I believed in having to get revived again after having died.)

After having believed in these basic facts, the matter comes up of compliance with them. It is what is called *Shariat*. It contains directives and injunctions for carrying out the life affairs in accordance with the Divine dictates which are conveyed to the Prophet through Revelation. Every Prophet tells the people how to lead their lives in accordance with their Lord's Will, how to comport themselves mutually with each other, how to acquire and make use of the bounties given them by God and how to abide by the dictates of God. The Prophet is imparted all these injunctions through Revelation. Thus, the religion which culminated and climaxed on the advent of our Prophet (SAW) is composed of knowledge and practice both. ■

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid: A Great Preacher and Reformer of India

-Mahboobur Rahman

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was born at Rae Bareli in Uttar Pradesh on the 6th of Safar, 1201 A.H./29th November 1786 A.D. His father, Muhammad 'Irfan, belonged to a prominent family, renowned for its holiness and religious learning. Muhammad 'Irfan was a descendent of Sayyid Qutb-ud-Din Muhammad al-Hasani, who migrated from Baghdad to Ghazni and then moved onwards with reunite of his dependents and followers to India in 1211 A.H. Sayyid Muhammad al-Husaini was the twelfth in the line of his descendents of Hasan bin 'Ali. Sayyid Shah 'Alamullah (1033-1096/1623-1685), the great-great-grand-father of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid had settled in Rae Bareli. His spiritual mentor was Shaikh Adam Binnauri, the spiritual successor of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi; Shaikh Adam Binnauri was so impressed with his talented disciple that he awarded him own turban as well as the headgear of his spiritual mentor of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi. Then, bidding farewell to Shah' Alamullah he said: "Sayyid, now you go back to your home well contented. You would be like a sun among the stars". Alamullah built a mosque on the bank of the river Sai in 1050/1640, which eventually came to be known as Takiyah-i-'Alamullah or Daira-i-'Alamullah, and this is the place where Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was born.

Many among the sons and grandsons of Shah Alamullah, blessed with the internal illumination continued in succession to keep alight the lamp of spirituality. His second son Sayyid Muhammad Huda, who was destined to become the great grandfather of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, was particularly noted for his chaste and pious life and generous disposition. Sayyid Muhammad Noor, the eldest son of Sayyid Muhammad Huda and a favourite of his grandfather, was not less careful in following the precepts of the Prophet than Shah' Alamullah who had taken special pains for the moral and spiritual discipline of his grandson, Sayyid Shah Abu Sa'eed, the grandson of Shah' Alamullah's eldest son. Sayyid Ayatullah was the maternal grand-father of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. A man of God, known for his piety and righteousness, he had the honour of being the spiritual successor of Shah Waliullah. Sayyid Muhammad Nur had two sons, Sayyid Muhammad No'man and Sayyid Muhammad 'Irfan. Like his father, the later was also a pious soul. While returning from Lucknow in 1800 A.D., he fell seriously ill in the way and expired before reaching Rae Bareli. Bibi Najiya, the mother of Moulvi Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali, Sayyid Ahmad 'Ali Shahid, Sayyid Hamiduddin and Sayyid

'Abdur Rahman, was the only child born to the first wife of Muhammad 'Irfan. After the death of his first wife, he married the daughter of Shah Abu Sa'eed, to whom were born three daughters and three sons, Sayyid Muhammad Ibrahim, Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq and Sayyid Ahmad Shahid.

Early Education of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid:

According to the tradition of Indian nobles, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was sent to a Maktab at the age of four years and four months. But unlike his brothers, he took little interest in his studies. He had neither taste nor inclination for education. Sayyid Muhammad' Ali, a nephew and closed companion of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, writes that during the three years of student life in the Maktab, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was able to memorize only a few chapters (Surahs) of the Qur'an, and to write only some simple words. His elder brother, Sayyid Muhammad Ibrahim and Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq appeared to be much worried over his lack of interest in studies, but father asked them not to fret for him. Said he, "Leave his affairs to the will of God. He would do what-ever is best for him".

There are evidences to show that the family of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid had a mystical tradition. This is an important factor for our understanding of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and his reform movement.

Some say that during the school days of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid whenever he looked at books, the words disappeared from before his eyes. When Shah Abdul' Aziz was informed of this situation, he inquired whether Sayyid Ahmad could see other small things? When a positive answer was given, Shah Abdul' Aziz advised that his education be stopped. Shah Abdul' Aziz considered that exoteric (zahiri 'ilm) had not been allotted to Sayyid Ahmad Shahid; rather he would acquire esoteric education (ilm-la-dunniwabatini) Thanesari, speaking about the problem of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid's education, puts in an apologetic word saying that the quality of "illiteracy" which he "inherited" from the Prophet, was becoming manifest.

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was, however, very fond of sports, particularly those which involved exertion and contest. He often used to divide his playmates into two parties, each of which tried to vanquish his enemy in mokebattles.

He spent most of his time in wrestling, swimming, kabaddi etc. He took such a keen interest in wrestling and other athletic exercises that according to his nephew, Sayyid ' Abdur Rahman, he could practice these exercises continuously for hours without showing any sign of fatigue. He had several dumb-bells weighing twenty, thirty and forty seers for gymnastic exercises. The result was that he had acquired such a

physical strength that once he lifted a heavy stone lamppost and carried it about twenty paces. Similarly, in swimming, kabaddi and other sports, he could easily beat the companions.

Makhzan-i-Ahmadi informs us that from the time of his mid-teens Sayyid Ahmad Shahid began to live an extremely pious life. He was endowed with such a nature (fit-rat) of piety that even the slightest deviation from the commandments of God could not be tolerated by him. As for his desire to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet, he was so overwhelmed with it that he tried to fashion every act of his life on the pattern of the Sunnah. Even during his boyhood, there was no instance showing that he had ever strayed from the path of righteousness (Jadah-i-haqq) or had given preference to permissible acts (rukhsat) over the obligatory ordinance of God ('azimat-i-'amal).

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was, from his childhood days, infatuated with a desire to wage war in the way of God. His enthusiasm was however, taken by his elders as a childish fad except, of course, by his mother who had never had any misgivings about the capabilities of her son. The religious force was creative in Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, which shaped him eventually to launch his reform movement. It was the righteousness of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid which impelled Shah Ismail to express his conviction that from the very

beginning Sayyid Ahmad's person was created with qualities resembling those of the Prophet. Hence some of his biographers declare that he was born a Wali. Sayyid Muhammad Ali tells us, that in his mid-teens, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid made human service his special sign. Social service had not caught his imagination so ardently that he never hesitated in performing the toilsome jobs of his neighbours nor was there any work too low for him. He was troubled by the sight of destitutes, and he showed special sympathy towards children, orphans and old persons. Every morning and evening, he used to visit his poor neighbours to inquire about their well-being and to bring them wood, water or whatever they needed. As most of these neighbours held the Sayyid's family in reference and were in general the murids of his family. Sayyid Ahmad's service to them very often started them for the very fact that they were beings the murids, supposed to render service to Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, instead he was very much particular in rendering them his best service. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid also developed a passion for spending long hours in prayers and remembrance of God. He often spent the whole night in vigils recollecting God and contemplating over the injunctions of the Qur'an¹¹. Belonging to a family with a long standing tradition of zealously following the precepts of true faith, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid avoided from the very beginning, doing anything which

could be construed as an innovation in religion or superstitious accretion to the teachings of the Qur'an and sacred Traditions. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid thus led a chaste and unblemished life from his childhood days. Equality of man was an important point in the teaching of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. During his reforming career, on different occasions he emphasized on this point. The social contact on the part of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid during his early life makes him distinct from a large number of Sufis, who passed most of their time in their Khanqahs. His contact with the people offered him opportunities to witness their socio-religious life; and the un-Islamic practices, which he must have had observed among the people, remained ingrained in his heart. Thus, we are of the opinion that Sayyid Ahmad's contact with the society in his early life enabled him to realize socio-religious problems of Muslim life which he tried to eradicate during his reforming career.

During 1803-4 when Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was about 17 or 18 years of age, he set out for Lucknow with his eight companions, mostly relatives to seek some employment. They had to cover 79 kms. but with only one pack-horse being available, everyone in the party enjoyed the ride when his turn came, while others walked with their luggage on their heads. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, however, never availed himself of his turn and always withdrew in favour

of someone. When they had covered about half of the distance, almost every one was too exhausted to carry on the journey with his heavy baggage. No porter was available either. At last, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid offered to suggest a solution provided everyone in the party agreed to accept his suggestion beforehand. This done, he packed the whole luggage in a blanket and carried it on his head; and, at the sametime, thanked his companions for giving him an opportunity to be of some service to them.

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid went to Lucknow along with some of his relatives and friends, of whom his nephew, Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali, the author of Makhzani Ahmadi, may be mentioned. We, therefore, accept, Makhzan-i-Ahmadi as the main source of information for Sayyid Ahmad's life in Lucknow.

Nawab Sa'adat 'Ali Khan, the then ruler of Lucknow, was a competent administrator who attempted to reform the revenue administration and enforced financial discipline. He ascended the throne on 21st February, 1798; but his dominion had not still recovered from the ravages of the great famine of 1783-84 owing to the apathy of his predecessors and disorganized local administration in the districts.

A Patrician of the city who held the Sayyid's forefathers and other elders of his family in reverence took Sayyid Ahmad Shahid as his guest while his

other companions had to earn their daily bread through calligraphy, tailoring or other manual labour. It was not often that one of the Sayyid's friends was unable to earn a penny, but Sayyid Ahmad Shahid always shared the victuals sent by his host and sometimes he even went without food to satisfy his friends' pangs of hunger. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and his friends spent four months in this manner at Lucknow. The host of Sayyid was by this time ordered by the Nawab to recruit a hundred cavalry for which about thousand candidates with their arms and colts had turned up. The Sayyid's host asked him to select two persons from amongst his companions. He offered both the appointments to two persons and related to him and his relatives to have faith in God who would solve their difficulties too. Very much impressed by the Sayyid's selflessness, his host promised to make some arrangements for his remaining companions in near future. After a four month's stay in Lucknow, the host of the Sayyid was asked by the Nawab to arrange a hunting expedition. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and his friends accompanied his host on Safari in the hope of securing some employment during the expedition. Three more months, however, elapsed in the hilly tracts in the north during winter season, without any opinion sight for any one. After that Sayyid Ahmad left for Delhi.

Sayyid Muhammad' Ali informs us that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid had, however, given up all hopes of getting

employed by now and was incessantly pleading with his comrades to abandon their illusive quest of the worldly gains and go with him to Delhi. "Brothers", said he, "all this toil and trouble to make a living has been in vain. Why not abandon it and go to Delhi? Shah 'Abdul Aziz is there now a sign among the signs of God". None, however, took him seriously. At least he took Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali aside one night and said, "I shall leave for Delhi in a day or two. I want *you* to accompany me". Muhammad 'Ali replied, "We do not have anything except the clothes we are putting on. You might have the courage to undertake such a long journey empty handed, but we can dare". Then after two or three days, Sayyid disappeared without notifying his departure.

From the above discussion of the early life of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid it appears that, his attitude towards following the Shar'iahkam and avoiding the innovations or deviations was, in fact the result of his religious up bringing. This spiritual urge, caused, Sayyid Ahmad's early departure from Lucknow. On arrival at Delhi, he presented himself before Shah' Abdul' Aziz for spiritual guidance. He thus, began a new phase in his spiritual career and very soon reached the threshold of its perfection, which was followed by his reform movement. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid left Lucknow for Delhi alone. His birth and bringing up (growth) in a sufi environment, must have detested the

worldly life of Amirs and Nawabs. The "Shiah" environment of Lucknow might also have disgusted him. As a matter of fact, Mirza Hayrat Dehlawi writes that, "when Sayyid Ahmad Shahid met an Amir, the first question put to him by the Amir was, whether he was a "Khariji" or Alite"Shiah"; Sayyid Ahmad heard these words for the first time in his life. But the Amir hoped that the innocent boy would become a "Shi'ah".

In reaching Delhi in 1804 A.D., Sayyid Ahmad Shahid went straight to 'Abdul 'Aziz who enquired about his family, home and his purpose of visit to Delhi. On coming to know that the Sayyid's maternal grandfather was Sayyid 'Abu Sa'eed, and his uncle Sayyid No'man. Shah Abdul 'Aziz once again shook hands with Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and embraced him. He remarked, "God willing, you shall have the patrimony of your ancestors". Therefore, Shah' Abdul' Aziz asked a servant to take Sayyid Ahmad Shahid to his younger brother, Shah 'Abdul Qadir, in Akbarabadi Mosque and tell him that he should extend every facility to the honoured guest. Shah' Abdul' Aziz also ordained three persons to look after the needs of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid.

When Shah' Abdul' Aziz asked Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, "Why have you come to Delhi? Sayyid Ahmad replied: "Considering your pious personality as "ghanimat" (one thing as the means of

achieving something else), I have come in quest of God Almighty.

Then Shah' Abdul' Aziz replied: "If God's grace accompanies the situation then you will achieve your own fatherly and motherly heritage".

By "fatherly and motherly heritage", Shah' Abdul' Aziz was evidently referring to Sayyid No'man and Sayyid Abu Sa'eed, uncle and maternal grandfather of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, respectively. Of course, apart from these personalities, there were many other persons of the family of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid who had received both exoteric and esoteric learning in the circle of Shah Waliullah himself and later in the circle of his sons.

To the Sayyid, Shah' Abdul 'Aziz started teaching all the three systems of Sufi orders (Chishtiyah, Qadriyah and Naqshbandiyah). After Sayyid Ahmad Shahid had gone through the initial stages, like recollecting of God, subduing of egoism, denial of everything other than God, affirmation of God, etc. he was instructed by Shah' Abdul' Aziz to practice "Shughl-e-Barzakh" or concentrated contemplation on the image of his Shaikh.

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, however, asked: "Sir, how does it differ from idolatry? One has an image carved in stone or painted on paper, the other has a conceptual figure upon which the mental gazed is fixed".

Shah 'Abdul Aziz recited a couple of Khwaja Hafiz in reply: "Soak the prayer-mat with wine at the mentor's bid, for nescient the guide is not, of the journey's goal". Sayyid Ahmad Shahid submitted again: "I dare not associate anything with God. I only want to be satisfied that the concentrated contemplation on the image of sheikh is not identical to idolatry. I would be convinced if there is anything to throw light on it in the Qur'an, Hadith or the consensus of the jurists".

Shah 'Abdul' Aziz was much pleased with the reply of his dis-ciple. He hugged the Sayyid and kissed his forehead saying, "My son, you have been blessed by God with the prophetic enlightenment". Asked to elucidate what he meant by prophetic enlightenment, Shah 'Abdul' Aziz explained: "Mystical sainthood is propinquity to God which is marked by a passionate attachment, seated deep in the heart of the lover. In that condition one becomes dead to the world and all that it stands for; progeny, riches, honour and human desires, all are effaced from one's heart. Then, with all his heart and soul, the mystic desires the pleasure of God. But those who soar in the domain of prophetic enlightenment are so completely lost in love of God that they answer the description of God moved souls given in the Qur'an.

"Ye will not attain unto piety until ye spend of that which ye love".

"Lo! In our sight they are verily of the elect, the excellent".

In their habit, and actions such persons are a replica of the Prophet about whom God says:

"But righteous is he who believeth in Allah and the last day and the angels and the scripture and the Prophets; and giveth wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due. And those who fulfill their pledge when they make one, and are patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere. Such are the God fearing".

"Such men of God attain an affinity with the Prophet in character and demeanour; death their souls from all desires and affection; spend their time in guiding the people and weaning them away from vices; enforce the commandments of God and revive the practice of the Prophet; fight the infidels and mischief mongers; and they are ever willing to diffuse the ways of true faith among the Muslims through their haranguing and discourses, whether people pay attention to them or not. This, in the parlance of mystics, is called "Qurb-ul-Faraiz" or duteous proximity. Such an enlightened soul always acts on express injunctions of the Qur'an and those who attain that stage should be deemed to have reached the highest domain of spirituality. And, that is the bounty of Allah, which he giveth unto whom He will".

Later on Sayyid Ahmad Shahid explained why it was dangerous to practice the contemplation on forms and figures although it formed an essential tenet in several mystical orders. It was an innovation in religion, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid explained because of its similarity to the worship of idols, and that the practice was likely to lead the traveller of spirit to pay divine regards to inanimate images and symbols which considered heretical by Islam. In preference to the other mystical orders, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid laid emphasis on a new method which he called "Suluk-i-Rah-i-Nabuwat" or the Sufism according to Prophetic method. The distinguishing feature of this new method is that the mystic should first turn away from all sins and makes all his actions confirm strictly to the law given by the Prophet before taking to remembrance and contemplation. The "Dhikr" or remembrance of the Prophetic method comprises recitation of the Qur'an and prayers handed down from the Prophet with intense humility, restless yearning and a heart-felt realization of the awe of God. The "Fikr" of the method consists of, first, contemplation in the goodness and Grace of God which is profusely spread all over the universe; and secondly, making one's will completely subservient to the will of God, realizing His Omnipotence at every moment, and abandoning everything which is the way of concord between one's desires and the will of God. The new mystical order

puts moderation and sobriety above solitude and "jihad" above musical recitations resorted to by the mystics belonging to others schools of mysticism for attaining spiritual trance and ecstasy. Sayyid's method of spiritual ascent demands abhorrence of every innovation in religion and punctilious devotion to the law of Islam³¹.

"The ultimate goal of mystic endeavour is to secure a concord between the inner self on an individual and the Divine Will" explained Sayyid Ahmad Shahid dilating on the significance of "Bi'at-i-tariqat" or the oath of allegiance to tread the path of mysticism, "And the pleasure of God can be had", he added, "only by following the luminous "Shari'ah, for, every path other than that of the Prophet leads the travellers astray to the blind valley of infidelity and denial of God. Hence, anyone making a claim to the contrary is a perverse liar whereas, 'Bi'at-i-Islam' (Oath allegiance to follow on Imam) is meant to fight for the sake of God and dominance of the "Shari'ah". This, if attempted without the least trace of self gratification or love for power, honour or riches is know as "Jihad" in religious parlance, and is the highest form of a man's submission to the will of God as none of the religious observances and forms of prayer can be equal to it in attaining the spiritual possibilities of the human state.

From the above discussions, it appears that an "Alim Sufi" of so great

repute as Shah' Abdul' Aziz was unaware of fact that there is a difference between "Tasawwur-i-Shaykh" and idol worship. Rather we should say an un-Islamic practice, resembling idol worship, had crept into the religious life of even Shah' Abdul' Aziz through the agency of Sufism. Finally, for the first time, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid received acknowledgement for his being endowed with "Wilayat-i-Anbiya" from his "pir". Recognition from Shah' Abdul' Aziz was the greatest spiritual achievement for Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid considered corrupt Sufism as the chief agency through which religio-social abuses entered into Muslim life. As a matter of fact, widespread corruptions provided Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, with reasons to reform Sufi practices.

During the period Sayyid Ahmad Shahid remained at Delhi, he engaged himself in mystical exercises; remembrance and contemplation, in order to attain perfection of spirit. He also avoided every act which could be regarded as unwholesome by the "Shari'ah". Once, a few of his friends insisted upon the Sayyid to visit a fair held on the banks of the river Yamuna. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid went with them albeit unwillingly, but he did not reach there as he fell unconscious in the way. Shah' Abdul' Aziz once remarked: "This Sayyid is so sharp in esoteric knowledge ("Ilm-i-Batin") that from a slight indication, he understands the high stages and passes them".

Sayyid Ahmad Shahid returned to "Rae Bareilly" by the end of 1807 or in the beginning of 1808. Reaching his home, he went straight to the mosque of "Da'irah-Alam-ullah". Generally Sufis prefer to live in a mosque, rather than usual dwelling, because they consider a mosque to be the perfect place for meditation. Sayyid Ahmad's stay in the mosque offered him a channel to meet various people to whom he delivered sermons regularly. The main concern of his sermons was to explain the excellences of the Qur'an and hadith. As a matter of fact, before the formal inauguration of his religious reform movement, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid kept himself busy in matters relating to preaching and admonishing. Hayrat Dehlawi writes that Sayyid Ahmad Shahid translated the commands "Ahkam" of "Shari'ah" into practical life in such a way that his life became "Shari'ah" life in actuality. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid always emphasized on the practical aspect of religious life. His reputation as a pious sufi spread very quickly in the neighbourhood of "Da'irah-Alamullah", it drew the attention of the people, who began to assemble in his presence and to express the desire to become his disciples. But he declined to receive "Bay' at" from anyone, in its place he admonished them against corruption and superstitious activities that were wide spread among them. He asked them to live lives in conformity with the commands of the Holy Qur'an and the

“Sunnah”. He used to say, for example, to people coming to give him “Bayat”. For a Muslim the “Muridi” (discipleship) of God and the Prophet is sufficient; do not tell a lie; do not deceive others. So, this is the advice; if you become “Murid” of a “Pir” and forget these things, your muridi would be of no use. If you implement these words in your life, you would not need any pir; take “Bay’ at” from it, so that it will not wrap you in devilish influence; and this is the way for salvation in the two lives. How can the words of a “Pir” or a religious preacher be better than these? Sayyid Ahmad Shahid had made this statement. This indicated clearly the direction in which he was going to launch his reform movement. His apathy for the commonly accepted idea of “Piri Muridi” is discernible.

In 1809, he was married to “Bibi Zuhra” widow of his eldest brother Sayyid Ahmad Shahid’s first child, a daughter named “Bibi Sarah”, was born in 1810. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid was now about 23 years of age. The economic pressure on his growing family led him to seek other means of livelihood. He was not “Alim”, therefore, could not be appointed as “Qari” or “Mufti”, or teacher. The only honourable job he could do was in the army. Amir Khan Pindari of Rajputana was struggling independently for temporal power. After sometime he had decided to leave his home town and joined the cavalry of Amir Khan in 1811. ■

Eminent Urdu Poet Kalim Ajiz passed Away

An Urdu poet of global repute and recipient of Padma Shri, Dr. Kalim Ajiz, passed away in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand on 15 February. He was 95.

Dr. Ajiz, chairman, Urdu Advisory Committee, Government of Bihar, was author of several books on poetry.

Dr. Ajiz was born in Patna in 1920. He was a Gold Medalist in BA from Patna College and then earned his Masters degree in Urdu from Patna University. He also got his doctorate from Patna University for his thesis on “Evolution of Urdu Literature in Bihar”. This thesis was later printed in a book form. He served as a lecturer for decades in the Department of Urdu at Patna University, wherefrom he retired as Professor.

In 1976, his first book of ghazals was released by the President of India in Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi. In the 1960s and 1970s he was the only Urdu poet who represented Bihar in the Red Fort Mushaira held every year in Delhi on the eve of Independence Day.

The greatest Urdu poet of all time, Rahgupati Sahay Firaq Gorakpuri was a great admirer of Dr. Ajiz. He sent his famous tape recorded words for Dr. Ajiz’s first book while he was lying on his deathbed in which he respectfully said he felt jealous of Dr. Ajiz because of the ease in which he could express his thoughts through his verses.

He said he loved Mr. Ajiz’s poems so much that whenever he heard him reciting his ghazals, he always forgot his own works.

Dr. Ajiz avoided any sort of publicity or fanfare despite the fact that he had hundreds and thousands of admirers all over the world. ■ (Courtesy; Radiance)

Value of Man in Islam

- S.Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be on him, elevated the position of human being and value of human sympathy and compassion to a height which was beyond human imagination. According to the teachings of Islam, if a person fails to sympathize and support an aggrieved person, he is like one who fails in obeying Allah. The following saying of the Prophet, which is a Divine Tradition (*Hadith Qudsi*), underscores this theme very effectively.

“Allah will tell one of His bondsmen on the Day of Judgement, ‘I fell ill, but you did not visit Me’. He will reply, ‘Lord! how could have I visited You, for You are the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds?’ Allah will tell him, ‘Didn’t you know that such and such slave of Mine was ill, but you did not visit him. Had you visited him, you would have found Me there. O son of Adam! I asked you for food but you did not give food to Me’. He will submit, ‘My Sustainer and Cherisher, how could have I provided You with food, for You Yourself are the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds?’ Allah will tell him, ‘Don’t you remember that such and such slave of Mine asked you for food, but you did not give food to him. Had you given food to him, it would have reached Me. O son of Adam, I asked you for water but you did not give Me water to drink.’ He will submit again, ‘Lord! how could have I given You water to drink, for You are the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds?’ Allah will tell him, ‘Such and such bondsman of Mine asked you for water but you did not give him water to drink. Had you given him water to drink, you would have found it with Me’ (Muslim).”

This is, indeed, the highest level of Allah's appreciation of a person's help to his fellow beings. There is yet another Tradition in which the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, has emphasized the value of having compassion and goodwill for one another:

*“None of you could
be a perfect believer
unless he wishes for
his brother [in faith]
what he wishes for
himself.” ■*

Prophet Muhammad and Peace

-Shakeel Samdani

On 30 September, 2006, cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were published by a Danish newspaper, including one in which the exalted Prophet was depicted as wearing a time-bomb as his head-gear. It was a pathetic attempt to denigrate the Prophet and show him just the opposite of what he really was. The thesis which was sought to be built up by the sketches, which were later published by many western newspapers and websites, was that if the Prophet of Islam was like this, what would common Muslims be - a total nightmare for the world. Let us here explore the personality of Prophet (pbuh).

The rapid expansion of Islam in the seventh century surprised all, particularly Christians and Jews. They tried to block the spread of Islam but ultimately failed. Two tyrant superpowers of the day, Byzantine and Persia, were destroyed by the Islamic tide. This happened during the reign of the second caliph, Hazrat Umar. Islam spread to two-thirds of the known world within a short span of time and Islam ruled for at least the next seven centuries.

When evil elements failed in blocking the Islamic tide, they resorted

to dubious means and spread false propaganda which is continuing till this day.

It was claimed that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was responsible for making Muslims violent by teaching them the concept of Jihad, that he spread Islam by the power of the sword that through his teachings Muslims became terrorists, that the status of women was reduced to that of a prisoner. It was claimed that it is due to such teachings that there is violence in the world and that Muslims are responsible for all that is evil in the world today.

The claim that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) taught Muslims to use violence and wage Jihad against one and all is baseless. During his own life-time, Muslims fought many wars while they were in a disadvantaged position in terms of numbers and arms. They had empty pockets and lacked horses and fighters. Despite such handicap, they came out victorious in all battles.

Historical evidence tells us that both Byzantine and Persia indulged in creating towers of human heads after their victories but the Muslim armies led

by the Prophet and his lieutenants never adopted such repressive means to celebrate their victories and behaved in a civilized way with the war prisoners as well as the people of the conquered lands. It is certain that the charge of terrorism, violence and meaningless Jihad is baseless; otherwise Islamic armies would have been responsible for the genocide of the conquered people in Iraq, Persia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Spain etc after their thumping victories. They were in a position to enslave people, show disrespect to women and destroy cities and towns. But history is witness that all Islamic rulers, especially the rightly-guided caliphs and a majority of the later rulers, such as Mohammad ibn Qasim, Tariq ibn Ziyad and Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi had spread love, affection, compensation and peace after their victories and this policy was one of the most important factors behind the rapid rise of Islam.

Another charge leveled against the followers of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is that they had spread Islam through the power of sword. I totally reject such false propaganda. History stands witness that Muslim rulers never forced their people to convert to Islam. If Muslim rulers had adopted such questionable means, then after nearly 1000 years of Muslim rule in India, Muslims would not have been in a

minority. If such a policy was indeed used, then the slave of the second caliph Hazrat Umar Farooq would not have been a Christian till the caliph's death. No one forced him to change his religion.

If we go through the history of the battles fought by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) during his life-time we find that in all these battles only 759 non-Muslims were killed while 259 Muslims were martyred. This leaves us with a total of 1018 casualties in all those battles. Such a low causality during the greatest revolution in human history proves that it was a bloodless revolution. We have seen that in the French and Russian revolutions millions of people lost their lives. In the light of such historical facts, it is hard to accept the tendentious view of some anti-Islam propagandists that the Prophet (pbuh) accomplished his mission by the power of sword.

An analysis of all the battles fought by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Muslims during the last one thousand years will be revealing and surprising. During wars spread over these one thousand years Muslims did not kill even a fraction of the casualties of European, American, Christian and Jewish wars. During each of the first and second wars alone around 80 million people were killed while the injured may be counted in hundreds of millions. When the followers of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

were living in peace and were engaged in spreading knowledge of science and mathematics, Europe was fighting senseless wars spanning over thirty years. Uncounted people were killed during pre-and post-French Revolution. Millions were killed in Vietnam, Cambodia, Yugoslavia and Chechnya. About 7.5 million people were killed during the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949), about 5 to 10 lakh people were killed in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), about 5 lakh people were killed in the Angolan Civil War (1975-2000), about 2 to 8 lakh people died during the Warlord Era in China (1916-1928) and in Vietnam war about 8 lakh to 3.1 million men, women and children were killed. The total number of the injured during these conflicts may be imagined looking at the numbers of the fatalities. All this was the end result of the wars fought by Christians, Jews and Communists. Islam or its followers had no hand in these killings.

Leaving old history, we see that after the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate in Turkey (1924), Muslims became weak in all matters while Christians and Jews registered tremendous growth in power. Communism which had triumphed after a lot of blood-shedding, finally collapsed in 1990. But Christian and Jewish sway has not stopped the spread of Islam. Reports of electronic and print media and research data suggest that Islam is

fast spreading all over the globe. In Europe and America, large numbers of people are embracing Islam. France and UK are not far behind. According to a recent report, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. In 1990, 935 million people were Muslims and this figure rose to around 1.2 billion by 2000 which meant that around one in five people in the world follows Islam. Although Islam started in Arabia but by 2002, 80 percent of the believers in Islam lived outside the Arab world. In the period 1990-2000, approximately 12.5 million more people converted to Islam than to Christianity (Guinness World Records 2003, p. 102). According to Reader's Digest Almanac Year Book, Islam grew by 235% in 50 years between 1934-1984.

According to a report on CNN, "the second largest religion in the world after Christianity, Islam is also the fastest growing religion. In the United States, for example nearly 80 percent of more than 1200 mosques have been built in the past 12 years. Some scholars see an emerging Muslim renaissance as Islam takes root in many traditional Christian communities. Islam has drawn converts from all walks of life, most notably African-Americans and people of Spanish origin in the USA. These developments suggest that teachings of Islam are for all mankind forever and that people are embracing it through their

free will even when Islam is weak and is being attacked.

A non-Muslim scholar, Michael Hart, has given befitting reply to those who accuse the Prophet in various ways. He has compiled a list of a hundred most respected, powerful, kind and successful men throughout history. He put the name of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) on top of his list. Hart is, no doubt, a committed Christian but his assessment is based upon strict criteria. As a result, he accorded the first place to the Prophet of Islam in the galaxy of political leaders, messengers, scientists, philosophers, thinkers and reformers of the world. He devoted the opening chapter of his book to the Prophet, underscoring, as it does the dominance of the Prophet's position in human history. Another equally significant point is that Hart is a scientist by profession. As a Christian or as a scientist he should have naturally bestowed this honour upon Prophet Jesus or Newton. However, rejecting their claim to primacy, he presents Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as the most influential figure in human history. In his entire book, only two Muslims have figured, one is Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the other is Hazrat Umar (RA) whom he placed at number 52 in his book. He has also offered us the logic behind placing Prophet

Muhammad (pbuh) over Prophet Jesus. Explaining why he chose the Prophet over all others, Hart said in his book, "my choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels." Hart further wrote that, "We know that the victories of Arabs in seventh century have left a lasting impression and shaped the history of mankind. It is a mixture of religious and worldly effects. It is the main reason due to which Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is placed at the top of the list of hundred personalities".

Study and analysis indicate that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had brought a message of love and peace for whole of mankind and world for all time to come. The world is facing violence, disturbances, disruptions and deprivations because people are not following teachings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Islam. If the world dreams of a peaceful, hospitable and affectionate tomorrow then we all must embark upon the path shown by Islam and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

(The author is professor in the Faculty of Law, AMU and President Sir Syed Awareness Forum.) ■

Guiding Principles of Human Rights

-Parvez Mandviwala

Man is a social being who is unique in Allah's realm of creation by virtue of having been given the freedom to exercise his own free will. However, history is witness that this free will has often been misused to usurp the rights of other men, causing untold disorder and misery. There thus arose a need to specify what rights man has and what is the scope of his freedom.

The Constitution of India, in the year 1950, laid down certain Fundamental Rights for every citizen of India. A year earlier, shocked by the enormous number of casualties in World War II, the Geneva Convention had enlisted the rights of Prisoners of War and Rules of Warfare to be followed by all signatory countries. Going still back, we have the French Revolution from 1789-1799 and the resultant 'Declaration of Rights of Man' which speaks of Sovereignty of Man, Liberty, Equality, Right to Vote, Trial by Jury, etc. We may also add the *Magna Carta* of 1215 here which essentially was a truce between the British Emperor and his Barons but is also widely counted as a Human Rights Declaration.

And long before these self-proclaimed 'noble declarations' were written down or even thought of, Islam gave to man all the Fundamental, Civil and Moral Rights he ought to be entitled

to, in order to lead a dignified and peaceful life on earth. The Constitution of the Islamic State is derived from the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of His messenger, Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be to him). Its President is the Caliph (Allah's vicegerent on earth) who is entrusted with the responsibility of executing Allah's commands in the State after due consultation with the *shoora* (advisory council).

This concept is amply reflected and elucidated in the first speech that the first Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq (May Allah be pleased with him) delivered upon being nominated head of the Islamic State. He said, "O People! I have been chosen to lead you, despite not being the best among you. If I do well, help me; and if I do wrong, correct me. Truth is a trust and lying is a breach of trust. The weak among you are strong in my sight, until I have ensured that they have their rights. The strong among you are weak in my sight, until I have ensured that they have their *right and justice*. Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His messenger. If I disobey them, I forfeit every claim to your obedience."

Let us now discuss some of the rights an Islamic state offers, and indeed guarantees, all people under its jurisdiction. For ease of understanding,

allow me to classify them as under:

A. JUSTICE

Irrespective of one's social, economic or political position, every person is treated equally before the law, and every person is entitled to seek justice from the court of law. The judges are instructed to deliver justice without favour or prejudice as mentioned in Surah an-Nisa ayat 135 and Surah al-Maidah ayat 8. So we have the Messenger of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be to him) telling a gathering that even the hands of his beloved daughter Fatima (May Allah be pleased with her) would be severed if she were to commit a theft and we have Caliph Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), who had to appear before a judge in the capacity of an ordinary petitioner to claim back his stolen armour from an ordinary citizen who happened to be a Jew!

Some basic rights under this heading are:

1. The Right to Life

Following the narration of Abel's murder by his brother Cain in Surah al-Maidah, the Qur'an avers that the murder of one innocent person is equivalent to the murder of the entire humanity and saving the life of one person is equivalent to saving the life of all mankind. Life of every person has been declared sacred and the Islamic state can reward capital punishment only under two circumstances - as a

punishment for murder or for *spreading fasaad* (corruption) in the land. (Surah al-Maidah, ayat 32)

2. The Right to Appeal and the Right to Habeas Corpus.

3. Protection from Prosecution for someone else's crime.

Surah al-An'am ayat 164 says, 'And every soul earns not (blame) except against itself, and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another.....' In Surah al-Baqarah ayat 178 it is clearly said that a free man would be punished for his sins, a slave for his and a woman for her alone.

4. The right to be treated as innocent, unless proven guilty.

Caliph Umar's (May Allah be pleased with him) golden statement would always be remembered in the history of jurisprudence that 'A 100 criminals may be erroneously acquitted, but not even a single innocent should be convicted.'

5. Right to refrain from Sin/Crime.

The Prophet had proclaimed that there is no obedience to the created if it implies disobedience to the Creator. This gives each person the right to deny any order which involves a sin or a crime and the state would support it in this decision of his.

B. EQUALITY

The thirteenth ayat of Surah Al-Hujurat and the Final Address of the Prophet on the plains of Arafat are

equivocal in laying down the principle that all men are equal before their Lord and distinction between them would be based only on his/her level of piety.

Thus, in an Islamic State, there is no bias on the basis of nationality, colour, race, creed, profession or gender. Everyone is entitled to equal opportunity and has the liberty to choose one's profession, regardless of the profession of his father.

Women's Rights

At a time when the European clergy was immersed in a debate on whether a woman even has a soul or not, Islam had already given equal rights to women and firm steps have been taken towards its realisation. For example:

Men have been asked to live with women in kindness. (Surah an-Nisa ayat 19 and Surah al-Baqarah ayat 231)

They have been given the right to initiate divorce in the form of *khula*.

They have been given a fixed share in the inheritance of their husbands, parents, children and siblings. (Surah an-Nisa)

They have the right to accept or deny a matrimonial proposal

They are entitled to receive a gracious *mehr* upon being married. (Surah an-Nisa ayat 4)

Right to remarry upon being divorced or widowed

They are not to be compelled to share their earnings with anyone

Political equality is also a gem of Islam. The head of the state is neither chosen on the basis of family hierarchy nor from any elite priestly class. The general rule is that the best person available should be democratically chosen Caliph by common consensus. Caliph Umar used to recollect his earlier days and remark that 'There was a time when I could not even tend camels properly and today Allah has elevated me to such a high position that there is no one in authority between me and my Lord.'

C. SECULARISM

Secularism can be vaguely defined as Equal Treatment of All Religions by the State. This can mean different things to different countries. In the USA, there is separation of Religion and State and all men come under the ambit of a common civil law. In France, any overt expression of religious symbols is banned by law, whereas in Communist countries, religion itself is banned altogether. In India, all religions are equally respected by the state and the individuals are allowed to follow their personal religious laws.

Although based on religious ideology, the Islamic state is secular in the sense that it does not interfere with the personal religious choice of any individual.

1. Right to practise one's faith

Every individual is free to follow his/her religion under the Qur'anic injunctions of 'There shall be no compulsion in religion' and 'To you your religion, and to me mine' (Surah al-Baqarah ayat 256 and Surah al-Kafiroon ayat 6 respectively)

2. Right to Protection from religious insult

It is explicitly mentioned in Surah Al-An'am ayat 108 that, 'And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah.....' This injunction provides the non-Muslims with complete protection against religious insult.

3. Rights of Zimmis

The non-Muslim residents of an Islamic state are entitled to the same civil rights and liberties as their Muslim countrymen. They are only required to pay a small tax called *jizya* in lieu of which they are exempted from military duty and the state takes the 'zimmaj zimmedari' or responsibility of their welfare. This tax is not an 'additional' tax because the Islamic state is essentially a welfare state and no other taxes are levied. This *jizya* is often far less than the zakat and ushra paid by the Muslims and even that is forgiven if the *zimmi* is unable to afford it!

D. FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION

Contrary to the Western concept of 'Freedom to Say Anything about Anyone', the Islamic concept of

Freedom of Speech and Expression is far more responsible and productive. It entails:

1. The Freedom to Speak up for the right and against evil

The famous Qur'anic injunctions of *amr bil ma' aruf and nahi anil munkar* are self-explanatory. Islam gives each person the right, or should I say encourages every person to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. (Surah Ale-Imran ayaat 104 and 110)

2. Right to protest against injustice

The Prophet has instructed us that if we happen to witness some wrongdoing, we should stop it with our hands, or with our speech or at least detest it in our hearts, this being the lowest level of faith.

3. Right to organise and gather, albeit unarmed

4. Protection from vilification and defamation

Freedom of Speech and Expression is not the freedom to defame and libel. It should not be exercised at the expense of someone's honour. Surah Al-Hujurat ayaat 11 and 12 strictly prohibit ridiculing someone, insulting, calling nicknames, unwarranted suspicion, spying and backbiting. Slandering chaste women has been emphatically prohibited in the 23rd ayat of Surah An-Noor.

5. Right to hold divergent views

Caliph Ali had allowed his enemies, the Khawarij to propagate

their views publicly despite being opposed to them. The only condition was that they should not forcefully compel anyone to subscribe to their views. We know that it was this very group that was responsible for his assassination a few months later. This tolerance showed by Caliph Ali is a guiding light for all of us in all such cases till the end of time. May Allah be pleased with him.

E. PRINCIPLES OF WAR

In Islam, wars are not fought to annex kingdoms or to plunder wealth, but to establish justice. The Geneva Convention is merely a piece of paper which is hardly enforced. In sharp contrast, Islamic war principles were scrupulously adhered to during the reign of the rightly guided Caliphs.

Non-combatants including women, children, the elderly, the sick and the injured were not to be harmed.

Those who were engaged in worship in their churches and synagogues or temples were not to be harmed.

Those inclined towards peace were not to be harmed.

Prisoners of War were to be treated with dignity. Surah Ad-Dahr ayat 8 even speaks of the virtues of feeding the captives from one's own food!

Lady prisoners of war were distributed among the soldiers by the state authority for their welfare and upkeep and were not considered a part of war booty.

The general amnesty declared by Prophet Muham-mad (May peace and blessings of Allah be to him) after the fall of Makkah in the year 8 AH is unparalleled in human history and even his staunchest enemies have wholeheartedly appreciated this magnanimous gesture of his.

F. GENERAL CIVIL RIGHTS

The Islamic State is essentially a Welfare State and it assumes the responsibility of providing each resident with food, clothing and medicines. So principled was this system that once when the city of Madinah was gripped with famine, Caliph Umar suspended the punishment for theft because the state could no longer provide food for the citizens and consequentially, if anyone was compelled to steal out of hunger, he was forgiven!

The state would support a good cause and not support a bad cause.

The state is also required to arrange for the education of all children.

G. MORAL RIGHTS

The Islamic state is responsible for the moral health of the society. Hence, rights of Parents, Children,

Siblings, Spouse, Relatives, Fellow travellers, Neighbours and mutual rights of fellow citizens have also been constituted in the light of numerous injunctions mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith and the state encourages their implementation.

All these rights are guaranteed to each and every human soul residing under the jurisdiction of an Islamic state, whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim and whether he is a friend or a foe. We need to realise that these rights were declared and enforced by the erstwhile Islamic state 1400 years ago when the

very concept of Human Rights was elusive. Even today, while a lot has been written about Human Rights in various State Constitutions around the world, they are hardly heeded to. In sharp contrast, the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs was a personification and epitome of Justice, Equality, Secularism, Democracy, Freedom and Fraternity in the truest sense of the terms and these are the very Guiding Principles which are required to be followed by every Islamic State in any part of the world. ■

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India For The Indians

-Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi has done well to speak out publicly at a national celebration of the Elevation to sainthood of Kuriakose Elias Charara and Mother Euphnesia at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi against religious violence and intolerance after a series of attacks on Churches, the controversy surrounding 'ghar wapsi' or rereligious conversions and love Jihad. Mr. Modi has pledged that "My government will ensure that there is complete freedom of faith and that everyone has the undeniable right to retain or adopt the religion of his or her choice without coercion or undue influence." He further assured that "My government will not allow any religious group, belonging to the majority or the minority to incite hatred against others, overtly or covertly."

It should be kept in mind that India is one of the largest democracy in the world. It has been the cradle of a variety of

civilizations, cultures and religions. It is a pluralistic society. It has the birth place of Buddah, Mahavir, Guru Nanak, Mahatma Gandhi, Kabir, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr. Zakir Husain, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and the like. All these beacons taught lesson of brotherhood and fraternity in their respective period and time. Their instructions and messages still inspire us to lead a peaceful life on this land. Let us revive the thought - provoking slogan of Swami Dayanand "India for the Indians".

It is time Prime Minister must thwart VHP and RSS who try to turn India into a Hindu rashtra. They indeed undermine BJP's development agenda on which the party came to power. Moreover, Mr. Modi's slogan 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' can only be realised if communal harmony prevails and the government is seen to be upholding the law. ■

Obituary

Dr. Muid Ashraf Nadwi, incharge Majlis-Sahafat wa Nashriyat, Nadwatul Ulema, passed away in his ancestral village, Pure Kamghar, Barabanki, U.P. on 19-02-2015.

After passing out from Nadwa he was employed there. He obtained his Ph.D. degree from the Lucknow university. He held the post of Manager of Tameer-e Hayat. Later on was promoted as incharge of Majlis-Sahafat wa Nashriyat Nadwatul-Ulema Lucknow.

His sudden death stunned everyone. Dr. Maulana Saeedur Rehman Azami Nadwi, S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Hasani Nadwi, Maulana Hamza Hasani Nadwi and some members of non-teaching staff visited his ancestral home and joined the funeral rites of Dr. Nadwi.

MAY ALLAH GRANT PEACE TO HIS SOUL. AMEEN!

Duties of a Woman in Islam

Islam is a fair and balanced system of life. While it specifies the rights of women, it also lays down duties. A Muslim woman is expected to observe the following:

1. Belief in One God (*Tawhid*) and the practice of Islam should be her foremost duty. A Muslim woman must perform her Prayer (*Namaz*), observe Fasting (*Sawm*) during Ramadan, pay Almsgiving (*Zakah*) on her own wealth (if it is applicable) and go to Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) if she can afford it.
2. She is required to maintain her chastity at all times. She must not have any extra-marital relationship.
3. She should dress modestly and should put on Hijab, (Hijab means a long outer garment or head scarf) while going out and meeting adult males beyond her close relatives (see Quran, 33:59, 24:30-31).
4. It is her duty to bring up children with the best character, according to the rules of Islam. She has to look after the family and has almost absolute control over domestic affairs, although the family is run by mutual consultation and cooperation. She is the Queen of the family.
5. She is her husband's helpmate. A faithful wife is like a garment, a source of peace, love, happiness and contentment for her husband. (See Quran, 30:21, 2:187)
6. If she is asked to go against the command of Allah, she must defy even her husband, father or brother. (See Quran, 9:23)
7. Islam considers a husband and a wife as complementary to one another. Neither dominates the other. Each has his or her own individual rights and duties - together they form a peaceful and happy family which is at the core of a sound, stable and peaceful society.

(*The Facts Vs. Fiction by Syed Hamid Mohsin*)

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