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The Quranic Dictum

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The Qur'an lays stress on following the way of the prophets and asks the believers, time and again, to pattern their lives and conduct after the example set by the messengers of God.

"Verily in the messenger of Allah ye have a good example for him who looketh unto Allah and the Last Day, and remembereth Allah much."

It directs the Muslims to beseech God always to show them the right path.

"Show us the right path, The path of those whom Thou hast favoured;

Not (the Path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray."

This prayer which forms part of the service repeated several times a day, teaches man to seek the companionship of the prophets, their leaders and guides and God-loved souls. Whoever shall live up to this supplication by coming close to the appearance and behaviour of these pious souls shall undoubtedly be sanctified and redeemed by divine grace. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

It has been called ummul-amradh, or the root of all sicknesses of the heart. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), warned that a person having even an iota of it in his heart will never enter paradise. This deadliest of all sins is kibr, or arrogance.

"... Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful; Those who are miserly and enjoin miserliness on other men and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounties." (Qur'an, 4:36-37)

"And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance. Verily, you can neither rend nor penetrate the earth nor can you attain a stature like the mountains in height." (Qur'an, 17:37)

"And do not turn your face away from men with arrogance, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah does not like each arrogant boaster. And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the ass." (Quran, 31:16-19)

"Of what benefit to you were your great numbers (and hoards of wealth) , and your arrogance against Faith?" (Quran, 7:48)

"Enter the gates of Hell to abide therein and (indeed) what an evil abode of the arrogant!" (Qur'an, Ghafar, 76)

"I shall turn away from my ayat (verses of the Qur'an] those who behave arrogantly on the earth, in a wrongful manner." (Qur'an, Al-A'raaf:146)

"Verily! Those who disdain My worship (because of arrogance), they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!" (Qur'an, Ghafer: 60) ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Once a man asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, advise me. The Prophet said, 'Avoid lengthening the dress (below the ankles), for this practice is from arrogance. Verily, Allah does not like arrogance' ."

The Prophet said, "Paradise and Hell quarreled in the presence of their Lord. Paradise said, 'O Lord! What is wrong with me that only the poor and humble people enter me?' Hell said, 'I have been favored with the arrogant people.' So Allah said to Paradise, 'You are My Mercy,' and said to Hell, 'You are My Punishment which I inflict upon whom I wish, and I shall fill both of you.'" (Bukhari)

"Arrogance is to knowingly reject Truth and to belittle other people." (Hadith)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "One will not enter Paradise, if one has an atom's weight of arrogance in his/her heart." (Muslim, At-Tirrnithi)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) defined it for us in an authentic hadith reported by "One will not enter Paradise, if one has an atom's weight of arrogance in his/ her heart." a man then asked, "One may love his clothes to look good and his shoes to look good?!" The prophet replied, "Allah is beautiful and loves beauty, arrogance is: rejecting the truth and looking down on people." (Muslim, At-Tirmithi)

"Dignity is my lower garment, and arrogance is my covering. If anyone competes with Me in either of these two, surely I torture him." Qudsi Hadith, reported by Imam Muslim.

"While a man was showing off in his garment, he looked proudly to himself, all of a sudden, Allah immediately crumbled the earth underneath him, and he is still dropping with struggle through it till the Day of Judgment." (Bukhari, Muslim)

"Whosoever drags his clothes out of arrogance, Allah will not look at him on the Day of Judgment." (Bukhari, Muslim) ■

Legacy of Islam

Terrorism in any form does not have the sanction of Islamic ethics. The Holy Quran has repeatedly warned Muslims to live a pious and peaceful life and eschew violence. Even in a few wars, which were fought during the life of the Prophet Muslims mostly, remained defensive. The wars were mainly against the tribes of Mecca and were in retaliation.

The political edge to Islamic expansion made it perforce accretive and adaptive. It is not without significance that Christians and Jews were not forced to convert in the recently acquired Islamic lands since this was not politically expedient. And Islamic law sanctified this. Linguistic conversions, i.e. speaking of Arabic language preceded religious conversions. After the demise of the Prophet this spirit of tolerance only intensified. Under the Ummayyad and later the Abbasid Caliphate the first cultural transformations that were noticed had more to do with language than religion. Within one century Arabic became the official language of the state and its bureaucracy. Being Arab in the Islamic Empires implied a linguistic identity more than a religious or ethnic identity.

The spirit of accommodation was more than evident in the flowering of a rich Islamic scientific culture during the period of the Caliphates. Until the rise of modern science, no other civilization engaged as many scientists, produced as many scientific books, or provided as varied and sustained support for scientific activity as Islam. Religious discourses on science advocated its separateness from religion. As a result a value free or ethically neutral scientific knowledge that is not specific to any particular culture was able to develop. Islamic science inherited all the earlier pre- Islamic and Christian and Iranian

scientific traditions and fused them into one new whole. Baghdad was at the center of this scientific activity. Here the Abbasi caliphs Harun-al- Rashid and Al Mamun patronized scientific activity of higher caliber. The latter started a programme of astronomical observations in Baghdad and Damascus. Along with Baghdad and Damascus many other centers also emerged. These were located in Shiraz and Isfahan in Iran. Scientists from Muslim Spain-Andalucia-travelled to these centers for training. And like in astronomy and mathematics in the realm of medicine as well Baghdad remained the dominant center for the production of the Arabic medical tradition. It was here that many Greek medical treatises were translated into Arabic. A worth mentioning fact here is that most of these centers of learning under the Muslim rulers had non-Muslim scholars and translators. They were given due recognition of their merits.

This narrative of Islamic expansion reveals that Islam carries a rich intellectual legacy of tolerance of other cultures and a spirit of open mindedness to learn and adopt the good points of other civilizations. Moreover in Islam state non- Muslim lived quite happily and carried out their religious obligations freely. Even in trade and other commercial activities they enjoyed full liberty Such a religion can never encourage Violence and hatred. We need to remind ourselves of this rich history of our religion and use it to mould us into better human beings. ■

S.A.

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The Duties of 'Ulama'

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

O believers! Maintain your covenant with Allah and be witnesses in equity.

(al-Ma'idah 5:8)

The whole Muslim community is to stand up for truth. Allah charges Muslims with this duty to uphold truth everywhere. They should perform this obligation wherever they are settled. Although the verse is directed at the entire Muslim community, the address is also specific to the 'Ulama'. They should be the champions of truth and justice. While Muslims should profess these ideals all over the world. 'Ulama' should ensure that the Muslim community adheres to these ideals. They should keep watch that the community does not deviate from its goals. Thus they should perform the role of witness.

Man is apt to infer profound conclusions from ordinary happenings. Shaykh Sa'di, the great Persian poet, is acclaimed for this trait. The same is true of Rumi who employs ordinary parables to convey lasting truths. Both are adept at drawing attention to the ultimate reality. Let me recount my recent personal experience. I undertook a long journey from Delhi to Hyderabad. The train took numerous turns and passed through many regions. Yet my

compass guided me to the direction of prayer all along. It was unaffected by the movement of the train. I was struck by this mechanical device. How constant and sincere it was. It kept on guiding me to the right direction, irrespective of the changes being made around it. In contrast man, who is the supreme creature, changes his way at every opportunity. I trusted my compass and offered my prayers on the basis of the information it provided. My compass was unmoved by its circumstances. So doing, it served its purpose well. Like a compass, 'Ulama' should keep on guiding the community. They should perform their duty, no matter how adverse the circumstances might be. 'Ulama' hold a place of distinction in the community. They should serve as a compass, commanding the respect of community members. Let it be recalled that all Muslims are obliged to face the same *qiblah*. By the same analogy, they should follow 'Ulama' in their life. Their overall objective should be to win Allah's pleasure.

In matters of belief and *Shari'ah* rulings 'Ulama' should be firm. They should not show any leniency even to a mighty emperor. Rather, they should hold fast to *Shari'ah* rulings and articles of faith. For these are beyond compromise. There is a world of

difference between deference to worldly power and adopting a strategy in the larger interests of the community. They should not betray any flattery to rulers. They can state the truth tactfully without showing any sign of weakness. Of course, they should invite people to Islam with tact and admonition. However, any laxity in matters of faith is out of the question. The Qur'an warns: "*The unbelievers wish that you should compromise (in religion) with them; so they too would compromise with you.*" (*al-Qalam* 68:9) The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was asked by Allah to promulgate polytheists. (*al-Hijr* 15:94) Whenever the doctrine of monotheism is at stake, a believer should turn away, without any consideration. Allowance may be made in certain matters. However, regarding monotheism, the *Sunnah*, *Shari'ah* rulings and articles of faith no laxity is admissible. The Qur'anic directive is very clear: divine injunctions are to be promulgated and in relation to polytheism no compromise is conceivable. It is therefore the bounden duty of '*Ulama*' to take a firm stand on matters concerning monotheism. They should nonetheless act with tact. They should make their point well. If some mischief breaks out, '*Ulama*' should try to control it, using moderate language. They should take firm steps later. However, they should not leave the impression that they will reconcile

themselves with falsehood. Islam has been preserved in its original form because of this approach. The truth cannot therefore be mistaken for falsehood. People are of course free to incur self destruction. However, they cannot blame the *Shari'ah* or '*Ulama*' for their errors.

On studying history it emerges that the Muslim community as a whole has never fallen into error. There have been instances of some aberrations at local level. *Hadith* proclaims however that Muslims as a whole cannot reconcile themselves to misguidance. In contrast, Judaism was corrupted at a very early stage. The same was true of Christianity which deviated from the straight way at the outset. The Qur'an therefore, speaks of Christians as those in error.

By Allah's grace, Islam is preserved in its purity. Anyone can find out the vast difference between monotheism and polytheism, between the *Sunnah* and *jahiliyyah* innovations and between the culture of Muslims and non-Muslims. A Muslim land may be corrupted for a time, brought under the influence of some invader or face some mischief. However, this is the exception. '*Ulama*' have always been alive to the cause of truth. They are ever engaged in the reform and preservation of Islamic identity. ■

A Reformist

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

Sheikh Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was a person of multiple dimensions and every aspect of his personality was visible in his life in practical form. Just as he rendered his services to Islam and Muslims, he also strove to fulfill the demands of humanity at large and left an indelible impact on the society. He was carrying so many different types of efforts at the same time that if someone could manage only one or two of them, he would be easily celebrated as a man of prominence.

His study of Islamic history was very deep and thorough. His study of the history of mankind and the rise and fall of nations was also very vast. His study included all facets of human life - political, religious, cultural, and ideological. In the light of those studies, he analyzed the condition and needs of his country - India - which is populated by followers of different religions and Muslims live there as a minority community. He then, as a concerned Muslim who feels obligated to guide people to the right path and improve their condition, dedicated all of his talents and abilities for the service of the *millat* (Muslims and mankind) and the country.

He was born in a family and environment which was well suited for nurturing and strengthening this sense of responsibility. His environment also helped him develop skills of articulation, speaking,

and writing which he utilized wisely as Quran has advised:

Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious. - *Al-Nahl*, 16: 125

Sheikh Nadwi applied this profound advice of Quran to all of his activities including teaching, mentoring, *d'awah*, preaching, character building, protecting *shari'ah* (Islamic code of conduct), internal purification, research, publication, presenting Islamic viewpoint [on various issues], working from the stage of Payam-e-Insaniyat [to convey the message of Islam to non-Muslims], and social reform of the *millat* and the country.

Out of all the above-mentioned activities, those related to Payam-e-Insaniyat and social reform were most sensitive because they involved interaction with the country's administration on one hand and the non-Muslim population on the other, and thus had the potential of being easily turned contentious and confrontational by political parties. That is why Sheikh Nadwi, following the example of Mujaddid Alf Thani (d. 1624), always kept himself away from confrontational methods and presented himself as a non-political and independent leader.

Sheikh Nadwi considered Mujaddid Alf Thani's methodology to be fully derived from the *sunnah* (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad who had set the

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best example of kindness, good conduct, patience, and wisdom in inviting people towards the right path. Once, while in a journey, Prophet Muhammad was lying down under a tree in midday in a desert with his sword hanging from a branch of the tree and his companions were scattered at a distance taking rest under nearby trees. The Prophet was awakened by the presence of a stranger who was holding the Prophet's sword in his hand. The man asked the Prophet, "Who can now save you from me?" The Prophet said, "Allah" with full faith and conviction. It had such an effect on the man that the sword fell down from his hand. The Prophet immediately picked up the sword and retorted to him, "Now, who can save you?" The man felt subdued and begged the Prophet to pardon him and show mercy to him. The Prophet asked him, "Do you accept Islam?" He said, "I cannot do this. But I promise not do anything against you." The Prophet let him go. The Prophet neither forced him to accept Islam nor did he punish him. There are numerous instances in which people of Makkah rejected his invitation and treated him rudely, but he did not retaliate.

Keeping such examples [of the Prophet] before him, Sheikh Nadwi adopted the strategy of Mujaddid Alf Thani who had struggled in this very country (India) in the regime of the Mughal emperor Akbar (1556-1605). Akbar, after becoming disgruntled with the prevailing customs and practices of his time, had started promoting un-Islamic practices and had introduced a new religion (Deen-e Ilahi) in his vast empire and put the future of Islam

and Muslims of the country in great peril.

Faced with such a dire situation, Mujaddid Alf Thani did not adopt confrontational methods. Instead he used means of counseling, communication, and wisdom. Also, instead of confronting Akbar directly, he approached Akbar's courtiers and advisers and encouraged them to give appropriate advice to Akbar whenever possible. He communicated with them through letters which were full of genuine concern and compassion. His strategy began showing its effect by the time Akbar's son Jehangir (1605-27) became the emperor. Jehangir's thinking was different from Akbar's. The transformation continued and Jehangir's son Shahjehan (1627-58) turned out to be even better than Jehangir. Finally, the transformation reached complete fruition when Shahjehan's son Sultan Mohiuddin Aurangzeb (1658-1707) became the emperor. Thus the final outcome of Mujaddid Alf Thani's efforts appeared in the form of Aurangzeb who established justice and peace on the pattern of *Khulfa Ar Rashideen* (the first four caliphs of Islam) after a gap of about a thousand years.

Perhaps the Prophet's journey to Taif (a town at a short distance from Makkah) was also in front of Mujaddid Alf Thani. In Taif, when the residents responded harshly to the Prophet's call, drove him out of the town and set street urchins to throw stones on him he sat down in a lonely place and prayed to Allah. In response to his prayers, the divine help of Allah came down and he was given the choice of getting the people of Taif crushed between the mountains. The Prophet said

, "If they don't listen, I hope and pray that their progeny will listen". The Prophet did not take revenge on them although he was badly tortured both physically and mentally.

Sheikh Nadwi adapted the strategy of Mujaddid Alf Thani for his own time and situation. He advised leaders, rulers, and government officials of India and Muslim countries through letters and personal meetings to take necessary steps for eradicating vices which had become widespread in their countries. He did it with wisdom and compassion. In case of India, he also reminded the authorities about the rights of minorities and the protection of Islamic *shari'ah*.

In 1975, when the then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi imposed the state of emergency in the country, no one dared to talk to her and tell her to stop the brutalities which the government officials were committing against the public. At that time, Sheikh Nadwi met her with courage and *istighna* (expecting nothing from anyone except Allah) and prudently advised her to change her course of action. Since there was a real danger that he might be detained and might not come out of the meeting, he had advised his associates about what to do if that happened.

In 1985, during the regime of Mrs. Gandhi's son Rajiv Gandhi, the Supreme Court of India, in a court case concerning the alimony of a divorced Muslim woman, gave a ruling which infringed upon the Islamic *shari'ah*. Sheikh Nadwi along with Sheikh Syed Minnatullah Rahmani met Rajiv Gandhi several times, explained the

shari'ah perspective of the issue to him and convinced him to take necessary measures to rectify the situation. He also worked hard to win the support of non-Muslims and stayed away from confrontational and violent means. The result was that Rajiv Gandhi was able to get a legislation passed in the parliament which nullified the Supreme Court's ruling and upheld the Muslim Personal Law.

In 1991, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in Uttar Pradesh, it issued an ordinance requiring every child [of government-run schools] to recite the polytheistic anthem *Vande Mataram*. Sheikh Nadwi opposed the ordinance with a firm voice and warned the government that if it was not rescinded, he would ask all the Muslims parents to withdraw their children from those schools. Ultimately, the government lifted the restriction and the minister who had issued the order was reprimanded and removed.

Whenever a new leader came to power, Sheikh Nadwi wrote a letter of advice to him and met him as well. Thus when Narasiraha Rao became the prime minister in 1991, he met Rao and reminded him about the need of improving social and moral condition of the country and emphasized that these issues were more important than political maneuvering.

When H.D. Deve Gowda became the prime minister in 1996, he came to Nadwatul 'Ulama to visit Sheikh Nadwi. Sheikh Nadwi gave him useful advice and urged him to improve the condition of the

country and be fair to minorities. Deve Gowda pledged to do justice to the minority communities and weak sections of the society.

When Atal Behari Vajpayee became the prime minister in 1998, he came to Nadwatul' Ulama to visit Sheikh Nadwi who was sick at that time. Sheikh Nadwi reminded him to work for the welfare of the country.

Sheikh Nadwi's advice used to be very effective and penetrating. It was due to the fact that his way of giving advice of sincerity and wisdom and he never allowed any blemish on his character either as a scholar or as *aada't* (one who calls people towards Allah). He always kept the interest and welfare of the Muslims, country, and humanity in the forefront and did not care about his personal benefit. This was the reason why everyone had a good opinion about him and considered him as a sincere well-wisher of the country and humanity.

He was firmly determined not to seek or demand any benefit for himself or any family member [in return of his services] or solicit anyone for the same and practiced it very strictly. He avoided accepting any favor due to which he had to feel obliged to anyone. This strictness made some of his relatives complain that so much precaution was unnecessary, but he did not change his practice and chose not to become obliged to government officials and authorities.

On the other hand, he always remained obliged to those officials and authorities who had done any favor to help

the cause of *millat* (Muslims) and gave them due recognition. In his autobiography *Karwan-e-Zindagi*, he has mentioned a few of them such as Mulayam Singh Yadav (chief minister of Uttar Pradesh) and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who had played an important role in restoring the Muslim Personal Law in the lawsuit involving a Muslim divorcee; Sheikh Nadwi used to often mention it in his conversations.

No other Muslim leader or speaker attracted as many non-Muslim leaders to their speeches as Sheikh Nadwi and the government knew about it. That is why regardless of which political party came to power, it recognized his status and importance and did not ignore his viewpoint. This was true with BJP as well. Thus when BJP came to power in 1999 at the central government, it realized his influence and weight and gave him due recognition. BJP is a political party that is known to be generally unsympathetic to Muslims.

There is a large organization known as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which mainly espouses interests of Hindus. Some of its leaders, after listening to Sheikh Nadwi's speech, remarked that no other leader had as much love and concern for the country as him.

Sheikh Nadwi's commitment to *deen* (Islam) and *millat* was unwavering. He never compromised with those who were opposed to religious values. He avoided doing anything that could undermine *deen* or *millat*; he was so conscientious in this respect that he seldom accepted gifts from anyone.

With respect to political parties, he maintained absolute neutrality. Though he appreciated and acknowledged their constructive accomplishments and reminded them about the common good, he stayed away from their political differences and wrangling.

He used the same approach with respect to the leaders of Islamic countries as well. To the leaders of India, he talked about the problems of the country, people, and minorities. To the leaders of the Islamic countries, he talked about the problems of *deen* and *millat*. He sent letters to the Saudi kings (Shah Saud, Shah Faisal, Shah Khalid, and Shah Fahad) and met them personally. He reminded them about their obligation to preserve *deen*, maintain sanctity of the holy places (Makkah and Medinah) and fulfill the needs of Muslims all over the world. He met them with full *istighna* (selflessness) and sincerity.

He met Shah Hussein of Jordan, Shah 'Abdullah (grandfather of Shah Hussein of Jordan), Shah Hasan of Morocco, the presidents of Yemen and Pakistan, and other heads of state. He reminded them to improve the condition of their countries and give due importance to the Islamic needs and challenges. A review of the letters that he wrote to various leaders give an insight of his style of addressing, understanding of issues, and foresightedness.

In addition to being a distinguished scholar of Islam, he was also a highly skilled writer and effective speaker. His writings and speeches were very stirring,

touching, and penetrating. He did not accept any gift from someone whom he intended to advise and correct. He used to say that if you accept a gift from someone, your advice would become ineffective for that person, but since advising is obligatory upon us, we must not neglect it. He used this strategy not only with rulers and authorities, but also with influential persons and leaders of the community.

There was a *seerah* (life of the Prophet) conference in Qatar in 1980 in which many top leaders, intellectuals, and crown princes from all over the Muslim world were present. Sheikh Nadwi had to deliver the inaugural speech there. In his speech, he told the audience with absolute clarity that if there was any theme of this conference, it must be about getting rid of the duplicity that had crept into the Islamic and Arab societies. He said:

Thanks to Allah that our disease is not *kufr* (rejection of faith) or *shirk* (polytheism). Our disease is *nifaq* (hypocrisy). We proclaim one thing and do something else. This duplicity has made us and our society untrustworthy. As a result, Islam has now become unattractive to others though our character was the main reason for others to appreciate Islam in the past.

He also kept himself fully abreast of current issues, contemporary thinking and what was happening around the world. His book *As Sirau Baina Fikratil Islamiyyate Wal Fikratil Gharabiyya* (published in English as *Western Civilization, Islam and Muslims*), speeches, writings, and travelogues bear

ample testimony to this effect.

Sheikh Nadwi used the platform of public speaking to bring reform in the society at large. He addressed large public gatherings and delivered lectures at conferences to remind people about important issues and possible solutions. With that goal in mind, he used to convene gatherings of people of all religions in large cities [of India] from the platform of Payam-e-Insaniyat. He also used to convene gatherings of Muslims only from the stage of an outfit known as Islah-e-Mo'asherah (Reform of the Society) in which he drew attention of Muslims towards their religious and social problems and obligations.

Due to these efforts, Sheikh Nadwi had become well known among the educated Muslim population and leaders of the Asian and Muslim countries. He was seen as a sincere and selfless scholar and leader who wished well for all and was able to articulate his viewpoint in a pleasant and stimulating manner. His command of the Arabic language was as if it was his mother tongue and he was able to present his viewpoint in Arabic without any difficulty. He also had the working knowledge of English and Persian.

In 1973, the Muslim World League sent a delegation to Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq under his stewardship for the purpose of introducing the League to Muslims of those countries and also to know their condition.

In Iran, he met prominent religious and political leaders and explained to them

the essence of *deen* and how important it was for the survival and prosperity of the country. He also made it clear to them that Prophet Muhammad was the final prophet and a good can come only through this channel. His knowledge of Persian proved very useful there.

In Afghanistan, he met government officials, *'ulama*, and intellectuals. He impressed upon them the need of creating awareness about Islam among common people. He shared with them his own experiences and suggested to them how to guide people.

He also got opportunities to address intellectuals in Europe and America. He delivered lectures at several universities including Oxford, London and Cambridge in UK, and Columbia in USA. In those lectures, he enumerated high points of the Western civilization and Christianity, highlighted the need of social reform and presented the teachings of Islam.

In a speech at an American university, he said,

Given the current temperament and lifestyle of the people living in Europe and America, Islam offers a better alternative to them because it professes to combine the good of both the material and spiritual aspects of life. Contrary to that, Christianity which they have adopted as their religion requires them to *shun* the world and thus does not fulfill all the necessities of the life. As a consequence, they have neglected the teachings of Christianity and have become overly engrossed in the worldly pursuits. They

should have studied Islam and seen how beautifully it fulfills their spiritual needs without requiring them to abandon the world.

In a speech at Germany's Berlin University, he first acknowledged the extraordinary contributions of German philosophers and then invited the audience to adopt correct means to realize those ideas.

The lectures that he delivered in Europe and USA were in Arabic or Urdu. They have been translated into English and published in the form of books entitled *Speaking Plainly to the West* and *From the Depth of the Heart in America*.

Most of Sheikh Nadwi's travels to Europe and America had resulted from his annual visits to the Islamic Centre of Geneva, Switzerland, of which he was a member. This center was established in Geneva by the Egyptian scholar Dr. Sa'id Ramadan for the purpose of introducing Islam to the people living in the West.

Sheikh Nadwi used to present his viewpoint in a very pleasant way in his speeches and articles. He used to mention unique traits and needs of the nation or community which he was addressing. He also used to identify specific evils and immoralities which were prevalent in the society. When addressing Muslims, he used to remind them about what was expected of them if they claim to be the best nation. When addressing educational institutions, he used to draw their attention to the need of developing a curriculum which could meet both the religious and contemporary needs.

To the Muslims who had migrated to Europe and America and settled there, he emphasized that they should be aware that the Western countries are not like the Eastern countries because the Western educational system espouses and promotes values that are very different from those of Islam. He used to warn them that if they did not do what was needed to nullify the ill effects of the Western education on their children, the children would grow opposite to their parents. He also urged them to appreciate the discipline and outward cleanliness that existed in the Western countries and not to carryover the bad habits which the people of the East had become accustomed to. Otherwise, they would leave a bad impression on the local inhabitants and make them apprehensive and uncomfortable about Islam and Muslims which would be a big loss.

Sheikh Nadwi's message was very broad and comprehensive and it covered all facets of human life. His method of *islah* could serve as a model for those who are in the positions of leadership, especially in the Muslim communities.

There were several aspects of Sheikh Nadwi's life which the readers of his biography should keep in front of them. His life was very clean, he was extremely conscientious, he practiced complete *istighna* (selflessness) in worldly matters and he completely avoided seeking any material benefit for himself. These qualities made his words very effective. Listeners saw him as a sincere and selfless person and took positive effect from his advice.

Sheikh Nadwi could have confined himself to writing and publishing. Or, he could have dedicated himself to academics and teaching. Or, he could have devoted himself to *tasawwuf* and *sulook* as Dr Iqbal, the Poet of the East, has mentioned in his couplet:

*ya khaak ki aaghosh mein tasbeeh-o-
manaiaat* (Urdu)

Either isolate yourself in a corner of the earth to remember and glorify Him.

Instead, he chose to fulfill the needs and interests of the *millat* and mankind and dedicated himself to the effort of *d'awah* and *islah* although he was by nature more inclined towards writing and publishing. In other words, he chose:

*ya wusat-e-aflaak mein takbeer-e-
musalsal* (Urdu)

Or, continue proclaiming His greatness in the vastness of the universe.

as Dr. Iqbal has advocated in the second part of his couplet and continued striving for this cause until the very end of his life.

Just one day before Sheikh Nadwi passed away, a delicate issue popped up. Some members of the Muslim community did something which gave the impression that it was permissible in Islam to do anything, right or wrong, to achieve an objective and it did not matter if it harmed other communities or fellow human beings. In order to correct that impression, he issued a statement explaining the correct Islamic perspective which was published in the newspapers the very next day - the day on which he departed from this World. ■

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Knowledge Sans Ethical Values and Norms is Destructive

- S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi*

Islam attaches more importance to knowledge as compared to other religions. Besides it introduced knowledge in religious teachings and bestowed on learned persons a great status. Needless to add that Islam and knowledge both are inseparable. That is why Islam has made it obligatory to its adherents to acquire it. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says: "Seeking knowledge is compulsory for both male and female." Islam divides knowledge into two parts i.e. profitable and non-profitable. These days both types of knowledge are gaining momentum. This modern age the age of knowledge, progress and prosperity. The ratio of knowledge as compared to other fields has increased. Today educational institutions have come up in urban as well as in remote rural areas on a large scale. The irony of the situation is that these institutions which are required to impart lessons of brotherhood, *fraternity, love, equality, ethical values* and train people of etiquette to live in peace and amity instead lead them towards the path of devastation, ruination and exploitation. Moreover, it makes one selfish and self-seeking. This is the main reason of people's deprivation and their bad luck. It has

resulted in creating bad blood among themselves. One community is against the other and one state is against its neighbouring state. Its core cause is divergence in motives and insistence on one own's Ideology and thought. Knowledge has become a source of seduction, gulf, estrangement, and misleading. Various acts of deception, delusion, craftiness and fraud are done in the garb of knowledge. Education centres have become centres of spreading terror and panic.

Ironically the countries which are prosperous and developed have destructive and ruinous weapons. It is strange that atrocities perpetrated by them are being hushed up and innocent people are branded terrorists. These are those states which are considered most developed in spheres of education, culture and civilization.

Israel is one of these developed countries which is far more advanced in the field of education as compared to other countries. But it has occupied the land of others and is now mounting atrocities on its original natives and forced them to run away from their own land. Nevertheless Israel is helped and reinforced by those countries which are superior in various ways to other states of the globe. Israel violates international

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laws still intelligentsia of his country as well as Noble laureates living in European countries and USA support these scourges, atrocities and devilish acts of Israel.

Erst-while Soviet Union, a developed state invaded Afghanistan and killed thousands of people, exiled most of them as well as usurped their rights of citizenship. Further it pressed them for adoption of its ideology. It changed the laws and concocted false history and distorted regional civilization and culture. It tried to implement its own language, culture and ways of life on them. It created the issues of Palestine and Cyprus and divided the government on the basis of race. It placed them on the threshold of mayhem, carnage, pogrom, massacre, bloodshed and killing. The atrocities of British can be assessed from the freedom movement of India. A noted Indian journalist proved in his book that the British killed 11 million Indian people for the sake of remaining in power in India.

Germany is another developed country educationally and culturally. The oppressions perpetrated on Jews by Nazis is the worst holocaust of history. Developed countries waged two World Wars which claimed lives of 70 millions people. What to speak of denying the incident of burning Jews alive in Germany, is an unpardonable sin. But the question pops up here who committed this menace? Did Muslims

on whom the allegations of terrorism are branded or western countries, considered developed and progressive? The answer is one that it the incident of burning is real, it is an open tyranny and atrocity of the inhabitants of Germany, representative nation of Europe and if it is false then it is a vivid evidence of falsehood of Europe.

The most prominent and developed country is America which in 1945 dropped atom bombs on Japan and killed thousands of innocent Japanese. For years it shed blood in Vietnam and behaved with them like that of wolfs treatment with goats. Despite that, its thirst of blood did not quench. Accordingly it headed Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, and targeted them with atrocities and oppressions.

France too is considered in these developed states, it too killed one million people in Al-Jazair and got a' rebellious group trained against religious and collective norms and set its network in the entire world. These are a few instances of these developed countries. If the bloody and sanguinary stories are penned and incidents of atrocities and cruelties are written in detail, many volumes will not be even sufficient. ■

(English Rendering: Obaidur Rahman Nadwi)

Islamic View on Education

- Saeedur Rahman Al-Azami Al-Nadwi*

Education has always been an important mean to help human beings in achieving highest position in social milieu. Right from the beginning it has been a beacon in various spheres of human life. Scholars of Islam have shown their keen interest in this field so that a common man may be benefitted with this great asset of Islam. Besides they may get awarded of moral, ethical and social values and norms of this great faith. Moreover, they may mould their lives with religious hues and may lead peaceful life accomplishing their duties and responsibilities in a better way.

This is an admitted fact that everyone gives ample importance to education. This we have inherited from the first prophet Adam. It is education that makes a benign society and moulds hearts with excellence and merits and purge human hearts with baseness and meanness. It inculcates in mankind moral values and sublime qualities and enhances human safety and its status and grandeur.

The edifice of Islamic way of life rests on the firm and sound principles of knowledge. The fountain head of morality and ethics is education in Islam. Education brings about such

magnificent constitution of life of which the fragrance travels far and wide. It keeps humanity refresh and sound with its sweet and delicious spring. It never perishes and dries up. Its beneficence never causes paucity and scarcity. Islam lays great stress on acquiring all kinds of knowledge. It does not distinguish, be it religious or secular. Islam made it obligatory for its adherents. Islamic culture and civilization encompasses whole gamut of human life. It makes life purposeful with its extraordinary favours, courtesies and immense bounties and boons.

It should be kept in mind that Islam praises that knowledge which has some limits, demarcation and principles. Besides it has its own ideology. Its fountain sprouts' with pure and fair faith and religious dogmas. Being imbibed with this clear and vivid spring its followers exhibit radiant and shining gems of knowledge and they constitute their principles and laws in its light. Their main motto is to enjoin good and forbid evil so that one may lead a purposeful life and attain the pleasure of God.

Needless to add, that Muslims distinguished themselves and made great strides in every walk of life

(Continued to page 32)

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Fundamentals of Understanding The Message of Holy Qur'an

- Mohammad Zubair*

To seek guidance from the Holy Qur'an, one needs to understand its 'law of guidance'. This law comprised of two basic conditions. The first requirement is to have 'faith' on it and accept its divinity. This is an essential condition for a person who claims to be a Muslim. The second significant requirement is the positive intention and sincere effort to seek guidance from it. This second requirement is of prime importance for a person to understand the message of Quran, whether he/she is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. After qualifying this 'law of guidance', there are certain fundamental principles which must be kept in mind while studying and reflecting on Holy Qur'an. The first and foremost thing is to know the unique formation and organization of the Book. It is not poetry, yet it looks like poetry. Also, it looks like prose but it is not even prose. Secondly, Quran has an extra ordinary coherence within its content which needs to be identified to understand the context. The third thing is that the Qur'an has been revealed in classical Arabic. It is therefore very important to have correct understanding of this language spoken at that time in the tribe of Quraysh. Another important thing to note that the Qur'an has not only been revealed in classical Arabic but it has been revealed in the language which is lucid and clear. The Book itself clarifies the meaning of its content, if

studied in context. Last but not least, one should clearly know that Quran is the final and ultimate authority. Every single saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace Be upon him), all the narrations of his companions and every act and opinion of the Muslim scholars must be evaluated on the basis of the Holy Qur'an. All the previous scriptures must also be evaluated on the scale of Holy Qur'an. This paper discusses all the above fundamental parameters of understanding the message of Qur'an.

When we plan to study the Book of Allah Almighty, the Holy Qur'an; we must keep in our minds that this Book is entirely different from all types of books we normally read. Unlike any other book, the Qur'an does not discuss an idea(s) or a topic(s) through a sequence of paragraphs, sections and chapters. It is the reason, when we approach it for the first time and do not find any sequence or order in its discussion; we get confused. On the contrary, we find that it discusses the issues of faiths, defines ethical and moral values, formulates civil, economic and other laws, describes historical facts, instructs for doing good deeds and stops from doing bad deeds, guarantees the success for the believers on the Day of Judgement and admonishes the disbelievers. But all of these teachings are blended together and there is no apparent connection between them. Also, all these topics repeat again and again with exactly

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same way or other. Sometimes, all of a sudden; a new topic starts in the middle of another topic without any apparent reason. The speaker(s) and the addressee(s) change without any intimation [1]. All these things are strange and contrary to the concept of a book we have. As a result, we feel that:

Qur'an is a Book without any sequence or order

It does not have any continuity or link between its Aayaat

All of its Surah are arranged in haphazard manner without any logical sequence

It is not a Book on one particular topic or subject, 'rather it is a Book of various miscellaneous topics which have been gathered randomly

In response to the above feelings, the disbelievers raise numerous objections on Qur'an whereas its followers try to device strange justifications to respond these objections and to ease their minds. They sometimes establish senseless connections between its Aayaat, which results in odd meanings and strange conclusions.

As a last resort, they even accept that the Qur'an is a Book of miscellaneous topics arranged without 'any inter-connection between Aayaat. Consequently, Aayaat are being studied without their context and therefore further confusions arise in their meanings.

In order to solve all these problems, one must understand the unique nature of this Book, the significance and meaning

of the terms it uses, the true links between its Aayaat, the nature of its Arabic language, the context under which a certain passage was revealed and its final authority over all other things. The discussion below, describes all these aspects in detail.

Law of Guidance - Prerequisites

Allah Almighty has devised a 'law of guidance' for all mankind. According to this law, there are two basic requirements to get guidance from the Holy Qur'an. The first is to have 'faith' on it and the other is the 'positive intention' to understand it. The latter is the essential parameter for a person (whether Muslim or non-Muslim) who genuinely wants to be guided on the right path of the Holy Qur'an. The prior, however; is the additional condition for a person to be a Muslim. Following is the detail of both these conditions.

Faith on Holy Qur'an

A person must have 'faith' on Qur'an to be a Muslim. But when one says he/she has 'faith' on Qur'an, what exactly does it mean? It means that he/she must accept and believe that:

1. Qur'an is the last and final revelation of Allah Almighty.
2. It has been revealed on Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who is the last and final messenger of Allah.
3. The Book is secured and safe from any alteration and amendment whatsoever. It is exactly the same as it was revealed on Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah Almighty Himself is the protector of the Book.

4. It is the final verdict and ultimate authority on any matter related to Islam. No other thing is supreme over it. Whatever Qur'an judges to be right must be right and whatever it evaluates to be wrong must be taken as wrong and must be rejected.

All the above facts are clearly mentioned in the Holy Book as:

"O believers! Believe in Allah and His Messenger and in the Book He has revealed to His Messenger." (An-Nisa 4: 136)

"As regards this Admonition, it is We Who have, sent it down, and We Ourselves will preserve it." (Al- Hijr 15: 9)

"And (O Prophet!) We have revealed to you this Book with truth in confirmation of the Book before it, and standing as a guardian over it. Therefore, give judgement among them according to the guidance revealed by God, and do not yield to their whims by swerving from the truth revealed to you." (Al- Ma'idah 5: 48)

A person who claims to be a Muslim but does not accept all the above conditions of 'faith' (or refuses, to accept anyone of them) will never be guided as per the 'law of guidance' of Holy Qur'an. The Book describes this reality in following words:

"Allah is the Helper and Protector of those who believe in Him: He brings them out of the depths of darkness into the light. And those who deny, their friends are the transgressors who drive them out of light into the depths of darkness. These are the people who are doomed to the fire, wherein they shall live forever." (Al-Baqarah 2: 257)

Positive Intention

The second essential requirement of the 'law of guidance' is to have positive intention and to put sincere effort to seek the true message of Allah Almighty. If one has some other intention of studying Qur'an he will not only be faraway from its blessings & guidance but will possibly be strayed from the right path [1], [3].

This condition is essential for both Muslim and non-Muslim who genuinely need to know the right path. Qur'an itself defines this attribute in the following words:

"Allah leads astray many and guides many to the right way by the same thing. And He leads astray only those who are transgressors." (Al-Baqarah 2: 26)

While explaining the above Aayat, a renowned scholar Syed Abul-Aa'la Maududi says in his book 'Tafheem-ul-Qur'an' [4]:

"Those who do not wish to understand things and are not motivated by the urge to seek the truth become enmeshed in superficial questions relating to the Book of God, draw altogether erroneous conclusions when they encounter references to apparently insignificant things such as gnats, and are thereby thrown further and further away from the truth. Those who seek the truth and possess true perception, on the other hand, penetrate through these superficialities and perceive the gems of wisdom that they embody. This appreciation makes their hearts attest that such wisdom could have no other source than God Himself."

Qur'an is a Book of absolute guidance. However, if one approaches to it with the ill intention of finding errors and discrepancies in it, he/she gets deviated from the right path. Qur'an indicates this behaviour as a profitless bargain.

"These are the people, who have bartered away guidance for error, but this is a profitless bargain that they have made, and they are not at all on the right way." (Al-Baqarah 2: 16)

So, any person (whether Muslim or not) can get guidance from the Holy Qur'an, if he approaches it with attentive mind and be ready to listen its message. Qur'an says:

"Verily there is a lesson in this for everyone who has a (sound) heart and who listens with an attentive mind." (Qaaf 50: 37)

This is the 'law of guidance' of Allah Almighty for all mankind. It clearly says that everyone can get guidance from His message (the Holy Qur'an), if he listens it with attentive mind and with positive intention. However, to have 'faith' on the Holy Qur'an is an essential additional condition for a Muslim to be a Muslim.

3. Reflecting on the Holy Qur'an - Fundamentals

After the fulfilment of the 'law of guidance', there are some fundamental principles which must be kept in mind while studying and reflecting on Holy Qur'an.

3.1 Basic Units of Qur ' an - Aayat and Surah

The common concept about Qur'an is that it has different chapters and each

chapter has numerous paragraphs and sentences or verses. But Qur 'an does not have such divisions and does not use typical common terminologies of a book. Qur'an deduces its own terminologies which are absolutely unique. No other language can translate these terminologies in its true sense.

3.1.1 Aayat

The small unit of Qur 'an is known as Aayat (means 'sign', plural Aayaat). Therefore all the Aayaat of Qur 'an represent signs of wisdom & knowledge of Allah. He invites human being to think over several of His 'signs' which are everywhere in the universe and within the human being itself [2]. There are so many Aayaat which show this reality:

"There are many signs on earth for those of sure faith and also in your own selves. Do you not see?" (Adh-Dhariyat 51: 20-21)

"Soon shall We show them Our signs on the horizon and in their own beings until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." (Fussilat 41: 53)

In English, we normally translate Aayat as 'verse'. But the fact is that, the verse is the combination of hemistiches. It has a series of metrical feet forming a rhythmic sound. Therefore the Aayat cannot and should not be translated as 'verse' or 'hemistich'.

In the same way, the Aayat cannot be translated as 'sentence'. As per the definition of Oxford Dictionary:

"A sentence is a group of words that makes complete sense, contains a main

verb, and begins with a capital letter.”

Alternatively a sentence can be defined as a group of words that are put together to mean something. It is the basic unit of language which expresses a complete thought. It has some grammatical rules of syntax.

On contrary, Quranic Aayaat do not fulfil above definitions of sentence. Following discussion shows its uniqueness [2]:

1. Some of the Aayaat are very lengthy and comprised of more than one ‘sentences’, such as ‘Aayat- ul-Kursi’ mentioned as follows: *“Allah: the Everlasting, the Sustainer of the whole universe; there is no god but He. He does neither slumber nor sleep. Whatsoever is in the heavens and in the earth is His. Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His own permission? He knows what is before the people and also what is hidden from them. And they cannot comprehend anything of His knowledge save whatever He Himself pleases to reveal. His Kingdom spreads over the heavens and the earth and the guarding of these does not weary Him. He alone is the Supreme and the Exalted.”* (Al-Baqarah 2: 255)

2. Some other Aayaat are comprised of only one ‘sentence’. Few examples are as follows:

“The sun and the moon follow a reckoning.” (Ar- Rahman 55: 5)

“Surely, he will be cast into a flaming fire.” (Al- Masad 111: 3)

3. There is some other type of Aayaat mentioned in Holy Qur’an. These are

comprised of an incomplete ‘sentence’, such as:

“By the time!” (Al-Asr 103: 1)

“By the dawn!” (Al-Fajr 89: 1)

“The indubitable event!” (Al-Haqqah 69: 1)

4. One more type of Aayaat is that which has no meaning at all. Even these Aayaat cannot be read as complete words rather these are read character by character. The examples are:

“Haa’ Meem Ayn Seen Qaaf.” (Ash-Shura 42: .1-2)

“Kaaf Haa’ Ya Ayn Suad.” (Maryam 19: 1)

“Yaa Seen.” (Yaa Seen 36: 1)

The very important thing to note that there is no rule to define such types of Aayaat. In some cases these ‘abbreviated words’ are treated as a single Aayat as mentioned above. And in some other cases similar types of ‘abbreviated words’ are NOT considered as a complete Aayat, rather these are treated as a part of an Aayat. ■

Think Now

Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment. Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself. Be like the sun for grace and mercy. Be like the night to cover others’ faults. Be like running water for generosity. Be like death for rage and anger. Be like the earth for modesty. Be as you appear. Within tears, find hidden laughter, seek treasures amid ruins, sincere one.

– Jalaluddin Rumi

13th century Persian poet

The Role of Muslim Leaders and Organisations in Combating Extremism

- Tariq Abbasi

It is all honour and privilege for me to be here today amongst the likeminded brothers and sisters striving to accomplish the one and only goal, the goal to achieve peace amongst communities, amongst Nations and generally peace on earth.

I say likeminded, because just couple of weeks ago I received an email from his Excellency the Secretary General to attend a climate change meeting in London. I happily followed the instructions and attended the meeting, this was the very first time I had ever attended any such meeting and I had no idea whatsoever as to what was to be under discussion. Admirable efforts of people to keep the nature calm and clean by controlling the rising temperature throughout the world. everything was French to me, I sat there 2 hours talking to myself that the only temperature I ever seen rising was in my own home, each time I was late from meetings, the temperature at home would rise, but I discovered that to be normal and natural, and thank God that I never had to call a fire brigade to control that.

So at the end I asked (I question that the creator of this Universe had not put contingency plan for this universe to adjust itself as we move on ... I left it there as I was asked "sir which planet do you live on". I left the conference room quietly.

Let me confess that I am not an expert in any filed whatsoever, just a

layman trying to see the world through different angles.

There has been another form of temperature rising against the Muslim of this planet earth.

Let me first of all condemn the Paris attacks in the strongest terms. Our thoughts and prayers for the families of the victims of a barbaric crime.

Our condemnation and prayers also go out for the victims of terror attacks in Lebanon, Turkey Palestine, Kashmir, Burma, and other places where people are terrorised on a daily basis, some because of their religion, and some for political reasons.

Our prayers are also for the children of Syria who are left homeless and in millions due to no fault of theirs.

In this world, the religious leaders - has a key role to play in influencing society far beyond the sanctuary walls. So, in a real sense, God has given us the religious leaders a big responsibility - the responsibility of leading not only our congregations but working together as a nation as well. We can use this influence negatively or positively.

I believe it is up to those of us who seek to engage with other faiths to have this further responsibility to provide an alternative narrative to that of religious

extremists In that spirit, allow me to share with you what I believe to be the role of religious leaders in enhancing commitment to respect and value people of diverse faiths, and promoting peace and harmony amongst faith communities.

I believe that the religious and faith leaders have a prophetic role to play.

Throughout history, religion has often been used to legitimize the political power of the day. Sometimes religious leaders opted to be quiet and be complicit, rather than to confront injustice for fear of losing their rights and privileges.

Instead, religious leaders must use the power of religion to speak truth to power and to promote justice in their societies and the world.

The prophetic leader does not seek to please the powerful or maintain the status quo.

In our holy books we find many examples of the prophets challenging injustices and abuses of power.

Driven by a commitment to live out the commands to love God and the neighbour, the prophetic leaders use their powers to call for justice and secure human rights for all people, especially those dispossessed and marginalized by society.

I believe religious and faith leaders have not spoken enough about justice and peace. Perhaps they represented their government's policies and ignored justice;

may be they were concerned only with their own internal problems and interests and ignored the burning issues of the world.

For example, how many countries suffer now under oppression, lack of human rights, social injustice, occupation, newest form of colonialism and the like? Religious leadership has not spoken enough about this. If religious leaders will only raise their voices in a concerted way, they will become a beautiful, effective symphony of justice that will disrupt injustice and end violations of human rights.

People today speak about freedom and democracy, but from their own narrow national interests. We say that justice is the first priority for many countries in the developing world in order that freedom and democracy may work. It is the duty of world religious leaders to work for justice and only justice, because where there is injustice, there is no peace.

According to the research, nearly 85 percent of people throughout the world profess belief in God so according to the figures 85% of the world population will readily receive and accept some form of communication for their religious leaders, so together we can have a huge impact on fostering reconciliation through- out the world.

God calls us to seek together the values our faith traditions hold in common, such as justice, peace, forgiveness,

respect, toleration, understanding and love.

Reconciliation is not simply the absence of hatred. Our people need to learn how to create a shared vision of common values and a shared hope for the future.

But before reconciliation can take place, each tradition must take responsibility for its actions.

“The great world religions have both similarities and fundamental differences. And one of the most important similarities is actually a conviction that it is part of the innermost essence of religion to be a source of peace and reconciliation.”

Religious leaders are to model respect for other religions. Religious leaders must set the example for their followers in their words and deeds.

If we want our children to behave appropriately, we must behave in like manner. As faith leaders, we must engage with each other in healthy, respectful and public ways so that those we lead will see people of other faiths as neighbours and allies for life, not enemies.

Honest representation of the other

As religious leaders, we have a responsibility first to understand the other as they want to be understood and next, to share that understanding with our people. It is our duty to ensure that our people get an accurate picture of the other, not just the prejudices they hear in the media and from other non verifiable

sources.

We must all oppose those who selectively read sacred writings of other faith traditions in an effort to tarnish its reputation.

We must not allow extremists to kidnap our holy writings for their own purposes. We must not tolerate the language of mutual denunciation, dehumanization and demonization. And so we must teach our people a new language - the language of love and respect.

Let us jointly call on all religions to teach the right thing about the other and use the same language at home, at work, in the synagogue, at church, in the mosque and at temple.

This applies to our schools as well

“On religious grounds, on moral grounds, we denounce the contemporary concept of terrorism which is associated with wrongful practices wherever they come from - including assaults on peaceful civilians, unethical practices such as the destruction of buildings, and ransacking cities. These horrific attacks on human life transgress the law of God, and we denounce them.

As the Quran says, ‘Take not life which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law’ (AlAnaam, 51). [The statement] goes on to say, ‘No human whose heart is filled with light could be an extremist.

One of the great challenges of the 21 st century will be to reclaim faith as a

force for justice, peace and love, rather than being part of the problem.

Ever since the Sept. 11 tragedy in the United States, to a large extent, the world has focused on the growing threat of Muslim extremism.

But no religion has a monopoly on hate or extremism. All of us are equally responsible and equally called to work together to seek the common, positive values of love, compassion, justice and peace, and together to uphold the sacred value of all, regardless of colour, race, creed or religion.

It is ironic that often the people who call themselves fundamentalists, in any religion - have often abandoned the most basic fundamental of all: "love God and your neighbour as you would love yourself."

Unfortunately, our western claims of bringing democracy and freedom to the Middle East seems like a cruel joke at present. Clever extremists will use democratic systems to come to power and extremism will grow.

We have not been given out a contract to solve the problems of this world, it looks like that we have the contract to create problems in the world.

Millions of people have been kicked out of their beautiful homes, then we offer them shelter, and then given aid to just live on bare minimum with respect no dignity and we say we have given them the aid of billions of dollars.

As living is the west, We are just breeding hate for us.

It is high time we the moderate people of faith stand up and take back our religions! We who are grounded in the real fundamentals of love, compassion, justice and peace must affirm together that God has created every human life - indeed all of the creation - to be cherished, protected and nurtured. We must stop demonizing one another in the name of God and instead try to see God in one the other.

Religious and faith leaders must create a united front to oppose extremism, for extremism tries to transform political injustice into religious wars and conflicts, in which the only winner is extremism itself.

We understand and agree that there are people who has been very successful in brainwashing some of the Muslims, but the number is limited because of their movement restrictions and media access. However, there has been another entity very active in brainwashing the whole nations about their behaviours towards Muslims.

I place both media and the extremists in the same category, both are involved heavily in their dirty work, one can be seen as non-violent and other as violent, but both causing huge *damage* to the society. One legal form of brainwashing, and one illegal.

So extremisms is not only affecting Muslims, we are all suffering society as a whole, nations as a whole.

In the west as well as USA Islamophobia is high on agenda, Muslim are the targets of hate crimes, especially Muslim women who wear the Hijab and men wearing Islamic clothing who are easily identifiable as Muslims. Muslims women have been complaining about the increase in anti-Muslim propaganda in the media, resulting people spitting on them, pulling the hijab off their heads, calling them terrorists.

People are being programmed to behave in a certain way towards Muslims.

Therefore, common problem requires a common solution.

We are all Ambassadors of our faith and as an Ambassador we must follow strict rules and guidelines, No more cut and paste religions.

There are around 1.6 Billion Muslims around the globe, and 0.0000001 % are promoting and practicing twisted form of religion, and the rest, in a greater percentage we are all law abiding peace loving community living amongst people of other faiths without any issues whatsoever.

If killing was part of my religion, I would have been the only person living in London.

My religion actually forbids me to criticise other faiths: here is an example.

One day our Prophet (peace be upon him) was sitting with his companions and He told them "Do not curse your

religion" they asked how can we curse our own religion O Prophet, The Prophet said, if you curse other people's religion, they will curse yours, and it is like you have cursed your own religion. Here is another saying of our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) One day he was sitting with his companions and He said, "Shall I tell you what is far more important than your Prayers, charity and Fasting. The companions were surprised and said O Prophet what can be more important than Prayers, charity and fasting, The Prophet said:

"Keeping peace amongst communities" as quarrels and bad feelings destroys mankind - Sahih AL Bukhari And whatever has happened to "*watasimu bi habli-ialhe jamieeanwa la tafarraqu*" seems like that the rope has become just imaginary and invisible scattered strings with no real strength and power, easily breakable, easily manipulated, cut and destroyed.

We all know that Muslims are presently going through a really rough ride, but whose fault is it? Shouldn't Muslims take control of their own problems, socio economic issues, political issues, neighbouring country issues, and I think this can only be achieved by going back to Qur'an and Sunnah of our beloved prophet (peace be upon him). Let us solve the problems through Diplomacy; I don't believe we have exhausted all avenue yet. ■

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad As Educationist

- Mohammad Manzoor Alam

1857 is a watershed in Indian history when with the fall of Delhi. British sway was fully established all over India. Men of substance and vision like Sir Syed were quick to realise that the rout had come because the Indian side had fallen behind the British in the realm of knowledge of all kinds, especially that of science and technology.

The forty-year old Sir Syed took it to heart and spent the rest 40 years of his life in relentless endeavour to promote education. The rest, as they say, is history.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (born in 1888) came into the world when Sir Syed was 70. A precocious child, Azad grew up to become a recognised scholar right in his teens. In his writings, like *Azad ki Kahani*, he acknowledges Sir Syed's abiding influence on his thought and life, particularly on his religious and philosophical ideas. Maulana Azad did not get a formal education, but was well-versed with the Quran, Hadith and canonical writings on these subjects, besides the long tradition of Muslim philosophers and scientists. He also knew Western thought, its literary, political and philosophical heritage as well as a broad understanding of modern Western sciences, technologies, art

and culture. All this, put together, made him a formidably learned and erudite person. A sound grasp of Arabic, Persian and Urdu literature and Indian art and culture put a patina of great cultural finish on his personality.

No wonder, other learned men of his time like India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru were highly impressed with his scholarship. Nehru compared him with "the great men of Renaissance, or, in a later period, of the Encyclopaedists who preceded the French Revolution, men of intellect, men of action."

When freedom came, for which he had so valiantly fought over the decades, he was chosen for even a more important role, that of leading India's huge effort to educate its people, 85 per cent of whom were illiterate.

The Right Choice

When India got its freedom, the scholarly Maulana Azad turned out to be the right choice to lead the new Ministry of Education. In fact, he had taken the charge of Minister of Education *even* before the formal Declaration of Independence, on August 15, 1947. He had taken over the Ministry of Education in January 1948 in the Interim Government.

He had studied education as a discipline in his early days, and thus quickly got down to a further clarification of the issues involved before launching major initiatives. The widespread illiteracy militated against India's democratic aspirations. To understand the value of freedom, tolerance and national development, education of the people was a necessary condition.

He appointed a University Education Commission in 1948, Kher Committee for Elementary Education the same year and Secondary Education Commission in 1952-53. Soon he began restructuring the system of education in India that would have far-reaching implications for the future of education in the country.

He was as much concerned about primary, secondary and high school education as he was about university education, engineering or medical education. The quality of higher education always depended on the quality of feeder intuitions from where students went up to the higher institutions. He wanted to give *professional training* to teachers as he believed the quality of education largely depended on the quality of teachers.

Till then education was the prerogative of a handful of people. Class and caste decided who would get education and who would not. Azad wanted to break this pattern and he went in for universalisation of education up

to secondary school. He also pushed for adult education and women's education.

He laid down a three-language formula in which the language of a given state and Hindi would be the medium of education, with English as an additional, but important, language. He was an advocate of education in mother tongue as education through only English language gave people an unnatural cast of mind. Such education only fulfilled Macaulay's objective of producing Indians with brown skin and English way of looking at India and Indians, thus being the slaves of the British Empire who looked with contempt at their own countrymen.

Maulana Azad remained Union Minister of Education till his death in 1958. In the meanwhile, a large network of teachers training colleges had developed all over India, producing teachers who were better qualified professionally to discharge their duties. Within his lifetime the country witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of schools, trained teachers and school graduates.

He was equally active on the front of university and higher technical education. His goal was to make India the hub of higher education where people from other countries would come to get higher degrees. He laid the foundation of world-class technical education by starting IIT Kharagpur in

1951.

He restructured the All India Committee for Technical Education and established the University Grants Commission, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Council for Social Sciences Research, the Indian Institute of Science, the National Institute of Basic Education, Central Bureau of Textbook Research and the National Board of Audio-visual Education.

In the early years, only one percent of the Union budget was allocated for education. Maulana Azad wanted ten percent. The prime minister was

supportive of him, but the resources were meager. Maulana Azad believed that education was more important than other issues. In the first budget the Education Ministry got only Rs. 2 crore, but in later years it was increased to Rs. 35 crore.

A great lover of Indian art and culture, he established Hindi Shiksha Samiti, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Lalit Kala Akademi and Sahitya Akademi. The system of education which we have today was largely built by him. Even the Right to Education Act is based on some of his seminal ideas. A grateful nation celebrates his birthday (November 11) every year as Education Day. ■

(Continued from page 19)

because of certain system of education- adopted by them. They set up universities and centres for culture and civilization to work systematically in their respective areas.

Islam encourages knowledge of science, technology and other subjects. Islam also motivates and urges people to ponder over the creation of the world. Both knowledge are incumbent to achieve success in life. Islamic way of life can prove its utility and usefulness if it maintains equal balance between religious and modern education respectively.

In short, Islam appreciates those who strive to attain profitable and advantageous knowledge and try to explore mysteries and wonders of the universe. Almighty God says: "Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; and the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding" (S.3.A. 1 90) He further says: "Soon will We show them Our signs in the furthest regions of the earth, and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth. Is it not enough that thy Lord doth witness all things?" (S.41 ,A.53). ■

(Translated by Obaidur Rahman Nadwi)

'Barbarism in Words And Deeds: Barbarism of Imperial Wars is Unmatched'

- James Petras

What Russia is sponsoring and doing [in Syria] is not counter-terrorism; it is barbarism." ~ Samantha Power, US Representative to the United Nations.

The US representative to the United Nations, Ambassador 'Ranting Sam' Samantha Power, accused the Russian and Syrian governments of 'barbarism', claiming Moscow or Damascus had attacked an unarmed United Nations humanitarian convoy delivering aid to civilians in Aleppo. No evidence was presented. Rants and threats do not require facts or proof; they only require vehement emotional ejaculations and compliant mass propaganda organs.

'Barbarians,' to be clear, evoke images of leaders and groups, which abjure all civilized norms and laws. They only respond to armed force. In the present context, Power's charges of barbarism against Russia and Syria was used to justify the US aerial bombardment of a Syrian army outpost, which killed and maimed almost 200 government troops engaged in combating ISIS terrorists and Jihadi invaders.

In other words, accusing Syrian soldiers of 'barbarism' was Ambassador Power's cynical way of dehumanizing the young victims of an earlier and deliberate US war crime.

Let's analyze the appropriate context for the use and abuse of the language of 'barbarism' – and its rightful application.

Barbarism: the Deed

Over the past decade and a half, the US and its allies have invaded, occupied, killed, wounded and dispossessed over ten million people, in countries from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon.

Military and civilian officials have systematically destroyed entire economies, fostered ethno-religious wars, undermined ancient community and family ties and placed corrupt political puppets in power.

Promoted by the US, torture, arbitrary arrest and incarceration have become the norm creating lawless and chaotic societies, which had once been productive and stable. The shredding of social structures has provoked massive population flight, with millions of desperate refugees fleeing invasions, wars and total society breakdown. The result of these deliberate imperial policy decisions has been emptied cities and neighborhoods, broken families, destroyed lives and futures for many millions of young Arabs and Muslims.

As the human toll mounts and Western Europe is flooded with the results of US aggressive wars, the imperialists have sharpened their shrill rhetoric, labeling all of their adversaries and critics as 'accomplices in war crimes,' and 'barbarians.'

'The greater and more sustained the policy of wanton imperial pillage, the more intense the frustration of its leaders over its ultimate failures, and the greater the recourse of its 'diplomats' to vituperative language.

Barbarism in Search of Barbarians

The principal adversaries to US aggression, Russia, China and Iran, have not invaded any sovereign countries, nor have they provoked the desperate flight of millions of refugees. Russia was invited to aid its Syrian government ally confronting an invasion of terrorist mercenaries who are intent on dividing the country. Crimea peacefully re-joined Russia

via elections. Moscow rejected playing any military role in support of Western wars against Iraq, Yemen and Libya. None of this rose to the level of US-EU barbarism.

In Asia, the West has invaded and devastated VietNam, the Philippines and Afghanistan. Japan, now a US ally, had invaded China, Korea and Southeast Asia. China for its part has not engaged in any imperial war of conquest for centuries.

Iran has not invaded any country in modern times. On the contrary, Iraq invaded Tehran in the 1980's with US support and waged a decade-long war which caused millions of casualties.

In truth, if waging wars, staging invasions, destroying whole societies and causing millions of deaths are the measure of barbarism, then the US, Europe and Japan have been clearly barbaric. To claim otherwise and follow the ranting script of Ambassador Samantha Power is to enter into a tunnel of hallucinations where the language of liberal values embellishes truly barbarian acts.

The entire language of politics has been perverted and converted into an artifice of self-delusion. Terrorist militias are re-packaged as 'rebels' and 'moderates,' spreading barbarism from the imperial Western center to the periphery. The deliberate spread of terrorism is itself a barbaric deed, which degrades the status of Western powers.

Conclusion

In ancient Greece, the barbarians were those outside of the empire who did not speak the language of civilization. They were savage invaders seeking to pillage the wealth and culture of the empire. Today the barbarians emerge from inside the empire and spread outward. The imperial leaders have engaged in serial wars of destruction and pillage, even

as their own societies and economies wallow in ignorance, misery, debt, addiction and criminality. Imperial barbarians devastate whole cultures, erasing the great historical legacy of ancient civilizations like Iraq and Syria, while imposing their culture of morons, drugs and electronic gadgets, which has already infantilized its own population.

The empire of barbarians is infested with money changers and corrupt speculators. They have debased the entire legal system and legislative bodies. The public space has become a private latrine for the elite, closed to any real public discourse and debate.

Electoral spectacles, rather than reasoned debates, undermine republican principles. Imperial conquerors, enmeshed in a military metaphysics, cannot reconstruct a devastated society into a productive colony, nor can they learn or benefit from the best and brightest among its captives, as Rome did with Greece, because it has sown such destruction and salted the very soil under the feet of its conquered peoples.

The barbarian-imperial world order is constantly at war with 'others' and can never assimilate and learn from the precious human treasures it has so wantonly destroyed. It rules by terror abroad and deceit at home. As so crudely displayed by the imperial rants of Ambassador Samantha Power, its oratory at international forums reflect the hysteria of mediocre functionaries: mindless barbarians raving among themselves in marbled echo chambers.

In the end, the imperial barbarians will be besieged by their own fleeing vassals and puppets. When they finally confront their own decay and internal dissolution, they have to decide whether to engage in a last global conflagration or dismantle the imperial barbaric order and choose justice, law and civilization. ■

Contribution of Muslims in the Field of Science...

- Obaidur Rahman nadwi

It should be noted that Islam has never been a barrier in progress and development. History can not cite any instance from other religions of the world that has played a leading role in the field of science and technology as Islam did. In the words of noted Islamic Scholar late Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi: "There is not a single sector of European revival which is not indebted to Islamic thought. Islam imparted a new glow of life to Europe".

In his book, "Islam at the Crossroads" Muhammad Asad has rightly said: "History proves beyond any possibility of doubt that no religion has ever given a stimulus to scientific progress similar to that of Islam. The encouragement which learning and scientific research received from Islamic theology resulted in the splendid cultural achievements in the days of the Umayyads and Abbassides and the Arab rule in Spain. Europe should know this well, for its own culture owes to Islam nothing less than the Renaissance ("re-birth") after centuries of darkness. I do not mention this in order that we might pride our selves in those glorious memories at a time when the Islamic world has forsaken its own tradition and reverted into blindness and intellectual poverty. We have no right, in our present misery, to boast of past glories. But we must realize that it was the negligence of Muslim and not any deficiency in the Islamic teaching which caused our present decay.

Similar thoughts have been expressed by Maulana S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi, Rector Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow and President All India Muslim Personal Law Board: "When Europe was passing through darkness and ignorance of the Middle

Ages, Muslim world was producing scholars, thinkers, educationists and eminent masters of physical and social sciences. European writers have quite often acknowledged that for six hundred years Europe learnt and benefited from the researches of Muslims before commencing their march to progress." In the words of Marquis of Duffering: "It is the Musalman science, Musalman art, and the Musalman literature that Europe has been in large measure indebted for its extrication from the darkness of Middle ages".

Dr. Robert Briffault has rightly stated that science arose in Europe as a result of new spirit of enquiry, of new methods of investigation, of the method of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks, and that spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs (Muslims).

It goes without saying that the Muslim scientists not only made original contribution to science but also to technology. In other words, they made practical use of their scientific discoveries. They observed the stars, and prepared star maps for navigational purposes. Ibn Yunus made use of pendulum for the measurement of time. Ibn Sina used air temperature. Paper, compass, gun, gunpowder, inorganic examples of scientific and technological developments of Muslim scientists, which brought about an unprecedented revolution in the human civilization, (Islam and Evolution of Science, P,15).

It would not be out of place to refer some important books penned by

prominent Muslim writers on different branches of science. "Ihsa al Ulum (Enumeration of Sciences) by al Farabi (Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Muhammad. d. 339 AH.); Rasa il Ikhwan al Safa wa Khillan al Wafa (The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity and the Companions of Fidelity), (mid-fourth century AH.); Mafatih al Ulum (Keys to sciences) by al Khawarizmi (Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Yusuf, d. 387 A.H.); al Fihrist (the Book of Indices) by Ibn al Nadim (Muhammad ibn Ishaq, d. 438 AH.); Aqşam al Ulum al 'Aqliyah (Divisions of Rational Sciences) by Ibn Sina (Avicenna), (d. 428 AH.); Maratib al 'Ulum (Ranks of Sciences) by Ibn Hazm (d. 456 AH.); Tabaqat al 'Ulum (Levels of sciences) by al Abyuri (Abu al Muzaffar Muhammad ibn Muhammad, d. 507 AH.); al Muqaddimah (The Introduction) by Ibn Khaldun (d. 808 AH.); Miftah al Sa'adah wa Misbah al Siyadah. fi Mawdu 'at al 'Ulum (Key to Happiness and Lantern to Sovereignty in the Fields of Science) by Tash Kubra Zadah (d. 968 AH.); Kashf al Zunun 'an Asma' al Kutub wa al Funun (the Unravelling of Intents in the Titles of Books and Arts) by Hajji Khalifah (d. 1067 A.H.); Kashshaf Istilahat al 'Ulum (Index of Scientific Terms) by al Tahanawi (Muhammad ibn 'Ali, d. after 1158 A.B.); and Abjad al 'Ulum (the Alphabet of Sciences) by Siddiq ibn Hasan al Qunuji (d. 1307 A.H.)" (Classification of Sciences in Islam Thought: Between Imitation and Originality, Page-8-9)

"Some scientific works of Muslims were thoroughly studied in Western academic institutions, which exerted a great influence on scientific development in Europe. Kitab al Qanun by Ibn Sina, Kitab al-Manazir by Ibn al-Haitham and Kitab al-Tasrif by al-Zahrawi are mentionable as an example. Kitab al- Qanun, which is a

comprehensive medical work and is called Canon in the West, was translated into Hebrew in 1270. It was also translated into Latin by the two Gerards of Toledo, and about thirty editions of this work were published in Europe. Many commentaries on it were written in the 15th century. A beautiful Arabic edition of this work was published in Rome in 1593. It formed half the medical curriculum of the European universities in the latter part of the 15th century, and continued as a text-book up to about 1950 in the universities of Montpellier and Louvain. The translation of the first volume of the book, with the exception of the anatomical part, was made into English in 1930.

Kitab al-Manazir (book of optics) was translated into Latin under the title Opticae Thesaurus Alhazeni. Ibn al-Haitham, the author of this book was called Alhazen, -a name by which he is remembered in Europe to this day. According to George Sarton, this book exerted a great influence on European scientists (from Roger Bacon to Kepler, i.e. for about 600 years).

Kitab al-Tasrif is an encyclopedic work comprising medicine and surgery. In the 12th century Kitab 'al-Tasrif was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona, and various editions of it were published at Venice in 1497, and at Basel in 1541. It was published in 1778 at Oxford along with the original Arabic text. One copy of this edition is present in the British Museum, and one in the Bodleian Library. Its English translation was published in 1961, and a French translation appeared in 1880. This masterpiece of al-Zahrawi held its importance for centuries as the manual of surgery at Salerno, Montpellier and other early schools of medicine in Europe. The great European historians admit that

Europe owes her primary advancement in surgery to al-Zahrawi. Dr. Joseph Heres has recognized Abu'l Qasim al- Zahrawi as an eminent surgeon. Dr. Arnold Campbell, in his book. Arabian Medicine has written a large treatise on al-Zahrawi, which reveals the importance of this name in the West. He has disclosed that the Western scholars like Roger Bacon (1214-49) gained the knowledge of medicine and surgery from the books of al-Zahrawi and ibn Rushd.

The numerous Arabic words and scientific terms currently being used in European languages are living monuments of Muslims' contribution to modern sciences. Besides, the large number of books in the libraries of Asia and Europe, the scientific instruments preserved in the museums of many countries, the mosques and palaces built centuries ago also bear an eloquent testimony to this important phenomenon of world history.

It will be interesting to note a few Arabic words and terms which are currently being used in some European languages. The terms ciphra, cypher and chiffre in Latin, English and French respectively have been derived from the Arabic word Sifr (meaning empty or nil). Sifr is a numeral written at the right of another numeral to increase its value ten times. Until the end of the 17th century, the word chiffre in French was

Used in the same sense, but gradually it became the name of the whole subject dealing with numbers i.e. arithmetic. The English word cypher is used for some particular type of zero."(Islam And Evolution of Science, p. 17-19)

Strangely despite this genuine fact when we hear the word science our attention is surely be drawn to the west. There are two reasons behind it. One is

that biased historians ignored most names of Muslim scientists. Even if they mentioned some of them, that too in distorted form. What to speak of non- Muslims even educated Muslims do not know that Avesina, Razes and Jaber were from Muslim community.

Some such names are quoted below :-

Arabic Name	Latin name
1. Abu' I Qasim al-Zahrawi	Albucasis
2. Muhammad Ibn Jabir Ibn Sinan al-Battani	Albetinius
3. Abu 'Ali Ibn Sina	Avicenna
4. Muhammad Ibn Zakariyya al-Razi	Rhazes
5. Ibn Rushd	Averroes
6. Abu Yusuf Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq al-Kindi	Alkindus
7. Abu 'Ali Ibn al-Husain Ibn al-Haitham	Alhazen
8. 'Abd al-'Aziz Ibn 'Uthman Ibn 'Al i al-Qabisi	Alcabitius
9. 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Abi'l-'Ala Zuhr	Avenzoar

It is time we must bring contributions and achievements of Muslim scientists in focus so that our new generation may learn of their achievements and derive benefit out of the works of these doyens of science. It is unfortunate that today scant attention is being paid to education by Muslims. While other people are being benefited by our ancestors scientific achievements and contributions. The need of the hour is that we must impart our children good education and adorn them with good qualities and sublime norms only then our past glory may again come back. Besides we may act on the first revelation which Allah sent to His last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for creating a new civilization. ■

On Divorce

(1) It is related by Abdullah bin Omar that the Apostle of God said: "Among the lawful and legitimate things, most disagreeable to God is divorce."

– *Abu Dawood*

(2) It is related by Mu'ad bin Jabal that the Apostle of God said: "Oh Mu'ad, God has not created anything on the face of the earth which may be more pleasing to Him than the setting free of captives and slave-girls, and He has not created anything on the face of the earth which may be more displeasing to Him than divorce."–

– *Daar Qutni*

(3) It is related by Soban that the Apostle of God said: "The sweet smell of Paradise is forbidden to the woman who demands divorce from her husband except on account of severe hardship."

– *Musnad-i-Ahmad, Tirmizi, Abu Dawood, Ibn-i-Maja and Daarmi*

Commentary: The admonition, evidently, does not apply to the woman for whom it may have become really intolerable to live with her husband, but if she seeks divorce without the things having gone that bad, it will be highly sinful on her part.

(4) Narrates Mahmood bin Labeed: "(Once), as the Apostle of God came to

know about a person that he had divorced his wife thrice, at the same time, he rose up in great anger and said: 'Will the Book of God be trifled with even when I am present in your midst? (To divorce thrice, at the same time, is to make a mockery of the Qur'an in which the law and method of divorce are distinctly laid down. Will the Book of God be reduced to a plaything in my lifetime)?' (As the Apostle of God spoke these words in extreme anger), a Companion stood up and said: 'O Apostle of God! May I better not kill the man who has acted like that.'"

– *Nisai*

Commentary: It shows that the giving of three divorces simultaneously is a most serious transgression of the law of God. The giving of three divorces, at the same time, has been condemned as playing with the Book of God, probably, on the basis of the following verses: "A divorce is only permissible twice, and, then (a woman) must be retained in honour or released in kindness ... And if a person divorces his wife irrevocably, i.e., the third time, he cannot, after that, remarry her until after she has married another husband and he has divorced her." (Qur'an II: 229-30). From these verses, it is evident that if a man wanted to divorce his wife more

than once, he should not do so at the same time, but at different times, with suitable intervals.

(5) It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "There are three things to speak seriously and with deliberation with relation to which is a reality, and to speak light-heartedly and in jest with relation to which, too, is a reality. (The three things are): marriage, divorce and restitution, i.e., receiving by a husband of his wife after divorce."

– *Tirmizi and Abu Dawood*

Commentary: Its purport is that if a man marries a woman or divorces her or receives 'back the divorced wife in joke, it will be real in the eye of the Shariat and deemed to have, actually, taken place. Marriage, divorce or restitution, by their nature, are such serious and solemn acts that no fun or frivolity can be permitted in respect of them.

(6) It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "Each divorce is valid except by a man who is not in his senses."

– *Tirmizi*

Commentary: Sometimes, a man goes out of his mind, owing to a shock or illness, and does things he would not do if he was in his senses. Should such a man divorce his wife, in that condition, the divorce will not have a legal force in the same way as the divorce by a lunatic is held, legally, to be of no effect. In

another Tradition, it is stated that there are three persons who will not be held responsible for what they say or do, and no law of the Shari'at shall be applicable to them: i) he who is in a state of slumber; ii) a minor child; and iii) one who is out of his mind. It denotes that if a man divorces his wife while talking in his sleep, it will not be effective, and similar is the case with the divorce given by a minor child or a man with a deranged mind.

(7) Ayesha relates, saying that she heard the Apostle of God say: "A divorce and setting free of a slave under duress are void and have no effect (in law)."

–*Abu Dawood and Ibn-i-Maja*

Commentary: It shows that if a man is made to divorce his wife or set free his slave under constraint or coercion, it will not be valid. This is the viewpoint of a majority of legist doctors, but Imam Abu Hanifa holds that a divorce given under duress will be effective in the same way as a divorce given in jest, and the authorities of the Hanafi School give quite a different interpretation of the above Tradition. It should, however, be noted that Imam Abu Hanifa is not alone in his judgement, but precursors like Saeed bin el- Mussaiyyab, Ibrahim Nakha'ee and Sufiyan Suri, also, are reported to have drawn the same conclusion. ■

(YMD)

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