



# THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

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# The Fragrance of East

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## Demostration of Islamic Equality and Fraternity

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The *Hajj* is a victory for Islamic nationalism over racial, linguistic or territorial nationalisms for which a large number of Muslim countries also have, unfortunately, fallen. It is a proclamation as well as a most impressive manifestation of Islamic nationalism. On reaching there, the Muslims cast away their national or local garments which differentiate them from one another and to which some of them have become attached to the extent of being clannish and parochial, and put on the national robe of Islam, called *Ihram*, and they all sing the same song of humbleness and submission.

O God! Here I am ! Here I am in Thy presence! Thou hast no partner! Here I am! All praise is for Thee and from Thee are all blessings! To Thee alone belongs Power and Rule! Thou art without partner!. ■

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### **Wisdom of Qur'an**

**"Most blessed is He Who set a constellation in the heavens, and placed in it a great lamp and a shining moon. He it is Who has appointed night and day to succeed one another, (as a sign) for him who desires to take heed, or desires to be thankful."**

*(Al-Qur'an – 25:61-62)*

These *ayats* invite us to reflect over the objects of nature. The Arabic word *buruj* (constellation in the heavens) is used to denote a fort or palace, or a fortified building. Some commentators on the Qur'an have interpreted the word as denoting the planets. Reflection over the content of the verse leads us to think that perhaps the reference here is to the heavenly spheres, which have been separated from each other by means of fortified boundaries. Although the frontiers in the atmosphere are imperceptible, it is impossible for anything from one sphere to penetrate into that of another. In this sense, *buruj* seems to signify 'fortified heavenly spheres', including the sun and the moon.

The succession of day and night each day is also a Sign which invites one 'who desires to take heed or desires to be thankful' to reflect. The first result of reflecting on the alternation of day and night is that one should believe in the Oneness of God; and if one had been oblivious of God, this reflection should act as a reminder. The second result of such reflection is that one should become conscious of God's absolute and unbounded Lordship and this should generate feelings of gratitude and humility towards Him. ■

### **Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)**

Anas bin Malik relates that the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: "There are three qualities; whosoever has them may taste sweetness of faith: first, one who loves Allah and His Messenger above all else; secondly, one who loves someone simply for the sake of Allah; and thirdly, one who abhors return to disbelief after Allah has rescued him from it, as he abhors being thrown into the fire (of hell)."

*(Bukhari and Muslim)*

Man is submissive by nature. He wants to submit to a Supreme Being. But he does not know to whom and how he wants to submit. The Blessed Messenger puts it here in the right order: one who loves Allah and His Messenger more than all others and loves someone else for the sake of Allah can taste the sweetness of faith. His heart lights up with faith and he becomes steadfast. The Prophet's Companions often used to address him: "O Messenger of Allah! Our parents are subordinate to you."

A man loves his parents, wife and children. If his parents ask him to do something un-Islamic then his love for Allah emerges. The Blessed Messenger was the best husband to his wives. Immediately after listening to the call of Prayer, he rushed to the mosque as if he had nothing to do with them.

A steadfast Muslim should not adopt the company of such friends as run contrary to Islamic teachings. He should befriend only such persons as do not stand in his way, rather prove helpful in discharging his duties. ■

## Martyrdom of Hazrat Husein

Islamic calender begins with the month of Moharram that follows the last month of Zilhijja. So before Moharram Muslims perform Hajj, one of the five tenets of Islam. They observe the traditions of sacrifice, a way shown by the first messenger of Islam Hazrat Ibrahim, the liberator and constructor of the holy place 'Kaba'. The New Year of the Islamic calendar assumes great significance because of the confrontation of "Truth" and "Evil". Here the politics and religion came face to face. It is an admitted fact that evil forces and pious forces are running side by side so that one could differentiate between the two and realise the importance of kindness and humanity.

About 1436 years ago an undeserving and cruel person Yazid assumed power of Islamic state and became the ruler of Islamic world. He was apprehensive that his authority would not get credence without the approval and support of the kins of the last prophet. To get himself accepted as ruler and head of the religion also he sought the favour of Imam Husein the grand son of Prophet and son of the fourth Caliph Hazrat Ali. Imam Husein informed Yazid that he had no objection in his becoming ruler but he could not be accepted the head of Islam. Yazid got furious and threw a challenge to

Imam Husein. Imam Husein planned visit to Iraq and settle the issue. He reached Karbala and camped there with his family and about 70 followers. Learning the arrival of the Husein Yazid saw to it that they were put to the maximum discomfort. He manipulated that they could not get water. In that sandy land and scorching heat he confronted the Husein's party with an army of soldiers. In a fierce battle of Karbala one could imagine the plight of a three days thirsty associates of Husein. All of them were brutally massacred. There is no dearth of heinous incidents in the history but the incident of Karbala on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Moharram in 60 Hijri was the most painful and cruel work of evil forces against the humanity and religion.

Every year on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Moharram we remember that horrified incidence of the martyrdom of Husein to keep the flag of truth flying and condemn Yazid for his inhuman act. It has been rightly said:

“Qatle Husein asl mein marge Yazid hai  
Islam zinda hota hai her Karbala ke bad.

**S.A.**

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## Guidelenes for Married Life

- S.Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

*O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person [Adam] and from him, he created his wife [Eve], and from them both He created many men and women. And fear Allah through Whom you demand [your mutual rights] and [do not cut the relations of] the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is ever a watcher over you.*

(al-Nisa' 4: 1)

*O Believers! Fear Allah as He should be feared. And do not die except in the state of Islam.*

(Al 'Imran 3:102)

*O Believers! Fear Allah and speak the truth. He will direct you to good deeds and will forgive your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger he has indeed attained a great achievement.*

(al-Ahzab 33:70-71)

Apart from being the fulfilment of a biological need, marriage represents a kind of worship. All the messengers of Allah entered into wedlock. It is the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). In Islam marriage constitutes an important message, reminding man of his important duty. It makes man cognisant of his servitude to Allah, his humanness, his obligations and *Shari'ah* commands.

The verses quoted above are usually recited in the marriage sermon. These convey an important message for

this pleasant duty and provide directives for the whole of married life. They further embody a code of conduct which should govern our lives. For these contain divine directives about how we should lead our lives. The first verse is from *Surah al-Nisa'*. This *surah* is entitled *al-Nisa'* (Women), which underscores the important status enjoyed by women in Islam. It is absolutely clear that in Islam women have both rights and duties. The passage opens with an address to the whole of mankind. Man being man has his human needs and limitations. He has natural urges which are recognised by the *Shari'ah*. It is natural for man to have a life partner. It helps him lead life positively and meaningfully. Allah asks mankind to fear their Lord Who has created them from a single person, Adam and from him He created his wife, Eve.

The verse recounts the beginning of the human race. It was an auspicious beginning, which encompasses the whole of mankind. It is the story of our ancestors as well. It lent meaning and colour to human existence. Allah started human life from a single person. Nonetheless, He soon created a spouse for Adam. Their union, rather marriage according to the *Shari'ah* was blessed so much by Allah that the entire world is now populated. This is because their marriage followed natural and moral principles. Without this the world would have been a desolate place. Allah therefore, mentions the first pair as a

blessing. Their auspicious union by Allah's leave, led to the appearance of the entire human race.

Man should learn lessons from this event. It should reassure him of divine help and support. Allah exhorts man that he should fear Allah. For it is He Who created him from a single person. At the beginning there was a single person. However, Allah provided him with a partner and brought about their union. As a result, there have appeared numerous men and women. Their exact number cannot be ascertained by any researcher. Man should fear Allah, for while invoking Him he asks fellow human beings to fulfil their obligations to him. Again it is Allah Who grants man everything - life, mental faculties, knowledge and strength. A large gap in man's life is however filled by his marriage, as he is blessed with a marriage partner.

Throughout his life man asks Allah to do him favours, one after another. No one is exempt from this. Interestingly enough, man is accountable for all that he gets. Man is dependent upon both Allah and his fellow human beings in all his transactions and social relations. Education, and ties with one's teacher exemplify this very well. A student seeks knowledge from his teacher. By the same token, his teacher is accountable for his assignment. One has something while another person needs the same. Each one of us is in need of and dependent in equal measure on others. Those in charge of important affairs cannot accomplish anything without taking help from others. Kings need subjects. Without the latter, the

former cannot exercise their power and authority.

Accordingly man is asked to fear Allah in Whose name he invokes others' help. One seeks the hand of a female belonging to another family. This involves others' honour and prestige. However, this is regularly done in Allah's name. Islam linked people and taught them to join with one another through matrimonial alliance. This amounts to forging mutual relations among individuals, races and communities. However, Allah's name should be invoked in marriage. In discharging matrimonial obligations one should fear Allah, for by invoking His name one entered wedlock in the first place. Moreover, throughout life one should abide by His commands by way of following the *Shari'ah*. One should be very particular about the lawful and unlawful as declared by Him. It would be very mean and selfish for anyone to invoke Allah's name to meet their needs and then disregard Him altogether. The thrust of the verse then is fear of Allah. As man invokes His name in marriage, he should thus fear Him constantly.

Man is also exhorted to maintain the ties of kinship. In the face of a new tie, older ones should not be ignored. Some people are apt to do just that. However, Allah insists that the ties which one had before marriage should be respected. One is expected to fulfil one's obligations to one's mother, father, sisters and brothers. Marriage does not then imply the snapping of earlier ties. Both the bride and bridegroom are instructed to bear this in



mind. This advice extends to their family members as well. This is followed by the reminder: "*Allah is ever a watcher over you.*" In other words, one should not take the above advice lightly, thinking that one will not be called to account for one's conduct.

In verse 102 of *Surah Al Imran* believers are asked to fear Allah as much as He should be feared. Man is not free to set some standard on this count. Fear of Allah is already determined by the *Shari'ah*. This consists in obeying His commands and in pursuing the way prescribed by Him. Muslims are also exhorted to maintain their faith. They should not die except in a state of Islam. This brings into sharp view another eternal truth.

Marriage is no doubt a happy occasion. One should enjoy this auspicious event. Yet one should not forget that life is transitory. One should ensure that one is a believer at the time of death. One's life should be characterised by obedience to Allah. By the same token, at death one should be submissive to Allah, demonstrating love and respect for Allah and His Messenger. One should furthermore recite the credal statement of faith as one leaves this world.

The last verse quoted, once again, exhorts believers to fear Allah and speak the truth. One's acceptance of faith should not be a mere verbal utterance. Rather, it should be a well thought out, conscious decision. One should realise what this entails in terms of obligations and their implications.

The believers are directed to speak the truth. If they grow habitual of it, it will transform them into men of character. It will set their course in life. As a result, Allah will help and reinforce them. Today we have got every material comfort. We draw upon numerous resources. Thanks to scientific and technological inventions we can lead a comfortable life. Yet we are negligent of our obligations. We disregard the ultimate reality. Allah, however, promises that He will improve our deeds. For this will help us enjoy a peaceful life. This would also put an end to present-day materialism and selfishness. Allah's help can enable us to lead a happy life.

Marriage being part of the Prophet's *Sunnah* draws us closer to Allah Who will pardon our sins. This is indeed a great privilege. Generally, the marriage ceremony is regarded as no more than a ritual. Actually it is a mode of worship. Whoever leads his married life in accordance with the *Shari'ah* is constantly engaged in an act of worship. This point is very well brought out by Shah Muhammad Ya'qub in his observation that as one ends one's prayer, the reward due for it comes to an end as well. However, the reward accruing from marriage continues as long as this tie lasts. All that one earns and spends with the intention of supporting one's family, all the affection which one showers on them and all the time one spends with them will be a source of credit and reward. Little wonder then that the Qur'anic verse concludes on the note: "*Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger he has indeed attained a great achievement.*" ■

## The Last Message of God And The Last Scripture

-S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

God sent His messenger on this earth to guide human beings in believing their Creator and to thank Him for his bounties. Also to mould their lives according to His dictates. These messengers were deputed to convey His orders and the scriptures were also meant for the same. The last of these apostles is Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the last scripture is Qur'an Majeed. Both have the unique characteristic that up-till the Day of Judgement the sayings of the Prophet, Peace be upon him, and the book would keep guiding all on the path of truth and virtue. He was the greatest of the Prophets who were sent to provide guidance to all the classes, ranks and grades.

With the Prophet, (PBUH), the religion was perfected and completed. The faith and truth would guard against any interpolation and mutation, addition and deletion in the Holy Book. The directives of Qur'an, the teachings and deeds of the Prophet, (PBUH), would act as source of light up-till the Last Day.

The Qur'an has taken the place of all scriptures. This is the base of the religious jurisprudence (*Shariah*) and to abide by it would make Allah happy and satisfied.

For the faithful it should be kept in his mind that to draw maximum benefit out of it, he should have complete faith that these are the words of Allah and each letter

is leading towards virtue and truth. He should have complete faith that these are the holy diction from God and he is honoured and blessed by its study.

God's greatest gift to the mankind is the Qur'an and His last Messenger. He was chosen for the good of the whole mankind and God had created in his person an embodiment of love and truth.

He has no parallel in the whole history of mankind. It should be noted that the devotion to him does not lie in just reading about him but to love him, to carry out his directions and to follow him in all aspects of life.

God told the believers about the exalted status of the apostle and bade him to draw inspiration from the Prophet and to glorify him.

The Prophet has said, "No body among you can be true believer if he does not love me more than his parents, children and all human beings." The Holy Qur'an says: .

*"By the name of your God those people can not be true believers unless they come to you for the settlement of all their disputes and feel not a bit of annoyance with your judgement. "*

Then again Qur'an says:

*" We have indeed, in the messenger of God, a good example (of conduct) for*

*anyone whose hope is in God and the Final Day."*

People who believe in God would find the Prophet a true ideal and an excellent example for them to follow.

These orders clearly indicate that every Muslim should have such a perception of the love grandeur and piety of the holy Prophet that he should make these qualities as an ideal believer in all the ups and downs of his life. He should see in the person of the holy Prophet a man superior to all the outstanding persons in the world.

God has sent His blessings on holy Prophet. He says, "Allah and His angles send blessings on the Prophet O you that believe! Send your blessings on him and salute him with all respects."

If the name of Holy Prophet is mentioned in any talk it is obligatory to send blessings on him. If a Muslim does not do it he is acting against the directions of the Prophet.

The Holy Prophet was born in a clan of Arabia and his life span was that of sixty three years. The early forty years of his age were spent in making him perfect to bear the burden of Prophethood and the remaining twenty three years were spent in the application and transmission of the prophetic mission.

Allah would have made these sixty three years of life a period of rest and comfort and would have saved him from all the ordeals and difficulties. He was beloved of Allah and nothing could have

stopped Him to bestow all the pleasures of life on him but the world allotted to him required that he should be well-versed in performing his job and bear the burden of extreme responsibility.

In forty years a man becomes fully matured and his physical and mental qualities come to the top. His personality takes its full shape. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was blessed with the Prophethood at this age and was made a guide for the whole world and a grand teacher for humanity. He was a symbol of gracefulness, courtesy and mannerly behavior. His supplication to God was exemplary. God put him to the strong experiences of self abnegation and unearthly dispositions.

He was born an orphan, the mother parted in his childhood. The kind grandfather died before he came to age, then only the uncle was left and the Prophet (PBUH) got his whole-hearted support in the early ten years of the Prophethood. His pious and loving wife Khadeja gave him all her love and attention. She was a companion and helper. She knew and acknowledged his qualities and gave him all the help. Both the uncle and wife died in the tenth year of his Prophethood. Now there was no one left to treat him with love and kindness. Only the devotion to God was his comfort. He endured all the persecutions, the indifference of relatives the insolence and threats of the outsiders. He bore it with dignity and honour. He treated his worst enemy with kindness and never abandoned hope.

When the kind uncle and the loving wife expired and the apostle was persecuted by all, he left for the neighbourly city of Taif. He expected to find some chieftain there whose help might have been a relief from the tortures of Mecca. He met the Chiefs and leaders and invited them to Islam. They proved very cruel and rude. They stirred up some rubble of the town to harass him. These ruffruffs followed the prophet abusing and throwing stones on him. The feet of the prophet were injured and smeared with blood. He could not get a cup of water to drink. He left the city and took refuge in an orchard. The oppression was so great that a prayer complaining about his helplessness and pitiable condition and seeking the succor of God came to his lips, "O Allah"! said the Prophet, "to Thee I complain of my weakness, resourcelessness and humiliation before the people. Thou art the most Merciful, the Lord of the weak and my Master. To whom wilt thou confide me? To one estranged, bearing ill will, or, an enemy given power on me? If Thou are not wroth on me, I care not for Thy favour in abundant for me. I seek refuge in the light of Thy countenance by which all darkness is dispelled and every affair of this world and next is set right, lest Thy anger should descend upon me or Thy displeasure light on me I need only Thy pleasure and satisfaction for only Thou enablest me to do good and evade the evil. There is no power and no might save in Thee.

He had taken the job of spreading Islam in pursuance to the commands of God. The omnipotent God would have checked these cruel deeds and given solace to the Prophet. In spite of extreme disappointment the prophet did not complain. He only referred to his helplessness and pitiable condition. He was afraid lest the God might not feel annoyed. He repeats his determination to Keep the Almighty pleased and satisfied.

The mercy of God was touched by the prayer he sent the angel of mountains who sought the prophet's permission to join together the two hills between Taif was located but the Prophet replied, "No I hope God will bring forth from their loins who will worship God alone, associating nothing with Him."

The quality of pity and mercy was absorbed in his soul. Compassion was the special favour granted to him by Allah. God says in the Holy Qur'an:

*"And we sent thee not save as a mercy for the worlds."*

Again he says:

*"Now hath come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you shall suffer, ardently anxious is the over you to the believers is he kind is he most merciful."*

The holy Prophet, (PBUH) has passed from ordeals and very adverse, circumstances he understood the miseries of the downtrodden and aggrieved. Also it had given him the strong

determination to face hardships and bear responsibility. He had to announce and declare and apply the mission of Prophethood in extreme difficulties. This he did with perfection and after the expiry of twenty three years when the time came for his parting from this mortal world he asked his companions at the end of the sermon on the occasion of the-farewell pilgrimage. "And you would be asked by God about me so what you would say"? The companions replied, "We testify that you conveyed the message and fulfilled your mission." Then he said, "O God be witness."

God made the Prophet to undergo in a variety of conditions and state of affairs only to become an excellent example for, the believers.

You indeed in the messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct).

The Prophet had to deal with hypocrites and hidden enemies. He underwent both adversity and prosperity. He had the pleasure of having children and also faced the grief of his son who died in infancy. In his deep sorrow over the infant's death the apostle of God said, "The eyes weep and the heart grieves, but we say nothing that displeases God and we are grieved on being separated from you, Ibrahim.

There was a solar eclipse on the day Ibrahim died. Some of the Companions attributed the eclipse to Ibrahim's death, but the Prophet corrected them in a speech wherein he said, "The sun and the moon are the two of the signs of God; they

are not eclipsed on account of anyone's death." He instructed to remember God and offer prayers at such occasions. .

Here is the difference between the prophet and a worldly leader. No such a man would have rejected this observation of the people and used it for his glorification.

The Prophet was always solicitous for the pleasures of God and was always apprehensive of His displeasure. When the wind blew he thought that it might be a token of His displeasure. This was when the God said that He would not punish the pagans of Mecca because the Prophet lived between them. He always remained engaged in thought to find ways to create passion among the people for the worship of God. The narrators have described him to be always pondering and in a mid of slight gloom. Often he would remain silent but this mood prevailed only when he was alone, otherwise when with -Companions he was always happy and polite. His tolerance, forbearance, sympathy and wide-heartedness was beyond limits.

He was of cheerful disposition. Sometimes he shared some light joke with his companions. He laughed but his laugh was always manifested in smile, never he laughed loudly.

If anybody asked him for something, he gave it. If it was not possible he comforted him with kind and sweet words. Never gave him any stern reply. He did never strike anybody. He was angry only when the honour of God was concerned

or the limit set by Him was transgressed. For youngsters he was like a' father, for equals he was companion and friend, for elders he showed due honour.

The Prophet used to say, "Whoever leaves some property as a legacy, it belongs to his heirs, but his unpaid debts are my responsibility. At the time of danger he was foremost. In any gain he shared it with all. He paid such attention to everyone attending his meetings that everybody thought that none attracted his notice like himself.

God had endowed the Prophet with and impressive personality. His features displayed grace and splendour. This automatically attracted a new corner and he recognized him immediately though he never cared to occupy any special place in any sitting. Anybody who saw him for the first time was overawed but when he kept his company he became attached to him with all the warmth of his heart. They used to say that they never saw a man like him either before or after him.

This cheerful disposition and kind behavior does not mean that he should be called a miraculous personality. This God's gift throws light on his exalted position. He was an ideal for the believers and they are instructed to follow him in every walk of life. He was the favourite of God but he had to undergo all the hardships for twenty years.

He wished good to everybody, he always sought God's pleasure, he always thought of the Day of the Judgement and weighed his noble deeds for that Day. He

always expressed his humility before God. This he did for all his life.

God had forgiven his all sins, past or future, yet he was most eager and earnest in paying homage to Him. Once in a night he stood praying for such a long time that his feet got swollen. He said, why should not I be grateful servant. He never indulged in exacting retribution for any offence or excess to himself. He was angry only when the honour of God was trifled.

The life of the Prophet is described by the most trustworthy narrators, his truthful and pious companions. Its knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim. This should act as a guide line for all.

The Holy Qur'an says, "There was indeed for them an excellent example for you to follow, for those whose hope is in Allah and in the last Day."

Qur'an Majeed, the Book of Allah, and the sayings and deeds of the holy Prophet, *Hadith* and *Sunnah*, are the grand sources of the religion of Islam. To be true believer one is to follow these sources and to mould oneself according to the directions. The holy Prophet has said, "I leave for you the two things of grand magnitude. If you clutch them strongly you would never be misled. One is the book of Allah and the other is to adopt my conduct of life."

In the words of his wife, the mother of all Muslims, Hazrat Aisha "The Qur'an was his life sketch. ■

## **Maulana Abdul Bari Farangi Mahli**

**-Mufti Mohammad Raza Ansari**

Maulana Qayam-ud-Din Mohmmmed Abdul Bari was born in 1878 in a famous family of Ulema of Farangi Mahal. He was taught and educated at home in the traditional style. He got education perfectly well at home under the guidance of famous teachers of Farangi Mahal. After completion of his studies he became a teacher and writer.

He first entered politics in 1912 when the Balkan war was going on. He was 30 years-old then. He got publicity in the political field after the incident of desecration of a mosque in Kanpur. While Sir Imam Ali, Maharaja Sir Mohammad Ali Mohammad Khan of Mahmoodabad, Mr. Mazharul Haq and Sir Syed Raza Ali were pleading in the case as lawyers and political leaders, Maulana Bari took part as a religious luminary.

During the Balkan War Maulana Bari used to consult leading Muslim Ulema on the question of saving the shrines in Arabia from destruction. They were of the opinion that the safety of Harmain Sharif (Mecca and Medina) was more urgent and the world Muslims should lend support to the Arab Governments in looking after these shrines.

There was a big gathering of Muslim leaders in Lucknow in December 1913 to discuss the issue. The Muslim University Foundation Committee, All India Muslim League Council and Hilal Ahman used to organise meetings, in this connection. Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana

Shaukat Ali were also present in Lucknow those days.

### **Anjuman**

Maulana Bari invited the Ali Brothers and Sheikh Mushir Hussain Kidwai at Farangi Mahal and after a prolonged discussion formed an organisation-Anjuman-e-Khuddam Kaaba-with Maulana Bari as its President and Sheikh Mushir Hussain and Maulana Shaukat Ali as secretaries. Delhi was chosen as headquarters.

Although the apparent objective of the organisation was to guide the Muslim pilgrims to Mecca and other shrines in Arabia, the real aim was to strengthen Muslim politics and create hatred against the British Government so that the Muslims could know, the British attitude towards their religious places. The British Government got scent of it and began to suspect the activities of the organisation. When Ali Brothers were imprisoned during World War I and Sheikh Mushir Hussain left for Europe in 1916, the Anjuman was automatically dissolved.

Maulana Bari frequently visited the Ali Brothers in Chhirdwara jail in MP and used to discuss different problems. There was unrest among some sections of Muslims due to their arrest. And Maulana Bari was in the forefront in the protest.

Meanwhile, Gandhi had returned from England in 1915. Sheikh Mushir Hussain wrote to Maulana Bari from

England about the discussion he had had with the young Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi who was sympathetic to the cause of Caliphate. Ghandiji favoured Muslims' sentiments. Maulana met him in Delhi in 1918 and discussed the problems arising out of Balkan War, Caliphate and the arrest of Ali Brothers.

Gandhi led the delegation of Muslims which met the Viceroy and demanded the release of the Ali Brothers.

When World War I began, Maulana Bari on behalf of the Anjuman, requested in a telegram to the Turkish Caliph (Sultan of Turkey) to remain neutral in the war. On the other hand he got the promise from the English Government, on behalf of Muslims, that the Muslim shrines would not be touched, desecrated or destroyed during the war but protected.

But the British Government backed out of the promise when the war ended. This created uneasiness among the Muslims in India. In September 1919, a big meeting of Muslims took place in Lucknow in which leaders participated. After discussing the Caliphate problem, an all India committee known as the Khilafat Committee was formed with Seth Chhotani of Bombay as President and Mr. Ahmed Siddique Khattri of Bombay as General Secretary. Maulana Bari was again the brain behind the formation of the committee and a big rallying force to convene such a big gathering. When the Ali Brothers were released in December 1919, Maulana Shaukat Ali was made secretary of the Central Khilafat Committee.

Then Maulana Bari intensified his efforts in order to acquaint Muslims of the true problem and began to muster wide support. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, who was president of the reception committee of All India Muslim League Conference in Delhi in 1918, asked the Maulana to seek the solution to the problem from the League platform instead of forming a separate organisation of Muslims. Maulana Bari agreed to this and the first big conference under his leadership was convened under the banner of the Muslim League in which leading Ulema participated.

### **Jamiat**

Then, in 1919, on the occasion of the first Khilafat conference in Delhi, presided over by Mr. A.K. Fazlul Haq of Bengal.

Maulana Bari suggested the formation of Jamiat-ul-Ulema Hind. The organisation was soon formed and Maulana Bari presided over the first meeting attended by, among others, Hakim Ajmal Khan.

Maulana Bari and the Jamiat fully supported the stand taken under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi to protest against the atrocities in Punjab. Maulana Bari was second to none in preaching the creed of nonviolence of Gandhiji among Muslims.

Besides Maulana Hasrat Mohani, disciple of Maulana Bari's father, Maulana Abdul Wahab, also fully subscribed to the movement although he did not accept the non-violence creed of Gandhi.



When the All India National Congress with the cooperation and support of Muslims accepted the creed of Gāndhi, the latter became the leader of both the movements- the Congress and the Caliphate. Maulana Bari remained with Gandhi and developed good relations with almost all the leaders-Muslim as well as Hindu.

The Ali Brothers were not known as 'Maulana' till their release. It was Maulana Bari who, in view of their services to Islam and Muslims, got the honorary degree of, 'Maulana' conferred on him from Madrasa 'Nizamia-his Madrasa of Farangi Mahal-in 1921.

When a Muslim delegation was formed in 1920 to go to London to discuss the Caliphate movement with the British Government, Maulana Bari was named as a member. But he asked Maulana Syed Suleman Nadvi to represent him. The delegation was led by Maulana Mohmad Ali.

A group of Maulana Bari's disciples in Farangi Mahal also participated in the Non-Cooperation movement. One of his relations Maulana Mohammad Salamat Ullah Farangi Mahli was sent to jail in 1922. In jail, he was with Motilal Nehru, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Mohan Lal Saxena and Chaudhury Khaliqur Zaman, Maulana Mohammad Shafi Hujjat Ullah, son of Maulana Salamat Ullah, who was a leader in the Madrasa of Maulana Azad in Calcutta's Nakhuda Ki Masjid, was also arrested. This Madrasa was established during the Non-Cooperation Movement in order to counter the Government-backed Madrasa Alia. For quite some time Maulana

Hussain Ahmed Madani was also a teacher at this Madrasa.

Another relation of Maulana Bari, Maulana Barkat Ullah Raza Farangi Mahli, was imprisoned in Bahraich in 1919 for "anti-national" activities. When Sultan Ibn Saud took over the Haramain Sharifain (Mecca and Medina) in 1924, Maulana Bari was first in India to protest and lead the movement against this, unjust act of Ibn Saud. He formed a body-Khuddam-ul Haramain.

His wholehearted participation in the movement against 'Ibn Saud somewhat caused the break in his relations with the Ali Brothers because they were in favour of the action taken by Ibn Saud.

On the one hand, Muslims of India, during this period, were busy in protesting against this Saudi and Sharifi move and, on the other they were resisting the reactionary move of Shudhi and Sanghatan in India itself. They were already busy in the protest against the moves that Maulana Bari died in January 1926 after a brief illness at the age of 47.)

The best tribute paid to him was that by Mahatma Gandhi himself, who in 1942, when the Quit India Movement was at its peak, retorted to Mr. Jinnah's allegations of Gandhiji's being Muslims' enemy No. 1. Gandhiji was addressing the AICC session when he said:

"Whether I am an enemy of Muslims or their friend, Maulana Abdul Bari would have answered had he been alive. He was a great man. I used to stay with him in Lucknow. ■

## **Children's Day**

**- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi**

Every year Children's Day is observed on 14th, November, the birthday of Jawaharlal Nehru. He loved children and is fondly remembered as chacha Nehru. To bring up children as useful citizens was his utmost desire. Their company was his solace and comfort. He knew their nature, feelings, psychology, mood and attitude well. He knew that the future of the country depended on them. His fondness for children increased with the years. No doubt, the story of his life is one of noble words and righteous deeds.

Late President Dr. Zakir Husain has quoted:

"If you were with me," Jawaharlal Nehru writes in one of his letters to the children of India, "I would love to talk to you about this beautiful world of ours, about flowers and trees and birds and animals and stars and mountains and glaciers and all the other wonderful things that surround us..... You must have read many fairy tales and stories of long ago. But the world itself is the greatest fairy tale and story of adventure that has been written. Only we must have eyes to see and ears to hear and a mind that opens out to the life and beauty of the world."

Jawaharlal Nehru is no longer here to talk to children: his message has to be carried to them so that they open out their minds to life and beauty.

He further says:

"He loved children and flowers and birds, but his love of friendship and peace among men and nations was deeper still, because that was for him the most beautiful and desirable of all things. It was to this that he dedicated all his thought and energy, and he did it with a smile that has become a part of our history."

His father Motilal Nehru, was a well known lawyer of Allahabad. He wanted Jawaharlal to be educated in England. So he got him admitted to the famous public school at Harrow. Then he joined Trinity College, Cambridge from where he took his degree with honours in the Natural Science.

Later on he joined the Bar in the Inner Temple, London, and got through the Bar examination easily. In the autumn of 1912 he returned to India after a stay of seven years in England.

After coming to India he devoted himself to the cause of his motherland. He played a very significant role in the national struggle for freedom. He was arrested many times and spent many years of his life in prison. He was in various prisons - at Naini, Bareilly, Dehradun, Almora, Alipore in Calcutta and Ahmednagar. India attained freedom on August 15, 1947 and he became the first Prime Minister of free India. He was in office from 1947 to 1964.

He made outstanding contributions to the development of modern India. He was the architect of India's foreign Policy. Under his leadership India made great progress in the field of science and technology. In 1950 under his leadership India's First Five Year Plan was launched.

Needless to add that he first met Mahatma Gandhi in 1916 during the Lucknow Congress session. Since then both worked together for the sake of the country.

Jawaharlal Nehru was a prolific writer. Some of his famous books are, the Discovery of India, An Autobiography, Glimpses of World History. Indira Gandhi says: "My father's three books, Glimpses of World History, An Autobiography and The Discovery of India, have been my companions through life. It is difficult to be detached about them". (Glimpses of World History)

The most striking aspects of his life is that he was very hardworking. He worked long hours. He told the people again and again that they were sentenced to hard labour. They had to work hard to build the country. "Aaram Haram Hai". (Rest is not proper), he often said. Even when he was ill, he thought of nothing but working for his country.

He once said : 'There is one ambition left in me: that in the few years left to me, I should throw myself, with all the strength and energy left in me, into the work of building up India. I want to do it to the uttermost, till I am exhausted and

thrown away as on the scrap-heap. I am not interested in what you or anybody thinks of me afterwards. It is enough for me that I have exhausted myself, my strength and energy, in India's task.'

He wrote on his writing pad the following lines from a poem by the American poet, Robert Frost :

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep.*

*And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep.*

He kept these lines in mind till the last hours of his life.

Nehru never wasted his time, Even his life in prison was not wasted. He wrote his three famous books while he was in prison. Apart from it he lived to keep himself in good health, wherever he was. He did physical exercise daily. The habit remained with him throughout his life time.

In a nutshell, children may imbibe a lot from Nehru's life. His life is a role model for them. They should follow him in letter and spirit.

Eminent Journalist M. Chalapathi Rau has rightly said: " Jawaharlal needs no memorial. The whole of modern India is a memorial to him. The story of his life will be told and retold. It is the story of a brave, hard-working, and chivalrous man, who loved his people with all his mind and heart, who worked for them till the end of his life, and who built a hopeful future for them. They cannot forget him. And they know they must carry on his work." ■

## **Mohammed Marmaduka Picthall**

**-Abu Tariq Hijazi**

A great proponent of Islam and translator of the Qur'an, Mohammad Marmaduke Picthall was one of the challenging literary personalities of Britain in the late 19th century.

He was born in London in a Christian family as William Picthall on 7 April 1875. His mother was Mary O'Brien, he was only five when his father Rev. Charles Grayson Picthall had passed away. In childhood, he was contemporary of Sir Winston Churchill at Harrow private school. His ancestry is traced out to a knight of 'William the Conqueror'. He was over thirty when WWI was in offing. He could see the tricks and intrigues at the international level. He travelled to the other parts of the world. He visited Turkey Egypt, Jordon and Palestine etc where he gained fluency in Arabic language. He studied the Orient and was soon acknowledged as the Middle Eastern scholar. He was a strong advocated for the Ottoman Caliphate.

The year 1917 claimed to be a year of revolution in his life. When delivering a lecture on 'Islam and the Progress' at Muslim Literary Society in Notting Hill, West London on 29 November 1917 he publicly declared his embracing of Islam. He was not a hypocrite. He believed what he said and he said what he believed. Very soon this young scholar esteemed by D.H. Lawrence, H.G. Wells and E.M. Froster became a leader among the emerging group of British Muslims.

In 1919, Pickthall worked for the London based Islamic Information Bureau which also published the weekly "Muslim Outlook." In 1920 he left England for India where he stayed for long 15 years. He worked as editor of Bombay Chronicles for some time.

In 1925 he was offered a job of Principal (Director) in a Hyderabad college which he gladly accepted. (This largest Muslim state of India was established in 1748 commanding a larger area than the England with a population of 12 million and capital of Hyderabad of 400,000 natives.)

The Great achievement: Pickthall regarded Holy Qur'an as a Book "Wonder of the World." He saw that there was an obligation for the Muslims to know it intimately. So to acquaint the beauty and wisdom of the Quran to his English speaking brothers and sisters internationally, he embarked on the mission of translating the Holy Quran into English. In 1928 he took his sabbatical for two years and devoted himself fully to the noble cause. He rendered the glory of Holy Quran into classical Biblical English language and named it the Glorious Quran. For its clarification and authentication he travelled to Egypt and stayed there few months with the help of Rashid Rida, procuring the authority of Jamia Al Azhar (University) at Cairo for his translation. MMP had profound love for the Word of God and noted that while he had great

difficulty in remembering a passage in his native English, he could easily memorize page after page of the Holy Quran in Arabic with perfect accuracy.

His monumental work of the translation was completed in 1930. His Highness Nawab Mir Usman Ali Khan patronized it. And the *Meaning of The Glorious Quran* was published by Nizam of Hyderabad as a gift to the Muslim Ummah. It was hailed by the *Times Literary Supplement* as "a Great literary achievement." Pickthall chided the Muslims "to keep the message always in your hearts, and live by it." In his introduction to the Surahs, he powerfully focused on the Universality of Islam.

In 1939 Allen and Unwin published Pickthall's work under license from Knopf in England. Later, Pickthall completed an edition of his translation with corresponding Arabic text (Mushaf) within days of his final departure from India. This bilingual edition was first published in two volumes by the Government Press in Hyderabad. In 1953, the English text was issued in New York as a paperback in the New American Library.

Pickthall's translation itself has been translated. In 1958 extracts were put into Turkish by (inasi Siber) in Ankara. Other extracts were published by M. Cevki Alay and Ali Kitabo in Istanbul the same year. In 1964 it was rendered into Portuguese in Mozambique and in 1960 a trilingual edition - English, Arabic and Urdu - appeared in Delhi. It has also appeared in Tagalog, the language of the Moro Muslims in the Philippines.

In 1927, Pickthall took over as editor of "Islamic Culture" a new quarterly journal published under the patronage of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Among the many young authors who were encouraged by him to publish their works, were Dr. Hamidullah and Mohammed Asad Leopold-weiss who later emerged as great scholars of the Islamic world and published their own translations of the Holy Quran in French and English.

When in 1927, the Islamic committee of Madras, India, invited him he delivered his eight lectures which are included in the famous collection named as 'Khutbat al Madras'. His lectures on Islam were published separately in 1961 under the title of 'The Cultural side of Islam' by Sheikh Mohammed Ashraf Publishers Lahore (to whom the writer met in Hijaz.) His lecture entitled 'The Tolerance in Islam' is a marvelous piece of scholarship.

This 'Soldier of the Faith' & 'The Servant of Islam' (as termed in his elegy published in *Islamic Culture*.) after along stay of 15 years in India returned to England in 1935. In 1936 he moved to St. Ives where he, at the age of sixty, breathed his last on 19 May 1936) and was buried in the Muslim cemetery at Brook-wood Surrey near Woking, England. After 16 years another great scholar Abdullah Yousuf Ali was buried in the same graveyard. May Almighty Allah shower His choicest blessings upon both of these noble servants of Islam whose Translations are referred by millions of the people around the globe daily. ■

## **Qur'an, Bible and Creation of the Universe**

**- Ahmad Wahaj Siddiqui**

One common charge that the Europeans often fling upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is that he drew his inspiration of Islam from the Bible as both the Qur'an and the Bible are found to have striking similarities.

Muslims have since then came out with piles of replies to counter any such notions.

One such counter-proposition is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) could neither read nor write, because he was unlettered person.

But the most important suggestion the Muslim scholars come out with is that the biblical cosmogony mentioned in the Book of Genesis stands in contradiction to the facts offered by modern science on the formation of the universe.

The Book of Genesis says: "God said, 'Let there be light' ... He separated light from darkness. He called the light day and the darkness night. So evening came and morning came, the first day." (Gen, 3-5)

"God made the two great lights, the greater to govern the day and the lesser to govern the night; and with them He made the stars. ... Evening came and morning came a fourth day." (Gen, 16-17,19)

It is an evident contradiction. How the day and night can occur on first day when the greater light sun that causes day and lesser to govern the night i.e. moon were made on fourth day?

The holy Qur'an is free from any such ambiguities, which may stand in tussle with the modern scientific thoughts. On the creation of earth, the Qur'an says: 'Verily your Lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days'. (7/54); "A revelation from Him Who created the earth and the high heavens." (20/4)

The Qur'an refers to the creation of both the heavens and the earth, and the earth before the heavens. In fact the notion to be derived from the Qur'an is one of concomitance in celestial and terrestrial evolutions, where as the Bible mentions "God made the vault and separated the water under the vault... God called the vault heaven. Evening came and morning came, second day." (Gen, 7, 8)

Thus it does not mention the creation of earth along with heaven. We shall see it does not conform to modern scientific thoughts.

The Qur'an telling about the primeval origin said: "Have not those who disbelieve that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation) before We clove them asunder. We made

everything living from water, will they not then believe." (21 :30)

"Say: You verily disbelieve in Him, Who created the earth in two Days, and ascribe unto Him rivals? He (and none else) is the Lord of the worlds." (9:41)

"Then turned He to the heaven when it was smoke, and said unto it and unto the earth; come both of you willingly or loath. They said: We come obedient. Then He ordained them seven heavens in two days and inspired in each heaven its mandate. And We adorned the lower heaven with lights." (41:9)

From the above verse it is evident that the heaven and the earth were joined together and the heaven was smoke and hence the earth was also smoke. The smoke is defined in science as solid particles suspended in air. That is to say that the heaven and the earth were both gaseous mass. So Allah separated them.

Unlike the narration in the Bible, all this description is in perfect agreement with modern science on the existence of primary nebula and the process of secondary separating of the elements that had formed the initial unique mass. This separation resulted in the formation of galaxies, which were divided into the solar systems including the creation of heavens by their Great Creator God.

The Quran said: He Who created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them in six days'. (25/59)

The above revelation refers to the simultaneous creation of the heaven and

the earth and all that is in between in six days. After separation from the gaseous mass the process of the completion of the earth was occurring on one hand and the process of the formations of the heavens and celestial bodies was taking place on the other.

The days referred in the revelation should not be considered 24 hour's day resulting from the axial rotation of the earth, because when the earth was separated from the Gaseous mass the 24 hour's day did not exist. It came into existence after complete evolution of the earth.

The Qur'an says: Verily the numbers of months with Allah is twelve, (in a year) the Day when He created the heavens and the earth. (9:36)

Further Allah exemplifies a day: The measure thereof is fifty thousand years. (70:4)

It is therefore, logical to think of six days as six stages or phases. The apparent association of six days with seven day a week led to a association in the Book of Genesis: On the sixth day God completed all the working had been doing on the ceased from all his work.' (Genesis, 2:2-3)

To work or to cease from work are the animal qualities, which cannot be attributed to God. He is free from all animal qualities. Allah (God) only intends and the existence or formation of everything takes place as He intends in His will and plan.

The six stages mentioned by the Qur'an do not stand in contrast to the modern scientific notions. It is considered:

a) That the first stage is the cleaving asunder of the gaseous mass nucleus. It was intensely hot because of the density. The scattering of the content over the vast space lowered gradually such intensity.

b) The second stage is likely further cooling and condensing as Allah created the atoms of all the elements internalizing the electrostatic forces to keep the nuclear balance till the end of the universe.

### **The creation of Ozone layer**

Radiation belts canopy, the moisture in the atmosphere raining down on the hot liquid mass all done by Allah's command to further cool the earth so that hot liquid mass is enveloped by 10 to 15 miles layer of solid crust.

It should be noted that the radius of the earth from the center to the top of the crust is 4,000 miles approximately. The surface rock falls in three categories. It is made of lime stone, granite and basalt. We get a reference to it in the holy Qur'an: And in mountains are tracts of white and red of diverse hues and raven black. The white is lime stone, the red is granite and the raven black is the basalt. Raven black also refers to black igneous rocks. These may be the two days mentioned in the verse 41-9 mentioned above.

c). There is a theory of Plate Tectonics and Continental Drift. The continental masses

although solid are lighter than the liquid magma and were floating on it. It is speculated that the continental plates were together, then split and drifted apart.

The continental drift theory is not acceptable due to the following reasons:

1. The cooling, condensing and axial rotation will make for the distribution of the continental masses around the globe rather than conglomeration on one spot.

2. The surface hardening into a solid crust will fix the position of the continental mass in relation to solid basalt layer and

3. Drifting and splitting of the continental mass is the scientist's notion and based on accidental phenomena where as the creation of the heaven and the earth is well planed as God said:

Thou can't see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation, then look again canst thou see any flaw. Then look again and yet again thy sight will return unto thee dull and discomfited in a state worn out. (67/3-4)

c) The third to the sixth stages i.e. 4- days very aptly matches with the four eras of geological history: The Proterozoic (first life), the Palaeozoic (ancient life) and the Cainozoic (modern life). Special mountain formation and transformation of the land and development of life forms mark each of these periods.

The creation of the heaven and the earth was contemporaneous. In the same period of time, Allah created seven



firmaments and adorned the lower heaven with lights, i.e. galaxies with their solar system.

In the verse 41:9 stated above, Allah said unto the heavens and unto the earth "Come both of you willingly or loath. They said we come obedient." There is no wonder in Allah's calling to the heaven and the earth because they are not dead bodies to their Creator, and their calling to obedience means to act to His will and plan.

Psalms of David (148/3-4): "Praise Him sun and moon. Praise Him all you shining stars, Praise Him heaven of heavens."

Similarly there are narrations that stones, trees and animals talked with the holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Ali bin Abi Talib said that he had been once witness to stones, trees and mountains greeting the Prophet, saying 'Peace be upon you O, the Prophet of Allah!' (Abu Noaim, Al-Baihaqui)

Verily We subdued the hill to hymn the praise of their Lord with him (David) at *nightfall* and sunrise. (38/18) All that is in the heaven and the earth glorifies Allah. He is the Mighty the Wise. (57-1)

So we did see that the Qur'anic facts revealed in the 7th century about the creation of the universe are held correct by the scientists and not the Biblical version about the universe. ♦

### MOSQUES OPEN DOORS TO NON-MUSLIMS IN GERMANY

Muslims in Germany have opened the doors of their mosques to non-Muslims on Friday with the hope of eliminating prejudices against Muslims and encouraging cultural exchange. "Unfortunately we are witnessing a growing fear of Islam and growing hostilities against Muslims in German society," Ender Cetin, the chairman of the Sehlik Mosque Association in Berlin, told journalists during the "Open mosque day" event.

"Our German guests here are often asking us questions on violence and terrorism and whether they have any root in Islam. We are telling them the real values of Islam, informing them about our activities against extremism. We are trying to reduce prejudices against Muslims," Cetin said. ♦

### 'SO-CALLED' RADICALS MISUING ISLAM, SAYS OIC

A senior figure from the world's second-largest intergovernmental group after the U.N. has told an Istanbul audience that strategies are needed to challenge "so-called radical groups" misusing the name of Islam. Elshad Iskandarov, the secretary-general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's youth forum, was addressing delegates at major conference for young people in Turkey's largest city.

Iskandarov noted that the progress of radical groups in the Syrian town of Kobani was pressing bodies like the OIC into adopting major strategies to stop extremists converting young people to their ideologies. "But how should we, the policy makers and experts reject this? In this particular area the four groups are: revenge seekers; adventure seekers; the self-identity seekers; and the ideology seekers." "We should develop strategies to deny these so-called radicals," Iskandarov said. ♦

## The Gaza Betrayal: An Analysis

- Ramzy Baroud

Ask any Arab ruler, and they will tell you of the great sacrifices their countries have made for Palestine and the Palestinians. However, both history and present reality are testaments, not only to Arab failure to live up to the role expected of them and stand in solidarity with their own oppressed brethren, but also to the official Arab betrayal of the Palestinian cause. The current war on Gaza, and the dubious role played by Egypt in the ceasefire talks between Hamas and Israel are cases in point.

Read the [following] comment by Aaron David Miller [to the *New York Times*], a scholar at the Wilson Center in Washington to appreciate the depth of the unmistakable Arab betrayal:

*"I have never seen a situation like it, where you have so many Arab states acquiescing in the death and destruction in Gaza and the pummeling of Hamas. The silence is deafening."*

Miller explains Arab silence in relation to their loathing of political Islam which rose to prominence following the so-called 'Arab Spring.' Such rise saw the advent of movements like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and al-Nahda in Tunisia to the centers of power. The 'Arab Spring' challenged and at least temporarily, disabled the hegemony

over power by corruption-ridden, pro-western Arab elites, unleashing the energies of civil societies that have been historically marginalized.

Political Islam, especially that which is affiliated with moderate Islamic ideology known as *al-Wasatiyyah* (roughly translated as 'moderation') swept up the votes in several democratic elections. Like Hamas's victory in the Palestinian elections in 2006, other such Islamic movements followed suit the moment the 'Arab Spring' pushed open a small margin for democracy and freedom of expression.

The danger of political Islamic movements that don't adhere to an extremist ideology like that of the Islamic State (IS) and al-Qaeda, for example, is that they are not easy to dismiss as 'extremists,' 'terrorists,' and such. At times, in fact, often, they seem much more inclined to play the democratic game than self-proclaimed Arab 'secularist,' 'liberal' and 'socialist' movements.

Israel's most recent war on Gaza, starting on July 7, came at a time that political Islam was being routed out in Egypt and criminalized in other Arab countries. It was the first major Israeli military attack on Gaza since the ousting of democratically-elected Muslim

Brotherhood President Mohammed Morsi on July 3, 2013. Although the Israeli war morphed in the course of a few days to that of a genocide (thousands killed, thousands wounded, and nearly fourth of the Gazan population made homeless), most Arab countries remained mostly silent. They mouthed-off some random condemnations that meant so very little. Egypt, however, went even further.

Soon after the Israeli war 'Operation Protective Edge' began, Egypt proposed a most suspicious ceasefire, one that even the *Times* found peculiar. "The government in Cairo... surprised Hamas by publicly proposing a cease-fire agreement that met most of Israel's demands and none from the Palestinian group (Hamas)," wrote David Kirkpatrick on July 30.

Hamas, the main Palestinian party in the conflict, which is also declared by Egypt's government as 'terrorist,' was not consulted and only learned about the proposal through the media. But, of course, Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the Egyptian proposal; Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, a main rival of Hamas, and a strong opponent of armed resistance (and arguably, any form of Palestinian resistance, really) welcomed the 'brotherly' Egyptian gesture; other Arab rulers rushed to commend Egypt's Abdul Fatah al-Sisi for his astute regional leadership.

Of course, the whole exercise was a farce, meant to eventually blame Hamas and the resistance in Gaza for refusing an end to the conflict (which they didn't start and were its ultimate victim), and to prop up Sisi as the new icon of peace and moderation in the region; the kind of 'strong man' with whom the United States government liked to do business.

It all failed, of course, for one single reason, the Gaza resistance held its ground, costing Israel serious military losses, and igniting worldwide sympathy and respect.

But no respect came from traditional Arab governments, of course, including those who praise the legendary '*Sumoud*' -steadfastness - of the Palestinian people at every opportunity, speech and sermon. The renewed success of Hamas, which arguably had been fading away into oblivion after the overthrow of Egypt's brotherhood, and the severing of ties with Damascus and Tehran, was puzzling, and immensely frustrating to these governments.

If Hamas survives the Gaza battle, the resistance will promote its endurance before the Middle East's supposedly strongest army as a victory. Netanyahu will suffer dire consequences at home. Ties between Hamas and Iran could be renewed. The 'resistance camp' could once more rekindle. The moral victory for the Brotherhood and the moral defeat of

Sisi (and his prospected regional role) would be astounding.

An alliance of sorts was founded between several Arab countries and Israel to ensure the demise of the resistance in Gaza - not just the resistance as an idea, and its practical expressions, but also its political manifestations as well, which are felt far and beyond the confines of Gaza's besieged borders.

Former Israel lobbyist and current vice-president of the Brookings Institution in Washington, Martin Indyk has an explanation. "There's an 'alignment of interests' between nations that aren't allies, yet have 'common adversaries,'" Indyk told Bloomberg. "As they see that the US is less engaged than it was before, it's natural that they look to each other - quietly, under the table in most respects - to find a way to help each other."

Naturally, the latest round of ceasefire talks in Cairo failed because the party that is hosting the talks deems the leading Palestinian resistance group Hamas, 'terrorist' and would hate to see a scenario in which Gaza prevails over Israel. If the resistance demand of ending the siege is met, especially the demand of reactivating the Gaza seaport and airport, Egypt would be denied a major leverage against Hamas, the resistance, and the Palestinian people altogether.

And if the resistance wins - as in holding the Israeli military at bay, and

achieving some of its demands - the political discourse of the Middle East is likely to change altogether, where the weak will, once again, dare challenge the strong by demanding reforms, democracy, and threatening resistance as a realistic way to achieve such objectives.

Interestingly, the Hamas victory in the Palestinian Legislative Elections in 2006 had revived the possibility of political Islam in achieving its goals via the ballot box, which was a harbinger of the rise of political Islam throughout the region following the 'Arab Spring.' Any victory for Palestinian resistance can also be considered equally as dangerous for those who want to maintain the status quo throughout the region.

Some Arab rulers continue to declare their strong support of Palestine and its cause. 'Operation Protective Edge,' however, has exposed beyond a doubt that such solidarity is just a mere show of words; and that, although discretely, some Arabs wish to see Israel crush any semblance of Palestinian resistance, in Gaza and anywhere else. ■

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(Courtesy: YMD)

## Zionist in Palestine An Illegal Entitu

- Abu Backer

An article entitled "Holy Land's Pin-up Warriors" in the *Outlook* (4 August, 2014) highlights the illegal existence of 'Israel' in Palestine. The magazine raised two questions: (1) 'Is Israel becoming a rogue state?' (2) 'Can't the international community rein it in?'

To this few people responded. Richard Anderson Falk (Former UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Palestine) said: 'I believe that Israel is a rogue state in the regional context of West Asia. It has been defiant toward international law in war/peace contexts, especially since the Lebanon war of 2006, but also in its periodic massive military operations carried out in Gaza over the last six years (2008, 2009, and 2014) against an essentially defenceless civilian population encaged within a crowded space.'

Gregory Shipak (Lecturer, Media Studies, University of Guelph-Humber, Toronto) said: 'Israel has long been [a] rogue state in that for decades it has violated international law [in] countless ways. Examples of that include its illegal occupation and settlements in Palestinian territories; its refusal to allow Palestinian refugees the right to return to their homes in accord with UN Resolution 194; its seven-year old siege

of Gaza, characterised as illegal by such groups as the Red Cross and Amnesty International as well as by UN officials like Desmond Tutu, Navi Pillay and Richard Falk.'

Ian Pappé (Historian, University of Exeter, UK) said: 'It is becoming a rogue state in the eyes of the civil society worldwide, but it is not depicted this way by the political elites or the mainstream media.'

Talmiz Ahmad (Indian Diplomat) said: 'A rogue state is one that functions with total disregard for international law, norms and values.'

### HISTORY

Palestine is the land of Palestinians from the time immemorial. The Israeli people live there for a short while after they lost ground in Egypt. Thus, they are not the aboriginal inhabitants of Palestine. The Jews were driven out from Palestine by the Romans in 78 C.E. After that they mingled with the European races, and consequently, they lost the purity of race. They lived in Europe for 1900 years, a time more than their settlement in Palestine. The Jews' claim of Palestine as their homeland is totally absurd.

There are many places in the world where the original population turned to

another faith. The Chinese converted to Buddhism. Even though they were the original inhabitants of the land and their faith was different before, no one claimed the old faith as the law of the land. The Romans and Greeks were pagans before converting to Christianity. Pagans never claim that Rome was the land of Pagans.

Professor Comas writes: "The anthropological fact is that Jews are racially heterogeneous and there is no foundation for the claim that there is a Jewish race. Their constant migrations through history and their relations with the widest variety of nations and people have brought about such a degree of cross-breeding that the so-called people of Israel can produce examples of traits typical of every people."

M. Fishberg says: "The claims of Jews to purity of descent are of radical difference between Jews and the so-called Aryan race which anti-Semitism is based."

A famous scholar, R.N. Salman opines that 'the purity of the Jewish race is imaginary; the widest variety of ethnic type is found among the Jews.'

The life of Israeli people is mentioned in the Old Testament as well as in the Holy Qur'ân.

Shail A Mayaram, in his article 'Israel a gift of the Arabs' (*The Hindu*, September 11, 2014), opines that the Jewish state of Israel was a gift of the

Arab people. The author points out that the Jews enjoyed much freedom and equal rights as Muslims in Muslim countries. Jews and Muslims lived peacefully in Morocco, Algeria, Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Palestine for centuries.

The author writes: 'There is substantial historical evidence available to show how Jews were thriving in the Abbasid and Ottoman Empires'. He points out that 'anti-Semitism has plagued the Jews for two millennia and is often involved to justify Israeli impunity. Ironically, the Arabs have historically not been participants in the history of racial hatred. On the contrary, it was in Arabia that the Jews sought refuge after they fled Jerusalem following destruction of second Temple.'

The author also suggests that the whole world, especially democratic India, should support Palestinians for a sovereign and independent state. The author was an eye witness to the terror of Israel in Gaza on 31 May, 2010 when 400 Palestinians were killed of which one third is children. (*The Hindu*, 11 September, 2014).

In 2006, *Gulf Times* (Qatar), quoting report by Reuters under the title 'Syrian Christians support Hezbollah' revealed that 'Syrian Christians in Lebanon support Hezbollah against Israel'. The report says, 'Seventy seven year old Mona Muzaber lights a candle for Hezbollah at the Orthodox Church of the Cross Centre of Damascus. She

says; 'I love him. I never felt Nazrullah was a religious zealot. He is a patriot who does not seek personal 'gain'. I light a candle daily for him to remain under God's protection'. (*Gulf Times*, 5 August, 2006).

The report says: 'Israel's offensive against Lebanon has brought Christians in neighbouring Syria closer to Nazrullah.' Bishops and priests say Syria's Christians, a devote community of around three million people out of a population of 18 million, identify strongly with Nazrullah's battle with Israel, which has occupied Syria's Golan Heights since 1967. Pray for resistance, pray for Hassan Nazrullah. He is defending justice', Father Elias Zahlawi told the congregation at special mass held at the Lady of Damascus, a Catholic Church. (*Gulf Times*, 5 August, 2006).

Even the Israeli people support Palestinian cause and oppose Israeli onslaught on Palestinian people, especially children and also Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. Professor A.K. Ramakrishnan speaking at JNU in December 2012 described the human rights violation of Israel in Palestine and cruelty of Israel on Palestinian children.

Zionist occupation of Palestine was not as a result of Hitler's anti-Jewish attitudes, as many of us believe. In fact, the seeds for a Jewish State were sown in the 19th century itself. Zionism came into existence during

1880s and Hitler's Fascism was introduced in 1945. It is very clear that the formation of 'Israel' was as a result of crooked planning of Judaeo-Christian extremists in Europe. The reports clearly indicate that Britain and America had a pre-planned policy on Arab nations.

To strengthen the illegal state of Israel, Britain and America helped Zionists to make nuclear weapons and destructive bombs. A news report in *Peninsula* (Qatar) entitled 'Britain knew 1950s nuclear ingredient was Israel-bond' reveals that Britain admitted that it knew that heavy water it sold in the 1950s, a key ingredient in making nuclear weapons, was bond for Israel, amid claims of cover-up'. This secret was disclosed by BBC reporter Michael Crick. He revealed that Norway also sold nuclear materials to Israel. Michael Crick said: 'Britain's Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) wrote Foreign Office official Donald Cape, who gave the Ministry's approval for the deal. America also involved in the deal. (*Peninsula*, December 11, 2005).

A news report entitled 'Against the survival of Israel' (*Gulf Times*, 1 January, 2004) says that Israel will not last long. Citing historical evidences of the fate of 'Crusaders', the author, Gwynne Dyer opines that Israel's existence in Palestine is illegal and illogical. He refers to the speech of Avraham Burg, former speaker of Israel's Knesset

(parliament). Burg warned Israel with the words: 'It turns out that 2000 years struggle for Jewish survival comes down to a state of settlements, run by an amoral clique of corrupt law breakers. A state lacking justice cannot survive. More and more Israelis are coming to understand this as they ask their children where they expect to live in 25 years. Children who are honest admit, to their parents' shock, that they do not know. The countdown to the end of Israeli society has begun.' (*Gulf Times*, 1 January, 2004). Gwynne Dyer points out that in spite of Arab's willingness to recognise Israel as it was in 1948, Israelites are not willing to recognise Palestine state. Gwynne Dyer opines, 'There can be no lasting peace with the Arab world that does not reconcile with the Palestinians.'

The World Book Encyclopaedia states: "Muslim rulers controlled the region until the early 1900's. The rulers allowed Christians and Jews to keep their religions. However, most of the local population gradually accepted Islamic culture of their rulers." (Vol. 15, 1990, P.104). In fact, many original Israel people embraced Islam. It was the Christian Bishop who handed over the key of Jerusalem to Omar bin Khattab, the second Caliph, and the inhabitants commented that the Muslim rule was a blessing to them comparing the rude rule of the Romans.

## **DISTORTION OF HISTORY**

Excavations are made in Palestine to unearth past reminiscence of historical buildings to establish Jewish claim over the Palestinian land. It is true Israeli people lived in Palestine for a certain period, but the places of worship they built were entirely different from Jewish synagogues. Judaism is known after Judah, one of the twelve sons of Yaqoob (Israel), the son of Ishaq (a Prophet of Muslims). The other 11 tribes were not known as Jews in the beginning. Abraham (Prophet Ibrahim) is the father of Muslims also. The Jews are divided into two groups, Ashkanazism and Sephardim. These two groups have different cultures. The former speaks a language called Yiddish while the latter speaks Ladino.

The sinister designs of Christian fanatics of Europe (Christians of Arab region are entirely a different community from European Christians whose culture is deep rooted in Roman despotism) have a similarity with the anti-human ideals of Hindutva forces in India. Both were trying to hide their past crimes from their enemies – Jews, the enemies of Christians and non-Brahmanical Hindu castes (Sudras, Harijans etc.), and the enemies of Brahmanical class. Brahmins persecuted low caste Hindus for centuries and European Christians persecuted Jews for centuries under the pretext that Jews are responsible for 'Crucification' of Jesus. As the world is



'free' now and the Jews have become powerful, Christians feel that Jews would take revenge for what fanatic Christians have done to them. There is similarity in the case of Brahmanical class who feels that its past crimes on non-Brahmanical Hindus would be retaliated. Hence, they distort history with the false propaganda of persecution of Hindus by Muslim rulers which is totally absurd and illogical.

### **THE PLOT**

The formation of Israel on Arab land was the result of a plot by anti-Muslim forces in Europe and America. In fact, the Jews were living peacefully in Muslim countries like Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Algeria and Morocco. Zionism as a terrorist organisation was formed to capture Palestine where all three religions existed with equal status. Zionist activity started in Russia in the beginning of the 19th century. In 1813, Mordacai Manuel Neach (1785-1851) pleaded to the Christian world to settle down the Jewish people in Palestine. As Christians had guilty consciousness of 'killing' Jesus, they wanted to avoid revenge from the Jews who were developing in the post-war periods. Nephali Hertz (1861-1909) wrote a national anthem for the Jews. Writings of famous scholars like George Eliot, Moses Hess, Asher Ginsberg (AhadAham) also influenced Jews to have a separate homeland. Theodor Herzl, an Austrian, was the first Jew to

give political interpretation to Zionism. He wrote a pamphlet entitled *Deer Judonstaat* (Jewish state). He was followed by Weizmann. He along with Sokolow persuaded Balfour to make 'Balfour Declaration' by which Jewish people should be settled down in Palestine.

According to the UN plan, Israel was to be formed in America or Uganda (see *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Vol. 15). But, later, America compelled the UN authorities to create a Jewish state in Palestine. In fact, according to the original plan, Israel is a country with 6000 square miles and no expansion should have been made. In 1919, only Arab people lived in Palestine and the population was estimated at 7,00,000 (7 lakhs). The British government had assured that Israel would be formed protecting the civil and religious rights of the Palestinians. But, after the establishment of the Mandate, Palestine was open to European Jews to migrate. The non-Jewish races also took advantage of the situation. From 1914 to 1934 their number reached 9,00,000 (9 lakhs). Still, Jew and non-Jew population in Palestine was 1:3. (See, *World History*, K.L Khanna, Laksmi Narayan Agarwal Publication, 2010.)

On 29 November, 1947, the U.N. General Assembly agreed to divide Palestine into an Arab State and a Jewish State. Arabs did not agree to this

plan. However, Israel came into existence on May 14, 1948, under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion. A series of conflicts took place between Palestinians and Zionists. But, the UN remained a mute spectator, and did not help Palestinians against the culprits with western powers misusing the Veto power. In 1948 the Jewish population of Israel was only 6,50,000 (six lakh fifty thousand) only. Between 1948 and 1970 about 13 lakhs migrated to Israel. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* writes: "The emergence of Israel as a Jewish state on the former territory of Palestine was the central political issue of the Middle East after World War II (Vol. 22, 1988).

Large scale migration of the Jews came from 1939 C.E. onwards. They captured the Palestinian land with crooked methods. During night time the Zionists climbed hilly areas and from there they threw heavy stones at residential areas of Palestinians. Subsequently, the Palestinians vacated the places fearing danger in life. The Zionists cheated the Arabs and occupied the land. The Palestinians who were suffering war ravages were given cheap money and their lands were occupied by the Zionists.

Palestinian resistance started from the year 1939. However, the Zionists used crooked methods to defeat the Palestinians. The Zionists disguised as Arab military persons entered the Palestinian camp and stole

all the weapons therefrom, subjugating the Palestine army men who were unprepared for a counter attack. Thus, the Zionists could very easily displace the Palestinians from a large portion of the land. After getting a settlement there Zionists fought an unholy war in the night, killing the Palestinians; and by rolling heavy stones from the hilly places to the bottom they frightened the natives who ran away from the places.

### **INDIA AND PALESTINE**

India was a land of truth and justice from time immemorial. That is why ancient Indian people embraced Islam without any political subjugation. This fact was noted by Pandit JawaharLal Nehru in his *Discovery of India*. Gandhiji was asked by a group of European journalists on 2 June 1947 at Bombay Dhrodi Hall regarding the solution to the Palestinian problem. Gandhiji replied that the only solution is that Jewish people should abandon terrorist activities in Palestine. The same views were published in *Harijan* on 18 May 1940. Gandhiji used the word 'terrorism' for the first time against the Jews who had planned to capture Palestine. Gandhiji also advised Jews to hold direct talk with Arabs, excluding the British and the Americans. A famous Kerala scholar, Prof. SukumarAzhicode (a University Professor and scholar) has revealed these facts in his article "Gandhiji and Palestinian Problem" published in *Mathrubhumi* newspaper

on 10 February 2009.

Gandhiji said: 'Palestine belongs to Arabs in the same sense as England belongs to the English and France to the French'.

Traditionally, India had a very close and cordial relation with Palestine where only Palestinian people were inhabitants till 1939, when the European Jews migrated to Palestine and occupied lands gradually. Religiously speaking, the original inhabitants included Muslims, Jews and Christians. The Muslim Arabs or Palestinians had no problem with the Christian Arabs or with the original 'Children of Israel', who were the traditional inhabitants of Palestine. In the Testaments the name of the land is 'Palestine'. Israel refers to the race rather than a nation.

'Israel' was one the few black listed countries of the world where Indians were not permitted to travel. This matter was shown in the Indian passport also. Later, in 1972, Moshe Dayan visited India and started bilateral relations with India. Today, they have found an ally in Hindutva forces in power, and Israel is a favoured nation, which is against the spirit of the Constitution of India.

### **CHANGE IN INDIAN STAND**

India's traditional attitude of supporting law and justice was turned down by Narasimha Rao, a staunch

enemy of Islam and Muslims, when he established full diplomatic relation with the state once considered to be illegal by the government of India. Israel was one of the few countries where Indians were not permitted to visit. It was in 1992 that Rao, who is also named in the Babri Masjid demolition case, invited Zionists to India, and then onwards some officials seem to have been acting according to the instructions given by the Zionists. The illegal arrests of Muslim youths, bomb blasts by Hindutva forces, distortion of historical facts, etc. in India were done under the influence of Zionists. Zionists established 'cordial' relations with Hindutva forces, even though these two anti-social elements claim their own superiority over 'other' people. The present Indian stand is criticised by many patriotic Indians, including famous writers and politicians.

### **DANGEROUS ALLY**

Referring to the Hindutva support to Zionists, *Outlook* weekly writes: 'But public demonstration in support for Israel action on Gaza by pro-Hindutva groups in New Delhi and elsewhere indicates the emergence of a new force openly proud of its admiration for Israel. Ironically, the Hindutva policy is against any non-Hindu groups in India including the Jews. Then why hard-core Zionists terrorists make an ally with Hindutva? These two elements have a common enemy – the Muslims.

## **WORLDVIEW**

Even though few people felt sympathy with the 'Jews' for Hitler's anti-Jewish attitudes, now general opinion has turned against Zionists as they are crueller than Hitler. Hitler was an ultra-nationalist who showed dislike towards 'settlers' as the Jews and other non-Germans were called. But, the Jews, who were not the citizens of Palestine for any significant time, occupied Palestine and have been torturing and persecuting the natives with might.

The general view is against 'Israel' and Zionists. Even prominent Jews, including Albert Einstein opposed the formation of 'Israel' by saying that the term 'Israel' mentioned in the Old Testament is the Kingdom of God in the Heaven and not a country in the world. Recently, 543 Israeli military officials, including few top ranking officials, resigned due to the inhuman acts of Israeli government like spying and abduction of innocent Palestinian children. They told the media that they are not ready to do treacherous work. Many such incidents occurred, and in 2002, 200 Israeli soldiers rejected Israeli military order to attend a camp. The news report entitled '200 Israelis defy army call-up' (*Gulf Times*, 18 September, 2002) says, 'More than 200 young Israelis called up for national

service said in a petition released yesterday that they would refuse to serve in an 'army of occupation'.

The 213 petitioners accuse Israel of 'committing war crimes and violating human rights' in Palestinian territories, and back 'any form of refusal to do military service'. They also said: 'The occupation is not only immoral but also damages our security as it is driving the Palestinians to despair and provoking acts of terrorism'. The report says: 'In addition, 483 reserve officers and soldiers have signed a 'refusal petition' saying they will not serve in the occupied territories' (*Gulf Times*, 18 September, 2002). Rashid Khalidi of Columbia University says: "By parroting deceitful Israeli talking points about 'self defence' and 'human shields', the US and its allies make themselves complicit in what may well amount to war crimes. Until they are willing to end Israel's impunity and allow the UN to stop this carnage, it will continue." Even though many countries are against Israeli policy or even the existence of Israel in Palestinian land, no one is bold enough to speak publically against Israel. Indian tradition says: *Satyamev Jayate* – the ultimate victory belong to TRUTH. ■

(Courtesy: Radiance)

## The Prophet's Inexhaustible Patience

- Shahul Hameed

The source of the Prophet's courageous determination in the face of all the traumatic experiences he suffered was his strong faith in God.

One of the marvelous qualities of beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was his infinite patience.

God was with Muhammad, as He is always with those who patiently persevere: "God is certainly with those who patiently persevere." (Qur'an, 2:153)

The Quranic word used for patience is *sabr*, and there is no English equivalent for it. We can convey the idea of *sabr* only by phrases such as endurance against afflictions, patience with delay, perseverance against hardships, steadfastness in the face of setbacks, courage against hostilities, self-restraint against provocations, will power against temptations, and equanimity or calmness of mind as regards fortunes and misfortunes.

Prophet Muhammad's on good Manners

- Good Manners: Key to Paradise
- Prophet Muhammad: The Thankful Slave
- Forgiveness: A Prophetic Example
- Manners of the Prophet – a Brief Account
- Even the Prophet Feared Allah

In all the meanings indicated by the above expressions, the Prophet was a perfect model to his followers. Indeed his life presents before us the shining example

of a man of extraordinary endurance: His father died before his birth; his mother died when he was only six years old; and his grandfather who took up his guardianship also died soon. Then it was his uncle Abu Talib who protected him.

And when God appointed him His last Prophet, he was faced with the most brutal persecution and hostility from his own people. But these harsh experiences of life did not make him a cynic or cruel. On the contrary, they perfected his faith in God, making him all the more strongly committed to his God-given mission.

Records of the Prophet's life by his contemporaries bear testimony that during the 13 years of his life in Makkah as the messenger of God, he faced all forms of abuse, boycott, expulsion, and threats of physical violence. And yet the Prophet did not budge an inch away from his mission. And all the while, he was gentle, considerate, and sympathetic even to his enemies who wanted and tried to kill him and other Muslims.

During the early days of his preaching, the people of Makkah had approached him through his uncle Abu Talib and made very tempting offers to him, such as the leadership of the City of Makkah, the most beautiful girl in marriage, and wealth of immense proportions. The Prophet spurned all these offers and said:

"I swear by the name of God, O Uncle, that if they place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand in return

for giving up this matter (calling people to Islam), I will never desist until either God makes it triumph or I perish defending it." This steadfastness and constancy against temptations was unusual in an Arab of those days.

### **Grieve Not, God is with Us**

And imagine the day when the Prophet had to leave his home, his city, and his people and emigrate to another place! The Hijrah, as the emigration of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah is known, was a great sacrifice and a painful decision for the Prophet at the time when he undertook it. But his personal comforts, likes, and dislikes had no value in the face of the immense task before him.

One remembers the time when he and his Companion Abu Bakr were almost overcome by their pursuers in the Cave of Thawr. When Abu Bakr in dismay told the Prophet that they were only two persons against the enemy, he told him with unflinching faith in the Almighty not to grieve, as God was with them.

God in the Quran admonishes the Muslims: "If you will not aid him [Prophet Muhammad], God certainly aided him when those who disbelieved expelled him, he being the second of the two, when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion: Grieve not, surely God is with us. So God sent down His tranquility upon him, strengthened him with hosts that you did not see, and made lowest the word of those who disbelieved; and the word of God, that is the highest; and God is Mighty, Wise." (Qur'an 9:40)

In the matter of complete reliance on God and faithful submission to Him, the Prophet was an unparalleled model to all

Muslims. For he taught his followers: "When you ask for anything, ask it from God, and if you seek help, seek the help of God. Know that if the people were to unite to do you some benefit, they could benefit you only with what God had recorded for you, and that if they were to unite to do you some injury, they could injure you only with what God had recorded for you. The pens are withdrawn and the pages are dry." (At-Tirmidhi, 1515)

The source of the Prophet's courageous determination in the face of all the traumatic experiences he suffered was his strong faith in God and his dependence on Him. The Prophet's conviction that God was with him when he was struggling with adverse circumstances, is evident from this teaching: "Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his, and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer; for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (God); thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it." (Muslim, 2999)

### **Do Patience and Gentleness Go Hand in Hand?**

The Prophet was always considerate and understanding, even towards those who were ignorant and arrogant towards him. Indeed his gentleness and patience with them earned their love and respect, as God says in the Quran: "Thus it is due to mercy from God that you deal with them gently, and had you been rough and hard-hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you." (Qur'an, 3:159)

An incident at the Prophet's mosque in Madinah demonstrates how lenient and kind the Prophet was to ignorant people. Abu Hurairah reports: "A bedouin urinated in the mosque and some people rushed to beat him. The Prophet said, 'Leave him alone and pour a bucket of water over it. You have been sent to make things easy and not to make them difficult' (Al-Bukhari, 6025)

Once a man approached the Prophet seeking advice, and the Prophet said: "Do not get angry." The man asked for advice several times and the Prophet replied every time, "Do not get angry" (Al-Bukhari, 48)

The questioner was probably one disposed to a quick temper, and so the Prophet was stressing the need to control his anger. The Prophet also said: "He who is deprived of forbearance and gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all good" (Muslim, 638)

We may remember the day of Makkah Victory: The Prophet reentered the city after 10 long years of living in Madinah, and practically there was no opposition as he was accompanied by an overwhelming number of Muslims. The whole of Makkah lay at his feet as he marched in. His enemies stood in surrender awaiting his verdict, and he could very well have cried "havoc" or "let slip the dogs of war" as the triumphant commanders of those days used to do. Instead, in a historic break from the old tradition, the Prophet of Islam announced forgiveness and amnesty to all his former enemies. He told them simply: "You may go. You are a free people." (Authenticated

by al-Albani)

Such kindness and generosity could not have been in vain, as the whole of the community of Makkah thereafter embraced Islam, a feat that could never have been achieved by the use of force. And certainly this superb act of forgiveness was in keeping with the Quranic injunction: "Let there be no compulsion in religion." (Qur'an, 2:256)

Unflinching loyalty to the cause of God is the virtue of prophets. Prophet Muhammad was a brilliant example of a man committed to his divinely appointed mission. So it is no wonder that he stood firm against all opposition and finally succeeded in winning over the hearts and minds of millions.

Living in a fast-moving, high-tech environment of "instant nirvana" and "preemptive redemption," most people of this postmodern world are programmed to brush aside a religion that insists on a slow-paced, meditative, prayerful form of worship five times a day (*salah*), as well as on a rigorous form of fasting during the daytime for a whole month (*sawm*).

Also, *zakah* and *Hajj* are indicative of the importance of practicing *sabr* in our daily life. And it is no exaggeration to say that our beloved Prophet has amply demonstrated through his own life that Islam (which means submission to Allah) is *sabr* itself; *sabr* with the fortunes and misfortunes our Creator has apportioned to us in this world.

For those who practice *sabr* in Islam, there is always the unfailing promise and prospect of a never-ending world of felicity. ■

(Courtesy: The Milli Gazette)

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