



# THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

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# The Fragrance of East

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## Value of Love

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

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

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

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

“Human beings, We created you all from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-fearing of you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”

(Al Qur'an – 49:13)

This ayah warns mankind against the prejudices on the basis of race, colour, language, country, and nationality. These prejudices make man discard humanity and draw around himself some small circles and regard those born within those circles as his own people and those outside them as others. These circles are drawn on the basis of accidental birth and not on rational and moral grounds.

In some cases their basis is family, tribe, or race, and in some particular geographical region, or in a nation having a particular colour or speaking a particular language. Then the discrimination between one's own people and others assumes the worst forms of hatred, enmity, contempt and tyranny.

In this ayah, Allah draws our attention to three cardinal truths: (1) The origin of all of us is one and the same; (2) In spite of being one in origin it was natural that we should be divided in nations and tribes; and (3) The only basis of superiority and excellence that there is, or can be, between man and man is that of moral excellence. Thus, all men are equal, for their Creator is One, their substance of creation is one, and their way of creation is one, and they are descended from the same parents. ■

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

“All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety (taqwa) and good action.”

(Bukhari)

Islam rejects certain individuals or nations being favoured because of their wealth, power, or race. God created human beings as equals who are to be distinguished from each other only on the basis of their faith and piety.

One of the major problems facing mankind today is social inequality. The developed world can send a man to the moon but cannot stop man from hating and fighting his fellow beings. Ever since the days of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him), Islam has provided a vivid example of how racism can be brought to an end. The annual pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah shows the real Islamic brotherhood of all races and nations, when about two million Muslims from all over the world come to Makkah to perform the pilgrimage.

In another hadith the Prophet has said: “You are all the children of Adam, and Adam was created from the dust. Let *the people* give up boasting of their ancestors, otherwise they will stand more degraded than a mean insect in the sight of Allah.”

In yet another hadith he said: “Allah will not enquire about your lineage on the Day of Resurrection. The most honourable in the sight of Allah is he who is most pious.” ■

## The Hajj

The Hajj is one of the basic pillar (Rukn) of Islam for those Muslims who can physically and financially afford it. The occasion of its performance comes only once in a year. Its significance is such that whole community gets electrified and activated. This year it falls in the second week of September.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"And proclaim unto mankind the pilgrimage (The Hajj). They will come unto thee on foot and also on every lean camel; they will come from every "deep ravine that they may witness things that are of benefit to them, and mention the name of Allah on appointed days over the beast of cattle that He hath bestowed upon them. Then eat there of and feed there with the poor and the distressed. Then let them make an end of their unkeptness and pay their vows and go around the ancient House (The Ka'ba)" (xxii:27 -29)

Imam Ghazali writes: "If there is an earnest desire for nearness to God, a Muslim will be compelled to strive for it. A lover is passionately attached to every thing that bears an association with the beloved. The House of Ka'ba is associated with God and a Muslim should, therefore, instinctively feel drawn to it, to speak nothing of the attraction of the Recompense promised on it." (Ihya-ul-Uloom, Vol 1 p:24)

To those who will be in the sacred land of Arab and also those who intend to go there in near future following advice is being offered:

1. Remember that you are on a blessed journey. This journey, which is a migration toward Allah, is based on belief in His Unity (tawheed), on sincerity toward Him, on responding to His call, and on obedience to His commands. There is no greater reward than that of a Hajj which is acceptable to Allah Ta'alah-the reward of the Garden of Paradise.
2. Be on your guard against the mischief of Satan, who intends to cause dissention among you. Love each other as brothers and avoid disputes and disobedience to Allah. Know that the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said, "None of you has truly relived unless he likes for his brother what the likes for himself."
3. Whenever you have a question concerning religious matters or concerning the Hajj, ask knowledgeable Muslims until you receive a satisfactory answer. This is in accordance with what Allah has said: "If ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the Message." It is also in accordance with what the Prophet (PBUH) has said: "When Allah intends good for someone, He gives him understanding of the religion."
4. Know that Allah has made certain acts fard (obligatory) and other acts sunnah (according to the practice of the Prophet, peace be on him). Allah does not accept a sunnah which violates some fard. Some pilgrims ignore this fact when they harm believing men and women in their zeal to kiss the Black Stone, to hasten in their circuits around the k'abah, to make salah behind the Station of Ibraheem, to drink from Zamzam, and similar practices. These practices are sunnah. To harm any believer in doing them is haram (prohibited). How is it possible to carry out a sunnah observance while

doing a haram deed? Therefore, avoid hurting each other, and Allah will grant you His mercy and will increase your reward.

We would also like to emphasize the following:

- (a) It is not fitting that a Muslim man performs his Salat next to, or behind a woman in the Sacred Mosque or at any other place if it is at all possible to avoid doing so. Women should pray behind men.
- (b) The doors and entrances to the Sacred Mosque are for traffic and should not be blocked by people praying there, even though if it is to join the congregational prayer that may be in progress.
- (c) It is not permissible to block the free flow of people around the K'abah by sitting near the K'abah, by praying near it, or by standing near the Black Stone, or al-Hijr or at the Station of Ibraheem, especially when the place is crowded, as this is a source of harm to other people,
- (d) While safeguarding the dignity of Muslims is a fard, kissing the Black Stone is a sunnah, A fard cannot be sacrificed for a sunnah, When the area is crowded, it is sufficient to point to the Black Stone, saying "Allahu akbar," and to continue to move with the flow of people without causing a break in the lines. Indeed, keeping an easy flow during circuits is the most commendable thing.
- (e) It is not a sunnah to kiss the Yamani corner, but to touch it with the right hand, if it is not overcrowded, and say: "Bismillahi wal-lahu akbar," But if it is difficult to touch it, then move on, do not point to it with your hand, or say takbir, For it is not reported of the Prophet. It is mustahabb (good) to recite the following supplication in between the Yamani corner and the Black Stone:

"Rabbana atina fid-donya hasanatan wa fil-akhirati hasanatan wa qina adhaban-nar",

- (f) In the wake of terrorism all around and recent attempts of explosions in various parts of Saudi Arabia particularly near the Masjid Nabvi in Madina pilgrims should remain cautious and alert .

Finally, the best advice we can give is that one should follow the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger (peace be on him) in all what one does.

"Obey Allah and the Messenger in order that you may receive mercy,"

S.A.

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## Hajj (Pilgrimage): Manifestation of Islamic Brotherhood

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Hajj (Pilgrimage) is the fourth pillar of Islam. If a Muslim does not perform Hajj in spite of his ability to perform it, he may be considered a renegade according to some Quranic verses and Traditions. This obligatory deed is performed at Makkah al-Mukarramah in Saudi Arabia in specified days of a specific lunar month.

### Relevance of Prophet Ibrahim's Story to Hajj

Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) was a son of an idol-maker who was also a priest at the largest centre of worship in his home city. Thus both by profession as well as faith, he was strongly committed to the worship centre he was associated with. This was a difficult situation because if faith is coupled with material gain, the attachment becomes more rigid and uncompromising. There was nothing in that environment which would have created in Prophet Ibrahim's heart faith in and love for One God and persuaded him to revolt against the prevailing polytheistic way of life. But Prophet Ibrahim whose noble heart was prepared to shine with the light of prophethood and who was destined to work for creating a new world had to act in a different way:

We bestowed aforetime  
On Abraham his rectitude  
Of conduct, and well were  
We acquainted with him.  
(XXI: 51)

Prophet Ibrahim began his revolution from a place where sometimes even great revolutions of the world did not have an access. This was his family life - a place where a person is born and raised

and where he wishes to live all his life. Then all those incidents came to pass which have been narrated in the Quran clearly and effectively. They included Prophet Ibrahim's breaking down the idols, rage of the priests over it multiplied with surprise and helplessness, their revengefulness against Prophet Ibrahim, their making a fire for him, the fire becoming cool on him, and his bold and eloquent dialogue with the tyrant king of the time.

Prophet Ibrahim's revolt reached a stage where the whole city turned against him. The government also became hostile and tried to hurt him. But he remained unimpressed, as if he expected such repercussions. Calm and contented, he migrated from his city and began his journey alone and helpless, with faith in Allah as his only support. Wherever he went, he saw the same type of human beings and found the same evils of idol-worship, polytheism, ignorance and slavery to desires from which he had escaped. He reached Egypt where he faced a great trial and suffered from an insulting experience as the ruler there developed an immoral inclination toward his wife. But he was able to leave Egypt with his wife unhurt. He then reached Syria and found it hospitable and suitable for his stay. He decided to stay there and began his work of denouncing the practice of idol-worship and calling people toward the Oneness of Allah.

In Syria which was rich in greenery, means of provision, and beauty of nature, Prophet Ibrahim felt comfortable and at home, but soon he was commanded by Allah to move toward a new country which

was sharply opposite to Syria due to its severe climate and formidable natural setting. He was not his own master; his heart was not attached to any specific land, no matter how rich and beautiful it was. He was Allah's slave and His messenger. For him the whole world was his homeland and the whole human race was his family. He therefore, gladly got ready and migrated to Saudi Arabia from Syria with his wife Hajra (Hagar) and his son Ismail.

Allah further ordered him to leave alone his wife and child in a specific valley which was surrounded by barren hills burnt with extreme hot climate. The place had no water which is necessary for sustaining life and looked so awesome with a heavy silence hanging over it. There was no friend or well-wisher around whose presence could have been a source of comfort for him. He had leave his weak wife and new born child alone there simply because it was Allah's order and did so with full trust in Allah's mercy and power. He was expected not to manifest any hesitation or fear at that time. Ibrahim, may Allah be pleased with him, obeyed the order of Allah with prophetic grace, showing complete disregard for natural resources necessary for survival and reposing all trust in Allah, the Unseen, the Omnipotent.

After Prophet Ibrahim left his family alone in the valley, the child became restless with thirst, but there was no water around, not even in ditches which sometimes contained some water. The mother felt alarmed for the child's safety and restlessly ran between two hills, Safa and Marwa, in search of water. When she reached the second hill, she thought of her child left out unattended and ran back to the first hill to be able to see the child from there and make sure that he was safe.

Then again, pressed by her child's urgent need for water, she ran to the second hill hoping that she might find a traveler there or a sign leading to water. Although she was wife of a prophet and mother of a Prophet-to-be, she adopted necessary means to solve her problem and did not consider it an act against the spirit of her trust in Allah.

No doubt, she was restless but her faith in Allah remained unflinching. The scene was truly unique and unprecedented. Then Allah's mercy came to her rescue and miraculously a fountain welled up there, which was later called *Zamzam*. This auspicious source of water flows ceaselessly since

then. It never dries out nor does it show any sign of decrease in its water stock.

It is used by people throughout the world and generation after generation until today people have been getting water from it profusely. Allah has granted this water abundance and power to cure and sustain. To drink this water also carries reward.

Allah made this act of a sincere believing woman, running between Safa and Marwa, an obligatory condition for Hajj for all pilgrims, whether they were scholars, philosophers, or emperors. Unless they walk briskly between the two hills, which called Sa'i in Islamic terminology, their Hajj is not complete. The Sa'i very appropriately symbolizes the ideal life style of a true believer because it embodies both reason and emotion, feeling and faith, A Muslim makes use of his reason for fulfilling the needs of this life, but at times he also submits to his emotions which are, in fact, rooted more deeply in him than even the reason. He lives in a world full of adornments and attractions, but, following the example of a believer performing Sa'i between the hills of Safa and Marwa in Makkah al-Mukarramah, he keeps on



moving without getting distracted by one thing or the other or stopping unduly at a place. His eyes are set on his destination and he is solely concerned about his future. He considers his life as a few rounds of Sa'i that he makes in obedience to his Lord following the precedence of his predecessors. His faith does not interfere in his quest for knowledge and exploration and his Sa'i does not disturb his trust in Allah. The true value, spirit, and message of Sa'i may be expressed in two words: love and submission.

Now the child grew up to the age where his father naturally developed greater attachment to him. The child went out with his father, played happily with him and hung around him all the time. His father, who was specially gifted with compassion and love, got very much attached to the child. This excessive love for the child, however, created a problem for the father. His heart was not an ordinary man's heart. It was the heart of a "Friend of Allah" (Khalilur Rahman) which was apt to be a seat of love exclusively for the Almighty Allah gave Prophet Ibrahim an indication in dream to sacrifice his beloved son for Him. As a Prophet's dream is like a revelation, Prophet Ibrahim did not fail to understand the will of his Lord and got ready to act accordingly. He first tested his son because it was certainly difficult to perform this task without his cooperation, patience, and forbearance. The son showed the highest level of worthiness, nobility, and submission to the will of the Lord; after all, he was a prophet's son, a future prophet, and a future grandfather of a prophet:

He said: "O my son!  
I see in vision that  
I offer thee in sacrifice:  
Now see what is thy

view!" (The son) said:

"O my father! Do as thou art commanded:

Thou will find me,  
If God so wills, one  
Practicing patience  
And constancy!  
(XXXV11: 102)

Whatever happened after that defied all norms of reason. The father went out with his beloved and worthy son to sacrifice him at the command of his Lord. The son followed his father in obedience. Both of them had one and the same goal-to carry out the will of their Lord in perfect submission. The Devil met them in the way and, she always tries to beguile the virtuous, made an attempt to dissuade them from doing that noble deed. He tried to persuade them in a highly sympathetic and attractive way to disobey Allah. But they refused to listen to him and remained steadfast in their decision to carry out the divine command.

Then came the moment which made the angels, jinns, and human beings restless. Prophet Ibrahim laid his son on the ground and put the knife on his son's throat with a view to sacrifice him in the name of Allah. It was at that time that the mightily will of interfered. The aim behind the whole incident was not to take the life of Ismail. It was, in fact, Prophet Ibrahim's undue love for him, which could have distracted him from loving his Lord most, which was to be sacrificed. When this aim was fulfilled, Allah sent a sheep from the paradise to be slaughtered instead. Allah also established the act of slaughtering an animal as a religious ritual to be practiced by the followers of

Prophet Ibrahim and all succeeding generations of believers. This is what we notice on the Day of Slaughtering in Hajj.

So when they had  
Both submitted their  
Wills (to God),  
And he had laid  
Him prostrate on  
His prostrate on  
(for sacrifice),  
We called out to  
Him, "O Abraham!  
Thou hast already  
Fulfilled the vision!  
Thus indeed do We  
Reward those who  
Do right.  
For this was obviously  
A trial-and We  
Ransomed him with  
A momentous sacrifice:  
And We left (this blessing)  
For him among generations  
(to come) in later times:  
Peace and salutation  
To Abraham!"  
(XXXVII: 1 03-09)

Allah immortalized Prophet Ibrahim's resistance to the beguiles of Satan and commanded the believers to stone the Satan of Satan and commanded the believers to stone the Satan at the places where the Satan had stopped the righteous father and son in an attempt to persuade them not to obey their Lord. The act of stoning, therefore, is done every year in the most auspicious days of Hajj. Its main purpose is that Muslims should develop hatred for Satan and show repulsion to him. This is an act in which a believer feels great pleasure provided his faith is strong, understanding correct, and desire to obey the Lord sincere. When he acts the part played by the hero of the story, Prophet Ibrahim, he feels as if he is at war with the forces of the evil, the Satan and his legion, in a battlefield although he understand that

stoning does not inflict on the Satan any physical harm save insult and humiliation.

Time moved on. The child attained adulthood and was blessed with the honour of prophethood and leadership. The message preached by Prophet Ibrahim, on the other side, had also spread far and wide. The need of the time then was to establish a religious centre which could be fully trusted by the people and provide strength to the true faith. The world at that time had many palaces for kings and temples for idols, but there was not a single place devoted to Allah exclusively for His worship. That was why when the true religion had been established and a community of Muslims had come into existence, Prophet Ibrahim was commanded by Allah to construct a centre of worship called "the House of Allah" (Baitullah). This House was intended to be a place of refuge and peace for the whole humanity in which Allah, the One and the Only God, was worshipped. The worthy father and the worthy son, thus, constructed that auspicious House which was very simple in appearance but very magnificent in appeal. They carried stones and raised the walls of the House:

And remember Abraham  
And Ismail raised  
The foundations of the  
House (with the prayer): "  
Our Lord ! Accept  
(this service) from  
Us: for thou art  
The All-Hearing,  
The All-Knowing.  
Our Lord! Make of us  
Muslims, bowing to Thy  
(Will), and of our  
Progeny a people  
Muslim, bowing to Thy  
(Will); and show us

Our places for the  
Celebration of (due) rites;  
And turn unto us (in Mercy);  
For Thou art the Oft-returning,  
Most Merciful. "  
(11: 127-28)

This House was constructed with the highest level of faith and sincerity to serve and please Allah. He accepted it, bestowed it with permanence, beauty and grandeur, turned the hearts of people toward it, and made it a centre for all Muslims to face in prayers. To it the hearts of Muslims were attracted with magnetic effect where Muslims came with utmost eagerness and for which they were willing even to sacrifice their lives. This House was free from all apparent decorations and embellishments and was situated in a town away from the streams of modern civilization. Yet, it had an attraction due to which Muslims lovingly came to it to catch a glimpse of it. When this House was ready, Prophet Ibrahim was instructed thus:

And proclaim the  
Pilgrimage among  
Men: They will  
Come to thee on  
Foot and (mounted)  
On every kind of  
Camel, lean on  
Account of journeys  
Through deep and  
distant mountain  
highways; that  
they may witness  
the benefits (provided)  
for them, and celebrate  
the name of God, through  
the Days appointed,  
over the cattle which  
He has provided for  
Them (for sacrifice):  
Then eat ye there of

And feed the distressed  
Ones in want.  
Then let them complete  
The rites prescribed  
For them, perform their  
Vows, and (again)  
Circumambulate the  
Ancient House  
[XX11: 27-29]

In the days of Prophet Ibrahim, people were slaves to material resources and valued them as if they were self-existent and independent. Such resources, therefore, ultimately emerged in the society as deities worthy of worship creating a new kind of faith for the people along with their existing faith in idol-worship. The message and worship of all false deities. He called people to worship Allah, the One and the Only God worthy of worship. It was a proclamation of the faith that Allah alone brought all things from non-existence to life. He created things that served human beings as resources and He was their Master. At His will He could deprive a thing way. He commanded absolute power to use a thing as He wished.

Then at a point people made a large fire to burn Ibrahim and said:  
Burn him and  
Protect your gods,  
If ye do (anything at all)!  
[XX1: 68]

But Prophet Ibrahim knew well that the fire, like all other things, obeyed Allah's command when it acted. He knew that to burn was not an inseparable quality of fire and that Allah could turn a fire into a garden if He so willed. Prophet Ibrahim, therefore, entered the fire trusting that Allah could protect him even in the fire. When he did so, Allah changed the fire to a garden by His absolute power:

We said. "O Fire!

Be thou cool, and  
(a means of) safety  
For Abraham!"

Then they sought a  
Stratagem against  
Him: but We made  
Them the ones that  
Lost most!

[XX1: 69-70]

It was commonly believed in those days that life was dependent on abundant water, fertile land, and rich gardens. People, therefore, were always in search of such places to settle which were agriculturally rich and commercially promising. Prophet Ibrahim revolted against this materialistic way of thinking and chose for his family such a barren valley for permanent residence which had no agricultural or commercial opportunities. It was a place far from the then commercial centres in the area and was not connected with them by regular roads. After settling down with his family there, Prophet Ibrahim prayed to his Lord to increase their provision, turn the hearts of people toward them, and provide them with fruits of different kinds through His unknown resources.

"O our Lord!  
I have made  
Some of my offspring  
To dwell in a valley  
Without cultivation, by  
Thy Sacred House;  
In order,"O our Lord,  
That they may establish  
Regular Prayer: so fill  
The hearts of some among men

with love towards

Them, and feed them  
With fruits: so that  
They may give thanks".

[XIV: 37]

Allah accepted his prayers, made available all kinds of fruit in that town, and blessed it with peace and security.

Have We not  
Established for them  
A secure sanctuary,  
To which are brought  
As tribute fruits of  
All kinds, —a  
Provision from Ourselves?  
But most of them  
Understand not.

[XXV111: 67]

Prophet Ibrahim placed his family at such a place where there was no water even to wet the throat. But Allah brought forth from that land of sand and rock a spring of water which continues to flow to this day, satiates thirst of millions of people, and is carried far and wide throughout the world by the pilgrims.

He let his family at such a desolate and uninhabited place where there was no soul to be seen, but in a short time the place was populated and became a centre of attraction for people from all over the world. The life of Prophet Ibrahim, thus, was a challenge against the excessive dependence on material resources and symbolized complete reliance on the absolute power of Allah. In fact, this is an established practice of Allah: He always makes the true faith win over faith in material resources and, if He so wills, produces from such resources results contrary to their nature and, thus, unimaginable by human mind.

#### **HAJJ Reminder of Prophet Ibrahim's Mission**

Hajj and its rituals-Ihram, the special dress for the occasion, staying in Arafat, circumambulating the K'aba, stoning the Satan, walking between the hills of Safa and Marwa in Sa'i-are all, negate the undue

importance of resources, renew trust in Allah, and strive to attain His pleasure. Hajj is an open revolt against false traditions, customs and practices and is an occasion for Muslims to revive faith in Allah and learn to live a life of sacrifice and selflessness. Hajj guarantees cultivation, noble spiritual and religious values, and selfless human and Islamic brotherhood which are stronger than any nationalistic or geographical ties. It is a call to follow the ways of Prophet Ibrahim: inculcate in oneself his true missionary spirit, and keep up the banner of his mission in all times and climes.

It is the cult of your  
Father Abraham; It  
Is He Who has  
Named you Muslims.  
[XX11: 78]

Every year a good number of religious scholars and pious and God-fearing people perform Hajj due to whose presence the environment of Hajj is deeply charged with spiritual effulgence. This environment moves the hearts even of the hard-hearted; the transgressors return to their Lord in repentance seeking His forgiveness; the eyes which never get wet shed tears profusely for the fear of Allah. The dead and forgetful hearts are revived with new life. The mercy of Allah descends on the pilgrims, peace and tranquility enshrouds the whole environment, and the Satan finds no place to hide his face in shame. It is related in a Hadith: "The Satan is not seen more humiliated and disgraced, rejected and enraged on any day other than the Day of Arafa, and this is because he himself sees that the mercy of Allah is descending (on the pilgrims) and that Allah is forgiving (their) major sins" (narrated by Malik: Mursal).

The environment at the time of Hajj has a special effect. It seems as if it is charged with some kind of current. The pilgrims coming from different places to perform Hajj find their hearts once again enlightened with true faith. They are blessed there with faith in Allah, pride in Islam, and true knowledge and understanding of the religion which they take back with them and from which they derive strength to face all kinds of negative persuasion, pressure, temptation and fear that they may encounter later. After returning to their countries they share these blessings of Hajj with those who for some reason were not able to perform Hajj with them. Thus, a current of faith runs through the whole body of the Muslim Ummah and creates in the ignorant desire to learn, in the weak and meek courage, and in the despondent and depressed enthusiasm and zeal. From it Muslims gather new strength to do the work of preaching. Thus, a new morning is born.

#### **HAJJ Manifestation of Islamic Brotherhood**

Hajj is a practical manifestation, proclamation, and victory of Islamic nationalism, if we can use this term, over linguistic and geographical nationalism to which many Muslim countries have fallen a prey (due to different factors). In Hajj all pilgrims discard their national dresses and put on an Islamic dress called Ihram in Islamic terminology. All pilgrims thereafter loudly pronounce together the same words in the same language and in the same spirit:

I am present, O Allah!  
I am present. There  
Is no partner unto  
You. All praise and  
Virtues are for you  
As is sovereignty. You

Have no partner (indeed).

Among pilgrims there is no differentiation between the ruler and the ruled, the master and the servant, the rich and the poor, the privileged and the unprivileged. They show no difference in the dress "they wear or words of Talbiya they utter (mentioned above). This is also true about other deeds, rituals, and places relating to Hajj in which people of different nationalities stand side by side. They all run between the hills of Safa and Marwa, go together to Mina and then to Arafat, supplicate together at the Jabale-rahmah (Mount of Mercy) in Arafat, and spend the following night together in Muzdalifa. On returning from Muzdalifa they stay in Mina together and together they perform all other rituals of Hajj, such as sacrificing an animal, shaving the head, and stoning the Satan. They all move together, stop together, and return together from Hajj.

The un-Islamic missions and philosophy of nationalism will not be able to devour Muslims until Hajj continues as a living practice among Muslims (and, God-willing, it will always remain so). Also, Muslims will never succeed in constructing a new K'aba in their countries (due to their natural love for their motherland) and promoting it among believers as a site of pilgrimage. The present Centre of Islam, the Qibla, will remain unchanged toward which all Muslims in the world turn their faces in prayers. The House of Allah (Baitullah) will remain the same to which pilgrims from different parts of the world will keep on travelling for Hajj.

Remember We made  
The House a place of  
Assembly for men  
And a place for  
Safety; and take

Ye the station of  
Abraham as a  
Place of prayer.  
[11: 125]

Muslims from far and remote parts of the world will always eagerly try to reach Makkah for Hajj, pray vehemently for an opportunity to visit it, and consider it a great fortune if they reach this town.

#### **Hajj Associated with Specific Time and Place**

The rituals of Hajj are associated strictly with Makkah al-Mukarramah and its neighbouring places, Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifa. Hajj cannot be performed in any month other than Zil-Hijjah, or on dates other than the prescribed ones for this purpose, or at places other than Makkah, Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifa. The wisdom and objectives of Hajj necessitate that this great religious deed is performed in the same month, on the same dates, and at the same places. In fact, Hajj is a commemoration and imitation of the zeal of Prophet's Ibrahim and Ismail for Tawheed (Oneness of Allah) and their love for Allah and readiness to sacrifice the best and the dearest for His pleasure which were actually exhibited centuries ago at the same place and time. This noble emulation has a great power to create in believers' hearts love for Allah and ability to sacrifice their interests for Him. It also relieves them from subjugation to man-made laws, customs, and practices. Furthermore, the noble objective of keeping the Muslims throughout the world tied to the culture of Prophet Ibrahim, to Makkah as the centre of Islam, and to Baitullah (House of Allah) cannot ever be fulfilled without letting all Muslims perform Hajj at the same place and time: ■

## Message of the Entire Humanity in Mina and A'rafat

S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

It was to lead the entire humanity to the path of piety and success that the Prophet Mohammad (SAW) was assigned the Prophecy by Allah, the Lord and Providence of all the worlds. Each and every member of the Djin and the mankind, wherever he/she might be living, is now in need of the guidance imparted by his Prophecy up till the Doomsday. The way to, and provisions for, success and triumph for him/her now lies only in leading one's life, acting out the Prophet's (SAW) injunctions. Three months before his demise, the Prophet (SAW) taught the entire humanity, in the Arafat ground and during his sojourn in Mina, the way to lead one's life, the way wherein no human being becomes a thorn for another one, wherein homicide and genocide are absolutely not indulged in; wherein it is the Islamic teachings which call the shots. About the sermon delivered in Arafat, Hazrat Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi writes:

"In it, he (SAW) enunciated the fundamental principles of Islam and struck at the roots of polytheism and Ignorance. He declared in it all those acts totally unlawful which are unanimously deemed so by all religions and nations and they are: killing someone without any justification; usurping someone's property; violating somebody's chastity and honour. He

declared that all the customs and practices of the Pagan past were trampled under his feet. The practice of usury of the pre-Islamic days was abolished, in its entirety, by him (SAW). He declared the transactions made under it totally null and void. He (SAW) commanded to treat the womenfolk well and explained their rights on their husbands and vice-versa. He told that boarding and lodging, in accordance with the normal practice, is their right. He (SAW) exhorted the *Ummah* to strictly adhere to the Book of Allah and said that so long they would stick to it they would not go astray.

"In the sermon delivered in Mina, he (SAW) apprised the audience of the sanctity of the *Yaum-un-Nahr* (the Day of Sacrifice) and dwelt on the significance Allah Almighty has accorded to this day. He elucidated the honour and distinction held by Makkah against all other cities (of the world). He called upon the people to follow and obey whoever guided them in accordance with the Book of Allah.

"He (SAW) also exhorted them not to turn, after him, infidels who keep cutting each other's throats. He (SAW) also bade them to convey all that he had told them to others. He also said: 'Worship your Lord; offer prayers five times a day; observe fast for a month (in Ramdan); obey those who are in authority and you shall enter

the Paradise of your Lord.' At that time he (SAW) said some valedictory phrases, too. That is why this Haj came to be known as the *Hajjat-ul- Vidaa* (the Farewell Haj)."

Along with these matters of common human weal and philanthropy, the Prophet (SAW) of Allah also taught that all the human beings were servants and slaves of the One and the Only God and the God was the Providence and Sustainer of all of them. By having Him ingratiated only one can get the peace and tranquility in life. Hence, it is a must for His slaves to beseech Him only whenever they are in need and distress and make supplication to Him only. By himself making supplications on each and every occasion, he (SAW) had it taught, too, as to how to make supplication on each occasion.

Throwing light on the centrality of Ka'ba, the universal unification of the humanity that takes place there and its infinite message of peace and security, Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi (RAA) writes:

"The house of Ka'ba is the shadow of *Arsh-e-Ilahi* (the Divine Throne) and the foot-mark of His Mercies and Benedictions on this earth. It is that mirror, which His attributes of Mercy and Forgiveness, laying their reflection on, make the entire universe illuminated with their rays. It is that fountain-head where the spring of Truthfulness sprang from, the only one which irrigated the entire world. It is that horizon of spiritual knowledge and cognizance whose rays made each and

every particle of the Earth resplendent. It is that geographical pivot which all the members of the *Millat* are riveted to. They all reside in different countries and regions, speak different languages, don different apparels, lead lives in different civilizations; but, all of them, despite these innate differences and natural distinctions, circumambulate the one and the self-same house of Ka'ba and deem the one and the self-same Quibla their centre. Holding the one and the self-same place as *Umm-ul-Qura* (mother of all cities - which is one of the names of Makkah Mokarramah) all of them, obliterating all distinctions of nativity, nationality, civilization and culture, colour and complexion, et al, they get united into the one and the self-same nativity, the one and the self-same nationality (*Aal-e-Ibrahim* - the family and followers of Ibrahim), the one and the self-same civilization and culture (*Millat-e-Ibrahimi* — the Ibrahimi way of life) and the one and the self-same language (Arabic). It is that fraternity into which all the nations of the world and residents of various countries, who are (normally) captivated by the terms of nativity and nationality, get entered within a moment and a fraction of a second. With that all the chains, fetters and shackles contrived by the man himself get severed and shattered. For the few days, in the vast expanse of Haj grounds, all the nations stand shoulder to shoulder with each other, getting converted into one nation, a fraternity, rather, of one household, in one and same country, donned in one and



same apparel, that is *Ihram* and at one and same place. They all converse with God in only one language. It is this very colour of unity that gets all those materialistic distinctions obliterated which are the causes of armed clashes and conflicts among the human beings and their trials and attributions. This Divine *Harem* is, therefore, not the cradle of peace only in the sense that all sorts of bloodshedding, aggression and cruelty is unlawful here; but from this aspect also it is so that, getting a fraternity of all the nations of the world constituted here, it gets all the ostentatious distinctions wiped out which are the cause of the insecurity and anarchy of the world.

“People dream today to get inhabited, after getting out of the straits and narrow lanes of nativity and nationality, in the vast expanse of human fraternity. But the initial call of *Millat-e- Ibrahimi* (the creed of Ibrahim) and the revival siren of *Millat-e- Muhammadi* (the Mohammad’s -SAW-creed) had dreamt it hundreds and thousands years ago and had presented its verisimilitude before the world. People are possessed today with making efforts to evolve a single language (sprinto) for the entire world. But, the decision of according centrality to the house of Ka’ba has, since long long ago, got this problem resolved in so far as the followers of Ibrahim are concerned.”

The supplications made by the Allah’s Prophet (SAW) during this Haj performed by him are very moving. They

had emanated from the very core of the heart. They are, on the one hand, paragons of literature and eloquence and, on the other hand, make others fully enlightened on the nature and extent of his bondage with Allah Almighty. They show how much he considered himself, despite being the chosen and favoured servant of his Providence and top-ranking Prophet, insignificant, infirm, needy and destitute and how much absolute faith and undaunted confidence he (SAW) had on Allah Almighty, considering Him Only the Saviour, Sustainer and Supporter.

In particular, the supplications made by him (SAW) on occasion of *Wuquoof-e-A’rafah* (ritual of standing in A’rafat) are extremely moving and impressive. It was a Friday. He had the Juma prayers offered in early moments of the time and joined the A’sr prayers with it. By that, he (SAW) made offering *Zhur* and A’sr prayers jointly in A’rafat a matter of *Sunnat* (a Prophet’s practice required to be followed). Thereafter, the Prophet (SAW) remained absorbed for several hours in making supplications. It lasted up to the sun-set. Up till then he kept himself engrossed in making supplications, praying, entreating, beseeching, lamenting, grovelling and expressing his helplessness, incapacity, distress and unresourcefulness. With hands raised, he was begging his Lord, the Lord of the worlds, the way a beggar does.

SALL-ALLAH-O-ALAIH-E-WA-SALLAM. ■

## Iraq War Was Illegal

The 2003 invasion of Iraq was illegal, Lord Prescott, former deputy prime minister to Tony Blair has admitted, adding that he would live with the "catastrophic consequences" of this decision for the rest of his life. "In 2004, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that as regime change was the prime aim of the Iraq War, it was illegal. With great sadness and anger, I now believe him to be right," Lord Prescott wrote in a Sunday Mirror column, the confession coming shortly after Sir John Chilcots report into the lead-up to the war was unveiled.

The Chilcot Report concluded on Wednesday that Britain rushed to join the conflict before all other bloodless options had been exhausted, with the assessment of Iraq's capacities "presented with a certainty that was not justified." The report also found that "The governments decision to contribute a military force to a US-led invasion of Iraq inevitably increased the risk that more service personnel would be put in breach of the harmony guidelines. The issue of the potential pressure on service personnel was not a consideration in the decision." A 2002 letter released by the Chilcot Inquiry showed that Blair assured then US President George W. Bush eight months before the invasion that "I will be with you, whatever."

"Tony's note to Bush with that devastating quote 'I am with you, whatever' was all the Americans needed to go in, without UN support. They wanted it over and done with quickly to avoid the heat of a summer military intervention," Lord Prescott writes.

Although the Chilcot Report had gone into detail about what went wrong, the peer said he wanted to "identify certain lessons we must learn to prevent this tragedy being repeated."

"My first concern was the way Tony Blair ran Cabinet. We were given too little paper documentation to make decisions," he wrote. "No documentation was provided" to justify Attorney General Lord Goldsmith's reasoning that it was "legal to act militarily against Iraq," he added. Lord Prescott has described the Chilcot Report as "a damning indictment of how the Blair Government handled the war," adding that he takes his "fair share of blame."

"As the Deputy Prime Minister in that Government I must express my fullest apology, especially to the families of the 179 men and women who gave their lives in the Iraq War," the 78-year-old member of the House of Lords wrote. "A day doesn't go by when I don't think of the decision we made to go to war. Of the British troops who gave their lives or suffered injuries for their country. Of the 175,000 civilians who died from the Pandora's Box we opened by removing Saddam Hussein," he added.

Nearly 4,500 American personnel, 179 British troops and some 150,000 Iraqis were killed in the six-year war, plunging Iraq into chaos, which is thought to have helped create Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL). The families of British soldiers who died in Iraq have called for Tony Blair to face legal action over the invasion. They were reportedly allowed to see the Chilcot Report before it was unveiled. Unable to hold back the tears, the sister of one soldier who was killed in Iraq aged 19, called Mr Blair "the world's worst terrorist"

"I have got back to that time when I learned that my brother had been killed. There is one terrorist in the world that the world needs to be aware of and his name is Tony Blair," the sister of a UK soldier fallen in the Iraqi campaign said at a press conference accompanied by the applause of other relatives.

"I think about him so often. There is never a closure on to losing someone," the father of a 19-year-old soldier who also died want some justice for these soldiers," the man added.

An Iraqi victim of the war who became a symbol of coalition's invasion, Ali Abbas, was only 12 years old back in 2003. He lost both arms and suffered severe burns when two US missiles hit his house and killed 16 members of his family. "There was no military base near our house. I don't understand why they did this," Abbas told RT (rt.com) ■

*(Courtesy: The Milli Gazette)*

## Islamic Perspective on Individual Rights

- Syed Jalaluddin Umeri

**RIGHT TO LIFE:** The most fundamental of human rights is obviously the right to life. If this right is denied then all other rights are automatically nullified. Hence all democratic systems have recognised the right to life as primary and basic. However, the right to life is not absolute nor is it unconditional; in some circumstances, demands of justice may override it.

Islam, in its discourse, gives supreme importance to right to life, strongly opposes its violation and accords it due legal protection. Islam declares that this right could not be snatched away unless truth and fair play demand otherwise. Every human being intrinsically enjoys this right by birth, since life is a gift from the Creator. He is its real master and no one has the authority to terminate it. The individual himself is also not permitted to do so; that is why suicide is prohibited by Islam.

Islam says about believers that they do not kill any human being unjustly.

"Believers are those, who invoke not, with Allah, any other god. Nor do they slay such life as Allah has made sacred, except for just cause."

(Qur'an, 25:68)

Abdullah bin Amr says that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said, "Major sins are these: to associate partners with Allah, disobedience of parents, slaying a human being without just cause and false evidence." (Bukhari)

This admonition of the Prophet implicitly warns the believers to refrain from

the heinous act of unjust killing.

Islam has identified the possible situations in which this right loses its sanctity. If an individual becomes an intolerable menace for the society, he may not expect to retain his right to life. The Qur'an says,

"If anyone killed a person – unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he slew the whole of mankind. And if anyone saved the life, it would be as if he saved the whole of mankind." (Qur'an 5:32)

The above principle was among the Divine teachings given to the community of Israelites. The Islamic law reiterates the same. If a person kills another without just cause or spread mischief in the land, he loses the sanctity of his own life. His continued presence becomes intolerable for the health of the society. To remove him in order to restore peace and tranquillity becomes a supreme duty of the state. Such action of the state is unexceptionable.

A hadith quoted by Muslim identifies three crimes which would invite capital punishment: apostasy, killing without just cause and illicit sex by a married person.

The reason given by Islam for this harsh penalty is the obvious severity of the crime. To kill an individual without just cause opens the doors of the mass killing. On the contrary, the act of saving an innocent person is a life saver for humanity as a whole. Harsh penalty underlines the sanctity accorded by Islam to human life. Among Adam's sons, one brother unjustly

killed another. He initiated this evil tradition of unjust killing. Hence in any unjust killing thereafter in human history, the first killer would also share part of the blame; it would be included in his list of sins. Abdullah bin Masood narrates that the Prophet said:

“For anyone killed unjustly, a part of the blame will be shared by the killer son of Adam, since he was the first person to initiate this evil.”(Bukhari)

Islam, in the context of unjust killing, has given a number of injunctions:

1. The killer is to be given death penalty. Others with such tendencies would be discouraged. The Qur’an says:

“In the law of Qisas (death penalty for the killer), there is life for you; O men of understanding. This injunction is given so that you may restrain yourself.” (Qur’an 2:179)

Apparently, death penalty means that one more human life is to be lost. But sober reflection shows that this apparent loss actually guarantees the life of the whole community. If seriously implemented, this law will serve as a powerful deterrent. Unjust killings would be reduced, and mankind as a whole would be more secure.

2. If the survivors of the victim agree then they may accept blood money instead of death penalty for the killer. The blood money may also be waved off by them partially or fully. To grant pardon to the killer is counted as an act of virtue and is highly commended.

3. The authority to demand full punishment or to forgive the killer or to accept blood money rests with the family of the victim. The state has no role in it. The state will help the victim’s family in

giving to it its legal due. However, they (the victim’s family) would be restrained by the state if they seek to inflict inhuman torture on the killer or if they resort to other excesses, or target innocent family members of the killer.

The Qur’an says:

“Do not take the life – which Allah has made sacred – except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, We have given his heir authority (to demand Qisas or to forgive); but let him not exceed bonds in the matter of delivering the penalty. He will be helped (by the state).” (Al Qur’an 16:33)

### **RIGHT TO EQUALITY**

Equality is an important fundamental right and serves as the foundation for other rights. Reference may be made to “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. It is stated therein that human rights included in the declaration would be available equally to everyone irrespective of race, complexion, sex, language, religion, political affiliation, socioeconomic status or place of birth.

The same principle is stated in “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”. States are also expected to ensure that rights of citizens are not violated and their benefits are not withheld from anyone.

Islam gives equality on even higher status than commonly accepted today. Unity of mankind and equality are among its basic tenets. Islam presented them, when the world was unfamiliar with the notion of equality itself.

As a matter of fact, great diversity exists among human beings as reflected by differences in race, complexion,

language, ethnicity, sex, status and occupation. These natural differences were wrongly regarded by some as crucial and were even made basis for superiority and inferiority. Sometimes whites were regarded as superior to blacks or particular races were accorded higher status. Distinctions of higher and lower were made on the basis of language spoken. Difference of sex was often made the ground for the controversial male superiority. In spite of great propaganda of equality, such notions continue to exist in today's world as well.

Islam has however categorically prohibited discrimination, on the basis of such natural diversities. It maintains that such natural differences are merely for mutual acquaintance. To get acquainted with a person, one needs to know his native place and the language spoken by him. Such mutual introduction serves the purpose of better acquaintance. If human beings were identical in their features and attributes, recognition of them as distinct individuals would have been impossible. Such diversity is a sign of Divine wisdom and the human unity is maintained in spite of such differences. It need not lead to disputes or discord. The Qur'an says:

"O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things." (Al Qur'an 49:13)

After the decisive victory over Makkah, the Prophet delivered an

important sermon. He announced the abolition of all notions of tribal or racial superiority. He asserted equal status of all children of Adam. Only piety and nobility of character may bestow honour on a person; he would deserve the greater respect given to him. The Prophet said:

"O people! Indeed your Lord is one and your ancestor is one. There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab nor of an Arab over an Arab. White is not superior to black nor black is superior to white. However the pious among you deserve greater respect."

This was an explicit declaration of human equality, including in its scope people of all races and regions. There is no superiority on racial or regional basis. Only the pious are more honoured and deserve greater respect.

Improper discrimination among people and unjust treatment invite Divine chastisement. The wrongdoers are eliminated from the Earth. Pharaoh and his tribe were racial chauvinists with superiority complex; they were not willing to treat the Israelites as equal. Israelites had been enslaved by them and coerced into submission. By ethnic cleansing, their numerical strength was being reduced in order to weaken them. They were not allowed to develop and prosper. This was a very serious crime against humanity. The Qur'an has condemned this grave injustice. It has described the Divine scheme through which Allah liberated the Israelites, and Pharaoh and his supporters met their doom. The Qur'an says:

"Indeed, Pharaoh elated himself in the land and divided its people into

sections. He depressed a group among them, killing their sons and keeping the females alive. He was indeed an evildoer. And he wished to be gracious to those, who were being depressed in the land. We wished to make them leaders and heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land. We wished to show Pharaoh, Haman and their supporters, the eventuality that they were dreading from the Israelites." (Al Qur'an 28:4-6)

This is reiteration of the principle that the state power may not be used to subjugate a section from the people. All individuals and communities are to enjoy basic rights, which may not be snatched away from them on any pretext. Divine law does not permit oppression and coercion against any group of people.

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF JUSTICE**

A natural corollary of equality among human beings is that just treatment be meted out to everyone and none is subjected to injustice. Indeed, justice is the cornerstone of Islamic teachings. Islam has laid emphasis on establishment of justice and has sought to make it a living reality. The Islamic doctrine holds that the universe itself is based on justice; hence human life may receive its proper orientation, only through justice. Human conduct must conform to justice, since injustice would inevitably lead the society towards discord and conflict while peace will remain elusive from it. Human activities guided by the norm of justice are expected to lead to harmony, whose highest manifestation is visible in the system of the universe itself. The Qur'an says:

"The sun and the moon follow courses exactly computed. And the herbs and trees both bow in adoration. And He has raised high the Firmament and He has set up the balance of justice. This has been done, in order that you may not transgress due balance. So establish weight (i.e. regulate the weighing process) with justice and do not fall short in ensuring the balance." (Qur'an 55:5-9)

Indeed, the religion revealed by Allah rests on the foundations of truth and justice. The Qur'an says:

The word of your Lord does find its fulfilment in truth and justice." (Qur'an 6:115)

The above statement signifies that Islamic teachings as well as Islam's doctrine about unseen realities are indeed true. There is no rationale for doubting their truth. Moreover, Islamic injunctions are completely free from coercion and injustice; they are aimed at ensuring fair play among human beings.

An important aspect of the mission of the Messengers is the establishment of justice in human society. Proper use of power, to achieve justice, has been ordained. The Qur'an says:

"We sent our messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the book and the balance. This was done in order that human beings may stand forth in justice. And We sent down iron. In it, there is great might as well as many benefits for mankind; so that Allah may test who it is (among human beings) that will help unseen, Allah and His messengers. Indeed, Allah is full of strength, exalted in might." (Qur'an 57:25)

The society envisaged by Islam cannot be visualised in the absence of justice. Its primary teaching is to completely refrain from excesses of all kinds; no deviation from just conduct is permitted. The comprehensive Qur'anic guideline in this regard is the following:

"Allah commands justice, performance of good deeds and generosity to kith and kin. He forbids indecent action, evil conduct and insolence. He instructs you that you may receive admonition." (Qur'an 16:90)

Islam maintains that even enemies are to be treated fairly. The Qur'an says:

"O believers! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing. Let not enmity of a group motivate you to depart from justice. Be just; it is in accordance with piety. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is well acquainted with all that you do." (Qur'an 5:8)

Islam regards state power as a means to achieve justice in society. Those at the helm of affairs obviously share greater responsibility in this regard. The ruler should establish justice in all circumstances and avoid injustice. Islamic state, in any case, is expected to utilise all its resources to ensure justice. Prophet David, who was a ruler, was advised by Allah to be just (in discharging the duties of the state). The Qur'an mentions that Allah addressed David as follows:

"O David! We have indeed made you a vicegerent on earth. So judge between people with truth. Do not follow lust, for it will lead you astray from the path of Allah. For those who wander away from Allah's path, there is grave chastisement, because

they forget the day of reckoning." (Qur'an 38:26)

The Last Prophet received a similar advice, from Allah:

"If you choose to judge between them, be sure to judge in equity, because Allah loves those who judge in equity." (Qur'an 5:42)

The Prophet has stated that a just ruler, on the Day of Judgement, would be among those virtuous individuals, who will find shelter under Allah's throne, when no other shelter will be available. (Bukhari)

Abdullah bin Amr bin Aas narrates that the Prophet said:

"There is no doubt that on the day of judgement, just individuals would be seated near Allah, on illuminated seats. They would be on the right hand of the Merciful Lord and both His hands are right hands. These virtuous individuals had dealt fairly in their own affairs and in their family matters and in all other matters entrusted with them." (Muslim)

The above teachings of Islam are explicit about importance of justice. Put into practice, these Islamic teachings would eliminate injustice and exploitation from society.

#### **SUPREMACY OF LAW:**

Islam has prescribed a legal system and also endorsed the supremacy of law. Hence all are to be treated equally, before law; with no distinction of rich and poor or mighty and weak. Everyone must accept the rule of law; otherwise it would indicate weakness of faith. The Qur'an says:

"It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman that when a matter has been

decided by Allah and His messenger, to have any option about their decision. If anyone disobeys Allah and His messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path." (Qur'an, 33:36)

In this context, the Qur'an has criticised the hypocrites, since they were reluctant to accept the rulings of Allah and His messenger. They wrongly thought these rulings to be harmful to them. On the contrary true believers have an entirely different attitude. They carefully pay attention to Divine rulings in order to obey them and accept them sincerely. The Qur'an describes the believers' attitude, as follows:

"The response of the believers, when summoned to Allah and His messenger, in order that the Prophet may judge between them, is none but to say that 'we hear and we obey'. These are the people who will achieve success. One who obeys Allah and His messenger, fears Allah and does right, is among those who will triumph." (Qur'an, Ch. 24:51-52)

History has recorded a shining example of supremacy of law. Once, a woman from the tribe of Bani Makhzoom committed theft. She was apprehended; then some people of that tribe requested Usama to intercede before the Prophet, on her behalf; that she may not be given the prescribed punishment (of amputation of hand). Though Usama was very dear to the Prophet as his own kin, the Prophet got angry at this intercession. The Prophet said: "O Usama! Are you interceding in a matter concerning Divinely ordained penalties?"

Then the Prophet clarified the matter in a public address. He said: "Many people before you were doomed because when an honoured person among them would commit theft, they would acquit him. And when a weak individual would commit the crime, they would punish him."

After these preliminary remarks, he emphasised the supremacy of law in this remarkable statement, which only a Prophet could announce. "I swear by Allah that even if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, would have committed theft, I would have cut off her hand." (Quoted by Bukhari)

Abdullah bin Umar narrates that the Prophet said: "If one intercedes to prevent the execution of Divinely ordained penalty, he opposes the will of Allah." (Quoted by Abu Dawood)

### **STATE AS GUARDIAN OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

According to Islamic view, a person enjoying prominence in society has enhanced responsibilities. In particular, those with authority are charged with protecting the human rights of subordinates. The ruler shares the highest burden of this responsibility. According to the narration of Abdullah bin Umar, the Prophet said:

"Let it be understood that all of you are guardians and you are accountable about your sphere of authority. *The ruler* is guardian of people and accountable for them. Head of a family will be held to account concerning his family. A lady is the guardian of her husband's house and children; she is accountable concerning them. Servant is custodian of his master's property and he is accountable for it. Know



you all that all of you are guardians in some capacity and you are answerable concerning it."

### **DUE PROCESS OF LAW**

Islam postulates the legal axiom that everyone is innocent unless proved guilty by due process in a court of law. To that end, it has laid out a detailed procedure to arrive at credible evidence in any legal case. To hold a person guilty without proper evidence or to harm an individual's prestige is a cognisable offence, in Islamic law. In the same spirit, Islam has forbidden propagation of rumours and has discouraged unwarranted speculation.

Once, a person from Iraq approached the Caliph Umar. He said that he wanted to report a matter which made no sense. Umar asked him to elaborate. The person said that the matter was "false evidence". Umar, on hearing this, stated categorically: "By Allah, I tell you that under Islamic law, a person may not be imprisoned without credible evidence against him, rendered by reliable witnesses." (Quoted by Malik in Muatta)

The above is a clear statement of the Islamic guidance that a person may be punished with imprisonment only when credible evidence is brought against him to prove that he indeed committed the crime that he is charged with; and that he deserves the punishment prescribed for that crime.

### **ABOLITION OF ENSLAVEMENT OF FREE INDIVIDUALS**

In many regions, exploiting the weakness of a person, he was captured by an unscrupulous person and sold as a slave; this could happen for instance due

to an unpaid loan. This was a very reprehensible practice and Islam abolished it. It prohibited capture, enslavement and sale of free individuals. A slave once set free may not be enslaved again or made to serve as a slave. The Islamic scholars are unanimous about this. To enslave free human beings has been strongly condemned by Islam. Abu Hurairah has reported that the Prophet said:

"Allah says that on the day of judgement, I myself will present the case against three persons. One of them is a man who made a covenant with God as witness and then violated it. Second is a person who captured and sold a free human being and devoured the price received. The third is one who hired a labourer but did not pay his wages." (Bukhari)

To gauge Islamic attitude, it may be noted that Islam encourages that slaves be set free. On the contrary, to enslave a free person is a grave crime in Islam. To compel a person to work without wages is, similarly a reprehensible sin. Even the prayers of such wrongdoers will be rejected by God. Abdullah bin Amr bin Aas has narrated that the Prophet said:

"Allah does not accept the prayers of three characters. One of them is a person who after settling a slave free, enslaved him again." (Quoted by Abu Dawood)

To stop such inhuman practices, the state may enact suitable legislation.

### **UNDUE PUNISHMENT NOT PERMITTED**

According to Hadith, to unduly take away a person's clothes forcibly or to beat him on the back with lashes invites the wrath of God. Tabarani has quoted that the

Prophet said:

"A person who without just cause, renders a believer naked by depriving him of his clothes, will meet Allah, when Allah would be very angry with him."  
(Commentary, Jamias Sagheer)

The Hadith is in the context of Islamic society; so unjust punishment given to a believer is being prohibited. But the principle is applicable to all human beings, generally. To inflict unjust punishment on any one is a grave crime and reprehensible deed which invites God's wrath. Punishment is permitted only when the guilt of the accused has been established and degree of punishment would be in accordance with the degree of crime.

### **PROTECTION OF PERSONAL HONOUR**

Every individual is naturally endowed with self-respect. It is among his human rights that he is not insulted or given a bad name. Indeed he deserves respect as a human being. Human dignity is an important element of the ethical and legal framework of Islam. To malign a civilized person or to harm his prestige is a grave crime. In particular, the Prophet clarified that to unjustly accuse an innocent woman of immodesty is one of the major sins. (Quoted by Bukhari) The Qur'an has prescribed a punishment of eighty lashes for this crime.

"And those who launch a charge against chaste women and do not produce four witnesses; flog them with eighty lashes. And reject their evidence ever after. Such men are wicked transgressors." (Qur'an, 24:4)

The above verse describes the punishment to be given for a false accusation of immodesty against chaste

women. If a man is similarly accused of adultery and required evidence is not presented, the accused will get the same penalty. The penalty is same whether the accused is male or female (if he / she is not a minor).

The law is explicit about false charge of adultery. For any other false accusation (as of theft, drinking or vagrancy), this punishment will not be given; instead suitable milder chastisement will be administered. This could include imprisonment. The chastisement is to be milder as compared to eighty lashes. A Hadith says:

"Apart from prescribed penalties; for lesser offences, no more than ten lashes' flogging may be given as punishment."  
(Bukhari)

Imam Abu Hanifah says that if the accuser is a slave, the punishment is forty lashes. So for lesser offences, the flogging should not exceed thirty-nine lashes. However, Abu Yousuf regards seventy-nine as upper limit (because instead of a slave, he considers the case of free person as offender). Hazrat Ali's practice was a maximum of seventy-five lashes for lesser offences.

As for minimum chastisement, it could be as mild as three lashes. However, the punishment should not be so light that it causes no pain and fails to act as *deterrent*. Some scholars are of the view that the chastisement may vary from case to case and the judge may exercise his discretion. (Hidayah)

A question arises that if the accused person forgives the offender, will the chastisement be waived off? Abu Hanifa,

Sauri and Auzayee do not permit this. But according to Shafai, the chastisement may be waived off. Some scholars opine that if the matter reaches the court, right to forgive may not be exercised. Islam protects personal honour of individuals and prescribes detailed legislation for it.

### **FREE MOVEMENT**

Islam has recognised as human right the freedom to travel in various regions of the Earth. Islam has encouraged people to observe the natural bounties provided by Allah. Lessons are to be learnt from places of historical interest as well. Man is also permitted to travel to meet his diverse needs. Allah has invited our attention to His design that the Earth provides easy avenues of travel. The Qur'an says:

"Allah has made for you the Earth. He has spread it out and has made for you roads therein, so that you may be guided towards destination." (The Qur'an, 43:10)

"Allah has made the Earth for you as a carpet; so that you may move about in it, on spacious routes." (The Qur'an 71:19-20)

Islam has given some concessions to travellers. Society is encouraged to provide for them, if need be. They may also be supported by public treasury. Some needy people may not travel for their livelihood; others are encouraged to help them. In principle, Islam has permitted people to travel for any genuine reason; Islam encourages society to help them. It does not restrict movement of people.

### **RIGHTS OF VICTIMS**

Islam regards an individual's right to secured and peaceful life, as fundamental wherein honour and property of a person

are safe. In case of aggression from any quarter, the victim should be able to protest, to seek relief from court and to elicit public sympathy. The Qur'an says: "Allah does not like you utterance of evil words in public speech; except by one who has been wronged. And Allah hears and knows all." (Qur'an, 4:148)

On the one hand, the victim is authorised morally and legally to protest and demand justice and on the other hand, it is a social obligation to help the victims of injustice. The Prophet clarified that the victim deserves assistance from others; while the transgressors do not deserve any support. To assist in injustice violates the very spirit of Islam. The Prophet said: "One who knowingly supports an oppressor, leaves the fold of Islam." (Mishkaat)

To ensure justice, society should support the victim and isolate the oppressor. But the role of state is even more important.

Islamic state is obliged to provide justice for the victim. After assuming his office as Caliph, Abu Bakr stated the state policy in this regard:

"The weak among you is strong in my sight till I restore to him his due. And the strong among you is weak in my sight till I take away from him whatever is properly owned by others. It Allah so wills!" (Ibn Aseer)

If the victim gets state support and if the state is conscious of its duty of ensuring justice then even the weakest will get a fair deal. ■

(Courtesy: The Radiance)

*(Continued from page 38)*

“Surely Allah enjoins justice, kindness and the doing of good to kith and kin and forbids all that is shameful, evil, and oppressive. He exhorts you so that you may be mindful.” (16:90)

Muslims read the following verses: “Allah does not love those who exult (in their riches).” “Allah loves not those who create mischief.” (28:76,77). “Surely He does not love the transgressors.” “Surely Allah’s mercy is close to those who do good.” (7:55, 56) “Surely Allah loves the just.” (5: 42) “Make peace between them with justice, and be equitable for Allah loves the equitable.” (49:9) The Qur’an abounds in such verses. Muslims are extremely eager to be included among those whom God loves. And so, on the issue of social justice, this eagerness will stand them in good stead. Muslims have been trained to fear and obey and thank the invisible God through fasting and other forms of worship. Improper conduct cannot be expected from them, let alone unjust conduct.

Muslims are expected to emulate the edifying Exemplar of human conduct who is none other than the last Messenger of Allah. He is described by Allah as “Mercy to people of the whole world.” (21:107) The scheme of social justice as given by Allah, whose concern for the well-being of all is nonpareil, through His last Messenger who is mercy unto the nations of the world, and through the

Qur’an, a manual of guidance from the Most Compassionate and eternally Most Merciful Allah cannot but be perfect. Allah says about the Qur’an, “This is a Blessed Admonition that We have revealed. Are you, then, going to reject it?” (21:50)

Still there are people who find fault with purdah, polygamy, a woman’s evidence in court or her share in inheritance, laws of divorce or punitive laws. They just have to look within. What appears to be defective, deficient and unjust need not be so; it may be a red herring distracting them from the perception of truth, mercy and justice. Remediation is always possible if misery results while implementing the Islamic scheme of social justice. The Qur’an is a source of both guidance and misguidance. Those who are bent on denying the Truth are misguided through parables which function as red herrings. “He causes many to go astray just as He directs many to the Right Way. And He thereby causes to go astray only the transgressors.” (2:26)

Muslims who have put their trust in Allah and His Last Messenger declare, “We hear and obey”. (2:285) They believe in their wisdom and sense of justice, and not in the opinions and doubts of the critics. Sometimes we prefer what is harmful to us and reject what is beneficial to us. It is better to submit to the commands of Allah and His last Messenger. Unquestioningly! ■

## **Postmortem of September 11 Episode**

**-Nazrul Hafeez Nadwi**

The American intelligence agencies (mainly those operating inside America) have denied Usama bin Laden and his organization "al-Qaida's" role in September 11 attacks. Moving a step further, the French and the American scholars have proved beyond doubt that none but America itself is responsible for these attacks. The gist of the evidences provided by these scholars is that the propaganda made by America and the world media about the attacks is a transparent lie a big fraud. It was, in fact, a mutiny of the high military officials themselves with the agenda to compel President G. W. Bush to change his policies.

It has often happened in the American history that impartial and unprejudiced scholars have solved many a problem and unraveled a lot of scandals with their honest efforts. The same thing, once again happened with respect to the September 11 attacks. A team of American researchers reached to the conclusion that the accusation that the Arab youth were responsible for plane hijacking was nothing but a part of the conspiracy already hatched against the Muslims. Surprisingly enough, none of the accused Muslim youth was among the passengers or the hijackers of the hijacked planes. The whole world is wonder stricken why such

a historical event took place without the American intelligence agencies having any prior information about it. Hence, quite expectedly, the Americans were greatly agitated and highly disgusted with their government when they later on admitted that it had received prior information about the attacks. As a result the American politicians and the relatives of the victims laid the responsibility on the government itself.

It is noteworthy that when, during seventies of the past century, the graph of the incidents of plane hijackings was on increase in America, the Pentagon discussed the matter thread bare with the experts who then schemed to devise such a system that could control a plane from the ground. Two companies were assigned the job. Hence a system called (JPLS) was devised which could control and suspend the whole working system of a plane and could compel it land anywhere leaving the pilot utterly helpless. This system was totally concealed from the airline officials and even from the pilots themselves. After thirty years constructive use, this system was exploited by criminal-minded officials for hijacking tetrads of planes at a time and for attacking stronger and safer buildings. Despite such a strong evidence indicating the American ill minded officials own hand in September

11 attack, it is strange to witness that Usama bin Laden and Al.-Qaeda, without any clear evidence against them, were deemed as culprits. And in this guise Afghanistan was brought to naught. One does not help wonder over the fact why all the passengers. (70-80) boarding the hijacked planes did not raise any cry while witnessing their death with open eyes, why nothing of any recorded voice could be found? The fact is that all the instruments had been already rendered non-functional through remote control. It is also thought - provoking that only twenty four hours after the attacks the American government attributed the act to Usama and Al-Qaeda and the only substantial evidence in favour of this claim was an Arabic guide book meant for teaching to hijack a plane. How strange it is that such an extra-ordinary event is probed only with the help of a small pamphlet deemed to have been written in the Arabic language. According to experts even an expert pilot, having had the required training for hijacking, could not be expected to hijack the kind of planes which were hijacked on September 11. Then how could this act be performed by any Arab youth on whom rests the accusation.

According to Mr. Lawrence's findings no Arab name could be traced out from the passenger list. To him the whole record was mysteriously hidden. How strange is the airlines companies' report that the whole record had got

burnt inside the planes! Is the record maintained in the planes?

Mr. Landone, a Democratic Party Presidential Candidate has said that the attacks were the result of a great conspiracy and it was nonsense to say that it was handiwork of a handful of 'Arab terrorists'. How could it happen without the support of high level experts and responsible personalities from within the system itself?

The American researchers have raised many more questions about the issue. They ask why the intelligence agencies were not interrogated for their fault. How could it have been possible to destroy the towers so skillfully and completely unless there could have been strong explosive material already placed inside them.

One of these scholars, Mr. Marshal, questions, why within only twenty-four hours after the attacks the rubble was ordered to be cleared away and immediately melted while nothing of any investigation was conducted on it.

On July 24, 2001 (i.e. days before the attacks) Mr. Landone, during a lecture in Washington, had already cautioned his nation about the presence of such elements in America who are engaged in sowing seeds for the third world war which, as they have planned will occur between Islam and the West.

Those who ask why Americans wanted to destroy their own country

should read James Bomford's *Body of Secrets* wherein the author has mentioned a lot of incidents to substantiate his claim how there are elements in America who want to exploit national policies for their own interests. John F. Kennedy fell victim to one such incident. The CIA had planned to attack Cuba after getting approval from the Pentagon. It planned that many American military personnel would attack their own planes and ships and would destroy them wearing Russian uniform, in order to have opportunity to attack Cuba in 'genuine reaction'. When it was placed before John F. Kennedy, he refused to approve it and as a consequence had to pay the price.

### **Agenda of The Attacks**

The intentions of the real culprits and the basic purposes behind the September 11, 2001 attacks can be well imagined from the above description where it is evident that the foremost agenda of the doers of this heinous act was to root out the Muslims and their religion.

In a stepwise program, they first want to target Madrasahs (Islamic religious educational institutions) by presenting them as hub of terrorism.

Secondly, they try to malign Islam in the guise of targeting Taliban and Usama bin Laden.

Not only the Jewish but the Indian media, as well, is rendering its services to this anti-Islamic cause. One can fully

understand all this by considering the American President's own words, when he termed the attacks as clash of civilizations by which he meant that 'Uncivilized Islamic World' had waged war against the 'Civilized West'.

The Muslims were warned in plain terms either to remain with America or else face the burnt as terrorists. The enthusiasm of the antagonists of Islam can be understood from the words of Henry Kissinger who perpetrated great atrocities in Vietnam and other countries saying that even if it was not clear about Usama to be the real terrorist behind the attacks, still-America should act against his whole network and must attack all those countries where his network has its roots. And if other countries did not go hand in glove with America, it must take the step on its own without wasting time. Apart from political personalities, the general public expressed their sentiments more vehemently. To them destroying Tehran and Damascus, killing and shooting the Muslims indiscriminately, cutting them into pieces, and even poisoning them, when needed, were the necessary retaliatory steps. The media projected that America was not bound to any customary law. Even the American intellectuals dealing with the Muslim world suggested for bombarding Makkah and Madinah. While on one hand America was practising barbarity in Afghanistan, its media continued to

distract the world attention by spreading rumors that Usama was a magical personality too difficult for America to trap. He and his Al-Qaeda were projected to be powerful enough to strike. American interests any time anywhere: In order to lead people of the world especially those criticising American hegemonistic attitude into the world of fancies where they could no longer be able to take note of American carpet bombing on Afghan soil, the American Defence Minister. Donald Rumsfeld, openly expressed his contention that they could never trap Usama bin Laden. Through this statement he also intended to make American people believe that they were fighting a terrible enemy and so ought not to get stricken by the pitiable condition of Afghan innocent children, women and the sick. Moreover, with the purpose of keeping American general public away from trying to know the reality behind the attacks, the rumors about anthrax were vehemently spread. Fake news about overcoming Usama's nuclear power was set afloat for two months in different versions so that, in its guise secret investigation on the atomic capabilities of Afghanistan and Pakistan could be conducted. On the other hand it was intended to know the personalities who played vital role in building atomic capabilities of both these countries so that they could easily be eliminated .

One more agenda behind the attacks was to stop Islamic Da 'wah

(propagation) organizations striving throughout the world in general and in America and Europe in particular and to compel the Muslim students studying in Europe and America to flee away or put them behind bars.

Still greater was the purpose to shatter the economy of the Muslim world as a whole than that of the Gulf countries and warn them to face Afghanistan like situation in case they supported people like Usama.

One of the fundamental causes of September 11 attacks is the hegemonistic intention to grab the Gulf countries' natural resources of gas, petroleum, gold, silver, steel and other valuable minerals and ore so that these countries could not use oil as weapon. Since this purpose could be realized only by aggression against Afghanistan and the Central Asian region along with the Caspian Sea, therefore the attacks were made to subdue Afghanistan first. That would also stop religious enlightenment of the CentralAsian Muslims. That is why Russia and China supported America in this cause.

One more basic intention behind the attacks was to get justification for launching aggressive campaign against the Madrasahs to get them closed so that people like Taliban would not come out of them to become a danger for America. The meanest inhuman treatment being meted out to the Afghan Mujahidin at the hands of



American military personnel is an aspect of the terrible psychological war against the whole Muslim world in order to terrorize and crush them from within.

America wants to continue this war (against Islam) for a long time. That is why Usama's tale is being repeated time and again. But what has America gained from this war, so far remains to be seen. The situation within America surprisingly reveals that the result has proved to be much more beneficial to the Muslims themselves than to America itself.

The aftermath of the attacks has shown that economic, military and political potentialities of the antagonists of Islam, particularly America are gradually declining. Not only America but other European countries like Japan, Taiwan, Mexico and Brazil are facing great financial crisis. Almost one million people in America have lost their employment so far. Big companies, because of their financial bankruptcy, are bent on ousting many more of their employees. Manufacturing companies have also become bankrupt. America is facing terribly increasing unemployment and is now, rapidly losing its image in the world fora. Its military as well as political majesty has lost its reverential awe too. Contrary to this, the Muslims within America and Europe have got benefited in many respects. After the attacks, the Muslims began to take stock of their Islamic identity as possessors of their own

distinguished culture and civilization. They have started turning back to their religious life with new fervour. Now mosques are seen filled with worshippers. After America started its systematic war against Islam in the name of terrorism, not only have the Muslims taken keen interest in studying the Holy Quran and other Islamic literature but the American and European non-Muslims have also been impressed to purchase and study Islamic literatures.

America alone has witnessed thirty percent increase in such purchasing. English translations of the Holy Quran have been sold to such a great extent that book-shops and stalls have fallen short of space for Islamic literature. According to American news agency reports as many as fifty thousand copies of the Holy Quran were sold within a month a record sale making the Holy Quran the highest selling book after September 11. In addition to this, yearning for knowing about Islam among the non-Muslims has greatly increased. They would, now visit mosques and Islamic centers in great numbers, to seek answers to their queries about Islam. Such a situation had never been witnessed during last thirty years. Heads of some Islamic centers said that each one of them had to give as many as eight interviews a day to media persons. The Muslims themselves pre-emptively extended their contacts with sources of

communication. Islam is spreading fast. According to a latest report thirty thousand Americans have embraced Islam from September 11 to the second week of December 2001.

If the American Muslims would spend crores of dollars on introducing Islam to their fellow countrymen, the result would have not been as encouraging as it stands now. Even their very existence was at stake and was nowhere felt. Now the people have begun to ask them about their religion, civilization and history. They are invited to the meetings in churches to talk about Islam. This ultimately has leads the Christians to Islam.

Another benefit to the American Muslims was that American media began to give greater attention to their statements than before. Political parties too attended them with keen interest. Members of higher echelons of the American congress gave statements in favour of the Muslims and communicated their emotions and sentiments to them. American President. G. W. Bush himself admitted the fact that different Jewish organization had faxed anti-Muslim messages to him to such a great extent that they overpowered him. Even the American deputy Defence Minister (a Jew) played a wicked role in this respect. After the attacks the collective consciousness of the Muslims has increased. They have given up their state of disappointment and are enthusiastically providing Islam

literature to their co-religionists.

According to the USA Today, the American people began taking extraordinary interest in studying Islam. In its September 17, 2001 issue, it writes that Islamic literature was sold to such a great extent that a week after the ugly incident almost none of the book shops in America was in a position to provide even a single Islamic book. It is strange to know that the Americans used to remain away from their Muslim countrymen until the attacks took place. But now they come to ask them about Islam, the Muslims and about issues related to the Middle East. Such a drastic change has occurred due to two reasons:

One, the Americans seriously thought how a single person could launch such a great attack.

Secondly, almost 70% of the American people consider American media to be partial. 55% of them don't trust their media sources, considering the news merely a false propaganda.

Even the editors of American newspapers and Journals protested against this policy of yellow journalism. That is why the American people were hardly influenced by the propaganda against Usama and the other Muslims. When the American government came up with documentary evidences, the American journalists themselves were the first to reject them as sheer fraud and falsehood. ■

## **Social Justice in Islam**

**- U. Muhammad Iqbal**

One Arabic word for justice is Qist. Strangely enough, it carries the connotation of injustice too. Words which carry contrary meanings are known as contranymy. The context in which such words are used will clearly denote what they actually mean. English language has such a category of words too. Such words are like the arrows of Cupid. One arrow of Cupid can make a man fall in love; another arrow can bring about the cessation of love. Cupid is the source of both love and loss of love, according to Greek mythology.

Another Arabic word for justice is Adl. Urdu word 'adalat' meaning court of justice is derived from it. Arabia is rich in synonyms.

Man is a social animal and, while rubbing shoulders with others, chances for friction come unsought. The resulting sparks can burn the prospects of friendship and mutual understanding to ashes. Man's abhorrence of solitariness and obsession with company cannot withstand such an unfortunate eventuality. Man's instinct for company craves for understanding, adjustment, forbearance, forgiveness, friendship and unity in diversity.

When people gather, they tend to sub-divide on various issues and then they resort to intrigues for survival or

domination or preserving the independence of each sub-division. Though fissiparous, these tendencies have a way of their own. The holy men of the Cave, numbering seven, were sub-divided into two groups! (18:12) Their undivided dedication to the Creator of the multitude of universes held them together and their split ceased to be subversive. An appeal to and reliance on dynamic social justice becomes an unavoidable imperative, when one is not inclined to take law into one's hands.

Social justice takes into account the rights of parents, family and relatives, in-laws, neighbours (both travelling and residential), business partners, colleagues in one's profession, party, club, organisation etc., officers vested with authority and subordinates in a hierarchy, and the rights of many others not mentioned here. The State creates institutions to establish and ensure social justice on the roads and in a habitation. Such institutions should be allowed to function without any obstruction and their personnel should be given due respect.

Factors which jeopardise social justice are many. A few can be hinted at here: egoism, anger, hatred, revenge, denial of rights, suppression,

oppression, sex crimes, scary living conditions, greed, jealousy of the dispossessed, craze for pump and pleasure, ingratitude, real or imaginary grievances, nepotism, ethnic superiority complex, exploitation, extortion, corruption, deception and fraud, groupism and struggle for domination, crime as a profession, honour killing, hate speeches, etc. Persons blinded by these factors cross the limits.

Aware of these factors and holding a holistic view of social justice, Islam instils in its followers a well-integrated belief system that keeps them well-informed and well-motivated to uphold justice in general and social justice in particular. Muslims are known as Muslims because they have renounced their autonomy and have submitted themselves joyously and voluntarily to the authority of Allah and His last Messenger (Allah's blessings and peace be unto him). Islam lays the highest stress upon belief in One Living God because this belief has the potential to purify and reform an individual, to have a political system in which God is sovereign, and to restructure society for the optimal use of its inherent strengths. Social justice is the key to peace, progress and prosperity and to realise the ideal of human brotherhood. There should be no discrimination, no deprivation of rights, and no exclusion or suppression of any section of society. That situation to emerge requires a blissful absence of

conflict between precept and practice.

To keep the Muslims steadfast on the path of social justice they are made to remember perpetually that Allah will be the Judge on the Day of Judgment, that Prophet Muhammad was asked to judge people in the light of the Qur'an, and that Muslims will have to bear witness and be accountable on the Day of Judgment. That Day will not arrive before one's death and if the certainty of death is not lost sight of, the need for fairness in dealings will gain strength and compulsiveness.

### **ALLAH AS THE JUDGE**

Allah always lives and sustains and supports the universe. He never dies (25:58). He has created life and death (67:2), the heavens and the earth (6:1), the human beings and other living creatures. He does not have the infirmity of sleep and is an eternal Eye-witness to all activities that are going on in His universe. He does not get tired while discharging His duties for billions of years. He knows each and everything that He has created. No one can add anything to His knowledge while deciding a case. Whatever knowledge one possesses has been granted by Him. No one can encompass His knowledge. He exercises His authority over the multitude of universes and has been doing so all the time that the universe has been in existence. He has the right to take cognizance of any offence committed anywhere because He has legal jurisdiction over the

universe. (2:255)

All those who dwelt and are dwelling in the heavens and on earth are His subjects and belong to Him (21:19) and they are accountable to Him. "None shall question Him about what He does, but they shall be questioned." (21:33) "Every living being shall taste death and We shall subject you to ill and good by way of trial, and to Us shall all of you be eventually sent back." (21:35) He will inform us how we fared in the trial.

Perfect justice cannot be rendered in the present scheme of things. Motive, action and the direct and indirect consequences of that action spread over centuries have to be taken into account in order to serve the cause of most satisfying justice. Therefore, a day has been fixed by Allah to judge mankind. Only He has the requisite eligibility to sit in judgment over others, (read) His servants, whose wages He will pay in full. In the Qur'an, in its very first chapter, He projects Himself as the Owner of the Day of Judgment.

In order to be just and fair, He has taken all precautionary and elaborate measures to record the activities of each individual. He knows each person through and through. He has employed His angels to record what one says loudly and what one hides and what one does in secrecy and in public. (21:4,110; 19:79, 50:118; 27:88-90)

On that Day, Balances will be set up, "Whoever does an atom's weight of

good shall see it; and whoever does an atom's weight of evil shall see it." (99:7-8) (See Ecclesiastes, 12:14) "The earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain." (Isaiah, 26:21) Transparency will characterise all His judicial activities. "And then the Record of their deeds shall be placed before them and you will see the guilty full of fear for what it contains, and will say: "Woe to us! What a Record this is! It leaves nothing, big or small but encompasses it." They will find their deeds confronting them. Your Lord wrongs none." (18:49)

The impact of these verses and the realisation that we have to meet Allah and will be questioned by Him who knows all about us and whom we cannot hoodwink will have a salutary effect upon us and, consequently, the cause of social justice will be championed zealously by us. Allah has reminded us, "He suffices as the Knower of the sins of His servants." (25:58)

### **PROPHET MUHAMMAD AS JUDGE**

Prophet Muhammad (Allah's blessings and peace be unto him) held the reins of government in Madinah; he was the chief judicial executive too. "Allah sent His Messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and Balance that people may uphold justice." (16:90)

Prophet David is no exception. "(We said to him) O David, We have appointed you vicegerent on earth.

Therefore, rule among people with justice and do not follow your desire lest it should lead you astray from Allah's Path." (38:26)

Similarly, Prophet Muhammad is given this order, "(O Messenger), We have revealed to you this Book with the Truth so that you may judge between people in accordance with what Allah has shown you. (4:105) See also 2:213, 5:49.

The judgments that our beloved Prophet (Allah's blessings and peace be unto him) passed should be accepted in faith, willingly and submissively. "But no, by your Lord, they cannot become true believers until they seek your arbitration in all matters on which they disagree among themselves; and then do not find any vexation in their hearts over your judgment, and accept it in willing submission. (4:65)

Scholars have compiled the judgments passed by him and we can read them for our instruction and enlightenment. The variety of cases settled by him is wide and complex and the reader is left with a sense of wonder at his judicial acumen.

The fact that Allah called upon His Last Messenger to render justice cannot fail to bring home to the Muslims the fact that they should not be guilty of any kind of injustice. This motivates them to be fair in their dealings with others. After all, the Qur'an says to the

Muslims, "The Messenger may be a witness over you and that you may be witnesses over all mankind." (22:78) Knowing that our Prophet is a witness over us, we cannot neglect the cause of social justice.

Prophet Muhammad is ordered to remind Muslims that Allah enjoins justice. (7:29) He himself sought justice and support from Allah against those who accuse him falsely and defame him. (21:42)

In the Hereafter, our Prophet's engagement with justice will continue at a higher level. With the divine permission of Allah, Prophets will intercede on behalf of their respective followers.

And our Prophet (Allah's blessings and peace be to him) will be the Intercessor par excellence. A distinctly unique honour will be conferred on him.

## **MUSLIMS ARE UPHOLDERS OF JUSTICE**

O Believers! Be upholders of justice, and bearers of witness to Truth for the sake of Allah, even though it may be against yourselves or against your parents and kinsmen, or the rich or the poor, for Allah is more concerned with their well-being than you are. Do not follow your desires lest you keep from justice. If you twist or turn away from (the Truth), know that Allah is well-aware of all that you do." (4:135)

*(Continued to page 28)*

## **A Fugitive Organisation**

**- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi**

There is an international well knitted programme to denigrate Islam and its ideology. No stone is being left unturned to obliterate it from the surface of the earth. Be it Dhaka Cafe terrorist attack or terrorist attack in France or Turkey or Afghanistan or in any other part of the world, the main target of all these onslaughts is to tarnish the image of Islam and its adherents. Terrorists have no faith. No religion permits to kill innocent people. The so-called Islamic state group has no link with Islam. Islam condemns those out fits which make disturbance and mischief. In the garb of Muslims, they are maligning Islam. We may easily understand their sinister design that they even did not spare Prophet's Mosque in Medina. Muslim organisations in India strongly condemned attacks in Saudi Arabia and other parts of the world. The ISIS has nothing to do with Islam and its principles and tenets, in fact, all its activities and terror attacks are meant to strike at the very roots of Islam. The ISIS is not only unIslamic but seems to be a tool in the hands of evil forces who are inimical to Islam. Despite this fact since the attacks on WTC on 9/11 in USA, all events are being linked with Islam without any genuine proof. It is nothing but a deliberate conspiracy of USA and its allies to obliterate Islam from the surface of earth. That is why they have started destroying Islamic countries one by one. First they raided Afghanistan suspecting that Usama Bin Laden mastermind of the events of 9/11 in USA is there. They invaded Iraq on the pretext of looking for weapons of mass destruction. The Chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix though had declared that Iraq does not possess mass destruction weapons. Even after this fair report, thousands of people were killed and thousands were maimed and all valuable things of Iraq were

looted by USA. The same tactic is being followed in Middle East where Israel is destroying Palestinians and Lebanese.

Needless to add that they partitioned Jews and the Arabs in 1948 to fulfill their ugly dream. Since its inception the Zionist State of Israel has been practicing all kind of oppressions and atrocities on Palestinians and Lebanese.

It is no secret that Israel is perpetrating such inhuman acts with the connivance and assistance of the U.S.A.. At the very outset, the U.S. has been extending both financial and Military aid to Israel. Reportedly, the world today has some 36,000 nuclear bombs in the arsenals of the eight declared nuclear weapons states. Ironically, they excluded Israel, which has an estimated 200 nuclear weapons. Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Palestine led us to believe that United Nation Organizations has not lived up to expectations. It will be apt to call it "subordinate organization of United States of America." Right from its inception, the UNO has proved to be biased and partisan organization. It should be noted that after Hitler's destruction UNO came into existence to maintain International peace and security and cooperate in solving international, political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems as well. Strangely, America has attacked more than 21 countries, from Vietnam to Nicaragua, after UN came into existence. Despite that, UN helps the US in various ways. The UNO has failed in implementing its charter under the influence of USA. If UNO wants to retain its impartial image, it must come forward to tackle the issue of terrorism by tracing its true perpetrators. A successful diagnosis of the ailment will certainly provide a lasting cure. ■

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