



**THE FRAGRANCE  
OF EAST**

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Post Box No. 93,  
Nadwatul Ulama  
Tagore Marg,  
Lucknow – 226 007

Ph. No. : 0522-2740406

Fax : (0522) 2741221 E-mail: [nadwa@bsnl.in](mailto:nadwa@bsnl.in)

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# The Fragrance of East

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## Islamic Culture

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

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

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

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### ***The Qur'an***

The knolls of Safa and Marvah are among the rites decreed by God. Anyone who observes Hajj or Umrah commits no error by traversing the distance between them. If one volunteers more righteous works, then God is Appreciative, Omniscient. (2:158)

“And pilgrimage to the house is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can afford the journey thereunto. And whosoever disbelieves (i.e. he does not come to the house despite his being able to do so) then (he does Harm only to himself) Allah stands not in need of any of his creatures.” (3:97)

Our Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in uncultivable valley near unto Your Holy House, our Lord! that they may establish proper worship; so fill the hearts of some among men with love toward them, and provide them with fruits in order that they may be thankful. (14:37)

Hajj is (in) the well known months, and whoever is minded to perform Hajj therein (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation in Hajj. And whatsoever good you do Allah knows it. So make provision for yourselves (here after); for the best provision is to ward off evil. Therefore keep your duty unto Me, O men of understanding. It is no sin for you that you seek the bounty of your Lord (by trading). But, when you press on in the multitude from Arafat, remember Allah by the sacred monument. Remember Him as He has guided you, although before you were of those astray. Then hasten onward from the place whence the multitude hasten onward, and ask forgiveness of Allah. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. And when ye have completed your devotions, then remember Allah as you remember your fathers or with a more lively remembrance. (2:197-200) ■

### ***Hadith***

The sacred Prophet has described love and affection to be among the essential qualities of Faith. The Prophet, himself, was an embodiment of love, and each attribute of his was an attribute of Faith indeed.

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said :”A Believer is a personification of love. There is no virtue in him who does not love others and the others do not love him.”

—Musand-i-Ahmad and Baihaqi

*Commentary:* It shows that to have a loving and affectionate nature is a religious requirement for a Muslim. If he does not care for others and the others do not care for him, he is devoid of virtue and his existence is of no benefit to society.

It has a lesson for the dry and unsociable people who imagine detachment and aloofness to be the signs of religiousness and spirituality, and do not feel warmly for others nor let others come close to them. It should, however, be taken for granted that the love and affection of the Believer is for the sake of God and subject to His Will and Command. ■

## Women And Patriarchy

After more than half a century of independence Indians have woken up to take account of their achievements and failures. Keeping aside many vital issues suddenly it has dawned upon us that women constitute more the 50% of our population and yet they are devoid of social and political rights with which they can negotiate the patriarchal structures in which they live. It is more than evident that this abysmal situation has arisen because politico-religious hawks of all hues have been allowed to call the shots in every governmental move on gender issues. These power brokers in a bid to keep their own political positions intact have prevented any progressive legislation benefitting women to pass through. The devastating fall out of such a policy is more than obvious: Rapists get acquitted with ease. Dowry seekers stroll the street with impunity even as dowry deaths increase and sexual harassment continues unabated with hapless women knocking the doors of justice in vain. From Maya Tyagi of Baghpat (Meerut) to Roopam Deol Bajaj, an IAS officer of Punjab, and Anjana Misra, the wife of an IFS officer in Orissa, there is an endless list of women cutting across classes, caste and community who have come to exemplify the pitiable state of affairs.

It is high time that the political class paid some attention to the entrenched societal attitudes towards women which shape the political handling of gender issues. This is more important than merely shedding crocodile tears on the plight of women and giving lip service to the idea of their being co-sharers of political power. There is a pressing political need to initiate a dialogue in society on the validity of the prescribed "role" for men and women. We adore women, use reverential language to address them, designate them as mothers, sisters or daughters. But we stoutly refuse to accept them in any other role. If women opt to make strides beyond the spheres prescribed for them by men then we see to

it they are made vulnerable to male fury, lust and aggression.

The impunity with which violence against women is becoming a routine affair is best brought out in the accounts of partition. Mr. Andrew Whitehead, in his radio series “India: a people partitioned” broadcast on the BBC World Service has aptly observed that during the partition of the country when large scale migrations of people took place across the border women migrants suffered the most. The extent of sexual violence against women has been concealed behind a veil of silence and shame. Figures available suggest that about one lakh women were abducted mainly in Punjab. How many more were raped and killed or casually cast aside God only knows. Whitehead further says that it is not hard to find veterans of the partition violence who admit sometimes with remorse, often with an obscene pride that they rioted and perhaps even killed. But no one admits to have participated in mass rape of women. Yet in 1947 there were tens and thousands of rapists exacting what they saw as communal vengeance or taking advantage of the breakdown of law and order to brutalise and humiliate women.

The situation is not different even now when communal riots flare up in any part of the country. Women bear the brunt of mob fury. The despicable carnage in Gujarat is the latest instance of brutality towards women. Thus it is imperative that we first create a social atmosphere where women can live without fear of sexual harassment. Without ensuring this basic security all talk of elevation and empowerment are meaningless for a large majority of women.

**S.A.**

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e-mail: shariq\_alavi@yahoo.com  
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## Discovery of America\*

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Allama Iqbal opens his long Persian poem, *Asrar-i- Khudi* (Secrets of the Self), with these verses from Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi.

Last night the Sheikh wandered about the town with a lamp

Saying, "I am tired of demon and beast; man is my desire.

My heart is sick of the feeble-spirited fellow-travellers:

The Lion of God and Rustam-i-Dastan are my desire."

I said, "We, too, searched for him, but he couldn't be found."

He replied, "What cannot be found that thing is my desire."

On a dark night, Maulana Rumi tells, a sage was wandering in the streets of the town, with a lamp in hand, as if he was searching for something that had been lost. The poet enquired from him what he was trying to find, and he replied that he had grown sick of living in what, in truth, was the abode of wild animals, and was now looking for man, a Lion of God and a Rustam-i-Dastan, who could restore his faith in humanity. The poet remarked. "You are looking for the impossible; for something that does not exist. Rest assured, you are never going to find

him." "It is the rare, the uncommon, the unattainable that I seek. This is the trouble with me," replied the wise, old man.

As you know, I have come here at the invitation of the Muslim Students Association and it is a new world for me, not, of course, in the sense in which it was for Columbus, but from the viewpoint of a student who, also, possesses some knowledge of religion. I am grateful to the Muslim Students Association for giving me an opportunity not only of coming to this great land, but, also, of seeing it from coast to coast and of meeting people and speaking to them. I have travelled from New York to California, and, also, visited Canada, thus covering about four thousand miles during these few weeks. It is at the end of the tour that I am addressing this meeting. You will, naturally, like to know my impressions. Coming, as I do, from a country which, so to speak, is backward at present and lagging behind the West, I would have described to you with relish the phenomenal advancement that has taken place here, but you are more familiar with it than me. and, hence, it will be unnecessary.

To many of you the verses from Maulana Rumi I have just quoted will have come as a surprise. Maulana Rumi lived in Anatolia which was not backward. On

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\* *The speech was delivered at the Muslim Community Centre, Chicago on June 19, 1977,*

the other hand, it was one of the most advanced parts of the then civilised world. The Maulana belonged to a place where the foundations of the magnificent Saljuk Kingdom were about to be laid. He was born at Balkh, in Iran, which was the most civilised country in those days and could, justly, be called the Greece of the East. In philosophy and literature it had made a glorious contribution and left an imperishable mark on the pages of history. Nevertheless, he has tried to show the wounds of his heart through these verses. He relates the story of the "sage", but in fact, it is his own story. He says that in that wonderful city and in that land of culture and enlightenment, he pines for man. There is everything there—stately mansions, blooming gardens, delicious food, elegant dresses and refined manners, but not man. What one sees are not real men; they possess only human forms and figures.

In another verse, Maulana Rum has spoken with greater clarity. He says: These are not men, only men's faces they have  
Slaves of the stomach, victims of sensuality.

#### **The bloom of the machines**

I have seen of America what could be seen during this brief stay and have travelled from north south and from east to west, but the one thing that has struck me is the supremacy of the machines. The bloom you see here is the bloom of mathematics, trade and technology. The

physical sciences have reached the highest point of their development and given to mankind whatever they could by way of progress, easy and luxury.

But what will the answer be if in this country which is bustling with life and activity one were to ask bow many real men lived; men whose hearts throbbed and eyes wept for the sake of humanity; men who controlled their carnal desires and were the riders and not the mounts of this civilisation; who held the reins of life instead of being driven by it ; who knew their Creator and whose hearts were filled with love for Him and respect for mankind; who led a simple life, in harmony with nature, and were aware of true joys and genuine pleasures; who did not like tensions and conflicts in the world and hated the selfishness and greed of the politicians; who wished every country well and wanted it to prosper; who were eager to give and not to grab; who did not believe that the aim of life was only to eat, drink and be merry, but thought that there was much more pleasure in feeding the other man and going hungry themselves than in eating the most sumptuous meal; who saw gain in loss and victory in defeat; who dreamt of the reconstruction of the world and were not concerned solely with the growth and development of their own land; who wanted to see the world united, not on the transitory and artificial platform of the United Nations, but on the real and natural stage of the oneness of mankind; who knew what was the beginning and the end of their

existence, and were, also, regardful of it; who realised that they had been created by someone and would not turn to dust, like the insects, after completing the span of their life, but had to go somewhere and render an account of the tremendous capabilities God had endowed them with, capabilities which had enabled them to impart life to stones, conquer the vastness of the skies, imprison the rays of the sun and plant their feet on the moon, and felt that the glory of man did not lie in breathing life into inanimate matter and subjugating the world through it, but in enlivening himself? God had created man and placed the crown of Vicegerency on his head : it was, therefore, not the height of his achievement that he became a slave to matter but made the matter his slave, or, rather, the slave of God and took from it the task of the fulfilment of His Will. This was what Vicegerency of God meant. Men who did not see greatness in subjugating the other countries and making them bow to their will but wanted to serve mankind selflessly and put an end to exploitation of one country or community by the other; men who aspired to release humanity from the bondage of the inordinate appetites of power, wealth and even intellect ?

The Bedouin of Arabia whose heed Islam had raised as high as the heavens had told Rustam, the Commander-in-Chief of Iran, bluntly that “we have been sent by Allah to deliver whom He wills from the overlordship of His slaves (i.e.,

men) to His own overlordship, from the narrow confines of the world to its boundlessness, and from the oppressiveness of other religions to the fairness and justice of Islam.” Now, there was the mighty Rustam whose name was enough to strike terror in the heart of the enemy, and, before him, it had become possible for a poor Bedouin to stand up and say : “God has appointed us to rescue men from the worship of fellow-men and lead them to the worship of no one save Him; to take them out of the prison-cell to which you have given the imposing name of the Iranian Empire into the Lord’s wide and limitless world and into the open air of freedom. We take pity not on ourselves, but on you. It is your wretchedness that has evoked sympathy in our hearts and compelled us to come out of the desert-land of Arabia. Unfortunate Iranians, we want to bring you out of the golden cage in which you are held in captivity like the nightingales into the boundless kingdom of the Lord. You are the slaves of your desires and habits, of your musicians, cooks and water-men while we are the slaves of God. We have come to deliver you from the countless forms and varieties of servility to freedom”.

**Light is one, darkness has numerous faces**

Freedom is one: servility is of many kinds, Light is one but darkness has numerous faces. Hence, wherever Noor (Light) is mentioned in the Quran, it is in the singular number. As for

instance, Allah is the Protecting Friend of those who believe. He bringeth them out of Zulumaat' into Noor. (II : 257)

But why? Is the plural form of Noor not found in the Arabic language? Or, was the range of expression of the Quran limited? The fact is that light is one, while 'darknesses' are unlimited. The origin of Noor is one and it is the awareness of God. There is no other source of guidance if Light is not available from that eternal fountainhead. Today, as I see this country, the following verses from Iqbal come to my mind. Iqbal had not visited the United States, but his knowledge of the West was deeper than ours. He says :

Though Europe is radiant with the light of knowledge,

The 'Ocean of Darkness' is barren of the 'Fount of Life'.

A nation unblessed by Divine Light,  
Steam and electricity bound its works.

The West is an 'Ocean of Darkness' in which the Fount Life' does not exist. There is an old proverb that the 'Fountain of life' is found in the 'Ocean of Darkness'. It is said that Alexander had made Khwaja Khizr his guide and requested him to take him to the waters of immortality in the 'Ocean of Darkness', but even Khizr had confessed his inability. Alluding to this brief story. Iqbal observes that though the West is an 'Ocean of Darkness', it does not possess the 'Fountain of Life'. What, then, is the ultimate fate of the nation which is deprived of Divine

beneficence and turns its back upon Apostleship and relies wholly upon the intellect and spends all its energies on matter, on minerals, steel and weapons, and makes the terrestrial, and not the celestial, world the sole sphere of its activities'? The matter is conquered, but not its own soul: the world is subjugated but not the spirit of the world. The West made the material world the only field of its struggle and endeavour, and material progress the high aim and ambition of its life. In it the West has been eminently successful for it is the practice of the Lord that He makes His Help available, in fullest measure, to man in whatever sphere he singles out for his attention. In whatever field a man wants to make progress. God grants him a full opportunity to go ahead. The crux of the matter lies in choice and preference.

#### **Christianity is unsuited to the West**

Those of you who have studied the history of the West and the Western Civilisation and read J. W. Draper's History of the Conflict between Religion and Science will agree that when Europe was converted to Christianity and the Christian missionaries got busy in it events took such a turn that it plunged head-long into materialism, Religion could not capture its imagination for Christianity offered no encouragement to intellect, nor gave a practical guidance for the organisation of society. It wanted to take it backwards while the European races which were eager and restless by

temperament wanted to press onward. A vista of opportunity and achievement was opening before them and the competition for advancement urged them to stop at nothing. The revolution that was unfolding itself forced the European people to select for themselves a field in which they had no rivals. They could not rest content with a narrow sphere of growth and progress in which they had to abide by the Bible at each step or ask the ecclesiastics whether such and such a thing was lawful or not. It was a tragedy not only for Europe but for the whole world that Christianity fell to its lot.

If it was asked which religion was most inimical to the spirit of Europe and the natural disposition of its people, the answer would invariably be, Christianity. On the other hand, as a little thought will show, no religion could be more in keeping with its genius and capable of giving it a proper sense of direction than Islam.

According to Christianity, man is born a sinner. He is carrying the heavy load of the original sin on his head. How, then, can a Christian have faith in himself? How can a man who is feeling ashamed of himself on account of being a sinner by birth look boldly at the universe, lay bare the forces of nature, pierce the bosom of the oceans and dream of reaching the planets?

How can a man who believes that he is a born sinner, that sin is ingrained in his nature and that he is in need of an

external atonement which has to be offered on his behalf undertake with pride and courage the voyage of the discovery and conquest of nature? Here was a contradiction the parallel of which could scarcely be found in the world. It was as if two horses had been tied to a cart, one in front of it and the other behind. The same thing happened to Europe. Two horses were fastened to it. Under the influence of climatic and other environmental factors, its spirit was eager to go forward, to do something, but the horse of Christianity was pulling it back. It was trying to take it towards monasticism. The ecclesiastics were openly preaching that earthly life was a bad business and the spiritual advancement of man lay in escape from life. If he wanted to attain salvation, he should live in mountains, dedicate his life to the Church, and practise celibacy. A perusal of Lecky's History of European Morals would show how people ran away from the shadow of a woman. The height of callousness was that a mother travelled a thousand miles to see her son and when the son heard that she was coming he took to heels like a man possessed and the mother had to return broken hearted. This was the Christianity that had reached the West. In the upshot, the West decided that if it had to progress, it should not only free itself from the shackles of the Church, but also take leave of religion. Significantly enough, while the decline of the Muslim World started when it abandoned Islam, the

rise of the West began when it forsook Christianity.

### **Slave of machines**

It is this distressing evolutionary process that has, today, made America a slave of the machines. The supremacy of the United States is accepted all over the world and its hand is seen in everything that happens anywhere. No country, Muslim or non-Muslim, is altogether free from its control and domination. In one form or another, its presence is felt at every place. Plans are made here and enforced in our countries and our own leaders implement them. Today, America has enslaved the world, but it has, itself, become the slave of the machines. It is a prisoner of its way of life, of material progress, of factories and laboratories, and of fancy goods and gadgets. The thing that I did not see here was man, the real man whose heart was alive and awake, and not the working part of a machine. Man, here, has got cast so completely in the technological mould of life that his ideas and emotions, too, have become mechanical. The properties of rock and iron have entered into his soul. He has become narrow and selfish, cold, unfeeling and impervious. There is no warmth in his heart, no moisture in his eyes. This is the reality I have sadly observed during my stay in America.

### **Guard against the dissolution of your personality**

Before I leave for home I would like

to tell you one thing : do not be overawed by this civilisation. You are the fruit of the tree of Apostleship. Live here, but keep away from the slavish imitation of the Western Civilisation. Derives much benefit as you like from our stay, but do not be swayed by crude and vulgar materialism. Remember your message and be on your guard against the dissolution of your personality. Do not feel ashamed of your Faith, way of life and culture. Do not imagine that you are the beasts and they are men. No, you are men and they are the beasts, This land is glittering with electric lights; even the night here is bright as day; but it is devoid of true effulgence, of blessedness and Divine guidance. As Iqbal has said:

Dark is the Frankish country with the smoke of its machines;

This 'valley of Blessedness and Hope' is not worthy of Divine Splendour.

### **Bondmen of idols carved by themselves**

These people are the slaves of their habits and of the mechanical contraptions and devices made by themselves. Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham) had asked the idol-worshippers of his time : What are these images unto which ye pay devotion ? (XXI : 52). What irony is it that you kneel down tomorrow before what you make today? The same is happening here. Today a standard is laid down, a law is formulated and a machine is made, and, tomorrow, the whole nation becomes a

slave to them. Bondmen of the idols and images carved by their own hands!

### **Deputyship of Ibrahim**

This Country is an idol-hall in which the Azan of Ibrahim has to be given, and this you, alone, can do. You are the real descendants of Ibrahim, not the Jews who have strayed far away the path. Not the Christians who are the followers of the Christianity of St. Paul, not of Jesus. They have been divested of true Christianity, It was a colossal conspiracy that bore fruit. No religious conspiracy has perhaps, been so successful. It brought about a complete metamorphosis of Christianity. Now, whether Catholics or Protestants, they are the adherents of St. Paul. They have lost the claim to be the successors of Hazrat Ibrahim. You are his successor.

In the words of Iqbal :

Architect of Haram, for rebuilding the world awake;

Out of heavy sleep, heavy sleep arise !

Out of slumber deep arise !

Only the architects of Haram can build the new world. Today, destruction is rampant. In appearance it is construction, in truth, destruction. It was the mission of the Apostle you follow to deliver mankind from every kind of servility to the servility of One God. You, therefore, are in America not merely as masses of flesh and blood, nor simply as Indians, Pakistanis, Egyptians and Syrians.

Break idols of colour and blood: lose

yourselves in the Millet.

Neither the Irani should remain nor Turani nor Afghani.

You are not Egyptians and Syrians, but Muslims. You are one community, one brotherhood. You are Ibrahim and Mohammadi. Know yourself. You have not come here to lose your identity and get fitted into this monstrous machine like a valueless part or to fill your bellies like the animals. No. Take the Message to the peoples of this land; wake them up: tell them how they have gone out of the right way.

If it ever occurs to the Western people how wrong and perverted is their outlook on life, they go to the other extreme. They turn towards Hippie-ism. Hindu asceticism and renunciation. A large bathing festival, called Kumbh, is held every year at Ahlahabad, in India. If you go to it, you will find educated Americans roaming about like stray cattle or, rather, lunatics. This civilisation has developed indigestion. They have imbibed the wine of culture so excessively that they have begun to vomit. They are seeking satisfaction by descending to the level of the beasts, by rejecting the favours and blessings of God, and by running away from the realities of life. Would to God that our Islamic countries were capable of showing the correct path to the Americans and speaking to them in a confident, self-assured manner. But alas, not one of them is in that position. The result is that when the Americans

get disgusted with their own way of life, they go to the Himalayas and use narcotics to produce an unreal feeling of peace and serenity. We, the Muslims, could lend guidance to them if we possessed the capability.

### **Where are Muslims?**

Brothers and sisters, you are not here merely to earn and spend. This any community can do. You are here to earn according to your need, but you must, also, know your station and present before the Americans a new design of life. You should give the Azan which may stir their minds and offer Namaz so that they may see and ponder over it. Lead a clean life in order that a revulsion is created in them for their own degenerate ways of living, practise moderation so that a realisation may dawn on them of the foulness of sensuality and excessive self-indulgence, and freeing yourselves from the ruthless domination of the machines, live in a cool, calm and collected manner in order that they may know where peace is. Rediscover the world that lies within you and develop the spirituality which might be felt by those who came into contact with you. I wish that devout bondmen of the Lord, men with an illumined heart, came to live here and told these people who are disgusted with life that "*Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.*" (XIII : 28).

Today, only the Muslims can give this message, but where are they? Has

any Muslim country or community the courage to tell the Americans that in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest? They no longer believe in it themselves. How can they convey the message of Divine Unity to others who have themselves lost faith in the power and efficacy of Namaz, in the truth and veracity of the Kalima, in the control and authority of God over gain and loss, and in the preordination of good and evil, and made the Americans the great provider of the daily bread? How can they tell them that there is no Giver of Sustenance save Allah?

First, try to produce Faith within yourselves, observe Namaz and spend some time everyday in meditation; produce the warmth that has been destroyed by the smoke of the factories, refresh your soul, set right the aim of our life, read the Quran daily, study the life of the Prophet and seek light from it, and, then, convey the message of the Religion of Nature to the Americans.

### **Only Islam is the Religion of Nature**

Islam, alone, is the religion which does not frown upon human nature, but declares it to be essentially pure and flawless.

God had given a clean slate to man, a guiltless nature and an inclination towards goodness; we have debased it. Man is, by nature, upright. Left to his natural instincts, he will follow the correct path. First, realise these truths, produce them within yourselves in your hearts as well as in your minds,

and, then, place them before the Americans. You are the people of preaching and instruction; you are the people of Apostleship, a community with a purpose, and the bearers of the Message. It does not become you to live like two-legged animals, filling your stomachs and procreating.

#### **Discover man**

These are some of my impressions. I have spoken to you from the heart. I have seen everything in America, but man. If I have found one here, it is among you. It is not that I am unacquainted with America or the Americans. I have met them in literature, on the T. V., and over the radio. They are not strangers to me.

Find out the man who is the Vicegerent of God and for whom the world has been created and in whose breast beats the heart which is more precious than the entire universe. All the treasures of the world and the achievements of science are nothing before an illumined heart. Produce that humanity in yourselves. You stay here is correct. It is not only justified, but also a worship and a great source of preaching and propagation of Faith. And if it is not that then I have great misgivings. As I have said on various occasions, if you do not take full care to safeguard your religious life and arrange for the religious education and upbringing of your children and make sure that your future generations remain true to Islam then your living in this

country is a sin and you are in grave danger.

Lo! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they wrong themselves, (the angels) will ask: In what were ye engaged? They will say: We were helpless in the land.

(The angles) will say : Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein? (—IV: 97).

For us it is legitimate to live only in a country where we can live with our distinctive qualities and observe our duties. If it is not possible in this environment or you feel you cannot carry out your religious obligations then it is not permissible for you to reside in this land. It is your duty to see that you lived here as Muslims, with all your characteristics. You should build your own society, and, also, assure that your children will remain Muslims after you, as Hazrat Yaqoob (Jacob) had done in regard to his progeny. It is set forth in the Quran:

Or were you present when death came to Yaqoob. when he said unto his Sons : What will you worship after me? They said : We shall worship thy God, the God of thy fathers. Ibrahim and Ismail (Ishmael) (II: 133).

It was then that Hazrat Yaqoob was satisfied and he departed from the world with a contented heart. It is the duty of all of us to make certain that our children grow up to be Muslims, otherwise, friends, it will be necessary to have a second look at your stay and

to decide whether you should continue to live in this country or not.

**You must live as Muslims**

I highly appreciate the services of MSA and other institutions and individuals who strive in the cause of Faith form study circles, circulate the Islamic literature and organise meetings. Whether they are Arabs or non - Arab they are a blessed lot. God will accept their services and raise them in ranks. Of fore-most importance, however, is the stipulation that you

made sure you would be able to live here as Muslims and not break up and lose your identity. Would you melt like wax before the heat of this civilisation .In that case, you would better go back to your native lands, no matter whether you earned only a fourth or a fiftieth part of what you do here. And if you are safe against it and there is no such danger then blessed is your stay in America. A new light may come to it through you, and the path may be opened for Islam. ■

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*(Continued from page 37)*

question that the Arab tribes of Madinah, in fact, entered Islam hoping that it would unite them under one faith and help them conquer new lands to rule and enjoy worldly glories. But does this explanation stand to the test of authenticity? It is narrated in Bukhari, the most authentic book of the Traditions, that when the residents of Madinah were offering a pledge of allegiance to the Prophet at 'Oqba in order to take him to Madinah, one of them asked: "O Prophet of Allah! What will be our reward if we fulfill our pledge?" The Prophet replied, "the Paradise" (Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Dastoore Hayat: 36)<sup>3</sup>. Thus the Prophet did not lure the residents of Madinah to support him in the hope of conquering new countries and becoming rich and powerful with him. He, in fact, invited them to the Islamic faith (iman) and piety (taqwa) so that they could win Allah's pleasure and enter paradise, thus delinking his message from the pursuit of a lavish life.

In fact, as soon as he migrated to Madinah, peace prevailed in and around the city and sword was sheathed, as it had never been before. The Aws and Khazraj clans of the Arabs, which were fighting each other for a long time, became united. The Ansar (residents of Madinah, Helpers), in an exemplary show of religious brotherhood and unity hitherto unknown in history, gave one half in their houses, lands and gardens to the Emigrants of Makkah (Muhajirin) to help them meet their financial obligations and kept the other half for themselves and their children. Soon after his arrival at Madinah, the Prophet contracted a peace treaty with the Jews living there to ensure peaceful coexistence and mutual support, which especially guaranteed full freedom to the Jews to practice their religion. And then, most importantly, the Prophet also declared Madinah as Haram, where injustice, bloodshed and provocation of all kinds were forbidden in the same way as they were in the Haram of Makkah, thus enhancing the safety zone on earth for all. Do these facts not prove that the allegation of using violence to propagate Islam is based on pure ill-will? ■

## The Quality of Being 'The Mercy For The Worlds

- S. M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi\*

The level of passion of love and sympathy with each and everyone that the Prophet (SAW) had was extra-ordinarily high. The impact that this passion made on the Muslims and the orientation it gave to the minds of Muslims was uninterruptedly perceptible in the Prophet's (SAW) time and also in the lives of the later Muslims. As its fall-out, regions after regions of whatever lands the Muslim empires got extended to and wherever the Muslims got settled, got entered, on their own, on having seen those Muslims' kindheartedness and favours, into the fold of Islam. They were not forced by anyone to do so. It was so because, as per the injunctions of Islam, it is forbidden to force anyone to convert to Islam. This interdiction is extended further to the extent that the non-Muslim citizens living under the Muslim rule would not be burdened with obligations that the Muslims are burdened with. They have always been allowed to practice their respective religions in accordance with their religious teachings even in matters which are prohibited for the Muslims. As a result thereof, whichever non-Muslim communities had the opportunity to observe these virtues of Islam had embraced Islam.

Having embraced Islam meant that Allah alone was to be believed to be one's lone and sole Providence and Master. His commands conveyed to him through His

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\* Rector, Nadwatul-Ulama, Lucknow.

Apostle must be obeyed. The transgressions and moral and sexual waywardness that were being perpetrated in pre-Islamic life must be stopped. Hence, the people who embraced Islam kept their practices mended accordingly. The human comity got thus reformed a lot. A lot of such virtues as were vividly demonstrative of sublime human (raits and characters were instilled. It may be assessed and appreciated by having a look at the pre-Islamic society which was marked by the ethnical inequities and the bloody carnages perpetrated by those in power, the powers that be, and which make the man shiver when he reads them in the annals of history. In the regimes governed by Islam even 1% of all that did not take place even in the event of war and battles. When the Romans captured Jerusalem after having fought for it, they shed so much blood of Muslim rulers and the Muslim people that their horses were knee-deep in blood. But, when the Muslims recaptured it later, they pardoned off the Christian rulers who were in occupation of it. It is what the English historian, Stanley Lane Pole, himself, has confessed.

In each and every society of pre-Islamic days, whether it were under the Roman empire or the Persian one or the one of the Indian sub-continent or of the adjoining regions, the treatment meted out to womenfolk was so iniquitous as is hardly meted out to even the beasts. They had no right of inheritance. Nor were they

equal in rights to their brothers. There was no safeguard for their honour and chastity. They were made to serve, in their own houses, like the servants and slaves are made to serve. And, if they became widow, they were deemed even ill-boding. On their birth, the family members got struck with grief. Many a people had them killed even before their coming of age. Those who were not killed were meted out the treatment mentioned above.

It is Islam which, on its advent, proclaimed the womenfolk entitled to be treated with honour and respect. It made them entitled to a share in inheritance, in the legacy left by their parents on their death. Ill-treatment of women simply because of their being the women was declared totally unlawful. In the days of Ignorance, women while menstruating would be rendered untouchable by the society. No one would come close to them nor would sit close by. Islam had this practice totally abolished. Barring the cohabitation, coming close to women in their state of menstruation in all other matters was declared absolutely permissible. Prior to Islam, women were kept reduced to the status of show-pieces. Their job was to seduce others with their body and dresses, be the source of feasting the eyes with their adornments and ornaments and be the tools of entertainment for the men-folk. It is Islam which, on its advent, strictly prohibited this malpractice. It ordered that, if the womenfolk, out of necessity, had to be amidst men not closely related, they must have themselves clad in loose apparels so that the lecherous glances are not directed towards them.

Likewise, women are mentioned, side by side the men, wherever instructions regarding matters of worship et cetera are enunciated. They, too, are provided opportunity to attain highest levels of spirituality and religious merits. However, as much differentiation as is warranted by the physical and congenital difference between the two sexes and is necessary and inevitable has, of course, been maintained. The holy Quran has the following statement made:

(And the believing men and believing women are friends one unto another: they command that which is reputable and restrain from that which is disreputable, and establish prayer and give the poor-rate and obey Allah and His apostle. Those! Allah will surely show mercy to them; verily Allah is Mighty, Wise.)

And

(Whosoever worketh righteously, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely quicken him to a clean life, and will surely recompense them their hire for the test of that which they have been working.)

And also that:

(I let not the work of a worker amongst you to waste, man or woman, one of you from the other.)

On occasion of the Hajjat-ul-Vida'a (the Valedictory Haj), the Prophet (SAW) exhorted as follows:

(Take this exhortation from me in respect of women: be nice to them, you have had them under Allah's security

and have made them legitimate for you by the Word of Allah.)

Thus, the woman, in her constitution, is a little different from that of man. It makes her weaker than the man. Keeping that in view, and, in order to have safeguards against the man making misuse of this disparity, some rules have also been formulated. For example: She should not travel all alone; she must be accompanied by her husband or some uterine kin. In return for obtaining right to use her by making her one's wife, it is made mandatory to give her, in cash or kind, a gift of alimony. He is not permitted to appropriate the wealth and property that she owns. Only she has the right over whatever she owns. The husband has no right over it. Prior to her getting married, the onus of the expenditure on her is laid on her parents. In their absence, it is laid on her closest kin. After her getting married, this responsibility is to be borne by her husband. Thus, the wife herself has not been assigned the responsibility of meeting her own expenses. She would, however, in exchange, be the mistress of the house and assistant to her husband. She would bear the responsibility of the household affairs and looking after the children. The mandamus is:

(The woman is to bear the responsibility of looking after her husband's household.)

On separation from her husband, in case of divorce from him, she would revert back to the charge and responsibility of her parents.

The consequent effect of the values of mercy, compassion and

humanitarianism enforced and promulgated by Islam was that wherever the Muslims adorned with these values went, they brought about a world of change in those places. All the iniquities and aggressions perpetrated owing to the class disparity between man and man or the sexual disparity between man and woman or the disparity between the ruler and the ruled or those committed on occasion of military conflicts or committed just for the sake of fun and enjoyment were all exterminated. Even the people who did not embrace Islam, too, got influenced in some way or other by these reforms. The non-Muslim societies, too, took to emulate, to some extent at least, the reformed practices of these places. There were some practices in the past adopted just for the sake of entertainment or by way of sport, wherein creatures other than the man were subjected to brutality. Making the man and the beast confined within a well-like enclosure they were set against each other and made to fight to the death to the amusement of a vast assembly of spectators. It was not felt at all necessary to be kind in any way to the animals. All these beastly acts underwent an exceptional change subsequent to the advent of the Prophet Mohammad (SAW) and as a result of his teachings and practical examples of morals set by him. And, thus, his coming into the world happened to be the mercy not for the Muslims only, but, in addition to the mankind, for all the creatures on the earth. That is what the holy Quran has referred to when it said:

(And We have not sent thee except as a mercy unto the Worlds.) ■

## Assam – A Lab of Experiments

- Syed Azharuddin

It's better that 10 guilty men go free than one innocent man be wrongly convicted. The statement is so famous that it makes every sensible human being forgive the mistakes of others. However, the same is worthless for rulers of India in Assam. The state's hectic process of NRC, along with issue of D-voters, illiteracy of masses, targeting a particular community based on the religion they practise and the language they speak, is just a nightmare.

Thousands of citizens are being termed as foreigners just for the mistake in their name or age, which was written by government officials in their documents. Typing errors cannot be the reason for the citizens losing their citizenship. This could lead to fissures and ruptures in the social fabric of this sensitive and strategic border state in the northeast of India. The current crisis revolves around two issues which have hit at the core of the state's social and political identity: the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill.

The other side of the coin makes us think on various aspects on the issue of NRC. The questions to be answered are, will Assam be the first and last state to have a process of NRC which is nothing but criminalisation of state resources just on unauthentic statement of officials to target a particular community by saying people are migrating from other countries to Assam. It also contradicts the state policy when one of the state ministers says the Hindus from outside India will be allowed to stay in Assam.

Even the state of Assam, under the supervision of SC, starting the process of NRC to find out illegal immigrants raises questions for Indian border forces and security authorities: how can they allow so many people inside without following the rules and regulations; and, if you can't doubt the security authorities, the other option to doubt is biased governments (present and past) targeting the Muslim community because they form one-third of Assam's population and are mostly illiterate and uneducated in comparison to any other community.

The motive behind the struggle for dumping IMDT Act 1983 and starting the process of NRC aims at harassing the citizens, especially women, by some officials with the tool of Doubtful voters list. Will this process end here in Assam or will it target other Northeast states where the Christian minority is in majority. One said, "Northeast India will become a dump-yard if Citizens Amendment Bill is implemented." It is also possible that this NRC process can be carried out in other states later if the experiment of making citizens second class citizens is successful in Assam, as Assam is now a Lab of Experiment from many aspects.

It's time to plan strategically, execute it with confidence, face challenges and future will be in the hands of peace lovers. Insha Allah!

"They plan, and Allah plans. Surely, Allah is the Best of planners." [Al-Quran 8:30] ■

*(Courtesy: Radiance)*

## Contribution of Mohammad Ibne Tahir Patni in Dissemination of Hadith in India

**-Mohammad Ijtiba Nadwi**

Gujarat is known due to its glorious history, abundance of production, luminous soil, clean air, sweet water, high mountains and its comfortable sea ports. In relation to other areas of India, it has superiority and predominance over all the states of India and since ancient times it has been famous for its coastal and commercial markets. Arab tourists, historians and geographers such as Abu Rehan Beroni, Masoodi Idrisi etc have mentioned them in their travel booklet before the arrival of Arab caravans to Gujarat. Masoodi has revealed very good and glorious facts and discussed very beautifully in his book (Murawwajuzzahab wa Maadinul Jouhar ) about very good behavior of the king of Gujarat Raja Blahra, with the visitors in Gujarat. He welcome them warmly. Raja Blehra gave them a great respect and honor, provided them additional economy resources and his actions were not restricted to his tribe and community only but it was common for all nations and communities and in the result people lived in peace, security and prosperity along with the activities of preaching and when the power came to the hands of Muslims, it added its beauty more than ever. It got a lot of growth and progress in all the fields of life and added to the beauty of its literature, civilization and culture, building and costruction. The historian Joseph Lobon wrote in his book "Hazratulhind" that Gujarat is the most subtle and civilized province of India, whose chief city Ahmadabad possesses a very important place in the field of trade and the ports of Kathiawar are known throughout

over the world. (Hazratul-Hind- page 7). Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir has mentioned Gujarat as saying "The beauty of India is Gujrat". This is the place of experts, artists and industrialists.

Dr. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami writes that the story of the services of Gujarat and its cultural activities is very long. No such services and stories are available in any region in India. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi, whose pen has made a history in Gujarat, writes in his booklet 'Zikra Imam' about India as saying, "The climate of this region is very pleasant and moderate and the sea is spread all over the area. Melons, apples, varieties of flowers and fruits, vegetables, and medicines are supplied from Surat, and very fine and strong species of horses as well as very beautiful cows and elephants are supplied to Gujarat from some regions. It has a great place in the field of export also, as swords of fine art are exported to Arab countries like Iraq etc. from Sarohi. Kaab Ibne Zuhair has mentioned the Indian sword in his poetry as saying " Translation (The Indian sword of Allah is drawn) (Alhind fil Ahdil Islami Page 17). There are many literary pieces of those poets and literary persons who either visited this city or have they an opportunity to visit there. They felt so much delighted in their visit to Gujarat and being pleased with natural features and landscape, they composed some beautiful verses and wrote some literary pieces of fine art which have no room to be mentioned here.

In between 810 H. to 980 H. from the reign of Emperor Zafar Khan to Monarch Sultan Mahmood Sani is the period when Gujarat reached the top achieving the objects and arriving at the destinations of progress. The circle of its export and investment exceeded the limits of the Gujarat and expanded to other countries through sail boats. These good natured and pious rulers ruled Gujarat for a long span of about 180 years. During this period Gujarat occupied a high place in the defense and economy that none of the other provinces of India could compete with it.

Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Al Hasani Nadwi writes, "The sciences which started during this period, were completely unknown earlier and such kinds of civilization were existed during the same period that no one knows about them in the past. During this period the trade progressed so much and the agriculture also improved a lot. It seemed that these cities got a new life during the reign of the muslim rulers. (Al hind fil Ahdil Islami Page 302)

Since the medieval era and the age of emperors, arts and sciences, madrasas and monasteries have added to the beauty of Gujarat. Innumerable Islamic scholars from Arab countries and Persia visited it and scholars and narrators of Hadeeth travelled to this city. Apart from it, many people related to the Naqshbandi, Saharverdi, Chishti and Mujaddiya mystic way of life visited this city and extended their great services in this very self defense region.

The fact that cannot be declined is that this is the very first region in India that became familiar with the science of Hadeeth . The historians write that Muslim caravans

which travelled to India via Basra, Bahrain and Oman during the period of second khalif Hazrat Umer Bin Khattab, cast their eyes on this region and the areas which they put their foot on them first were two cities of Gujarat named as vadodara and Dhabel and it is most probable that some companions of the prophet Mohammad SAW may have visited them because a large number of great successors of the holy prophet is seen to live in this region who brought a big number of Hadeeth with them. They published this art and science and assured it to each and every common man in this region and then they themselves spread in the other regions. Mohaddis Abdul Haque arose for the service of Hadeeth in Delhi. The very first book of Hadeeth was written by Abu Bakr Ibne Sabeeh Saadi Basri. He is one of the successors of the holy prophet (SAW). He came to Gujarat in 159 H. He performed the duty of teaching here, disseminated the art of Hadeeth among the people and was later buried in the same city.

More than 50 narrators of Hadeeth emerged in this region. They got attached with the teaching and compilation of the traditions of the holy prophet. A few of them are named as follows:

- 01 .Sheikh Ghausuddin Gujrati (895 H).
02. Mohammad Ibne Abu Bakr Damaleeni.
03. Sheikh Ahmad Ibne Mohammad Naharwani (949 H).
04. Sheikh Abdul Muti Ibne Bakseer Makki Ahmadabadi (998H).
05. Muhaddis Kabeer Allama Majduddin Mohammad Ibne Tahir Patni (Writer of Majma Biharul Anwar fi Gareebil Hadeeth (986 H).

Today a brief introduction will be

given about Muhaddis-e-kabeer Allama Mohammad Ibne Tahir (R.A)only. I got an opportunity to visit Pattan in March 1999 with two of our great scholars of Islam Hazrat Maulana Syed Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi (MZ) present rector of Darululoom Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow and Hazrat Maulana Syed Wazeh Rasheed Hasani Nadwi (MZ) present administrator of education of Darululoom Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow. The Patan is the new name. It was earlier called as Naharwala. This blessed and auspicious journey was very useful and pleasant. This journey was carried out on the order of the Hazrat Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and on the advice of Maulana Mohammad Noor Wali who although originally belonged to Pattan, yet lived in Hijaz. He is the one that managed to make the publication of the latest addition of the book of Allama Mohammad Ibne Tahir Patni namely as 'Majma Biharul Anwar' on his own expenses and he wishes that Hazrat Maulana Syed Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi (MZ) present rector of Darululoom Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow may deliver a lecture in Pattan regarding Islamic Madrasas so that the attention of every common person may be drawn to their financial and spiritual assistance.

Later on we were taken from Ahmadabad to Pattan by car where a warm welcome was given to us by people of that region. I mentioned Hazrat Maulana Abdul Qadir Saheb Patni Nadwi (MZ), present vice principal and Ustaze Hadeeth of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow who is one of my loving and noble students. He is a great Islamic scholar and possesses a lot of academic abilities. I asked about his house, they indicated towards a house

which was adjacent to the mosque in the old city of the region. He was then in Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow and was completely unknown to this journey of our.

Pattan is very old and a historical region. This was the capital of King Bheem and it was called 'Anawada', however the Arab called it 'Naharwala' but this name was later changed as Patan. I entered the city through a big gate which was adjacent to an old wall. Its historical archeology denotes that it is very old but most of the archaeological marks were vanished and erased. There were some historical marks still left on palaces, mosques, madrasas and graves etc. We all saw them. Then we visited a grave which was said to be as the grave of Islamic scholar Allama Mohammad Ibne Tahir. Then we went to visit the old and ancient Madrasa. Indeed, we came here for the visit of this madrsa only. The emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir managed to renew the construction of this Madrsa. The archeological facts of its construction works are witnesses of the attention and care showed by him towards it. The Madrsa has so far been playing its role in the field of education and training. During the visit a function was held which was attended by all the teachers and students of this Madrasa and lectures were delivered in both the languages Arabic & Urdu and in the end Hazrat Maulana Syed Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi (MZ) delivered a lecture which was full of guidance and preaching. The academic level of Madrasa is fine and all the norms of teaching and academic phases are above what is expected. Both of its old & new buildings are very comfortable and all the required facilities are available in it. There is a lot of land of waqf beside it. If it is utilized for

Madrasa, good deeds and for the improvement of Muslim community, it may be quite fabulous.

We saw the ancient city of some non-Muslim kings. A big underground castle was built there. We entered it by coming down the old stairs and saw inside a big hall, rooms and bathrooms but they were all deserted. The people lived there and passed away. The holy book of Allah indicates towards this fact as saying Translation exchange the days among the people). This is the region of Pattan where the great Muhaddis Allama Majdudeen Mohammad Ibne Tahir Patni Gujrati was born and the Indian history as well as the students of prophetic sciences feel proud of him.even after centuries.

He was born in Pattan in 913 Hijri and was brought up there too. He had memorized the holy book Quran before he reached the age of maturity. He was taught the Islamic sciences by various teachers of the city like Shiekh Ustazuzzaman Mulla Mehta, Shaikh Nakori, Sheikh Burhanuddeen Samhudi and Maulana Yadullah Sohi etc. He became expert in all these subjects and had surprised all his contemporaries before he was fifteen years old. He travelled to Haramain Sharifain (Macca& Madina)in 944 H, performed Haj and stayed there for the purpose of getting spiritual knowledge. He achieved a lot from great scholars as Sheikh Abul Hasan Bakri, Ahmad Bin Hazrami Makki , Ali Bin Iraq, Abdullah Assarhandi etc. He stayed in the company of Shaikh Ali Bin Hisamuddeen and achieved a lot from him. He mentioned him in the preface of his book "Majma Biharul Anwar and then he visited Gujarat and got busy with teaching & writing and spent his whole life helping the students of

prophetic sciences. Shaikh Abdul Qadir Hazrami writes in his book 'Annoorussafir' indicating towards him that he was so pious and was full of piety that he was matchless. He got expertise in various sciences and arts and surpassed his contemporaries. I knew no one among all the scholars of Gujarat who is equal to him in this regard and could reach his status in academic qualities. Allama Syed Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi mentions him in this way that Allah has done a great favour to all the Indians by giving him deep knowledge and then he has mentioned all the narrators of Hadeeth who visited and came to Gujarat and attached with the activities of science of Hadeeth. He writes that Allama Mohammad Ibne Tahir (Death 986 H.) taught Hadeeth and wrote a few books also on the subject of Hadeeth. Those few books are as Majmaul Bihar Fi Ghreebilhadees, Al Mughni Fi Asmairrijal and Attiazkiratu fil Mauzooat. He had complete knowledge of Hadeeth. He had no parallel in the wideness of knowledge and farsightedness in India. Of course Shiekh Hisamuddeen Muttaqi Gujarati was there who was considered to be parallel to him but he migrated to Hijaz and all of his generosity was common for the people of Haramain Sharifain . As far as Sheikh Mohammad Bin Tahir is concerned, he remained in India (Assaqafatul Islamia fil Hind). Shiekh Mohammad Bin Tahir returned from Hijaz after getting complete skill of Hadeeth and being inspired by the spirit of this prophetic knowledge, then he intended to disseminate Hadeeth staying in his own city and native place and got busy with the service of its teaching and writing. He was completely engaged with the teaching of Hadeeth. The students began to gather around him. He inherited a lot of wealth and

property which he used to spend generously on students. He asked the other teachers of the city to select any student who is worthy, intelligent and fond of learning and send him to me. He always took care of students. If they are wealthy he asked them to spend their own. If they are helpless and poor he asked them to stay with him, learn and work hard, He looked after them and paid attention to their education and training and supported them with all what required for their maintenance and education. This was the method he assumed to manage education and training for students. In the result the students who were skilled in various arts & sciences emerged from his circle.

He is originally an Indian and is Gujarati by birth. He was brought up by Gujarati parents. Ameer Siddiq Hasan Kannoji has written in his book namely "Ithafunnubala" that he is a Siddiqi also but Allama syed Abdul Hai rejected it. He writes, "He belonged to the sect of Bohra who migrated to Gujarat and inhabited it and his ancestors embraced Islam on the hand of Sheikh Ali Haideri who is buried in Khambat and other profession as the word of Bohra itself denotes it. The original of word Bohra is "Beopar" which means trading. They were the followers of Ismaili faith of Shia religion but some were sunnis who were guided by Jafer Bin Abi Jafer Gujrati and Mohammad Bin Tahir to the thought of Ahle Sunnat wal Jamat. Both of them were the followers of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamat School of thought. In the end he says "He was purely Indian. It was illustrated in his book Tazkiratul Mauzooat (Nuzhatul Khawatir Page 298 volume 4).

His famous works are as under mentioned:

01. Tazkiratul Mauzooat.
02. Almughni fi Asmairrijal.
03. Majma Biharul Anwar fi Gharabittanzeel wa Latafil Akbar.

The third book of them, occupies the position of the commentary of Sihah Sitta. This book made him famous all over the world. The story of his death is very painful. He was going to the emperor to ask for his help to root out the mischief of Mahdi-ism. In the way the people of Mahdi sect deceived him and killed him. In the time of his martyr he was at Ujjain. The event of his martyr took place in 986 H. His dead body was brought to Pattan and he was buried there.

His book Majma Biharul Anwar is the best book in the description of gharib traditions (Gharib Hadeeth). All the scholars of Hadeeth are agreed on this point and it occupies the position of the Encyclopedia in this science. After this book, there is no need to refer to any other book. He has mentioned in the preface of this book that this book contains all what is written about the gharib traditions. The subjects & points he discussed in it were hardly discussed by anyone. It means, he has discussed the quality of compiling Hadeeth, its delicacies and the causes which make it ghareeb.

The quality of this Encyclopedia is that it contains the explanation besides the meaning of the word. No one could pay ones attention to this point earlier. In this regard the writer explains the word at his best. One such passage is referred here for example. even Ibne Asir and Imam Nauvi too did not payheed.

"Valullilmutalleen" In this example he has not confined to the meaning only like

Ibne Aseer but he has explained reason which makes the deed of the swearing person null & void. In the same way he throws a complete light on “ayatihimullahu” and the words like Ubhar, Ajadib, Ashara, Wabra as well. These words have completely been explained. No part of explanation is left behind. Thus the reader feels complete satisfaction.

This is a brief introduction of the great Muhaddis of Gujarat and his great book compiled by him. Gujarat feels pride in him and he is considered as the crown of India. His personality will always be like the clean and bright spring of water. May Allah give him the best reward in the Hereafter! Ameen! ■

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*(Continued from page 38)*

and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) passed by the then Congress-led UPA Government is a good initiative. It is indeed a historic milestone in India’s struggle for children’s right to education. The credit of it goes to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He really wanted to see every citizen of India literate, educated and civilized. He had rightly said: “I am what I am today because of education.”

It is time state governments must implement RTE in its respective state instead of investing money in other unnecessary activities and jobs. No doubt, the 86<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment and the RTE have provided us the tools to provide quality education to all our children. It is now imperative that we, the people of India; Join hands to ensure the implementation of this law in its true spirit.

The only lacuna in the RTE is that it has not specified that Maktabas and Madrasas run by Muslims are covered by the Act. If Muslim boys and girls are forced to study only in State run schools then they will be deprived of their religious lessons. Unfortunately, scant attention is paid by us towards this great asset. Criminal negligence is found on the part of parents in upbringing of their children. It should be a bounden duty of parents to impart education to their offsprings from their early childhood in a very decent way.

In short, education is the backbone of the nation. Reformation is not possible in the society without it. Our life is hollow and barren sans education. History bears witness that no nation made progress and attained prosperity without it. So long, Muslims stacked to education; they made great strides in every walk of life. According to Maulana S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi, President All India Muslim Personal Law Board and Rector Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow “when Europe was passing through darkness and ignorance of the middle ages, Muslim world was producing scholars, thinkers, educationists, eminent masters of physical, and social sciences. European writers have quite often acknowledged that for six hundred years Europe learnt and benefited from the researches and treasures of knowledge of the Muslims before commencing on their march to progress.”

Suffice to say that only true education may lead us to the path of progress and salvation and may save us from ruin, degradation, annihilation and demoralization. Former President of India Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam is a living example. He comes from a middle class family. He is the son of fisherman. He was elected President of India because of his extraordinary erudition and excellence. ■

## Haji Imdadullah

- Sultan Shakir Hashmi

Haji Imdadullah commanded great respect in the hearts of his followers and the people who had chosen him to be the commander-in-chief of the movement to oust the Britishers from their motherland and defeat their nefarious designs, besides the millions of their people who thought in similar terms.

Haji Imdadullah took over the command of the organisation and movement of freedom struggle of Shah Waliullah after its Chief Shah Mohammad Ishaq had left for Makkah (Saudi Arabia). He was given the command of the organisation as he had recognised in him the qualities of a great freedom fighter and a patriot.

Haji Imdadullah was born in the year 1815 (Hijri 1233) in Qasba Nanaut in Saharanpur District in U.P. He was an intelligent and bright student and he had the credit of receiving his training and guidance from the famous learned scholars of that time, Sheikh Mohammad Qalander, Sheikh Naseeruddin Dehlvi and Sheikh Elahi Baksh Kandhalvi who infused in him the light of patriotism and high religious values.

The chief of the Madarsa, Shah Mohammad Ishaq was directing the activities of his freedom struggle from Makkah and was very successfully strengthening his sacred movement to liberate the country from the clutches of

Britishers. Haji Imdadullah had already been his assistant and second in command, as such he was well acquainted with the aims and objectives of the freedom struggle led by Shah Mohammad Ishaq and the burden of the whole organisation and movement came on his shoulders in 1846 after the expiry of the great patriot.

It was a time when there was an utter confusion and chaos in India. Although the Britishers maltreated each and every Indian but they were particularly hostile towards Muslims. Ever-since the Britishers had entered India and stepped on the sacred soil of the motherland Indians were having sleepless nights. The Mughal emperor in Delhi had become too weak and powerless to exert his will. There was almost no law and order in and around Delhi and the Britishers were getting more and more defiant every day. They had no respect for the Emperor and were interfering in the administration and imposing their will everywhere. There was hatred and anger against the Britishers all over. This is proved beyond doubt from the letter of Lord Mr. Allenbarow, the Governor General addressed to Duke of Wellington on 18th of January, 1843.

According to this letter the whole of Muslim-community was the greatest enemy of the British ruler in India and were a great danger for their survival in India.

He emphasised the need of getting friendly with Hindus and defeat the Muslim designs with their help. The East India Company was well aware of the strong waves of the scared freedom struggle movement of Shah Waliullah.

Thus to sow the seeds of hatred and mutual distrust among Hindus and Muslims, it was publicised widely all over India among the Hindus that two great gates were forcibly taken out of Somnath Mandir by Mahmood Ghaznavi and taken to Ghazni. It was claimed that East India Company was a good friend and supporter of Hindus. That is why the company had arranged to get back the two huge gates of Somnath Mandir and reinstal in Somenath Mandir. This was disclosed by Lord Mr. Allenborrow to the Hindu Kings, Maharajas, Sardars and influential people among Hindus in a special meeting called for this purpose. This was widely propagated with the two gates taken out in processions. Later on, the two huge doors were found to be fake and are still preserved in the fort at Agra.

This was one of the examples of the dirty and nefarious designs of the Britishers to spread hatred and violence and mutual distrust among millions of Hindus and Muslims and these dirty tactics started showing results very soon. A great conspiracy was being hatched by Englishmen for wide spread conversion of Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. This work was very cleverly being done by opening schools and hospitals in different

parts of the country and by offering allurements and incentives to Indians who converted to Christianity. They were now dreaming of a Christian India and teams of Priests and missionaries were devotedly working in this direction with strong backing of East India Company and its wealth.

The Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was more of a poet than a powerful Emperor. The Emperor was left with power and will to his own and the British Resident was boldly interfering in Royal affairs and customs and in the personal lives of the members of Royal family.

But Haji Imdadullah was not afraid of the British government. His faithful lieutenants Maulana Mohammad Yaqoob, Maulana Mohammad Waseem, Maulana Abdul Ghani and Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi were exposing the real face of Englishmen to the masses and were extensively touring the country and spreading their message of love and patriotism through their speeches and writing and inciting them for armed struggle against the British. The British policy of humiliating Talluqedars, Jagirdars, Nawabs and Rajas by confiscating their estates and privileges was also helping in strengthening the movement and the organisation of Haji Imdadullah along with the renewal of contacts with all the old students of Madarsas and enlisting their services for the sacred cause. These all categories of Indians including highly respected Sufis and Faqueers, Hindus

and Muslims and heroes of freedom struggle were fast coming under the banner of Haji Imdadullah and getting prepared for a grand fight for freedom. The old students of the Madarsa were playing a very active part by recruiting volunteers in their areas.

Haji Imdadullah and his faithful followers were not merely good speakers and preachers but they themselves fought like brave soldiers along with Haji Imdadullah himself and Maulana Abdul Ghani, Maulana Mohammad Qaseem, Maulana Mohammad Yaqoob and Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi in 1857 at Shamli.

The Punjab Chief Commissioner Sir John Lawrence successfully defeated the attempts of Haji Imdadullah of obtaining the help of Pathans of the border in the freedom struggle, by cleverly making friends with Maulana Vilayat Ali and his followers by bringing them.

After the fire of great freedom struggle and revolt on 1857 had almost died down, the merciless British government let loose their revenge on Indians and particularly on Muslims. Thousands of innocent people were banged all over the country. Thousands of them were executed merely because they looked like Muslims. The British were madly searching for Haji Imdadullah and his followers but in spite of their best efforts they failed to arrest them except for Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi.

This was a great setback for Haji

Imdadullah and his freedom struggle movement. Thousands of his followers and colleagues were mercilessly put to death by the British army and the rest of them were being searched. But Haji Imdadullah did not lose heart. He was a brave soldier and a revolutionary and the East India Company could not dampen his spirits. After extensive consultations with his followers he entrusted his responsibilities in India to Maulana Mohammad Qaseem and left for Makkah along with Maulana Abdul Ghani and Maulana Mohammad Yaqoob.

Although there was a narrow escape from arrest in the name of Maulana Mohammad Qaseem but he bravely carried on the activities in spite of all the odds, and was constantly receiving directions from Haji Imdadullah from Makkah. The Britishers had very brutally crushed the revolt and indiscriminate killings of Indians was being carried on, on mere suspicion. Blood of the innocent Indians—men, women and children had been spilled and under such circumstances the sacred freedom struggle had almost come to a stand still for a great network of detectives and spies was spread all over the country and frantic search was on for locating the freedom fighters and butchering them like animals. The Britishers had instilled a fear in the hearts of Indians and had broken all records of tyranny.

After some time Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi was pardoned and released from jail and Maulana Qaseem

was again joined by another great consolation for Maulana Qaseem, Thus a secret meeting was organised between the patriot and brave soldiers of the motherland to chalk out the strategy to counter the growing influence of British administrator and infuse new blood into the veins of the followers and believers of the movement against the much hated Englishmen. To escape the eyes of the Britishers it was decided to start another Madarsa in some remote and unknown place. Again Maulana Mohammad Qaseem was entrusted the assignment with Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi as his deputy.

The brave Maulana, the great soldier of the motherland untiringly worked meticulously with great competence and precision and did not let the sacred movement of Shah Waliullah die down till the last breath of his life. Later on he too left for Makkah and continued directing the movement in India through the Haji's who went to holy city of Makkah for pilgrimage and was constantly sending directions to his faithful followers in India. Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni was the last of his followers who held the candle of freedom struggle high as per the wishes of this great and brave soldier of the motherland and kept the ambitions of his master alive. Haji Imdadullah left for his heavenly abode at the age of 87 years. A great soldier and a brave freedom fighter had gone but not before giving a great fight to the Britishers who were thirsty for his blood. ■

## Obituary

Maulana Jawed Iqbal Nadwi, faculty member Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow passed away on August 17, 2018 after a brief illness. He was 57. Born in 1961 in a noble family of Lucknow. In 1983, he graduated from Nadwatul Ulama. Besides he did M.A. in Arabic from University of Lucknow. He was appointed as teacher in Madarsa Alia Irfania, Lucknow shortly after his passing out from Nadwatul Ulama. A year later he was selected as teacher in Nadwatul Ulama. He proved himself a good teacher. He served Nadwa for about three decades.

He performed his duties with honesty and integrity. He always kept himself aloof from controversial issues. He was sociable and co-operative.

Maulana S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi, Maulana S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Hasani Nadwi, Maulana Saeedur Rahman Azami Nadwi and Maulana S.M. Hamza Hasani Nadwi expressed grief to Dr. Syed Iqbal Nadwi his father. He is survived by wife, three sons and two daughters. Maulana Dr. Saeedur Rahman Azami Nadwi, Principal Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama led his funeral prayer. A good number of teachers and students were a present at the funeral. He was buried in the graveyard of Paper Mill Colony. May Allah adorn his grave with luminosity and refulgence and grant peace to his soul Ameen!

## I Found The Teachings of Jesus Christ in The Qur'an

- Aisha Canlas

Before I came to Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I was a Catholic since my parents are also Catholic. We went to different churches to pray to God but through man made images. During that time I was asking myself: is that the real face of God? How come anyone could know what He looks like? Have they already seen Him?

There is this one place in Manila where there is a mosque. Whenever it was time for salah and I heard the Adhan, I would close my eyes and feel serene even though I didn't know what it meant. It was like music to my heart.

No one, even I, had known that I will convert to Islam eventually. I applied for a job in Saudi Arabia to give my family a better future.

To be equipped and not to experience a culture shock, I researched things that may help me to get along well, while living in a Middle Eastern country.

I researched about the culture, the country as a whole, the language and of course the religion. I really got curious about Islam, that even before I took the plane going there I read things about it.

My conversion was not done in a snap of a finger. I frequently ask my doctors about Islam. Because in my mind they will be able to help me

understand more about Islam since they have lived their whole life here in the Kingdom.

It was on January 15, 2008 that I learned that there is a Madrasa or 'Islamic Teaching' in my workplace. That's when I decided to attend the class. I first attended it with my friend and roommate, who is a born Muslim, on January 17, 2008.

All eyes were on me at first, since I was new in class and the only Christian sitting among them. I listened to what our teacher was telling us about Islam, the Qur'an and about Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) and Allah Almighty.

From then on, I started to really understand Islam. After that, I asked permission from my Mum to allow me to convert from Catholicism to Islam. Alhamdulillah, she did not oppose. She said she was just afraid that when I convert I would forget them. I said that Muslims have high regards towards parents, especially towards the Mother.

It was January 24, 2008 when I made my Shahadah in front of my teacher and other students. While I was reciting the Shahadah there was heat emanating from me. I can't explain the feeling that time.

The only thing I knew after reciting my Shahadah is that my heart felt light

from burdens. At last I found the inner peace I was looking for in my life. Being in Islam is really different.

I was questioned by some colleagues why I decided to enter Islam. I said that I believe that there is no one else to be worshipped than Allah and one of His messengers is Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him).

Some Christians thought that I betrayed my faith. Yet, in my heart I know that it is not true. Alhamdulillah, I had also experienced Umrah. I went for Umrah last March 5, 2008 and it was really memorable and something special.

It's like I am separated from my problems, my worries and all the bad things in the world. I was really delighted and felt that I can stay there a lifetime praying to Allah and praising Him for all the wonderful things He has done for mankind.

Never had I known that I will be able to see the Ka'bah in real life. I've seen it in pictures but to see it personally, filled me with happiness; and gratefulness filled my heart.

I am attending Madrasa (Islamic Teaching) during weekends in my workplace. As time passes by, I've been learning about Islam. I feel everything will turn out alright as long as my faith with Allah is intact and keeps on growing stronger.

I hope and I pray to Allah that I will be able to convince my family to embrace Islam also. I want them to be saved from the wrath on the Day of Judgement.

In my opinion, the best thing a Muslim can do is to lead a life of goodness to be a good example. That gets non-Muslims curious and also helps them realise that the negative stereotypes about Islam are wrong.

I was a very committed Christian, who married a Muslim man. I married him because of his character, because I knew of no Christian man who so demonstrated the teachings of Christ as this Muslim did.

Still, I was determined to prove to my husband that he was on the wrong path and that he should become a Christian. All he did was ask me serious questions about my belief, such as "Where in the Bible does Christ teach that he is God?"

When I found that there is no such place, I began to search more and more. After a long research, I became frustrated. I read the English meaning of the Noble Qur'ân (ironically, that my pastor had given to me) in order to better debate with my husband.

Instead, I found a text harmonious with Biblical teachings. I found comfort in the concept of One God.

Thanks be to Allah, we are now a Muslim family. ■

## Was Islam Spread By Sword?

- Shah Ebadur Rahman Neshat

### Introduction

The opponents of Islam, especially the Orientalists, have blown up the battles fought by Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, out of all proportion, cast them in a malicious mold and alleged that Islam was spread by sword. They have carried out a long and ceaseless campaign to malign Islam as a religion having a history of violence which it is pursuing to this day. Thus what the world knows today about Islam is more or less like this: Islam used force to convert non-Muslims, Islam instigated its adherents to launch jihad against non-Muslims, and the Prophet of Islam fought many battles against those who opposed his message. And when such allegations are aired dexterously, Islam surely appears to be a religion of violence, not of peace.

In order to judge the validity of these allegations, we need to check why in the first place the Prophet Muhammad fought the battles that are ascribed to him. We have to investigate who initiated the fight. Were the Muslims strong enough to force their opponents to convert to Islam? Were they larger in number and superior in arms? And does history record any incident of forceful conversion by the Prophet of Islam?

### Scope of the Study

In this study we will restrict the discussion only to the battles that Prophet Muhammad had fought in his life, as it was in these very battles that the martial as well as ethical principles of war and peace in

Islam were established, which remain the criteria for Muslims forever. To talk about the actions of individual Muslim emperors and enthusiasts is beyond the scope of this short study, as we are investigating a charge against Islam, not defending an individual or organization which carries a Muslim name.

In order to systematically cover all the battles that Prophet Muhammad had to fight, we will divide them in four sections following this order: the battles with the Quraysh, the battles with the Jews, the battles with the Romans, and confrontation with the Hypocrites of Madinah. These battles, as we know, did not take place in this order. Nevertheless, this order, it is hoped, will help the readers connect the events better and visualize them clearer. At the end we will take up a few pertinent issues that have been related to the charge of violence in Islam.

### Battles with the Quraysh

#### Background of the confrontation

First of all, we have to look into the cause of confrontation between Prophet Muhammad and the Quraysh of Makkah. Who was responsible for intensifying animosity and religious hatred between the two communities? And what made it escalate to such a large scale? Did the Muslims threaten the Quraysh of using force if they dared to oppose Islam? Or were it the Quraysh who unjustly resorted to arms to oppose Islam and adopted all possible means to annihilate it?

Clearly, Prophet Muhammad was

neither in a position to force the Quraysh to convert to Islam, nor did it match with his past conduct. Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah was a courteous and peaceful member of the Makkan society and had lived with the Quraysh amicably for forty long years. He was grandson of the late chief of the Quraysh 'Abdul Muttalib and nephew of the present chief of the Quraysh Abu Talib and had a reputation of being a helper of the destitute, caretaker of the widows, protector of the travelers and supporter of the deprived and down-trodden. They had acknowledged his virtuous character by giving him the titles of the Saadiq (the Truthful) and the Ameen (the Trustworthy). He was a perfect family man — husband of the respectable Lady Khadija (r) and father of four noble daughters, two of whom were happily married to the dignitaries of the Quraysh. What was so wrong then in his message of Islam due to which the Quraysh stood up in arms against him?

Was it due to Prophet Muhammad's call to tawhid (Oneness of God)? It does not seem to be the case because the concept of tawhid was not unknown in that society: the Jews, the Christians and the Hanifs (people who claimed to follow the teachings of Prophet Ibrahim, or Abraham) also preached and practiced monotheism. As Shibli Nomani states, "Qus bin Sa'da, Warqa bin Nawfal, 'Obaydallah bin Jahsh, 'Uthman bin al-Huwayrith, and Zayd bin 'Amr bin Nofayl, wellknown and well-respected members of the Quraysh, had abandoned their tribal faith and declined to worship the idol deities" (Nomani: 137)." The polytheist Qurayshites themselves believed in one God, the supreme Lord they called Allah, whom they held above all deities they worshipped: Prophet Muhammad's father

was named 'Abdullah, i.e. the slave of Allah, after the same one God called Allah. The Arab society had comfortably accommodated the followers of these divergent faiths and lived with them in peace.

Change of religion was not considered so abhorrent in that society either. At times an Arab dignitary renounced paganism and adopted Judaism or Christianity which never became an issue in the society. In Makkah Warqa bin Nawfal, a Quraysh scholar and chief, had accepted Christianity, but that did not affect his social status in the least. In Madinah Abu 'Aamir of the Khazraj tribe had converted to Christianity, but he was much respected there for his monkish character and lifestyle. Some superstitious Arabs of Madinah who feared childhood mortality of their newborns used to declare that their children would follow Judaism as their religion, hoping that they would live long by virtue of the change of religion, which was never objected to in the society. (Nomani: 186)

If neither the call of tawhid was unknown in the then Arab society nor was the practice of conversion to a different religion a taboo, why was the call of Islam met with such severe opposition?

Was it due to the fact that as Makkah was a bastion of polytheism at that time, Prophet Muhammad's call to tawhid was an act of provocation to the Quraysh which naturally created a violent reaction in them? But is it true that Makkah was rightfully a bastion of polytheism? As history tells us, Makkah was actually the city of Prophet Ibrahim, the icon of monotheism, who had constructed Ka'ba there with his

son Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) for the worship of One God. Was Prophet Muhammad offending the sanctity of Makkah by preaching monotheism there? Or were the Quraysh to blame who had planted three hundred and sixty (360) idols in and around the Ka'ba?

It could also be said that as Judaism and Christianity were not local faiths, so to say, and that as the Hanifs were not trying to preach and popularize their doctrines, the Quraysh saw little danger from them to their traditional faith. But Muhammad was a local chief preaching to win converts, which posed a genuine threat to the religious status of the Quraysh and necessitated precaution. But then, was it justified for the Quraysh to insist that everybody must follow polytheism and worship idols, 'and that none had a right to preach or practice Islam? In the twenty-first century the UN charter and constitutions of most countries acknowledge the right of the citizens of a country to follow a religion of their choice and peacefully preach it to others. And so, according to this accepted universal law, who was right: Prophet Muhammad who was calling people to monotheism by peaceful means, or the Quraysh who took resort to violent means to stop him from it? The fact that the Quraysh were trying to forcibly stop Prophet Muhammad from peacefully preaching Islam is documented in history. They had met Abu Talib, Prophet Muhammad's uncle and patron, in delegation twice and demanded that he withdraw his patronage from his nephew or be ready for armed confrontation with them. Once when they attacked Prophet Muhammad in the Ka'ba, Abu Bakr,<sup>(1)</sup> an early convert to Islam, rushed to save him

and challenged the offenders by saying the memorable words: "Do you want to kill a person simply because he says that his Lord is Allah?" (Nomani: 182)

### **Violent Opposition by the Quraysh**

Whatever the reasons, the Quraysh began to oppose Islam in Makkah tooth and nail and adopted all possible means to discredit it. Here are the details that we find in the pages of history:

1. Personal insult and denunciation: The Quraysh openly started defaming and denouncing Prophet Muhammad as mentally deranged, possessed by the djinn, sorcerer, and by other derogatory terms, when they themselves had given him the titles of the Amin (the Trustworthy) and the Saadiq (the Truthful).
2. Physical assault on the converts: They severely beat up those who accepted Islam and punished them in whatever way they could.
3. Isolating the Prophet: They pressurized Abu Talib, the Prophet's uncle and guardian, to hand over Muhammad to them so that they could kill him and bring the dispute to an end. They also broke the nuptial engagements of Prophet Muhammad's two daughters betrothed to the sons of Abu Lahab.
4. Social boycott of the Prophet's clan: The Makkan polytheists took a collective stand to impose a total boycott on Bani Hashim, the Prophet's clan, asserting that no one would marry in the clan of Bani Hashim, buy from or sell anything to them, or interact with them at any level. This boycott was applicable to food items as well. Under the influence of the Quraysh, the outside traders coming to Makkah also refused to

sell food items to the Muslims. Consequently, the Muslims had to leave the city of Makkah and move to a nearby valley, later named as the Valley of Abu Talib (She'ab Abi Talib). There the Muslims lived for three years, suffering from acute shortage of food and other basic articles of daily need. Their children and women were hit worst. It is said that Lady Khadija lost her health irreparably there due to which she breathed her last soon after the boycott was over. (Armstrong, Muhammad, 86-87)

5. Forcing Muslims to migrate: The situation did not improve for Muslims in Makkah even after the decree of the boycott was declared null and void after three years. The ever-growing opposition made it impossible for them to live in peace in Makkah. Consequently, they first migrated in two groups to Abyssinia, but when even that did not help, they started to migrate to Madinah, individually or in small groups.

#### **Who used sword first?**

When the Quraysh could not suppress Islam by these means, they decided to use sword against Muslims to show their earnestness. Below are some examples of it:

1. The first person killed for having converted to Islam was a lady called Sumayya, a slave, who was murdered by Abu Jahl. Her husband Yasir, also a convert to Islam, met the same fate. He suffered long the unbearable torture and ultimately succumbed to death. (Nomani: 163)

2. Likewise, the first free man killed by the Quraysh in their opposition to Islam was Harith bin Abi Hala, son of Lady Khadija from her first marriage. He was a Muslim.

Hearing one day that the Prophet was surrounded by the Quraysh in the Ka'ba and was in danger, he rushed there. He threw himself in the throng to protect the Prophet and fell victim to the swords meant to kill the Prophet. He was the first Muslim whose blood was shed in the Haram by the polytheists. (Nomani: 150)

3. The polytheists of Makkah openly resorted to sword against the Prophet and attempted to kill him. The real target of the swords that struck Harith bin Abi Hala in the Haram was the Prophet. 'Umar bin Khattab, a polytheist chief of the Quraysh, had once proceeded with a naked sword in hand looking for the prophet to kill him and put the dispute to an end forever. The selected swordsmen of Makkah clans had surrounded the house of the Prophet at the night of his migration to Madinah for this very purpose. The Quraysh announced a reward of a hundred camels to bring Prophet Muhammad back to them, dead or alive, when he had escaped to Madinah. The Quraysh were bent upon killing him and that was not a secret.

It should be kept in mind that during the thirteen years of the Prophet's stay in Makkah, neither he nor any of his followers ever indulged in any offense against the Quraysh. In fact, they did not have power even to defend themselves.

#### **Why did people accept Islam in Makkah?**

A question that naturally arises at this point is this: Why did people accept Islam in Makkah? Who had threatened them to do so? Surely Muslims were not in a position to force the Quraysh to convert to Islam or face the consequences. In fact, the sword was in the hands of the Quraysh and the

Muslims were truly at the receiving end.

The opponents of Islam might say that as Islam proclaimed equality among humans, some slaves, men as well as women, tried to find refuge in it and opted to convert. But then why did dignitaries like Abu Bakr, 'Uthman bin 'Affan, 'Abdur Rahman bin A'waf, Mus'ab bin 'Umayr, Hamza bin 'Abdul Muttalib and scores of others accept Islam there? How come they then adhered to Islam even when they were expelled from their homeland and disowned by their tribes, the severest misfortune that could befall an Arab of the time?

Why did 'Umar ibn al-Khattab convert to Islam with a naked sword in his hand when he had stepped out of his home with an intention to assassinate the prophet? Who forced Huzayfa, son of 'Utba, the famous chief of Makkah who led the Quraysh army against the Muslims in the Battle of Badr, to accept Islam and migrate to Madinah? Why did Umm Habiba (who was later married to the Prophet), daughter of Abu Sufyan, the hawkish chief of the pagan alliance, accept Islam right in Makkah in the days when her father was at the zenith of his career as an arch enemy of Islam, and migrated to Abyssinia to protect her faith? Did she, the daughter of Abu Sufyan, fear the sword of Islam in Makkah where her father was the undisputed chief?

Why did it happen that Prophet Muhammad himself had to escape to Madinah in the dead of night when he was allegedly powerful enough to force others in Makkah to convert to Islam? Who was leaving his hometown in utter helplessness and whose blood-thirsty soldiers were chasing him for the ominous reward of one

hundred camels for bringing him back, dead or alive?

These are burning questions without answering which the investigation about the validity of the sword theory cannot be conducted at the rational level. If the above-mentioned cases of conversion in Makkah were not due to the fear of the sword of Islam, and they were not, then what else can be said about it except that it was Islam's intrinsic appeal that won the hearts of the converts? What else can explain the case of their sincere commitment to Islam due to which they gave their life but did not give up their faith? There was not a single case of reversion to polytheism.

#### **Why did Islam spread in Madinah?**

The detractors of Islam have alleged that Prophet showed perfect prophetic perseverance in Makkah, never retaliating to his senseless offenders, but after migrating to Madinah he unsheathed his sword and used force to subjugate the Quraysh and their allies. This, they argue, became possible because Islam had spread in Madinah before he migrated there and so he found there a city full of Muslims whose armed support he used to vanquish his enemies.

This allegation should, of course, be duly investigated, but we will have to answer first why the whole city of Madinah converted to Islam when no Muslim army was ever sent there. The Prophet had not visited the city yet. Whose fear had forced the residents of Madinah to accept against their will the message of Prophet Muhammad?

It could be said in answer to this  
*(Continued to page 16)*

## Values Of Education

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Knowledge is an essential tool for comprehending realities of life. Human beings are considered superior to other creatures of God by virtue of knowledge. It enlightens heart and soul and enriches the mind. Besides, it produces excellences in intellect. It is knowledge through which one distinguishes between good and evil.

Islam is the only religion, which has made education mandatory for its adherents. Even the first revelation was sent to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by Almighty God also indicates towards knowledge. The holy Quran says: "Read in the name of thy Lord who created-created man, out of a leech-like clot: Read and thy Lord is most bountiful. He, who taught the use of the pen, taught man that which he knew not." (S.96, A-1-5)

If we think why God commenced the first revelation with reading, we find that the age in which Prophet Muhammad was sent, the age of ignorance. It is obvious that without education ignorance and stagnation can not be dispelled. That is why Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has laid great emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. The Prophet said: "Seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim man and woman." "Seek knowledge from cradle to the grave." Acquire knowledge even if one has to go to China." Knowledge, says a Tradition of the sacred Prophet, is the lost property of a Muslim and he is its rightful owner. The Prophet further said: "Acquire knowledge, because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord, who seeks it adores God, who dispenses

instruction in it, bestows alms, and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what its forbids and what it does not; it lights the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends' it serves as an armour against enemies.

With knowledge the servant of God rises to the height of goodness and to a noble position, associates with sovereigns in this world and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next."

According to Ibn Khaldun, the doyen of Muslim scholars, knowledge is essential for three basic reasons. Firstly, it facilitates cooperation among human beings. Sociability of man is an unquestioned reality. Nothing in life can be accomplished in isolation. The variety of human needs, frailty of human character, and physical weakness, prompt men to live in company and seek other's help, knowledge alone helps them to understand the nature and purpose of such cooperation for various occasions. Secondly, the path-ways of life are strewn with many ghoulis objects. Man is in dire need of knowledge to differentiate between good and evil so that he can avoid the latter and perpetuate the former. And lastly, knowledge economizes time and increase human energies, to resolve the numerous imponderable problems of life." (The Muqaddima, vol.II, p 418)

In this context Right of Children Free

*(Continued to page 26)*

## An Appeal

Darul uloom Nadwatul Ulama is engaged in its academic and religious pursuits under the patronage and guidance of Maulana Syed Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi. The institute is dedicated to the golden principles of Islam in propagating the virtues and worth of the message of that religion which show the path of salvation.

The academic excellence and proper guidance in character building has been attracting students from far and wide. This has posed the problem as to how cope with this increasing influx. Our resources are limited and unless generosity is shown by you it is difficult to meet the situation.

We earnestly appeal that you come forward and help us in this task. Even a little contribution from you will not only help in running the institution successfully but will earn you benefits of Heavenly favours.

S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi      Motamide Taleem, Nadwatul Ulama

Athar Husain Khalidi              Motamide Ma'l, Nadwatul Ulama

Saeedur Rahman Azami Nadwi      Mohtamim Darul-Uloom, Nadwatul Ulama

S.M. Hamza Hasani Nadwi          Naib-Nazim, Nadwatul Ulama

Please send your contribution through cheques or Bank Drafts issued in favour of "Nadwatul Ulama" A/C No. 10863759733, State Bank of India (Main Branch) Lucknow and post them on following address ;

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