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Malice a Serious Evil

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The view of life arising from prophetic teachings has equity and moderation as its two immutable bases. Speaking of the right-guided persons, the Qur'an says:

"And those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging; and there is ever a firm station between the two."

(*Al-Furqan* : 67)

Again, the dominant characteristic of the followers of the Qur'an is stated to be their remarkable moderation:

"Thus we have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be a witness against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you." (*Al-Baqarah*: 143)

The Prophet himself afforded an illustrious example of complete and ennobling moderation. The distinguishing feature of Islam too, described as "the straight path" and "a right religion", is natural temperance and moderation and refraining from the aberrations of excess and extremism. Addressing the Prophet of Islam, says. God Almighty :

"Say: Lo! As for me, my Lord hath guided me unto a straight path, a right religion, the community of Abraham, the upright, who was no idolater."

(*Al-Anam*: 162) ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

Remember when you were few and were reckoned weak in the land, and were afraid that men might kidnap you, but Allah provided a safe place for you, strengthened you with His help and provided you with good things so that you might be grateful.

(al-Anfal 8:26)

Allah reminds Muslims in the above passage of their small number and weakness in the early days of Islam. The Muslims being weak were persecuted. They lived then in constant fear of annihilation. It was then that Allah blessed Muslims with refuge and helped them as a special favour from Him. They were provided with good things which enabled them to thank Allah.

On studying the above against the backdrop of the early days of Islam, one can better appreciate life in Madinah. On reading this, one is readily reminded of Dar al-Arqam and the valley of Abu Talib. At Dar al-Arqam Muslims sought refuge against the persecution unleashed by the unbelieving Makkans. There they could remember Allah and mention His name in relative peace. They were free there to offer Prayers. It was there that many-leading Companions declared their acceptance of Islam. To the best of my knowledge, 'Umar too embraced Islam there. In sum, Dar al-Arqam served as a refuge for early Muslims. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "He who has fear sets out at the beginning of the night and he who sets out at the beginning of the night reaches the destination safely. Remember, the bargain of the Lord is not cheap, but extremely dear. Remember, the bargain of the Lord is Paradise."

—Tirmidhi

Commentary— In Arabia the Caravans, generally, started in the last part of the night and, therefore, the highwaymen too, made their raids during the early hours of the morning. The travellers who were careful, however, preferred to begin their journey in the earlier part of the night so that they reached the destination without being attacked by the robbers. The Prophet, accordingly, says that just as prudent travellers forgo the night's sleep and start on the journey soon after dusk, those who are keen to attain Paradise should, also, proceed energetically towards the goal and be ready to suppress their desires and give up comforts for the sake of it. He, further, emphasises that what the bondsman is looking forward to obtaining from the Lord is not a thing of a poor quality that can be given away without a price but Heaven, the abode of celestial bliss, which no one can hope to gain without making a sacrifice of the most valued things like life, property and carnal appetites. Says the Quran: Lo! Allah hath bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs. [ix: iii]. ■

Editor's Note 

Our Existence

After elaborate scientific research scientist could find out how a human being is born. But their findings are incomplete. The true picture is explained in Holy Qur'an which came to us centuries ago through Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Allah says:

O man! You were before a non-existent.

“Does not man remember that We created him before while he was nothing?” (Maryam 19:67)

Then He created you from a mixture of male and female discharge and made you hearing, seeing. Allah says,

“Has there not been over man a period of time, when he was not a thing worth mentioning? Verily, We have created man from drop of mixed sexual discharge of man and woman in order to try him; so We made him hearer and seer.” (Al-Insan 76:1-2)

Then you moved gradually from a state of weakness to strength and you shall be returned to a state of weakness again. Allah says,

“Allah is He Who created you, in (a state of) weakness, then gave you strength after weakness, then after strength gave (you) weakness and grey hair. He creates what He wills and it is He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful” (Ar-Rum 30:54)

Then the end is death and you, through these stages, move from weakness to weakness; you cannot avert evil from yourself nor can you bring about benefit for yourself except by using that strength and provision that Allah gave you. You are by nature poor and needy. Many are the things that you need to remain alive which you do not possess or which you sometimes have and sometime are deprived of. Many are also those things that are useful to you and you would like to have and which you achieve sometimes and do not achieve other times.

Many are things that harm you, ditch your hope, waste your efforts and bring on you tribulations and calamity which you would like to avert; and which you sometimes succeed in averting and which you fail sometimes to avert. In view of this, do you not feel your helplessness and your need to Allah? Allah says,

“O you people! It is you who stand in need of Allah. But Allah is Rich (free of all needs) Worthy of all praise.” (Fatir 35:15)

You are exposed to a weak virus which you cannot see with your naked eyes, and that causes you painful disease which you cannot prevent and you then go to a weak human being like yourself to treat you. Sometimes, the medicine works and doctor fails to cure you and both you and your doctor then become confused.

O man! What a weak creature you are when the fly snatches something from you and you cannot take back from it! Allah says the truth when He says,

“O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it: Verily, those on whom you call besides Allah cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly snatches away a thing from them, they will have no power to release it from the fly. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought.” (Al-Hajj 22-73)

If you cannot take back what the fly snatches away from you, which then of your affairs do you have control over? Your forelock is in the hand of Allah, so is your soul. Our heart is between two of His fingers which He turns round as He wills. Your life, death, happiness and misery are all in His Hand. ■

S.A.

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Message of the Life of the Prophet to Present-Day

Muslims

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Obviously, the world was not a deserted place at the time of the raising up of the holy Prophet. It was not a graveyard. The wheels of life were moving at that time, too, with a very little difference, as they are now. Business was carried on almost in the same manner, and the people, generally, were satisfied with the things around them, and did not feel the need for a change.

But the Almighty did not like the shape of the world. As it is told in a Tradition: "The Lord cast a glance at the dwellers of the earth, and felt highly displeased with them, whether Arabs or non-Arabs. He was angry with all except for a few who believed in the revealed religions. He, thereupon, sent down the Prophet Mohammad, and, along with him, made provision for giving rise to a whole community. This community had, evidently, been created for a definite purpose which was not being fulfilled by others. There could be no need to raise a new community for something that was, already, being done, or to produce the storm in the placid ocean of life that followed the emergence of the new Ummat.

When the Lord created Adam, the Angel asked were they not enough for His glorification? Why should the creature of clay be brought into being?

The Lord replied: I know what ye know not, (II: 30). He, thereby, indicated that Adam had not been created to fulfill the function of the Angels, but He intended to take some other work from him.

If the Muslims were being raised merely for trade the merchants of Mecca who took their caravans to Syria and Yemen, and the Jews of Madina who had established large business houses had the right to ask whether they were not good enough that a new community was called for, and if it was agriculture, the farmers of Madina, Khyber, Najd, Syria, Yemen and Iraq could have complained that they were being overlooked. And, so on.

But the Muslims were being created for a new task which no one in the world was performing or could perform. A new community was required for it. Hence, it was said:

You are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind. Ye enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and ye believe in Allah. -III: 110

It was for its sake that people left their homes for good, suffered the loss in trade and agriculture, and shut their eyes to the comforts of the world. They shed their blood like water, preferred

widowhood for their women, and the state of an orphan for their children. Was all this strife, this struggle and sacrifice, aimed simply for the ends and activities with which the Muslims appear to be so contented today? The way to their attainment was safe and even. There was no opposition from the contemporary world over it. Progress along it was not the bone of contention between the Arabs and the other people. They, indeed, had repeatedly offered the things the Muslims are hankering after now. But each time the Preacher of Islam had firmly rejected all the proposals of power, wealth and luxury.

Now, were the Muslims to come down to the level where all the pagan communities subsisted at the time of the raising up of the holy Apostle, and the entire non-Muslim population of the world is finding itself today, and plunge recklessly into worldly affairs and interests like the Arabs, Romans and Persians of those days, and make the high aim of their existence the ends and advantages the sacred Prophet had turned down with disdain, what could it denote save the repudiation and betrayal of the early history of Islam? Would it not show that the blood that was shed at Badr, Hunain, Ahzab, Qadsia and Yarmouk had been in vain?

If the leaders of the Quraish were able to speak today, they could rightfully

tell the Muslims that the things they were craving for were exactly what they had offered to their Prophet. All these could be obtained without shedding a drop of blood. Was the net result of the whole struggle and the worth of all the sacrifices the way of life they had chosen and the moral standards that were so pleasing to them? What answer would we have then?

The chief anxiety of the holy Prophet about the Muslims was that they fell a prey to the allurements of the world and forgot their mission. He had addressed this warning to them in the sermon he delivered during the last days of his life:

“It is not poverty that I fear for you, but what I really fear is that the earth should be spread for you, as it had been spread for those who came before you, so that you could covet it as they had coveted, and, then, it destroyed you as it had destroyed them.”

As we learn from Hazrat Abu Ayub Ansari, when it was felt by the Ansars of Madina that they withdrew, for sometime, from Jihad and paid attention to trade and agriculture which were suffering through neglect,—they could not even think of exempting themselves from the principal duties like Namaz, Roza and Zakat but had only expressed the intention of taking leave, for a time, from participation in the active endeavour for the glory of Faith-, this

temporary withdrawal, too, was held to be nothing short of suicide, and the following verse of Sura-e-Baqara was revealed:

Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah, and be not cast by your own hands to fitting destruction; and do good as it ought to be and carry it on. Lo! Allah loveth those who do good deeds.

-II: 195

The particular mould of a Muslim's life is such that he should either be engaged in the preaching and propagation of Faith and other practical endeavours in its path or lending help and support to those who are so engaged, and also, wishing, genuinely, to join in the task himself.

The life of a contented citizen or businessman is not the life of a Muslim. It can never be his aim and ideal. Legitimate concerns of life and lawful economic activity, of course, are not forbidden. On the contrary, these are a form of worship and a means to the gaining of the propinquity of the Lord provided that the intention is pure and the eye is on the reward of the Hereafter and such an occupation is carried on within the limits prescribed by the Shariat.

This is the chief message of the life of the sacred Prophet for Muslims. To remain indifferent to it is to allow its purpose to be wasted and turn a blind eye to the fundamental reality the life of the Prophet presents to us. ■

Karnataka Passes Resolution Rejecting Centre's Waqf Bill

BENGALURU: The state assembly Wednesday passed a resolution rejecting Centre's Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024, calling it an attack on the federal structure and as being "against principles of equity, equality, and parity".

Another resolution passed in the day urged Centre to earmark a dedicated budget for SC/ST welfare, similar to what Karnataka had done through legislation.

Law and parliamentary affairs minister HK Patil moved the two resolutions amid opposition from BJP MLAs, with the party accusing the govt. of hypocrisy over SC/ST welfare and later staging a walkout with its ally JD(S) over the Waqf bill issue.

On the resolution urging Centre to withdraw Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024, Patil argued that Waqf matters, being under the Concurrent List, did not lie in Centre's exclusive domain. Issues pertaining to religious institutions, places of worship, and cremation grounds were joint responsibility of Union and state govts, the resolution contended.

Criticising the Centre for ignoring opposition MPs' recommendations, it stated, "Although Karnataka Waqf Board and other organisations had opposed the amendment, it has been unilaterally decided to bring the amendment bill in the Parliament."

Amid protests, Speaker UT Khader passed the resolution by voice vote.

(The Times of India – 20-3-2025)

Oppn Netas Join AIMPLB Protest Against Waqf Bill

NEW DELHI: Stepping up its protest against the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, expected to be introduced in Parliament in the ongoing budget session, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Monday led a demonstration here, which was joined by MPs from several opposition parties. AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi cautioned NDA allies TDP, JDU and LJP (Ramvilas) - that if they supported the bill, Muslims would not forgive them.

“Waqf grants Muslims the same rights that other religions enjoy over their institutions. If every faith has the right to administer its affairs, why are Muslims being singled out,” asked AIMPLB’s Syed Sadatullah Husaini.

Board spokesperson SQR Ilyas said AIMPLB has come to the conclusion that the proposed legislation will pave the way for “usurping” of Waqf properties. This would be a “direct attack” on Muslims, he said.

During the protest at Jantar Mantar, Owaisi alleged, “This bill is unconstitutional... It is not for saving, protecting or enhancing income from Waqf properties but for finishing Waqf properties altogether.”

“The bill attempts to take away Muslims’ mosques, dargahs and cemeteries. We are cautioning (TDP chief) Chandrababu Naidu, (LJP.Ramvilas chief) Chirag Paswan and (JD-U’s) Nitish Kumar – remember that if you support the bill at this critical juncture. Muslims will not forgive you ever because it would be passed with your support”, he said. AIMPLB too has reportedly urged NDA allies to not support the bill.

Congress functionary and former minority affairs minister Salman Khurshid claimed that the bill was not valid constitutionally. Claiming that opposition MPs’ suggestion to the joint parliamentary committee on the bill were rejected, Congress functionary Gaurav Gogoi said, “It shows govt does not want to resolve any issue, but just wants to create a divide in society.”

“By rejecting all suggestions of opposition, govt has shown what its intention is. We are against this bill,” SP functionary Dharmendra Yadav said. TMC MP Shatrughan Sinha said, “This is divisive politics. If they force this bill on the basis of brute majority, there will be protests.” ■

(The Times of India–18-3- 2025)

Islam And Moral Excellence

- S. Sulaiman Nadwi

The goal or ideal of a Muslim and his thinking should always be high and sublime. He should repose complete trust in Allah and should keep his spirit high in- difficult situations.

Patience, Gratefulness, Reliance and Contentment, Fate

It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:
and when you are resolved, put trust in Allah. Allah loves those who trust (in Him).

(3:160)

If Allah helps you, none can overcome you. If He abandons you, who then can help you? Therefore, in Allah, let the faithful put their trust.

(3 : 160)

No misfortune can befall the earth, or your own persons, but is recorded in a book before We bring it into being. That is easy for Allah, so that you may not grieve for the good things you miss or be overjoyed at that you gain. Allah does not love the haughty, the vainglorious.

(57 : 23)

Lord, fill our hearts with steadfastness. Make us firm of foot and help us against the unbelievers.

(2 : 250)

Many a prophet has fought side by side with many devoted men. They never lost heart on account of what befell them in the path of Allah: they were neither weakened nor brought low. Allah loves the steadfast. Their only words were; Lord: Forgive us our sins and our excesses; make us firm of foot and give us victory over the disbelievers. (3:146—147)

Kind Treatment with the Enemies

There are many practical examples of the Prophet's kind and magnanimous treatment with his enemies. Here we give only a few examples of the world's greatest preacher of Islam.

The most suitable occasion for taking revenge on his enemies was the conquest of Makkah when he entered the city as a victor and not as a vanquished and his blood thirsty enemies were standing before him, but he granted them general amnesty.

On the day of migration, Suraqah mounted a swift horse in pursuit of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) so that he could seize him and get the reward one hundred camels but repeated stumbling of his horse gave him a warning to desist from this evil design. He asked forgiveness

and Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forgave him.

A Jewess put poison in the food of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He felt the effect of the poison and called the Jews who made the confession of guilt; but he did not say anything. He forgave the savage who had killed Hamza, his uncle.

He forgave Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufyan who tore out the heart and liver of his (the Holy Prophet's) loving uncle.

He forgave Habbar b. Al. Aswad who had inflicted severe injury to the Prophet's loving daughter Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her).

During the Treaty of Hudaibiya, a band of sixty men descended the mount of Tanim at dawn with an intention to kill the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). They were arrested; but the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) let them off.

A person intended to kill him. The companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) caught hold of him and brought him to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He trembled out of fear. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to

him: Do not be afraid, even if you intended to kill me, you could not do so.

The people of Ta'if hooted him through the streets listening to the call of Islam and refused to give him shelter. They pelted him with stones and blood flowed down upon his legs. The angel said to him: If he desired we cause the mountain to fall upon them. He said: No, perhaps any believer of Allah may be born from their progeny.

Once a person asked him to invoke curse, he said: I have not been sent to curse; but I have been sent as a mercy unto the worlds. Once he was returning from the battle. He passed by a plain. The sun was hot and the people were resting under the shades of the trees. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went to sleep under the shade of a tree hanging his sword to a branch. A bedouin came there and took off his sword intending to kill him (the Holy Prophet). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was startled to see a bedouin standing on the side of his head with an unsheathed sword in his hand. He (the bedouin) said: Tell me, who can save you now from me? He said: (It is) Allah. This impressive reply had its effect and he put the sword back into its sheath.

The Quraish confined him (the Holy Prophet) and his family in Shi'b Abi Talib so that wheat and corn could not

reach them. The children cried of hunger but the callous Quraish did not listen to their cries. As against this what was the treatment which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) accorded to the Quraish? Makkah used to receive corn from Yamama. Thumama b. Uthal, the chief of Yamama had embraced Islam. He said to the Quraish: By Allah, you will not get a single grain of wheat from Yamama until it is permitted by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). At last the Quraish came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and requested him to ask the chief to continue the supply. He (the Holy Prophet) sent a message and its supply was restored as usual.

It must be remembered that when there is a fight between the believers and disbelievers and the latter are bent upon striking at the very root of Islam, that alliance and friendship with the infidels is prohibited which might jeopardise the interests of the Muslims or by which Islam is humiliated or the Muslims have to suffer loss or their prestige is lowered. It has been stated in the Holy Qur'an:

Let not the believers take unto themselves the infidels as their friends beside the believers and whosoever does that Allah has nothing to do with him-except that you guard yourself fully-against them. (3 : 28)

O ye who believe chose not your fathers nor your brethren nor friends if they take pleasure in disbelief. Whoso taketh them for friends, such are wrong-doers. (9 : 23)

Love for Allah and Enmity for Allah

One may question here as to why the sentiments of hatred and enmity could not be ended? But it is contrary to the laws of nature as love and hatred, accord and discord, pleasure and anger are ingrained in the very nature of man and all the activities, struggles and endeavours in this world are due to these two sentiments of opposite nature. If the people were deprived of these sentiments there would have no activities good or bad. It is a flame or fuel which motivates a man to action. All the hustle and bustle of this world depends upon them. It is, therefore, neither proper nor possible to curb or throw out these natural instincts and sentiments. The only rational way which has been adopted by Islam is as to how and when these sentiments would be overcome or given vent to and that one's love and hatred, friendship and enmity, pleasure and anger should not be for any selfish cause or motive or personal benefit; but it should be to help and assist the cause of truth and to seek the pleasure of Allah. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an: Say (O Muhammad, to mankind) If you love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. ■

Don't Gag Free Speech

Three pillars of democracy – legislature, executive and judiciary – have codified powers, and police to enforce them. The fourth – media – draws strength entirely from free speech. On Monday, a Supreme Court bench of justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan hammered home the importance of media freedom during a hearing. It reminded courts, especially, of the need to be tolerant of free speech, and not cry contempt on the slightest pretext. “Why should courts be touchy about some comments made against their orders...,” the bench asked.

In Jan this year, 1.45L contempt cases were pending in SC and high courts. Some of them would be against media organisations and independent journalists. And a subset of those could well be arbitrary, unfair or excessive. The 2019 Meghalaya HC order against two women journalists, holding them guilty of contempt for reporting on the perks provided to retired judges and their families, had drawn global attention. Later, SC had stayed the order.

Monday's SC hearing was about a Delhi HC order against Wikipedia that deemed criticism to be “interference in court proceedings”. But as the SC bench pointed out, judges have to take criticism in their stride – “Sometimes, someone says that you are sitting here with a preconceived mind or that you are not giving a proper hearing. People say things, and we have to tolerate it... Someone says we are prejudiced. That's their opinion, but we decide on law.”

During the hearing, the bench once again emphasised the dangers of sweeping gag orders. “Courts can't pass gag orders...to tell someone to remove something just because there is some criticism of what the court has said or done *is not okay*,” it said. In 2022, SC refused to bar journalist Mohammed Zubair from posting on X while on bail, saying, “Gag orders have a chilling effect on the freedom of speech.” By now, this should be a well-settled point. Sadly for free speech in India, it isn't.

SC has questioned the “legality and validity” of Delhi HC's directions against Wikipedia. By pursuing this enquiry further, it could build safeguards against the arbitrary exercise of contempt powers. Perhaps, it's time for a larger Constitution bench to look into this question and answer it once and for all. As the SC bench said on Monday, “The question here is about free speech rights of media.” By extension, it's about strengthening the fourth pillar of Indian democracy.

(Editorial- The Times of India, 19-3-2025)

Movement of Nadwatul Ulama- Importance And Necessity

- S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi*

Meaning of intellectual and ideological breadth:

In this era, the reference which is cited regarding intellectual breadth of Nadwatul Ulama, some time, a misunderstanding appears in it. So it should be well understood what the intellectual breadth of Nadwa means. There is a difference between different jurisprudence and generally there may be a difference of opinion sometimes, or there may be a difference in the method of Da'wah none of them should be blamed. Before the establishment of Nadwatul Ulama, there was a period in which there were great quarrels and fights in the schools of jurisprudence and sometimes even bloodshed, there are incidents of this in history. Against this situation, Nadwatul Ulama always raised a revolt and said that all these Masaliks (different schools of thought) are right, one should follow any maslak, there is no need for us to conflict in this regard. In fact, these masaliks are the rights of all and they are not for preaching, but there is definitely a problem of priority, some people declare a particular maslak as the best

and some others, but this process of prioritizing the masaliks is the work of our scholars, for which personal and academic meetings are needed, not to say and do in front of the public, otherwise there will be an anarchy, which also existed in this country.

Allama Abdul Hai Hasani depicted the map of Delhi Jama Masjid that there somewhere Ahle Hadis are sitting, somewhere Hanafis are sitting and there are people of other schools of thought and there is a hot market of religious debates and disputes. The truth is that Nadwat-ul-Ulama raised a rebellion against this situation and the very first assembly of it was held.

Nadwatul Ulama invited everyone to it, but after that those who were open deviants separated and those who were righteous joined Nadwa.

There is a need to understand the breadth of thought, we must have the breadth within us to embrace people, we have reached them with the right message, but it does not mean that we take the wrong path, or adopt a deviant thought and we say that Nadwa calls for breadth of thought, what is wrong with us if we adopt any method. This is not

* Rector Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow.

the case at all, Nadwa has called for firmness in belief and expansion of the resources that come with it, this needs to be understood.

The vastness does not mean that we have shortcomings in the practical field, remember that the scholars have a very high position, the graduates of our school are a model for the people and are ideals for the whole Ummah, their lives are seen by people, if their lives are deviated from the Qur'an and Sunnah and their actions are against the Sunnah, what kind of example will they set, but they will also defame their institutions and scholars, as a result of this, it is possible that the Ummah will turn in the wrong direction. Therefore, we have to prove by our actions that we are a scholar, Allah has given us the knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah and we are the interpreters of this knowledge.

Along with the process, we also need to have the ability to present ourselves, for this we need to master different languages.

English language or regional languages or Hindi language and these different languages of the South, we should master them and we should also have power over world languages so that we can interpret the religion.

In the verse of the Holy Qur'an, Allah Ta'ala has mentioned the same things. Hazrat Maulana Ali Mian Nadwi used to say that I looked for the mention of religious madrasas in the Holy Qur'an, and when my eyes fell on this verse, I clearly felt that this is actually the verse in which madrasas are not only mentioned, but their entire purpose and the responsibility of those who graduate from there have also been described. Allah says: "If a contingent from every expedition go forth to devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when they return to them, that thus they may learn to guard themselves against evil".

(S.9.A.122)

This verse clearly shows that during education, we have to develop understanding of religion. Understanding of religion does not mean that the mastery of jurisprudential details is developed, but it means that the temperament of religion comes, a person understands the temperament of religion and its reality, understands the difference between good and bad, how far we can go and what are our limits. It is also a matter of Tafaqquh fiddin (Contemplation in religion) that we should have full knowledge of our religious problems.

How to overcome the lack of knowledge? The second thing that has been mentioned in this verse is that what is our job after graduation? I am not asking you to do anything except reading and teaching and not doing anything except calling and preaching, but I am saying that you should go into any field but go with your identity and go with a sense of your responsibilities. In this regard, I especially say that you must study Sirat-ul-Nabi by Allama Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, and especially the last four volumes are the core of religion. Syed Sahib has presented the summary of religion with such moderation that we can remove the great deficiency by studying these books, then we will know all those facts and we will be able to understand religion with full balance, and we can remove the inconsistencies that sometimes arise within us.

The personality of Hazrat Syed Sahib has extraordinary characteristics. In the past someone published a text of Syed Sahib on social media that when he realized his mistake, he formally announced that I had written a sentence about a Sahabi, which I realize, I confess my mistake. It is obvious that these are our elders, for whom the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) are above all,

about whom even the slightest insolence or disrespect cannot be accepted.

I request them to write down this text and remove this text from their book. After that, Syed Sahib removed all such deviations wherever there were, and he used to say that never deviate from the opinion of the people, if you stick to the opinion of the people, you will be on the right path.

About Hazrat Maulana Ali Mian Nadwi, our elders and our old graduates of Nadwa know that Hazrat Maulana used to address in the farewell meetings of the students of Nadwatul Ulama, remember! The creed of Nadwa is that it will never like to turn away from Jamhur Ulama. It is that it never deviates from the path of the people. If you stay on the path of the people, you will stay on the right path. Of course, in academic discussions, a person can have any opinion and there is a discussion about it, but to stick to one opinion and become its advocate, which is an opinion that deviates from the right path. Nadwa never likes it and it has never invited it. But the truth is that Nadwa has invited against it. So we need to understand it too. ■

(To be continued)

*(English Rendering: Obaidur
Rahman Nadwi)*

India's Message To The World

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Today India is in search of its Destiny: a message which it can diffuse to the world. But what should after all be the gospel of India—Socialism, Communism or its own civilization of yore? Socialism has already had the opportunity to bloom outside the country. India can at best be a follower in this field but never a leader. As for the ancient culture of India, there is hardly any charm for the world in the relics of the past. Howsoever we may be proud of our ancient customs and traditions, culture and philosophy we cannot convince the world to adopt these simply because of the profundity of our philosophical thought or the past achievements of our deep-rooted culture. We cannot, in the same wise, hope that any nation could give up its own culture and traditions and change-over to our own. Similarly, Indian nationalism cannot be expected to have an attraction for any other people in the world, for the nationalism of every country has an equal claim on the patriotism of its own citizens. None of these has any attractiveness at all. But we can certainly catch the attention of the world if we have a message which can deliver the modern man from the servitude of his fellow beings, liberate his soul from the subjugation of evil desires and demoniacal spells, trappings of power and pelf, raise human beings in the scale of dignity, enjoin the service of humanity as a sacred duty of every man and enforce the equality of human beings as the creation of the one Omnipotent Master and Lord. This is indeed the underlying meaning and content of the worship offered to God.

“Surely pure religion is for Allah only.” (xxxix : 3)

A message so sublime cannot suffer injustice nor can it give preference to a country, individual, language or culture over another land, man, dialect or social tradition. This is a message befitting India and it can assure an honourable place to it in the comity of nations. ■

India's

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The Messenger of God

HIS LIFE AT A GLANCE

- Qutbuddin Aziz

Childhood

Prophet Muhammad (S) was born on April 20, 571 AD. In the city of Makkah in Arabia. A distinguished scion of the Hashim clan of the powerful Quraish tribe, his father was Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib. Alas, he did not live to see the birth of his son who was destined to spread God's message of peace, piety and righteousness on earth. He died a few months before his son was born. Abdullah, a thriving businessman who led trading caravans to Syria from Makkah, was taken ill in the city of Madina where he died and was buried there.

The mother of the infant Prophet-to-be was the pretty and cultured Amina who loved her son. Despite the widowhood inflicted on her at a young age she looked after him with the utmost devotion. His paternal grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, also loved his handsome grandson. In conformity with the prevailing custom in Arabia, his mother appointed the conscientious Halima Saadia to nurse him and she breast-fed him like her own son.

Muhammad (S) was barely six years old when a second tragedy struck him. His mother took him to Madina to visit the grave of his father. On the way back to Makkah, she fell ill and died

suddenly. His grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, then became his full-time guardian and gave him the affection and care which he badly needed. But hardly two years had passed when he lost his loving grandfather, too, who died at the age of 82. He willed that his son, Abu Talib, should make Muhammad(S) his ward, and he looked after his upbringing and education. In the partly pastoral economy of Makkah, sheep had considerable value and Abu Talib, on occasions, deputed his 12-year-old nephew to be the shepherd of his flock. He also took him to Syria with a trading caravan. On way to Syria, a Christian friar saw the young Muhammad(S) and discerned in him the signs of Prophet-hood. The visit to Syria broadened the horizons of his knowledge of geography and commerce.

Social Service

When war broke out between the tribes of Quraish and Qais, the teenage Prophet-to-be sided with his Uncle but he wielded no sword nor did he shed human blood. He gave cheer and hope to the wounded in the battle of Fajir. Subsequently, he joined a band of dedicated young men in founding a social service agency which helped the weak, the destitute and the oppressed. He signed a covenant under which the

welfare agency was established and a leading light in it was his Uncle, Abu Talib.

The shrine of the Ka'aba in Makkah was renovated but a dispute arose amongst the many tribes of Arabia as to who should place in it the much-venerated black stone. It was decided that the person who enters the Ka'aba with the first light of dawn on the morrow should have the privilege of doing this duty. And, 10, the next morning, the teenage Muhammad(S) was the first to enter the precincts of the Ka'aba. Showing statesmanship at such a young age, he persuaded the Makkans to place the black stone on a large thick sheet and the leaders of all the tribes joined in lifting it and placing it in the Ka'ba. A tribal war was thus averted by his wisdom.

Trade

Initiated into trade and commerce by his Uncle, the young Muhammad(S) won fame as a successful, honest and trustworthy trader. His trading missions to Syria and Yemen yielded sizeable profits, and those who entrusted him with their money and goods reaped large dividends. His honesty as a trader was so well-known that many Makkans deposited their wealth with him and called him the most reliable trustee or Amin. A wealthy widow, Khadijah, sent him on a trading mission to Syria where he sold her merchandise from Makka

at a good profit and returned home with riches, all of which he handed over to her. Deeply impressed by his honesty and business acumen, forty-year-old Khadijah proposed marriage to the 25 year-old Muhammad(S), who was also her distant cousin, and they were married. He continued his trading missions and saw many more neighbouring countries. He loved his wife devotedly and their marital relations were blissful. She bore him six children, two sons and four daughters, including Fatima whom he adored.

Prophethood

Right from his youthful days, Muhammad(S) detested the hundreds of idols which the Makkans worshipped in the Ka'ba. He abstained from the feasts which they held to honour these 360 stones. He urged them to give up the evil practices which they followed as a part of their idolatrous existence such as nude pilgrimage and bacchanal orgies. To escape from the din and bustle of the city, he sometimes sought refuge in solitude in the cave of Hira, 3 miles from Makkah. There he meditated on the mysteries of the universe and the destiny of man on earth. His soul yearned for the divine light. On a fateful day, the Angel Gabriel appeared before him and asked him to recite the name of the Almighty Allah, the Lord of the Heavens, and the Creator of the Earth and of all mankind. Shocked by the suddenness and the glory of the divine

revelation, the forty year-old prophet hurried to his loving wife, Khadijah and told her what had happened in the cave of Hira. She took him to her uncle, Warqa bin Nawfil, who was a scholar of the earlier Scriptures. They narrated to him the whole story and the old sage was at once convinced that it was an angelic visitation and a command from God that he was henceforth to be His Prophet on earth entrusted with a divine mission to spread His word to the farthest corners of the globe. The noble housewife and a righteous woman became the first convert to Islam and a believer in the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (S).

The Angel Gabriel visited the Prophet many a time and revealed to him the word of God in the shape of the holy Qur'an. He shared knowledge of his Divine Revelation with some of his closest, relatives and friends amongst whom were the rich and magnanimous Abu Bakr, the lion-hearted Ali who respected him like a father, the learned Uthman, the intrepid Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqqas and the Prophet's former slave, Zaid, whom he treated like his own Son. They hailed Prophet Muhammad(S) as God's Messenger and joined the fold of Islam.

Encouraged by Divine support and unflinching loyalty and affection of his faithful wife and his companions, the Prophet taught them the verses of the Qur'an and the Islamic form of prayer.

As news of the Islamic religious movement launched by the Prophet reached the idolatrous rulers of Makkah, they felt alarmed and unleashed persecution on the converts to Islam. They tried to tempt the Prophet with worldly riches to subvert his faith in God but, with rock-like determination, he continued to spread the message of Islam. He showed immense patience by cheerfully bearing the tortures which the idol-worshipping Makkan rulers inflicted on him and his Muslim followers. They even tried to have him murdered but their evil designs failed. The fraternity of Muslims continued to expand rapidly and it gained in strength when the dynamic Umar and the powerful Hamzah joined it by embracing Islam. Many tribes which lived in the neighbourhood of Makkah became Muslim.

Muslims go to Abyssinia

Deeply grieved by the tortures which the Makkan rulers perpetrated on many Muslims, the Prophet persuaded 15 of them, 11 men and 4 women, to immigrate to Abyssinia where the merciful Negus gave them asylum. He spurned the mounds of gold offered by the emissaries of the Makkan rulers to hand over the Muslim refugees to them. A Christian, the Negus was pleased when the Muslims said in his court that while they believed in the Almighty God and His Prophet Muhammad(S), they also respected Jesus as a God-sent

Prophet and his mother, the Virgin Mary.

For three long and hardship-laden years, the small Muslim community in Makkah bore the social and economic boycott ordered by the Makkan rulers. But they never wavered in their allegiance to God and their faith in the divine mission of the Prophet grew stronger. In these testing times, a tragedy befell the Prophet His Uncle, Abu Talib and his wife, Muzdijah, passed away. It was an irreparable loss because he loved them dearly. But he showed great fortitude in bearing his loss. He continued his divine mission and preached Islam even in the precincts of the Ka'aba, provoking the

wrath and conspiracies of the Makkan overlords.

The process of Qur'anic revelation to the Prophet by the Angel Gabriel continued. Out of the 23 years of his Prophet-hood, thirteen were spent in Makkah and ten in Madina. About two third Qur'an was revealed to him while he was in Makkah and the divine revelation continued in Madina. Before he emigrated to Madina, the Prophet was taken by the Angel Gabriel on a journey to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem from where he ascended to the Heavens, met the Prophets who had preceded him and was ushered into God's presence. ■

PM: 'Sunita a Trailblazer'

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined celebrities, politicians, scientists and others on Wednesday to celebrate the return of Nasa astronaut Sunita Williams to earth after nine months, terming her an inspiration for generations to come and lauding her determination.

"India's daughter and her fellow astronauts have inspired everyone with their perseverance, dedication and never-say-die spirit," Murmu said on X. "Congratulations to the entire team behind the safe return of Nasa's Crew9 mission to earth. Their historic journey is a tale of determination, teamwork and extraordinary courage," she added.

The PM said it was a test of grit, courage and the boundless human spirit of the astronauts. "Their unwavering determination in the face of the vast unknown will forever inspire millions. Space exploration is about pushing the limits of human potential, daring to dream, and having the courage to turn those dreams into reality," he said, adding that Williams, a "trailblazer and an icon", had exemplified this spirit throughout her career.

(The Times of India – 20-3-2025)

Information Technology: Its Social And Moral Implications

- Abdur Rashid Siddiqui

Recite! And your Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught (the use) of the pen — taught man that which he knew not. (al-'Alaq 96:3-5)

All natural resources are decreasing. Fossil fuels oil, coal and other resources are all heavily used by human beings and without adequate alternatives to replace them their stocks will exhaust. But information is one of the resources that is increasing manifold. And what we are experiencing is called the "information explosion". The expansion and progress in this field is happening at such a fast pace that it is difficult to keep up with all this IT — Information Technology. But there is not much thought given to its consequences for society. For example, how will this transform our lives? The revolution of which we are a part cannot be stopped and should not be. It will go on apace. It has enormous potential for good but at the same time it also poses very real and serious dangers. As Muslims we believe that all knowledge comes from Allah (swt). The verses from the very first revelation that I have just recited speak of the pen; the word processor is just its next stage of development. Knowledge is a useful tool but we also need guidance on how to use properly. As Rumi, a thirteenth-century Persian poet-

philosopher said in his epic Mathnawi:

If you acquire knowledge for your carnal self it is like a serpent. But if you seek it for your heart it is your friend.

Thus, it is imperative for us to acquire this very useful and essential knowledge. But it is equally important to find a way that allows us to develop ourselves when using this technology.

IT raises many moral, social and political issues that we should address carefully. Of course, there are great benefits and much convenience provided by this tremendous tool we call the Internet. It is possible to search vast databases and retrieve useful references and even download full text as well. By the touch of a button you can tell the profitability of every company in the world, even that of any of its subsidiary companies as well. Through the Internet you can communicate to anybody in the world via an e-mail address. At the same time, with any human invention there are inherent dangers as well.

So what are the issues that we should consider about this very useful tool? As IT makes it easier to acquire and manipulate very useful information, it also makes it easier and simple to transfer pornography. Many chat lines

encourage the exchange of lewd conversations and make people live in a virtual state of hypersexual excitement. Pornography has become a roaring business on the Internet. It is easy for anyone except the strong willed to be tempted by this means of sexual gratification. It also makes it possible for pedophiles and other perverts to exchange information and perpetrate their nefarious activities. They can also lure teenagers by posing as young people themselves: this in order to abuse them. Thus, we have to take very stringent actions to safeguard our society. While not infringing personal liberty we have a duty to protect ourselves from this exploitation. The World Wide Web is extensively used as a weapon to corrupt society. With the advance of technology it is now possible to penetrate our homes and reach young people without any censorship. Unless people apply self-restraint there is nothing to stop them from viewing and downloading pornography.

Then there are other social issues. If we examine the interplay between the social shaping of technology and the technological shaping of society, then we should endeavour to re-shape, re-direct or simply resist certain technological developments. We have to realise that technological developments and innovations are not in themselves there

to shape our society. They have to be put in a social and cultural context and properly understood. We should constantly monitor, evaluate justify the use of these very powerful forces and not just submit ourselves to its dictates.

Apart from these moral and social considerations there are many political concerns as well. The question one should ask is: who controls the information? The fact is that really rich and powerful organisations control the media. Whether it is the Murdoch Empire or CNN or even the BBC. They all have their own agenda. Theoretically, there is supposed to be the free flow of information. To be truly free, the information flow should be two-way, not simply in one direction.

However the concentration of the telecommunications industry, mass media outlets and data resources precludes a full flow of free and impartial information. Western media dominate and monopolise the distribution of news. The result is that stories written about Muslims and other developing countries are distributed and transmitted by international news agencies based in New York, London and Paris. Thus news about our neighbouring countries comes to us through foreign news media. Despite the claim of objectivity, the Western mass media often distorts news from the Third World. All of us have experienced listening to and viewing

inaccuracies, slanted interpretations and untruths woven into news reports. These media moguls pour out what they want us to see and listen to. For example, from 1950 to 1989 the whole economy of the West was geared towards military expenditure to ward off the supposed threat from the Soviet Union. Billions of pounds were wasted on weapons. Scientists and technologists instead of using their resources for the betterment of mankind were engaged in the production of sophisticated arms and ammunitions. Now as the Red threat is no more it is being replaced by the threat of so-called Islamic fundamentalism. Islam is being portrayed as the great enemy of the West. The recent coverage of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the manipulation of the threat of weapons of mass destruction that led to them are the worst examples of news management. So how do we get our dissenting voices raised in the public domain?

A sample of distortion involves stressing bad news and ignoring good news, Powerful news outlets not only have the power to relay information, but they also have the power to ignore or censure information. For example, people can organise demonstrations and even collect millions of people to march on the streets of a capital city protesting against the government policy. Yet there may not be a single

word of any speech on the radio or TV. This is known to have happened on many occasions. This conspiracy of silence is equally damaging. This power to ignore and to suppress information is something that should concern us all.

Another aspect for our consideration is cultural imperialism. It is now possible to transmit directly to all countries of the world. Western programmes and Western culture which only contaminate the elite in the Muslim world has now entered our drawing rooms and bedrooms with satellite dishes. This is something that no government can control. So how can we safeguard the vulnerable from this onslaught?

We should consider another aspect as well. Louis Joinet expressing his concern at a symposium on trans-border data flow sponsored by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development said:

Information is power and economic information is economic power. Information has an economic value, and ability to store and process certain types of data may well give one country political and technological advantage over other countries.

There is no control over what sort of data is collected by remote earth sensing satellites without permission. This again is loss of sovereignty and

intrusion in the rights of states' resource management. There are many multinational organisations which collect and analyse data and exercise their propriety rights. There is no safeguard against this economic exploitation of poor countries.

Then governments and other organisations also collect personal information about people and without proper safeguards this information can be abused. They can even penetrate personal computers and extract data from them without the knowledge of their owners. George Orwell's scenario as depicted in his novel 1984 is not just fantasy. "Big Brother" is really watching us all. From sophisticated computer networks to grocery store checkout scanners, it is easier for governments, employers, advertisers and individuals to gather detailed personal information about each of us. Technological advances have made it possible for surveillance to become global and integrated commercial and government-related personal data flow both boundaries and Row private and public sectors as well. Thus we have to take measures to resist social control and incursions into our privacy.

We should be aware of these modern developments. We have to ask ourselves what systems do we need to achieve our objectives. Then we can develop our databases and

communication channels for dissemination of our message. We have to check that the information we get is accurate. So how can we establish the truth from the malicious lies? For this we have to think what organisations we need to secure our objectives. We have to learn to handle IT for the betterment of society. Thus, Information Technology has tremendous potential for both good and evil. It is our duty to channel it for the good of society. Following the guidance from our beloved Prophet (saws) we should pray:

O My Lord! I seek Your refuge from a heart which is not fearful and the prayer which is not heard and the soul which is impatient and the knowledge which is not useful.

(Ahmad)

O My Lord! The knowledge that You have given me, make it useful to me. Only give me that knowledge which is useful to me and apportion me that knowledge which is beneficial, and increase my knowledge.

(Hakim)

We are all responsible for the knowledge which we acquire and we should use it for our benefit and for the benefit of mankind. May Allah (swt) guide us and help us in our efforts.

(Amin) ■

Zakah Should Be Given To Whom

- Abdul Rehman Ansari

The Holy Qura'n makes specific reference to the headings under which Zakah money must be spent:

1. Fuqara: The poor

2. Masakin: The needy

(i) Those whose possessions do not reach the minimum Nisab limit.

(ii) Those whose earnings are not enough to satisfy the essential needs of themselves and their dependents.

Under the definition of the poor and the needy could be included, for instance, a woman who only has some expensive Clothes which are in constant use, and therefore could not be considered as accumulated wealth beyond her needs. In like manner, a person possesses a large number of books or some expensive books, which are in his use but possesses no other wealth reaching the Nisab limit, would also qualify to receive Zakah.

Likewise, a person owning fixed property or properties on the income of which he maintains his family, or farm lands from which he receives no income, and if his total income hardly suffices for the maintenance of his family and he does not have any wealth left over to reach the minimum Nisab limit, then he

is religiously defined as poor and deserving of receiving Zakah.

A person in regular employment could also come under this definition if his income is insufficient to maintain his family.

3. Amilun: Those engaged in the collection and distribution of Zakah through a community organisation or Bait az-Zakah

Where a Bait-UI-Maal is in existence on governmental level (Department of Zakah), or where a properly constituted Zakah Fund is in existence on community level, then the salaries and wages of those who are employed by the Department or the Fund in the collection and distribution of Zakah, could be paid from the Zakah money.

4. Mu-allafatu al-Qulub: Those whose hearts are made to incline towards truth - the converts who need help

Those whose hearts are inclined towards the truth means converts to the religion of Islam. If they are in need of assistance for their rehabilitation in the new religion, then zakah money could be used to assist them.

5. Riqab: Ransoming of captives, wherever such necessity arise

The ransoming-of captives is not necessary in this age, but should occasion arise when Muslim lives are required to be ransomed, then Zakah money could be used for the purpose.

6. Gharimun: The Debtors

A person, whose total liabilities exceed his total assets, is a debtor, and Zakah could therefore be given to him.

7. Ibn as-Sabil: The wayfarer (the traveller who is not poor, but finds himself stranded abroad without funds) Wayrarer means any traveller who finds himself in financial difficulties.

(i) A person away from home whose money is lost or stolen, and who thus finds himself penniless in a country where he is unknown.

(ii) A person on whom Haj is obligatory and he sets out on pilgrimage with sufficient money to cover all his expenses, but through unforeseen and unexpected increases in the cost of commodities, fares, etc. or through any other reason, he finds his funds exhausted, and he does not now possess money even for his return fare.

(iii) Zakah could be given to people who find themselves in such temporary plights.

8. Fi Sabi-lillah: Those engaged in the way of Allah

Those engaged in the way of Allah, is a term which jurists generally apply to those who are actively engaged in fighting for the defence of Islam in the battlefields, but in this category could be included:

(i) Those who are engaged in acquiring religious education and who cannot afford the requisite expenses, such as tuition fees, boarding, lodging, clothes, etc.

(ii) Those who are engaged in missionary work for the propagation of Islam without receiving any payment for their services, and/or they are able to maintain their families with great difficulty.

(iii) Those who are engaged in the work of imparting knowledge of Islam - teachers, through educational centres such as Madrasas, or schools, but who do not receive adequate salaries to maintain themselves and their families. Those could be assisted from Zakah funds and sums given to them - not as salaries but as gifts or bonuses without the need to tell them that the money comes from Zakah.

(iv) Those who are poor students in secular schools and college Money from Zakah funds could be given to them for fees, text books, boarding and lodging expenses, for clothes etc..■

The Relationship Between Ramadan And The Holy Qur'an

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

The Holy Qur'an describes Sawm (Fasting) at a great length. No other pillars of Islam were mentioned in the Qur'an in details as the Fasting.

It is worth mentioning that all Divine Books were sent down during the holy month of Ramadan. Accordingly, the Qur'an was first revealed from al-Lawh-al-Mahfooz (The preserved Tablet) to the first heaven on Laylatul Qadr (the night of Decree) all at once, then it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through Angel Jibrail intermittently over a period of 23 years. Similarly, the Suhuf (Scrolls) were sent down to Ibrahim (A.S) on first or third Ramazan. Hazrat Daud (A.S) received Zabur on 12th or 18th Ramazan, Hazrat Musa (A.S) received Tawrat on sixth Ramazan and Hazrat Isa (A.S) received Injil on 12th or 13th Ramadan. Obviously, the holy month of Ramadan has a special relationship with the all Divine Books.

As regards the Holy Qur'an, it is one of the greatest miracles of Allah. As the Holy Qur'an was revealed in the month Ramadan, therefore, it has a special relevance to the holy month of Ramadan. And that is why

Ramadan is described as the month of the Qur'an.

The main purpose of the Holy Qur'an is to lead mankind from darkness towards the light. Every book has its subject matter. And the subject matter of the Qur'an is mankind. Allah vividly says, "A Book We have revealed unto thee, in order that thou mightiest lead mankind out of the depths of darkness into light-by the leave of their Lord to the way of the Mighty the Innately praiseworthy". (S.14.A.1)

"It is the Qur'an alone which enriches us. Let us present before you some gems gleaned from the treasure-house that is the Qur'an. Its wealth suffices for the whole of mankind. Only the Qur'an can enrich the super-rich, mighty rulers and flourishing business tycoons. It can change their fortunes. Rather, it can make them rich in the real and abiding sense of the term.

The Qur'an is capable of achieving such transformation. Those indifferent to it turn into utter losers. This is the constant divine law. If the Qur'an is not acted upon in the right spirit, its bearers are doomed for

destruction. The laws enacted by Allah make no distinction. It is common knowledge that laws are to be respected and applied uniformly. The same holds true of the Qur'an and divine laws are to be respected and applied uniformly. Those failing to obtain guidance from the Qur'an are destroyed in accordance with divine laws" (Guidance from the Holy Qur'an, p, 5)

"The Holy Qur'an is the uncreated word of Allah. The Qur'an, final message to man, is exactly the same in its present version as it was at the time of the Prophet (PBUH). The Qur'an is the Book of Hidayah, the Guidance for man. Its authority is final. The Qur'an has come down to us complete. No changes have been ever made in it. Nothing of its is missing. No additions have been ever made to it. No part of it is forgotten. The Qur'an is protected by Allah Himself from all corruption. It is the only Revealed Book in the world today, preserved in its original form. It is free from all from distortions. It is precisely in the wording in which it was sent down upon Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The text of the Qur'an has remained free from all alterations, additions or deletions. Since it was revealed, there is no other instance of any book, of whatever

description, which has been preserved over such a length of time". (Studies in Islam)

It should be kept in mind that Allah is the Protector of His Book. As the Qur'an says," We have, without doubt, sent down the message; and We will assure you guard it from corruption". (S.15.A.9) Similarly, He is also Protector of those who learn, read and follow its teachings and injunctions.

As regards Fasting, it is the fourth Pillar of Islam. The Holy Qur'an says," O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may learn self- restraint. Fasting for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number should be made up from days later. For those who can do it with hardship, is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will, it is better for him. And ye fast, if ye only knew". (S.2.A.183- 184)

It is also a special gift of Allah. It strengthens and deepens our Iman (Faith)."It deeply affects the human heart both spiritually and physically. It brings us closer to Allah, making us more aware our actions and intentions.

Besides, it helps reduce anxiety,

stress and depression, promoting a sense of inner peace and contentment. It also helps purifying the heart by removing negative traits like greed, arrogance, and anger. It is the best opportunity for self- reflection, repentance and strengthening the connection with Allah.”

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says,” When the month of Ramazan begins, the gates of Mercy are opened, the gates of hell are locked, the devils are shut” (Muslim). Every act of man is for him except fasting. It is done for My (Allah) sake, and I will give a reward for it. The breath of the faster is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk”. (Muslim)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said,” There are three persons whose dua is not rejected, the fasting person until he opens his fast, the just leader and the supplication of the oppressed person” (Tirmidhi)

He also said,” whoever observes the Fast, believing and seeking reward of Allah, his past sins forgiven”.

It is significant to note that the Holy Qur’an is one of the greatest blessings of Allah. It has a deep relationship with the month of Ramadan. It was revealed to last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the Angel Jibrail during the month of

Ramadan. As the Holy Qur’an vividly says, “Ramadan is the month in which was sent down the Qur’an as a guide to mankind, also clear signs for guidance and judgment between right and wrong. So everyone of you who is present at his home during this month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period should be made up by days later. Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties. He wants you to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance ye shall be grateful.” (S.2.A.185)

Muslims observe fast from dawn to sunset, engage in extra prayers, including the Tarawih prayer. They listen to the entire Holy Qur’an during this holy month. The believers strive to complete the recitation of the Holy Qur’an at least once during this blessed month.

No doubt, the Holy Qur’an is closely related to Ramadan. Even Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to recite the Holy Qur’an in every Ramadan and Hazrat Jibrail used to recite it to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Listening to the Holy Qur’an and reciting it is *Sinnah*. Generally it is followed in Tarawih prayer.

It should be noted that the trend of reciting the Holy Qur'an increases in the holy month of Ramadan and generally Muslims recite more during this holy month considering the relationship between the Qur'an and Ramadan.

It should also be noted that the Holy Qur'an was sent down on Laylatul Qadr during the month of Ramadan. The Qur'an speaks of Laylatul Qadr in two places. In Sura 97, it is mentioned thrice and in Surah 44, where it is described as Laylatun Mubarakah, a blessed night; a night of grandeur and majesty. Allah says, "We have sent it down on the Night of Power. What will make you know what the Night of Power is? The Night of power is better than a thousand months" (S.97.A.1-3)

Several Traditions show that the believers should look for it as one of the odd nights during the last ten nights of Ramadan: the twenty- first, the twenty- third, the twenty- fifth, the twenty- seventh or the twenty- ninth. Allah's Messenger is reported to have said "Seek Laylatul Qadr among the odd nights during the last nights of Ramadan. "He also said," A month has come to you in which there deprives himself of its blessings, is deprived of all blessings. And none is deprived of the blessings of the Night of Power

except the most unfortunate".

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is reported to have said, "He who passes the Laylatul Qadr in prayer, out of faith and seeking pleasure of Allah, will have his past sins forgiven!"

More importantly, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Fasting and the Qur'an will intercede for the slave on the Day of Judgment. Fasting will say," O my Lord! Prevented him from food and sexual desires, so accept my intercession for him". Likewise, the Qur'an will intercede for its reciters on the Day of Resurrection". This means that our good deeds and actions will be weighed against our bad ones on the Day of Judgment.

That is why Muslims spend this night in prayer and seeking Divine blessings.

In short, the Holy Qur'an and Sawm (Fasting) are both great blessings of Allah for believers and both can lead lifelong spiritual and physical benefits.

Hence, it is imperative for us to spend this holy month of Ramadan by reciting the Holy Qur'an as much as we can and attain Taqwa (piety) which is the sole purpose of the holy month of Ramadan. ■

Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him)

His Loyalty to the Messenger of Allah

Anas was a loyal and sincere follower of the Messenger of Allah one realizes this from the Ahadith reported from him whenever he mentions the Prophet. One finds in his speech the words of a person who loves and is truthful and he did not alter this love after the death of the Prophet instead, he preserved its strength and honesty.

It is reported on the authority of Anas that he said: "I never felt brocade or silk that was softer than the hand of the Messenger of Allah nor did I ever smell any fragrance sweeter than that of the Messenger of Allah. I served the Messenger of Allah for ten years and he never once said 'Uff' to me, nor did he ever say of anything which I did: 'Why did you do it?' Nor did he say of anything which I did not do: 'Did you not do such and such?'"

Do you not perceive in every word of this Hadith the sincere love and the unique loyalty? Indeed, it might be that the Hadith itself contains the reason for that love and that is the high moral character of the Messenger of Allah and the unique

treatment which Anas received at his hands.

He used to remember the Messenger of Allah much after his death and whenever he did so, his eyes would fill with tears and he would sob uncontrollably, and because his love for the Prophet filled his heart and mind, he frequently saw him in his dreams.

It is reported on the authority of Al-Muthanna bin sa'eed Az-Zarra' that he said: "I hear Anas saying: 'Never does a night pass without my seeing my dear one the Messenger of Allah then he would weep.'" And he used to say: "I wish that I could meet the Messenger of Allah and say to him: 'Oh, Messenger of Allah! It is your humble servant.'"

Because of his love for the Messenger of Allah, he longed to see him on the Day of Resurrection, in order to say to him: "Oh, Messenger of Allah! It is your humble servant," and to seek intercession from him. We sense in every word of his speech, the deep longing he felt for the Messenger of Allah, and that longing was the natural result of his love for the Messenger of Allah.

Even when he was dying, Anas did not let that distract him from thoughts of the Messenger of Allah rather he was eager to have something to remind him of the Messenger of Allah while he was in his grave.

Thabit Al-Bunani said that Anas bin Malik said to him: "This is one of the hairs of the Messenger of Allah so place it under my tongue." He said: "So I placed it under his tongue and he was buried with it under his tongue.

And he had a little stick which had belonged to the Messenger of Allah, and when he died, he ordered that it be buried with him, between his side and his shroud.

Everything which comes from a loved one is beloved, even when the person is alive and sustained. As for one who insists upon this even after his death, there is no doubt that this is evidence of a unique love.

His Fighting

Anas took part in the defense of Muslim beliefs from the time he was a young boy, for he attended the Battle of Badr with the Messenger of Allah in order to serve him; and is not one who serves a leader in a battle considered to be a participant?

Thumamah bin Anas reported

that it was said to Anas:

"Did you take part in the Battle of Badr?" He replied: "And how could I be absent from Badr?" And Anas said: "I took part with the Messenger of Allah in Al-Hudaibiyyah, his 'Umrah, his Hajj, the conquest of Makkah and the Battles of Hunain, At-Ta'if and Khaibar."

He also took part in the Battle of Tustar and he brought Al-Hurmuzan to 'Umar and he embraced Islam and became a good Muslim.

Musa bin Anas bin Malik was asked how many battles Anas had taken part in and he said: "Twenty-seven battles; in eight of them, he was away for months and in nineteen of them, he was away for days."

He was a skillful archer, who seldom missed his target; he would order his sons to fire in front of him and sometimes, he might fire with them and he would beat them due to the frequency with which he hit the target.

Anas, the Narrator of Hadith

We cannot open a book of authentic Ahadith without finding the name of Anas, for he was a famous narrator of Ahadith; he narrated thousands of Ahadith from the Messenger of Allah and he did not

narrate anything from him unless he was certain of what he said, but in spite of this, he would not narrate a Hadith without adding: "or as he said," due to his fear of forgetting a word or altering the wording. A part of what gives his Ahadith their high value is the fact that he lived close to the Messenger of Allah and so his Ahadith are a record of the life of the Messenger of Allah both in word and deed. His Ahadith covered all aspects of life, including acts of worship, manners, Seerah and other subjects. Anas reported from many of the Companions, as he narrated from the Messenger of Allah he reported from Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, 'Umar, Uthman, 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hudhaifah bin Al-Yaman, Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari, Mutadh bin Jabal, 'Ubadah bin As-Samit, Abud_Darda', Zaid bin Thabit, 'Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf, Fatimah and many others may Allah be pleased with them all.

Here are some examples of his Ahadith, so that you may see how they cover most of the matters which are important to the Muslim:

It is reported on the authority of Anas that he said: "The Messenger of Allah was the best of people in morals."

And it is reported from him that

he said: "Up to the day he died, the Messenger of Allah did not eat from a Khiwan and he did not eat thin bread."

And it is reported from him that he said: "The Messenger of Allah said: "Straighten your rows, for straightening the rows is a part of the completion of prayer.

And it is reported from him that he said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: "Allah said: 'Oh, son of Adam! So long as you supplicate Me and ask of Me, I will forgive you for what you have done and I will not mind. Oh, son of Adam! Were your sins to reach the clouds in the heaven, then you asked My forgiveness, I would forgive you. Oh, son of Adam! Were you to come to me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as It."

And it is reported on the authority of Anas that he said: "Abu Talhah was the wealthiest of the Ansar in Al-Madinah in date-palms and the most beloved property which he possessed was the garden of Bairuha' and it was in front of the Mosque of the Prophet. The Messenger of Allah used to go there and used to drink its sweet water." Anas added: "When this Verse was

revealed: 'By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you spend (in charity) of that which you love: (3:92) Abu Talhah said to the Messenger of Allah: "Oh, Messenger of Allah! Allah, the Blessed, the Superior says: 'By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you spend (in charity) of that which you love.' And without doubt the garden of Bairuha' is the most beloved of all my property to me. So, I want to give it in charity in Allah's Cause. I hope for the reward of it from Allah, the Most High. Oh, Messenger of Allah! Spend it where Allah shows you that it is best." On that, the Messenger of Allah said: "Excellent! That is a valuable property that is a valuable property. I have heard what you have said (oh, Abu Talhah), and I think it would be proper if you gave it to your kith and kin." Abu Talhah said: "I will do so, oh, Messenger of Allah!" Then Abu Talhah distributed that garden among his relatives and his cousins."

And it is reported from him that whenever the Messenger of Allah fought in a battle, he would say: "Oh, Allah! You are the One Whom I trust and depend upon and You are my Protector. By You, I defeat the plots of my enemies and oppose evil, and by You, I attack, and by You, I fight."

And it is reported from him that he said: "The most frequent supplication of the Prophet was: "Allallumma, aatina fid-Dunya hasanatan wa fil-Akhirati hasanatan wa qina 'Azaban-Nar (Oh, Allah! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good and save us from the punishment of the Hell-fire).

The Companions Reverence for Him and what They said about Him

Anas remained a man of good reputation throughout his life no one said anything but good of him and the Companions of the Messenger of Allah extolled him and esteemed him due to the love which they knew he had for the Messenger of Allah and to his virtue, piety, knowledge and abstemiousness.

It is reported on the authority of Musa bin Anas that when Abu Bakr became Caliph, he sent for Anas bin Malik and ordered him to go to Bahrain during the time of Al-Fitnah and 'Umar came to Abu Bakr and Abu Bakr said to him: "I want to send him to Bahrain, but he is a young man." 'Umar replied: "Send him, for he is intelligent and literate." And Abu Hurairah said: "I have not seen anyone whose prayer resembles that of the Messenger of Allah more than

Ibn Umm Sulaim (i.e., Anas)".

Anas bin Sirin said: "Anas bin Malik was the best of people in prayer whether at home or on a journey."

'Umar bin Al-Khattab honored him, according to the Hadith narrated by Anas himself; he said: "Abu Bakr appointed me to collect the Zakah, but when I came to him, he had died. 'Umar said: "Oh, Anas Have you come to us with the caravan?" I said: "Yes," He said: "We have brought it; the money is yours." I said: "It is more than that." He said: "Even so, it is yours." and it was four thousand."

Some of the Companions used to serve him due to the great respect they had for him, because he had served the Messenger of Allah

It is reported on the authority of Anas that he said: "I accompanied Jarir bin 'Abdullah and he served me and he said: 'I saw how the Ansar behaved towards the Messenger of Allah I did not see any of them who did not serve him."

And whenever the noble Companion, Thabit came to Anas, he would kiss his hand; it is reported on the authority of Jamilah, the slave-girl of Anas that when Thabit came to Anas, he said: "Oh, Jamilah! Bring me perfume to wipe over my hand

with, for Ibn Abi Thabit will insist on kissing my hand; he says: 'It is a hand that touched the hand of the Messenger of Allah."

And Qatadah said that when Anas bin Malik died, Mu'arriq Al-Ajali said: "Today half of the knowledge has departed."

Intercede for Me,

Oh, Messenger of Allah!

The Prophet treated Anas with complete love, affection, care and kindness. And he imbibed from him knowledge as much as Allah willed, but Anas, who found every kindness and consideration at the hands of the Prophet desired something greater than that from the Prophet. And is there anything greater than what the Prophet gave him from his great benevolence? Yes, he desired that which is more permanent and more lasting he desired Paradise; and in spite of all his worship and his striving, he wanted a guarantee of the intercession of the Prophet and for this reason he requested that he intercede with Allah on his behalf. Anas said: I asked the Messenger of Allah to intercede for me and he said: "I will do so." I asked him: "Where shall I seek you?" He replied: "Look for me on As-Sirat" I said: "And if I do not find you there?" He answered:

“Then I will be at Al-Mizan I said: “And if I did not find you at Al- Mizan?” He said: “Then I will be at Al-Hawd.” I will not miss these three locations on the Day of Resurrection.

These questions following each other in succession are evidence of great keenness to achieve the intercession of the Prophet and in addition to attain Paradise and this keenness confirms the Strength of his faith in Allah’s Promise of pleasure and Gardens as wide as the heavens and the earth. And a person does not show keenness for something unless he is absolutely convinced that it will occur and Anas was absolutely convinced of the truth of Allah’s Promise, as is obvious from this Hadith.

Anas spent his blessed life in the service of this religion, as a servant of the Messenger of Allah as a student, as a worshipper who imitated strictly the practices of the Prophet (PBUH), as a teacher who was generous with his abundant knowledge from which the people benefited greatly during his lifetime and from which they will continue to benefit until the Day of Resurrection via the books from which every person seeking the truth imbibes. He lived his life in loyalty to the Messenger of Allah, keeping his

covenant with him, imitating him and remembering every kindness of the Prophet.

It was as if the soul of Anas felt an aversion to the life of this world after the departure of all of the companions of the Messenger of Allah; it was said to Anas “You are the last remaining Companion of the Messenger of Allah.” He replied: “Some of the Bedouins still remain, but as for his Companions, I am the last of them.”

And it was as if his spirit longed for Muhammad and his Companions. No one can avoid the departure from the fleeting life of this world and so his pure spirit departed from his body. He had spent his life prostrating and bowing (in prayer), fasting and fighting and his soul ascended to the intercession of the prophet and the meeting with him, so that he might say: “Oh, Messenger of Allah! It is your humble servant.” His death occurred in the year 93 AH, when he was over ninety years of age and he was buried in Basrah. He ordered that a short stick which had belonged to the Messenger of Allah be buried with him, along with a hair from the Prophet, confirming thereby his love for the Prophet even at death time. ■

Around the World

400+ Die in Israel Strikes in Gaza in One of Biggest Single-Day Tolls.

JERUSALEM/CAIRO: Israeli air strikes pounded Gaza and killed more than 400 people, Palestinian health authorities said in an onslaught across the enclave that ended weeks of relative calm after talks to secure a permanent ceasefire stalled.

Israel of breaching the truce, which had broadly held since Jan, offering respite from war for the 2 million inhabitants of Gaza, where most buildings have been reduced to rubble. Hamas, accused Israel of jeopardising efforts by mediators to negotiate a permanent deal to end the fighting, but the group made no threat of retaliation.

The strikes hit houses and tent encampments from the north to the south of the Gaza Strip, and Israeli tanks shelled from across the border line, witnesses said. Gaza's Hamasrun health ministry said 404 people had been killed in one of the biggest single-day tolls since the war erupted. Families in Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip and eastern areas of Khan Younis in the south fled their homes after the Israeli military issued evacuation orders warning the areas were "dangerous combat zones". UN emergency relief coordinator Tom Fletcher said the "modest gains" made during the ceasefire had been destroyed. He said humanitarian aid and commercial essentials must be allowed to enter Gaza. Israel has halted aid deliveries into Gaza for over two weeks, exacerbating a humanitarian crisis.

India-B'desh Ties in 'Good Shape': Yunus

Chief adviser Muhammad Yunus said that relations between Bangladesh and India "remain positive", with no deterioration in bilateral ties, despite "some challenges" arising from "propaganda".

"Some conflicts had been seen mid-way. I would say, some clouds were seen. These clouds mostly came through propaganda. Others will judge the sources," he said as the interim government in Dhaka is set to complete seven months in office.

"We are trying to overcome these misunderstandings. There is no problem in our basic relationship (with India)," Yunus told BBC Bangla in an interview.

New Delhi's response to his statement about the bilateral ties being "in good shape" remains to be seen.

India had repeatedly cited targeted attacks on Hindus, their temples and businesses since the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5 last year, a charge the chief adviser denied on different occasions.

In Monday's interview, Yunus said relations between Bangladesh and India is "historically, politically and economically" so deep that even after the recent untoward events, they remained "in good shape" and "will remain good in the future". He said, "There is no alternative to maintaining good relations... no scope of deviating from them."

Highlighting the "huge interdependence" between the two neighbours, Yunus said there is "continuous communication" between them. ■

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