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## EDITORIAL

*All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted*

# Value Your Time

If you are rich, how dearly you hold your capital; and if poor how careful about your meager sum? Every single penny you would like to spend only at such a time when there is a hope of obtaining a particular pleasure or benefit in lieu; but, have you ever taken into account the great blessing given to you by Allah, the big wealth provided by the nature – called Time? You know whatever you do today takes place within the dimension of time; thus, it means that you have to render account for each and every fraction of a second, a minute or an hour. Are you ready for that?

In future someone else will take you to account; why not evaluate yourselves now? In what avocations do you spend 365 days a year and 24 hours a day? From this, how much time do you cull out to remember Allah? How much do you devote to Salaah and other religious observances? For how much period do you remain engaged in human service? How much in commiserating the grief-stricken and in assisting the helpless? And then, how much time you have wasted in fostering, adoring and flaunting your person and your attributes? Hasn't it happened, time and again, that you expended the whole days in merriment and the nights in entertainment? Doesn't it usually happen that most important and extremely necessary obligations are left in lieu to countless absurdities? Won't there be any inquiry with regard to the moments going waste in backbiting and caviling, envy and jealousy, lie and exaggeration, pride and ostentation, sycophancy and glibness, selfishness and amusement? Won't there be any account-

ability concerning the life breaths going through your bosoms in a negligent and inebriated way? Further, what is this that vis-à-vis worldly matters you are considered highly intellectual, wise and organised, but in wasting the wealth of time the tale of your prodigal liberty is noticeably inscribed in the running pages of day and night.

If you are still a youth then it is comparatively easy for you to reform yourself. For God's sake, strive to appreciate the value of time from this very moment. Keep it in mind that the progress and betterment of both you and your community lie in relinquishing the futile engagements and using the wealth of time in profitable and constructive activities. In case, you have advanced in years then it is far more necessary that you turn your attention towards this issue as the next generation is going to follow you only and you yourself are unaware when your time (of leaving this world) will draw near. Surely, you won't be held responsible for anything that is beyond your capacity, but you will be certainly asked, and there won't be any easy answers, if you fail to give your time in full to address the matters lying well within your power and domain and which are inviting your attention to reach fruition. The main reason behind the miserable conditions confronted by the Muslims, both at individual and community level, with regard to their affairs is only because our youth and aged, wealthy and poor, men and women, educated and uneducated, city dwellers and villagers, or any other category, have ceased to appreciate the worth and value of time.

# Question Answer

## Question.

What is moderation in religion?

## Answer.

Moderation in religion means that one does not exaggerate and go beyond the limit set by Allah, and that one does not neglect it and fall short of the limit set by Allah.

Moderation in religion means following the example of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Exaggeration means trying to do more than he did, and negligence means not reaching that level.

For example, a man says, "I want to spend all night in prayer (qiyaam al-layl), and never sleep all my life, because prayer is one of the best acts of worship, so I want to spend the entire night in prayer." We say, this is going to extremes in the religion of Allah, and this is not right. Something like this happened at the time of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), when a group of men got together and one of them said, "I will pray at night and never sleep." Another said, "I will fast and never break my fast." The third one said, "I will never marry women." News of that reached the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and he said, "What is wrong with people who say such and such? I fast and I break my fast. I sleep, and I marry women. Whoever overlooks my Sunnah does not belong to me." These people had gone to extremes in religion, and so the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) disowned them, because they overlooked his Sunnah which includes fasting and not fasting, praying at night and sleeping, and marrying women.

The one who is falling short is one who says, "I do not need to do voluntary (naafil) actions, so I will not do them. I will

only do the fard actions. He may even be falling short in the fard actions, so this person is lacking.

The moderate person is one who follows the path of the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and his rightly-guided successors (al-Khulafaa' al-Raashidoon).

Another example: three men are faced with an immoral man. One of them says, "I will not greet this immoral man and I will boycott him, keep away from him and not speak to him."

The second one says, "I will go with this immoral man, greet him and smile at him. I will invite him to my place and accept his invitation. He is just like any righteous man to me."

The third one says, "I hate this immoral man for his immoral actions, but I love him for his faith. I will not boycott him unless doing so is in his best interests. If there is nothing to be gained by boycotting him, and if that will only increase him in his immorality, then I will not boycott him."

We say that the first man is going to extremes, the second is negligent and the third is moderate.

The same applies to all other acts of worship and dealings with others. People vary between extremism, negligence and moderation.

A third example: A man is a prisoner of his wife, who directs him as she wishes and he does not stop her from committing sin, or urge her to do good. She has taken over his reason and has become the one who is in charge of him.

Another man treats his wife in a harsh, arrogant and high-handed manner. He does not care about her and regards her as

less than a servant.

A third man is moderate in his dealings with his wife, as Allah and His Messenger commanded.

*"And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable" [al-Baqarah 2:228 – interpretation of the meaning]*

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:] "Let no believing man hate a believing woman. If he dislikes one of her characteristics he will be pleased with another."

This last man is the one who is moderate. The second one is extreme in his dealings with his wife, and the first is falling short.

The same applies to all other deeds and acts of worship.

#### **Question.**

Is it compulsory to shave the head of new born baby within seven days of birth?

#### **Answer.**

In order to obtain blessings the following should be done:

1. The afterbirth (placenta) and navel cord should be buried with due care since they are parts of the human body.
2. Upon birth: the newly born child should be given a proper Ghusl.
3. Thereafter, the first words to reach the child's ears should be the message of the Greatness and Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Rasulullah (Sallallahu ?alayhi Wasallam). This is done by giving Adhaan near the right ear and Iqaamat close to the left ear (this noble act should be preferably be done by an ?alim or a pious elder of the family). If such a person is not immediately available then any Muslim male may conduct this Sunnat.
4. To perform Tahneek (placing of a date, softened by chewing on the tongue of the

new born baby). The act of Tahneek should also preferably be done by an ?alim or a pious elder of the family. If such a person is not available then any Muslim male may perform this act. Honey may be a substitute for dates, if dates are not available.

5. To give the new born an appropriate name on the 7th day.

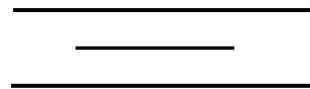
6. To make Aqeeqa on the 7th day.

7. Aqeeqa is a form of Sadaqah whereby the child is safeguarded against misfortunes. Two sheep, alternatively two goats are slaughtered in the case of a male while one goat or one sheep in the case of a female. If for some reason Aqeeqa was not made on the 7th day, then it should be done on the 14th, 21st 28th or any day in multiples of 7 thereafter. The sooner the Aqeeqa is performed the better.

8. It is Mustahabb to remove the baby's hair on the 7th day after birth - gold alternatively silver equivalent to the weight of the removed hair may be given as charity to the poor otherwise its equivalent value in money. The hair should be buried with due care and respect.

9. To prescribe Salaat to the children when they are seven years of age.

10. To chastise them if they don't perform Salaat when they are 10 years of age. One is reminded here of the separating of males from that of females when the child turns ten years of age.



#### **Cont'd from page 6**

Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to learn the Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S). They had no source of income; still they did not ask anyone to fulfill their needs. A stranger used to think that they were well-to-do, because they refrained from posing themselves as needy.

# Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

## Sura Baqarah—Verse 265-274

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ  
وَتَنْبِيئًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ  
فَأَتَتْ أَكْطَافَهَا ضَعْفَيْنِ ۖ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ ۗ  
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۚ ۲۶۵

*The example of those who spend their wealth to seek the pleasure of Allah and to make firm (their faith) from (the depths of) their souls is like a garden on a foothill on which came a heavy rain, and it yielded its produce twofold. Even if a heavy rain does not come to it, a light drizzle is enough, and Allah is watchful of what you do. (2:265)*

أَيُّودٌ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ  
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ  
وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْكِبَرَ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ ۗ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ  
فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۚ ۲۶۶

*Would any of you wish to have a garden of dates and grapes, with rivers flowing beneath it, in which there are all kinds of fruit for him, and old age befalls him, and he has children who are (too) weak (to earn livelihood), then a whirlwind comes upon it with fire in it, and it is all burnt?<sup>149</sup> This is how Allah makes the signs clear to you, so that you may ponder. (2:266)*

149. Obviously, nobody would like to face such a situation. Similarly, a person who spends in charity deserves reward in the Hereafter, and he is like the one who has a

garden, full of trees producing fruits. But if he boasts about his generosity, embarrasses the person to whom he gave the charity and subjects him to any kind of physical or mental discomfort, then these acts are like a whirlwind that destroys the garden which will render all the rewards of charitable acts nullified. Reference to old age in this parable is to indicate that after reaching such an age, one can no longer earn more. His only hope is the garden he has, and once it is destroyed, he has no hope to recover this loss. Similarly, when a person is raised in the coming life, he will not be able to bring new virtues and their rewards to his credit. His only hope would be the charitable acts he performed in the worldly life, but when they will be nullified by his own bad deeds, he will turn out to be empty handed.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ  
وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا  
الْحَيَاتِ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخِيذِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُعْمِضُوا  
فِيهِ ۗ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ۚ ۲۶۷

*O you who believe, spend of the good things you have earned, and of what We have brought forth for you from the earth, and do not opt for a bad thing, spending only from it, while you are not going to accept it (if such a thing is offered to you), unless you close your eyes to it, and know well that Allah is All-Independent, Ever-Praised. (2:267)*

الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ  
يَعِدُكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۚ ۲۶۸

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يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ۚ ۲۶۹

**Satan frightens you with poverty, and bids you to commit indecency, and Allah promises you forgiveness from Him, and grace as well. And Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. [2:268]**

**He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever is given wisdom is certainly given a lot of good. Only the people of understanding observe the advice. [2:269]**

وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ ثَقْفَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ۚ ۲۷۰

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ۚ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۗ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۚ ۲۷۱

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ هُدَايُهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَا تُنْفِسْكُمْ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفِّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

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**Whatever expenditure you spend and whatever vow you make, Allah knows all of it, and for the unjust, there are no supporters. [2:270] If you make Sadaqāt (alms) openly, it is good enough, and if you keep it secret and give it to the needy, it is much better for you, and this will write off part of your sins. Allah is All-Aware of what you do. [2:271] It is not for you to put them on the right path. 150 Rather, Allah puts on the right path whom He wills. Whatever good you spend is for your own selves, and you shall not spend but to seek the pleasure of Allah, and whatever good thing you spend shall be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged. [2:272]**

150. The background of this verse is that some Muslims abstained from giving charities

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to non-Muslim needy person under the hope that it would induce them to accept Islam. Allah directs them not to abstain from spending on needy persons, particularly the relatives, even though they are not Muslims, because it is Allah's prerogative to put someone on right path. Nobody else is responsible for that. It should be noted, however, that this rule is applicable to optional charities. As for Zakah, it cannot be given to a non-Muslim.

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَحْصَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ صَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يُحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَعْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ ۚ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ ۚ لَا يَسْتَلُونَ النَّاسَ الْحَافًا ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ۚ ۲۷۳

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۚ ۲۷۴

**(Your charities should be preferably meant) for the needy who are confined in the way of Allah, unable to travel in the land. 151 An ignorant person takes them as free of need because of their abstinence. You know them by their appearance (from begging). They do not beg people importunately, and whatever good thing you spend, Allah is All-Aware of it. [2:273]. Those who spend their wealth night and day, secretly and openly, they have their reward with their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.**

**[2:274]**

151. It refers to those who have devoted themselves for learning Islamic disciplines. Their inability to travel is not because any physical handicap, but because they have dedicated their lives for that purpose. According to some reports there were Ashab-us-Suffah i.e., the Sahaaba (RA) of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) who used to stay in the Mosque of the Holy

**Cont'd on page 4**

# Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

*Dr. Rafiq Ahmad*

## *The Book of Ablution*

### **Chapter 25 : To inhale water in the nose during ablution.**

This has been quoted from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) by Uthmaan bin Abdullah bin Zayd and Ibn Abbas.

#### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab**

Imam Ahmad is of the opinion that to inhale water into the nose for cleaning (Istinshar) while performing Wudu is obligatory (Wajib). Imam Bukhari (RA) also seems to be of the same opinion for two reasons viz., 1. he has preceded the Hadith of Istinshar over Madhmadah (rinsing of mouth with water) and 2. for Istinshar, imperative (صيغة أمر) sentence has been used in Hadith whereas it is not so for Madhmadah.

#### **Hadith No. 158**

#### **Narrated Abu Huraira (RA)**

*The Prophet said, "Whoever performs ablution should inhale water in his nose and then blowing it out, and whoever cleans his private parts with stones should do it with odd number of stones."*

#### **Comments**

The front soft portion of the nose has hair vibrissae which trap dust particles present in air that is inhaled and the inner mucus membrane of the nose secretes the mucus secretion. These secretions and the inhaled dust particles of air form dirt in the nose. Since Shaitaan likes dirty places, so it becomes one of the places where Shaitaan resides; that is why it has been directed in the Hadith to wash the nose while performing Wudu. And Allah knows the best.

### **Chapter 26 : To clean the private parts with odd number of stones or clay pieces.**

#### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab**

In the last Hadith it was mentioned that odd number of stones or clay pieces should be used for Istinja. In order to further support that Imam Bukhari has got this chapter.

#### **Hadith No. 159**

#### **Narrated Abu Huraira (RA)**

*Allah's Apostle said, "If anyone of you performs ablution he should put water in his nose and then blow it out and whoever cleans*

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*his private parts with stones should do so with odd numbers. And whoever wakes up from his sleep should wash his hands before putting them in the water for ablution, because nobody knows where his hands were during sleep."*

given such a warning like "ويل للأعقاب من النار" to Sahaaba for keeping the heels dry in Wudu because in Masah to rub every part of feet is not necessary.

#### **Hadith No. 160**

#### **Comments**

There is difference of opinion amongst the scholars of Hadith whether using three stone pieces is obligatory or optional. The Hanafi school of thought is of the opinion that it is not obligatory to use three pieces. The real purpose is to achieve the cleanliness of private parts in Istinja and that may be achieved with three pieces or less than three or more than three. However, to use three pieces are usually sufficient to achieve the cleanliness. As per Shafa'ee school of thought the number of three stone pieces is obligatory.

Lastly the Hadith says that when a person gets up from sleep he should first wash his hands before putting them in the water pot or container because one does not know if his hand might have got contaminated during sleep. For example, if there is water in a bucket, one should first get some water by tilting it and wash his hands instead of inserting his hands directly into the bucket.

#### **Chapter 27 : Washing the feet, and not to do Masah (passing of wet hands) over the feet.**

##### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab**

Imam Bukhari (RA) strongly advocates that washing the feet is a must in Wudu and that to perform only Masah over them is not permissible thereby refuting the claim of Shia people who believe that Masah on feet is permissible. By quoting this Hadith here, Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to convey that, had Masah been permissible then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would have not

#### **Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Amr (RA)**

*The Prophet remained behind us on a journey. He joined us while we were performing ablution for the 'Asr prayer which was over-due and we were just passing wet hands over our feet (not washing them thoroughly) so he addressed us in a loud voice saying twice or thrice, "Woe to the heels from the Fire".*

#### **Comments**

Abdullah bin Umar says that in a journey Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) remained behind us and the time of Asr Salaah was coming to end, so they were hurriedly performing Wudu. Due to hurriedness and shortage of water they had left their heels unwashed. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) came, he saw their heels were dry after performing Wudu. At this moment he warned them that the heels which are not washed properly in Wudu will go into the hell. From this Hadith, Imam Bukhari (RA) and majority of Ulema of Ahle-Sunnah wal Jamah have derived the conclusion that washing of feet is obligatory in Wudu, otherwise there would not have been such a severe warning.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

*O you who believe! when you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far*



*as the elbows, and wipe your heads and wash your feet to the ankles; (5:6)*

In this verse Allah says that when you intend to offer Salaah, wash your faces, arms up to elbows, rub your head and wash your feet up to the ankles. As per Arabic grammar the word "Arjulakum" can be recited as "Arjulakum" with 'Fatah' on 'Laam'. In this case it will get related with "Fagsiloo" meaning thereby that you wash feet in addition to washing face and arms. If it is read as "Arjulikum" with 'Kasrah' on 'Laam', then it will get related to 'Wamsahoo' meaning thereby that you rub (i.e., Masah) your feet as you rub your head. There is consensus in the Ummah that this word is read as "Arjulakum" i.e., with 'Fatah' on 'Laam', thereby related to washing. Only the Shiats read it with 'Kasrah' as "Arjulikum".

The reasons given in favour of the opinion that washing of feet in Wudu is a must are as follows:

1. Haafiz Asqalaani says that it has been quoted with 'Tawaatur' (continuity) from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that he always washed his feet while performing Wudu. (Fathul Baari).
2. Abdul Rahman bin Abi Laila has quoted Ijma (consensus) from Sahaaba about the washing of feet in Wudu. (Fathul Baari)
3. The Hadith quoted in this chapter by Imam Bukhari (RA) strongly proves that rubbing (Masah) is not permissible because in Masah to rub each portion of the part is not necessary.
4. Arjulakum is related to "Fagsiloo" i.e., washing, this is also proved by the fact that it is tagged with the word 'up to the ankles' as is the washing of arms tagged with 'up to the elbows'. This specification of limits is not mentioned about Masah on head.

#### **Classification**

One question which can be raised here is that why washing of feet is mentioned at the end and not in continuity with washing of face and arms? The answer given by the Ulema to this question is that the Qur'anic verse has kept in consideration the sequence that is to be necessarily adopted while performing Wudu.

## Goodness brings Goodness

*The conditions affecting the mother during pregnancy tend to affect the child within her as well. Infact, some physicians are of the impression that the conditions affecting the parent during intercourse affect the habits and disposition of the child as well.*

*Therefore during pregnancy, the mother should ponder at length over the religious achievements of some pious personality. This, will Insha-Allah produce a pious offspring. If both parents perform their Fajr salaah in the morning following the night of conception, Insha-Allah the child will be obedient to Allah. If Fajr salaah is missed, there is a fear that their children will be disobedient to them, just as they have been disobedient to their Allah. As parents, we are the gardeners of our children. What we plant today will be harvested tomorrow. Our lives of goodness will bring such children into this world that are also full of goodness.*

# Purposeful or Purposeless?

*V Muhammad Ashrof*

Materialism and positivism destroys the purpose and meaning of life. Its premise is that blind physical forces, brought us forth in a world already were extant. There is no moral order in the universe in which goodness and justice must finally prevail. Man is an accident of the cosmos, formed by chance and chaos, directionless in life, and in the end, nothing but food for worms. The universe is purposeless and meaningless for neither the universe as a whole nor human beings. In the unfeeling immensity of the universe out of which we emerged by natural forces, humans must live it alone and draw upon our own resources. This is most certainly a philosophy of despair, cynicism and pessimism. Does humanity have a design and purpose? Or are we all a kind of cosmic accident - with all human achievements destined to an eventual oblivion of destruction in an unthinking universe? Do we as individuals have any meaning, or are accidental little flickers of consciousness in an eternity of nothingness? Can our lives have any real purpose?

The character of the universe is not the result of a mere creative sport (44:38). When the universe as one united whole and the deep order that permeates it are taken into consideration, it becomes impossible for one to escape the conclusion that this universe has not come into existence accidentally. Indeed, the consummate harmony that pervades it forcefully points to the fact the whole system has been created and is being directed by one Intelligent Being who is all powerful and all-knowing (2:164). For think-

ing people, the message described in the verse is apparent everywhere in the cosmos and in natural phenomena. Wise people see with open eyes the creative activity of God at work in heaven and on earth. They see the Wisdom and Mercy of God behind the system of day and night. When they see ships plowing the oceans carrying commercial goods from one part of the planet to the other, they associate how their *Rabb* (Lord) had made the natural order serve Mankind. The Qur'an has described the psychology of the unbelievers: 'Even if We open to them a gateway of heaven, so that they ascend into it all the while. They would certainly say: Only our eyes have been covered over, rather we are an enchanted people' (15:14- 15). God must have a purpose to create the universe and human beings. The elaborate arrangements and facilities provided in the universe are suggestive of some purpose for the creation. This fact is stated in the Qur'an as follows: 'We did not create the heavens and the earth and everything between them as a game. We did not create them except with truth but most of them do not know it (44:38-39). 'Did you suppose that We created you for amusement and that you would not return to us?' (23:115). The creation of the heavens and the earth has been in accordance with the requirements of wisdom (15:85, 39:5)

The goal (*telos*) of all rational human inquiry is the discovery of the inner logic (meaning) inherent in reality. The motivational force that drives all researchers is the creaturely search for the *logos* (coherence, order) of creation. Everything that has been

created by the Lord has not only a divine purpose to serve, but it has been shaped into perfect form. There is no flaw or defect in it. The wonderful beauty of creation from the tiny atom to the massive star in the realm of matter and from the smallest and to the most developed form of life, all speak to the Lord's perfect Wisdom (32:6-7). On earth we see many varieties of life forms as well as lifeless bodies. The trees and green vegetation, ants, insects, animals and birds, fishes and reptiles, valleys and mountains, mines and minerals, seas and rivers and the like; everything that exist on earth has significance for the survival and sustenance of life with their proper balances in nature (21:16, 25:2, 22:65, 14:32-3). The harmony and interconnectedness of millions of natural phenomena and their relationship to life can be explained on the basis of one hypothesis only - namely that we conceive of a Creator for this vast system Who has established the diverse elements of life on this globe by means of a limitless and infinite power and has drawn up a program for each of those elements. The occurrences of natural phenomena such as the flight of birds, migratory movements of birds and fishes, wind movement, rainfall, volcanic eruptions, the wild growth of forests and flowers, oceanic movements etc. are visible to the naked eye. Man has to exercise his intelligence to realize their true significance (44:38).

Nature constitutes a part of the complex system with a definite structure and a distinct purpose and design: 'Not without purpose did We create heavens and earth and all between' (38:27). The order of the universe cannot endure even for moment unless there is perfect balance, harmony and co-ordination, tying its limitless objects and innumerable forces into a unified system (21:22). The fact that there is one Designer and one Controller and Creator of the whole universe can certainly be inferred from the

order, adaptation, proportion and co-ordination which pervade the whole universe and to which all the sciences bear undeniable testimony. If the universe were under the hegemony of several independent sovereigns, how could a unified set of regulation prevail in it? The very existence of an ordered system implies that it has no more than one Sovereign who controls it (21:33). Is it possible that such a perfectly well ordered universe could have come into existence and then functioned with such ease and smoothness had it been under the control of more than the one God?

The difference between the materialist and the believer in *Tawhid* is that the former comes to stop as soon as he reaches the appearance; while the latter seek for the co-ordinator of this harmonious whole. Here it is relevant to quote a verse from the Qur'an: 'And they say: There is nothing but our life in this world; we live and die and nothing destroys us but time and they have no knowledge of that; they only conjecture' (45:24). An important point that is greatly emphasized in the Qur'an is the existence of order in natural phenomena, harmony among the various elements of nature and a purpose in nature (67:3, 10:5, 25:2, 13:8). The existence of this order and design has been pointed out as a sign for the validity of *Tawhid*: 'If there had been in them any gods except God, they would both have certainly been in a state of disorder' (21:22).

Natural world, being the creation of God, deserves respect and care in its own right and not just because of its utility for us. A poignant metaphor of *stewardship* related to the status of man is very apt in the Qur'anic approach towards environment (63:6, 6:165, 55:8, 27:62). In principle, any attempt to discover inter-relations in various aspects of nature without acknowledging the inherent order would be futile. A

belief in the universality of law makes us realise that wherever we fail to find the order in a natural phenomenon during our study, it would be due to the insufficiency of our knowledge rather than disorder or rule of chance in nature. During the early years of the second quarter of the twentieth century, when quantum mechanics was being propounded some of the pioneers of the theoretical physics rejected the idea of the existence of order in the subatomic domain. Einstein, though unable to present any argument against it, was able to reject it relying on the principle of order in nature, with the firm declaration: 'God does not play dice'.

Belief in the reality of the external world is the basis of all researches in empirical sciences, and the Qur'an also underlines the idea (7:185, 38:27). Human beings, confronting the immense universe and the overwhelming forces of nature, badly need the feeling of proximity to God who is concerned about them, their suffering and their aspirations (2:186, 58:7). This belief gives meaning to all other travails and sacrifices.

# Absolute Trust in Allah

## (Al-Tawakkul A'la-Allah)

*In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficial*

Tawakkul is a fundamental part of the Islamic Aqeedah. Tawakkul is translated here as either trust or dependence. Putting our trust in Allah (swt) is a matter of belief and contributes to our view regarding this life.

Tawakkul means to put in one's best efforts to do what Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) expects one to do and then leave the results to Allah's will. Tawakkul comes from conviction in qada wa qadar, one of the six pillars of eeman: What Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) has written for me must come to pass.

Tawakkul in Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) includes tawakkul in His provision of rizq. 50,000 years before the creation of the universe, what provisions would come to me were written down in Lawh Mahfuz (The Preserved Tablet). Our test in this world is of the means we choose to earn these provisions. Do we adopt halal means and work seeking the pleasure of Allah (subhana wa ta'ala); or do we resort to haraam, not trusting the rizq to come to us through halal means?

To make this point clear, some of the Ayahs are quoted as below. Allah (swt) says:

*"If Allah helps you, none can overcome you: If He forsakes you, who is there after that, that can help you? In Allah then, let the Believers put their trust." [3: 160]*

And Allah (swt) says:

*"Say: Nothing will happen to us except what Allah has decreed for us: He is our Protector: And on Allah let the believers put their trust." [9:51]*

And Allah (swt) says:

*"And put they trust on the exalted in Might, the Merciful." [26:217]*

Allah (swt) also says:

*"...Then when thou hast taken a decision put they trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)" [3:159]*

All of the above Ayahs order Muslims to wholly and exclusively to rely on Allah (swt) in their lives. It is only Allah who controls the Universe and both good and bad are His decree. The significant element that should always be kept in mind is the omnipotence of Allah (swt). Therefore our actions and the material

resources available to us do not guarantee the outcome of any of our undertakings. For example our material and physical strength may deceive us into believing that victory in a battlefield is inevitable. The truth is that our strength or weakness has no bearing on the outcome of the battle, and it is only by the will of Allah that we become victorious or get defeated by the enemy. It was this firm belief that led a handful of Muslims during and after the time of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to fight so valiantly against a formidable enemy over and over again.

One may ask, why then do we strive to accomplish any task if we cannot influence its outcome? The answer is rather simple. The actions that we take fall into three categories: They are either obligated upon us by Allah (swt), recommended by Him or we are simply allowed to do them. The obligatory actions are taken because Allah (swt) has ordered them as compulsory. The recommended actions are taken to be rewarded in addition to the rewards we get upon accomplishing the fard. In both of these cases we seek to please Allah (swt), Actions falling under the third category are taken to achieve certain objectives we anticipate to fulfil. However, the certainty of accomplishing those objectives is not under our control. Therefore the cause of initiating any action is not whether we control its outcome. It is the anticipated goal we aim to achieve.

This brings us to an important misconception amongst the Muslims where some of the associate effort with having trust in Allah (swt). For example, it is a popular notion that earning provides rizq and Tawakkul in Allah (swt) should come after one has made a sincere effort to earn a living. Some of the Muslims who hold such a view often present the following Hadith in their defence:

Anas (RA) reported that a person asked Rasul Allah (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam), "Should I tie my camel and have Tawakkul

(trust in Allah for her protection) or should I leave her untied and have Tawakkul." Rasul Allah (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam) replied, "Tie her and have Tawakkul." (Hasan) [Jami At-Tirmidhi]

This Hadith does not indicate any prerequisite for trusting Allah (swt). It does not, therefore suggest that somehow there is a link between people tying the camel (an action) and putting ones trust in Allah (swt). However, the Hadith conveys an important lesson to all of us: That while trust in Allah (swt) is absolute being independent of what we do it is our responsibility to act on what we intended to accomplish. In this case tying the camel was a right thing to do if the person feared that the camel would run away. Therefore he should have taken the precaution regardless of his trust in Allah (swt). Tying the camel does not take away from his trust in Allah (swt), irrespective of our efforts and the circumstances surrounding us.

This belief should help us to this life according to the commands of Allah (swt) even if we face hardships in doing so. Disappointment, hopelessness should not daunt us because we have put our trust in Allah (swt), our Creator and the only Sustainer. Many Muslims indulge in the prohibited actions arguing that it is the only alternative; otherwise they would face disastrous consequences. Avid example is giving riba when buying a house on a mortgage. They regard owning a house as a necessity and we are willing to sacrifice Islam in doing so.

They fail to realise that it is only Allah (swt) who provides security for them and their off springs and they need only to put their absolute trust in Him.

Unfortunately the materialistic thought that we have acquired from the Kufar who depend on material gains for their very survival, has drastically influenced our view towards this life as well... we take pride

*Cont'd on page 27*

# The Life of This World is Fleeting Enjoyment

Allaama Ibn Kathir (RA)

***"Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children. (It is) like a rain (Ghayth), thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment, and (there is) forgiveness from Allah and (His) pleasure. And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment." [57:20]***

Allah the Exalted degrades the significance of this life and belittles it by saying:

*"that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children."*

Meaning, this is the significance of this life to its people, just as He said in another Ayah:

*"Beautiful for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This is the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allah has the excellent return with Him." [3:14]*

Allah the Exalted also sets a parable for this life, declaring that its joys are fading and its delights are perishable, saying that life is "Like a rain (Ghayth)," which is the rain that comes down to mankind, after they had felt despair. Allah the Exalted said in another Ayah:

*"And He it is Who sends down the Ghayth (rain) after they have despaired." [42:28]*

Allah's statement:

*"thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller;"*

Meaning that farmers admire the vegetation that grows in the aftermath of rain. And just as farmers admire vegetation,

the disbelievers admire this life; they are the most eager to acquire the traits of life, and life is most dear to them,

*"afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw."*

Meaning, that vegetation soon turns yellow in color, after being fresh and green. After that, the green fades away and becomes scattered pieces of dust. This is the parable of this worldly life; it starts young, then matures and then turns old and feeble. This is also the parable of mankind in this life; they are young and strong in the beginning. In this stage of life, they look youthful and handsome. Slowly, they begin growing older, their mannerism changes and their strength weakens. They then grow old and feeble; moving becomes difficult for them, while doing easy things becomes beyond their ability. Allah the Exalted said:

*"Allah is He Who created you in (a state of) weakness, then gave you strength after weakness, then after strength gave (you) weakness and gray hair. He creates what He wills. And He is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful." [30:54]*

This parable indicates the near demise of this life and the imminent end of it, while in contrast, the Hereafter is surely com-

ing. Those who hear this parable should, therefore, be aware of the significance of the Hereafter and feel eagerness in the goodness that it contains,

*"But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment, and (there is) forgiveness from Allah and (His) pleasure. And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment."*

Meaning, surely, the Hereafter that will certainly come contains two things either severe punishment or forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure.

Allah the Exalted said:

*"And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment."*

Meaning, this life is only a form of enjoyment that deceives those who incline to it. Surely, those who recline to this life will admire it and feel that it is dear to them, so much so, that they might think that this is the only life, no life or dwelling after it. Yet, in reality, this life is insignificant as compared to the Hereafter.

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

*"Paradise is nearer to any of you than the strap of his shoe, and so is the (Hell) Fire." [Ahmad 1:387]*

Al-Bukhari collected this Hadith through the narration of Ath-Thawri [Fath Al-Bari 11:328]. This Hadith indicates the close proximity of both good and evil in relation to mankind. If this is the case, then this is the reason Allah the Exalted encouraged mankind to rush to perform acts of righteousness and obedience and to avoid the prohibitions. By doing so, their sins and errors will be forgiven and they will acquire rewards and an exalted status. Allah the Exalted said:

*"Race with one another in hastening towards forgiveness from your Lord, and Paradise the width whereof is as the width of the heaven*

*and the earth."*

Allah the Exalted said in another Ayah:

*"And march forth in the way (to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who have Taqwa." [3:133]*

Allah said here:

*"prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is the grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He is pleased with. And Allah is the Owner of the great bounty."*

Meaning this, that Allah has qualified them for, is all a part of His favor, bounty and compassion. We mentioned a Hadith collected in the Sahih in which the poor emigrants said to the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

*"O Allah's Messenger! The wealthy people will get higher grades and permanent enjoyment." He asked, "Why is that?" They said, "They pray like us and fast as we do. However, they give in charity, whereas we cannot do that, and they free servants, whereas we cannot afford it."*

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), said:

*"Shall I tell you of a good deed that, if you acted upon, you would catch up with those who have surpassed you? None would overtake you and be better than you, except those who might do the same. Say, "Glorious is Allah," Allah is Most Great", and "Praise be to Allah", thirty three times each after every prayer."*

They later came back and said, "Our wealthy brethren heard what we did and they started doing the same." Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), said:

*"This is the favor that He gives to whom He wills." [Muslim 1:416]*

# Perils of Permissive Societies

*Muhammad Jaber Al-Ansari*

The philosophers of Western "progress" have been telling the world that the West would not take any step without thinking. We have been hearing this "glad tidings" throughout the 19th century and before the two world wars. But after the wars that killed millions of people and destroyed big cities and historic monuments people saw the barbarity of Westerners that contradicted what the philosophers had said.

It seems that the Western societies that developed and reached the stages of progress and prosperity under the shade of their democracies are currently moving toward individualism and selfishness as they ignore the interests and problems of others.

In the past there were incidents that children would not visit parents if they were not given fuel money in advance. Before that psychologists and educators advised parents to give children full freedom, allowing them to do whatever they want. These scholars later realized the dangerous situation created by their philosophy as they saw youths opening fire haphazardly at people in malls and streets... and kill them.

After seeing these dangerous developments, the scholars gave up the idea of giving full freedom to children and advised elders to control them by giving necessary guidance. But current developments proved that youth movements have become uncontrollable. The permissive societies will not accept anything short of total freedom. We can see the movements of young men and women in the West as well as in the East doing whatever they want, like the Occupy Wall

Street movement. These movements have exceeded their limits and do not allow people to sleep peacefully. They keep on beating the drums even if others do not sleep. "Let them go to hell" is their attitude and philosophy.

Mankind has been believing for long that one man's freedom ends as another man's freedom begins. But the new "Occupy" movements have changed this longstanding concept. People now think that they have the freedom to beat the drum whenever they wish...even if it disturbs the sleep of others.

There was a press report recently that people in a most progressive European country came out in the open demanding authorities to give them the freedom to use marijuana, a recreational drug that gives users some kind of illusive pleasure. They did not ask for greater progress and democracy.

Another most amazing thing is that the president of the world's most powerful country announced recently his support for same-sex marriage in order to get some votes. I still believe that it was a decision taken by the Democratic Party, which is known for such stands. I don't believe that the majority of Americans as well as Michelle Obama and the president himself would accept such immoral practices.

A few years ago when I visited California I observed some colorful flags on top of some houses. It was neither the national flag nor the flag of any other country or organization. When I asked about those flags, somebody told me it belonged to homosexuals. It shows that they are united to declare their homosexuality.



In short, the societies of progress in the West produce selfish individuals who do not care about others. The youths who commit malicious crimes in those societies are people who had not enjoyed the love and kindness of their mothers while they were children, because their mothers had left the families and children and ran away with their boy-friends. This phenomenon is not restricted to women as many men leave their wives and children and go with their girlfriends. In Western societies we see many families that are supported by either father or mother as the second half leaves the family to appease his or her selfishness. They are not ready to sacrifice their selfishness for the sake of their families and children.

This dangerous situation is fast spreading in eastern societies also as many men and women leave their families to "enjoy" their lives. This phenomenon of selfishness and extreme individualism is spreading all over the world like a disease.

A number of judges and lawyers assembled recently to remember the famous Greek philosopher Socrates who took poison to defend his freedom of expression and I am wondering whether Socrates would accept those who beat drums without allowing others to sleep as well as men and women running away with their boy or girl friends leaving their children on the street.

*Muhammad Jaber Al-Ansari is a Bahraini academic and writer.*

*(Courtesy of Al-Hayat newspaper)*

# Qur'anic Sciences

*Justice Maulana Taqi Usmani*

*Nowadays a voice has been raised that every individual should take up the task of understanding*

*Qur'an according to his own comprehension.*

*Though it is all more necessary to understand the Qur'an but lack of proper knowledge in this regard can drive a person towards unknown extremes and wrong interpretations. In the following issues we will be covering some fundamental requirements for interpreting the Qur'an correctly.*

## THE SCIENCE OF EXEGESIS (TAFSIR) AND ITS SOURCES INTRODUCTION

The word "Tafsir" is derived from "Fasr" which means "to open". Since the meanings of the Qur'an are openly described, this science is known as the "Science of Tafsir" or Exegesis. In the beginning this word was applied exclusively to the explanation of the Quran (*Allaama Zarkashi has defined Tafsir in brief as: "The knowledge through which one gains understanding of the Qur'an and comprehension of its commandments and wisdom." (Al-Burhan, v1, p. 13)*). During the era of the Prophet (S) the sciences were not yet grown much so there were not many branches of the sciences. But when it acquired the shape of an organised knowledge and received attention from different angles, it became a very vast and developed science, and kept on expanding according to needs of the time. The technical interpretation of 'Ilm-ut-Tafsir (Science of exegesis...), the science of Tafsir is that branch of knowledge that deals with the method of the delivery of the words of Quran, their interpretation, their individual and composite forms and expediencies. It includes the meanings derived from them in their composite state. In the summation of meanings due consideration is allowed to the background of revelation, the abrogator and the abrogated and equivocal stories. (*Ruh ul-Ma'ani, Aalusi V1, P-4*)

In the light of this definition the science of Tafsir has the following components.

1: Methods of delivery of the words of Quran; that is how

the words of the Quran may be read. Early Arabic commentators used to mention in detail the various recitals of every verse in their exegesis and for this purpose a separate science by the name of "Qira'at" (Recitals) also exists.

2: Interpretation of the words of Quran; that is, the lexical meanings of the words. For this it is essential to be thoroughly conversant with the science of lexicons. That is why we find numerous references to the scholars of lexicons and to Arabic literature in the books of exegesis.

3: Individual Forms of the words. This implies knowledge of every word as to form, its root, how it acquired its present form, its conjugation, and the meanings and attributes that go with that conjugation form. For this the knowledge of etymology is needed.

4: Rules regarding compound words. This is to know the meaning it conveys when it combines with other words? What is its grammatical analysis? Why the diacritical marks so placed and to what meaning they point at? For this, the science of Syntax and Meanings is essential.

5: The ultimate meaning of the compound phrase. It is to know what meaning a particular verse conveys in reference to its context. Depending on the subjects of the verse, help is taken from various sciences. Apart from these, sometimes one has to look at it from the point of language and literature, Hadith and principles of jurisprudence are also considered.

6: Summation of the meanings. Due consideration is given to the background of verses and details of short and concise expressions of the Quran. For this purpose mostly the Ahadith are relied upon. But this is such a vast subject that the knowledge of almost every art and science of the world can be incorporated in it because sometimes in a very short sentence the Quran expresses an endless world of realities and secrets. For

examples, the Quran says...

*And also in your own selves — do you not see? (Az-Zariyat. 51:21)*

Just see that the entire subjects of physiology and psychology can be encompassed in the explanation of this short sentence, yet it may not be said with certainty that it explains fully the secrets of Allah's infinite Wisdom in creation as contained in this phrase. Hence through intellect, thinking, experiments and observation, different subjects become part of the science of Tafsir (Exegesis).

#### **Tafsir and Ta'wil**

In the early period another word "Ta'wil" (interpretation) was also used for "Tafsir" and even the Quran itself has used the former for its Tafsir e.g.

*But none knows its interpretation except Allah. (Al'Imran, 3:7)*

Thereafter the scholars began to argue whether the two words were interchangeable and synonymous or different from each other?

Imam Abu Ubayd and some others think they are synonymous, while some other scholars have tried to point out differences in the two words, but so many different opinions have been expressed to denote these differences that it is very difficult to enumerate all of them. Some of these opinions are (*al-Itqan, Sayuti V2, P173*):

1: "*Tafsir*" is the name of explanation of individual words exclusively, and "*Ta'wil*" is explanation of a sentence or sentences.

2: "*Tafsir*" means the description of apparent meaning of words but "*Ta'wil*" means to explain the inherent meaning.

3: "*Tafsir*" is an interpretation of a verse which is not open to any other interpretation while *Ta'wil* is to choose one interpretation out of the several possible in explaining a verse.

*Cont'd on page 27*

# The Dishonest House

*The educated ones among the rejecters of Hadith – Muslim or non-Muslim – clearly seem to lack the quality of honesty. And, the nature of their calling demands lots of slinking, and, therefore, apart from dishonest, they also happen to be slinkers. They cannot go about the affair in a straight, honest way, writes SYED IQBAL ZAHEER.*

A hadith says that amanah (honesty, integrity) was sent down first, and then Revelation was sent down. It should be easy to guess why: if a man is not honest, what good the revelation will do to him? Not surprisingly, the Prophet said that a believer cannot be a liar.

Broadly, there are two classes of Hadith rejecters: One, those who are educated, to some measure or the other, and two, those who are either ignorant, or stupid, or both.

Down the line, both the classes merge together and become one as fanatical believers in rejection of Hadith. That is, rejection of Hadith becomes their `aqeedah. It should be obvious that once a tenet becomes an `aqeedah, it cannot be easily destroyed. For example, if a child is taught that God is three, or every stone is God, or, there is no God, then it becomes the child's `aqeedah. It is hard to shake him from that position once he has grown into adulthood.

The educated ones among the rejecters of Hadith – Muslim or non-Muslim – clearly seem to lack the quality of honesty. And, the nature of their calling demands lots of slinking, and, therefore, apart from dishonest, they also happen to be slinkers.

They cannot go about the affair in a straight, honest way. The Qur'an, in which they deceptively claim belief, instructs them that they should go attempt their affairs in honest straightway manners (2: 189): "Come

into the homes by their doors."

Yusuf Ali commented on this verse: "This is a Muslim proverb now, and much might be written about its manifold meanings. (For instance) 'If you want to achieve an object honorably, go about it openly and not by the back door.'"

Asad (a former Jew), voices much the same opinion: "Since, metonymically, the word bab ('door') signifies 'a means of access to, or of, a thing' (see Lane I, 272), the metaphor of 'entering a house through its door' is often used in classical Arabic to denote a proper approach to a problem..."

A rejecter of Hadith has to take the crooked path. He must avoid not only the straight path, but also avoid all those who can tell him the bitter truth about him. He must work in private, taking individuals one by one. He will not appear among a group of scholars (even if they are Orientalists), to announce his rejection of Hadith. He knows that if he does not shut up and get down the stage, after the laughter has died down, someone might call the mental hospital ambulance.

One problem he realizes is that non-Muslim scholars of Islam – who spent their precious lives studying Islamic disciplines – accept the Hadith, because there is so much scholarly evidence that no man in his senses can deny. For centuries, the Orientalists have been accepting the Hadith and quoting it quite often, albeit to discredit the Prophet.

They argue, from whom the Muslim rejecters of Hadith steal quite a few tricks of the trade, that they cannot believe in the Prophet because he said, "Women have been made dear to me" (Nasa'i), or because, "Musa (asws) had slapped the angel of death" (Bukhari), or because `Ibrahim (asws) had circumcised himself at the age of eighty" (Bukhari), etc.

If you tell the Orientalist that the Hadith is unacceptable, then, firstly, you are to him too ignorant, or fanatic, or stupid, and, secondly, you have taken the wind out of his argument for rejecting the Prophet.

The honest way then, of going about rejecting the Hadith would be to write a dissertation in Arabic or English and send it across to seats of learning in Makkah, Cairo, Harvard, Oxford, Leiden, etc. The non-Islamic institutions will be particularly glad to receive it and will immediately refer it to their specialists to evaluate. The latter would be quite pleased to get their hand on it, and publish it without delay, because they themselves have not been able to discredit the Hadith despite several centuries of mighty efforts. However, if the dissertation is worth trash, it will be tossed away in a couple of minutes. The Hadith rejecter knows this very well.

Therefore, he prefers to write in local languages and publish his trash from unknown publishing houses. Since there is no shortage of buffoons among the human population, he is sure to win one here, one there, to his cause.

The above is the first dishonesty committed: target the buffoons.

The next dishonesty contains in the way he argues. He starts by saying that he does not believe in the mass of Hadith. That is, he rejects the entire body of the Hadith because, he says, they are untrustworthy. But when you pin him down and ask him as to which ones does he recognize as authentic, he slinks away and admits that he does not believe in the authenticity of any Hadith.

But then a problem arises: To believe in the Qur'an, he needs at least one Hadith of the following text: "The Qur'an was revealed to me" – or, "was revealed to Prophet Muhammad." Now, on whatever basis he accepts this one Hadith, he will have to accept thousands of Ahadith on the same basis.

The time for dodging and slinking has arrived for him. He leaves the highway and slinks into side alleys.

Another dishonesty that the rejecter of Hadith resorts to is that on some occasions he uses the Hadith to strengthen his position. For example, he argues that the Prophet himself said, "Do not write down my Ahadith." He beats his chest like a gorilla and says to the Muslims, "And look, this Hadith is in Muslim." So, he first accepts a Hadith as authentic, and then uses it to reject rest of the Ahadith, including those of Muslim from which he took the Hadith. If you point this out, the gorilla retreats into the forest.

Another dishonesty he commits is that he does not quote the above Hadith in full. (That is the reason why most Hadith rejecters are non-Arabs). The Hadith of Muslim that he quotes says in full:

*"Do not write down from me. Whoever wrote from me anything else apart from the Qur'an, may erase it. However, narrate from me, there is no harm in that. But (remember) whoever fastened a lie upon me, intentionally, may find his home in the Fire."*

So, there were two ways of reporting what the Prophet spoke:

1. Write it down
2. Narrate from memory.

The Prophet preferred verbal narration. So, the Companions freely narrated from him. After all, the Prophet had also said, "May Allah keep the face of him fresh and

bright, who narrated from us..."

Now, the question is, where are those Ahadith that the Companions narrated to hundreds of thousands of the next generation Muslims, and they to millions of the next generation? The rejecter of Hadith knows that the verbal narrations permitted by the Prophet were ultimately written down by the scholars of Hadith around 200 years after him who feared their corruption through verbal narration. Thousands preferred to continue with verbal narration, but, ultimately, the written versions prevailed.

On the other hand, the earliest followers of the Prophet were not stupid. Stupid people do not overturn a thousand year old world Power. (And they overturned two). Accordingly, Abu Bakr kept writing the Hadith, `Ali kept writing, and many others did so. They knew that the instruction was for such starters in Islam who were incapable of differentiating between Qur'an and Hadith – apart from the fact that the writings of the starters, who did not have PhDs in literature, could have been no better than a doctor's scribble which only doctors and pharmacists could decode. So, let such starters not write at all. Accordingly, when the situation of the starters improved, the Prophet allowed that his words and actions may be recorded.

Does it sound reasonable? But not to the Hadith rejecter. The neurons that are fired by his grey matter, are wrongly directed and land at the wrong places.

Another question that the rejecter does not ask his junky brain is: was writing of Prophetic words completely banned during the time of the Prophet? Well, the same Imam Muslim reports that a man called Abu Shah asked some questions and requested the Prophet to get the answers written down. The Prophet ordered his Companions, "Write them down for Abu Shah."

Yet another dishonesty that this Dishonest House commits is that they sniff

through the entire Islamic literature to select – out of context – statements of great scholars to demonstrate that they distrusted the Hadith. They have the temerity to mention such names as Imam Zuhri, who, on the order of `Umar b. `Abdul `Aziz collected Ahadith of Madinah. They claim that he hated Hadith, whereas, the truth is, he was fearful of the task because of the extreme importance of the job. His fear is reported as 'hatred of Hadith' by these honest blokes.

Another person they name is Imam Abu Haneefah about whom they claim that he was a Munkir (rejecter of Hadith), while it is widely reported that Abu Haneefah preferred a weak Hadith over his personal opinion for working out Law. The rejecters of Hadith provide proof that Imam Abu Yusuf was a Fasiq, and Imam Muhammad a liar. The great irony is that they report Hafiz ibn Hajr, a giant Hadith scholar who wrote some 50,000 pages on Hadith literature, as someone who distrusted Hadith.

The list of dishonesties is pretty lengthy, sickening, and stinking.

A question that the commonest of men asks the rejecters of Hadith is, "If we have to depend on the Qur'an alone after we have discarded the Hadith, then, how do we do our Salah, or pay Zakah etc., seeing that the detailed instructions for these rituals, and every other Qur'anic demand, is not in the Qur'an but only in the Hadith?"

Now, if the question is raised by a commoner, they have one answer, but if it is someone a little educated, then the answer is another. We shall deal with the answer given to the commoner in this write-up, to deal with other answers, some other time, Allah willing.

The answer they give about Salah is that at the time of the Prophet, there were no organized five daily prayers; and the Madinan mosque was not for prayers. It was more of a place to organize social affairs. This is

what the Qur'an means when it says,

"Establish the prayers." That is get together into the mosque, there is a social, political, financial, or military problem at hand – over which consultations and distribution of duties are required.

The idea is preposterous beyond words, but it works with some of the commoners, especially, if they already possess in good quantity the three qualities that we have been speaking of: dishonesty, slinking, stupidity.

Now, if we take Salah in the sense of consultations, distribution of responsibilities, etc. how do we understand the following verse which deals with Salah in battle-fields?

[102 : ]

*"If you happen to be with them (O Prophet), and you establish the Salah, then let a group of them stand with you, and let them take their arms. Then, when they have done their Sujud, let them fall back to your rear, and let the other group which did not do the Salah come up and do Salah with you."*

If we do not take the meaning that every Arab child takes of the word Salah, then how does the rejecter of Hadith understand the following?

[6 : ]

*"Believers, when you establish the Salah, then wash your faces, hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles."*

Does the above mean those who are called through the Adhan for consultations, distribution of political, financial, administrative and military duties, must make Wudu before they come?

Are the rejecters of Hadith that stu-  
Cont'd on page 27

# Watch Your Words

**By Ismat**

They say that if speaking is from silver, if you like to talk, it is equal to silver, then to be silent is equal to gold because we cannot as a human being control our tongues. And the biggest problem in this world is that people are not able to control their tongues from talking. And the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), he said, in the meaning of his hadith, tradition, part of the hadith is that "anyone who can guarantee for me," he is saying, "can guarantee for me his tongue," he didn't say "his tongue" but he said, "what is between his jaws, I will guarantee for him Paradise." Because you don't know how you might address people and you hurt their feelings.

Anything that is between you and God, Allah swt, you do something wrong and you might take something to your advantage from the rights of your Lord, you repent, Allah is merciful He will forgive you.

Allah is always merciful. But the problem is that when we hurt the feelings of someone else or we backbite about someone else or we spread a bad rumor about someone else, the problem is not that you repent and god will forgive. The problem is that the person you hurt you must ask forgiveness. So there is a problem there. Might be the person you ask will not forgive you. So what happens? You are falling into a valley that has not bottom.

So it means on the Day of Judgment, whoever has been harmed he will give from

his good deeds to give to you...Then he may be left with nothing, bankrupt.

Unfortunately many of us they try to hurt the others... in different ways. Look. Some Muslims hurt the majority of Muslims. Why? Because they thought this is their way, so even though they prayed and fasted, as the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, because they hurt the other they are bankrupt in the presence of Allah they have nothing, they deserve punishment.

That is why one of the companions of the Prophet, 'Ali (r) , he said, "you have to be careful what you are saying and what you want to say." Today what makes people falling into problems is they have to know what they have to speak and what they have to say. He said, "before you speak judge yourself before you say anything."

#### **Moralistic Story :**

A younger woman one day said something that hurt (insult) her best friend. She regretted it immediately, and would have done anything to have taken the words back. But they were said, impulsively, in a moment of thoughtlessness, and as close as she and her friend were, she didn't consider the effects of her words beforehand.

In her effort to undo what she had done, she went to an older, wiser woman in the village. Explaining her situation, and asked for advice. The older, wiser woman listened patiently in an effort to determine just how sincere the younger woman was, how far she was willing to go to correct the situation.

The older, wiser woman said, "There are two things needed to do to make amends. The first of the two is extremely difficult. Tonight, take your best feather pillows,

and open a small hole in each one. Then, before the sun rises, you must put a single feather on the doorstep of each house in town. When you are through, come back to me. If you've done the first thing completely, I'll tell you the second."

The younger woman hurried home to prepare for her chore. All night long she laboured alone in the cold. She went from doorstep to doorstep, taking care not to overlook a single house. Her fingers were frozen, the wind was so sharp it caused her eyes to water, but she ran on, through the darkened streets, thankful there was something she could do to put things back the way they once were.

Just as the sun rose, she returned to the older, wiser woman. She was exhausted, but relieved that her efforts would be rewarded.

"My pillows are empty. I placed a feather on the doorstep of each home." Now, said the older, wiser woman, "Go back and refill your pillows. Then everything will be as it was before."

Now, said the older, wiser woman, "Go back and refill your pillows. Then everything will be as it was before."

The younger woman was stunned. "You know that's impossible! The wind blew away each feather as fast as I placed them on the doorsteps! You didn't say I had to get them back! If this is the second requirement, then things will never be the same."

"That's true", said the older, wiser woman. "Never forget. Each of your words is like a feather in the wind. Once spoken, no amount of effort, regardless how heartfelt or sincere, can ever return them to your mouth. Choose your words well, and guard them most of all in the presence of those you love.

*"Whoever fulfills a need of any of my ummatees (followers) with the sole intention of making him happy, will definitely please me. And whoever pleases me has pleased Allah Ta'ala. And whoever pleases Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala will enter him into Jannah." (Hadith)*

# Journey Called Life

Subhan-Allah! According to the Population Reference Bureau's "2010 World Population Data Sheet" (28-July-2010), 4.45 people are born every second worldwide, on the average, and 1.8 people die every second. Another way to look at it is: 267 are born and 108 die on an average, every minute.

We were all born on a certain day, in a certain place at a certain time, to a certain household assigned through the decree of Allah, our Creator & Sustainer of the worlds. (Rabb-il-Aalamin). As I sit down and think of this great blessing bestowed on me, I sadly also delve and reflect on the shameful fact that I have done nothing significant on my part, to show my gratitude and thankfulness for this wonderful favor that was showered upon me. Human beings consider themselves physically, mentally, socially intellect & adept in every faculty and superior to all tangible creations of Allah SubhanavaTaala.

Quran Surah Rehman Ayah 3 & 4 (Q 55: 3-4) states :

*He created man. (3) He taught him eloquent speech. (4).*

Yes, Allah not only created us from among the best of His creations but also provided us with language skills, a quality and blessing bestowed only on the human race. He taught us to speak articulately with reasoning, proper syntax, structure, grammar, with rationale and with humbleness like the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) used to.

Allah Taala could have created us as a tree in any of the wild dense tropical forests that cover the earth or as a bird flying somewhere in the vast expanse of Allah's horizon or as a stone being stepped and trodden on

as it lay unnoticeable on a side walk. We could have been created as an animal, an insect or as any of the innumerable objects that exist around us. But Allah with His encompassing mercy not only created us as humans, but also chose us to be from the ummah of our beloved Prophet Mohammed (S. A. W.). That by itself manifests as the greatest of all blessings endowed upon us.

But we are so caught up in this world that we do not even ponder on this enormous blessing, leave alone thank Allah and show our gratitude. We all are running in a looser race trying to catch up with the glamour, the dazzle, false desires of this world, its artificial brightness blinding our sole purpose & goal in life. We have to remind ourselves that we are here not to enjoy this temporary short term worldly life that entralls us, but to successfully plan and carefully work every moment towards the long term permanent abode, Aakhira. We are all travelers' in this journey called life. We should lay out our travel plans cautiously, so we can accumulate and add to our album/book of good deeds. We should seek to deliberately max out and work day in and day out, every minute towards our final destination, paradise.

Allah repeatedly reminds us through several verses in the Quran about the hereafter.

Surah Al-Mumenoon ayah 15 & 6 (Q 23:15-16):

*Then We made the Nutfah into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), then We made the clot into a little lump of flesh, then We made out of that little lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We brought it forth as another creation. So Blessed is Allah, the Best of creators.[] (14)*



*After that, surely, you will die. (15) Then (again), surely, you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection. (16)*

Surah Al-Hajj Ayah 5 (Q 22:5):

*O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily! We have created you (i.e. Adam) from dust, then from a Nutfah (mixed drops of male and female sexual discharge i.e. offspring of Adam), then from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood) then from a little lump of flesh, - some formed and some unformed (as in the case of miscarriage), that We may make (it) clear to you (i.e. to show you Our Power and Ability to do what We will). And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then We bring you out as infants,[] then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water (rain) on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells and puts forth every lovely kind (of growth). (5)*

Surah At-Tariq Ayah 5-8 (Q 86:5-8) :

*So let man see from what he is created! (5) He is created from a water gushing forth, (6) Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs, (7) Verily, (Allah) is Able to bring him back (to life)! (8)*

In all the above ayahs where Allah SubhanavaTaala talks about birth & creation of man from "Nutfah", he immediately follows with reminding us of death & Resurrection.

As a Muslim we all believe in the "Day of Resurrection" (Yawm al-Qiyamah) but only a few are religiously and conscientiously working toward it.

Time is a precious asset we are all blessed us. We should utilize it to buy the permanent reward of Jannah on the Day of Judgement. Remember our journey as travelers in this fleeting life will end soon. We all know when we were born but we do not know when our journey ends. In other words we do not know our timeline as a traveler. Remember Allah is all merciful, all compassionate and all forgiving. It is never too late to ask Allah for forgiveness and to shift our focus in life and start working hastily, sincerely & consistently towards Akhirah.

Insha-Allah as long as we clutch on tightly and not let go of the Holy Quran as our travel guide in this journey of life and follow the Sunnah as our road map by emulating our prophet (S.A.W), we will hopefully, when the journey ends partake in Allah's encompassing mercy.

**By: Sarah K.**

*She is a wife, a mother and an engineer.*

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in different situations and circumstances. It is a living example, a mirror reflecting all the conditions and complexions of human life.

A Jew, who wanted to find fault with the Muslims, once said to a companion of the Prophet <sup>^1</sup>, "Your Prophet teaches you everything, even trifling matters?" "Yes," came the prompt reply, "Our Prophet teaches us even about cleansing after urination and excretion." The Muslims are still proud of this noblest exemplar for all human beings: he is the heaven's gift, a standard by which every man can reform and reform his life and morals, body and spirit, behavior and conduct and habits and manners. The people having faith in Islam need nothing beyond the standard set by the Prophet (S) for their cultural, moral and social progress. The Prophet's (S) life is the universal touchstone: it draws a distinction between the vice and the virtue, the good and the bad. For the world lacks another exemplar like the Prophet (S) he alone is the perfect model for the whole world. May Allah have peace and mercy on him.

# Building a Relationship with the Quran

Certain basic states and attitudes of heart and mind are a necessary prerequisite to any fruitful relationship with the Qur'an. Develop them as much as you can. Make them part of your consciousness, keep them ever-alive and active. Integrate them in your actions. Let them penetrate the depth of your being. Without the help of these inner resource you will not receive your full measure of the Qur'an's blessings. They will be your indispensable companions, too, throughout your journey.

These inner resources are neither difficult nor impossible to find. Through constant awareness and reflection, through appropriate words and deeds, you can acquire and develop them. The more you do so, the closer you will be able to come to the Qur'an; the closer you come to the Qur'an, the greater will be your harvest.

**Faith:** The Word of Allah : First Come to the Qur'an with a strong and deep faith that it is the word of Allah, your Creator and Lord. This book is no ordinary book; it opens with the emphatic statement:

*'This is the Book [of God], there is no doubt in it' (al-Baqarah 2:2)*

Your purpose in reading and studying it is no ordinary purpose; you seek from it the guidance that will transform your whole being, bring you and keep you on the Straight Path:

*'Guide us on the Straight Path' (al-Fatihah 1:5)*

is the cry of your heart to which the Qur'an is the response.

**Purity of intention and Purpose:** Secondly Read the Qur'an with no purpose other than to receive guidance from your Lord, to come nearer to Him, and to seek His good

pleasure. What you get from the Quran depends on what you come to it for. Your niyyah (intention and purpose) is crucial. Certainly the Qur'an has come to guide you, but you may also go astray by reading it should you approach it for impure purposes and wrong motives.

*'Thereby He causes many to go astray, and thereby He guides many; but thereby He causes none to go astray save the iniquitous' (al-Baqarah 2:26).*

**Bringing Gratitude and Praise:** Make yourself constantly alert with intense praise and gratitude to your Lord for having blessed you with the greatest gift - the Qur'an - and for having guided you to its reading and study. Once you realize what a priceless treasure you hold in your hands, it is but natural for your heart to beat with joy and murmur, and for your tongue to join in:

*'Thankful praise be to Allah, who has guided us to this; [otherwise] never could we have found guidance had not Allah not guided us' (al-A'raf 7:43)*

**Acceptance and Trust:** Accept and trust, without the least doubt or hesitation, every knowledge and guidance that the Qur'an conveys to you. You have the freedom to question whether the Qur'an is the word of Allah or not, and to reject its claim if you are not satisfied. But once you have accepted it as His word, you have no basis whatever to doubt even a single word of it. For to do so would negate what you have accepted. There must be total surrender and abandonment to the Quranic teachings. Your own beliefs, opinions, judgments, notions, whims should not be allowed to override any part of it.

**Obedience and Change:** Bring the will, resolve and readiness to obey whatever the Qur'an says, and change your life, attitudes and behavior-inwardly and outwardly-as desired by it. Unless you are prepared and begin to act to shape your thoughts and actions according to the messages you receive from the Qur'an, all your dedication and labor may be to no avail. Mere intellectual exercises and ecstatic experiences will never bring you anywhere near the real treasures of the Qur'an.

**Hazards and Obstacles:** Always remain aware that, as you embark upon reading the Qur'an, Satan will create every possible hazard and obstacle to stalk you on your way to the great riches of the Qur'an.

**Trust and Dependence:** Trust, exclusively and totally, in Allah to lead you to the full rewards of reading the Qur'an

**Participation of the Inner Self:** Reading the Qur'an, the tilawah, must involve your whole 'person'. Only thus will you be able to elevate your encounter with the Qur'an to the level where you can be called a

*'true' believer in the Qur'an (al-Baqarah 2:121)*

#### **What is the Heart?**

The more important part of your 'person' is your inner self. This inner self the Qur'an calls the qalb or the 'heart'. The heart of the Prophet, blessings and Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, was the first recipient of the Quranic message:

*'Truly it has been sent down by the Lord of all the worlds, the Trustworthy Spirit has alighted with it upon your heart [O Prophet], that you may be one of the warners . . .' (al-Shu'ara' 26:192-4)*

You will therefore reap the full joys and blessings of reading the Qur'an when you are able to involve your heart fully in your task, Insh'Allah.

*May Allah always guide us to the right path and be pleased with us. Ameen.*

*Source: The Muslim Link*

*Cont'd from page 18*

4: "*Tafsir*" is an unquestionable explanation while "*Ta'wil*" may be challenged with another explanation.

5: "*Tafsir*" is the name of explaining the words, and "*Ta'wil*" is meant to expound the lessons derived from them.

And there are other differences too.

6: In fact, the opinion of Abu 'Ubayd appears to be correct that there is no real difference in the use of these two words. Those who hold the two words as different have not given us a definite and unanimous verdict through their divergent arguments. It seems that some scholars did try to give the two words different meanings but they could not give a convincing argument and gain universal acceptability. That is why the commentators even from the earliest times are using them as synonyms and one word is used for the other hence it is futile to waste time in

*Cont'd from page 13*

in our wealth and what we do, and have displaced the trust in Allah (swt) by relying solely on material possessions... For only that which is ordained for us will come to us.

*May Allah (swt) restore only trust in Him for only then can we truly succeed! Allahumma*

*Ameen*

*islamquotes.org*

*Cont'd from page 22*

pid? The answer is, no, their leaders are devilishly clever. Apparently, there are two purposes for interpreting the Qur'an in the above manner:

1. Salah is the vitally important pillar of Islam. You destroy it and you destroy Islam.
2. If you explain Qur'anic verses in stupid ways, you are testing the man before you. If he accepts such stupidity, he will accept anything. He is the right candidate to be recruited for your cause. That is how you grow in numbers.

*Source: Young Muslim Digest (Vol.13, No: 162) 27*

# The Myth of Sword and Veil

*Shelina Zahra Janmohamed*

Terror and the Veil are two recurrent symbols that appear in Western discourse about Islam and Muslims. But these were just myths created to serve one political view. Why do these potent historical symbols still haunt us today?

The Occidental view of Islam has been characterised by two vivid symbols – the sword and the veil. The West built up an image of an Islam that was “spread by the sword”, that forced violent conversion on non-Muslims as the Muslim dominion spread outwards from its origins in Mecca and Medina. The Muslim empire grew quickly geographically and politically as its armies spread both east and westward. Instead of using the sword, the faith of Islam grew more organically, through marriage and trade.

The West’s Myth of the Sword crystallised into its definition of the Muslim world, and it was hailed as the rallying cry against what was demonised as a violent and barbaric religion. The myth was nothing but political smoke and mirrors, as early as the time of the Crusades.

The Church and the kingdoms of Europe cleverly counterpoised the newly created idea of the ‘sword’ against the “love thy neighbour” and “turn the other cheek” proclaimed ethos of Christianity, failing to notice the irony of the Crusader hordes that rushed towards the Muslim heartlands to recapture the Holy Land. The conquests and counter-conquests of Christian Europe were not for

religious or humanitarian reasons, we should note, but to secure trade and control through the Middle East and to the Far East as well. The irony is not lost till today when the last 500 years have been dominated by ‘Western conquest’ and massive military superiority. Today, the ‘sword’ is wielded by the military hyperpower of the Western United States that uses it to spread and enforce its notions of democracy and enlightenment values.

The sword was a simple yet powerful symbol that Christian Europe projected from its own lexicon onto a Muslim world that it did not try to understand, and could not fathom from within the prism of its own ideology.

When Orientalists spoke of the ‘exotic’ lands of the Middle East, they conjured up evocative images of harems and mysterious women with dark eyes hidden behind translucent black veils. The Occident was enthralled by the paradox of how women were covered, often hidden in women’s quarters, or at least behind their modest dress. But what was once a healthy, Islamic yet palpable sexuality of the Muslim world was an incomprehensible contrast to the prudish values first of Puritanism and then of the Victorian Age.

Again, by interpreting through its own prism of understanding, the Occident turned the veil into a symbolic issue that defined a ‘barbaric’ and ‘oppressive’ personality of Islam. Again, it was the simplicity of the

symbol of the veil that raised it to define everything that the West saw as wrong with Islam and the Muslim world.

These two symbols have come back to haunt us today and still define the West's view of the Muslim world. Today's sword has been replaced by its modern counterpart – terrorist attacks. The veil, the small simple piece of cloth that is so rarely worn, still holds its own.

If the veil did not hold such symbolic and historic weight, why has it ignited such a whirlwind? Muslims reacted passionately not because most Muslim women wish to wear the veil – quite the contrary, only about five per cent of Muslim women in the UK wear a veil – but because where 'veil' was written, there was a caveat which said "for veil, read Islam".

The same applies to the rhetoric about terrorist attacks, and foreign policies that take Western forces into Muslim countries to 'help', but end up creating more strife and destruction to meet their own ends. Indeed, we all agree that there are terrorists out there and their actions are vehemently rejected by Muslims round the world. But Western terminology around terror attacks and the War on Terror, has the same resonance to it as the Myth of the Veil. The same caveat applied "for terror (or sword), read Islam".

The Sword and the Veil are once again at the centre of polemics. They uncover the simplistic view that the West holds buried deep inside itself of Islam's supposedly inherent violence, oppression and barbarism. But they are myths created from icons that have been misrepresented and conveniently fitted to meet a political narrative.

The Sword and the Veil are symbols that lie deep within the European narrative, and are therefore easy to hook onto. They were myths on which to build a political vision when they were first created. But the

power they hold over Europe is only because they draw on Europe's own heritage. The myth of the sword can only be meaningful in Europe because Europe understands what it means to use force and violence to further its cause. The majority of Muslims are confused by this myth of expansion of faith through violence. 'Jihad' for them is simply a spiritual struggle, military force is for defence. "There is no compulsion in religion" is the clear Islamic edict, so faith cannot be induced by bloody means.

The veil too is only potent because of Europe's uneasy history of social values regarding women and their status. The issues of oppression and sexuality of women that the Muslim world is accused of, are simply a mirror of the schizophrenic nature of western society with regards to the rights of women and how they should be treated. The West at first could not understand these mysterious women of the Orient who supposedly came from a heritage of liberation, passion and social participation. But this was all hidden behind a veil, behind modest coverings. And this seemingly paradoxical combination, and its contrast with the status quo in Europe where women had no rights till the 20th century, created fear and misunderstanding. The Myth of the Veil was embodied with this recoiling and incomprehension and came to symbolise oppression and mediaeval values.

Alas, where once the Muslim world led the world in providing a blueprint for the equality of women through the statements of the Qur'an, the Muslim world today also has little to be proud of with regards to the status of women. The veil was clearly a myth because Islam offered a framework that worked towards rights, status and equality. But now it has become paralysed by the same gender relations and sexual guilt, and the oppression of women that it claims to reject and which it accuses the West of. More worrying, is the fact that the Muslim world is in denial. The

Myth of the Veil in the West has created a Counter-Myth in the Muslim world – that because the basic laws of Islam liberate woman, give her rights and status – then it follows that the Muslim world is de facto implementing these values. The sad fact is that Muslims have a long way to go before the rights they trumpet about Islam with regards to women become social reality.

If you watch the media and political rhetoric unfold, you will see the discussions about Muslims and Islam punctuated by the leit-motifs of the Sword and the Veil. It seems that the West can only understand Islam and Muslims through these very simplistic and mythical symbols that evoke such deep-seated and irrational emotion. Talking about “markers of separation” and ‘wars’ only entrenches these myths in an historical and irrelevant narrative, instead of allowing new connections to be built and instead of shattering misconceptions and building an honest and open reality.

*Courtesy: The Muslim News*

# The Prophet as a Man

*Competing With the Best of All Muslims*

*Adil Salahi*

It is well established in the minds of all Muslims that the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) were the best of Muslim generations. Indeed, both individually and as a solid community they provided a clear example of dedication to the cause of Islam, which is difficult to attain by anyone else. Certainly all of them were not of the same standard. Yet even those of them who embraced Islam after it was well established in Madinah, or when it became a major force in Arabia, held in awe by all Arabs, benefited by direct guidance given by the Prophet. This is something that no other generation could have. What it meant was that they could receive divine guidance on the problems they faced, either as a community or as individuals. Surah 58 starts with the following verse: “God has heard the words of the woman who pleads with you concerning her husband, and complains to God. God has heard what you both had to say.” Clearly, this concerned the personal problem of an individual woman who pleaded her case requesting guidance from the Prophet with regard to her position with her husband. The surah goes on to provide this guidance and states rulings that apply in similar cases.

People in that generation appreciated this privilege and realized that it was due only to the fact that the Prophet lived among them and was accessible to them at every moment of day and night. When the Prophet passed away, they realized that this source of light and guidance was no longer available to them. They had to rely on what they learned from the Prophet and refer to the Qur’an, God’s book that contains guidance for all mankind.

When the people of Makkah finally ended their opposition to Islam, two years before the Prophet’s death, and when the tribe of Thaqeef followed suit a year later, the number of the Prophet’s companions was large indeed. Those who offered the pilgrimage with him a few months before his death were estimated to exceed 100,000. The whole of Arabia had accepted Is-

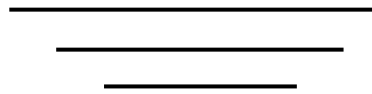
lam by that time, but the Prophet's companions were only those who met him in person and followed his faith. Yet we normally associate this honorable title with those of them who responded early to the call of Islam. There is no doubt that those who became Muslim after Makkah had fallen to Islam were not equal to those who fought for Islam during its days of weakness. God says in the Qur'an: "Those of you who gave and fought (for God's cause) before the victory are not like others: they are higher in rank than those who gave and fought afterward, although God has promised the ultimate good to all of them." (57: 10) Those early Muslims, the ones who followed the Prophet when he was still in Makkah and who emigrated with him to Madinah, i.e. the Muhajirin, and the people of Madinah who welcomed him and gave him their full support, i.e. the Ansar, are indeed the ones we think of when we refer to the Prophet's companions. This is in line with what the verse we have quoted states.

Abu Saeed Al-Khudri, one of the Ansari companions of the Prophet, quotes him as saying: "Do not verbally abuse my companions. By Him who holds my soul in His hand, should any of you spend in God's cause the equivalent of Mount Uhud in gold, he would not attain the measure of any of them, nor half that measure." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim and Abu Dawood).

In this Hadith the Prophet is giving clear instructions that no one may level verbal abuse on any of his companions. It is clear that the Prophet was saying this to some people who would heed his instructions, which means that they were Muslims, and as such they were among his companions. There were a few cases of friction between some of the Prophet's companions, and this Hadith might have concerned such a case. We may think that the case involved one of the early companions of the Prophet and one who was at the time a newcomer to Islam. In their dis-

agreement the latter might have insulted the other, and the Prophet took issue with the abuser. He thus defined the status of those of his companions who were in long association with him.

These were the ones who attained a special grade to which no one else can aspire. The Prophet tells us that when any of these spent for God's cause a reasonable measure, his action was better than anyone else spending a limitless amount for the same cause. The measure specified by the Prophet was known as Mudd, which is estimated as four times the fill of the cupped hands of an average man. Compared with a mountain of gold, this is an insignificant amount. Yet the Prophet gives the higher status to these ones because of the fact that they followed him at the time when he was facing stiff opposition from many quarters. They risked their lives and their families for the cause of Islam. They were ready to sacrifice their all at any time. They had little, lived in poverty, and were always under threat of extermination, yet they were so dedicated to the cause that they never hesitated to undertake any task assigned to them or to make any sacrifice required of them. They never wavered, nor entertained any thoughts of deserting the cause. Hence, their status was the highest of all Muslims.



*Cont'd from page 37*

Allah is true, and ask forgiveness for your fault, and glorify the praises of your Lord in the Ashi (i.e. the time period after the midnoon till sunset) and in the Ibkar (i.e. the time period from early morning or sunrise till before midnoon) [it is said that, that means the five compulsory congregational Salat (prayers) or the 'Asr and Fajr prayers]. (55)" [40:55]

# Reason, Logic and Faith

*How can Muslims claim that Islam is a divine religion and that it will triumph over all other religions?*

*This is explained in a step-wise manner, starting from absolute basics, making it easier to understand, starting right at the beginning, when a person starts putting his mind as to who he/ she is.*

## Step One

Any individual who has some concern about himself will start off with pondering, meditating and with introspection. In the first stage in this process he comes to realise that man is different from the animals.

Among the many differences are the following salient features: Man can think and ponder. Man can reason. By certain mental processes he can arrange his thoughts in a certain pattern, which is called logic.

Conclusion: Man is just not another animal. Man is a much higher form of species, able to think, reason and be logical.

## Step Two

Further contemplation on himself and everything around him makes him realise the beauty and perfection of all that he observes, in the skies, on the earth, in the vegetation, in the sand and the rocks and mountains, in all other creatures and in himself, etc.

Conclusion: There is a very complex system in everything. Many systems are such that they are beyond human comprehension. There is also tremendous beauty in "nature".

## Step Three

Still meditating on his own composi-

tion and on the universe surrounding him, the individual comes to realise that there are two levels of experiences: One is the physical whereby he can experience pain and pleasure in all parts of his body, sweetness and bitterness in his mouth, pleasant and unpleasant smells, etc. These are the physical level. However, he also experiences happiness and joy, exultation and depression, appreciation of higher values, etc. This is at another level. He realises that within him he has another force to which he attaches the name "soul".

Conclusion: Man is composed of a physical being and a metaphysical soul.

## Step Four

The next obvious thought that arises is: Where did all this come from? Is one to believe the Darwinists that it all came from nowhere, by itself, by chance and by a process of "natural selection" and "evolution"? Reason, logic and scientific facts show that this is not the case. Matter cannot create itself, much less can it come from nothing. Matter cannot arrange itself in such perfect systems and order by itself. Mutations that we witness do not enhance mankind but mutations generally cause congenital defects. And so forth. The other aspect completely ignored by the Darwinists is the presence of



the soul. Where does the soul come from? Can the physical scientists define the soul and its properties? Can it be measured?

Conclusion: There must be a Creator Who created everything, physical and meta-physical.

### Step Five

The question arises: Is there One Creator or are there more than one? The obvious answer is that there can reasonably and logically be only one. If there are more than one, where did the others come from? The conclusion will be that the others were created, so there must be only One Creator Who created these others. So, to claim that these others are also our creators is a complete contradiction because these others cannot be creators, being themselves created.

Conclusion: The universe and whatever is in it has only One Creator, who always existed and who has no partner/s.

### Step Six

Another question arises: Our Creator, having created the heavens and the earth and everything in it, and then created us as in a very unique form with unique qualities not shared by other creatures, would He then leave us directionless, without any guidelines as to what our purpose is in this world and how we should live our lives?

Looking at the world around us it is everybody's experience that in most instances we have systems whereby an instruction book and a trainer are used. Take a new car: it has a manual and the sales rep to explain the manual to us. He is there to make sure we understand how to use the different systems in the car. This applies to appliances, machinery and almost everything else. It is therefore only logical that our Creator would have given us some type of "manual" (a scripture) and a messenger (prophet) to let us know His purpose in creating us and to let us

know how to spend our time on earth.

Conclusion: It is necessary to find such a Messenger and such a Scripture from our Creator in order to live a life that our Creator wants us to live.

### Step Seven

There are sun worshippers, moon worshippers, idol worshippers, ancestor worshippers, and so forth. Can these objects that they worship be divine in the sense that they need to be worshipped? Each claims to have a leader/ priest/ guru/ etc. and a scripture or religious tracts to support each one's claims.

Then there is also the Talmud, the Bible and the Qur'an. How does one differentiate the true scripture and the true Messengers/s?

From Step One to Four, there are certain attributes of our Creator that we have to acknowledge in recognising Him as our One and only Creator: He is perfect in all His attributes, be it love or mercy or compassion or any other virtue. He has no defects. He is just. Injustice is a defect and cannot exist in Him. Similarly, all human failings that we experience, are absent in Him.

Bearing all these in mind, we can safely say that our Creator will not trick us or confuse us with contradictory messages. In His love for His creation He will make sure that the path that is straight and correct can only be one and that it can be easily recognised.

Conclusion: There is only one straight path and only one faultless scripture to guide us. This was the rule with previous communities throughout the history of mankind and this is the rule that still applies now.

### Step Eight

Out of all the scriptures it is only the Qur'an that meets the criteria of being preserved in its original form, being free of additions and alterations, being in its original lan-

guage, being in a language that was and still is spoken, etc. It also has certain challenges that it puts to the sceptics who doubt that it is a scripture revealed by our Creator. The best brains in the world have not been able to meet these challenges for the past fifteen hundred years.

As far as the Messenger whose example and instructions we need to follow, it is only Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) who fits the criteria for being a person of exemplary character, a role model as a husband, father, statesman, companion, spiritual leader, etc. He lived in the full light of recent history so that his whole life has been documented to the minutest detail.

None of the other scriptures match the Qur'an in the above-mentioned criteria. Although other Messengers (Peace be on them) were true representatives sent by our Creator to guide their communities, their scriptures and their roles were relevant to their age and were abrogated with the coming of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). If this was not done, there would be utter confusion, which would mean that our Creator did not take this into account. This concept is not possible as our Creator is faultless. Therefore, He had to make sure that none of the previous scriptures remained in a form that would create doubts in our minds as to which is the correct scripture to follow in this particular age.

Conclusion: The only reasonable and logical conclusion to arrive at is that the Qur'an is the final Divine scripture and Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the final Messenger. Therefore, salvation lies only in following Islam.

### **The role of reason & logic and faith**

Most people are confused as to the roles of reason and logic, on the one hand, and faith on the other hand.

There are those that say reason and

logic need to be exercised at every stage. Others state that faith is the most important factor and that it is the condition of the heart that is the determinant factor, thus reason and logic have to take a back seat.

The Muslim says that reason, logic and faith are complementary. One cannot dispense with any of these three.

### **The explanation:**

Reason and logic are absolutely necessary to be able to differentiate between what is genuine and what is false. One cannot dispense with these. Throughout the history of mankind each and every messenger (prophet) would appeal to the reason and logic of his community to order for them to discard idol worship and accept the Creator as being only one.

However, reason and logic are limited in that they can only function in a limited sphere. There are spheres beyond the reach of reason and logic. For example: The existence of angels, Hell, Paradise, etc. As these are not creations like other creations that we are aware of, their existence can only be known through information related to us by an authentic source, namely the Qur'an. To dispense with reason and logic is also not possible because then there would be no bases for rejecting all those false doctrine that are based solely on faith.

Once reason and logic have taken us to that point where we have found an authentic scripture (the Qur'an) and we have in front of us the life of the last Messenger, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), then faith comes into play and this faith then takes us beyond the spheres where reason and logic cannot take us. We then reach the level of conviction and we then submit to the will of our Creator. One of the meanings of Islam is total submission to the will of Allah.



# I'm Stressed Out, I'm Angry, I've Had Enough, I'm Going to Explode

*Raha Azeezuddeen Batts*

All praise is due to Allah. May the Salaah and the Salaam be upon Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and all those who follow him in goodness until the Day of Recompense, as to what proceeds:

Indeed the life of the Dunyaa is one of toil and struggle for the believer up until the time when he meets his Lord. It is for this reason that Allah has enjoined patience upon His slaves and has made it such an integral part of the religion of al-Islam. The All-Knowing, the All-Wise, has mentioned patience more than 90 times in the Qur'aan, from them is His, the Most High, statement:

*"And say not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah, 'They are dead.' Nay, they are living, but you perceive (it) not. (154) And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.)." [2:154-155]*

And His Statement:

"By Al-'Asr (the time). (1) Verily! Man is in loss, (2) Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic

Monotheism or Jihad, etc.). (3)" [Al-'Asr: 103-1-3]

In the first of the above two passages from Allah's Glorious Book, Allah informs His slaves of the sure fact that they will be tried and tested. However, it should be known that the objective of Allah's tests and trails is not for Him, the All-Knowing of what is in the breasts, to acquire some knowledge about His slave that He didn't have. Rather, they are means by which He distinguishes the people of firm eemaan from those who have weak or no eemaan, the people of at-taqwaa and love of Allah from the disobedient ones. As Allah says in His Book,

"Alif-Lam-Mim. (1) Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested. (2) And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars, (although Allah knows all that before putting them to test). (3)" [29:1-3]

The reality of this affair can be seen in the fact that when some Muslims are tested they are actually strengthened in their forbearance and reliance upon Allah; while others are driven to despair and become disobedient to Allah and His Messenger, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. This is from the deceptions of Shaytaan who threatens the slave with poverty and afterwards incites him to do

what is unlawful to save himself from it. As Allah says about him,

“Shaytaan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahsha (evil deeds, illegal sexual intercourse, sins etc.); whereas Allah promises you Forgiveness from Himself and Bounty, and Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower.” [2:268]

In this second of these passages mentioned above (al-‘Asr 103:1-3), Allah informs us that all of mankind is doomed except those who have the two qualities mentioned therein (a) eemaan, which consist of belief in the heart, testification with the tongue and action with the limbs, and (b) patience. How are these two qualities related? Alee ibn Abee Taalib, may Allah be pleased with him, said “Sabr (patience) is to eemaan as the head is to the body; if the head is removed then the body will fall.” Saying that, he raised his voice and proclaimed, “You cannot have faith without patience!” For this reason ash-Shaafi’ee said concerning Sooratul-‘Asr; “If Allah had sent down upon his creation no other proof besides this Soorah it would have sufficed them” [Taken from ath-Thalaathah al-Usool by Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhaab]

After a brief introduction, I would like to share some of my personal experiences with my brothers and sisters in hope that they are benefited by them. And Allah says,

“Therefore remind (men) in case the reminder profits (them). (9) The reminder will be received by him who fears (Allah), (10)” [‘Alaa 87:9-10]

I am a Muslim who, at the time of writing this article, is 34 years of age and I have been in prison for the past twelve years. Due to a number of factors such as distance, frequent transfers, etc., I have not had a single visit from a family member over the course of the past twelve years. About half-way through my incarceration, I was faced

with the calamity which every incarcerated person dreads, and that is the death of my mother to whom I was very close with, as I am her only child just as she was her mother’s only child. I myself have only one child whom I have not seen since I left the streets in 1998 except in pictures; and my contact with her has been sparse to say the least. Three of the past twelve years were spent on lock down at a maximum security prison in Marion IL, USA. These are some of my personal trials. As for the religious and general trials, then they are many, such as those who are abandoned by their wives or friends and family, the harassment by the correctional officers to the Muslims. In fact, today an officer went into a Muslim’s cell under the premise of a “Shakedown” (a cell search for contraband, etc.) and took all of his Islaamic books claiming that he had too many. He only left him with secular novels and a bible! The “shakedown” is what the officers use to antagonize the inmates who they don’t like. So at any given time an officer may go into your room, search through your belongings, taking your personal items and having no respect for anything that belongs to the inmate.

One may think that people in prison have it easy due to the fact that we get three meals a day and a free bed, however, the prison system serves pork almost on a regular basis, so if a Muslim doesn’t have the support of his/her family, there will be a lot of hungry nights. But in spite of all this, and many other trials that I have declined to mention, some more significant than others, Allah has made my incarceration a source of guidance and abundance of good. He has made my prison to be a University and my cell to be a place of worship and study, thereby increasing me in eemaan and at-Tawakkul (trust) upon him. By Allah, nothing has been taken from me except that Allah has replaced it with that which is better. For I have seen individuals,

both Muslims and non-Muslims, experience not even half the trials that I have endured, yet have twice the complaints. Indeed, some have even been driven to disobedience, apostasy from the religion or insanity. But a servant cannot be given a gift better and more abundant than patience.

My dear friend and mentor, who is incarcerated in another prison, is currently serving a sentence of double life plus fifty!! 'O Muslim, let this sink in, DOUBLE LIFE PLUS FIFTY. This means hypothetically (if Allah doesn't decree his release), that if he were to die twice, he would have to come back and give the system 50 more years! But by Allah, I have never seen a Muslim more upbeat; having more sincerity to Allah, more love for Allah, His Messenger and the believers; more of a reminder of what the Salaf were upon and more patient. This is what I think of him and I praise no one over Allah. So how bad is your situation?

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, from Allah's Messenger, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, who said, "When one of you looks to one who has been favoured over him in wealth or appearance, let him look to one who is lower than himself as opposed to one who favoured over him" [Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, Kitaab Ar-Riqaq, Hadeeth # 6490]

On the authority of Khabbaab, Allah's Messenger, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Amongst those who came before you, a man would be sawn in half, but that would not cause him to abandon his religion" [Ahmad, al-Bukhaaree and Aboo Daawud]

I advise the Muslims to have patience for the sake of Allah. Have patience and Allah will compensate you. And know that with every hardship comes two reliefs, as Allah said,

"So verily, with the hardship, there is relief, (5) Verily, with the hardship, there is

relief (i.e. there is one hardship with two reliefs, so one hardship cannot overcome two reliefs). (6)" [94:5-6]

The scholars have explained that first relief comes when Allah removes the hardship. The second comes in the hereafter when the slave meets Allah and is rewarded for his patience. This is in addition to the fact that Allah grants leadership to his slaves due to their patience and their firm faith, as Allah says,

"And We made from among them (Children of Israel), leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). (24)" [32:24]

As for my affair, indeed it is a blessed one; for patience is the fruit of proper belief in Allah, the mighty majestic and his qadr. Due to it a slave knows that (a) nothing comes to him of good or evil except that which Allah has decreed for him, (b) Allah is in full control of all of the affairs, (c) that Allah does not burden any soul beyond what it can bear.

On the authority of Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas, Allah's Messenger, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said, "The most severely tried amongst mankind are the Prophets; then those that are most like them, then those that are most like them. The people are tried according to their level of faith..." [at-Tirmidhee #2398, Ibn Maajah #4023, ad-Daarimee 2/320, Ahmad, and it is authentic]

So be patient with the trials of life, may Allah bless you, and look for your reward with Allah, the mighty and majestic. Put your trust in Allah while acting within the legislated parameters. This is the path to success. May the prayers and peace be upon Muhammad, his family and Companions, aameen.

"So be patient (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). Verily, the Promise of

*Cont'd on page*

## The Ideal Prophet

# The Perfectness of the Holy Prophet's Life

*Maulana Syed Sylaiman Nadvi (RA)*

The Prophet (S) never tried to hide anything about him. He was known to all as he was. His wife 'Ayesha (RA), who had been his closest companion for nine years, relates: "Never believe one who says that Muhammad (S) had suppressed any commandment of God, for God Himself attests:

*"The duty of the messenger is only to convey (the message). Allah knoweth what ye proclaim and what ye hide." (5:99)*

Nobody ever wants to reveal his weaknesses— and spiritual and moral preceptors the least of all. Still, the Qur'an has several verses admonishing the Prophet (S) on his apparent mistakes. Each of these verses was read out to others by him, memorized by the people and has ever since been recited in the mosques and the homes. Had these verses not alluded to the Prophet's (S) mistakes, the world would have never come to know at least some of them. But these were pointed out by Allah, for this was the character to be presented in the full light of day as the prototype of all human perfection.

The marriage of the Prophet (S) with the divorced wife of his adopted son was an act detestable to the Arabs. Yet the incident has been described at length in the Qur'an. 'Ayesha (RA) says that if the Prophet (S) had the option to suppress any verse of the Qur'an, he would certainly have not divulged these to avoid criticism [Al-Musnad, VI,

p.233]. The very fact that the Prophet (S) gave out even these verses testifies that nothing about his life and character remains in the dark. It may be useful to recall here the attestation of Bosworth Smith, who writes:

*"There is full light of day upon all that that light can ever reach at all. 'The abysmal depths of personality' indeed are, and must always remain, beyond the reach of any line and plummet of ours. But we know everything of the external history of Muhammad's— his youth, his appearance, his relations, his habits; the first idea and the gradual growth, intermittent though it was, of his great revelation; while for his internal history, after his mission had been proclaimed, we have a book absolutely unique in its origin, in its preservation, and in the chaos of its contents, but on the substantial authenticity of which no one has ever been able to cast a serious doubt. There, if in any book, we have a mirror of one of the master spirits of the world; often inartistic, incoherent, self-contradictory, dull, but impregnated with a few grand ideas which stand out from the whole; a mind seething with the inspiration pent within it, 'intoxicated with God', but full of human weaknesses, from which he never pretended— and it is his lasting glory that he never pretended— to be free." [Mohammad and Moham-madanism, pp.17-18]*

Bosworth Smith further goes on to

say:

*"It has been remarked by Gibbon that no incipient Prophet ever passed through so severe an ordeal as Muhammad (S), since he first presented himself as a Prophet to those who were most conversant with his infirmities as a man. Those who knew him best, his wife, his eccentric slave, his cousin, his earliest friend— he, who, as Muhammad (S) said, alone of his converts, 'turned not back, neither was perplexed'— were the first to recognize his mission. The ordinary lot of a Prophet was in his case reversed; he was not without honor save among those who did not know him well."*

The more intimately one knew the Prophet (S) the more one admired him. The men who first placed trust in the mission of prophets before Muhammad (S) were those who knew least about them, and their friends and relations were the last to follow them. But the case was entirely different with Muhammad (S). He first won the allegiance of those who were closest to him, knew him intimately and had a personal experience of his dealings, conduct and behavior. What is more, all of them had to pass through a grueling test as well. Khadija (RA), the Prophet's wife, had to endure the rigors of a boycott imposed by the Makkans for three long years when she had to live in the Shuy'ba Abu Talib. Abu Bakr (RA) had to accompany his mentor when the enemy thirsting for his blood, was looking into every nook and corner to lay his hands on the Prophet (S). 'Ali (RA) had to sleep on the bed whose owner had been earmarked for assassination in the same night. Zaid (RA) was emancipated by his master, but he would rather prefer to live with his former owner than return home with his father.

Paying a tribute to the earnestness of the Prophet's (S) companions (RA)

Godfrey Haggins says that the Christians would do well to recollect that the doctrines of Muhammad (S) created a degree of enthusiasm in his followers which is to be sought in vain in the immediate followers of Jesus (AS) — when Jesus was led to the Cross, his followers fled, their enthusiasm forsook them, they left him to perish... The followers of Muhammad (S), on the contrary, rallied round their persecuted prophet, and, risking their lives in his defence, made him triumph over all his enemies [*An Apology for the Life of Mohammad*].

The Apostle of Allah (S) was hemmed in from all sides by the enemy in the battle of Uhud. He called out: "Who will barter his life for me?" No sooner than did his followers hear the summon that seven of the *Ansars (RA)* rushed to defend the Prophet (S) and fought, man after man, and died like heroes [Ibn Is'haq, *The Life of Muhammad*, p.380-81]. An *Ansari* woman lost her father, brother and husband in the same battle. She heard about the death of her nearest kins, one by one, but unmindful of her loss she continued to enquire: "Is the Prophet of God safe?" At last she was told that the Prophet ^ was alive; but not content with the news, she came herself to see the Prophet ^ and exclaimed:

*"No calamity shall befall us so long thou art alive.*

*My father, my husband, my brother and I myself,*

*All can be put at stake, my lord, for thy sake."*

This was the love felt all too deeply by those who knew the Prophet (S) intimately. Would it be possible for anyone to sacrifice his life for another man unless he considers him a perfect model of cardinal virtues? This is the reason why Islam presents the life of Muhammad (S) as a perfect model and an exem-

plar for the entire humanity and calls upon us to love him if we want to be loved by God.

*"Say, (O Muhammad to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you. [3:31]*

To follow the Prophet (S) is, then, the test of one's love for God. It is easy to burn oneself in a moment like a moth, but it is extremely difficult to follow in the footsteps of a guide assiduously until one's hour is come. It was a very severe ordeal, no doubt; but it was passed through with flying colors by every companion of the Prophet (S). This had become the goal of their lives: an ideal which made the Prophet's (S) companions and their disciples assume the role of biographers, chroniclers and historians. They made it a great task of their lives to find out each and everything about their beloved Prophet (S) and preserve it for the coming generations. This, in itself, is a proof of the perfection of the Prophet's (S) life and character in the eyes of his immediate successors. Nothing else would have engaged their attention so thoroughly.

For Islam holds up the life of the holy Prophet (S) as a perfect model for every Muslim, in all its aspects and details. And, the fact is that it has actually been so for the last one and a half thousand years, illuminating the path of countless believers over the ages. There is nothing in the dark, nothing missing - all that the Muslims needed to know of him for the edification of their souls was always found by them. A man whose life was so intimately known could have alone been held as a model guide, as an exemplar and as a sinless man of God by innumerable saints and savants, and hence the verdict of history also goes in his favor.

Babylon, Assyria, India, China, Egypt, Palestine and Greece have been the cradles of ancient civilizations. Ethical norms were set

up by the great philosophers of these countries, rules and conventions were evolved for eating and drinking, food and dress, marriages and deaths, festivals and bereavements. These were elaborated over hundreds of years, but destroyed in no time. Islam formulated the principles of its civilization in a couple of years, yet they continue to rule over the nations for thousands of years. They were found equally useful by all because they emanated from a single source- the life of the holy Prophet (S). This was the model which had left a profound imprint upon the companions, patterned their lives and set the model for their successors, thus, making it the ideal way of life for the whole Islamic world. The sacred life of the Prophet (S) was the nucleus round which revolved the lives of his companions and subsequent generations. It was made a full circle by the peoples of different stocks joining in the perambulation. The civilization thus reared by the genius of different Muslim nationalities may differ to some extent and may also have some shortcomings, but the soul which runs through it is one, complete and wholesome. Wherever there may be Muslims, they would derive inspiration from the same gold mine. Let me illustrate it by an example.

Whenever any savage of the dark continent or even a civilized person living in India embraces Christianity, he is taught to imitate the culture of the materialistic West although he takes his spiritual lessons from the Gospels. But, whatever may be the stage of development of any nation accepting Islam, it has to look to the same shining example for religion as well as culture, for morals as well as customs. The moment one enters the fold of Islam, one finds the life of the Prophet (S) before him, pointing the way to be followed

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