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"LET US END ALL SUFFERING FROM MANKIND"

President Anwar Sadaat of Egypt signed a Visitor's Book in Jerusalem on 20th November, 1977. A copy of his message in his own handwriting is produced below

القدس الشريف . ٢٠ نوفمبر عام ١٩٧٧
Jerusalem, November 20, 1977

President Sadaat
May God Guide
our steps towards
Peace
Let us end all
suffering for
Mankind

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
رَبِّهِمْ
الْحَمْدُ
أ. م. / ١١/٢٠

"MAY GOD GUIDE OUR STEPS TOWARDS PEACE. LET US END ALL SUFFERING FROM MANKIND" —President Anwar Sadaat
A Mission that awaits Fulfilment. See also article on JERUSALEM p.9

al-aḥimadiyya

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MEN OF UNDERSTANDING

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD admired and appreciated truth wherever it existed. He was free from all kinds of prejudices and demonstrated practically that the Lord of the nations had taken possession of his heart. Being in full knowledge of the implication of the text, "All praise is due to God, the Lord of all the worlds and of all the nations" (the Qur'an 1:2), his heart was wide enough to accommodate everything that was good and noble, even if it were found in persons that were not of his following. An incident is mentioned about him thus:

"Alqamah reported to me: 'My father narrated to me on the authority of my grandfather: 'I happened to be the seventh man in the deputation of seven on behalf of my community that waited upon the Messenger of God. And when we arrived in his presence and talked to him, he was extremely pleased with what he saw of our behaviour (i.e. our dignified and composed demeanour) and our manners. He asked us, How did you come to have this character?.... We said: (It is because of) 'Five things which we made a part of our character in the days of ignorance.' At this the Holy Prophet further inquired: 'And what were these five things which you made a part of your character in the days of Ignorance?' In reply this deputation spoke of five qualities of the mind:

1. To be thankful to God while in affluence.
2. To exercise patience at the time of calamity
3. To be pleased with the decrees of fate.
4. To remain steady at the time of conflict.
5. To refrain from feeling happy at the distress of the enemy.

At this the Holy Prophet said:

"Some men of knowledge are philosophers, and in their understanding they are almost like prophets" (See "Zurqaani", Commentary of "Mawahib-ul-Laduniyya", Volume IV, pages 76,77)

The deputation was impressed with the frankness of the Prophet. Another deputation that waited upon him asked him: "O Messenger of God! we have heard that one who does not leave his home for the sake of religion, cannot be regarded as having faith in him." At this the Prophet said: "Be God-conscious wherever you be, and nothing will be ignored of your actions." He is also reported to have said:

"Those will be close to me who are righteous, wheresoever they be, and whatsoever country they may be."

"SADR-UD-DIN

OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE - 2

by Farooq A. Shaikh ((Pakistan))

The interaction of world powers in the Third World, especially the Muslim countries is pushing them towards Communism. Communism is the largest anti-God movement existing today, although it promises utopian concepts of economic stability, equality and peace to the under-developed countries. Communism is expanding fast despite opposition from materialistic giants who are trying, though unsuccessfully, to resist its advance. As the forces based on a materialistic approach to life have failed to contain advance of Communism a concerted religious effort is required to meet this challenge. This effort can be provided by one of the two great religions of the world, Islam and Christianity, both of which are founded on the belief in God.

The concept of *jihād-bil-Qalam* in the light of the Holy Qur'an offers formidable weapon to counter the myth of the anti-God, and to achieve ultimate supremacy of Islam and Communism.

Let us consider chapter 112 entitled *al-Ikhlās* of the Holy Qur'an that gives in a nutshell, the concept of Islamic belief in the omnipotent, the greatest and the highest authority, Almighty Allāh. Both Islam and Christianity accept God as the supreme Creator of mankind, but there can be no better and explicit definition of God's omnipotence than the very words of Almighty Himself as revealed in the Holy Qur'an.

This chapter points out the fundamental errors of many religious beliefs and doctrines in its four short sentences. The first verse proclaims the absolute Unity of the Divine Being. In the second verse Allāh is said to be *Samad*, which the Holy Prophet is reported to have explained as meaning "the Lord to whom recourse is had in every need" so that all have need of Him and He has need of none. This statement negatives the doctrine according to which soul and matter are co-eternal with God, and God stands in need of them to bring about the creation. The third verse points out the error of describing God as being a father or son. The fourth verse negatives the doctrine of incarnation. Hence in the words of sura *Al-Ikhlās* we have supreme and unparalleled definition of the omnipotence and total supremacy of God. It is obvious that the forces of anti-God can only be effectively checked by a religion which puts forth a true concept of the Divine Being which only Islam does. Christianity, the other major religion, has weakened this concept of God's omnipotence by ascribing to Christ, divine powers, as the *only* son of God and by attributing to him the concept of Trinity about which, truly speaking, no mention has been made in the Bible. Many Muslims also subscribe to Jesus Christ similar divine powers and, more or less, by promoting the same Christian concept about Christ, they are weakening the strength of Islam and are hindering the progress of Islam in the world.



Last but not the least, the most outstanding hindrance in the way of Islamic Renaissance is the widening gap between the various Muslim sects and sectarian intolerance.

The Qur'an says : "The believers are brethren so make peace between your brethren, and keep your duty to Allāh that mercy may be had on you" (49 : 10).

This is the teaching of the Holy Prophet for the entire Muslim world. A teaching that is the golden rule for creating peace, love and affection among the Muslims in particular and the human society in general. These words offer us the best and most effective method of promoting Islamic Renaissance. It is undeniable that Unity is the keynote to renaissance. It is an irony of fate that all the Muslims of the world believe in one and the same God, in the greatness and finality of one and the same Prophet of Islam, seek guidance and solace from one and the same Qur'an that teaches us love, affection, peace, tolerance and forbearance for all the people of the world, whether he be Muslim or Christian, Yet we start to eliminate our own Muslim brethren — to destroy their property, encroach upon their freedom and rights, that are given by God Almighty. The late 'Allāma Iqbāl puts it thus :

مظمت ایک ہے اس قوم کی لسان بھی ایک
ایک ہی سب کا لی ' دین بھی ' ایمان بھی ایک
حرم پاک بھی ' اللہ بھی ' قرآن بھی ایک
آجہ بڑی بات تھی ہوتے جو مسلمان بھی ایک

The profit of this nation is one and the same and so is its loss.

The Prophet of all of them is the same and so is their religion and faith.

So is the Holy Ka'ba, Allāh and the

Qur'an.

How wonderful it would have been if

Muslims were also one and united !

It is a matter of high honour in Islam for any Muslim to be able to convince a non-believer to accept this great religion and to bring him into the fold of Islam. The status of such a Muslim is the highest in the eyes of God and his Messenger.

In the words of our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), to call a Muslim a *Kāfir* is more heinous than murder.

Have we ever thought why the Muslims of the world are following a path that will lead us to disaster? The Qur'an answers this question decisively thus:

"He it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive—they are the basis of the Book—and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give (their own) interpretation; And none knows its interpretation save Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from the Lord. And none mind except men of understanding" (3 : 6).

This verse of the Holy Qur'an is self explanatory. The Qur'an teaches us to hold fast to the basics that are clearly ordained in the Holy Book, as the very foundation of our religion and faith. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave us a perfect example of a life moulded and executed in the light of these basic principles. A very practical example of this concept can be given. Islam is like a building. The basis of the structure of a building are its foundations. These

are strong and firm and on them the entire superstructure is built. Once the foundations are laid, then the superstructure — the windows, the doors, furnishings and fixtures — are added to it according to the liking of the architect and conforming to the taste of the owner and consistent with the environment. As such, each building looks different from outside but has the same common concept of the foundation *i.e.*, the superstructure must be built directly on the foundation. Similarly, Islam is the foundation of human-society that is cemented by the basic principles of the Holy Qur'an. After these foundations are laid, Islam allows freedom and choice to each society to build the superstructure in the shape and manner most conducive to its aspirations and environment. Thus Islam promotes a sense of achievement, competition, development and progress for the healthy growth of society. Islam, thus gives freedom to all Muslims to discuss, deliberate and cooperate with each other so that the development of human mind is not allowed to stagnate, but is given a chance to nourish and grow. Islam is not a dogma nor is it a slave to rituals. It expects its believers to be constantly active and progressive, to explore and invent and work towards human refinement. Yet Islam does not allow the superstructure to become too heavy for the foundations because in that case the entire building will crumble down. It is a pity that this precisely is happening to our religion today. Secondary and allegorical situations are being given priority by a particular school of thought in one place; and by another school of thought at another place; and the basics are being absolutely ignored. This is not the way to Islamic renaissance.

I have tried to pin point the hindrances in the way of Islamic Renaissance. Let me very briefly sum up this paper by explaining remedies for the removal of these hindrances.

We all believe, that Islam gives us a complete code of life and regulates our lives in the most practical manner. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, rightly defines Islam as the only religion in the world that provides proof of its claims from within the Qur'an itself. It is such a complete religion that it provides simultaneously for the spiritual as well as the physical needs of human beings. Let us apply this test to the arrangements and elements provided by Islam. The elements provided by God for our physical existence and development most beautifully presented in the Holy Qur'an, are visible in abundance if we care to look around us, and no detailed resume of these is necessary as they are evident to the naked eye. But what are the elements provided to us by God for our spiritual evolution. God has conveyed the spiritual elements to mankind through revelation. The process of revelation continued in various societies and in various ages, according to the capacity and need of the people and communities of the those times through His selected Messengers. This process continued till the time that a complete and perfect code of life was ordained by God to be delivered to mankind. This was accomplished through the last of God's Messengers, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). In order to keep this code of life fresh at all times, and to maintain its unpolluted spirit, this process of revelation has continued through the advent of

Mujaddids in each century. However, it is essential to differentiate between the revelation of the prophets and that of the *Mujaddids*. The prophets are primarily revealed injunctions, rules and codes — that is *Shari'ah*, whereas *Mujaddids* after the finality of the prophets are not revealed the *Shari'ah* but are bestowed with revelations to keep the spirit of *Shari'ah* and the fragrance of faith fresh. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said :

“Beyond doubt Allah appoints *Mujaddids* (Revivalists) in every century, who revive and reinvigorate Islam.”

True to the Hadith of the Holy Prophet, the world has witnessed the appearance of *Mujaddids* in each of the thirteen centuries.

I may mention that we have witnessed the close of the 14th century and no person other than Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has claimed to be a *Mujaddid*. Qur'an further guides us in these words :

“And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful” (3:103). Verse that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the “Ahmadiyya Movement” in Islam. It establishes that unless one associates and works as an organisation created by the will of God, the noble objective of Islamic Renaissance cannot be achieved.

Let us pray that God may give us the strength to work in unity with this noble organisation without which our efforts for removing hindrances to Islamic Renaissance will not bear fruit. Let us live true to the Motto:

“Uphold religion above worldly quests.”

دین کو دنیا پر ملامت کرو



Maulānā S. Muḥammad Ṭufail, has been assigned a Paper “Islamic Renaissance through the Ahmadiyya Movement” and he will be dealing with it in greater detail.

I feel we must understand that this Movement is a Movement created through divine revelation.

It requires heart searching by all of us present here and elsewhere, that are we devoting our time and energy to further this cause? Are we showing our gratitude to Allah by making progress and development in this field? If not then Allah will select another group to carry on this work ; for just because one Movement becomes lax and passive and shows signs of stagnation the will of God cannot stop its function. God's word will continue to be spread, but this great boon of Allah on us shall cease and we will never be able to get back our noble status.

We should not be discouraged by the difficulties we are facing. Agreed that we are small in numbers, lacking in resources, finances and facilities; agreed that we enjoy no support from any government or Head of State, nor from any other worldly organisation. Even our own Muslim brethren throughout the world, instead of giving us support and cooperation for furtherance of this noble cause, shun us. But, we should be content that we enjoy the support of the Almighty — a support that alone is enough to give us encouragement and the will to work in union against all worldly odds. Let us pledge that we will strive towards the achievement of our goals with the will of God. And if we are honest and true to our promises, the will of God shall eradicate all hindrances and remove all inadequacies confronting us. It is, therefore, essential for us to become a united

international force of Islam, by bringing closer all our various groups in different parts of the world. By doing this we will have an international platform which is necessary for the pursuit of our dynamic objectives.

In the Convention held in London, our brother and friend Mr. M. B. Yasin as well as the representatives of the Western Hemisphere had given a similar idea. It was also decided that a detailed action plan was to be put forward for the execution of this idea. I regret to say that there has been no progress in this direction. It is our duty now, in this Convention to discuss the matter and to take a final decision.

I would like to mention for consideration one basic suggestion. The proposed body should be an autonomous and self-

executing body. It should be represented by Ahmadis of all countries on the basis of equal representation. Due to the very wide geographical composition of the body, the "executive" of this organisation should be based on such practical lines that these geographical distances are shortened. The relationship of this body with the Central Anjuman should be such that this body, though autonomous in its working, should be under the overall supervision and scrutiny of the Central Anjuman. This can be achieved by giving full freedom to this international organisation with powers to the Central Anjuman to veto all such matters that are not in harmony with the principles of Islam and the objectives of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

The above paper was read at the Eighth International Ahmadiyya Convention held in Trinidad (West Indies) in August 1980. Miss Anisa Tufail (now Mrs Tariq Ahmed) was in the Chair. —Ed.

THE UNITARIAN SHINTOS BELIEVE IN ONE GOD (An extract of a letter from Japan)

The Japanese name "Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto" literally means "Beautiful Word from Heaven" or "Man, a little Roof of Heaven". He is the Ancestor of the Fujiwara Clan, the greatest clan, which has the closest matrimonial relation with the Imperial Family and ruled over the country and assumed control of Japan 1,400 years ago and has a great influence on the Japanese Society until now. According to the Unitarian Shinto (or Voshida Shinto), the main section of Shintoism, "Worship and Obedience to One and only One God" is the authentic teaching of Shintoism, since the time of "Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto" who came to this country, helping the Founder of the Imperial Family establish the foundation of this state. The Japanese word "Shinto" literally means "The

Way of God". It is not "The Way of gods" although many people misunderstand this in such a way. The word "SHIN" is "GOD" (not "gods") and "TŌ" means "WAY". This is a very important point. Another name of "SHINTO" is "KAN-NAGARA" which means "SUBMISSION TO GOD". Furthermore, it is a secret but well known fact that in the back of Mirror, "YATA-NO-KAGAMI", Symbol of the Isē Shrine which is the Supreme and the Grandest Shrine in Japan, some words which are decisively important, are written. The Isē Shrine is dedicated to the Progenitor of the Imperial Family, and the Mirror "YATA-NO-KAGAMI" is one of the Three Sacred Treasures, Symbol of the Imperial Throne. This fact indicates that the Progenitor of the Imperial family Ama-Terasu, handed down the Truth "WORSHIP THE ONLY ONE GOD" to posterity and this is the greatest Principle upon which the Government of Japan must be based. Therefore, the role of the Emperor, the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, should have been to teach the faith

لااله الاالله

i.e. "Lā ilāha illal-lāh" (there is no object worthy of worship except (one) God) to his followers, the Japanese people. Another Messenger generally accepted by the Japanese people is "Omoi-Kane-no-Mikoto" (literally "The Man of Wisdom and resources") who has been destined to preside over all the political affairs and exercise mastery over this country, acting as an Adviser to the Founder of the Imperial Family. We can understand the real meaning of "Shintoism" only by reading the Holy Qur'an and researching the teachings of Islam. At the same time, we can say that making clear the origin of Shintoism and its authentic teaching and demonstrate the role of "Ameno-Koyane-no-Mikoto", "Omoi-Kane-no-Mikoto" and the Founder of the Imperial House, according to the Revelation of Allah in the Holy Qur'an, is a good approach and one of the shortest and possible ways to the FAITH here in Japan. It may be noted in conclusion that the teaching of the Holy Qur'an - that Allah sent messengers to every nation to teach the same truth of the Unity of Godhead - is substantiated by the Unitarian Shinto in Japan.

Hajime Kambara

Viewpoint

Jerusalem the Golden

by JOHN JULIUS NORWICH

'Jerusalem the Golden,' we used to sing in our school chapel, 'With milk and honey blest....' I do not know about the milk and honey — though the American Colony Hotel seems happy to provide plenty of both at breakfast — but there is one thing I can tell you: Jerusalem is golden. There is scarcely a single building that is not made of the local stone; and that stone, warm and mellow, reminiscent of Cotswold but ever so slightly paler, irradiates the entire city. At all times of the day it glows; at sunrise and sunset it blazes. And it gives Jerusalem more than colour; it gives it unity.

Jerusalem has, inevitably, grown in the past quarter-century to more than double its former size; but the Old City remains miraculously unchanged, for the very good reason that it is still completely walled. The present walls are not particularly old by Jerusalem standards: they were built by the Turkish Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in the first part of the 16th century. But for most of their circuit they follow far older ones, and their gates are still where the gates have always been. They are not particularly formidable, either. They have never withstood a siege and don't look as if they ever could have; there is none of that battered, heroic aspect that makes the walls of Constantinople so memorable. But they are wonderfully beautiful, and they succeed completely in cutting the Old City off from the New. Once through the Damascus Gate, or the Jaffa Gate — or even the less attractively named Dung Gate — the whole atmosphere changes. You are in another world. Motor cars are forgotten; the streets are mostly far too narrow to accommodate them. Instead, those streets are alive with donkeys and push-carts, loud with the shouts of the porters, the blandishments of the shopkeepers, the monologues of the guides and even occasionally — for this is Jerusalem — the hymns and prayers of the pilgrims.

The pilgrims are here in their thousands, and understandably so, for Jerusalem is still what it has always been — the foremost shrine of Christendom. Numberless are the churches, chapels and convents to which, with varying

degrees of willingness, one is led on the pretext of their reputed association with events recorded in the Gospels. Here is the site of the Flagellation, here the Last Supper, here the Ascension. All too many of them are as devoid of atmosphere as — one suspects — of authenticity; a few, however, are strangely numinous, and none more so than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself. Does it really mark the actual site of the Crucifixion and the Entombment? We shall never know. What we do know for a fact, however, is that the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, came here in the early 4th century, found what she believed was the True Cross — the cave in which she did so is identified by a special chapel deep beneath the church — and that the already long-established Christian community in Jerusalem assured her that this was indeed the authentic site. In other words, the tradition must go back to at least 250AD and quite probably before — which does not leave all that much margin for error. We know too that the Emperor Hadrian built a temple to Venus on the site in about 130AD; if, as seems likely, he did so in an attempt to stamp out its Christian associations, the margin becomes more slender still. But perhaps it hardly matters. The countless millions of pilgrims who have travelled — often half-way across the world — to visit this venerable, rambling, candle-lit, smoke-filled, incense-laden building have endowed it, over sixteen hundred years, with its own aura of mystery and sanctity which few buildings any-

where on earth can match.

Few buildings on earth; yet one of those buildings is in Jerusalem itself, only a few hundred yards from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is not a Christian building but a Muslim one, and not even a mosque, merely a simple shrine. And yet, by reason of both its architecture and its decoration, it is one of the most stunningly beautiful buildings in the world. It is called the Dome of the Rock.

It stands on the great 35-acre platform on which King David had built the first temple a thousand years before Christ. There too, at the beginning of the Christian era, Herod the Great had erected an infinitely larger one, which was only completed just in time for the Romans to destroy it utterly when they sacked Jerusalem in 70AD. What the Romans could not destroy was a huge slab of living rock which extruded from the platform and which, according to Jewish tradition, had served as the altar for Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac; and, coincidentally, it was from this very same rock that, with the coming of Islam, Mohammed was believed to have ascended, on his legendary steed, el-Burak, into Paradise. Thus, when the city fell to the Muslims in 638, the platform once again became a Holy Place; and 50 years later the Caliph Abdul-Malik covered the rock with the glorious building we know today. Of course, it has not remained completely unchanged in nearly 14 centuries (the Crusaders even went so far as to convert it briefly into a Christian church) but in all its essentials – the octagonal plan, the door at each point of the compass, the inner circle of massive columns supporting the great golden dome – it is as it was when the work was finished in 691. Within, beneath the glowing mosaics – some original, some added in the 11th century, shortly before the Crusaders arrived – lies the Rock itself, some 15 yards across, still bearing (as the Faithful will assure you) el-Burak's hoofprint. At one place it can be touched. You can rub it hard with your fingers and are somehow not

surprised afterwards to find them smelling of incense.

After the Church of the Holy Sepulchre – where, incidentally, you must be sure to pay a brief visit to the Abyssinian monks who, having long ago been evicted from the Church itself, have now taken up residence on the roof – and the Dome of the Rock, my own favourite building is the Crusader church of St Anne next to the Pool of Bethesda. The Crusaders in Jerusalem have a lot to answer for – when they took the city in 1099 they slaughtered every Muslim in the city and burned all the Jews alive in the Great Synagogue – but they built, with St Anne's, one of the loveliest churches I know anywhere, cool and tranquil and perfectly, almost miraculously, preserved.

All these buildings – indeed, almost all the historic buildings of Jerusalem, Jewish, Christian or Muslim – are to be found within the walls of the Old City. But the most memorable sight of all is to be had from outside those walls – the view from the Mount of Olives. Go, if you can, in the early morning, when the sun, rising behind you, first begins to burnish the city. There, beyond the thousands of Jewish graves lining the Kidron Valley, runs the great kilometre-long stretch of the eastern wall with the now blocked-up Golden Gate through which Christ is said to have ridden on Palm Sunday. Behind it, the gilded cupola of the Dome of the Rock dazzles your eyes; to the left, at the far end of the Temple platform, another cupola marks the great 13th-century mosque of El Aqsa. Further still, the domes and belltowers of scores of Christian churches, and, in the far distance along the western wall, King Herod's citadel. The view is breathtaking – a view that even the 22-storey tower of the new Hilton looming up unforgettably on the horizon cannot entirely spoil. All Jerusalem lies before you – Jerusalem the Golden, just as we used to sing.

THE JOURNEY

“Do not imagine that the journey is short; and one must have the heart of a lion to follow this unusual road, for it is very long..... One plods along in a state of amazement, sometimes smiling, sometimes weeping.”

Farid-ud-Din 'Attar, “The Conference of the Birds”

PRESERVATION OF MUSLIM MONUMENTS IN SPAIN

by MICHAEL McCLAIN

Neither in Murcia nor in Seville is there the smallest monument or plaque in honour of Ibn al-Arabi, nor in Ronda is there even the smallest monument or plaque in honour of Ibn Abbad. Then there is the question of the Mosque at Cordoba and Medina Az-Zahara. The excavation and restoration of Medina az-Zahara is proceeding very slowly for lack of funds. The restoration of these parts of the Mosque of Cordoba which need it is also proceeding slowly for the same reason. For lack of funds there are not even any plans to restore the minaret of the Mosque of Cordoba, which was badly damaged by a hurricane in the XVII century. Thanks to parts of the minaret which survived; descriptions, drawings and sculptures - the original appearance of the minaret is well known. The present Renaissance tower, while not ugly or monstrous, simply does not fit in with the rest of the Mosque, and any Cordobon will admit that it is no fair substitute for the Caliphal minaret. The Mosque of Cordoba now contains both a cathedral and a parish church. Yet the Mosque is so large that neither the Cathedral nor the parish church affect the principal part of the Mosque, i.e., the Mihrab, gem of Hispano-Muslim art. There is no reason why different parts of the same buildin could not be used for Muslim and Christian worship.

On the same site as the Mosque was formerly the Visigothic Church of San Vicente fragments of which are incorporated in the Mosque. For some decades before the construction of the Mosque, said church was used for both Muslims and Christian worship.

In Toledo the small Caliphal Mosque is now known as 'Cristo de la Luz'. It is no longer used as a church but is only a museum. It seems to me that it could be restored for use as a Mosque. Thanks to its location in Toledo, it would be very convenient for the embassies and the numerous Muslim students in Madrid. Considering how much oil money is now possessed by certain Muslim countries, and taking into account the above-mentioned facts, it seems to me that something could be done, that some sort of agreement could be reached to remedy a number of things.

*"REGARD AS ONE, THIS LIFE, THE NEXT LIFE, AND THE
LIFE BETWEEN"*

—Milarepa

THE ATMOSPHERE AND LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS

رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ

Rabb-us-Samāwaat

The Lord of the Atmospheres (45:36)

DR ALI M. KHAN

Within the past 25 years Space Research has considerably advanced. Men have landed on the moon. Unmanned rockets have sent thousands of photographs of some of our planets—Mars, Jupiter, Venus and Mercury. Thus the space scientists have gathered substantial knowledge of the planets and the universe. In the light of that knowledge they have concluded that some of our planets have atmospheres and that some planets in our galaxy may have such atmospheres that are capable of producing advanced life.

It is possible that there may be more advanced civilisations than ours within our galaxy and beyond. The Space scientists are nearly sure of life outside the earth. They are also led to believe that there may be a kind of ‘atmosphere’ in or around these planets. This reminds me of a verse of the Qur’an:

“Allah is He Who has created seven atmospheres (samaawaat) and from the earth the like thereof. Among them the command descends, that you may know that Allah is the Possessor of power over all things and that Allah encompasses everything in (His) knowledge” (65:12).

The word “samaawaat” used in the Qur’an is the plural of “samaa’ which is generally translated as “heaven”. The word ‘heaven’, however, does not convey any specific meaning. The Qur’an itself explains what it means:

“Then He (i.e. Allah) directed Himself to the “SAMAA’ السَّمَاءُ and it was “DUKHAAN” دُخَانٌ (41:11).

Now ‘dukhaan’ means smoke, vapour, gaseous matter—which means atmosphere. Hence ‘samaa’ means atmosphere. The Shorter Oxford Dictionary defines atmosphere thus:

“The spheroidal gaseous envelope surrounding any of the heavenly bodies, that surrounding earth...”

“And from the earth the like thereof” in the above verses of the Qur’an leaves no doubt that “SAMAA” means atmosphere. The word seven in Arabic means seven and several.

Thus the verses of the Qur’an shed a new light on this aspect of man’s recent knowledge about the planets. There is every likelihood that there is atmosphere on our Sun’s eight planets including earth or on several planets in our galaxy. It

does not exclude its existence on planets of other galaxies for which there are other verses of the Qur'an which I shall refer to shortly.

It is now known that seven planets besides earth, viz., Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune have atmosphere, though in different stages of development which earth has gone through but about the ninth, Pluto little is known.

ARE WE ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE?

On the strength of the present knowledge the scientists are asking the question: 'Are we alone in this Universe?' They are, therefore, planning of setting up radio telescope for inter-stella communication hoping that some civilisation might receive the message and answer back. Though radio magnetic waves which can travel through space without atmosphere as has been demonstrated by the live transmission of voice and pictures of the astronauts from the moon, carry the message with the speed of light, 186 000 miles per second, it will take at least 4.3 light years to reach the nearest planet of the nearest star and some number of light years to bring the answer back to earth provided it has advanced enough civilisation, and the answer is transmitted immediately after receiving the message. What about our next door neighbour, Andromeda, which will take over four million light years for our message and its reply to travel to and back. The scientists in the remote future will of course be delighted out of bounds if they receive a response. They will then be sure that other civilisations, perhaps more advanced than ours, do exist. But it is not yet likely to happen for many years. However, man's ability to make progress is boundless according to the Qur'an (96:5) and so he will eventually not only succeed in such projects but also he will be able to fly to those planets. Infra-red astronomy is going to be used more and more. Infra-red telescopes are being built to show distant stars of our galaxy more closely.

The Qur'an not only tells us about life on other planets but also that we can go to many such planets on which there are atmospheres and life:

"O company of jinn and men, if you have ability to pass through the regions of the atmospheres (as-samaawaat) and the earth then pass through, except with energy (illaa bi-sultaan). Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?" (55:33-34).

It must be remembered here that the 'jinn' of the Qur'an could also mean a

strong class of men equipped with might, power and energy, intellectually, academically or physically.

As far as my knowledge of the Book is concerned, the Qur'an plainly presents the possibility for man to go to other planets if he can produce enough energy for the purpose. By saying 'Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?' it draws man's attention to his capability inherent in the make up of his brain capacity and his knowledge with the pen that ensures progressive advancement towards that goal through sustained research and building up of such knowledge through his generations. It was the first revelation in the Qur'an which told man that unlike animal instinct man could make limitless progress through knowledge with the pen:-

“Read in the name of your Lord Who creates--

Created man from a clot

Read and thy Lord is the Most Generous

Who taught by the pen (AL-QALAM)

Taught man what he knew not” (96:1-5).

The Space scientists have not yet reached that stage when man will be able to fly off to other distant planets but they will do so one day as Allah has given us the good tidings (55:33).

Now about life on other planets

The quest of the scientists in this respect relying on radio telescopes may consume many years before the scientists find a quicker way to send the message. Travelling by rockets to go to distant planets is not yet fast enough for man to complete the journey in one man's life-time. But according to the Qur'an man can move on hopefully till he succeeds:

“And of His signs is the creation of the atmospheres (samaawaat) and the earth and what He has scattered abroad in them of living beings (daabbah). And He is All-powerful to gather them together when He will” (42:29).

It is not difficult to see that such information, in such an early stage of man's advancement, could not have possibly come from any other source but from Him Who created the universe and life therein. The Qur'an confirms life beyond earth by further stating that Allah is the feeder, nourisher, evolver, cherisher etc. of all the worlds and universes:

“So praise be to Allah, the cherisher of the atmospheres and the cherisher of the earth, and the cherisher of the worlds (universes)
(AL-'AALAMĪN) (45:36).

This shows that there are other 'atmospheres' and 'worlds' and 'universes' besides ours. The word 'Rabb' has been translated as 'cherisher' which does not fully explain its meaning. The Arabic word 'Rabb' conveys the idea of fostering, evolving, bringing up or nourishing and of regulating, completing and accomplishing. According to "Al-Mufradaat fī Ḡharīb al-Qur'an" (Dictionary of the Qur'an) by Imam Al-Raaghib al-Isfahaanī, 'Rabb' signifies the fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion.'

Hence 'Rabb' is the author of all existence, Who has not only given to the whole of creation its means of nourishment but has also before hand ordained for each a sphere of capacity and within that sphere provided the means by which it continues to attain gradually to its goal of perfection. By the use of the word 'Rabb' the Qur'an thus hints at the law of evolution as well which is working in the universe. There is no single word in English carrying the significance of the word 'Rabb' - 'nourisher unto perfection' would be the nearest. However, I shall use the word 'Rabb' for the sake of abbreviation as it is used in the Qur'an.

Here are some more verses of the Holy Qur'an in relation to life on other planets in our galaxy and beyond:-

"And Allah's are the hosts of the atmospheres (planets) and the earth and Allah is All-mighty All-wise" (48:7).

"Surely in the alternation of the night and the day, and that which Allah has created in the atmospheres and the earth there are signs for a God-fearing people" (10:6).

"And if truth had followed their desires, verily the atmospheres and the earth and all those who are therein would have perished. Nay, We have brought them their Reminder, but from their Reminder they now turn away" (23:71).

Before and after the end of Life:-

"And the Trumpet shall be blown and whosoever is in the atmospheres (planets) and whosoever is in the earth shall swoon away except him whom Allah wills. Then it shall be blown again and lo they shall stand awaiting" (39:68).

'Except him whom Allah will' means that Doom will not come to the whole lot at once.

"He is Allah in the atmospheres and the earth. He knows your secrets and your utterance and He knows what you earn" (6:3).

“Say, Who is the Rabb of the seven atmospheres and the Rabb of the mighty Throne of power?” (23:86).

Mighty Throne of power here means universe as God’s power extends over the whole universe/s.

“And on the Day the Trumpet is blown, then those in the atmospheres and those in the earth will be struck with terror, except such as Allah pleases and all shall come to Him humbled” (27:87).

‘Except such as Allah pleases’ also means as said before that Doom shall not come to all planets at the same time.

“So praise be to Allah, Rabb of the atmospheres and Rabb of the earth, Rabb of the worlds” (45:36)

“A revelation from Him Who created the earth and the high atmospheres” (20:4).

Scientists now believe that we and our planet are nothing special. On this assumption if intelligent life evolves once, it does so many times.

Scientists also believe that we are made of the most abundant stuff of the universe—hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen and oxygen. The atmosphere of the primitive earth probably consisted of these elements with the carbon allied to hydrogen to form methane gas and the nitrogen linked with hydrogen to make ammonia. The oxygen would have combined with hydrogen to make water.

The building blocks—Amino acids which collect together to form protein, the structural matter of life and an important component of cells and nucleic acids—must assemble themselves in the right way before life can start.

Soviet scientists reported a few years ago that a DNA-like spiral of organic molecules were found in a meteorite from the Ukraine. A similar result was obtained from a meteorite landed near Murchison, Australia. “In recent years, a whole host of organic molecules have been discovered floating freely in space. A large number lie in the giant cloud of dust and gas called the Orion Nebula..... Tracking down complex molecules in space has been going on for only a few years but already we know that ammonia and water are plentiful in space. Ours is not the only planetary system” (The Observer Magazine, London, December 23, 1973).

(From an unpublished book “THE FORMULA OF PEACE AND HAPPINESS” by Dr Ali M. Khan, 70 Ockendon Road, London N1)



LIFE AND TIMES OF MOHAMED ALI by Dr Afzal Iqbal. (An analysis of the hopes, fears and aspirations of Muslim India from 1778 to 1931). Published by the Institute of Islamic Culture, Club Road, Lahore, Pakistan. Price Rs. 50.

Dr Afzal Iqbal, a career diplomat, is a prolific writer. Some of his well-known works are: "The Life and Work of Rumi", "Diplomacy in Islam", "Culture of Islam", "Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohamed Ali" etc.

"The Life and Times of Mohamed Ali" is a full-length bibliography in English of Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar of the Khilafat Movement. (Born 10th December 1878, died 1931 in London—buried in Jerusalem). Maulana Mohamed Ali was the most vociferous leader of the Khilafat Movement, a colleague of Gandhi Ji and a strong supporter of the Indian National Congress upto 1928 when Hindus and Muslims, for the time being, united to liberate India from the foreign rule. In the literary world he was the founder editor of "Comrade" (English) and "Hamdard" (Urdu).

H.G.Wells once remarked:

"Mohamed Ali had the heart of Napoleon, the pen of Macaulay and the tongue of Burke."

Because of his fiery articles and speeches and their influence on the public he was sent to prison by the British for nearly eight years. But the years of detention did not shake him at all in spirit. As Afzal Iqbal points out:

"He was the epitome of fortitude under suffering. Accusations, allegations, trumped-up charges, malicious misrepresentations, vilification, character assassination—these were no source of shame to the lover; rather they reaped him praise and honour" (p.402).

About his other qualities it is said:-

"He set store by honesty and intellectual tolerance. He manifested rare

restraint and discipline when the entire Muslim press hailed in delirious headlines the decision of the Afghan Government to execute a couple of 'apostates' from Islam. He declined to join the chorus and stood alone but steadfast for the right of dissent" (p.405).

The details of this unfortunate and shameful episode have been given by the author at another place in the book thus:

"In early 1925, a report appeared that two members of the Ahmadiyah sect had been stoned to death in Afghanistan as penalty for apostacy. The entire Muslim press and almost all Muslim religious leaders endorsed this action. Mohamed Ali alone stood out in opposition to the Afghan Government. His was too radical an attitude for the orthodox and led to angry protests and shook the belief of millions of his admirers in his capacity to lead them. But Mohamed Ali stuck to his guns and refused resolutely to swim with the tide. He was not following a popular cause for he considered it his duty to give a lead even though the truth be bitter and the people found it unpalatable to swallow it. The circulation of his papers fell and so did his popularity. But he stuck to his view that apostacy could not be eliminated by eliminating the apostate" (p.332).

Mohamed Ali was a great admirer of his name-sake the late Mualana Muhammad 'Ali, the translator of the Holy Qur'an in English. He was greatly enthralled by the publication of this work and had nothing but praise for it. Once, before going to Europe on a political mission he visited Maulana Muhammad 'Ali and said:

"Maulana Sāhib, will you allow me to tell a lie when I go to Europe, that this translation is my work."

Maulana Muhammad 'Ali smiled and said: "Of course this is Muhammad 'Ali's work."

May God bless the souls of both Muhammad Alis.

BOOK RECEIVED: *Human Rights and Foreign Policy* by Evan Luard, published by Pergamon Press

REFLECTIONS FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

— A RADICAL NEW APPROACH —

by IMADUDDIN AHMED SHEIKH

It would be an act of rank ignorance or, worse, of extreme arrogance for a student of the the Holy Qu'an to claim to translate the Word of Allah, as the Qur'an cannot be fully transported from its Divine Arabic into an human tongue. Yet, most publications in this field are entitled: 'translation', 'interpretation', 'commentary' and the like, though it must be said in fairness and with a sense of grateful appreciation that some attempts have served the Holy Book well.

However, the meanings of the Holy Qur'an which are purposely saturated, tier upon tier, with implicit and prophetic knowledge — always remaining ahead of the fundamentally obsolescent nature of human awareness — can only be partially reflected through the 'mirror' of a dedicated believer's sensitivity. The phenomenon of this inexhaustible treasure of Divine meanings, embedded in the Qur'anic diction, has been particularly emphasised in the penultimate verse of AL-KAHF (chapter 18) and in the 28th verse of LUQMAN (ch.31) with the challenge that were the oceans of this planet to be used as ink and all the trees on earth as pens and over again to transcribe Allah's meanings they would run out without exhausting HIS words (ie meanings behind meanings....).

Only the 'purified in heart' can receive the Qur'anic intimations, reminded as we are with Divine emphasis and authority لا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ie 'none but the chastened in heart can perceive its import — preliminary import at that, (ch. 53:9). The clearer, therefore, the believer's mirror of multi-dimensional awareness and of unsullied humility, the truer and richer would be the reflection of the meanings and communications of the the Holy Qur'an.

I intend, with Allah's grace and guidance, to continue publishing such reflections (as are granted to me) from the various chapters of the Holy Book.

وما توفيقى إلا بالله

(I could have no success, whatever, except by endeavouring to serve Allah's will).



AL-'ALAQ (Ch. 96)

INTRODUCTION

As Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him!) approached forty, Allah Who knows the secrets of all things (being the Sole Creator) was pleased with having prepared him through those toughening years to such perfection as now to grant him His supreme favour, the break-through of the 'barrier' between God and man. The greatest of all the miracles – the everlasting and irrefutable – happened, as God spoke loud and clear to Muhammad, commanding him to 'receive' and recite verbatim et litratim the first five verses (of this chapter) – just enough for his human (nay superhuman) sensitivity to cushion its transmitting impact.

Elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an, Allah has drawn an unforgettable pageant of this explosively dynamic impact which no mountainous range on this planet could withstand without being blown to smithereens, out of apprehension of the Creator's Omnipotence. Of course, the implications of this spectacular similitude are also metaphorical.

On that blessed night (LAILAT-UL-QADR) of the Prime Revelation (honoured by the Almighty as the Night of Majesty and Divine Decrees, more momentous than the milleniums of humdrum time) Allah bestows the most loving and equally the most demanding gift upon him – the direct revelation of the first five verses. In another chapter (53) AN-NAJM (the Resplendent Star), God has portrayed, in the most graphic terms, the closest closeness He granted to Muhammad (symbolised by the scanty distance between the curved extremities of two bows when held together, or even closer:

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ

which must not be misconstrued as a SPACE-concept of pagan myths. This brilliant pageant has, as its focal point, Muhammad's supra-sensory alertness and perspicacity (which have been drawn with Divine affection and approbation) while undergoing the transfiguring experience of Revelation. God's purpose behind these dramatic details is to enable an honest sceptic to shed his/her misgivings -- possibly of self-delusion, hallucination, megalomania or sheer poetical rhetoric -- about Muhammad's claim to the recipiency of Divine Revelation. To clinch this crucial issue, God has thrown an open and perennial challenge to the so-called scholars of the world, even to collaborate if they wish, to match a chapter

or a verse of the Qur'an with their combined effort. Quite obviously, only such spell-binding, authoritative and humbling power as the Qur'anic strains possess could set the inimitable standard of Divine Articulation. Otherwise, there would be let loose a cataclysm of spurious revelations by megalomaniac pedlars of divinity.

Back to AL-'ALAQ.

The prefatory verse (Bismillaa hir rahmaa nir ra heem) which prefaces every chapter (except one) of the Qur'an is the quintessence of all that true religion should be essentially concerned with: the Reality of the Creator, His true nature and the indispensable need of the Creation to be able to acknowledge its Creator and to achieve fulfilment and serenity (an-nafs-ul-mutma'innah) by serving His Will.

The very opening word (IQRA' اقْرَأْ) which, among many other significations, means: 'to collect', 'to reflect', 'to study etymologically', 'to read and recite with the fullest understanding and deliberation', orientates Muhammad's near-Prophetic sensitivity, (with the famous, thrice emphasised crescendo of Divine Certitude), to receive, recite and deliver the fast-flowing five verses that followed.

In these verses, God appropriately introduces Himself as the Sole Creator of the Universe, Who is essentially Loving and Beneficent as He ceaselessly fosters His Creation on to the High destiny He has decreed for them. His Love and Beneficence are particularly channelled through the ability of acquiring knowledge – both empirical and supra-sensory -- that He has bestowed upon mankind so as to guide and enable them towards realising His true nature and resultantly towards the establishment of His Will in the affairs of Creation. The routes of all research and investigation (whether secular or spiritual) must inevitably lead to the truer understanding of the Creator and of the fundamentals of His Will. If, instead, they meander around the dead-ends of unquestionably obsolescent sciences and technologies and consequently in the 'deification' of sophisticated possessions and **weapons** of holocaust as instruments of domination, humankind will be torn apart and exterminated by its own suicidal momentum. A new creation خلق جديد will then have to take over to fulfil the Divine Decree on earth. To liberate these prisoners of their own misbeliefs and misdeeds, the Merciful Almighty demonstrates His grave concern about this progressive menace of false pretenders to Divinity, first by enlightening them through the second verse that no human could ever be Divine as he/she is unexceptionally created, as an event of

God's Love, through the exclusive process of male-female fertilisation. (Hence, the title of the chapter – AL-'ALAQ – Manifestation of Divine Love through human fertilisation). And later (in verse 6 to 8), the Ever-Functioning Almighty reminds and warns the human race that no person, however arrogantly and perversely he/she may imagine, can function successfully 'outside' the Creator's Providence. This is so because the *raison d'être* of human life on this planet comprises three major elements viz., the all-encompassing Love and Mercy of the Creator, the Divine gifts to humans of their ability to increase in knowledge of all things and in power and finally the inescapable event of reckoning of every individual before God, both in this world and in the next.

The remaining verses take up the issues that would arise from the initial respect of rejection, derision and hostility to the Holy Prophet and his true followers by the ignorant, arrogant establishment. Every opportunity for the genuine and honest acceptance of Truth is provided with great concern and forbearance. However, the perverse and the egocentric whose only reaction is of calculated rejection, persecution and more persecution are administered a conclusive warning that in any confrontation with God's Will, His Kingdom inexorably prevails to clean up all manner of corruption from His world.

To help bring God's Kingdom about on earth, Muhammad and his 'umma' (community) of true believers are commanded for ever to function as His steadfast witnesses, particularly commissioned to share their experience of godliness and their understanding of the meanings of His Qur'anic Will **with all people and in all ages.**

Finally, this chapter (to be precise, its first, five verses), though historically the first to descend upon Muhammad's Prophetic reciprocity is the synoptic essence of the whole Book. It beams out a message that never alters vertically in gradation or substance but rolls on horizontally with repetitive certitude, spelling out relentlessly the inevitability of history - making miracles that await the true believers to let happen, for Allah (the exclusive and complete Source of all Truth) does not grow with time in knowledge or wisdom.

AL-'ALAQ

CHAPTER 96

I begin by acknowledging Allah as the Sole

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ○

Creator Whose limitless mercy manifests

in His abundantly providing for every one's maximum development and again in His abundantly rewarding their best efforts.

1 Reflect (upon Our Creation) and spontaneously pronounce its exclusive authorship by your Creator-Sustainer Who alone created and continues to create all things,

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝

2 Who creates human life as a manifestation of His Love, through the process of fertilization and nourishes it through to fulfilment of a fully grown individual.

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝

3 Reflect again to proclaim that your Lord-Sustainer is the most Beneficent for He fosters all His creation to their higher state of evolution,

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝

4 Who has been providing (since the beginning) the surest means of acquiring knowledge by the varied means of recording and documentation (QALAM),

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝

5 And He has further provided mankind with other sources of knowledge and awareness that are not empirically obtained to them.

عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

6 Then, how unnatural and treasonable would be a human being's impulse to repudiate and rebel against the Creator,

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظٍ ۝

7 Arrogantly presuming that he/she is an independent, self-subsisting reality,

كُنْ تَرَاهُ إِذَا سْتَعْتَضَىٰ ۝

8 Not realising that he/she has inescapably to take recourse to your Lord-Sustainer for accountability and fulfilment both in this world and the next.

إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ۝

9 Now imagine the transgression of that person who attempts to prevent

أَمْ رَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يَنْهَىٰ ۝

10 A faithful servant of Ours from pursuing a prayerful way of life,

عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰ ۝

11 And fancy his/her intransigence in obstructing Our servant from obediently pursuing the path of Our guidance

أَمْرِيَّتْ إِنْ كَانَ عَلَى الْهُدَى ۞

12 And from devotedly striving to his fellow-beings on to Our path of righteousness.

أَوْ أَمَرَ بِالتَّقْوَى ۞

13 And further imagine the perverse ingratitude of the one who superciliously rejects and viciously campaigns against Our guidance, turning away with haughty disdain.

أَمْرِيَّتْ إِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى ۞

14 Yet how blinking and obtuse is such a person in failing to perceive that Allah (the All-Seeing) is witnessing his/her obduracy.

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى ۞

15 So let him/her take heed that if this arrogant aggression does not cease forthwith, We will most surely bring down humbling discomfiture upon them (seizing) them by their forelocks),

كَلَّا لَئِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهِ لَنَسْفَعْنَا
بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ۞

16 Which corrective treatment they desperately need for their grievously erroneous rejection of Truth.

نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ۞

17 So let the conclusive warning go out to the misguided villain to muster together their helpers and their might by all means,

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ۞

18 While We, in turn, will command Our corrective force to clean up all manner of corruption from Our planet.

سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ ۞

19 So, (O Muhammad and thy 'umma' of true believers!) sustain thy steadfastness and under no circumstances wilt thou yield to the enemy; rather, continue thy prostrations (symbolic of thy total obedience to Our Will) that We shower upon thee Our closest closeness.

كَلَّا لَا تَطِعَهُ وَأَسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ ۞

Questions and Answers

READING THE QUR'AN IN A CHURCH

- Q. Is it permissible to read or recite the Qur'an in a church?
Akela Haroun, London N.8
- A. Yes, with the permission of the authorities concerned. Remember, the Holy Prophet allowed a Christian deputation from Najran to stay in the Mosque at Medinah and hold their Sunday service in it.

ALLAH AND ALLAH'S LAWS

- Q. What is the difference between Allah and Allah's laws? Z.K. E.11
- A. We cannot define (and are not obliged to do so) the essence of God's Being. If, however, we understand some of God's attributes and laws working in human life or life around us that is more than enough to occupy us for the rest of our lives.

REVELATION – HIDDEN AND MANIFEST وحى خفى - وحى جلى

- Q. Some of the scholars are of the view that "Hadees" (Sayings of the Prophet) are based on "Wahy Khafi" (Hidden Revelation) (see Maulana Muhammad 'Ali "Maqaam-i-Hadees"). Does it mean that the Holy Prophet was devoid of any intellect (God forbid!) or was he merely a "computer" in the modern terminology, having no will of his own (God forbid!). Please also explain the difference between "Wahy Khafi" and "Wahy Jali". Is the Qur'an the result of the Prophet's inspiration as Dr Fazl-ur-Rahman attempted to prove in his book called "Islam". Z.K.
- A. "Wahy Khafi" (a hidden or inward revelation) is an idea put into one's mind and whatever the Prophet said concerning "religious matters" was said under 'special' divine guidance – the Prophet's intellect working in "cooperation" with the Divine Intellect.

"Wahy Jali" (the Manifest Revelation) was entirely an objective phenomenon where the Prophet was a passive recipient of God's communications; the Prophet's will or wish played no part in the messages he received. Some scholars, such as, Ibn Rushd, Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, Dr Muhammad Iqbal and Dr Fazl-ur-Rahman think that the Wahy (Revelation) of the Qur'an rose from the Prophet's heart and fell upon his heart. This view of the Qur'anic revelation is not correct. To understand the depth of the Prophet's experience one must be a prophet himself or someone who is very near to him. Otherwise we are just trying to explain and find out what "sweetness" is by using so many words and expressions. Revelation granted to prophets helps man to overcome evil and is the true basis of man's moral development and awakens in him the consciousness of a higher life. In the modern terminology, yes every prophet could be called a "computer" divinely programmed; because a prophet according to the Qur'an cannot speak before God speaks and he acts only according to His command (21:27)

and his revelation is divinely guarded (15:9; 58:77-80; 85:21,22 etc.). (Note that the terms “Wahy Jali” and “Wahy Khafi” are used in Islamic literature but not in the Qur’an).

SONGS OF ISLAM

- Q. You have often reported in “Al-Ahmadiyya” about the “Songs of Islam Session” – something new for me. Do you hold these sessions regularly after prayers? Z.K.
- A. No. We arrange special meetings for this purpose when songs in praise of God and the Prophet or the Qur’an are sung. “Songs of Islam” is the name of a book specially prepared for such occasions. It is a different work from ordinary “Qaseeda” books. Soon a long playing record of Urdū and English songs of Islam will also be available. ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

13.2.1981. Mr S.M. Tufail arrived back in U.K. from his tour of Pakistan and India.

17.2.81. A talk was given by him on Islam to the Banstead Christian Studies group at Banstead.

21.2.81. Annual General Meeting of the World Congress of Faiths.

4.3.81. Executive Committee Meeting of the World Congress of Faiths.

7.3.81. The Qur’anic Reading arranged by Zaimoon Yassin (from Guyana) and her sister Alimoon at Tooting Bec, London, SW17.

9.3.81. AN OBSERVANCE OF COMMONWEALTH DAY at Westminster Abbey was held in the presence of H.M. the Queen and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. Dr Saddhatissa, Swami Bhavyananda, Rabbi Hugo Gryn, Mr S.M. Tufail, Prof. Harmindar Singh, the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, the High Commissioners of Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Zimbabwe read passages from their religious scriptures. The Very Rev. Dr Edward Carpenter gave the feature address. Later the guests were invited to Marlborough House at a Reception.

17.3.81. A Consultation programme with religious leaders of U.K. with Dr John Ferguson (Chairman of the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) was held at 10-30 a.m. in the Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster Abbey.

25.3.81. United Nations Association Religious Advisory Committee Meeting.

31.3.81. Maulana Tufail left for Trinidad to hold classes and to take part in seminars, conferences, convention and Inter-Faith meeting in the West Indies. He spent two nights in Barbados as the guest of Haji Saeed Piprawala, St. Michael – before finally arriving in Trinidad on 2nd April. In Trinidad he is the house guest of Mr Wahid Omardeen, 3 Charles Street South, Gasparillo.

A.A. Rahman

Secretary Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam (Lahore) U.K.

FAITH IN AND RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

RESTORATION OF FAITH IN GOD IS THE SOLE MISSION OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

Shaikh Nisar Ahmad (Pakistan)

The above caption appears to have a simple meaning but in fact it has a much deeper significance and the person who claims to have faith in God devotes all his mind's and body's energy to accept His will and obeys His commands in complete surrender to all manifestations of life, conquering the fear complex of the past, present, as well as the future. Such real peace of mind is possible only when one's internal and external faculties are working in submission to the will of God.

A person who claims to have 'faith' should prove that whatever he possesses is not his own but Gods. This is possible only when all God's commandments are accepted from the core of one's heart. There are means and methods of attaining such a state of mind. In the Holy Qur'an the word 'waseela' (وسيلة) is used which signifies means which should fulfil the desired purpose. So the means should be such that enable us to achieve the objective. First and foremost is the conviction in the existence of God. The four great attributes mentioned in the Qur'an viz., PROVIDENCE, BENEFICENCE, MERCY and REQUITAL suffice to infuse this conviction in the heart of a true believer. God's unbounded love for all His creatures and the ideal to which the soul is made to aspire is the highest to which man can rise in the path of righteousness, the path of grace and the path in which there is no stumbling.

Although God manifests Himself in innumerable ways but the faith is primarily a belief in the Unseen. When the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him!) accepted and joined him what prospects and hopes did it offer except poverty, helplessness and enmity of all the clans but here was a n eye other than the physical which made all these odds look insignificant.

Similarly in this age a reformer appeared in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian who emphasised the concept of true faith in God and relationship with Him. By his personal example he showed that divine communication was still possible in this age and that God's speaking to man was not a phenomenon of the past:

وہ خدا اب بھی بناتا ہے جسے چاہے کلیم
اب بھی اس سے بولتا ہے جس سے وہ کرتا ہے پیار

“Woh Khudaa ab bhi banaataa hai jisay chaahay kaleem
Ab bhi us say boltā hai jis say woh kartā hai pyaar”

i.e. That God, even now makes a person Kaleem (recipient of Divine communication) whom He likes,
Even now He speaks to him whom He loves.

A considerable number of disciples and followers who gathered around the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement personally experienced this phenomenon of God's speaking to them and thus they became the torch-bearer of his noble mission --- the restoration of faith in God and developing relationship with Him which is in fact the soul of all **RELIGIOUS TRUTH**.

اب دیکھئے اللہ تعالیٰ قرآن کریم میں فرماتا ہے: ”اور جو تمہیں اسلام علیکم کہے اُسے یہ کہو کہ تم مؤمن نہیں“ (النساء۔ ۹۳)

حضرت نبی کریم صلعم نے بھی دانتکاف الفاظ میں فرمایا ہے: ”جو ہمارے حبیبی نماز پڑھے۔ ہمارے قبلہ کو اپنا قبلہ ٹھہرائے۔ ہمارے حلال کو حلال جانے لے۔ پس وہ مسلمان ہے۔ یہ خدا اور اس کے رسول کا عہد ہے۔“ (بخاری)۔ عام طور پر بھی اگر انگلستان میں رہنے والا کوئی فرد اپنے آپ کو مسیحی کہتا ہے تو حکومت انگلستان یا کسی دوسری ملکی حکومت کو یہ حق حاصل نہیں کہ اُسے غیر مسیحی قرار دے۔ بعینہ اگر احمدی اپنے آپ کو مسلمان کہتے ہیں تو اُنہیں طور پر کسی ملکی حکومت کو یہ حق نہیں پہنچتا کہ اُسے غیر مسلم قرار دیں۔

(۲) میرے کچھ پیڑھ احمدی دوست بھی اسرائیل سے پوچھے ہیں۔ اس ملک میں سیر و سیاحت کی غرض سے جانے کے لئے جو مراعات دوسروں کو حاصل ہیں وہ احمدیوں کو بھی حاصل ہیں۔ ان کے لئے کوئی ترجیحی قواعد و مراعات نہیں۔

(۳) اکثر مسلمانوں کا خیال ہے کہ مسیح ناصری بجز ہنصری آسمان پر زندہ موجود ہیں۔ اور قرب قیامت میں زمین پر اتر کر اسلام کا بول بالا کریں گے۔ احمدیوں کا عقیدہ ہے کہ قرآن کریم کی روشنی میں اس خیال کی تائید نہیں کرتیں۔ حضرت مسیح خدا کے فرستادہ نبی تھے اور دیکھنا ایسا ہی طرح اپنی بعثت کی غرض و غایت پوری کر کے دنیا سے رخصت ہو گئے اور اپنے بولے حقیقی کے پاس چلے گئے۔ حدیث نبوی میں اُمتِ مسلمہ میں ایک مسیح کے آنے کا ذکر پیشگوئی کی صورت میں ضرور آیا ہے۔ احمدی اس پیشگوئی کی یوں تادل کرتے ہیں کہ اُمتِ محمدیہ کا ایک فرد حضرت مسیح کی صفات اور خوبو کا حامل نبوت ہو گا جو مسیح کہلائے گا۔ یہ پیشگوئی حضرت مرزا غلام احمد قادیانی مجدد چہارم کی بعثت سے پوری ہو گئی ہے اور آپ ہی کی ساعی اور تبلیغ سے دین اسلام کائناتِ عالم میں پھیل رہا ہے۔

(الاحمدیہ دسمبر ۱۹۸۰ء ص ۱۴ و ۱۵)

(۴)۔ جی ہاں۔ اس کا جواب نمبر ۱ میں آچکا ہے۔

ارشادات نبوی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

■ ... حضرت عروین العاص رضی اللہ عنہ فرماتے ہیں: رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کو فرماتے سنا کہ جب کسی ملک کو فیصلہ سنانے سے قبل طلب حقیقت کی کوشش کر کے ہی فیصلہ کرتا ہے اور وہ صحیح ہی ہوتا ہے تو ایسے حاکم کو دو گنا اجر ملتا ہے لیکن اگر وہ فیصلہ صحیح نہیں ہوتا تو اس کو صرف ایک اجر ملتا ہے۔

حضرت ابوبکر رضی اللہ عنہ فرماتے ہیں: رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا تم میں سے کوئی شخص غصہ کی حالت میں (دو آدمیوں کے درمیان) فیصلہ نہ کرے۔
(صحیح بخاری و مسلم)

پاک ذات تو خدا کے بتر و توانا کی ہے۔ سبحان اللہ مجھ عاجز نے تو اپنے آقا کا قول پیش کیا ہے مگر تم ضد ہو کر اس آقا کو چھوڑ کر اس کے غلام کا قول پیش کروں۔ امام ابوحنیفہ تو حضرت نبی کریم کے خادم و متبع ہیں۔ ان کی کیا مجال ہے کہ اپنے اہل خانہ کے خلاف لڑ سکتی کریں۔ عباد اللہ میں کون ہوتا ہے جو حضرت امام ابوحنیفہ کی رائے کو اپنے آقا حضرت رسول اللہ صلعم کے زناد تہر جیٹو ہوں اسے توجیح کوں کر سکتی؟ کون کر سکتی؟ اعظم اور شیخ زادہ امام جو مثنیٰ صاحب کی طرف ذری کر رہا تھا اعلیٰں جھانکنے لگے! البتہ سلطان الہند اہل دربار اور صاحب علم حاضرین کو بھڑکانے کے لئے مثنیٰ عظم چلانے لگے۔

”استغفر اللہ۔ شخص کتنا گستاخ ہے۔ اعلا حضرت امام ابوحنیفہ کی توہین کر رہا ہے اور فقہ حنفی کے علمبردار مثنیٰ عظم کی دلیل کر رہا ہے۔ اس کی شرح چٹھی دیکھیے کہتا ہے امام ابوحنیفہ کی کیا حیثیت ہے حالانکہ کہہ دیر پہلے اس نے حضرت امام کا جو اطاعت اپنی گردن پہننا تھا اور ان کا منقلد ہونے کا دعویٰ کیا تھا۔“ علماء و سوہ بھی شور مچانے لگے جو خواجہ صاحب نے امام ابوحنیفہ کی شان میں گستاخی کی ہے یہ زندگی ہے۔ یشال ہے۔ سلطان الہند پر حضرت خواجہ نظام الدین کے سبک کی حقیقت آشکارا ہوگی۔ مثنیٰ عظم اور ان کے ہمراہ حضرت خواجہ کے مخالفین اور مداندین کے شور و سرکاس اس پر چند ان اثر نہ ہوا بلکہ ان کی غیر معقولیت اور تہی تہی ظاہر ہوگی اس وقت تو اس نے مجلس بخواست کر دی مگر جلد ہی مثنیٰ عظم کو اس کے عہدے سے برطرف کر دیا۔ (الاحمدیہ دسمبر ۱۹۵۸ء)

آپ کے مسائل

سوال ۱۔ کیا یہ درست ہے کہ اکثر علمائے اسلام کے نزدیک احمدی غیر مسلم ہیں؟ (۲) کیا یہ حقیقت ہے کہ سعودی مملکت امرائے میں صرف احمدی ہی داخل ہو سکتے ہیں؟ (۳) کیا مرزا غلام احمد فی الواقع مسیح موعود ہیں؟ (۴) کیا یہ درست ہے کہ پاکستان کے سابق وزیر اعظم میر جتو نے احمدیوں کے بارے میں آئین پاکستان میں ترمیم کرانی تھی جو احمدی غیر مسلم ہیں؟

جواب :- (۱) جی ہاں مگر یہ کوئی نئی بات نہیں۔ اولیاء و صلحی اہمات اور سابقہ مجاہدین کرام میں سے شائد ہی کوئی علماء سوہ کی تکفیر اور تفسیق سے بچا ہو۔ کئی بزرگان امت کو ملک بدر کیا گیا بہت سے بزرگ مظالم کا نشانہ بنے حقیقت تو یہ ہے کہ مسلمان ملوک، سلاطین اور امراء کے دہن بھی بے گناہ شہیدوں اور مظلوموں کے خون سے آلودہ ہیں۔ کفر و ایمان کا معاملہ خالق اور مخلوق۔ عابد و معبود کے مابین ہوتا ہے۔

وہ جنس نہیں ایمان جسے لے آئیں دکان فلسفہ سے ڈھونڈے سے ملے گی قائل کو وہ قرآن کی سپاردوں میں

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الاحمدیہ

احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام (لاہور) یو۔ کے کاترجمان

مارچ۔ اپریل ۱۹۸۱ء

جلد سوم نمبر ۳-۴

امیر قوم حضرت مولانا صدر الدین بایہ الدین نصرہ العزیز لاہور میں بخیریت ہیں۔ اسلام کے فتح نصیب جن جن حضرات مسیح موعود کے اس شاگرد کی عمر تک کو سال سے زیادہ نئے ذاکر فضل اللہ۔ اس مقدمہ پر حضرت امام زمان کے الفاظ ہم تائین کی خدمت میں ہمیش کرتے ہیں :-

احادیث میں جو آیا ہے کہ حضرت مسیح موعود کے زمانہ میں عمریں لمبی ہو جائیں گی اس سے یہ مراد نہیں ہے کہ موت کا دروازہ بالکل بند ہو جائے گا اور کوئی شخص نہیں مرے گا۔ بلکہ اس سے یہ معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ جو لوگ مالی۔ جانی نصرت میں اس کے مخلص احباب ہوں گے اور خدمت دین میں لگے ہوں گے، ان کی عمریں دراز کر دی جائیں گی۔ دعا ہے اللہ تعالیٰ اس مفاد میں دین کو صحت و عافیت عطا کرے + احباب سلسلہ پرین کرنا اور افسوس ہو گا کہ میان محمد احمد ایم اے غفلت الرشید حضرت مولانا محمد علی مرحوم ۲۳ جنوری ۱۹۸۱ء کو انتقال میں انتقال کر کے ان کی میت بذریعہ ہوائی جہاز لاہور پہنچائی گئی۔ ۲۷ جنوری بعد نماز ظہر انہیں احمدیہ قبرستان دارالاسلام (لاہور) میں سپرد خاک کیا گیا۔ انا للہ وانا الیہ راجعون۔

آپ جون ۱۹۷۰ء میں پیدا ہوئے۔ گورنمنٹ کالج لاہور سے ایم اے پاس کرنے کے بعد آپ اعلیٰ ملازمتوں کے امتحان مقابلہ میں شریک ہوئے۔ بفضل تعالیٰ آپ کامیاب ہو کر محکمہ ریڈیو سے منسلک ہو گئے۔ ۳۵ سال تک محکمہ کے اعلیٰ عہدوں پر فائز رہنے کے بعد آپ لاہور ڈوٹائی پورٹ کے چیف ٹریفک مینیجر مقرر ہوئے۔ جون ۱۹۸۰ء میں آپ ملازمت سے ریٹائر ہوئے اور آپ نے عمر کا باقی حصہ کلمت خدمت دین کے لئے وقف کر دیا۔

مجموع کی یادگار دو صاحبزادے اور ایک صاحبزادی ہے۔ بڑے صاحبزادے انجینئرز ہیں اور امریکہ میں مزید اعلیٰ تعلیم حاصل کر رہے ہیں۔ فریڈ احمد صاحب لادی ڈاکٹر ہیں چھوٹا صاحبزادہ طارق احمد با ۱۷ سال کا ہے۔ اور لاہور میں یہ تعلیم ہے۔ ہماری دعا ہے اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کی روح پر انوار و بکات نازل فرمائے۔ اور سو گوار خاندان کو مضرب سئل عطا فرمائے۔