

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

# al-ahmadiyya

Journal of

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From *yiddish* literature

# Self-Criticism

A merchant arrived in a small town, lodged in an inn, and as he was staying over the Sabbath, he decided to deposit his money with the Rabbi. The Rabbi called the elders of the community and informed them that the Jew had left ten thousand rouble with him, and explained that he had put the money in an iron strong-box. Early on the Sunday morning, the merchant came to claim his money, but the Rabbi disclaimed all knowledge. 'What's this about money? I know nothing at all about it.' 'What do you mean, Rabbi, you know nothing?' said the tradesman in a trembling voice, 'there were witnesses, the elders of the community.' The Rabbi called these elders, but they too gave the appearance of complete ignorance. 'What's this about money? The man is in a fever.' 'Fellow Jews', sobbed the man, 'this money was put in an iron box!' 'What's this about a box? We have no strong-box!' laughed the elders, and left the room. The Rabbi too disappeared for a while, but afterwards counted out the foreign Jew's ten thousand rouble deposited with him. 'Rabbi', said the merchant wondering, 'what has become of this whole game?' The Rabbi answered him with a smile, 'I wished to show you what sort of a community I have to deal with!'

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## Should women stay at home?

Some Muslim theologians in Pakistan are proposing that Muslim women working along with men, in offices and other professions, should be forced to give up their jobs and sent home, because home is the best place for a woman to stay. They generally quote the following verses of the Qur'ān in their support:-

*"O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other women. If you would keep your duty, be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease yearn; and speak a word of goodness. And stay in your houses and display not your beauty like the displaying of the ignorance of yore; and keep up prayer, and pay the poor rate and obey Allāh and His Messenger" (33:32-33).*

It should be borne in mind that these instructions are being given to the "wives" of the Prophet and not to Muslim women in general. This section 4 of the ch. 33 starts with the words:

*"O Prophet, say to thy wives" (v.28) and "O wives of the Prophet" (v.30) and in the v.32 "wives of the Prophet" are also mentioned.*

The wives of the Prophet were not allowed to marry after the death of the Prophet. If they desired world's life and adornment (which were not forbidden for the Muslim women in general) the Prophet would divorce them, giving them rich and ample gifts (v.28). And if any of the wives of the Prophet was guilty of "manifestly improper conduct" the chastisement will be doubled for her (v. 30) and for good conduct she will receive a double reward (v. 31). These restrictions or privileges obviously do not refer to other Muslim women.

It is, therefore not right to generalise these specific instructions and apply them to all Muslim women, (unless some of these injunctions mentioned here are also mentioned elsewhere in the Qur'an for the general body of Muslim women).

The injunction "*stay in your houses*" in this context is of a particular nature relating only to the wives of the Prophet.

If Muslim women, in general, are supposed to stay in their houses all the time how can they go and earn their livelihood, if there is a need for them to do so, or enter into some business, or, profession. The Qur'an say:

*"For men is the benefit of what they earn. And for women is the benefit of what they earn" (4:32).*

*"Men shall have the portion of what the parents and near relatives leave, and women shall have a portion of what parents and near relatives leave" (4:7).*

In these verses, the Qur'an is talking of material and financial aspects of life (Maulānā Muhammad 'Alī's English Qur'an, p. xxxii), but for some (probably most) commentators the benefits for men and women mentioned here are the benefits of the Hereafter through moral acts (see 'Abdul Mājid's English Qur'an under v.4:32. Maulānā Abul Kalām Azād, however, strongly differed with this view).

A careful examination of the above verse (4:32) shows that the subject matter dealt herewith is "material" and not spiritual. Verse 29 says: "*O you who believe, devour not your property among yourselves.*" Verse 33 says: "*And to everyone we have appointed heirs of that which parents and near relatives leave.*"

Sandwiched between these verses is the verse 32 which talks of the benefit of what men earn and the benefit of what women earn.

● If the Qur'an gives the right of benefit of the earned wealth to men and women it also entitles them to apply lawful methods for earning wealth. If a man or a woman can do so by staying at home that is perfectly all right, but if they have to go out to earn wealth the Qur'an does not interfere in their lawful activities for possessing, earning and spending it in whatever way they like individually.

(SMT)

## VIEWPOINT

# RAMAḌĀN FAST

M. AHMAD, B.Sc., M.Sc.

The Ramaḏān fast consists in the person getting up and eating before sunrise after which he must not eat or drink until after sunset. Within the tropics where twenty-four hours are fairly equally distributed between night and day this means, on average, a twelve hour abstinence from food and drink for each of the days making up a lunar month. There are of course other factors to be observed during the fast but here we are concerned mainly with the abstinence from food and drink during the fasts.

The abstinence from food is common to therapeutic fasting and the fasts of all other religions but what is unique in the Ramaḏān fast, is the abstinence from water for twelve or more hours. In the light of more customary views this seems unhealthy and dangerous since it is believed we need a certain amount of water whether or not we feel thirsty. There was a time when the idea was very popular that we need to have eight glasses of water per day; this was supposed to 'flush' the kidneys or help keep the bowels free. The bowels need help! How this was done was never explained. I once saw a senior lecturer of one of London's polytechnic colleges drink six glasses (each 8 oz.) of water in one go. When he saw me observing him performing this mighty bibulous feat, he was seen to shake his head in smug wisdom: "Do you know, Mr Ahmad, that plenty of water is good for you?" He was saying this to me with an air of pontification tinged with the discomfort occasioned by a conspicuously ballooned stomach. I remember asking him whether he was going on a long and arid trip. He said no. I pointed out to him that I was suddenly thinking about a camel which was equipped to do what he just did.

### Some Vital Facts of Water Drinking

One of the things that have been observed, however, is that if we happen to be on a healthy diet which consists of a substantial amount of fresh fruits, fresh fruit juice and salad stuffs we would find ourselves thirsty only infrequently, as fruits and vegetables contain a high proportion of water, and this is the best source of fluid for our bodies. It is only on those occasions when we have been forced to perspire freely, as when we are engaged in vigorous physical activity or in very hot weather, that we need to drink water,

for thirst soon gives the alert which should be heeded. Apart from these, the healthy diet tends to take care of thirst, and if we have to drink water, the occasions are relatively few.

Water, like food, is a physiological necessity. If over-eating or eating in the absence of hunger is injurious to health, why should the drinking of water in the absence of thirst be regarded as beneficial? It is a belief for which there is no physiological justification. It implies that thirst, which is the signal given by the organism, is not to be seen as the only intelligent and dependable guide to determine our fluid necessity but some strange belief which says that the kidneys must be flushed like toilet bowls. They are made of living tissues. They remove from the body the by-products of protein metabolism. This is uric acid whose abnormal retention in the body is dangerous. The by-product of protein metabolism is regarded as significantly more dangerous to health than any other metabolic by-products. Now, the body must have only a certain amount of fluid which is best indicated by thirst. To give it more than it must have forces to get rid of the excess. Therefore the heart, the kidneys, the whole circulatory apparatus will now be diverted to this task. The big drinker must sweat more profusely or must run to the lavatory with greater frequency. What must happen is that the kidneys will be diverted from their normal function which is now partly suspended since they are involved in getting rid of the excess fluid. If this excess water drinking is carried on for any length of time, the body would start to adjust to this extra fluid. Water-logged tissue would be an inevitable result..

It is in the excretory function that we see the greatest harm done by excessive water drinking or excess fluid taken in the form of tea, coffee, the so-called soft drinks, beer and so on. Cells live in a fluid medium, and one of their normal reactions is to expel those by-products which are toxic, acidic and injurious to their healthy survival. The effectiveness of this response depends on their awareness of what are injurious to their survival, that is to say, the agent to precipitate this reaction is the appropriate level of acidity itself. If this medium becomes swamped by too much fluid resulting from excessive fluid consumption, the actual quantum of acidity is not thereby reduced but it is in a diluted form. This dilution of the acidity makes the cells less aware of the acidity so that they would not react to get rid of the acidity as they otherwise would. The organism is thus made to tolerate what it would eliminate when the fluid intake is consistent with that signalled by natural thirst. This is why drinking excessively in the absence of natural thirst is a harmful practice when habitually persisted in. In fact it interferes adversely with the very processes to which it has been thought beneficial.

Returning to the Ramaḍān fast, the abstinence from food affords the organism a physiological rest but when this is accompanied for a relatively brief period by the abstinence from water also the rest is increased. The whole circulatory system is relieved. The reduction of fluid makes the acidity in the fluid medium of the body more concentrated, and the cells are able to meet this with the appropriate reaction to rid themselves thoroughly of the hostile acid products. This is why sometimes we develop a skin eruption during a fast - not a bad symptom. Deep-seated toxic waste which would have remained within - the main cause of most of our illnesses, acute and chronic - is brought to the surface to be eliminated. That the cells are able to match the concentrated acidity with the reaction is made possible by the important fact that they are not now engaged in the process of using a continual barrage of new nutritive materials from food eaten. The vitality conserved from the suspension of the digestive process thus enables the cells to react powerfully to the concentrated acidity. This means that the eliminative function is greatly intensified.

Against this view the Ramaḍān fast can be seen as a concentrated means to achieve what a twenty-four or a forty day fast with water will. It is a fast in which there is a relatively brief period of abstinence from food and water to be alternated with a similar period when the abstinence is suspended. Done in the right way when the right sort of food is taken and with rest and relaxation it is a workable compromise of the ideal fast. It may be carried out with only a minimum of interference to our daily activities and obligations. It becomes a token fast, however, when no attention is paid to the need for dietetic changes or some modification to the regular diet.

When this fast is observed, many there are who are amazed at the small amount of food required to satisfy hunger on breaking the fast. This should be closely heeded and cooperated with. If these people would only not overeat after the day's fast was broken they would not undo the great benefit they would avail themselves from observing the fast.

#### Physiology and the Duration of Water Abstinence

Normally fasts that are conducted or carried out by anyone do not require the abstinence from water. Rest, relaxation and water are the factors that are emphasized with water taken as indicated by thirst. None of the prophets of antiquity fasted for forty days without water. The criterion for determining the duration one can do without water lies in physiology. The daily activity we are involved in, the climate in which we live and the type of food we eat would determine our need for water in any given day. Sweating through

vigorous physical activity or in a hot climate or both must lead to greater thirst. Eating highly spiced and salty foods would induce the same effect. Thirst is likely to be less frequent when we are living in a more temperate climate and our food is not too highly spiced and salted.

The Ramadān fast had its origin in Arabia, a country with its southern part lying within the tropics and its northern part outside the tropics. This suggests that twenty-four hours are fairly equally divided between night and day throughout the year in that country. This means that a twelve to thirteen hour abstinence from food and water every twenty-four hours for the Ramadān fast is the norm. Physiologically, this is a perfectly safe duration for water abstention for a reasonably healthy person especially if the person does not forget that the effects of the fast will be greatly enhanced by more rest, peace and quiet.

We have seen that in countries where twenty-four hours are fairly divided between night and day sunrise and sunset determine respectively the commencement and termination of each day's fast. Chronological time was not in use so that solar time was depended on; there were no clocks. But clearly, this criterion cannot be applied in England, for example, where in the summer months the sun is up very early and sets far into the evening. This would make the duration for a day's fast far exceed twelve hours, and physiologically this can be trying for the working woman and man. In the winter the problem is in reverse; the sun is up late and goes down early. If physiology is to establish the criterion for the duration of each day's fast, this should be twelve to thirteen hours. This criterion should become universal, as the Ramadhan fast was never meant to be an ordeal inimical to health and life or a self-inflicted form of punishment. It was meant to give of life more abundantly.

The Ramadān fast represents one of those instances yet again when modern man remains indebted to antiquity, provided what has been left to posterity has not been distorted, misrepresented or misunderstood. It is a blessing to mankind. Muslims and non Muslims alike can benefit by it in a way which no words can describe, and if some modifications to the usual diet are made during the fast, particularly for the older age group, a high level of health may be maintained. Dr. Herbert M. Shelton of San Antonio, Texas, who has conducted over 40,000 therapeutic fasts is the greatest living authority on the subject of fasting, says: "a heart which is beginning to show signs of distress and trouble, after a few days fast, beats with greater vigour and regularity." While the fast employed by Dr. Shelton is not the Ramadān fast in that his patients are allowed water while they fast, it does emphasize what the organism is

capable of doing during a period of physiological rest: it can put itself back in good health. Commenting on the value of the fast of patients whose health he has restored when all else failed, Dr. Shelton says: "One must see it to believe it." We, however, must see in its prescription much wisdom, and this inevitably must make us pause to wonder whether it is really true that the science of physiology was indeed a knowledge for which only modern man can take the prerogative for man's enlightenment. What a true science seems to do is to reaffirm the wisdom of antiquity. ●

## News from abroad Trinidad

A Seminar on "FAMILY LIFE AMONG MUSLIMS" was held at Mayaro Bay, Trinidad, during the week beginning Monday 12th April, 1982 to Monday 19th April. It was divided into two parts. The first three days were for children and the rest of the week was for adults. The following is a two part report on the Seminar. —Ed.

### Children's Section

MRS LILLA OGEERALI

During the Easter vacation many children were fortunate to join a youth camp at Mayaro Bay, situated in Eastern Trinidad. The Camp was organised by the Gasparillo Mosque Board with the aim of getting children from different Jama'ats together. There were about forty-five people including six adults, four older teenagers and the rest were children above the age of nine years. Imam Zool Deen of the Gasparillo Mosque was the leader and he was very ably assisted by Mr Imran Farook of Siparia.

We all arrived on Monday afternoon and after allocating the children to their respective rooms they were taken to the beach where they enjoyed themselves bathing in the sea and playing games. They were supervised at all times by Imam Zool Deen, Messrs Farook and Wahid Omardeen. That evening the children were given an early dinner after which we gathered in one of the houses which we called "the mosque" during our stay there. After the Namaaz our guest speaker Dr Hamza Rafeeq spoke to the children about health and answered many questions asked by the children.

On the second day everyone was awakened at 4.30 am for morning prayer. The children quite enjoyed Mr W. Omardeen accompanied by some of the older boys, shouting "JAAGO, JAAGO" (wake up, wake up). After the prayer we sang songs from the SONGS OF ISLAM and then went for an early morning walk on the beach. The time between breakfast and lunch was spent sea bathing and games.

After lunch the children were gathered together in groups to learn Sūrahs from the Qur'ān. Mr Kalam Azad Mohammed was our guest speaker that afternoon. His topic was education and he too was able to create an interesting discussion among the children.

Maulānā Kemal Hydal and his family also spent a night with us. His children were adored by many of the older children. He addressed the children on the five pillars of Islam and continued his lecture the next morning after Fajr namaaz.

On the third night we had a surprise for the children. A big bon fire was made. They had a lot of fun and played many games around it. There were also many delicious things to eat. The children enjoyed themselves so much that they were reluctant to get ready for bed.

The last morning, after the namaaz, was the time when each person expressed his feelings about the last three days. Each one was sad that the camp had come to an end. We had learned so many things. The children said their five daily prayers. They assisted in organising games, in keeping the place clean and tidy and in the preparation and serving of meals but above all we had been able to live together in our Islamic environment and we had truly enjoyed our selves.

## Adults' Section

MR SUBRATIE KHAN

I was very fortunate to be able to attend the second part of the Seminar on "Family Life among Muslims". This part was meant for adults and was in pursuance of the Gasparillo Mosque Board' continuous education programme. The participants began arriving on the morning of Friday. Our prayer on that day was led by the camp co-ordinator Mr Wahid Omardeen. People continued coming, until by Saturday afternoon we were about sixty altogether.

Each morning after the namaaz we had short lectures and discussions on how we should conduct ourselves at home and out of home. We also sang so songs of Islam. In the afternoons we had various lectures on conduct at Jama'at level. Our lecturers included Imam Zool Deen, Mr Abdul Wahab and Mrs Sohaila Omardeen. At nights we recited verses of the Holy Qur'ān and some of them were explained to us. We were also treated to many beautiful renditions of the azaan (call to prayer) by various persons including Messrs Razi Mohammed and Amrul Ali.

One of the evenings was dedicated to the ladies who displayed a variety of talents. They sang, made jokes, put on a small play and made several small speeches. One very impressive speech was given by Mrs Rokia Ahamad,

who spoke about the role of women in our society.

We had many refreshing hours of relaxation as well. We went for walks on the beach, we bathed in the sea and played cricket and football on the sand. On our last night we lit a large camp fire and sang songs and played games around it. That night too many of the young men stayed up very late playing hide and seek in the dark.

But alas! Monday morning came and it was time to leave. So many of us were moved to tears both of joy and of sorrow - joy for we had so thoroughly enjoyed this home away from home and sorrow because we did not want this atmosphere of friendliness and peace to end. My wife who accompanied me was so pleased and satisfied with making so many new friends, helping to prepare meals, playing games with the young people, some of whose names she does not even remember, that she has already started preparing for the next year's programme. As for me, being one of the persons who assisted in the organisation of this seminar, I feel that so much new talent has been discovered, we have seen so many leadership qualities in so many of our young people, that at our Mosque Board Meeting I said that I felt secure about the future of Islam in our district.

## 3-Day Islamic Festival

MR NIZAM MOHAMMED

The second annual Three Day Islamic Festival was organised by the Gasparillo Mosque Board and sponsored by Mr Fen Mohammed and his family. It was held at the Marabella Senior Comprehensive School Auditorium.

The Festival commenced on Friday 23rd April 1982 at 7-30 pm with an Inter Faith Meeting on the topic: "THE NEED FOR RELIGION IN OUR INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY". The three main faiths were represented as follows:

HINDUISM - Mr Ganga Bisson.  
 CHRISTIANITY - The Rev. Harold Seetahal.  
 ISLAM - Maulānā Kemal Hydal.

Songs were rendered by the Gasparillo Sa'i Centre Choir, the Gasparillo Presbyterian Church Choir and the Gasparillo Mosque Choir. Special mention must be made of Mr Ganga Bisson who despite the late request to participate contributed excellently. (The original participant Professor Sharma, unfortunately, had to make an urgent last minute trip out of the country).

The general feed back from the audience was that the members were very satisfied at this inter-faith cooperation.

The festival proceeded on the second day with a cul-

tural evening. It took the form of a big play based on the formation of a Jama'at dramatizing the frustration of non-cooperation and reluctance to participate, to the glory of success. The play was written and produced by Mrs Sohaila Omardeen and directed by Mr Kamalo Deen with musical effects by Mr Mungal Patassar and group. The play included songs from *THE SONGS OF ISLAM* which were relevant to the theme inviting members to come out and help in the building of a mosque. Some members from the audience afterwards commented that they had never seen anything of its kind before; they enjoyed the wonderful singing by the choir and appreciated the many bits of humour and many of them were moved to tears at some very emotional parts. The members of the cast were also extremely happy that they worked long and hard in preparing and rehearsing for this event. Plans are being worked out for the re-staging of the play.

The final day was an all day conference on COMMUNITY LIFE. The day was divided into two sessions. The morning session was chaired by Justice Noor Hassanali and the speakers were Dr Hamza Rafeeq on the "Origin of Man" and Maulānā Kemal Hydal on "Community Life in Islam". The afternoon session was chaired by Mr Amral Khan and the speakers were Mr Abdul Wahab on "Evil Influence in the Society" and Mr Kalam Azad Mohammed on "Counteracting these Evil Influences".

Our Islamic Festival was a great success. Those who participated felt that they had gained a better understanding of the so desperately needed teachings of the Holy Qur'ān. Although we all enjoyed our programme very much there was a sad and worrying feeling throughout because our well loved Muslim brother and missionary Maulānā S.M.Tufail who was due to attend was unable to do so. He was very ill and had to undergo surgery. We pray that Allāh will restore him to health so that he could be with us in the early future.

## 30 DAY PROGRAMME OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

*to take place during the*

*HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN*

*THEME: SELF DEVELOPMENT*

*The Mosque Hall, 32 Bonne Aventure Road, Gasparillo*

MISS AMINA KARMALLY

Our Ramaḍān programme at the Gasparillo Mosque is unique in many respects. We do not only break our fast at the mosque and say our tarāwīḥ prayers but every night we also have a special programme of speeches on various aspects of our religion between evening and night prayers. The speakers include young and old alike. We invite even non-Muslims for a better inter-faith understanding. On one occasion the Rev. Herald Seetahal, Moderator of the Presbyterian Churches in

Trinidad brought a party of 40 members of the Presbyterian Church of North Carolina (USA) led by Mr G. Gallo-way. They were entertained with *aftāri* (breaking of the fast) meals by us and our Imam Mr Zool Deen on that night spoke about Islam in general for the benefit of the visitors.

On each occasion we have a different chairman of the meeting, many of whom are young men and women which gives them the chance for training in Islamics. I wish other mosques could also follow this pattern and make their mosque a hub of social activities for their members.

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## Ninth International Ahmadiyya Convention - 83

The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam Inc., Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to announce the holding of the Ninth International Ahmadiyya Convention during the last ten days of August 1983 to be held in Trinidad. It will be the biggest ever held Convention so far. The themes of the Convention will be:

1. ISLAM THE RELIGION OF MANKIND.
2. JESUS CHRIST DIED IN KASHMIR AND NOT ON THE CROSS.

An amount of over \$(T&T) 25,000 will be allocated towards the expenses of the Convention. Delegates and speakers from all over the world are expected to attend. Details of the programme will be announced in the subsequent issue of *Al-Ahmadiyya* and *The Call* (and nearer the date in the Trinidad Press, Radio and Television). A small fee will be charged for the Convention, otherwise hospitality during the Convention in Trinidad would be free. For bookings and further details please contact:

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## Indonesia

Mr S. Ahmad Syurayuda informs from Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia that he has been busy translating into Indonesian language *Maulānā Muhammad 'Alī's* book *THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT* (translated from Urdu into English by S.M.Tufail). Mr Syurayuda was a student at the Central Anjuman's missionary class at Lahore (Pakistan). After finishing his translation work he intends to proceed to Trinidad for further Islamic education and training in missionary work. The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha-at-i Islam Inc. would look after his studies and training in Trinidad.

## New Issues tackled by Rābiṭa

1. FASTING AND PRAYER TIMES IN TWILIGHT ZONE
2. NEW *MiQāts* - PLACES WHERE THE PILGRIMS PUT ON THEIR *Ihrāms* (HĀJJ CLOTHES)
3. FRIDAY SERMON IN A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ARABIC
4. ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION - NO STATEMENT ISSUED

1. The question of prayer and fasting times in extreme latitudes has become acute in recent years when major Muslim communities have settled in the northern parts of Europe and America. As the fasting month Ramaḍān, following the lunar calendar, has moved into the height of northern summer the hardship of abstaining from food and drink for perhaps as much as twenty hours have increased. Various suggestions on occasions have been made, which amount to a relaxation to the strict requirement of fasting from first light to nightfall. The decision from RĀBIṬA meeting in Makkah (February 1982) has reaffirmed the more strict traditional view. Where there is a clear distinction between night and day, regardless of how long either may be, the strict timings for both fasting and prayer must be observed. In latitudes where the twilights of sunset and dawn merge, timings are to be determined by the last occasion on which day and night were clearly distinguishable. When the night or day extends beyond twenty four hour cycle, timings are to be calculated by the nearest place where night and day are clearly distinguishable on a twenty four hour duration. The Rābiṭa has avoided using the term *fatwa* about these decisions implying that this is not expected to be the final word on the subject. Quite apart from the long periods of fasting which might be involved in some areas, the decision also makes it possible that a Muslim in a twilight zone may find himself fasting longer than one further north under the midnight sun.

2. The meeting also reaffirmed that the state of *ihrām* on entering the pilgrimage is to take place at or soon before the places traditionally stipulated (the *miqāts*). Passenger transport companies were to be informed of the practical implications, as far as they were concerned.

3. Another matter, of particular relevance to Muslims in minority contexts, was the decision that the sermon in connection with the Friday noon prayer could validly be given in language other than Arabic.

4. The meeting also considered the implications arising from artificial insemination and "test tube" babies. However, it was decided to postpone issuing a statement until more information became available.

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\*Courtesy "News of Muslims in Europe", Birmingham.

## HAJJ SEMINAR-LONDON 82

DR KALIM SIDDIQUI

The history of Islam and Muslims has entered a new and decisive phase. In the years and decades that lie ahead we think that the Ummah is going to re-emerge in an important role in the affairs of man.

This transition will occupy us over many decades. It will include many political, social, economic and even theological revolutions; new Islamic movements will emerge to establish new Islamic States; new conflicts will occur and will have to be overcome; the traditional opponents of Islam will employ new methods of warfare; the forces of Islam will have to devise new and versatile strategies to overcome the power of nationalism, the nation-States, socialism, communism, capitalism, humanism, liberalism and so on. In short, the western 'civilization will resist Islam in ways yet unknown. Muslims will have to devise their own strategies to overcome the 'power' and machinations of our opponents.

One of the priorities in our opinion is the early restoration of Hajj to its proper role in the affairs of the Ummah. The Hajj of course is the oldest and the most unique institution of Islam. It straddles history as no other institution does. The Hajj has always brought Muslims together from all parts of the world. The Hajj has given Islam and Muslim history a unique sense of unity, continuity and timelessness.

In the new phase of our history we need to pay early attention to the Hajj. We need to rescue the Hajj from its purely ritual annual enactment and restore to it the dynamism that was given to Hajj by the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace.

As a first step towards this goal we are holding an international seminar in London from August 4-7, 1982. Invited to the seminar are a number of leading scholars from all parts of the world as well as some of the most active workers in the Islamic movement, including many writers and journalists.

### List of Subjects to be Discussed During the Hajj Seminar

- 1) The Hajj through the Ages  
Dealing with Hajj before Islam; Hajj after Islam; the accounts of the Hajj written by famous scholars and writers of past.
- 2) The Causes of the Decline of the Haramain (Makkah and Medina) as Centres of Learning
- 3) The Commercialization of Hajj
- 4) The Impact of Hajj on the Hejaz Economy
- 5) The Impact of Technology on Hajj
- 6) Hajj Policies of some of the modern Muslim States

- 7) Hajj Problems of Muslim Minorities  
Case studies of India, Occupied Palestine, the Soviet Union, etc.
- 8) The Hajj in the Qur'an
- 9) The Last Hajj of the Prophet, upon whom be peace
- 10) The Ritualization of Hajj
- 11) The Political Role of Hajj
- 12) Management of Hajj under the Osmaniah State
- 13) The Physical Conditions of Hajj - recent changes in the Cities of Makkah and Medina
- 14) Modern Management of Hajj - the problem of inflation and numbers.

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## The Ahmadiyya Anjuman

Founded  
August 1974

## Ishā'at Islām (L) UK

Registered  
May 1979

### ■ Service at Westminster Abbey

The Commonwealth Observance Day Service was held on Monday 8th March 1982 in the presence of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II and H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Maulānā S.M.Tufail also took part in the Service.

### ■ Ramaḍān & 'Īd-ul-Fitr

Ramaḍān (the month of Fasting) will start on Wednesday 23rd June 1982 and will end on Thursday 22nd July. Ramaḍān Charts are separately available. On Saturday 10th July a special Aftārī get-together will be held at the Ahmadiyya House at 8 pm. 'ID-UL-FITR (Festival of the Breaking of the Fast) will be celebrated at the Ahmadiyya House (Tooting) on Friday 23rd July. 'Id service will be led by Maulānā S.M.Tufail.

### ■ "Resting Place"

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishā'at Islam (Lahore) UK has bought a piece of land at Brookwood Cemetery (Surrey) for the use of its members. For reservation of plots and other details please contact the Secretary, A.A.I.I (L) U.K., 215 South Gate Road, London N1 3LD (Telephone 01 226 0560). The number of plots are limited, so the preference will be given to the first applicants.

### ■ Visitors

(From Trinidad) Mrs Sohaila Omardeen, Mr & Mrs Roy Ogeerali, Mr & Mrs Enayat Mohammed, Mr M. Ibrahim, Mr & Mrs Shamsher Khan.

Secretary  
AAII(L) UK.

# Integration or Segregation -Turks in West Germany

MICHAEL MILDENBERGER\*

The Turkish community is a challenge for our people in Germany, which is marked by two dangers, both of which we have to avoid if we want to follow up the vision described by the World Council of Churches in its "Guidelines on dialogue", namely: a "community of communities" which is not one of totalitarian uniformity", nor does it "envisage self-contained communities, simply co-existing":

The first danger becomes obvious when we look back into our history: Germans have failed heavily in dealing with minority problems. There have been many different groups and people coming into that region in the middle of Europe and living there throughout the centuries. Some of these minorities, such as the French Huguenots, have found fair conditions. But in the crucial test we fell tragically short. And when today we read the slogan "Türken raus" (Turks out), on German walls one cannot but remember the slogan "Juden raus" (Jews out), of some forty years ago.

The second danger is an opposite one. There is a mentality among some people - Christians especially, but others as well - of all-embracing inclusiveness, an eagerness to help and fraternise which turns out rather paternalistic and which in a sophisticated way exposes a feeling of superiority: of course, we know what is good for our Turkish friends. And that means in the last analysis: of course, we know they should assimilate.

I want to warn of these dangers very clearly. In some way or another they are always present where a majority relates to a minority. It is the question of power we are constantly confronted with: economic and political power, social and cultural power and even religious power. Yet, I would make the point that there is a specific perspective to our German-Turkish situation, a perspective which is composed of historic reminders and present presuppositions. Therefore the alternative "integration or segregation", although relating to the Turkish people, at the same time relates to the German people and must be their concern. There is not only the future of the Turkish minority in Germany at stake but in a very subtle way the authenticity of the German majority as well. The very realistic aspects of this can be easily demonstrated. It is enough to recall a remark of the Chancellor Helmut Schmidt when in late 1981 he noted that the foreigners living in the Federal Republic in the long run would have either to become Germans or to return to their native countries.

.....  
What the Turks really need is a re-interpretation of Islamic faith, moral standards and religious practice

in terms of their minority situation in a western society. For this demanding task responsible leaders are necessary, who could inspire and encourage their communities not to withdraw from society in order to keep their religious and cultural identity, but to communicate and thereby change the conditions and structures of the surrounding world. Instead they are told to demonstrate Muslim identity by scarfs for women and authoritarian education of children. It is, of course, a question of minority but first of all it seems to be a question of spiritual power - of *parresia*, to use the New Testament term.

.....

### A bridge between Islam and the West ?

Today, the presence of several million Muslims in the industrial centres between Vienna and Manchester, Marseilles and Hamburg, has caused a number of unsolved problems. It would be wrong to underestimate them. But it would be equally wrong to despair instead of seeking the opportunities for a meaningful integration and of seeing the possibilities for mutual cultural enrichment.

One of the great themes of our time is doubtlessly the debate between Islam and the scientific and technological civilization of the West. Islam likes to regard itself as the spokesman of that majority of humanity which does not live in modern, industrial states, although still exploited by them. The debate between Islam and the West is, seen in that light, a part of the all-encompassing north-south tension. Separated from the political and economic elements, the basic causes of this debate are of a cultural and spiritual nature. So far, the role of the Muslim minorities in the debate is uncertain. Are they possibly the spearhead of an expanding Islam? A kind of trojan horse which naive Europeans have brought inside their own walls? They sought labour, but human beings came and with them a foreign and threatening world. Others suggest the reverse: To return the trojan horse as a subversive force into the Islamic camp.

Both perspectives are unsatisfactory. They operate in terms of fronts and assume that a process of mutual learning comprehension is impossible. The shrill voices which, also in the Islamic world today, seem to confirm this evaluation. But are they right? The long-term trend would seem rather to suggest that, despite the present painful turbulence of the Islamic world, Islam is set to come to terms with the modern world in a critical and creative way. Is it not possible that the Muslim minorities of Europe might become a bridge between Islam and the West? Bridges are exposed to special tensions and pressures, and at present it would not be reasonable to expect the Muslims living amongst us to bear that burden. But need that always be the case? ●

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\*Extracts from a public lecture given at the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, on 27th November 1981.

# MUSLIM APPROACHES TO RELIGIOUS SOURCES FOR PEACE

19

DR HASAN ASKARI

HE IS GOD; THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE;  
THE KNOWER OF THE UNSEEN AND THE  
VISIBLE; HE IS THE ALL-MERCIFUL,  
THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْ  
وَرَهْمَةً هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

HE IS GOD, BELIEVED FROM THERE IS  
NO GOD; THE PURE, THE ALL-HOLY,  
THE ALL-TRUTH, THE ALL-FAITHFUL,  
THE SELF-PROVIDER, THE ALL-MIGHTY,  
THE ALL-COMPELLER, THE ALL-SUBLIME.  
GLORY BE TO GOD, ABOVE THAT THEY  
COULD IMAGINE.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ  
الْقَدِيمُ وَسَالَمَةُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْمُهَيَّبِينَ  
الْمُتَرَبِّعِينَ الْجَبَّارِ الْمُتَكَبِّرِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ  
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

HE IS GOD, THE CREATOR, THE MAKER-  
THE SHAPER. TO HIM BELONGS THE NAMES  
MOST BEAUTIFUL. ALL THAT IS IN THE  
HEAVENS AND THE EARTH MAGNIFIES HIM;  
HE IS THE ALL-MIGHTY, THE ALL-WISE.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ  
الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ

(THE QUR'ĀN 59:22-24)

## 1. INVOCATION AND PRAYER:

The Qur'anic invocation "In the name of God, the compassionate, the Merciful" calls us to an act of reflection which involves the totality of our consciousness. Whether articulated in the Qur'anic form which upholds God's transcendence which is at the same time His Mercy, whether acknowledged without words as the axis of our inner reflections, it draws us all into a unity (*wahdah*).

To invoke the One is to become one, to rise above all divisions and discord. This is the significance of *tawhid*, the affirmation of unity, which is the central pillar of Islam, being a psycho-spiritual and spiritual preparation for peace. To invoke the name of God is to be in His presence; to be in His presence is to be in a perpetual state of prayer, and therefore prayer is an actualisation of peace. Only in prayer are the physical and mental instruments we use to inflict injury and destroy set aside - and through prayer can we become the instrument of His Peace.

## 2. The Witness of God as the basis for peace

"Verily, your God is One, Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between them" (Q 37:4-5). As *tawhid* unites us in the affirmation of the unity of God, so the source and cause of human disunity is every thing besides God. More divisive than anything else are the dogmas of various religious traditions which insist that the Reality (*ḥaqīqah*) of God is equal to what they claim about Him. Thus it is precisely in religious dogmatism that we find the fertile breeding of hatred and fear, and this is particularly tragic since it is in the religious orientation of human beings that we find the sincere intention to bring about peace. Hence,

it is not our claims about God, but rather the transcendence (*subhāniyyah*) of God which brings religious people together in modesty and responsibility before God. However, to emphasize this dimension of transcendence is not to concede to the humanistic approach to problems of war and peace. Humanity without Godwardness is nothing more than an illusion. To construe human beings as merely the product of historical evolution is the gateway of ideological views which with the force of religious dogmatism, equates the reality of "man" (*insāniyyah*) with various forms of socio-economic understanding. Hence, the secular concern of humanists, in fact, a restriction of humanity within the finite walls of history. Without spirituality humanism degenerates into a false philosophy and offers a false hope. Within the context of humanism peace is likely to be turned into a political strategy by one or another dominant ideology. We must keep this point clearly in mind since most of us are inclined to confuse the politics of peace with real peace.

### 3. Striving' (Jihād) in the Way of God is to vie one with another to do good

As we stand within different religious traditions, we face two extremely opposed options: one precludes any cooperation and asks for confrontation; the other invites us to transcend our specific "ways" and strive together for the well-being and for the survival of the human race.

*"To each one of you have We prescribed a Law (shir'a) and a Way (minhāj). If God had so willed, He would have made you as a Single People (ummatun wāhidah) but His Plan is to test you in what He has given you: so strive as in a race to do good. The goal of you all is to God; it is He Who will show you the truth of the matters in which you dispute" (Q 5:48).*

يٰۤاَيُّهَا  
رُكُوۡنَا اِنَّ  
اللّٰهَ لَجَعَلَ  
اُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً  
وَلٰكِنْ يَّبۡتَلُوۡكُمْ  
فِيۡ مَا اَنْزَلْنَا  
مِّنۡ سُوۡرٰتٍ  
اَلْحٰزِنَةَ اِلَى اللّٰهِ  
مَرۡجِعُكُمْ جَمِيۡعًا  
فِيۡمَنْ يَّكۡفُرُ  
بِمَا كُنۡتُمْ  
نَبِيۡوَيْهِ تَخۡتَلِفُوۡنَ ۗ

Hence, from the Qur'ānic point of view, differences of religious law and spiritual path do not essentially imply division, but are seen rather as a trial to test who excels as in a race to do good. The ethical takes precedence of the theological, the latter being left to God - "it is He Who would show you the truth of the matters in which you dispute". The Qur'ānic view, in short, can be stated as follows: once the unity and the transcendence of God are taken as the substance of religious consciousness, and once God is understood as Reality (*Ḥaqq*), human beings are drawn into an ethical relationship with one another irrespective of the differences of laws and ways and of differences in theologies. Thus Islam creates an ethical unity of all religions. The most important of the ethical values are peace and justice - "then make peace between them with justice" (Q 49:9). Thus, to strive in the way of God is to strive for peace and justice.

#### 4. Striving (jihād) for peace is striving for justice

Peace as a state of no war is no real definition of peace. Peace is not merely the opposite of war, but is rather a positive state which exists naturally when the contradictions of a given situation are totally abolished. To do away with contradictions requires, in the Qur'ānic perspective, the double process of the spiritual growth of the individual and the social growth of relationships between people. This is what the Qur'ān means by *jihād*, "striving". Peace in its positive sense, therefore, is a function of justice and love.

Justice as the essential prerequisite for peace requires us to identify and remove the many forms of oppression (*zulm*) and inequality within the human order. To strive to remove oppression is to strive in the way of God as a religious duty, for as the Qur'ān puts it:

*"Why should you not fight in the way of God and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated and oppressed among men, women and children" (4:75).*

The consciousness of the conflict at the root of the human order between the oppressors and the oppressed is an essential constituent of the religious consciousness. Hence, the Qur'ānic view of peace is inextricably linked with the issue of justice.

In relation to this, love creates the appropriate sentiment of peace upon which to sustain justice as the institutional basis for peace. It involves individual spiritual growth towards an inner realisation of peace as discussed in the paragraph above. Thus within the framework of *tawhīd*, the Muslim is obliged by his Qur'ānic commitment to invite people of other religions to participate in the striving for justice, love and peace. This is the good for which we are called to cooperate.

#### 5. "Do not spread disorder (fasād) on the earth, after it has been set in order" (Q 7:56)

Along with *zulm*, "injustice" or "oppression", against which humans must struggle "in the way of God", the Qur'ān has the concept of *fasād*, meaning "corruption", "disorder", or in the terms of our present concern, indiscriminate destruction. That the two concepts are interconnected is obvious. The physical manifestation of *zulm*, e.g. terrorism, destruction, are *fasād*. But the sense of *fasād* in Q 7:56 implies something more: "Do not spread disorder on the earth (*fi'l-ard*) after it (the earth) has been set in order." *Fasād* here denotes destruction in the physical and biological aspects - the destruction of life through massacres and persecution, the pillage of cities and the rape of the countryside. This is evidently far more devastating than *zulm* which refers more to the social aspects of oppression. *Fasād* must, however, be distinguished from natural disasters, such as earthquakes. Human beings are the perpetrators of *fasād* ("man", is *mufsid*), so *fasād* always has its origin and expression in the human act. The degree of *fasād* is,

therefore, directly linked to the capacity of the technology of destruction which humans develop.

The Qur'ān and the prophetic example make it clear and total distinction between what is permissible in the military aspect of *jihād* 'in the way of God', and the technology of *fasād*. The Holy Prophet Muhammad stated:

"Do not kill a decrepit old man, nor a small child, nor a woman."

The rules for *jihād* laid down by the first Khalifa, Abū Bakr, are also unambiguous:

"Do not slaughter a sheep or a camel except for eating; do not burn bees; and do not cut down trees with fruit on them."

These rules all direct the *mujāhid* ("Striver") away from the evil of those whose "effort in the earth is to cause *fasād* therein, and to destroy the crops and cattle; (for) God loves not *fasād*" (Q 2:205). Thus the technology of arrows, lances and swords was controlled by the Qur'ānic and prophetic norms of *jihād*, this being practically possible since the technology in question possessed limited efficacy and its users could make judgements as to whether their strike was legitimately "in the cause of God" (i.e. *jihād*) or in self-interest (i.e. *fasād*), whether they were fighting out of fear for God (*taqwā*) or in blind anger (*ghaiz*).

6. To promote and use nuclear technology for purposes of war is un-Qur'ānic and un-Islamic

The technology of modern nuclear weaponry is a totally different proposition. By its very nature it is holistic, its destruction total and structural. It causes a 'chain reaction' resulting in physical and biological effects which are well-enough known to need no elaboration. The natural order of the earth is disturbed, "after it has been set in order", and no distinction can be drawn between the *dār al-islām* (House of Islam), the *dār al-ḥarb* (House of War) and the *dār al-ṣulḥ* (House of Peace). "God loves not *fasād*" (Q 2:205). Therefore, beyond any question of doubt I hold the view that to promote and use nuclear technology for purposes of war is un-Qur'ānic, un-Islamic. To justify nuclear technology as an instrument of *jihād* is nothing less than to corrupt it as *fasād*.

Use of nuclear weaponry turns "man", designed in the Qur'ān as the deputy of God on earth (*khalifah fi'l-ard*) into a corruptor on earth (*mufsid fi'l-ard*). Ironically this weaponry is developed from the very nature of the technology which we are cultivating in the name of peace. We have only to recall the events which led to the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima in August 1945. Scientists found themselves the helpless servants of the modern state. It is true that Einstein pleaded with President Roosevelt for the control of the 'chain reaction', that the atomic bomb should be tested openly before the Japanese and an inter-

national audience so that, knowing of its terrible effects, Japan should surrender. Thus Hiroshima could have been saved, but Hiroshima was not saved. This tragedy of science was in reality the tragedy of humankind.

Are men of God too the servants of the modern state with its lethal technology? Can we rise together and with one voice and heart say a loud and clear 'NO' to this *fasād* which we have no power within ourselves to avert but through the Mercy and Power of God?

7. The technology of nuclear war compels us to review our traditional views of *jihād* and "just war"

*Tawhīd* is a psychological and spiritual preparation for peace. God as Reality (*Ḥaqq*) and Transcendence (*Subhān*) is a basis to rise above our "religious" divisions and uphold in consensus the most important of the ethical values, justice and peace. The technology of nuclear war compels us to review our traditional views of *jihād* and the "just war" and restate them from within the Qur'ānic and Biblical bases so that the order of nature as created by God is not disturbed to its structural foundations by the new knowledge and power which human beings possess today. The scientists have their responsibility. Those who are God-orientated have even greater responsibility, and it is one of those responsibilities which can be shared together. Let us pray: O God! You are the King; You are the All-Holy; You are the All-Peace; Guide us into Your Kingdom, into the paths of peace.

"There has come to you from God a light, and a Book Manifest whereby God guides whomsoever follows His good pleasure in the ways of peace, and brings them forth from the shadows into the light by His leave; and He guides them to straight path" (The Qur'ān 5:16).\*

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١﴾

يَهْدِي بِرَبِّهِ إِلَهُ مِنَ الشَّيْءِ بِرَأْسِهِ  
سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ  
إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى  
صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢﴾

\*Courtesy the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian Muslim Relations, Birmingham. — Editor AA.



REFLECTIONS FROM  
THE HOLY QUR'AN

— A RADICAL NEW APPROACH —

CHAPTER MOST MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE COMMENTATORS

CHAPTER 80

'ABASA

عَبَسَ 2

by IMADUDDIN AHMED SHEIKH

24 15-16. And entrusted for communication in letter and spirit, among peoples in all generations, to flawless scribes who are models of integrity and virtue.<sup>10</sup>

بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ  
صَكَرَاهُمْ بِرِزْوَانِهِ

17. Doomed then is that human who is prone to behaving ungratefully in rejecting his/her Creator!<sup>11</sup>

قَدِيرَ الْإِنْسَانِ مَا  
أَكْفَرُوا

18. (Would, they only reflected on the basic facts of their Creation!)  
Of what substance and process does He Create them?

مِنْ أَمْرِ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ

19. Of sperm-ovum fertilization He creates them and fixes for them their measure for individual growth,

مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ

20. And provides for the creative sequence to run smooth to their birth and, further, throughout their lives to fulfilment,

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسْرَهُ

10. (i) 'SAHAFA' (verb) means 'to spread out'

(ii) 'SUHUFU' (noun) - plural of 'SAHIFAH' - means

(a) written sheets, skins or letters (b) writings (c) and books/volumes.

These Revelations embodying the complete Writ of God extend over volumes in their increasing scope and application. This claim is frequently made in the Qurān to stimulate human understanding of what Creation is all about, to its peak:

'Were all the trees on earth as pens and the sea extended by seven more seas as ink (to describe the meanings of Allah's 'words'), they would be exhausted but not His meaning-. Verily, Allāh is all-Powerful, all-Wise'. (31:27)

Some of the many distinctions claimed here for the Writ are: (a) its ever-increasing respect in the minds of those who seek Truth with integrity anywhere in the world, (i.e. the distinction of being 'MUKARRAMAH') (b) its ever-excelling value beyond the reach of any other writing, secular or religious (i.e. the distinction of being 'MARFŪ'ATAN') and (c) its everlasting purity of text and meanings (i.e. the distinction of being 'MUTAHHARAH').

Equally, the main links of transmission of the Writ from the Almighty down to humankind- Gabriel as the 'bearer', the Holy Prophet as the 'recipient' and his companions as the scribes and exemplars - are all honourable, truthful and virtuous beyond reproach. Incidentally, every would-be commentator of the Qurān has, by implication, been set the highest possible standard of integrity, understanding and righteousness in undertaking the most rewarding of all tasks in human life.

11. 'KAFARA' (verb) means: to cover, to conceal, to deny, to reject or to be unthankful. 'KĀFIR' (plural, 'KAFARAH') is the person who acts in any of the above negative ways.

The response of concealing and hence of rejecting the self-evident fact of Divine beneficence, always at hand to benefit by, is a response of ungrateful throwing away of the very nourishment of life. Its consequence is the unavoidable decay of one's moral and intellectual faculties to extinction - whether of individuals, communities or nations.

21. Until their earthly existence is duly brought to an end and a place allotted to be laid to rest.

كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ لَهَا قَابِلَةٌ

22: And when He so decrees He would raise them to life again.<sup>12</sup>

كُلُّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْشَرَهُ

23. (Now were they to ponder with natural wonder on how caringly their creation has been designed and sustained, they might seek to pursue the true purpose of their existence). All the same, they have not yet fulfilled their Creator's decree severally or collectively.<sup>13</sup>

كَلَّا لَنَا بَعْضٌ مَّا أَمَرَهُ

12. (i) 'NUTFAH' (noun) means the germ-cell of the male as well as the female i.e. spermatozoon and ovum ('NISBĀH' by AL-FAIYŪMĪ).

(ii) 'SHA'AN' (noun) is an all-purpose word meaning a substance, an object, a process etc.

Most commentators, perhaps all, have translated 'NUTFAH' exclusively to mean the sperm-drop of the male as if that alone procreates life. This is a male-dominated view of re-production, contrary to God's Providence. Hence the new rendering: 'Sperm-ovum fertilization'.

The argument developed in verses 18-22 is not to show up the 'insignificance' or 'impurity' of the fragile and conjugal beginnings of human life, as some commentators have thought fit to spin out. Rather, it emphasises the creative love and sustaining care with which the whole sequence has been designed. 'He creates human life as a sign of His love through male-female fertilization and nourishes it through to the fulfilment of a fully grown individual' (96:2). All the stages of life's process - the pregnancy, the growth of the embryo and the foetus, the pains and pleasures of birth and of living through to death and the physical fact of death itself, followed by the enlightened certainty of resurrection for eternal life - all these stages reveal the un-mistakable evidence of God's creative love and purpose for every individual born and yet to be born.

13. Though this Divine purpose becomes evident to some understanding minds, most humans are tragically blind to its not-too-obvious reality and sometimes at violent cross-purposes with it. However, all human societies of every race and colour, according to the Qur'an which claims to be the true history of Creation, have been blessed with Divine guidance through their native prophets. And they have all, according to Divine plan, been preparing the way for the emergence, in the fullness of time, of the Exemplar - Prophet for all peoples in all time. Now, as this finalising Seal of Prophethood, its alpha and omega, has appeared with recognisable and lasting evidence of the Everlasting Creator, His commands should be within everyone's power to fulfil. The writer feels moved here to recall the sacred hadīth (Hadīth Qudsīyyah): 'Iau lāka lamā khalaqtul aḥlāqā': Had We not pre-planned thy being, We would not have created the universe'. Such is the un-matchable stature and purpose of the existence of the Holy Prophet in God's scheme. No wonder, then, that there would never be another demonstration of this scale of Divine mercy: "And in what manner of tale after this (supreme) sign will they ever believe?" (77:50).

24. (So, they must reflect again, beyond their own creation, on the marvel of Nature's goings-on around them). For instance, let them look closer into their basic necessities, their daily sustenance: how does its providing come about, (taken for granted as of their own making)?

لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا كَسَبَهُ

25. How We pour forth water in abundance, firstly,

سُبْحَانَ الْمَاءِ مَجْجَاةً

26. Then tear the earth suitably apart to receive it and germinate.

فَرَفَعْنَا الْأَرْضَ رَفْعًا

27. And cause grain of various foods and seed of various fruits and plants to grow therein -

الْحَبَّ وَالنَّارِ وَالشَّجَرَةَ

28-31. (For instance), grapes and edible plants, the olives and the date-palm, gardens densely covered with fruits and flowers and meadows with luxuriant herbage -

وَرَبِّهَا وَوَقْتَهَا

وَرَبِّهَا وَوَقْتَهَا

وَرَبِّهَا وَوَقْتَهَا

وَرَبِّهَا وَوَقْتَهَا

32. Thus providing a recurring abundance of sustenance for you as for your animals.<sup>14</sup>

مَتَابَعًا لَكُمْ وَلَا تَنْسَوْنَ كَلِمَةً

14. (i) 'HABBAH' (noun) means grain of all kinds (wheat, barley etc.) and 'HJRBAH' (noun) means seed of all kinds of fruit and plant.

(ii) 'QADBA' (noun) means (a) fresh edible plants (b) vegetables (c) trees with leaves specially relished by camels.

(iii) 'HADAIQA GHURBA' - this phrase means (a) gardens densely grown with trees (b) enclosed or walled gardens of luxuriant fruits, grape-vine and palm-trees (c) and lush meadows covered with dense herbage.

(iv) 'ABBĀ' (noun) means (a) dry or fresh herbage enjoyed like fruit by cattle (b) and all that grows on the face of the earth.

(v) 'MATĀ'Ā' (noun) means all kinds of provision that sustain or enrich life.

(vi) 'NA'AM' (noun-plural: AN'ĀM) means (a) a pasturing camel (b) and cattle of all kinds, specially camels. (vii) 'NA'IMA' (verb) means 'to live a life of ease, comfort and plenty.

These verses call for reflection on yet another undeniable evidence of AR-RAHMĀN's spontaneous mercy, the providence of nature around us.

Just as the human species with its unchangeable cycle of birth and death cannot be invented or eliminated, nor its basic biological laws altered by any human skill, so too are unchangeable the laws that govern the world of animals, vegetables and minerals. These laws will always defy the monstrous interference sometimes attempted by power-crazy scientists who abuse their analytical knowledge of

33. So, when Reckoning comes with its overwhelming blast that deadens all sounds but its own to call up humans to life again, to render account.<sup>15</sup>

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّلَاةُ

(Continued from previous page)

Providence with insane criminality.

While the vegetable world largely sustains animals (except the predatory ones who prey upon one another), the humans are sustained by the entire wealth of this planet and, with luck, perhaps with the wealth of other planets as well. It should, therefore, make enlightened sense to humans to realise that they in their turn, with their in-born capacity for knowledge and understanding, are under command to sustain this planet and what lives and grows on it as God's agents, in accord with His true attributes. And we have to go a long and risky way - with understanding, steadfastness and trust in the Ever-Functioning Almighty - to 'reach His kingdom'.

It seems appropriate to pause here to look closer for a layer of meaning which the writer suspects to be implicit in this verse, though hitherto un-explored.

The word - AN'ĀM - meaning a variety of cattle that makes life easy and fruitful would, in the context of the civilization of the desert, apply primarily to camels, the ships of the desert. However, as the Qufan is the everlasting Writ of God, it would not be irrelevant or far-fetched to speculate whether AR-RAHMĀN (the Beneficent) has made any implicit reference to the enormous energy resources that He has provided for the mechanical transportation of our times and of the future. The writer feels that there is a convincing measure of evidence in these verses to support this line of speculation.

We now know that all forms of energy - gas, coal, oil, atomic fuel etc. - had their origin several hundred million years ago in the trees and plants of the forests and the swamps of the Carboniferous period. Plant remains mixed with silt and subjected to high pressures and temperatures over a long time have produced all these forms of energy - our planet itself being about four-and-a-half thousand million years old. It would therefore be un-imaginative and restrictive on our part not to consider a layer of meaning emerging from the word - AN'ĀM - that could metaphorically apply to automobiles, ocean liners, aircraft, space-ships etc., remembering the popular metaphor of camels being called the ships of the desert.

Likewise, the word, ABBĀ, meaning 'all that grows on the surface of the earth' could also apply to the plants and trees of the Carboniferous period which eventually produced these energy resources vital for our present and future civilizations, if we let ourselves survive that long. Furthermore, the word TA'ĀM in verse 24, primarily meaning

(For <sup>15</sup> see next page)

{They will be so gripped with apprehension of their own plight that they will be drawn towards their Creator}

يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ آخِرِهِ ۝

وَأُولَاهُ ۝

34-35-36. Casting aside all attachments of kinship - of brothers (and sisters), mothers and fathers, of life-companions and of children.<sup>16</sup>

وَصَاحِبَيْهِ وَبَنِيهِ ۝

(Continued from previous page)

'sustenance' for humans and animals, could metaphorically apply to the energy requirements for feeding these mechanical beasts.

15. 'AS-SĀKHAH' - one of the many functional descriptions of the event of Reckoning - means 'the deafening blast that announces the beginning of the Reckoning and makes humans numb to all sounds except the call to life again'.

What a powerfully effective use of this description of Resurrection which haunts our minds with gripping fear and total surrender to the reckoning of whatsoever we have ever done!

16. (i) 'FARRA' (verb) means 'to run in fearful panic' or 'to turn away'.

(ii) 'SĀHIB' means (a) 'Lord or master' and (b) 'Companion' or Comrade'. The feminine SĀHIBAH means 'life-companion', the ideal wife.

(iii) 'BANĪ' (plural of 'IBN') means (a) sons (b) children and (c) descendants.

We are being fore-warned that when the final Reckoning comes, our sentiments of love and loyalty, so natural and even made binding under the Qur'ānic commands, towards every generation of our kinship, will instantly lose their force and attraction. We will now clearly see that these earthly attachments were provided to stimulate our inborn instinct of boundless love for our eternal roots - the Creator-Nourisher-Perfector of all of us. If, however, we ignore this Divine intention and upset the order of importance, as so often happens, we shall be painfully corrected during Reckoning. People will then be turning away in fearful flight from their erstwhile near-and-dear ones whose emotional pull had diverted their minds from understanding the true nature of their Creator and from living their lives in accord with that understanding.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have warned, in this context, that on this awesome occasion humankind would be magnetically and helplessly pulled towards their Creator in a state of utter panic and nudity and that they would be left with no sensitivity at all towards one another. Obviously, the point of the Holy Prophet's spectacular description of the journey of human life, full-circle, back to the Creator is that in Divine Presence no covering or connections that one's station in earthly life may provide can conceal a whit of truth from Him.

37. Each one of them on that occasion will be too pre-occupied with his/her own acquittal to respond to others' needs. لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ

38-39. (And when Reckoning is over, they will have distinctly sorted out) وَجُوهٌ يُّرْسِيهِ السُّعُورَةُ  
The faces of some will be radiant, صَالِحَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ  
rejoicing and ecstatic over receiving tidings of Divine grace,

40-41. While the faces of some others will be covered up in dust and over-spread with gloom and embarrassment of their wasted lives. وَوُجُوهُ يُّرْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ

42. They are the ones who had rejected their Creator-Nourisher-Perfector by concealing their hearts from His grace and, furthermore, had actively defied His Will on earth (out of blinding perverseness).<sup>17</sup> أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرَةُ الْفَجْرَةُ

17. (i) 'WUJŪHU' (plural of 'WAJH'), meaning face or countenance, is used as the natural index of the state of an individual's mind.

(ii) 'GHABARAH' means dust-storm.

(iii) 'RAHAQA' (verb) means 'to over-spread' or 'to overtake'.

(iv) 'QATARAH' (noun) means 'dust and its odour'.

(v) 'FAJARAH' (plural of 'FĀJIR') means 'deliberate disobeyers of God' or 'defiant transgressors'.

The brave righteous who never wavered against any odds in acknowledging their Creator as He truly is and lived their earthly lives and died solely at His pleasure will now radiate contentment and bliss that comes from the supreme attainment of His approval and grace. They are the ones who will make up the fellowship of the blessed whose life bore inspiring witness to the Ever-Functioning reality of the Creator.

On the other side of the self-raising 'barrier' will be those who had concealed their hearts and minds from His grace (i.e. AL-KAFARAH) and, in their insane visions of self-glory, had waged war upon His just and merciful limits (i.e. AL-FAJARAH).

Now, however, they will be face to face with the painful realisation of utter futility and tragic waste of their gift of life. Their only expression will be one of unbearable and un-ending embarrassment and humiliation painted all over their faces with dust and dusty odour, as if wailing with self-pity in the familiar tones of the last verse of An-NABĀ' (78:40):

'yā laitanī kuntu turābā!'

'Would, I had for eternity remained a particle of dust and had never undergone the process of having been created a human!'

Reproduced below are the comments on the 'incident' of the blind man (Ibn Umm Maktūm) by some of the well-known 'translators' of the Holy Qur'ān, with appreciable personal following:

1. THE HOLY QUR'ĀN ('Abdullah Yūsuf 'Ali):

The late Yūsuf 'Ali sums it up as 'an incident which reflects the highest honour on the Prophet's sincerity in the Revelations that were vouchsafed to him even if they seem to reprove him for some natural and human zeal that led him to a false step in his mission according to his own high standards.'

2. THE HOLY QUR'ĀN - Translation and Commentary by Mirza Bashiruddin Maḥmūd, Head of the Rabwā Aḥmadiyya Movement.

'The words "he frowned and turned aside", according to most commentators of the Qur'ān refer to the Holy Prophet, but more correctly they seem to refer to the arrogant attitude of the conceited Quraish leaders with whom the Holy Prophet was engaged in conversation and who turned away his face disdainfully, thinking how a humble and lowly person could dare interfere in the talk he was having with the Prophet'.

3. THE QUR'ĀN: (by Moḥammad Zafrullah Khān)  
(A new translation).

'(The Prophet's visitor) frowned and withdrew because the blind man came to him (the Prophet). (Grieve not over his having turned away) for how couldst thou have known that the one with whom thou wast engaged would purify himself, or would take heed and derive benefit from the Reminder? How could it be that thou shouldst do honour to one who is indifferent, whereas thou art not charged with his purifying himself, and that thou shouldst neglect one who fears Allah and comes running to thee? By no means, could that be so ...'

THE WRITER'S COMMENT

Both the late Mirza Bashiruddin and Sir Zafrullah have departed from the traditional account of the circumstances of these revelations by transferring the act of 'frowning and turning away' from the Holy Prophet to one of the Chiefs amongst his audience. Despite this brave effort, based merely on well-meaning speculation, their 'translation' of the subsequent nine verses is neither clearly critical nor openly supportive of the Prophet's behaviour. The readers will consequently be confused.

4. AL-QUR'ĀN UL-HAKĪM (Commentary in Urdū): Late Shabbīr Ahmed Uthmānī (religious adviser to Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly and to its 'Founding Fathers').

'The Holy Prophet must have thought to himself that he was engaged in a very important task of bringing some of the leaders of the Quraish to accepting Islam to benefit God's cause by attracting more people to its fold. Ibn Umm Maktūm, already a believer, should be showing the right sense of occasion as he has many other opportunities of learning

further about Islam and he should not therefore keep on interrupting! As a result, the Prophet shows visible signs of disapproval on his face. That became the very occasion for the revelation of these verses, instructing him that he should be paying special attention to people like Ibn Umm Maktūm who are handicapped and helpless but otherwise earnest seekers of Truth.'

5. 'TAFHĪM-UL-QUR'ĀN' (Abul A'lā Maudūdī). The late Abul A'lā, in his above 'translation in Urdu, comments on this incident thus:

'The Holy Prophet is being instructed here about his mistake in the method of his propagation of Faith in the early days of his ministry. Though his indifference to the blind man (Ibn Umm Maktūm) and his concentrating on the leaders of the Quraish were well-intentioned and not on account of snobbish considerations, Allah explains to him that the correct approach should be to give preference to those who are keen, though poor and disadvantaged. The Prophet's 'frowning and turning away' reported in third person subtly implies that Allah disapproves his behaviour as unworthy of his otherwise lofty manners.' The late Abul A'lā then tries to read the Prophet's motives thus:

'He reckoned that Ibn Umm Maktūm, being blind and helpless, would not be as useful for the cause of Islam as any of those Chiefs whose acceptance of the faith would considerably ease the early difficulties in the spread of Islam. But the Almighty rebuked him for this error of judgment in ignoring the blind man.'

6. 'MUHAMMAD THE PROPHET:' (by the late Muhammad 'Alī, the Founder-President of the Lahore Ahmadiyyā Movement and author of many books on Islam including a 'translation' of the Holy Qur'ān).

In his above biography of the Prophet, the late Muḥammad 'Alī comments thus on the incident of the blind man:

'But the Almighty God who wanted him to attain to the highest pinnacle of morals as well as manners did not let this incident pass un-noticed. Forthwith came the warning through Divine revelation: "He frowned and turned away because the blind man came to him." The advancement of the cause of Islam was bound up with the poor and the weak who would themselves be glorified ... This is a Divine admonition reproaching for his ignoring the blind man. This incident is also an evidence of the Divine authorship of the Holy Qur'ān because nobody can afford to have his faults brought to public notice, if he can avoid it, however penitent he might feel within himself.

7. THE HOLY QUR'ĀN: 'Abdul Mājid Daryabādī. ('Translation' and Commentary).

The late Abdul Mājid comments, as under, by quoting from Sir William Muir and the Rev. E.M. Wherry with approval:

'This incident shows the tender and ready perception by Muhammad of the slight he had offered, and the magnanimity with which he could confess his fault (Muir) 'Muhammad is justly praised for the magnanimous spirit shown in this

passage. Throughout his career we rarely find him courting the favour of the rich or the great, and he was ever ready to recognise merit in the poorest of his followers' (Rev. Wherry).

8. THE MESSAGE OF THE QUR'ĀN (Muhammad Asad, author of many books on Islam).

Commenting on the incident, Mr. Asad has regrettably been carried away with using very strong words indeed against the Holy Prophet when he writes: "Annoyed by this interruption of what he momentarily regarded as a more important endeavour, Muhammad 'frowned and turned away' from the blind man - and was immediately, there and then, reproved by the revelation of the first ten verses of the Surah. In later years he often greeted Ibn Umm Maktūm with these words of humility: "Welcome unto him on whose account my Sustainer has rebuked me ('atabanī)!" Indirectly, the sharp Qur'ānic rebuke (stressed, in particular, by the use of the thirdperson form in verses 1-2) implies, firstly, that what would have been a minor act of discourtesy on the part of an ordinary human being, assumed the aspect of a major sin, deserving a divine rebuke, when committed by a prophet; and, secondly, it illustrates the objective nature of the Qur'ānic revelation for, obviously, in conveying God's reproof of him to the world at large, the Prophet "does not speak out of his own desire." (53:3).

9. IN THE SHADE OF THE QUR'ĀN - FI ZILĀL IL QUR'ĀN - (by Sayyid Quṭb).

The late Quṭb who wrote a commentary-translation of the Qur'ān in arabic, as a prisoner of conscience in a Cairo jail and later martyred there, has the following comment to make:

'This sūrah opens by criticizing the Prophet's behaviour in this incident ... The point at issue here is not merely how an individual or a class of people should be treated. This is indeed the significance of the Qur'ānic comment on the incident itself taken in isolation.' The late Quṭb further remarks: 'Indeed, the Prophet's motive has been his great enthusiasm to win badly needed support for Islam. Here, heaven intervenes to say the final word in the matter ... Thus, we are given the scales by which to weigh our values regardless of what serves the interests of Islam as seen ... even by the greatest man, Muhammad (Peace be upon Him!). This is why the Prophet ... is strongly censured by Allah. It is the only point in the Qur'an that the Prophet, who is very dear to Allah, is told 'KALLĀ'. 'KALLĀ' is a term of censure and an order to desist.'

(In all the above quotations the words are underlined by the writer)

## THE WRITER'S CONCLUDING COMMENT:

(1) It is incorrect to state, as late Quṭb has done, that the word, 'KALLA', is addressed to the Prophet only once in the Qu'rān and that too in the sense of censure and forbidding.

In point of fact, there are two specific occasions - 96:19 and 80:11 - where this word is addressed personally to him and yet through him for the guidance of all of us. And the purpose is quite the opposite of what the commentators have thought it to be. It was neither to forbid the Prophet from doing anything unworthy that he was about to do; nor it was to rebuke him for something that he should not have done. To give an example: in 96:19 he was being strongly motivated with unflinching resolve, by the effect of this word-KALLA, never to yield to the enemies of God. Rather, he was to continue endeavouring in total obedience ('WASJUD') and to continue being blessed with His closest closeness ('WAQTARIB'). And this was mercifully made easy for him with the promise, in the preceding two verses (96:17-18), that the full support of God's punitive force was at hand to punish the combined might of his enemies. In short, the use of 'KALLA' in 96:19 was to strengthen and re-assure the Prophet to carry on his task fearlessly.

Likewise in verse 11 of 'ABASA, the use of this word has the objective of supporting and re-assuring the Prophet and not of censuring or forbidding him. The doubts whispered by some of the hard-pressed and the down-trodden that the Prophet perhaps preferred winning over the rich and the powerful to siding with the humble and the disabled, though understandable, were dangerously wrong. They must not arise. 'KALLA' here forbids such people from attributing these base motives to the Prophet and at the same time clears him of such accusations.

Incidentally, this word 'KALLA' has appeared at least on thirty one other occasions in the Qu'rān: 70:15,39; 74:16, 32, 53, 54; 75:11, 20, 26; 78:4, 5; 82:9; 83:7, 14, 15, 18; 89:17; 96:6, 15; 102:3, 4; 104:4 and so on. On all these occasions, the primary meaning of 'forbidding' or of 'emphatic rejection' has gained in variety and richness from the context. The meanings vary over a wide range; some renderings could be:

- (i) 'most certainly not' in 74:53 etc.
- (ii) 'most certainly' in 74:32; 83:7 etc.
- (iii) 'On the contrary' in 89:17
- (iv) 'Ungratefully and perversely' in (96:6) and a host of other shades of emphasis and certainty.

It would, therefore, be substantially incorrect to translate KALLA as 'nay' in all instances, as most translators have regrettably been content with.

(2) The reader will easily find ample information in the introduction and the foot-notes to answer the various points made by the Commentators, as reproduced in the Appendix.

**FAIRY TALES**

MICHAEL McCLAIN

It is no secret that contemporary physics has practically ceased to be materialistic. Many have noted that the physics of today resembles Vedanta more than it does the "billiards-ball universe" of the mecanistic materialism of the 18th and 19th centuries. Things which the mystics have known for more than 3,500 years ago are hailed as "great discoveris". It was not for nothing that the great physicist Robbert Oppenheimer learned to read Sanskrit.

Though it is in the field of mysticism where the above is most relevant, yet it applies to other fields as well. Contemporary physics affirms that matter and energy are interchangeable. Therefore, energy is an entity in itself, not a mere "function" or "epiphenomenon" of matter. An entity cannot be interchangeable with a non-entity. Contemporary physics also affirms that there are more than three dimensions and no one is capable of describing them. At last it affirms the relativity of time. In these three points contemporary physics has been anticipated not only by Mysticism (which has anticipated it in other aspects as well), but also by the so-called "FAIRY TALES".

Fairy tales are not peculiar to any particular people or ethnic group, but no people can compare with what may be called "the three Aryan peoples", i.e. the CELTS, the IRANIANS and the INDO-ARYANS in reference to the profusion and variety of fairy tales. The SLAVS learned some of these tales from their former Celtic and Iranian overlords.

"Fairies" are called "sidhe" in Celtic and "peri" in Persian, though said terms have somewhat wider meaning than the English word. Concerning the persistence of the belief in fairies among Celtic peoples I am well informed. Famous is the Irishman who, when someone asked him if he believed in fairies, answered: "No, but they are there just the same." Not long ago during the construction of a road in Ireland, the workers suddenly stopped work and refused to go any further, because they feared to disturb a "sidhe rath" or fairy fort. Finally there was no other solution but to curve the road so as not to disturb the fairy fort. The great Irish poet W.B. Yeats (1865-1939) (profound admirer of both Vedanta and Sufism; in one of his poems a-Hindu philosopher is giving a lecture on Vedanta. At the end Yeats says "and Ancient Ireland knew it all") firmly believed in fairies, something which some of his many admirers are always trying to make excuses for or to explain away.

The bedouins of the Arabian desert believe in "jinn" or "jann" (Genii), which are mentioned in the Qur'an and at least vaguely in the Bible. There is an important difference between the jinn on one hand and the sidhe or peri on the other. While the jinn appear in popular literature and tradition to be relatively uniform and homogenous and mostly evil or melevolent (according to Islamic tradition there are believers and infidels among the jinn), the sidhe or peri are enormously varied in all aspects, and some are melevolent, some benevolent, and some indifferent in this respect. The various sorts of jinn, ifrits, marids, etc. which appear in the Arabian Nights are most probably the result of Per-

sian and Indian influences. Both the jinn and the sidhe or peri are described as "beings of fire". Persian poets frequently use the terms "jinn" and "peri" as though they were synonymous and interchangeable, which is not strictly true.

One of the clearest, most succinct descriptions of at least one type of said beings is found in THE TALE OF THE FOUR DERVISHES by Amir Khusru of Delhi. "Peri" would be more applicable than jinn for the beings described by Amir Khusru; indeed, the similarity to a vast number of Celtic and Iranian fairy tales is obvious. The jinn or peri which appear in the tale of Amir Khusru have a rigorous hierarchy. Their king is described as "sitting on a throne set with myriad thousands of precious stones", his robe was embroidered with pearls of such lustre and size that I blinked as I looked at them. He had a magnificent crown of gold which shone like the sun." Note the emphasis in brilliance and shining. Also note that in many Indo-European languages the word for "god" is derived from the root "dewas", which means "shining"; see "deva" in Sanskrit, "daeva" in Avestan, "deus" in Latin, "theos" in Greek, "duw" or "deuo" in Celtic, etc. Later the king complains of having been deceived by mortals, and says: "You may yet deceive me. You are, after all, made of earth, while we are made of fire." Sometime later the narrator stabs the king of the jinn or peri, but, "It seemed to have no ill effect on him, and as I watched, fascinated, he assumed the shape of a ball and flew up into the sky." Later the king descends on the narrator and knocks him senseless.

Note certain elements here. The king of the peri or jinn says, speaking to the narrator, "You are, after all, made of earth, while we are made of fire." This phrase is very easy to interpret in the light of modern physics. The king is saying that while mere mortals are made of matter, the peri or the jinn are made of energy. The last incident indicates that, as one might expect, beings made of energy are capable of changing their outer aspect, at least within certain limits. This perhaps explains the bewildering variety of forms which these beings take in Celtic, Iranian and Indo-Aryan fairy tales. Both the element of "shining" and the ability to change outward aspects are beautifully and succinctly dealt with in the poem by W.B. Yeats, LAY OF THE WANDERING AENGUS. This does not mean to say that sidhe or jinn are necessarily uniform or homogenous, only that there may not be such bewildering variety of them as the Celtic and Iranian legends suggest.

Some points must be clarified here. Peri, sidhe or jinn are not pure spirits nor anything of the sort. They are different from ourselves because what might one call their "spatio-temporal component" is energy rather than matter. This has nothing to do with the soul. Since matter and energy are interchangeable, the one is just as spatio-temporal as the other. Note that the king complains of having been deceived. This shows that the peri or jinn are not omniscient. In summary, the sidhe, peri or jinn are limited, conditioned, spatio-temporal (though their space and time may be different from ours) creatures. Though their powers may be different from ours, they are not divine, and to worship them would be idolatry. In the words of Christian mystics and sufis, this would be to worship the

creatures rather than the Creator, which is idolatory.

The medieval scholastics discussed the question of "how many angels can dance on the head of a pin". The question is not frivolous. If the angels are pure spirit, and infinite number can dance on the head of a pin, since pure spirit is non-spatial and non-temporal. However, if the angels whose spatio-temporal component is energy rather than matter, one at most can dance on the head of a pin. The most generally accepted conclusion to this polemic is to affirm the existence of numerous purely spiritual beings is polytheistic, and therefore one angel at most can dance on the head of a pin. In referring to the angels as being "rarified matter" one sees a grasping toward contemporary concepts; in fact considering that the scholastics were well trained in mysticism, it would not seem overtly adventurous to say that the medieval scholastics had arrived at the modern concept of matter-energy but lacked the vocabulary and the mathematical formulae to express it. In any case Medieval Scholastics as well as the mystics were much nearer to the contemporary concepts of physics than was the physics of the 18th and 19th centuries.

In all fairy tales, the sidhe, peri or jinn are luminescent, they "shine", something certainly not surprising in reference to being made of energy. As we noted above, many ancient Indo-European peoples used words which mean "shining" as generic terms for their pagan gods. Later, when higher concepts of God were developed, some of these peoples, notably the Indo-Aryans and the Persians adopted a different term for the ONE GOD (such as "Brahma"). Other Indo-European peoples, such as the Greeks, Romans and Celts to this day use words for God which are derived from a root which means "shining". All this leads to certain conclusions. The pagan gods of the early Indo-Europeans were these "beings of fire". Later, when under the influence of mysticism higher concepts of God were developed, said people did not cease believing in their pagan gods, seeing no contradiction nor polytheism in this, any more than a modern Irishman considers himself to be a polytheist or idolator because he believes in fairies. Both the Bible and the Qur'ān affirm the existence of beings whose powers are superior to ours, but which are not divine. In summary, the Bible and the Qur'ān do not deny the existence of said beings, but forbid worshipping them. We are now arriving at the core of the question of Monotheism vs Polytheism. But to deal at length with this leads us too far afield from our main theme.

The fairy tales of the Celtic, Iranian and Indo-Aryan peoples also anticipate modern physics in two other aspects, i.e., the existence of more than three dimensions and the relativity of time. Celtic, Iranian and Indo-Aryan fairy tales contain numerous references to visits to "fairy land". Such "visits" are not journeys in space, since one does not travel in a physical sense, but suddenly one finds oneself in fairy land. Here one simply "travels" to another dimension. The "Middle Earth" of the novel LORD OF THE RINGS by J.R.R. Tolkien is obviously another dimension roughly as conceived in certain Celtic and Iranian fairy tales. Here also enters the field of the relativity of time. Iranian and particularly Celtic fairy tales are filled with legends in which a man is taken to fairy land, spends months or years there, but

when he returns to earth discovers that almost no earthly time has passed. Far less common is the reverse, in which man is taken to fairy land, thinks he has been there only for a short time, but when he returns to earth discovers that various decades have passed. This is closely seen in the Celtic legends of "Tir-na-Oge", literally "Land of Youth", where time does not pass.

The Qur'ān 17:1, referring to Mi'rāj (Ascension) of the Prophet Muhammad, has inspired a number of literary works, including one by ibn al-'Arabi, which apparently inspired Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) to write the DIVINE COMEDY. Some time ago I read one literary work based on the Qur'ān 17:1 (not that of ibn al-'Arabi, which is practically impossible to find: I have only read a condensation of it by Miguel Asin). In the version to which I refer, the Prophet Muhammad overturns a glass of water when he leaves on the Mi'rāj. He believes that he has spent a great deal of time in visiting Heaven and Hell, but when he returns to earth he discovers that all the water still has not flowed from the overturned glass.

FAIRY TALES ANTICIPATE THE LATEST DISCOVERIES OF PHYSICS

In summary, fairy tales anticipate modern physics in various aspects. Though it is still not quite clear how all the data concerning creatures of energy, other dimensions and the relativity of time fit into a coherent whole, it is evident that the fairy tales anticipate the latest discoveries of physics. It would be very strange indeed if all this were pure coincidence; as I said in another place, it may be taken as a general rule that the credibility of coincidences is in inverse proportion to their number. The fact that centuries ago people did not have the vocabulary nor the mathematical formulae to express them does not mean that people then were unaware of certain things which modern physics has rediscovered only recently, after centuries of neglect and disdain. In the fairy tales are profound truths, products of ancient wisdom whose sources are forgotten.

There is no reason to disdain (as Anglo-Saxons do) the Irish and the Highland Scots because so many of them believe in fairies. Nor is there any reason for admirers of W.B. Yeats to be constantly apologizing for and seeking excuses for his belief in fairies. Similarly there is no reason for the modern commentators of the Qur'ān to attempt to explain away the references to "jinn" or "jann" in a symbolic manner. Nor is there any reason to believe that our Celtic, Iranian and Indo-Aryan ancestors were naïve, benighted fools and primitive because they believed in "sidhe" or "peri". ●

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## Clothes for Guyana

IF YOU HAVE SOME SECOND HAND COTTON CLOTHES IN GOOD CONDITION TO SPARE, PLEASE CONTACT MR YUSUF MOHAMMED (Tel London:229-1951; 994-3939) WHO WILL COLLECT THEM FROM YOUR PLACE. IF OUT OF LONDON, PLEASE POST THEM TO M.HAROUN, 28 WARWICK GARDENS, HARRINGAY, LONDON N.4

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## Health Notes

Beginning with this issue of the journal will be a series of articles dealing with your physical well being.

Man, of course, is more than a physical body; he is an acting, thinking, feeling and social being; he is also said to be spiritual being. He is nevertheless a corporeal actuality but the injunction: "Honour thy temple which is thy body and keep it holy" is sometimes misplaced, completely lost sight of or simply jettisoned into obscurity. Either that or, what it does mean and involve, is overwhelmed by certain established beliefs, beliefs which would not bear the ordeal of a moment's fair examination as to why they should, in the first place, persist. It would perhaps sound far-fetched to say that what they amount to, when looked at closely, is nothing more than a long habit of not thinking them wrong. When these beliefs are carried to their logical conclusion they run into collision with the Qur'ān, the Bible and other holy Books, and ironically, with "science" itself behind whose apron they seek refuge. These introductory remarks will be insufficient to settle definitely this claim, but in the subsequent articles this point will be discussed in detail.

For the time being let us begin by turning our attention to a few simple remarks which, in the course of human history, have become universal. "Oh, my stomach is giving me trouble", you may have heard or overheard someone exclaim, or, "my bowels and liver are bad". One may say that these are trite and trivial statements which are not to be taken seriously. They are, however, social facts.

Being well is our natural and normal state; it is our birth-right; it is the way we have been constituted, and those who say that their stomachs, livers and bowels give them trouble, in fact it is they who give their poor hearts, stomachs, livers and bowels trouble. They themselves are the real culprits, and this accounted for by their neglect done out of sheer ignorance or in wilfulness; and ignorance of the law does not spare one from the results of one's ignorance. Could the thalidomide holocaust be forgotten? And if we care to look more closely we shall see that there are a number of other human birth defects which are still unaccounted for. All the drugs we take may not have the same dramatic effects as thalidomide but one cannot help wonder how many of these other defects are similarly induced.

This is not a body cult that is being asserted here, for if you really accept that it is true 'the body is the temple ... keep it holy', and you have the virtue of practising what you say you believe in, inevitably you will have to accept simultaneously as a truth, that as regards the actual care of the body you can exercise conscious control - here and now. And how to keep 'well will therefore form an intrinsic part of your way of life, provided of course, you are given the understanding to be able to do so.

We shall leave the question of the drugs for the time being. Let us begin at the very beginning by asking why was there food, air, water, sunlight, suitable temperature in abundance on this planet of ours? Important as these, are activity, rest, sleep and recreation. These are the primordial needs of all organic existence, including of course, man. Take these primordial needs away and all organic life will quickly fall into decay on this planet. They are so cheap yet there can be no organic life without them, and it is the wise who know that their needs are simple. By making sensible use of these, by understanding how life itself depends upon them, we shall have taken the first big step to show in a true sense our gratitude to Allāh.

(For further information please contact: THE HEALTH ADVISORY SERVICE, 24 Baring Street, London N1)

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## Letters

### THE INCIDENCE OF THE BLIND MAN

Regarding the commentary of the chapter 80 ('Abasa) of the Qur'ān by Mr I.A. Sheikh (April 1982 issue of Al-Ahmadiyya) I am greatly disappointed that the subject should be taken up to be transformed into a major issue of crises proportions. Posed as he was between loyalties to the blind man and the loyalties to the cause of propagating Islam to those he wanted converted the Prophet's response could only have been quite human by the repeated interruptions provoked by the blind man. Surely the blind man could not have seen the Prophet's disapproval but only sensed it. And if the blind man felt offended when so tactfully reprimanded, one wonders, in view of his close association with the Prophet, what did he actually learn in being a Muslim. If he was potentially a Muslim, he should have been the first to acknowledge that he, perhaps inadvertently, was making himself a nuisance.

Showing anger or disapproval where this is justified is not a crime, and it does not run contrary to the "conventions" of good behaviour. In fact those who continually suppress anger in such context are not to be trusted. Has not Jesus Christ given the Pharisees a good thrashing when they were making the temple into a trade house?

Some little things can be very significant, I agree, but this is not the one I and many others believe should have become into a major disaster. This is very much like a micro-Qur'ānic study. Many would see it as over-compensatory to what is not important; the over-compensation is to make important what is not important for want of creative thinking or contribution.

24 Baring Street, London N1

Ahmed Mirza

#### ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN YARIPURA

The Annual Conference of the Ahmadiyya Anjuma-Isha'at Islam India will be held on 7th, 8th and 9th August 1982. I request you to attend the Conference personally or send your message. May I hope that you will be able to request someone from Trinidad to visit Kashmir during this period to be with us during our Jalsa.

Many thanks for sending Al-Ahmadiyya. Please give my regards to all those brothers and sisters who came to Yaripura in your company last year in December, particularly Mr Wahid Omardeen and Miss Hamida Nancy Baksh.

Yaripura  
Anantnag  
Kashmir (India)

Raja M. Y. Taseer  
Secretary General  
A.A.I.I. (India)

## Our Sorrows

Eddo Chaan, Imam New Grant Mosque, Trinidad.  
Ahmad Khan, Arina, Free Port, Trinidad.  
Mrs Wahida Qayyum, Sialkot, Pakistan.  
Shaikh Aziz Ahmad, Wazirabad, Pakistan.  
Chaudhary Abdul Latif Ginai, Bhadarwa, India.

MAY ALLĀH BLESS THEIR SOULS!

Cigarette smoking is on the increase—and so are signs saying

# NO SMOKING

Charmian Evans investigates ways of breaking the habit

I remember the day well. I was all of nine years old, and in my sticky hand I clutched the passport to the dazzling adult world. Becky Smith and I hid round the back of the garage, opened a packet of five Park Drive tipped, struck the match and inhaled deeply. Within minutes we were both sick.

Some years later, I mastered what seemed a necessary social art, and puffed away until the prospect of a general anaesthetic for a minor operation made me stop. At the risk of sounding smug, I was one of the lucky ones: I had no problem in giving up cigarettes.

Today it is said 70 per cent of smokers would like to stop but don't know how to go about it.

## In the beginning . . .

Why do people turn to cigarettes? The reasons can be social; we smoke only when others are around, such as in a pub or at a party. Or perhaps cigarettes are enjoyed as a sedative, or as relaxation; we light up after a meal.

Some people smoke for the opposite reason, not for relief of stress, but for stimulation and to gain energy. Others smoke because they like the feel of a cigarette to handle or put in their mouth. Some people are dependent on nicotine and light up without thinking, as a matter of course.

Great Britain has a relatively high number of smokers. It was a minority habit in this country in the 1900s, and became fashionable following an American invention that automated the rolling of cigarettes. This country now has 18 million adult smokers—of which about 35 per cent are female. There are now 8 million ex-smokers in the population at large but despite this, 50 million working days a year are lost by cigarette smokers, for bronchitis and other health problems.

Someone once said, "I have every sympathy with the American who was so horrified by what he had read of the effects of smoking that he gave up reading." Joking apart however, one in three smokers dies as a result of the habit, and a large percentage are under 85. Causes and related illnesses range from chronic bronchitis, heart disease, cancer, hernia (aggravated by 'smoker's cough'), ulcers, gum and tooth decay (smokers lose more teeth than non-smokers) and emphysema.

Dozens of figures are published to try to put smokers off. For instance: four times as many people die from smoking as from road accidents; statistically, each cigarette shortens the life by five and a half minutes; every year over 1,000 babies of mothers who smoked in pregnancy are lost while others are born premature, and underweight; and so on. Certainly smokers can suffer from coughing, breathlessness and bronchitis for many years before more serious conditions set in.

## Giving up the habit

Facts and figures are all very well, you may say, but just how can a smoker who wants to give it up go about it?

First, try to decide what kind of smoker you are. Work out why you smoke, if you can, and draw up a list of situations and occasions when you are likely to smoke. There are no miracle cures. It's a very personal thing and different people respond to different methods of treatment. Determination is the thing that counts most.

If you smoke automatically, try putting an elastic band around the packet to remind you that every time you *don't* take a cigarette is a gain! If you're a social smoker, plan to avoid social situations for a bit. Go for a brisk walk if you feel you want a cigarette for stimulation. Those who smoke for oral satisfaction might chew a liquorice bark or perhaps gum. Stress smokers need something low in calories handy for when they feel the urge for a cigarette. People who turn to cigarettes for relaxation might break the habit with a new routine, perhaps going without that after-dinner cup of coffee, or reading a book instead of watching television (or vice versa).

You may find, as many smokers have done, that it is easier to give up smoking by stopping altogether, rather than cutting down.

Whichever way you choose, tell your friends, hide all the ashtrays away, and if

travelling, head for the clean, sweet-smelling, non-smoking compartments. Newspapers are full of claims for smokers' withdrawal aids, including dummy cigarettes, special filters that cut out a high proportion of tar and nicotine, and herbal cigarettes. The latter, although without nicotine, can produce as much tar and carbon monoxide as cigarettes in the low to middle tar range. Other methods are available in the form of mouth-washes, chewing gum or special tablets; they react with tobacco smoke to produce a bad taste in the mouth.

Some aids, in tablet, capsule or lozenge form, contain lobeline taken from the lobelia plant and claimed to give the satisfaction of nicotine without the harmful effects. A nicotine chewing gum is being tested; if it became available it would be on prescription only—nicotine in any other form is regarded as a toxic drug.

Hypnosis has helped some smokers, though the method has not been proved any more effective than others.

Psychological clinics may suit certain people. There are private courses, or a number of free Smoking Withdrawal Clinics, usually operated by the local Area Health Authority.

### Can I do it?

One of the cries heard from would-be

non-smokers is, "I'll put on weight". Admittedly, your sense of taste, smell and appetite will improve, and many smokers put on weight simply because they begin to taste food properly and enjoy eating more. Some smokers are under-weight anyway but even weight gained is considered far less harmful than the risks of smoking.

If you're thinking of other reasons to give up, consider your fellow men and women. More and more large organisations are coming down on the side of the non-smoker. Many cinemas do not allow smoking, others are cutting back on the space provided for smokers. Non-smoking compartments on British Rail are going up from 50 per cent to 85 per cent. London's Underground is 80 per cent non-smoking, and smokers on buses are to be confined to the back section only of the upper deck. The new Glasgow underground will not cater for smokers at all.

So for smokers who want to give up, there is encouragement all round. And if one method of giving up doesn't work, it simply means the wrong one has been tried, not that it can't be done!

Further details on courses mentioned here, are available from Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) 27-35 Mortimer St, London W1N 7RJ (enclose an s.a.e.).




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## Fruit salad days!

AN APPLE a day does not keep the doctor away. What's really required is TWO apples a day.

Research shows that pectin (the jelly that gels a jelly) helps to reduce heart disease, and there is enough pectin in two daily apples to keep the doctor, if not from the door, at least from opening it and stepping inside.

Dr Geoffrey Taylor, a health expert, of Ilminster, Somerset, believes in an orange a day, too.

In his opinion, poor diet contributes to all the current riots and hooliganism.

'Junk food,' he claims (by junk food he means sweets, fatty foods, etc.) and a lack of vitamin C leads to illness, depression and emotional troubles. A healthy person should have a daily vitamin C intake of 100 mg, which is the equivalent of one orange and a fresh salad.

ROY BOLITHO

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## رمضان اور اس کی برکات کے ذکر میں سے

اشاد باری تعالیٰ ہے۔ انی قریب

”میرے بندو! میں تم سے بہت قریب ہوں۔ اجیب دعوتہ الساع اذا دعان کوئی مجھے پکائے میں دعا کو قبول کرتا ہوں“

اور ہائے نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم فرماتے ہیں: ”رمضان آتا ہے تو دعوت کے دروازے کھل جاتے ہیں“ یہ ایک حقیقت تھی جس پر ہائے ہادی اور آپ کے صحابہ کی زندگیوں کو گواہ میں ماوراء آج

یہ ایک قصہ ہے،

اس لئے کہ ہائے دلوں میں خدا کے لئے ٹھپ پیدا نہیں ہوتی ہمارے جسم خدا کے آگے گرتے ہیں مگر دل نہیں گرتے اور دل میں ٹھپ پیدا ہونے کا نام ہے۔ آئیے اس رمضان میں ہم لوگوں کے غلوں

پڑھیں اپنے غلوں پر آنسو بہائیں کہ اے خدا ہم نے تیری قدر نہیں کی تیرے کلام کی قدر نہیں کی ہم نے تیرے پیغام کو چھپا کر رکھا ہوا ہے ہم نہیں جانتے کہ ہماری زندگیاں تیرے پیغام کو دنیا میں پہنچانے کے لئے

دقت ہوں نہیں چاہتے کہ ہوائے مال تیرے پیغام کو دنیا میں پہنچانے میں صرف ہوں وہ کام کرتے ہیں جن پر تیری طرف سے رحمت کا کھلا دھیرا ہے

اور اس یہ گناہے بیٹھے ہیں، تیری رحمت کے دروازے ہم پر کھل جائیں۔

مذکر کہتے ہیں کہ تو ہم سے تری سب سے گھول تجھ کو اتنی دوزیں کہ اس کو ذرہ

کوئی چیز نہیں بائے۔ تھے تیری دلیر پر ہوتے ہیں جہاں رحمت ملتی ہے

اور دل جمع ملا وعدہ واجب ان مالہ اخلاص کا درو کرے ہے ہوتے

ہیں زبان پر یہ ہوتا ہے ہم تیرے غلام ہیں اننا عبدك اور جہاں مال

ہر وہ جہاں مال نہیں وہ تیرا مال ہے۔ اور دل کی یہ حالت ہوتی ہے

کہ تیرے نام کو دنیا میں بن کر کرنے کے لئے جو نہ کوئی مال خرچ کرنی پڑیں

تو وہ ہیں پہاڑ نظر آتا ہے اور ہر جہاں ہے ہائے بنا کر ہر کوشش کرتے

ہیں کہ ہمارا مال ہم سے جدا نہ ہو۔ اے خدا تو اس جوئی زندگی سے ہیں

باہر نکال ہم زمین پر رات کی خاموشی میں ساتھ کہتے ہیں تو ہاں سے

ہیں یہ آواز آتی ہے کہ تو نے اپنے رب یا کاری کے سمجھ سے مجھے

نہاں کر دیا ہے اے خدا تو ہیں اپنی جناب میں مسجد کو زینت دے

ہیں اپنا غلام بنا لے کہ میں تیرا نام دنیا میں بنا کر گنے کے سرائے کوئی

لکھ نہ ہو اور تو ہمارا رب بن جا کہ تیری توجہ امت محمدیہ کو دنیا میں سر بلند

کرنے کی طرف ہو جائے۔

(صحیح بخاری، ج ۱، ص ۱۰۰)

