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THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Of the innate feelings of man, which we see implanted in his very nature, is a search after an Almighty Being to whom he is drawn by a hidden magnetic power acting upon his soul. Its first manifestation takes place with the birth of the child. As soon as the child is born, it is led by an instinctive desire to incline to its mother and, corresponding to the maternal instinct of love, it shows an instinctive impulse of attachment to its mother. With its growth and the development of its faculties, this instinct is displayed more prominently. It finds no rest but in the lap of its mother and no peace but in her tender caresses. Separation from her embitters all its pleasure and no blessing, however great, can atone for the pain caused to it by her loss. It has no consciousness but is impelled by instinct to love its mother and finds no quiet and repose but in her bosom alone. The attraction which thus draws the child towards its parent, points to the secret magnetism implanted by nature in the soul of man which draws him to his Creator, the true Object of adoration. It is this same attraction again which excites the affections of man to tend towards and take their rest in some external object. Thus we find the principle of attraction towards God distinctly implanted within us and instinctively impressed upon our hearts. The emotions of love, however different the objects which call them forth, are all to be traced to the instinct of love for the Creator. In fixing his affections upon other objects man seems only to be searching for the real object. He has, as it were, lost something of which he has now forgotten the name and seems to be seeking for it under every other object that comes before him. The attraction of wealth, the charm of beauty and the fascination of sweet and enchanting voice are only so many indications of some greater, nobler and real object of love and some of some greater power underlying all these which draws all hearts towards it. But as imperfect human reasons cannot comprehend nor the material eye discover this mysterious Being Who hidden, like heart, in every soul, is invisible to all, All true knowledge of His existence has been attended with the greatest difficulties, and blunders have been made concerning His recognition.

Superstition and gross credulity have given the homage due to Invisible God to frail creatures and material things. This blunder has been beautifully illustrated by the Holy Qur'an in a simile where the world is likened to a crystal palace paved with bright glass. Under this transparent floor a strong current of water is flowing. A superficial eye that witnesses the scene mistakes the glass for the water, being unable to attain to the reality and discover the truth. That through which the water is seen, is wrongly feared as water itself. Such are the great heavenly bodies which we see in the universe, such as the sun, the moon and the stars, which only reveal the existence of the Powerful Being, working behind them all. But faulty human judgement bows its head in worship before them under the same delusion as the eye in the above instance mistook transparent glass for water. The Being that manifests itself through these glasses is a thing quite different from the bodies themselves. The polytheist is foolish enough to attribute the work which is done by the Great Power to the material things through which that power is manifested. Such is the interpretation of the verse 'This is not water which thou fearest but surely it is a palace made smooth with glass' (xxvii 44).

In short, the person of God, although He reveals Himself manifestly, is invisible and hidden. The material universe cannot lead us to undeniable conclusion – to absolute certainty regarding the personality of its Author. The consummate order and perfect arrangement which the material eye discovers in the countless heavenly bodies and the numerous wonders which are disclosed to a thinking mind in nature, have never led, and can never lead, to the firm conviction, to the greatest certainty of which the mind of man is capable, that there is a God, the Creator and the Lord of the Universe, Whose power and knowledge extend over every atom of it. The greatest astronomers and philosophers who have applied their energies solely to those sciences have been involved in fatal doubts and scepticism as to the existence of God.

STAMPEDE DURING HAJJ 1983 MOB FRENZY

SHAMEFUL BEHAVIOUR OF SOME OF THE PILGRIMS

The inconveniences the pilgrims suffer during the Hajj (Pilgrimage) is a common occurrence. The way they are fleeced by taxi drivers and hotel owners and at times by the Hajj guides is well known to the pilgrims. The insanitary conditions in which they are forced to live, the lack of medical facilities when they fall ill, the ordeal which they have to undergo after the loss of their passports and other documents and the horror of their being separated from their dear and near ones are also a part of the fate of many a pilgrims. However, much publicity is not given to these incidents. It needs rather something monstrous and horrendous to awaken the conscience of the Muslim world to improve the existing abominable conditions found in the Holy Land of Islam. Some people think it is sacrilege to criticise or even to talk about the profanity of what is going on in that 'sacred' territory.

The 'holiness' of the Ka'bah was admitted by all the inhabitants of Arabia during and before the time of the Holy Prophet but when its sanctity was violated and its sacred character impaired by idol-worship and other evil practices, the Holy Prophet raised his voice against it. Even now if its sanctity is threatened and blasphemous, outrageous and evil acts are committed there by those who claim to be believers in Islam, it is a crime to observe silence at this point.

For the last several years the reports were being circulated on a limited scale, that all was not going well in Makkah and Medinah where millions of Muslims go to perform their religious duties. This year the Muslim world has been violently shaken by a stampede during the Hajj which cost the lives of hundreds of people, including children and babies; they were trampled to death by frenzic mobs at the site of Jamaraat stoning rites. Some people have laid the blame on thousands of those pilgrims who slept during the night around the area and many of them were crushed to death when other pilgrims arrived in the morning to perform the Hajj rites. However, the Government cannot be absolved of its responsibility of seeing that the place is not used as sleeping quarters by the pilgrims. This is only one part of the story. The exposé of the most shameful behaviour of some of the pilgrims cannot and should not be overlooked and tolerated, merely as an unruly conduct of a riotous and destructive acts of a mob under stress. Everything which has been happening during the Hajj cannot be swept under the carpet anymore. Part of this heart rending story is given below.

—Ed.AA.

• The increasing number of pilgrims being trampled to death while performing the Hajj rituals — especially during the "Satan Stoning" at the Jamaraat, is causing alarm among World Muslims.

Returning Haajis from all over the world are beginning to speak out strongly against this. Pilgrims said that they were shocked and horrified at seeing not only the bodies of people lying there mutilated, but also that of children and babies.

They condemned the “mob frenzy” during the Jamaraat Stoning rites and described the behaviour of the crowd as “un-Islamic”, “shameless” and “disgraceful”.

A Pakistani Islamic scholar believes “the era of JAAHILIYYA (Ignorance) has returned to Makkah”!

Haajis interviewed believe the situation is out of hand. They claim more people were killed in Hajj this year because of the greater volume of pilgrims that converged on the holy land.

“RIOTING MOB”

People described the behaviour of the crowd during the Jamaraat Stoning as “like that of a rioting mob”. Thousands of ignorant people who did not know how to use pebbles to pelt the “Satans” (the symbolic act of attacking idols) threw large stones which hit pilgrims on the head, knocking them unconscious.

When they fell, they were then trampled to death!

There were also acts of hooligan behaviour from men of different nationalities who elbowed people in the stomach and around their bodies, cracking their ribs. This, along with violent shoving and pushing, sent many injured pilgrims falling to their death underfoot.

WOMEN

Many hysterical women who were carried unconscious to their hotels, later said they were “sexually” manhandled around their private parts by satanic-minded men in the crowd. This even happened during TAWAAF (going round the Ka’bah). Women said they were shamelessly squeezed up against the Ka’bah while kissing the black stone.

Commenting on these reports, Muslim scholars said that what we are witnessing today in a supposedly “holy land”, are the “evil signs of the time”.

Gambling, drinking liquor, sexual perversions, spending huge sums of money on luxuries and worldly possessions, were as rife today in Arabia as it was in the Days of Ignorance, they said.

Other evils in that country which pilgrims complained about were the cheating Arab taxi drivers and hotel owners who were shamelessly ripping off people, many of them poor pilgrims.

CHAOS

Pilgrims were also roughly thrown out of their hotels right after the conclusion of their Hajj rites, which resulted in chaos at the airport. Thousands of people could not get bookings for days. Many lost their

luggage and passports. Husbands, wives, children and families in general were separated from one another in the chaos.

Responsible people are now asking what concerted steps are Muslim organizations going to take to stop this situation occurring next year and every following year!

“ ‘ULAMAA’ ”

They also pointed to the total silence of the ‘Ulamaa’ who have not come out of their PURDAH (veil) to expose or criticize the un-Islamic situation during Hajj. The only people, they said, who were in fact doing this, were the Iranian Muslims.

Many people believed that they should not speak about the deaths and other un-Islamic happenings in Makkah and Medinah. But Islam rejects this viewpoint. The Qur’an emphasizes that ALL evils, be it in religion, or in a holy place, MUST be exposed and eliminated. The Holy Prophet did this all his life.

GUILTY

Muslims who keep quiet when they witness un-Islamic and wrong things, are, according to the teachings of Islam, guilty of allowing such evils to prevail and prosper, and punishment awaits them in the Hereafter.

Hajj is an important Pillar of Islam. Muslim scholars maintain that the trampling to death of people through unruly, JAAHIL (ignorant) behaviour, cannot be condoned by Islam. And every Muslim should be ashamed of it.

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TAKING THE PLEDGE AFTER THE DEATH OF THE AMEER

This has been the tradition of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement that when their leader dies no new pledge is needed from those who have already taken the pledge. When the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement passed away no Ahmadi took a pledge at the hand of Hazrat Maulana Noor – ud – Din and when he died nobody took pledge at the hand of Maulana Muhammad Ali. Similarly when he died nobody renewed his pledge at the hand of Hazrat Maulana Sadr – ud – Din.

• To introduce taking of the pledge again after the death of the Amir is an innovation which will split the whole Jamaat inside and outside of Pakistan (SMT).

CHOSING ONE'S AIMS AND IDEALS

KALAMAZAD MOHAMMED

It is generally known and accepted by psychologists and even by laymen that if one is to have some measure of success in life one has to have a sense of PURPOSE, a sense of DIRECTION, an ideal worth striving for. But there are two main dangers which we have to guard against when choosing our aims and ideals.

The first one is that our purpose might be too limited, i.e., we may strive for physical comfort and luxury only, or for intellectual success at all costs, or for achievement on only one area of life, for example in a single sport.

And secondly, we may work towards the wrong goals: for selfish ambition, for our own social class, race, nation, or for members of our own family, party, or group, for domination of man by man in the manner of the Pharaoh of Egypt and other lesser Pharaohs of whom this world is replete. Besides being wrong, these aims are also too narrow and too limited and in trying to achieve them we are also too narrow and too limited in our approach and in their pursuit we always turn away from the higher purpose of our existence and so use any means, fair or foul, to achieve our ambitions.

And when we achieve these impure and limited goals, what then?

Are we fulfilled?

Do we feel happy and at peace with ourselves and with the world?

Certainly not!

The fight for and the achievement of narrow and wrong goals fill us with every kind of negative feeling and action — false pride, spite, envy, frustration, despair, rage, aggression, malice, revenge, greed, covetousness, competition, prejudice, gossip, slander, backbiting, suspicion, character assassination, fear, grief, anxiety, waiting for deliverance, crippling feeling of low self-worth, insecurity and inferiority, guilt complexes — those skeletons in the cupboard that lurk in ambush in the subconscious like so many ghosts only to raise their ugly heads without warning to destroy us in the midst of our temporary happiness and triumphs.

THE TREE OF 'ZAQQUM' — DEADLY FOOD

The Qur'an uses the symbolism of the tree of "Zaqqūm" to typify all forms of destructive thought, attitude, word and action.

What is the tree of Zaqqūm?

Zaqqūm is a dust-coloured tree, having small round leaves without thorns. It has a pungent odor and is bitter, and has knots in its stems . . . the heads of its leaves are very foul. It also means any deadly food. (Vide Maulana Muhammad 'Ali's English Qur'an, note 2111).

And in the Qur'an we read further of this tree:

"Surely We have made it (the tree of Zaqqūm) a trial for the wrongdoers. It is a tree that springs forth in the bottom of hell – its produce is as it were the heads of serpents" (37:62-65).

"Surely the tree of Zaqqum is the food of the sinful; like molten brass; it seethes in (their) bellies like boiling water" (44:43-46).

And the self-conceited ones in this life will be told sarcastically on the Day of Resurrection:

"Taste (the fruit of this tree) – thou art forsooth the mighty, the honourable!" (44:49).

It must be worthwhile bearing in mind that laziness and lack of proper vision give rise to similar negative feelings as the above and create the same kind of hell in our lives.

Seeing, according to the Qur'an, that we have been created to strive and to face and conquer difficulties, is there a way to avoid the hell which we create for ourselves, a hell in which the food neither nourishes nor satisfies?

Every verse of the Qur'an turns us away from NEGATIVISM and guides us towards creativity, fulfilment, freedom, self actualisation.

"Spend in the way of Allah," we are repeatedly advised.

"Imbue yourself with the Divine colours."

"Seek reward only from Allah alone."

"Do no favour seeking gain from others."

PARABLE OF A GOOD TREE

And Allah has used the parable of another kind of tree to describe the fruits of WORK and LABOUR of those who use their property and their lives in His way and who spend even out of what they love for His sake:

"A good word (or deed) being as a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches are high, yielding its fruit in every season" (14:24-25).

The work for God's sake gives us the highest and purest goal in life. This is the only way to spiritual fulfilment. There is no other, and Islam admits of no compromise in this matter. There is no time for negative thinking, for sadness and despair nor for false intoxication and exultation; no fear of loss or curtailment of reward which is one of the main reasons for anxiety and its consequent physical, emotional and spiritual repercussions, for we are told in the Qur'an:

"No calamity can even befall the earth and neither your own selves, unless it be (laid down) in Our Decree before We bring it into being; verily all this is easy for God. (Know this) so that you may not despair over whatever (good) has come to you: for, God does not love any of those who are niggardly and bid others to be niggardly" (57:22-24).

We are CITIZENS OF TWO WORLDS, for although we are stationed

physically on this planet. We are not merely creatures of the earth, for our hearts and souls soar beyond the moon and the sun and the stars to the far beyond where there is silencing silence for the contemplation of our souls and through this meditation we make communion with God; after reinvigorating our souls we descend to earth to continue working for and worshipping Him.

That there is need for a Power that is bigger than us from Whom we can draw sustaining strength and Who can cleanse and purify us of the leaves of the tree of Zaqūm is recognised by modern psychology.

RELIGION HAS THE HEALING POWER

In his book, "The Conquest of Fear" W. Mc Bride stresses this point:

"Psychologists now recognize the helpful power of a true religion in giving men and women FORTITUDE and FAITH to meet the challenge of life.

"There is a growing conviction that much of the neurotic condition and outlook of this age is due to the fact that in losing faith in God men and women have lost faith in themselves and their neighbours.

"That is to say that they have no background of confidence outside themselves, so that when they are confronted with a crisis or emergency which proves too big for them, they are left with nothing but the various forms of despair as an escape, namely, drink, drugs, suicide and insecurity" (pp. 58-59) and I may add another form, of nihilistic behaviour.

That religion is the only means by which we can heal ourselves and then grow and develop the Divine in us is also recognized, for the author continues:

"One of the modern psychologists, Carl Jung, whose words in this connection must be considered said: 'Among all my patients in the second half of life -- that is to say, over thirty five -- there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that everyone of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook' " (p.59).

And on page 60 the writer concludes:

"True religion has always given to men and women a sense of mystery. It has transformed the sense of insecurity and fear into one of confidence and faith. The man of faith feels supported by all the resources of the universe and through these is saved from panic and despair."

What specific steps can we take, what work can we do to cause our souls to grow in lustre and beauty especially in the light of the follow-

ing verses of the Qur'an:

“Consider the human self and how it is formed in accordance with what it is meant to be.

And how it is imbued with moral failings as well as with consciousness of God!

To a happy state shall indeed attain he who causes this (self) to grow in purity.

And truly lost is he who buries it in darkness” (91:7-10).

The Qur'an itself is a complete Book of Healing and Guidance:

“A healing of what is in the hearts and a guidance and mercy for the believers” (10:57).

Furthermore, if we study the lives of the Prophets of God as well as the Reformers and Saints we will find a manifestation of the Qur'anic verses. But since we cannot transform ourselves overnight into lily-white saints and since growth is a constant 'JIHAD' against evil and for good, we may well make a start by bearing the following teachings of the Qur'an in mind, understanding their implications and trying to put them into practice.

(1). We are all created with an inner truth. ‘What do you think that We have created you in vain. . .’ says the Qur'an (23:115). This means that we have a definite mission to perform, a distinct role to play in God's scheme of things. This also gives us the self-confidence that we all need if we are to be successful and frees us from feelings of self-consciousness and doubt – for now we know that we are working for God and not for self-glory, and consequently we are concerned with performance of duty rather than with results.

(2). We must keep up regular prayer and charity so as to guard against evil and indecency and wavering or standing on the verge. This calls for total commitment and gives us the power to cleanse our minds and souls of negative influences, for when we turn to God, we open ourselves to the Supreme Creative Force.

(3). We must persevere in the doing of good regardless of the vicissitudes of fortune, i.e., regardless of ease or adversity, of night or day in our lives. This imparts the quality of constancy to our lives and drives us away from inner conflicts and self-doubts.

(4). We must remain faithful to our duty at all times. The Qur'an exhorts us to take provisions for the journey through life, but stresses that the best provision is the doing of our duty. Through this we achieve self-satisfaction, self-respect and also the respect of our fellow-men.

(5). We must keep our goals and our self-ideals in our mind by constantly rehearsing and reinforcing them. To this end the Qur'an advises:

“From whatever place you come, turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque at every time of prayer” (2:149).

“Face” here, symbolises our ideals, our total will, the yearning of our soul.

(6). Like God, each day we, too, must be in new splendour and we can only do this if we follow this injunction:

“So set thy face for religion, being upright, the nature made by Allah in which He has created men. There is no altering Allah’s creation. That is the right religion – but most people know not – turning to Him; and keep your duty to Him, and keep up prayer and be not of the polytheists” (30:30-31).

And to conclude let me quote the words of two non-Muslims who remind me so much of the verses of the Qur’an.

The first is by Victor Hugo, the noted French novelist and poet. He says:

Have courage for the great sorrows of life
 And patience for the small ones
 And when you have finished your daily task
 Go to sleep in peace. God is awake.

The second is by Martin Luther who was to Christianity what our own Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was to Islam – a Reformer. And his determination is that:

“Even if I knew that tomorrow
 The world would go to pieces,
 I would still plant my apple tree.”

SLAVERY AND ISLAM - III

Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar Qureshi, Translation by Kaukab Siddique

THE FIFTH ERROR. It is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an:

And help get married such among you as are unmarried (be they men or women) and also (get married) the virtuous slaves and maidservants (so that by remaining unmarried they do not fall into immorality) (24:32).

Here an emphatic command is being given to get married (given their compatibility) those people who live in the land of Islam, be they citizens, Muslims, or captive men and women, so that the very condition of being unmarried should not lead to immorality. It is one of the most important duties of the God-oriented government to see that no one falls into corruption and immorality.

It is also worth noticing here that the word "virtuous" has been used for the slave-captive men and women. Obviously this means that those captive men and women are still virtuous, untouched by fornication, and no believer in the Qur'an has made them targets of his lusts, otherwise they would not be referred to as virtuous. Hence the Islamic community is being commanded to get them married so as to save them from future dangers. That is all there is to it.

THE SLAVE GIRL'S MARRIAGE AND THE NATION'S CONSENSUS

However, in spite of this clear command some scholars of religion (the slave-girl oriented ones) have opposed it and have given the ruling that marriage with women captives enslaved in war is *haram* (unlawful). That is not all. Things have gone so far that in opposition to the Qur'anic command, they have even declared that marriage with slave girls is unlawful! On one side is this theory and opposed to it are the emphatic words of the Qur'anic verse referred to above that "get married the virtuous slaves and maid-servants". Can this mean in other words, that first you can keep the maidens captured in the war for yourself, without marriage, and then you can get them married to some other slaves? Woe to such a religious understanding and "insight"!

THE SIXTH ERROR. Then in addition to the above verse, consider the following verse:

(O believers) marry from among the women whom you like (in emergency situations) two, or three or four. But if you fear you will not be able to be just then only one or those whom your right hand possesses (4:3).

The key words are: "marry. . . only one or those whom your right hand possesses".

Unfortunately, on the basis of self-made rules of Arabic, here too, tra-

ditionally, these words have been distorted to mean something quite different. These people have been saying that here “the command is for marrying one woman but marriage does not apply to the slave girl”. Wonder above wonder! How excellent is this skill in Arabic that it makes the poor, helpless slave girl lawful and permitted even without marriage and without her consent! She is exposed to exploitation without benefit of the sanctifying words of the wedding service.

Is this utter shamelessness in defying the words of the Qur’an not a distortion of and deviation from Islam itself? Let us consider the rule of the Arabic language involved here. Compare the wording of a similar verse of the Qur’an:

“(O believers) guard (properly) your prayers and (especially) the mid-most prayer. . . and if you go in fear (of not being able to complete the prayer regularly) then (pray) standing or on horseback (however, possible but do not miss the prayer time)” (2:238-239).

Notice here the wording of the Qur’an with proper sense of insight: “Guard your prayers. . . and if you fear, then standing or on horseback.”

And the wording sequence about captive women was:

“Marry from among the women whom you like. . . but if you fear. . . then only one of those whom your right hand possesses.”

Is the wording sequence in both these verses not exactly alike? If it is, then should the ruling derived from them be similar or different? Naturally, they should be similar.

If in the verse about guarding the prayer the words *fa in khiftum fa ri-jaalan au rukbaanan* “but if you are in danger (say your prayers) on foot or horse back” prove the necessity of prayer in both situations, then in the verse about marriage the words *wa in khiftum . . . fa waahidatan au maa malakat aimaanu-kum* “and if you fear. . . then only one or that which your right hand possesses” surely signify and prove the necessity of marriage to one (free) woman or to captive women where injustice is feared.

“Will they then not meditate on the Qur’an, or are their locks (of self worship) on their (stained) hearts?” (47:24).

Thus we have proven, in the words of the Qur’an itself, that marriage with the captive slave girls is obligatory, that sexual relations without their consent and marriage is HARAAM (unlawful) and amounts to fornication. When it is proven from the Qur’an that lawful marriage is required for sexual relations, it is also proven that in marriage free acceptance and consent, not compulsion, is required. In the words of Allah:

“O ye who believe: It is not lawful for you to forcibly inherit women (to take as wives). . . but consort with them in kindness” (4:19).

These words indicate comprehensively that in all conditions it is un-

lawful to force a woman to submit to sexual relationship, be she a local woman or a foreigner, a traveller or a helpless slave. Quite naturally, a captive woman whose husband has died, or she has, under circumstances of war, been separated from him and finds herself in captivity of Muslim soldiers, will not be willing to go to bed with her captors whatever sexual philosophy might be put forth to justify this. Her response will be all the more bitter if the same soldiers have killed her beloved husband, or brother, son or near relatives, or have been the cause of separation from them.

Hence, according to the Qur'anic laws, the establishment of sexual relations with such women requires not only lawful marriage but also her free acceptance of the Islamic faith, (see 4:25). In other words, if, as the established commentators on the Qur'an agree, it is unlawful to forcibly stop a widow, sister-in-law etc., who has property from marrying someone she wishes to, then how can it be lawful to force a helpless captive woman (who according to the Qur'an 4:36, deserves to be treated as nicely as parents and relatives are) into sexual relations without her consent and without marriage? Is this not exploitation of a helpless person who deserves sympathy and care? Surely such behaviour is not permitted. The rights of such women are like those of a daughter, sister or daughter-in-law.

A CRUEL JOKE

A cruel joke which has been played in this connection is that the Qur'anic words "malakat aimanu-kum" have been translated according to the Persian dictionary as "handmaiden" (KANEEZAK) and this has been rendered as slave girl, thus distorting the reality. In other words, it has been taken for granted that woman who have been captured in war can be made slaves and subjected to sexual assaults though the Qur'anic words literally mean "that which you obtain by the use of your right hand", that is something or somebody subservient to you owing to your power. The the treatment of subservients prescribed in the Qur'an is entirely based on 'noble kindness', not the arrogant sexuality of non-Islamic immorality.

THE CONCLUSIVE JUDGMENT

Finally, there is the need to study verse 47:4 so that one may understand the purpose of the Creator in revealing it. Ponder on these words of the Qur'an with proper understanding and much thought:

"Hence when you meet the unbelievers (in the battlefield), smite their necks, till, when blood has flown (and you have subdued them), tie them up firmly (as prisoners of war): thereafter is the time for generosity or ransom (in freeing them) till the war ends."

After this final command from Allah, no longer is it lawful to keep men and women prisoners-of-war as male and female slaves in the land of Islam after the war has ended, nor is it permissible to inflict pain on them in any way as the idolators and unbelievers used to do. Today, other than

Muslims, not even idolators and unbelievers, keep anyone as slave. Islam has made only two ways lawful for the release of prisoners after war:

Freedom granted by way of generosity and kindness of heart or, otherwise, in return for ransom or reparations of war.

There is no other way out.

The question arises, and it is an extremely important question which must be answered satisfactorily, that if the law is that both male and female prisoners-of-war are, in any case, to be released and sent off home after the war ends, then why does the Qur'an repeatedly teach the use of gracious behaviour towards them and why does it recommend marriage with slave girls?

The answer is that in situations where ex-prisoners may not be able to return home owing to political or revolutionary situations, or, affected by Islamic character of their own accord, may not desire to return and may decide to live within the domain of the Islamic government, they are to be treated as brothers and sisters or close relatives. In any case they are not meant to be targets of lust and oppression.

Another situation can be that a fair exchange of prisoners with the opposing side is not possible; in that case, in accord with 47:4, all non-Muslim prisoners, be they men or women, will still be freed but their movement will be confined to the domain of the Islamic government, not as slaves targetted for lechery and lust but as people under a form of house arrest. This confinement is justified according to the Qur'anic verse:

“If anyone transgresses against you, transgress ye likewise against him. But fear Allah” (2:194).

Even in that situation they will be well treated and cared for with affection till the Muslim POWs are freed and return home. (Such is the correct interpretation of 47:4). Or with the consent of these prisoners an agreement (“mukaatabat”) will be made individually with them leading to their ultimate freedom. But, alas! “they follow but conjecture and what (their) souls desire. And certainly the guidance has come to them from their Lord” (The Qur'an).

A FINAL APPEAL

In view of the Qur'anic rulings we have discussed above, the question arises that has the time not come for the believers to make a choice? Would they not prefer to struggle and sacrifice for the sake of the Qur'an and thus achieve success in the Hereafter? Or would they rather stay with the standard-bearers of traditional religion and “cooperate with them in sin and wrong-doing”? Such cooperation with those who have deviated from the Book and the Sunnah can only lead to disaster in the Hereafter. God says about such a situation in the Qur'an:

“Has that time still not come for the (sincere and true) believers that their hearts should be trembling with fear of Allah and (has the time not come) that they should bow down before the Truth? And that

they should not become like those who were given the Book afore-time that when a long time passed (after the revelation of the truth) their hearts became hardened (owing to the influence of a fabricated religion which led to corruption) and the majority of them are transgressors” (57:16).

The commandments of the Qur’an are so clear and lucid in their meaning that it is not at all difficult to understand them, provided one’s mind and soul have not been clouded by wrong-doing. It is also true that the Holy Prophet, a mercy for all the nations, had given evidence of the Qur’anic action and morality in his life so that he was addressed thus:

“(O Muhammad) surely you are on the best standard of morality” (68:4).

And Hazrat ‘A’ishah, (Allah be pleased with her) the wife of the Prophet replied in response to a questioner:

“He (the Prophet), in his behaviour, was the living Qur’an.”

Then can it be expected that the Holy Prophet ignored the Qur’anic laws we have discussed (God forbid) and appropriated Hazrat Maria the Coptic (Allah be pleased with her) for himself as a slave, without marriage, without her having committed any crime or mistake or even without having been taken as a prisoner of war? I take refuge with Allah from such ideas! But that is exactly what many of our Qur’anic commentators explicitly state and that is what has been put down in black and white by the most prominent “Islamic thinker” Maulana Abu’l A’laa Maudoodi in his ‘unique’ and popular commentary of the Qur’an! (See TAFHIM-UL-QUR’AN Vol.4, p.114 under the verse 33:50).

This is, surely a great slander against the blessed Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

(Concluded)

C O U R A G E !

A person was boasting about his exploits in the nearby bush, visited by tigers and lions.

“Once I saw a lion.”

“What happened, then?” everybody asked.

“I cut off his legs with my sword.”

“That was great,” all of them shouted admiringly.

Then someone asked quietly, “Sir, why didn’t you cut off his head first?”

“That was not possible, my friend,” the man replied. “Because someone else had already done that.”

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF JESUS CHRIST'S TRAVEL TO AND HIS BURIAL IN KASHMIR

ABDUL ZIZ KASHMIRI

Author of "CHRIST IN KASHMIR"

Almighty Allah has raised so many prophets in different parts of the world for the benefit and guidance of the people. One such great prophet was Moses who is accepted by all Jews, Christians and Muslims alike. Jesus Christ of Nazareth is another prophet, millions of Christians and millions of Muslims believe him to be a true messenger of God. But strangely enough nobody knew where these two great prophets were laid for eternal rest; not for sure for a long time till the beginning of our new era. About Moses all his followers believe that he died a natural death, but where his tomb was located nobody really knew. About Jesus Christ a legend is common among people that he was physically taken up to heaven and is still alive there. However, many present day Christian scholars reject this view. Similarly many Muslims who believed that Jesus was physically alive somewhere in the sky have come to realise that such a view is not correct. Muhammad Asad Leopold says in the "Message of the Qur'an" (Published by the All World Muslim League, Makka, Saudi Arabia).

"No where in the Qur'an is there any warrant for the popular belief of many Muslims that God has taken up Jesus bodily into heaven" (p.188).

The Holy Qur'an declares about Jesus Christ that he was "a messenger to the Children of Israel" (3:48) and in the Gospels Christ says, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).

However, when Christ became disgusted with the Israelites living in Jerusalem he addressed the city at the time of his departure thus:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that murders the prophets and stones the messengers sent to her! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings; but you would not let me. Look, look! there is your temple, forsaken by God. And I tell you, you shall never see me until the time when you say, 'Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord'" (Matthew 23:37-39).

The Gospels, as well as the historical facts make it evident that in Palestine the mission of Christ was a failure. In spite of all his efforts only 13 persons believed in him. Among these also, as the Gospels say, Judas betrayed him and got him arrested for a few coins and another St. Peter denied him thrice and also cursed his master, just to save his own life.

Although Jesus Christ was put on the cross, and at that time he was a young man, but according to our view, he did not die on the cross. On passing it may be mentioned that the three photographs given in the

Encyclopaedia Britannica (Vol.13 plate No.1, 14th edition) under the caption "Jesus Christ", – about which it is said that these are the most authentic – among these, two photographs show Jesus Christ to be an old man which proves that he had passed his life in some other country after leaving Palestine. The countries where he could have gone are India and Kashmir – Kashmir in particular – where an overwhelming evidence is found about his travel and stay. Before I go further I would like to make a few remarks about the people of Kashmir.

INHABITANTS OF KASHMIR

The inhabitants of Kashmir are quite different from other Indian races. The features of Kashmiris, their way of living, their rituals, their popular beliefs, their activities, mentality, civilization and culture are very close to that of Israelites. It has also been established by historians that the inhabitants of Kashmir are among the lost ten tribes of Israel. It was, therefore, necessary for Jesus Christ to look for his "LOST SHEEP" of the house of Israel. When his own people rejected him, he travelled to Kashmir so that the Israelites settled in the valley of Kashmir may hear his message. Kashmir is called **PARADISE ON EARTH** and the land was a **PROMISED LAND** for the people of Israel.

Dr G.M.D. Sofi says:

"The Jews: The physical and ethnical characteristics which so sharply mark off the Kashmiri from all surrounding races have always struck observant visitors to the Valley, and have led to several conjectures as to their origin. One such strong conjecture connects the Kashmiris with the Jews or rather one of the Hebraic people.

"The Jewish cast of features of many of the inhabitants of Kashmir has been noticed by scores of modern travellers. Two leading authorities on Kashmir in recent times, whose profound knowledge of the land and its people can hardly be questioned, namely Sir WALTER LAWRENCE and Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND have admitted the decided, 'Jewish' cast of faces among men, women and children. Sir Walter Lawrence says that the hooked nose is a prominent feature and prevailing type is distinctly Hebraic. Sir Francis says that here may be seen fine, old patriarchal types, just as we picture to ourselves the Israelitish heroes of the old, some indeed, say, though I must admit without much authority, that these Kashmiris are of the the lost tribes of Israel . . . and certainly as I have said, there are real Biblical Types to be seen. Here the Israelitish shepherd tending his flocks and herds may any day be seen" (KASHIR, Vol.1 pp.15,16, published by the University of Punjab Press, Lahore, 1946).

Another historian Muhammad Din Fauq, who is the author of many historical books on Kashmir writes:

"In Kashmir Malik tribe is in majority. They are Beni Israel (the Children of Israel). Their great ancestor was Qais, who was (also) the ancestor of Afghan tribe and was contemporary of the Prophet Muham-

mad (on whom be peace). Qais's geneology goes back to Saul, the King of Beni Israel after 36 stages and Saul was a king before 1000 BC." (AQWAAM-I KASHMIR, Vol. 1, p. 239).

"Shah Hamdan the great saint, visited Kashmir in the 14th century AC. He also names the Valley, Bagh-i Sulaiman or the Garden of Solomon. Seemingly supporting the settlement of Israelites in Kashmir" (KASHIR by Dr G.M.D. Sofi, p.16).

Another name of Kashmir in old histories is Kashir.

The famous historian Nazim Suharvi writes:

"Historians have stated that Kashmiris are descendants of Tibetan people. These might be the tribes of Kharasanians concerned suberbs or the inhabitants of Tibet: those were all descendants of the tribes of Babel and Syria, for these people were dispersed from these very areas and were settled in different countries" (NIGARISTAN-I KASHMIR, p. 73).

The great historian AL-BERUNI (973-1048 AC) accompanied the expedition of Mahmud of Ghazni against Kashmir, probably in 1021 AC. His impressions about the people of Kashmir were as follows:

"They are particularly anxious about the natural strength of their country and, therefore, take always much care to keep a strong hold upon the entrances and roads leading into it. In consequence it is very difficult to have any commerce with them. In former times they used to allow one or two foreigners to enter their country, particularly the Jews. But at present do not allow any Hindu (Indian) whom they do not know personally to enter, much less other people" (KITAB-UL-HIND AND AL-BERUNI'S INDIA, translated by Dr Edward C. Sachou, Vol. 1, p.206).

DESCENDANTS OF NOAH

A good portion of the population of Kashmir, consisting of boatmen (Hanjies) still live in different kinds of house-boats called Shikaras or Doongas. They live a simple life and are not richly cultured people as compared with other races of Kashmir. These people claim to be the descendants of the Prophet Noah as it is mentioned in some of the histories:

"The boatmen (Hanjies) of Kashmir claim Noah as their ancestor" (TARIKH-I AQWAM-I KASHMIR by M.D. Fauq, p.425; The Imperial GAZETTER of India, Kashmir & Jammu Section, 1909; NIGARISTAN-I KASHMIR by Nazim Suharvi, p.90).

FOLLOWERS OF THE PROPHET SOLOMON

Some historians think that the followers of the Prophet Solomon are also found in Kashmir:

"Kashmir was firstly settled by Hazrat Sulaiman (Solomon), who was a prophet of Islam. His followers and disciples inhabited this land. Hazrat Sulaiman lived around 1000 BC" (TARIKH-I HASSAN, Political

portion pp. 41,42, and NIGARISTAN-I KASHMIR p. 90).

“Muslims call this land (Kashmir) ‘paradise like’ and also BAGH-I SULAIMAN. They have got here many shrines and tombs of their saints. They believe that the Prophet Sulaiman had visited this place. Some believe that the Prophet Moses also passed here” (GULDASTA-I-KASHMIR by Pandit Hargopal, p. 17).

“Muslims are also tall, like Jews, strong and vulgar with exception of the gentle ones” (ibid., p. 73).

JESUS CHRIST’S COMING TO KASHMIR

Jesus Christ was a messenger of God for the Children of Israel. When his people rejected him, it was natural that he should come to Kashmir where his other “sheep” had settled and complete his mission assigned to him by God. Many historical facts support this view. Just a few references would suffice:

Mulla Naadiri is the first Muslim historian of Kashmir, who wrote the history of Kashmir in Persian during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-‘Abidin (826-879 A.H.). While narrating the events of Raja Akh he states:

“After him his son Raja Akh came to the throne. He ruled for sixty years. It is said that he founded the village of Achabal in Kothar district. After him his son, Gopananda took the reigns of Government and ruled the country under the name of Gopadatta. During his reign many temples were built and on the top of mount Solomon the dome of the temple became cracked. He deputed one of his ministers named Sulaiman, who had come from Persia to repair it, Hindus objected that he was an infidel of another religion. During this time Hazrat Yuz Asaf having come from Bait-ul-Muqaddas to this holy Valley, proclaimed his prophethood. He devoted himself, day and night, in the prayers to God, and having attained to the heights of piety and virtue he declared himself to be a messenger of God for the people of Kashmir. He invited them to his religion. Because the people of the Valley had faith in this prophet, Raja Gopadatta referred the objection of the Hindus to him for a decision. It was on account of this prophet’s orders that Sulaiman, whom Hindus called Sandeman completed the repairs of the dome. Year fifty and four. Further, on one of the stones of the flank while encasing the stairs he inscribed: In these times Yuz Asaf proclaimed his prophethood (*daraan waqt Yuz Asaf da‘wa-i paighambari mikunad*) and on the other stone of the stairs he also inscribed that he was Yusu, Prophet of the Children of Israel (*aishan Yusu paighambar-i Beni Israel ast*).

“I have seen a book of Hindus that this prophet was really Hazrat ‘Isa (Jesus) Ruh-Allah on whom be peace and salutations, and that he had also assumed the name Yuz Asaf. The real knowledge is with God. He spent his life in this Valley. After his death he was laid to rest in Mohalla Anzimarrah. It is also said, that light of prophethood used to emanate from the tomb of this prophet. Raja Gopadatta, having ruled for sixty

years and two months died. After him his son Raja Gokaran came to the throne and ruled for fifty-eight years" (TARIKH-I KASHMIR by Mulla Naadri, p. 69).

Among the sources of history PURANAS are also included, which are 18 in numbers. BHAVISHYA MAHA PURANA by Viyasji is the ninth Purana which is in Sanskrit and is said to have been written in 115 Christian Era (CE). It was first printed in 1910 CE under the orders of Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh of Kashmir.

About Raja Shalewahin, the grandson of Bikrmajit the Bhavishya Purana says:

"One day he went to a country in the Himalayas. There (while in that country) he saw (what appeared to be) a Raja of Sakas at Wien (a place about 18 Kms away from Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir) who was fair in colour and wore white clothes. He asked who he was? His reply was that he was Yusashapht (Yuz Asaf) and that he had been born of a woman, and on (Shalewahin being surprised) he said that he spoke the truth and he had to purify the religion. The Raja asked him what his religion was? He replied: O Raja when truth had disappeared and there was no limit (to the evil practices) in the *maleechh* country I appeared there and through my work the guilty and the wicked suffered and I also suffered at their hands. The Raja asked him (again), what his religion was? He replied: It is to establish love, truth and purity of heart and for this I am called Isa Masih. The Raja returned after making his obeisance to him . . ." (Bhavishya Maha Purana, Ch. iii, Sec.11, Sahalok 9-31).

Maleechh an unclean race; an infidel; a sinner; a miscreant.

About the above passage Dr Muhammad Yasin states that instead of Yusashapat (Yuz Asaf) there is the word "Ishpautram" (son of God), which in itself is a conclusive proof of his being Jesus. (See MYSTERIES OF KASHMIR by Dr Muhammad Yasin).

TOMB OF JESUS IN SRINAGAR

Khwajah Muhammad A'zam of Deedmar, in his famous TARIKH-I A'ZAMI written in 1148 A.H. states under the caption "Syed Nasir-ud-Din" as under:

"Besides that grave there is a tomb. It is well known amongs the people of the locality that there lies a prophet who had come to Kashmir in ancient times. It is now known as the place of the prophet. I have seen in a book of history that (he had come) after tribulations from a great distance. It is said that a prince after undergoing a good deal of penance and perseverance and through devotion and prayers, had become the messenger of God to the people of Kashmir. On reaching Kashmir he invited people and after death was laid to rest in Anzimarrah. In that book the name of the prophet is given as Yuz Asaf. Anzimarrah is in

Khanyar. Many pious people, and in particular the spiritual guide of the author, Mullah 'Inayatullah Shawal, say that while visiting the tomb Divine grace and blessings of prophethood were witnessed" (p.82).

Another book of history says:

"Yuz Asaf is from amongst the descendants of the Prophet Moses" (ASRAR-UL-AKHAYAR).

There is an ancient document signed in the name of a person Rahman Khan, the then caretaker of the tomb at Khanyar, from the five grand Mufties of the Moghal Court dated 11th Jumadi-ul-Thani 1194 A.H. (1776 C.E.) which is very significant. This document states the importance of the Tomb and says that Nobles, Ministers, Kings and other high dignatories visited the Tomb to pay their homage. This letter of authority also states:

"After recording evidence it has been established that in the reign of Raja Gopadatta who repaired the building on Mount Solomon and built many temples, a man came here whose name was Yuz Asaf. He was a prince by descent and had given up all worldly affairs and was a Law-giver. He used to devote himself to the prayer of God, day and night, and used to spend most of his time alone in meditation. This happened after the first great flood of Kashmir and when (people of Kashmir) had taken to idol-worship. The Prophet Yuz Asaf had been sent as a prophet to preach to the people of Kashmir. He used to proclaim Unity of God to the people of Kashmir till death overtook him. And he died and was buried in Mohalla Khanyar on the bank of the lake which is known as Rauzabal. In the year 871 A.H. (1451 C.E.) Syed Nasiruddin Rizvi, a descendant of Imam Moosa 'Ali Raza was buried besides Yuz Asaf.

"Since the place is being visited regularly by all, high and low, and the said Rahman Khan is the hereditary custodian of the place, he is entitled to receive the offerings which may be made therein and no one else has the right to or connection with the said offerings."

(The photocopy of the original may be seen in my book "Christ in Kashmir" p. 40).

Raja Gopadatta's reign corroborates with the period Jesus Christ lived. See "A Chronological Chart of the History of Kashmir" by T.N. Khazanchi (published in Marg, Bombay, March 1955) and "Guldasta Kashmir" by Pandit Hargopal Kaul.

Pirzada Ghulam Hassan while discussing about the adjoining tomb of Syed Nasiruddin at Khanyar writes in his TARIKH-I HASSAN which was written in 1310 A.H. (1893 C.E.):

"It is said that therein lies buried a prophet who, in ancient times was raised for the people of Kashmir."

Nicholas Notovich was a Russian traveller, who in 1887 reached India through Afghanistan. He visited Buddhist Monastery at Himis (Ladakh),

where he studied Buddhist literature in Tibetan language and wrote the "LIFE OF SAINT ISSA", and published it from New York. I would quote a few references from this book:

"In his fourteenth year young Issa, the Blessed one, came this side of the Sindh and settled among Aryas, in the country beloved of God" (V:1).

When Jesus condemned the Brahmans openly and

"The white priests and the warriors who had learnt of Issa's discourses with the Sudras (people of the lower cast), resolved upon his death and sent their servants to slay him" (VI:1)

on hearing of this plot Jesus left for Nepal. Therefrom after passing through several countries reached Palestine, (VIII, 24).

Some Christians say that Notovich was an American atheist who never left America and all his book is a fabrication (ref. Rev. George Buckwell, "Christ and Buddha", p. 367). This is, however, not true. Sir Francis Younghusband, who has been earlier mentioned in this article and who later founded the WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS in London, mentions meeting him when Notovich was on his way to Skardu from Kashmir and they spent a night together in a camp. See Younghusband's "The Heart of a Continent", p.217; published 1896.

This proves that Jesus had visited Kashmir twice. Firstly, he came in his early life with a merchandise, and secondly after escaping from death on the cross, when his mother Mary was also with him. He spent some time in Taxila, which was a centre of learning and literature during those days. Recently a slab has been found there with Hebrew inscription. It is preserved in the Taxila Museum a few miles away from Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

During Jesus's travel from Rawalpindi towards Kashmir, Mary passed away at Murree hill. She was buried at the same place and near Pindi post (Murree) her tomb can still be seen, which is East-West and is known as shrine of Mai Mari. It is for the same reason that this hilly area is called Murree.

In "Rajatarangini" by Kalhana, an old history in Sanskrit of the kings of Kashmir (now available in English translation by M.A.Stein, re-printed by Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow-Road, Delhi) one ruler Sandiman has been declared as Arya Raja whose master was ISANA who was a pious and self-controlled person. See pat I, 2:112, p. 65 of the above book.

PARTS OF BIBLE FOUND IN KASHMIR

The Rev. Claudius Buchanan, in his CHRISTIAN RESEARCHES IN INDIA writes about the manuscripts secured from the Beni Israel of South India as under:

"One of them is an old copy of the Book of Moses, written on a roll of leather. The skin was sewed together and the roll is 48 feet in length. It is in some places worn out and the holes had been sewed up with pie-

ces of parchment. It was brought from Cashmir. The Cabul Jews, who travelled into the interior of China, say that in some synagogues the law is still written on a roll of leather made of goat's skin dyed red" (p. 229).

There is another reference quoted by A.K. Johnston which is worthy of consideration:

"When Nadir Shah arrived at Peshawar, the chiefs of the tribes of Yusuf Zai presented him with a Bible written in Hebrew and several articles that had been used in the ancient worship which they had preserved; those articles were at once recognised by the Jews that followed the camp" ("Civil and Military Gazette", Lahore, 23 November 1898).

IKMAL-UD-DIN, an Arabic history one thousand years old, bears the teachings of Yuz Asaf, which are same as of Jesus Christ. Yuz Asaf called his teachings "Bushra" which is the Arabic translation of the word "Gospel". Corroboration in teachings and name proves that Yuz Asaf was the second name of Jesus Christ.

USUL-I-KAAFI, a book of Shi'ite traditions, which was written over a thousand years ago, mentions that there lived a king in Kashmir whose forty courtiers were well versed in the knowledge of the Torah (the Mosaic Law) and they used to read the sayings of Abraham and the Psalms. When they heard of the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him, they sent an emissary or envoy to investigate and in consequence they accepted Islam" (p.334).

Faizi, the famous poet of Akbar the Great, had addressed Jesus Christ as:

Ai ki naam-i tu: Yuz-o Kristo i.e. O thou, whose name is Yuz and Christ.

JESUS FOUND SHELTER ON A 'LOFTY GROUND WITH MEADOWS AND SPRINGS' – The Qur'an

Jesus Christ is the only prophet in the world who is called with so many different names in different languages of which a few names are attributed to his qualities. It is quite possible that after the event of crucifixion, when Jesus left his native land he might have called himself Yuz Asaf, so that his enemies could not pursue him and trace him up for prosecution. Yuz Asaf means Yasu the Gatherer. However after residing in Kashmir for some time he might have himself disclosed his real name - Yasu Masih, and that he had come from Bait-ul-Muqaddas (Palestine). As History of Kashmir by Mulla Naadiri, Bhavishiya Maha Purana and other records clearly state so. All these historical records cannot be set aside lightly.

The late Pandit Jawahir Lal Nehru, who was the Prime Minister of India has clearly mentioned in one of his books: "All over central Asia, in Kashmir and Ladakh and Tibet and even farther North, there is still strong belief that Jesus or Isa travelled about there" (GLIMPSES OF WORLD HISTORY, p. 84).

Hence after his miraculous escape from crucifixion Jesus had migrated

to a lofty ground with meadows and springs (i.e. Kashmir). Jerusalem, Egypt, Palestine or Damascus do not fit in with this category. He preached and completed his mission in the valley of Kashmir. This is also confirmed by the Holy Qur'an:

“And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign, and We gave them refuge on a lofty ground having meadows and springs” (23:50).

*Address given on August 14, 1983 at the Gasparillo Mosque Hall, during the Ninth International Ahmadiyya Convention, held in Trinidad. —Ed.

THE SECRET OF LIVING

There used to live in a village a poor man and his wife. They could not get both ends meet. His wife forced him to go out of the village and find some work for himself. As he travelled far away from his village he saw a fox whose leg was broken and he could hardly walk but seemed to be in good health otherwise, as if she was regularly fed. He was surprised at her condition and wondered from where she got all her food! He decided to stay there to solve the mystery. In the evening a lion appeared on the scene with a kill and when he had finished eating he left the remains of the animal there and disappeared in the bush. The fox dragged herself to that spot and had her fill. The next day a tiger came who had also killed an animal for food. The fox ate whatever the tiger left. The following day a wolf did the same. So a week passed and the fox always got his share of the left overs. That person thought, that he knew the secret of living, because it was God who provided whether one did any work or not. He travelled further and found a mosque which was rather deserted. He thought that was the best place for him to lodge. He said his prayers and waited. Nothing happened. He said more prayers but still nothing happened. He kept on praying to God for food.

‘O God I saw that fox with a broken leg — and You gave him to eat something everyday and it is the third day I have been asking food from You and have got nothing. Am I worse than that animal in Your sight? It seems you don’t care about me at all. . . .’

As he grumbled in his prayer he fell asleep. Then he heard someone saying to him:

‘O you the miserable one! God has given you hands and feet. Why don’t you make use of them for your living. You have seen the fox with a broken leg, but why didn’t you see the lion, the tiger and the wolf? Be like them and not like the fox. When you will become helpless like that fox, God will certainly come to your rescue.’

And that man can have nothing but what he strives for: and that his striving will soon be seen. Then he will be rewarded for it with the fullest reward; and that to thy Lord is the goal (The Qur’an 53:39-42).

SUDAN GOES THE ISLAMIC WAY

It was reported in the Daily Telegraph that:

"Christian church leaders in Sudan have written to President Nimeiri expressing in forceful terms their opposition to the introduction of strict Islamic laws in the country.

It is estimated that a quarter of Sudan's 20 million citizens are either Christians or Animists.

A joint letter signed by representatives of the Sudan Council of Churches, Evangelicals and Presbyterians says that while Christians do not oppose moral reform, Christianity rejects the justice of an eye for an eye" (Daily Telegraph, London, Monday 31 October, 1983, p.5).

The West is acting strongly at what President Nimeiri said in his swearing in speech on 24 May 1983 and the implementation of his Islamic plans for the people of Sudan. While taking oath as president for the third time he said:

"Brother members of the esteemed People's Assembly, I pledge to you to uphold Islam, unify all hearts in religion, faith and the Prophet's teachings. We shall be good Muslims who follow forbearance, modesty and simplicity. I also pledge to spare no effort to strengthen government institutions, to support the values of democracy, to share responsibility and authority, and to convert our great institution, the SSU (Sudanese Socialist Union), into a great national institution to contain the partial inclinations, the narrow loyalties, and the secondary tensions in the national consensus and the great popular alliance. I also pledge to obliterate dictatorship and violations of rights in our life. My door will remain open for the powerless, ill-treated and weak. I shall help them, God willing, against any tyrant or unjust person. I pledge to you to launch, during the new mandate, an escalated and intensified campaign to confront all signs of corruption and deviation in public service and national life. I shall spare no effort to purge public service of bribery, dishonesty and corruption."

At a time when the Muslim and Arab world was going through a phase of decline and disarray, Sudan seems to have sprung a rather unbelievable and happy surprise.

On 18 August last, President Nimeiri issued decrees completely substituting the colonial, civil and criminal code with a new law based on the Islamic Shari'ah. It barred the courts from issuing any verdict involving or awarding interest. That was in effect serving notice on the RIBAA (Usury) banks to begin to reorganise their operations on a non-interest basis because one day they should expect a complete abolition of interest. In the meanwhile they were on their own and the state would not be a party to their recovering any interest from any person.

The second major and equally significant measure was the issue of a law directing judges to base their verdicts on the Qur'an and Sunnah and in the absence of any guidance in the sources, take recourse to principles of analogy, ijtihaad (exercise of judgment), public interest and the rules of Islamic jurisprudence within or keeping with the norms of Shari'ah.

CRATES OF LIQUOR DESTROYED

These decrees were then followed by two symbolic but profound steps. On 23 September crates of wines, beers and liquors collected from Khartoum were crushed by army bulldozers and dumped into the Blue Nile right in front of the Grand and Sudan Hotels, the great cultural bastions of the colonial era. Giving the lead in 'drowning this evil' was Nimeiri himself.

The people of Khartoum came out voluntarily, in full strength to witness this significant event.

This operation of destroying stocks of alcohol was repeated in all the regional capitals and the day has been declared an annual holiday.

After the decision had been taken to impose total prohibition, questions had arisen as to what should be done with the huge stocks of alcoholic drinks which had been seized. Some officials suggested it could be sold back to the suppliers or to parties outside Sudan, but Nimeiri said: 'I am not allowed to sell alcohol. I cannot carry it to the port, so I can only carry it as far as its grave'.

THE WIND OF CHANGE

However, even at the existing and incomplete level, these developments were both profound and momentous. They raise a number of questions, but basically as to how credible was this transformation from a colonial socio-legal structure to one which was to be based on Shari'ah. How did it come about? What were Nimeiri's own credentials to lead Sudan on 'THE ISLAMIC WAY'? What internal and external interactions were now to be expected and with what possible consequences?

These questions seem important because Sudan was no PAKISTAN, nor Nimeiri was any Khomeini.

Sudan of course had its own revolution way back in May 1969, but it was seen more as a coup led by a dashing and ambitious army officer, Col Ja'far Nimeiri, commander of Khartoum's defence forces. The first Revolutionary Command Council was a coalition of nationalists and Marxists, including communists, and showed no visible affinity towards Islam. Nimeiri's own image — those who knew him personally — was un-Islamic, though an important distinction has to be made between 'un-Islamic' and 'anti-Islamic'.

Evidently what seems to have happened is that this man who had taken power for a mixture of personal and altruistic reasons, in the course of his turbulent journey, able to discover his inborn Islamic personality and consequently his obligations as a Muslim ruler. Of course there were a number of contributive and supportive factors, but it is very much 'natural' for anyone anywhere to return to his FITRAH (nature) that is Islam.

Nimeiri comes from a family, which like most Sudanese families, was religious. Like some Sudanese young men, he went astray for some time, and as most of them do, having gone through a certain experience, Nimeiri too seems to have made a come-back to Islam. It is interesting that few within or outside Sudan took note of his book, NAHAJ AL-ISLAMI, LIMAAZA (Why the Islamic Way), which he published as long ago as 1981 and which provides a fair insight into Nimeiri's journey into his own soul.

A large part of the book is personal history interpreted in Islamic terms, but as he proceeds, he also tries to reflect on questions of Islamic social change and the duties of a Muslim ruler. It showed that at least he was committed to Islam, but probably he had not yet mustered his will to realise that or maybe the time was not yet ripe for the measures he had in view.

Nimeiri claims that when he seized power he was motivated by the desire to serve Sudan. To do this he adopted the course of socialism, but socialism did nothing for him. The literally dozens of coups, two of which — one mounted by the communists in mid-1971 and the other launched by the Sudanese National Front in July 1976 — were almost successful, seem, however, to have had a poignant effect on his thinking. If his life had been so miraculously saved, then his obligations towards his Saviour could not be taken thanklessly.

Apparently some change had started after the failure of the communist coup. Nimeiri went to Makkah and performed 'UMRA (lesser Hajj). Probably he gave up DRINKING in this very period, but when the July 1976 coup came, he took it as a warning. He had survived this coup, because he had for no specific reason, advanced his departure from the US an hour earlier than scheduled and so upset the putschist plans by landing in Khartoum well before he was expected.

Nimeiri started to read and reflect on the QUR'AN as well as other Islamic books. He would discuss his ideas with his cabinet colleagues and even his visitors.

Having succeeded in achieving a national reconciliation, Nimeiri seems then to have turned his attention to what he called 'QIYAADA RAASHIDAH' – righteous leadership and there he appears to have concentrated on the army and then the educational system.

In the nature of their origin, training and structure, post-colonial armies in the Muslim countries were predominantly secular and therefore an instrument of imposing western or marxist systems. It was therefore significant that before turning to Islamise the laws, Nimeiri was trying to Islamise the military. Thus when it came to destroying the barrels and bottles of wines and liquors, it was the Sudanese soldiers and army officers who went round the warehouses, clubs and bars to collect the stocks and then destroy them by the side of the Blue Nile.

The people of Sudan (particularly Muslims) are absolutely jubilant over this happy 'surprise'. The whole thing is now seen as part of Nimeiri's bold and decisive style. The Islamists too are quite frank and generous in giving Nimeiri the sole credit. There is nothing that a politician does and it has no political connotation, positive or negative, but there are few in Sudan who see any opportunistic political motives on the part of Nimeiri.. And if there were to be any, they say that while we leave the question of motive (NIYYAH) to God, there can be no going back from here.

There is also the view that looked from a secular point of view, the objective conditions surrounding the country – a traditionally West-dependant economy, the political involvement of European churches in the southern region, the pro-western ties of the country and the strategic realities around Sudan – actually militated any such recourse to Islam

A WELCOME AND CHALLENGING PROCESS

No-one, however, claims in Sudan that the Islamisation measures taken so far were either complete or perfect, but it is commonly agreed that it was a welcome and challenging process and it needed to be encouraged and developed.

Nimeiri has been a successful ruler, but he has never been as popular as he is now. However, the success of the measures also depended on the response of the Sudanese power structure. There are no doubts that many areas of contradiction and insufficiency in the ruling cadres as well as the Sudanese Socialist (sic) Union do exist. But one important benefit of about 15 years of political stability and national reconciliation, can now be seen in the phasing out of the bulk of the old colonial, secular and socialist elites.

Today a sizeable proportion of the civil service, the academy and the military is broadly Islamic. A new and major area of Islamic input was in the banking sector. One could perhaps say that but for the success in the Islamic banking system, Nimeiri might not have felt confident enough to move the way he has.

REACTION OF THE WEST AND THE MUSLIM WORLD

At present the Sudanese internal front seems to be secure and solid behind Nimeiri, though efforts are expected to be made to isolate him from his Islamic constituency. But the major area of pressure and opposition is expected to come from the outside, particularly from Nimeiri's western friends, including some of the Arab friends.

The reaction of the western media do represent the perceived political interests of their Establishment to the events in Sudan has been interesting and revealing. In the first place they largely blacked out the basic facts of the situation so that no one in the Muslim world was able to grasp the significance of the developments. Having denied Sudan the possibility of any emotional solidarity in the Muslim world, the media then began to play on relatively smaller and even passe events, like the detention of Sadiq al-Mahdi, the resignation of the judges two months after the issue had been settled, the nearly seething 'rebellion' in the South and how Islam may widen Sudan's cracks'.

External support for Islamisation has so far come only from Saudi Arabia, Qatar

and Sharjah. Sudan's political ally and Muslim neighbour Egypt was not happy. There was a complete black out of news in the Egyptian press. When Nimeiri went to Cairo in September, Husni Mubarak complained that he was not consulted and he advised him not to be unmindful of the various implications of what he was doing. How it might effect political relations (with US) and Sudan's economic interests. WHAT ECONOMIC INTERESTS, Nimeiri is said to have asked? Out of the 100 or so wine-merchants and bar-owners affected by PROHIBITION, only three or four were Sudanese, the rest were Egyptian Copts, Greeks and Indians, he said.

The first volume of Nimeiri's 'Nahaj al-Islam: Limaaza (Why the Islamic Way?) was published in Egypt two years ago (perhaps because it emphasised more on moral aspects of Islam). Now 'Al-Akhbaar' was unable to serialise the second volume, 'NAHAJ AL-ISLAMI: KAIF?' (The Islamic Way: How?), probably because it now dealt with applications of Islam.

The Americans are not showing any overt reaction. Perhaps they first want to act through common friends, the Egyptian and Saudis.

BAN ON ALCOHOL AND ECONOMIC PRESSURES

But not so the International Monetary Fund (IMF). One of the IMF directors called on Nimeiri and brought up the question of the effect of ban on alcohol on the country's economy. He was concerned that it would cost Sudan about £40 million annually and could its economy bear this recurring loss of revenue?

Nimeiri turned to his finance minister who was accompanying the IMF man and asked, WAS IT ONLY 40 MILLION, I THOUGHT IT WAS 400 MILLION? That neatly summed up the meeting, but the points were fairly clear.

The BRITISH, however, appear to be the most worried. The ambassador wanted that diplomats and diplomatic parties be exempted from the ban on alcohol. Nimeiri explained that it was not practicable and jocularly remarked that Her Majesty's Government would be well within its rights to apply RECIPROCAL ban on Sudanese diplomats in Britain. He then explained that the law has to be respected by everyone and narrated his own experience in Britain. While DRUNK in an English pub, he did not want to leave when the closing hour came. The manager called the police and he was THROWN OUT. The law was right, Nimeiri said.

However, the ambassador's difficulties were still not resolved. His problem was that he was responsible for recommending AID projects, but given the circumstances, he was afraid, he may not be able to bring in the technical experts.

Are you all a nation of drinkers? Nimeiri wanted to know. Almost 95% of our people like to take a glass or so, socially or after work, said the ambassador. Then you can find your experts from the 5%, Nimeiri replied.

In the final analysis, however, it would all depend on the resolve, sincerity, wisdom and courage of the Sudanese leadership. It would depend on its ability to withstand all pressures and intrigues and at the same time not to be negative either about relations with the West or its unilateral obligations towards the Christian minority.

"Impact International", London, 28 October - 10 November 1983
(Edited and abridged)

DEPARTURES

MIRZA MASUD BEG, Secretary-General of the Central Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, Pakistan and recently appointed its Vice-President passed away on 2nd October 1983. Mirza Masud Beg was connected with the Anjuman's office from his youth. For a few years he joined the Government's service as Inspector of schools, and when he retired his services were taken over by the Anjuman again to which he served faithfully till the last days of his life. He was a scholar, good administrator, writer and speaker. He was a close associate of the late Maulana Muhammad 'Ali and the late Maulana Sadr-ud-Din of blessed memory.

The last time I saw him was in December 1982. We had a warm and friendly chat together for sometime. (I had worked with him in the Anjuman's office for many years while I was in Pakistan). And he confided in me that the official letters he wrote to me did not always convey his personal views. I told him that I did realise that. When I wrote to him in around November 1983 that I had completed several translations of Maulana Muhammad 'Ali's works in Urdu and would like to pass them on to the Anjuman for publication, his prompt reply was very encouraging. He wrote, *inter alia*, that he was very glad to know that I was busy as before (*hasb-i saabiq*) in the service of religion (*khidmaat-i deeniyyah*) and he ended his letter with blessings and prayers. After that I did not hear from him again. In Mirza Masud Beg the Anjuman has lost a valuable worker.

Mrs DR ABDUL AZIZ, the mother-in-law of Mirza Masud Beg died three days after the death of her son-in-law.

MASTER ASGHAR 'ALI SAYAL, another faithful employee of the Anjuman suddenly passed away. After a few weeks his son Iftikhar got involved in an accident and died.

CHAUDHARY FAZL DAD, an old and active member of the Ahmadiyya community of Lahore, brother of Ch. Fateh Muhammad Aziz.

MR YASSIN, father of Mr Mansoor Baksh (at present student of Missionary class of the Anjuman at Lahore).

MAY THEIR SOULS REST IN PEACE!

Members of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam (Lahore) UK extend their condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the deceased.

—Ed.

9. IK NA IK DIN

1. **Ik na ik din** paysh hogā tuu **Khudaa** kay saamnay,
Chal nahien saktī kisi kī kuchh qaḏaa kay saamnay.
 2. **Chhornī** hogī tujhay duniyaa'ay faanī ayk din,
Har ko'ī majboer hai ḥukm-i **Khudaa** kay saamnay.
 3. **Mustaqil** rehnaa hai laazim ai bashar tujh ko sadaa,
Rahj-o **gham**, yaas-o alam, fikr-o balaa kay saamnay.
 4. **Baargaah-i** Ayzidī say tuu na yoen maayoes ho,
Mushkilayn kyaa chiez hain **mushkil kushaa** kay saamnay.
 5. **Haajatayn** poerī karayn gay kyaa terī 'aajiz **bashar**,
Kar byaan sab haajatayn, haajat rawaa kay saamnay.
 6. **Chaahiyay** tujh ko mitaanaa qalb say naqsh-i du'ī,
Sar jhukaa bas Maalik-i arz-o samaa kay saamnay.
 7. **Chaahiyay** nafrat badī say aur naykī say piyaar,
Ayk din jaanaa hai tujh ko bhī **Khudaa** kay saamnay.
 8. **Raastī** kay saamnay kab jhoet phaltaa hai bhalaa,
Qadr kyaa paththar kī la'l-i bay bahaa kay saamnay.
1. *One day you will certainly be presented before God,
No one can ever escape at all from death.*
 2. *You will have to leave this transitory world one day.
Everyone is helpless before the Divine command.*
 3. *O man! You will have to stand firm all the time
Against grief and sorrow, despair and distress, trial
and anxiety.*
 4. *Do not despair like this, of the audience with God.
There is nothing difficult for Him Who is the
remover of all difficulties.*
 5. *How can the humble mortals fulfil your desires?
Make all your petitions known to Him Who is the
true provider of all needs.*
 6. *You should efface from your heart all the traces of
dualism. Bow your head only before the Master of
the heavens and the earth.*
 7. *You should hate evil and love what is good.
One day you will have to appear before your Lord.*
 8. *How can falsehood prosper before truth?
What worth is a stone before a precious ruby?*