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Chief Editor  
**Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi**

Editor  
**Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf**

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Address:  
**Markazi Jamiat-e-Ahle Hadees Hind**  
**Ahle Hadees Manzil**  
4116, Urdu Bazar, Jama Masjid,  
Delhi-110006  
Ph: 011-23273407  
Fax: 011-23246613  
website: www.ahlehadees.org  
E-mail: Jamiatahlehaddeeshind@hotmail.com

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## HOW A MODEL MUSLIM OUGHT TO DEAL WITH WOMEN

The male sponsored and thoroughly organized tyranny against women is spread over a millennia. There are crimes against the poor and defenceless creature all over the world.

In our country India, generally speaking, every effort is made to prevent the birth of a girl child. If this effort does not succeed, she is supposed to bring enormous dowry. If her parents fail, she runs the risk of being torched alive. As a divorcee or a widow, her future is like coal-black. An old ailing and widow mother is religiously sent to the holy places by her sons (and son-in-laws). As a widow she is considered inauspicious even to participate in her own son's or daughter's marriage. There are, then, cases when she has been married to gods. Lynching of a lower caste girl is sure if she dares to marry a boy of higher caste. That even in posh localities of metropolitan cities. All this amidst the claim that "woman is worshipped in Bharat".

We know, and admit that some Muslims have also been misbehaving with her reprehensible impunity. She is being divorced without sufficient moral or legal justification. In some cases, she is being denied inheritance. Her dower is also not being paid in times. Many Muslim families are broken due to this apathy.

Islam claims, it does, and can restore to her, her lost, ideal position. First of all, the Muslims shall have to start behaving with his spouse. They should remember what the Holy Quran says:

*"Among His signs is (the fact) that He has created spouses for you from among yourselves so that you may console yourselves with them. He has planted love and mercy between you. In that are signs for people who reflect" (30:21)* Holy Quran again says: *"Live with them in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which God has placed much good". (4:19)*

In a sermon on the eve of Hajjatal Widaa' the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) enjoined upon the Muslim Ummah: "O people! Listen! Behave well towards women, for they are like captive with you. You have no right to give them harsh treatment save in the case when they show open disobedience. If they are guilty of disobedience, keep away from them in the bedroom. In case, you punish them, take care not to cause them severe injury. When they come round and obey your will, do not find pretexts to harass them. Listen carefully! You have rights over your wives and your wives have some rights over you ... And listen, you owe a duty to them to feed them well, and provide good clothing to them".

In the family conceptualized by the Holy Quran and Sunnah, the male partner is head and the female partner is manager.

Is anybody out there to sympathetically consider her impassioned pleas for her proper place in society.?

## A TRIAL FOR MEN

*“And recall when We said to you, (O Muhammad), that your Lord encompasses these people; and that We have made the vision which We have shown you, and the true accursed in the Quran, to be only a trial for men. We go about warning them, but each warning leads to greater transgression”. (Surah Bani Israeel, 17:68)*

When the Makkan unbelievers had set out on a course of opposition to the Holy Prophet, God declared, unequivocally, that He encompassed the unbelievers. Regardless of the extent of the unbeliever’s resistance, it would simply be impossible for them to prevent the Prophet’s call from spreading. The task assigned to Muhammad (S.A.W.) was bound to be accomplished, and in the teeth of their opposition. If the unbelievers truly needed a miracle in order to mend their ways, they should reflect upon what they had already witnessed, i.e. that which had been foretold in the very early days of Islam had already come to pass and that their opposition and hostility towards the Prophet had proved to be of no avail in preventing the spread of Islam.

The word *ru’ya* is not a synonym of a dream, rather it signifies seeing something with one’s own eyes. God enabled the Holy Prophet to witness a number of things in the course of the Ascension. This was in order that people might learn certain truths for sure through no less truthful and trustworthy a person than the Holy Prophet who could report to them the truths that he had witnessed at first the truths that he had witnessed at first hand.

The tree *Zaqqum*, a bitter and pungent tree described as growing at the bottom of Hell, a type of all that is disagreeable. The application of the name to a tree of the myrobalan kind in the region of Jericho is, I think, of post Quranic date. It is a trial for wrong doers.

This dreadful bitter Tree of Hell is truly a trial to the wrong doers. (1) It grows at the bottom of Hell; (2) even its fruitstalks, which should have been tender, are like the heads of devils; (3) Its produce is eaten voraciously; (4) on top of it is a boiling mixture to cut up their entrails; and (5) every time they complete this round of orgies they return to the same game. A truly lurid picture, but more lurid in reality are the stages of evil.

## FAITH AND ISLAM

1. Sufian bin Abdullah Saqafi relates that (once) he asked the Holy Messenger (S.A.W.) to tell him something about Islam that he might have no need of asking about it from anyone else, the Holy Messenger said: "Say that you believe in Allah and Stick to it". (*Saheeh Muslim*)

2. Abu Sufiyan Sakhar bin Harab (may Allah be happy with him) relates as part of his statement about Hiraclius that the latter asked him what does he (i.e. the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) teach you, and Abu Sufiyan said: "He tells you: "Worship Allah alone and do not associate anything with Him, and discard all that your ancestors said; and he commands us to observe prayer, to tell the truth, to be chaste and to strengthen the ties of Kinship by helping those who are related to you". (*Saheeh Buhari and Muslim*)

The Hadeeths assert that belief in God is the nucleus of the Islamic faith. It means firm faith in all the attributes of God. One should make sincere and concerted efforts to spend the entire life in strict fulfillment of the teachings of Islam; that is one's faith and deeds must go in harmony

with each other. Man's ultimate success lies in his believing and firmly standing by his faith and Practising on it, not flinching from it by any sort of bust or threat or coercion. To have belief in God and remain firm by it is in fact the greatest achievement of life.

Faith in Islam is a state of happiness acquired by virtue of positive action and constructive conceptions. Thus, the true believers are: Those who trust God always and enjoy unshakable confidence in Him. Those who observe their daily prayers regularly as well as the weekly and annual congregations. Those who pay their religious taxes (alms or zakat) to the rightful beneficiaries). Those who enjoin the right and good, and combat the wrong and evil by all lawful means. Those who obey and love God and His Messenger Muhamamd (S.A.W.). Those who love their near and distant neighbors and show kindness to the guests and strangers and those who speak truth and observe the fast of the month of Ramadhan. Those who spend in the way of God of what He has given them.



# THE PRESERVATION OF HADITH

Dr. Abubar Imam Ali Agan

## INTRODUCTION:

*“(We sent them) with clear signs and scriptures. And We have sent down unto you (also) the message; so that you explain clearly to people what is sent for them, and that they may give thought to it”. (The Quran, 16:44)*

The triangular formula in this verse is very instructive. The role of Allah as the Law Giver is emphatically stressed. The role of the Prophet as the Teacher of the Divine messages, who is to give interpretations and detailed information of the messages, is equally stated. The recipients (i.e. the companions or sahabah) are also encouraged to functionally use their intellect and to ask for guidance from the Teacher, and to formulate their own ideas where the Quran and the Teacher are not categorical.

The Prophet’s role as indicated in this verse is viewed from different perspectives. The Quranic exegesis consider the role as the foundation for the developmental stages of Tafsir. The jurists view it from the lenses of legal matters, while the scholars of Hadith maintain that it was a method of verbal teachings of the Sunnah. This claim, by *the muhaddiseen*, has attracted the

attention of the critics of Hadith who argue that such postulation is wrong because the exact words of the Prophet can not be orally transmitted with accuracy. Abu-Riyyah has been promoting this position of recent. A close examination of his argument reveals that he lends weight to the views of the orientalist scholars that Hadith reflects the viewpoint of the later centuries of Islam and have little to tell about the early part of the century, which they allegedly belong. This assertion shall later be focused in this paper.

Azami has, however, queried the argument that the Hadith could not have orally transmitted for over a century. He says that the misconception about the beginning of the recording of Hadith was mainly due to a wrong conception of the Arabic words: “*Tadwin*”, “*Tasnif*” and “*Risalah*”. According to him, a lot of materials in the form of *Risalah* (booklets) and separate Hadith collections existed in the first century itself. One can also add here that the availability of literary activities in the Arabian peninsula before the Prophethood of Muhammad suggests people’s interest in writing and recording of events. That some curious Sahabah recorded the sayings of the Prophet, therefore, cannot be

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totally ruled out. This assertion is the main focus of this paper as revealed in the ensuing sections.

### **RECORDING OF HADITH: AN ASSESSMENT**

One of the issues raised by the orientalist scholars against the validity and the authenticity of Hadith is that Hadith was orally transmitted for over a century before its compilation into a book form. They argued further that the traditions were invented through a chain of narrators to emphasize either political affiliation or dogmatic doctrine. Put in plain terms the corpus of traditions from the Prophet is alleged to be the product of a large scale pious forgery.

A fact worthy admitting is that the official recordings of Ahadith came at a later stage during the time of Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz who ordered Abubakar Ibn Hazim, a scholar, to compile a book of Hadith for official use. However, individual compilation predated this official directive. The attempt could be regarded as a modest move geared towards the protection of Ahadith from containing false information, interpolation and the alleged pious forgery. This is evidently clear from the directive itself. Ibn Hazim was asked to rely on the collection of Qasim Ibn Abubakar (d. 112AH) the only survivor among the seven jurists who were the centre of reference on religious matters. This implied that the jurists themselves relied on personal collections of Hadith, which they referred to before arriving at a finale verdict.

It is not the aim of the present study to delve into the biographical notes of the seven jurists

of Madinah or to explore the arguments generated by their activities; a more detailed academic work is, in our view, required in this regard. However, their activities as at that time were compelling enough to invalidate Goldziher's and Schacht's claim of "pious forgery" and fictitious expression" respectively. The jurists, severally and collectively, possessed sound knowledge of Quran and science of Hadith which placed them at a vantage position of knowing the authentic from the fabricated Traditions. It is even on record that judges used to consult them before certain judicial decisions were made.

Another reason that the critics of Hadith adduce is that certain Ahadith forbid the recording of Hadith. Azami identifies three Traditions that are prominent in this regard. They are as follows.

Abu Said Al-Khudri reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: "Do not write from me except the Quran and whoever has written anything from me other than the Quran should erase it".

Zayd ibn Thabit visited Mu'awiyah and sought information concerning an Hadith from him. He (Mu'awiyah) ordered someone to write it. Then Zayd informed him that, "the Prophet forbids us from writing down any of his Ahadith". He then erased it.

Abu Hurayrah, reported that the Prophet once met us while we were writing Ahadith. He enquired what we were writing. We said, "They are your Ahadith". The Prophet remarked. "A book different from the book of Allah?. Do you

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know what led the people before you astray? They made other writings long with the book of Allah.

Azami investigates these Ahadith in a more polemical discourse. He argues in favour of recording of the Hadith and concludes that:

The Prophet's disapproval of writing Ahadith most probably meant the writing of the Quran and non-Quranic materials on the same sheet because that might have led to misunderstanding.

We are inclined to believe that the Prophet was admonishing against mixing the two together as the fear of mixture was real but personal writing could not have been totally prohibited. Furthermore, we discovered that the first hadith cited above which was reported by Abu Saïd al-Khudri is said to be weak, because it is categorized as *Mawquf*. As Salafi has however queried this judgement of Bukhari. He said that Muslim reported the same hadith in the category of *Marfu*. This is not an indication that As-salafi disagrees that the Prophet disapproved the recording of his statements. He only contends the categorization of the hadith as a weak Tradition. He further submitted that the hadith was later abrogated. Besides, this hadith has two different versions. One of them is transmitted by Abdurhman Ibn Saïed who was said to be a weak narrator and used to edit hadith without knowing it. For this reason Ibn Hisham opines that he deserved to be abandoned. The same argument goes for the second narration by Abu Hurayrah because the same Ibn Saïd appears in the chain of narrators. And as for the authenticity of the Hadith, the author of *Tuhfatul*

*Ahwazi* provides the following interpretations, if the Hadith to be considered on its merit:

That the recording of the Hadith was forbidden during the time of revelation, so that it could not be seen as dovetailing with the Quran. And that the Ahadith should not be recorded on the same sheet with the Quran, whereas it was allowed on different sheets. Furthermore the Hadith in reference was later abrogated by other Traditions that allow its recording.

Ibn Qutaybah, as quoted by As-Salafi, provides a fourth option that the disapproval was general while the approval was specific permission as could be deduced from the following Ahadith listed by Azami in support of the recording. It should be noted, however, that the Ahadith that shall be considered here said to have abrogated the Hadith against the recording of hadith.

Abdullah Ibn Amru Ibn Al 'Aas, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that, I said, "O the Prophet of Allah, we used to listen to your statements which we could not memorize, can we then put them into writings? The Prophet said "all right you could write them".

And from the authority of Ahmad (he reported Ibn Al Aas as having said) "Oh Prophet of Allah, I listen to your speeches, can I write them down? He said: Yes, I said "in both state of happiness and anger? He replied 'Yes', because, I do not utter any statement except the truth".

The two Traditions indicated that Al-Asi used to write down the Hadith. This point to the Prophet's approval of the practice. And to further consolidate the principle of tacit approval,

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Al-Asi enquired from the Prophet whether to quote him in every circumstance and the Prophet answered in the affirmative. The hadith of Abu Hurayrah, on the other hand, made some categorical statements on the recording of hadith.

Wahab Ibn Manbah reported from his brother who said he heard Abu Hurayrah saying that none of the Sahabah reported more hadith than me except Abdullahi Ibn Amru because he used to write and I didn't.

It should be re-emphasized here that the hadith analysts, as mentioned earlier, have explained these seemingly contradictory Hadith in many ways. Ibn Qutaybah, for example, is of the view that:

The Hadith on prohibition belong to an earlier period in the life of the Prophet and are abrogated (mansukh) by the later ones which carry permission, or alternatively the prohibition was meant only for such companions as were not well trained in the art of writing and did not include those who could write proficiently without fear of distortion.

Similarly, Siddiq, in our view, has argued quite reasonably that:

The date of one Hadith in the Sahih of Bukhari, which gives to Abu-Sha permission to write down one of his discourses, is dated the year of the con-quest of Makkah, a fact which would favour the view that the Hadith which allowed the writings of Hadith post date those which indicate prohibition.

In addition Ibn Amru, a principal actor in the Hadith being investigated, was said to have arrived Syria with a camel loaded with several books from which he used to quote. This is an indication that Ibn Amru had other collections with him different from hadith collection. It also apposite to mention that some books were in circulation as at that time such as tribal poems, promissory notes, personal letters and tribal agreements. The book of Daniel was also believed to be in circulation.

Furthermore, the Quran encourages documentation of events, pacts and business transactions so as to safeguard them from being forgotten or lost. It is an indisputable fact that the Sahabah would guard the Prophetic treasure jealously than the worldly materials or documents. Though one is not claiming that the events of 276 months (i.e. 23 years) were all recorded but a sizeable number of Traditions were actually recorded. Maurice Bucaille's claim that "not a single collection of Hadith was drawn up at the time of the Prophet, in our opinion, should be understood to refer to book collection and not the actual recording of hadith.

#### **THE SAHABAH AND THE RECORDING OF HADITH**

The companions as earlier observed formed the coterie of the Prophet's students. They received and assimilated the teachings of the Prophet for onward transmission to the later generation. The teaching method was memorization, while some recorded some Hadith. Muhammad Mubarak has, however, identified five ways for the

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dissemination of the Prophet's teachings during his life time as follows.

- (i) Wa'z: oral teaching in gathering.
- (ii) Khutbah: prepared sermons for Friday prayers, Eid prayers and on special occasions such as wedding ceremony.
- (iii) Ta'lim: special training sessions for his emissaries
- (iv) Af'al: his practical demonstrations of the Quranic teachings
- (v) Sunnah: his own actions based on the interpretation of the Quran messages.

Though the last two in our opinion, are identical, one can add the questions, and answers sessions as well as statements made while settling disputes as the sixth and the seventh possible methods respectively. It is worth noting that there was no formal system of education at that time. Circumstances usually dictate the method to be adopted. The second Caliph Umar was reported to have entered into an agreement with an Ansari to compare note on the Prophet's teachings when either of them was absent from the Prophet's circle. This reported episode is strong enough to cast doubt on the claim of Abu Riyyah that Umar used to reject the Hadith of other sahabah. Our contention here is that Omar, like other companions, used to rely on the reports of others, although he could still reject those he considered questionable, especially after death of the Prophet.

Another point worth stressing is that the sahabah demonstrated great enthusiasm in the

dissemination of the Prophet's word so that they would not be counted among those who withhold knowledge an offence which is strongly condemned in the Quran. Thus, the sahabah considered oral transmission of the Hadith imperative. To accuse the sahabah of pious forgery as Schacht submitted does not conform to the historical reality of the time. Both Goldziher and Schacht contend that the exact words of the Prophet could not have been memorized; hence its transmission might not be completely free from interpolation. This argument was first raised by Goldziher and has since remained an established thesis among some western scholars of Islam. The main argument, as Ansari puts it, is that the Traditions reflect the viewpoints obtaining in the second and third Islamic centuries and (therefore), have little to tell about the early part of the first century to which they allegedly belong". Schacht's skepticism is more offensive and un scholarly. He says:

Every legal Tradition from the Prophet, until the contrary is proved, must be taken not as an authentic or essentially authentic, even if slightly obscured, statement valid for his time or the time of the companions but as the fictitious expression of a legal doctrine formulated at a later date.

The possibility of an individual assimilating all the teachings of the Prophet is however very remote. The view of the Ibn Taymiyyah, in this regard, could be considered to be accurate. He says:

None of the sahabah could claim the monopoly of comprehending all the hadith. The Prophet might have uttered a statement or expressed a

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legal point or practically demonstrated an action which would be witnessed by a few. Those who were present would automatically inform those who were absent.

We can deduce from this submission that the sahabah used to compare notes among themselves during the Prophetic era and afterwards. It is not on record that the four guided caliphs, despite their closeness to the Prophet, were always in his company; hence they also asked questions on specific matters from those who were present when a proclamation was made on certain issues. This deduction however has been challenged by the critics of Hadith literature. They are arguing that some notable sahabah were vehemently opposed to Hadith narration not to talk of its recording or comparing notes among themselves. The names of both the first and the second caliphs are very prominent in this regard. Ahmad Amin states that both Abubakar and Omar opposed the narration of Hadith. His view is based on the following event.

Qarzah Ibn Ka'ba narrated that we embarked on a journey to Iraq Omar escorted us until we reached the place called Harar. He performed ablution by washing each part twice then he said: "Do you know why I have escorted you? We said yes, because we are all companions of the Prophet". He then said "you would come across a group of people who have difficulty in the recitation of the Quran, likened to a person climbing the palm tree. Do not narrate any hadith to them because it will confuse them. Perfect recitation of the Quran and limit your narrations

from the messenger of Allah. Proceed on your journey and I am with you. When Qurzah met the people, they enquired about hadith, he then said. Umar had forbidden us".

This event is self-explanatory and as such to use it as the basis of preventing the recording of Hadith is far-fetched and wishful thinking. Umar had made himself clear. He did not want the people to be confused because of their level of Quranic education. It is evident from the episode that if they had perfected their recitation, they would have met the standard considered safe by Omar to allow them to have free access to the Hadith. Therefore, to present this event in such a way as to prove that Umar was vehemently opposed to the recording and the transmission of Hadith will not in our view, be correct. Another critic, who shares Amin's submission on Umar is Mahmud Abu Riyyah. He bases his assumption on the fact that Umar was alleged to have prevent the Prophet from writing a book as contained in the following narration.

The Prophet was reported to have asked for a paper to write something on his sick bed. To this Umar said, "the Prophet is in the state of coma, the book of Allah is sufficient for us".

We are tempted to observe that this incident is extremely doubtful. The expression that "the Prophet is in the state of coma" can be interpreted in many ways. It could be that Umar was sympathetic to the Prophet's poor health rather than opposing him as wrongly claimed by the shiah scholars. It can also be contended that the Prophet was said to be unlettered, how

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then was it possible for him to write a book while in the state of coma and on the sick bed? In any case this event does not suggest that Umar was against the recording of Hadith. Azami strongly believes that Umar used to quote Hadith in his official letters and in this way many hadith were recorded and transmitted by him.

Furthermore, it is on record that Umar, during his caliphate, thought of compiling the Traditions but abandoned the idea for fear that the people should keep to them and leave the Quran. This could be regarded as another supportive argument that some companions paid attention to the preservation of the hadith in the same manner they had the Quran written down on the available scantily written materials. The fear of mixing the two was therefore the major concern of Umar in this regard.

The first caliph Abubakar is also alleged to have opposed the transmission and recording of Hadith. He was said to have observed that “We have the book of Allah in our midst; you should follow its injunctions. This argument is not strong enough to attract serious reaction. However, As-Sibaic quotes an instance which suggests that Abubakar used to reject any Hadith narrated by an individual narrator. Instead he used to call other witnesses. The incident being referred to, to the best of our knowledge happened once in the case of inheritance as follows:

When a grandmother came to Abubakar asking about her share in the inheritance of her grandson, he replied: “I have not found a share for you in the book of Allah and the Prophet did not fix any share for such a case”. He asked the

companions whether the Prophet gave a grandmother one Sixth. Abubakar asked him whether anyone was with him at such occasion to state as Mughirah had said upon this statement; Abubakar gave the grandmother one sixth.

From this incident, it is unequivocally convincing that Abubakar rather than rejecting Hadith laid a solid foundation for the principle of authenticating and disparaging (i.e *llmul-jarh wa ta adil*). It is also on record that he wrote down about five hundred (500) Hadith which he later burnt. The burning could either be a way of discouraging the writings of hadith and the Quran on the same sheet or it could be as Azami claimed that at the time of writing he did not know the position of the Prophet on the issue. It could also be that he suspected that it contained some hadith related by unreliable people.

## CONCLUSION

Despite the thesis and the anti-thesis of recording during the time of the Prophet, it is incontestable that Hadith were both orally transmitted and some sahabah had it written down. The opposing argument that stems from the fact that the Prophet was reported as having frowned at its recording can be disregarded, because if the recording were not in practice, he would not have kicked against it.

The second argument worthy of consideration is the fact that every society has certain norms, values handed down through generations. The existing generation is its custodians for onward  
**(Conton Page No.28)**

# SAYYADNA ‘UMAR BIN AL-KHATTAB

2<sup>ND</sup> KHALIFA OF ISLAM

(634-643 A.C. i.e. 13 to 23 A.H.)

Compiled by Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

## NAME AND PARENTAGE OF SAYYADNA ‘UMAR BIN AL-KHATTAB:

Sayyadna ‘Umar Bin Al-Khattab bin Nufayl bin Abdul Aza, bin Riyah bin Kurt-bin Razah bin Adi bin-Kaab-bin Luayy, the chief of the Faithful, Abu Hafs, Al Quraishi, al A’dwi, al-Faruq embraced Islam in the sixth year of the prophetic mission being seven and twenty years of age (in 583 A.C. about forty years before the great Hijrah.) An-Nawawi says that Sayyadna ‘Umar was born thirteen years after the years of the elephant.

He was one of the chiefs of the Quraish tribe and was charged with the duties of an envoy in the time of Ignorance.

## HIS SERVICES TO ISLAM BEFORE HIS KHILAFAT:

Sayyadna ‘Umar Bin Al-Khattab had great love for Allah and the Holy Prophet (S.A. W.). He participated in almost all the big battles: Badr, Uhad, Ahzab, Khaibar and Hunain etc. In the expedition of “Tabuk” he gave half of his wealth in the path of Allah. He was next to Sayyadna Abu Bakr to sacrifice his belongings for the cause of Allah. The Holy Prophet (S.A. W.) also had a deep love for him. Once he remarked, “Were

a Prophet to come after me, he would have been “Umar”. After the death of the Holy Prophet (S.A. W.) Sayyadna ‘Umar bin Khattab was the first person to pledge loyalty (Bai’at) at the hand of Sayyadna Abu Bakr and then helped him throughout the duration of his rule.

## SAYYADNA ‘UMAR’S KHILAFAT:

Sayyadna ‘Umar bin Khattab assumed the Khilafat according to the bequest of Sayyadna Abu Bakr in Jamadhil Akhirah, the thirteenth year of the Hijrah (634 A.C.) Az-Zuhri says that ‘Umar was elected to the vicegerency on the day of the death of Abu Bakr and that was on Tuesday, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Jamadal Akhirah (Recorded by Al-Hakim). He directed the government with the most complete success and victories were numerous during his time.

In the year 14 A.H. Damascus was taken, partly by convention and partly by holy war: Emessa, Ba’alabak, Basra, Ubullah were brought under Islamic state. In the same year, ‘Umar bin Khattab assembled the Muslims for the Taraweeh prayer.

In the year 15 A.H. whole of the country of the Jordon including Tiberias were conquered. And in the same year occurred the battle of Yarmuk

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and Qadissiyyah. During the same year Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas founded Kufah and Sayyadna 'Umar bin Khattab established stipends for the soldiers and instituted the registers and assigned allowances according to priority of merit (See An-Nawwi).

In the year 16 A.H. Al-Ahwaz was taken and Al-Madain, and in the latter, Sa'ad held the Friday prayers in the hall of Khusrau, and this was the first congregation assembled in Iraq, and that was in the month of Safar. In the same year was the battle of Jalula in which Yezdajird grandson of Khusrau was defeated and fled to Rai. (Jalula, a river that flows through Bakuba, and where the Persians were defeated with great slaughter, no less than a hundred thousand it is said, having fallen). The river took its name of Jalula, says Yakut, from the excessive (Jall) number of the slain. In the same year, Takrit was captured and Sayyadna 'Umar bin Khattab marched and took Jerusalem and preached at Al-Jabiyah his famous discourse. (Jabiyah was in the province of Jaydur in Palestine). In the same year Kinnasrin, Aleppo, Antioch, Manbij, Saruj, Kirkisiyah were captured by treaty and holy war. In the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, the Era of the Hijra was adopted by the advice of Sayyadna 'Ali.

In the year 17 A.H. 'Umar enlarged the mosque of the Holy Prophet, and a famine occurred in Hijaz and it was called the year of destruction and 'Umar through the merits of 'Abbas prayed for rain for the people. Ibn Saad records on the authority of Niyar-al-Aslami that when Sayyadna 'Umar went forth to pray for rain he appeared with the mantle of the Apostle of God upon him.

And from Ibn A'awn that he said, "Umar took the hand of 'Abbas, and lifted it upon and said. "O God! I implore you by the uncle of your Prophet, that You will cause this draught to pass away from us, and send down rain upon us; and they did not quit the place till it rained, and the heavens poured down rain upon them for days." During the same years Al-Ahwaz was taken by treaty.

In the year 18 A.H. Jundayasabur, Hulwan, Edessa, Sumaysat, Harran, Nasibun, and part of Mesopotamia and Mosel and its adjacent districts were captured. In the year 19 A.H. Caesarea was overpowered. In the year 20 A.H. Egypt was conquered, though it is also said, that with the exception of Alexandria which was taken, the whole of Egypt surrendered under convention. Local Christians and Jews were given freedom of religion; various taxes imposed by the Romans were abolished and the general condition of the country improved. The Egyptians had never enjoyed such a period of prosperity and peace before. 'Ali bin Rabah says that the whole of Mauritania was won by force. Tustar (the present Shuster in Khuzistan) was also taken possession of. In the same year died the Roman Emperor (Heraclius), and Sayyadna 'Umar expelled the Jews from Khaybar and Najran and apportioned Khaybar and Wadi-ul-Qura among those who had been present at the expedition. Wadi-ul-Qura is between Tayma and Khaybar.

In the year 21 A.H. Alexandria, Nahawand and Barqah and other places were taken. After this the Persians were unable to muster any army.

In the year 22 A.H. Adarbijan was subdued

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through convention, and Dinaur, Misabdan, and Hamadan captured and Tripoli in Morocco as well as Rai, Aksar and Kumas.

In the year 23 A.H. took place the conquest of Kirman, Sajistan, and Makran of the mountainous districts and Isphahan and its dependencies.

Towards the close of the year occurred the death of the chief of Faithful, 'Umar bin Khattab after his return from the pilgrimage, he being martyred (on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 644) by Abu Lulu. It is recorded in the history that Sayyadna 'Umar was stabbed on Wednesday the 26<sup>th</sup> of Dul-Hijjah and was buried on Sunday the first of the Sacred month of Muharram being sixty three years old, some say, he was sixty-six, and some sixty-one. Sayyadna Suhayb prayed over him in the mosque.

According to the Tahdib-al-Muzani, the impression on the signet ring of Sayyadna 'Umar was "*Death is a sufficient admonisher.*"

#### **SAYYADNA 'UMAR'S UNIQUE SERVICES AS KHALIFA:**

Al-A'skari says that he was the first who was called Chief of Faithful (Ameerul Mu'meneen), and the first who adopted the Era of Hijra, and the first who established public treasury, and the first who instituted the prayers of *at-Taraweeh* of the month of Ramadhan, and the first who went the rounds at night, and the first who punished lampooning, and the first who gave eighty stripes for indulgence in wine, and the first who forbade the sale of female slaves who had born children to their masters, and the first who as-

sembled the people to prayers over the dead with four Takbirs, and the first who instituted the public register, and the first who brought corn from Egypt by the Bay of Aylah (A'qbah) to Madeena, and the first who constituted the poor-rate in Islam to be used unalienably for the services of God, and the first who adopted the deviation by excess in *the division* of inheritances (For the explanation of the term A'awal. It is recommended to readers to see the Muhammadan Law of Inheritance). Sayyadna 'Umar was also the first who instituted the dedication of horses for religious service, and the first who said "may God lengthen the life," (he said it to A'li); and the first who said, "may God strengthen you," (he said it to A'li). This is the end of Al-A'skari narration.

An-Nawmi mentions in his *Tahdhib*, that he was the first who adopted the use of the scourge. Ibn Saa'd states this in his *Tabaqat*, and adds that it used to be said afterwards "Verily the scourge of Sayyadna 'Umar bin Khattab is more terrible than your swords." He continues, "he was the first who established Qadhis in the provinces, and the first who founded the cities of *Basrah* and *Kufah*, and placed in a flourishing condition *Mesopotamia*, *Syria*, *Egypt* and *Mosal*."

Ibn A'sakir records on the authority of *Ismail bin Ziyad*, that he said, that A'li, passing by the mosque in the month of Ramadhan in which lamps were burning, exclaimed, "*may the Lord illumine 'Umar in his grave as he has illuminated for us our mosques.*"

Ibn Saa'd says that 'Umar established meal houses, and placed within them flour and

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parched barley meal, and dates and currants, and what might be necessary to aid the disabled traveller, and stored along the road between Makkah and Madina, what would relieve those unable to continue their journey. He likewise demolished the mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and increased and enlarged it and floored it with pebbles. It was he who expelled the Jews from Hijaz to Syria, and transferred the people of Najran to Kufah. He also put back the praying station of Prophet Ibrahim, to the place where it now stands.

#### **IMPORTANT BATTLES FOUGHT DURING 2<sup>ND</sup> KHALIFA:**

The Battle of Namriq, the battle of Bridge, the battle of Buwaib, the battle of Qadsiy, the battle of Jalula, conquest of Syria, the battle of Yarmuk, Fall of Jerusalem, conquest of Jazirah Mesopotamia, the conquest of Egypt etc. took place.

Sayyadna Saa'd bin Abi Waqqas was appointed the commander of Muslim army to fight at Qadsiyya. When the army was leaving Madina, Sayyadna 'Umar gave instructions to Sayyadna Saad. Some of those are as under:

*“Allah does not repel evil with evil but he repels evil with good. All men high and low are equal before Him. One can win Allah’s favour only through devotion to His service. Remember that the “Sunnah” of the Holy Prophet is the only correct way of doing things. You are going on a heavy mission which you can discharge only by following the Truth. Inculcate good habits in yourselves and in your companions.”*

Sayyadna Sa'd encamped at Qadsia. He sent an envoy, Sayyadna Numan bin Maqran to the Emperor Yezdgird who told him about Islam and about the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.):

*“O Persians, we call you towards the path of peace, i.e. Islam. If you accept it, you are our brothers and we will leave Allah’s Book, the Holy Qura’n for your guidance to follow His commandments. If you reject this sacred message, pay us the “Jizia” (Defence Tax). The third alternative is the sword in case you reject the first two offers, so that we may talk our own course to spread this message.”*

The battle started at Qadisiy in June 637). The Muslims were 28000 in number and the Persian army were 120,000. Muslims won the war.

#### **SAYYADNA 'UMAR AT JERUSALEM:**

Sayyadna Abu 'Ubaidah and Sayyadna Khalid Bin Walid laid siege to the great city of Jerusalem. The people of Jerusalem offered a peaceful truce provided the “Khalifah” came in person to sign the treaty in their presence. Sayyadna 'Umar bin Khattab (2<sup>nd</sup> Khalifa of Islam) appointed Sayyadna 'Ali as his deputy in Madina and went to Jerusalem with his slave. They were having one camel on which each of them rode by turn. When Sayyadna 'Umar was entering Jerusalem it happened to be the slave's turn to ride on the camel. Though the slave offered his turn to the Khalifah but he refused and remarked: *“The honour of Islam (i.e. being Muslim) is enough for all of us.”* He entered Jerusalem holding the rope of the camel on which was riding his slave. His clothes were dirty and there were several patches on them. Sayyadna Abu 'Ubaidha, Khalid Bin Walid and other com-

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manders came some distance to receive him. They were wearing costly garments. This made Sayyadna ‘Umar angry. He threw some pebbles at his generals (to show his anger) and said: *“Have you changed so much in just two years? The only way for the success is the way of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).*

Then Sayyadna ‘Umar signed the treaty under which the inhabitants of Jerusalem were granted complete security of their life and property. Their places of worship were secured and remained intact. All the people were allowed to follow their religion freely.

The gates of the city were then opened and the Muslims entered the Jerusalem in the year 16.A.H. (i.e. 635 A.C.). According to some history books the date given on the treaty signed by Sayyadna ‘Umar falls in the 17<sup>th</sup> year A.H. It is possible therefore that the Muslims conquered it early in 17<sup>th</sup> year A.H. When Sayyadna ‘Umar visited the city, the time of Salat had reached. The Christians allowed the Muslims to perform Salat in the big church but Sayyadna ‘Umar declined to do so that it might not be an excuse for the future generations to take over the church from them. He offered the Salat with the Muslims on the steps of the church. Even then he gave in writing to the Bishop that the steps would never be used for congregational prayer or for the Adhan in future.

#### **THE SEVERE FAMINE AND PLAGUE:**

In the year 17-18 A.H. Hijaz (Northern Arabia) and Syria were faced by a severe famine and drought. Sayyadna ‘Umar took steps to get food supplies from Egypt, part of which had been

conquered by Sayyadna ‘Amar bin ‘Aas. He sent three big ships of grains to Madinah which were unloaded in the presence of Sayyadna ‘Umar Bin Khattab. He did not eat any delicacy (butter etc.) during the famine period. When he was requested to take care of his health he said, *“If I don’t taste suffering, how can I know the sufferings of others.”*

About the same time plague spread in most parts of Iraq, Syria and Egypt and it caused great havoc not only to civilians but also to Muslim armies. After the plague Sayyadna ‘Umar went to Syria to inspect the losses caused by the plague. Three important figures Abu ‘Ubaidah, Muadh bin Jabal and Yazid bin Abu Sufyan had passed away. He appointed Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan as the governor of Damascus in place of his brother Yazid bin Abi Sufyan.

#### **SOME ACCOUNTS OF SAYYADNA ‘UMAR AND HIS DECISIONS:**

The period of Sayyadna ‘Umar’s caliphat undoubtedly was the Golden Age of Islam in every respect. He was an extraordinary genius who not only moulded the destiny of the nation but made history of his own. It was ‘Umar under whose rule Islam became a world power and the mighty empires of Persia and Byzantine crumbled before the arm of Islam. Sayyadna ‘Umar bin Khattab was an exemplary administrator who originated an efficient system of administration, and thus he was the real founder of political system of Islam. He safeguarded the internal safety by introducing the police force; he gave stipends to the poor;

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he constructed cantonments and forts for the safety of Islamic armies; he founded new cities for the growth of Islamic culture and civilization; he improved agriculture and economics of the Islamic state; he founded the educational system in an Islamic state.

It is narrated that ‘Umar bin Khattab went forth one night wandering about Madina, as he was frequently in the habits of doing, when he passed by the house of one of the woman of the Arabs whose door was bolted upon her, and she was saying:

*“This night whose stars wander in their nightly journey, is wearisome.*

*And keeps me sleepless, for I have none with whom I may be merry.*

*And, by Allah, were there no God whose issues were to be feared!*

*But I fear a Watcher, who keeps word;*

*Over our souls, and whose recorder never is negligent.*

*The fear of the Lord and shame hinderes me;*

*And my husband, too worthy of honour that his place should be taken.”*

Sayyadna ‘Umar bin Khattab therefore wrote to his prefects in the field that no one should be detain on military service against the enemy for more than four months.

Sayyadna ‘Umar bin Khattab was martyred on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 644 A.C. by a slave Abu Lulu while praying the Fajr prayer in Madinah.

## **OPINES OF AHLE BAIT ABOUT ‘UMAR BIN KHATTAB:**

Abu A’bdullah Sufyan as-Thauri-b-Sai’d-b-Masruk (a native of Kufah and the highest authority in tradition and other sciences) said: “Whosoever thinks that Ali had more right to the Caliphate, than Abu Bakr, has ascribed blame to Abu Bkar, ‘Umar, the Fugitives and the Auxiliaries. And Sharik has observed, “no one who has goodness in him, places A’li before Abu Bakr and ‘Umar.” And Abu ‘Usamah says, “do you know who were Abu Bakr and ‘Umar? – those two men were the father of Islam and its mother. And Jafar as-Sadiq said, “I am quit of any one who mentions Abu Bakar or ‘Umar otherwise than favourably.”

Jabir relates that ‘Ali went to ‘Umar when he was at prayers and said, “may the mercy of God be upon you! There is no one with the record of whose actions it would be more pleasing to me to meet God, (after the companionship of the Prophet) than this performer of prayers.” (Al-Hakim).

Ibn Abbas was asked regarding Abu Bakr, and he said, he was like goodness in itself; “and he were asked regarding ‘Umar, and he said, “he was like a wary bird that sees a snare in every path, to take it;” and he was asked about ‘Ali, and he said, “he was full of resolution and vigilance and wisdom and dignity.”

‘Ali said, “when the righteous are mentioned, then be quick and mention ‘Umar: we used to say not without reason that the divine presence speaks by the tongue of ‘Umar.” (At-Tabri)

# CHALLENGES TO ISLAM SOLUTION LIES IN CONVEYING THE DIVINE MESSAGE

*The stigmatization of Islam is a legacy of the West, writes M.H. Lakdawala*

Islam. It's an innocuous five-letter word, but after September 11, its sub-text has, sadly, been rendered more sinister than ever before. Islam, read Jihad, read fundamentalism, read terrorism, read destruction of infidels, is the subliminal message flung at audiences by American television channels that juxtapose horrific images of the WTC bombings with those of celebrations in Palestine and declarations of support of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan. It's a message that's being reiterated by Muslim-baiters all over the world including India.

In India challenges can broadly be divided into two categories external and internal.

## **Stigmatisation of Islam**

The stigmatization of Islam, first among the external challenges, is a legacy of the West. Right from the Crusades; the Islam has been equated with fundamentalism by Judeo-Christian thinkers and journalists take Samuel Huntington's notoriously ill-founded thesis in *The Clash of Civilizations*. But to construe the September 11 attack as one on Christianity by Islam is ridiculous. It is preposterous to draw Islam into

this debate since no religion sanctions violence, not to say of Islam.

It is not only the western media that is responsible for Islam's image problem. A few days ago, S. Gurumurthy of the Swadeshi Jagran Manch declared on television that America was experiencing Muslim terrorism only now, but India had been suffering it for the last 1000 years. It was shocking and more so by the fact that the anchor did not even attempt to counter that statement. This kind of media-spread poison reinforces the perception gained from history books that Muslims were all "temple-breakers" and "slaughterers of infidels".

Even the liberal media, in its quest for sensationalism, is to blame. Take the recent so-called *fatwa* (diktat) on *Hijab* issued by the Lashkar-e-Jabbar to Muslim women in Kashmir. The Lashkar-e-Jabbar is a completely obscure militant group, yet this was front paged by the media. But was the condemnation of the *fatwa* by the Muslim Organisations in India given equal prominence? No. Again, when the Bamiyan Buddhas were destroyed by the Taliban in Afghanistan, all Muslims from Iran to

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Egypt to India condemned this barbaric act. I don't remember this kind of confluence of Muslim views on any issue in the last 40 years. But again that gets relegated to the media sidelines. So, cranks use this media penchant for sensationalism to gain instant fame never mind that the image of the average Muslim takes a further battering.

In spite of Gopal Singh commission coming out with the facts that Muslims in India are not only most backward but also discriminated three decades ago none of the governments showed any interest in removing poverty and illiteracy amongst the community. The percentage of Muslims in the judiciary, bureaucracy, police, public and private sectors ranges from 0.5 to 2 per cent well below their 15 per cent population in India. Thus employment and education is one of the major challenge faced by Muslims here.

The part played by politicians is also crucial. There's also the fact that the political representation of Muslims has been progressively going down, what have any of the so-called secular parties done to promote leaders within the community? Have they ever fielded a Muslim candidate from a constituency, which is not Muslim-majority? The net result of this kind of politics is that even the Muslim politician feels compelled to appease their high command, emphasis his secular credential and appear more secular than anyone else.

Media is following the official line not even questioning the Police account.

The trend is toward branding entire family, as accused even if one member of the family is arrested.

Using the pretext of National security Police randomly conduct combing operation in the Muslim localities, from which accused belong.

Many innocent youngsters and there family are been harassed and detained for questioning.

Sangh Parivar's new strategy is to brand more and more Muslims Individual and Organisations as anti-national and project the distorted image of the community before the masses. This way Sangh Parivar can easily sidelined Muslims. When the issue of National security comes even the Human rights activist and organization refused to comment. Also under the pretext of National security all the rights of the accused stand suspended.

### **Myriad Brands of Islam**

First among the internal challenges is that Islam in India does have a greater hold on the Muslim masses. Most Indian Muslims are poor and illiterate, there is bound to be a disproportionate influence of the clergy. For backward people the only source of literacy is Madrasas. Also, different social classes understand religion differently. For the upper classes it's more of a philosophy, for the lower classes an emotional support. That's why the Ulema, who are themselves from the poorer classes they come out of madrasas that only the poor patronize tend to have a peculiar view of the religion and perpetrate it through their teachings.

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Various organization preach and emphasise their brand of Islam. Some Islamic organizations give emphasis on particular aspect of Islam another on some other aspect.

Even the Islamic literature though outdated in most cases more of reflect the viewpoint of the particular sect, or organization.

In this slew of Islamic versions the quintessential Islam is lost. It not only confuses the young generation but also pushes them away from Islam. Many a time these branded Islam produce extreme reaction from a section of society that harm the entire Islamic cause.

The term *Jihad* is now part of the language of international discourse. But instead of helping to heighten the understanding of Islam, its repeated mention is hurting the religion's image. Media needs to shoulder some blame for that. But Muslims should also realize that the meaning of *Jihad* has been hijacked by the very people who have resorted to violence in its name.

The Holy Qur'an itself does not preach violence as is commonly believed. In the Quran, the permission to use violence is purely contextual, not normative. In fact, the word Islam itself means peace. Commentary on verse 2. 192:

God, in whom the believers have faith, is forgiving and ready to pardon even the worst criminal and sinners after they have renounced their arrogant defiance towards Him. It is suggested that this attribute of God should be reflected in the behavior of the believer as well. Hence, whenever the believers have to resort to armed conflict, they should do so not for the

sake of quenching their thirst for vengeance but in the just cause of their defense. Their conflict with any group should last only as long as that group is fighting them. As soon as it gives up this fight the hostility should cease. Today's terrorism has to be seen in political, not religious context. Religion has nothing to do with all this.

Moderation is a part of faith, so those who accuse Muslim schools of fostering fanaticism should learn a bit more about Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Ruined are those who insist on hardship in faith and, a believer remains within the scope of his religion as long as he doesn't kill another person illegally.

Such knowledge and words of guidance are desperately needed at this time, to separate fact from falsehood, and to recognize the Last Prophet's own definition of that which makes a person representative, or otherwise, of the faith he lived and the one we try to teach.

Ignorance about Islam as it was revealed to Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is a major bane of the community. Hearsay has become a major source of Islamic Knowledge. The trend of reading authentic literature and doing research from the basic sources like the Quran, the Hadith and Shariah is non-existing. Thus a community which has a large number of its members unaware of their own religion its survival will always be at stake.

Due to the peculiar conditions in India Muslims are still in a defensive mode enclosed in their shell. The community as a result has closed all doors of self-correction and reforms from within.

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Hence the defect in the community is giving bad name to Islam.

Moreover, even the Ulema and Islamic scholars are divided into various sects and groups leading to the stagnation. *Ijtihad* has become a controversial term and no group is even ready to touch it even with a barge pole.

On the other hand, Muslim intelligentsia is not only alienated from the community main stream but also have no interaction with the masses nor Ulema.

Islam is the total way of life. Ironically, Islamic teachings do not reflect in the Muslim society. Islam has been reducing to many compartments and emphasis puts on rituals and various rites. Thus as George Bernard Shaw said Islam is the best but Muslims are the worst, holds true to Indian Muslims.

Since Islam has been reduced to compartments the morality, values, ethos and discipline is totally lacking. In spite of Islam giving emphasis on these Muslims are earning a bad name for themselves and Islam.

India is a plural society. A common Muslim still is ignorant about his responsibility to his Non-Muslim brothers. Due to the circumstances Muslim have become inward-looking and lack any initiative in having interaction with non-Muslim even Islamic organization total focus is on the community rather than on Da'wah work.

The Qur'an acknowledges the coexistence of other faiths and in doing so acknowledges that other cultures can live together in peace. There

is no compulsion in religion. It states, meaning that people should not be compelled to change their faith. Elsewhere it states, To you your religion; to me mine. Respect for religious values and justice is at the Quran core. The Quranic history provides ample examples of inter-religious and international relationships; of how to live together.

In this great country, opportunities of propagating pure Islam is in abundance. Being secular and democratic and tolerant society the people of this nation is waiting since ages that someone convey them the true religion.

With the revolution in the field of mass communication new avenues are beckoning the Muslim Ummah to communicate the Message from the Almighty to a vast multitude of humanity.

**BASE YOUR LIFE ON  
ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES**

*“Believers! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those from among you who are invested with authority; and then if you were to dispute among yourselves about anything refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you indeed believe in Allah and the Last Day; that is better and more commendable in the end;*

**(Al-Quran.4:59)**

# DAWAH-SOME PRACTICAL HURDLES AND SUGGESTIONS

By. Dr. Habeeb Haris

"When our first father Adam was sent down to earth, he was reminded in advance that during this temporary life guidance from God would be sent and those who follow the guidance will succeed and those who reject it will have a disturbed life and would be the real losers in the final phase of the everlasting life of Hereafter: Let the Muslim do their duty, call the people of the World towards building a peaceful world which accepts the authority of God and in which peace and dignified life is ensured for all human beings". (*Editor*)

However, one penetrating look is enough to see the ominous cracks developing in the shell under which the Muslim mind and soul had been seeking to hibernate in order to escape from the field of Dawah. All said and done, there is also an earnest need to understand some practical difficulties that are being faced by the grass-roots Dawah worker, not to use them as an excuse but to try and solve them, make the work as easier and practicable as humanly possible.

Avoiding stereotypes and practically outlandish approach resulting from 'drawing-room' gloating which has unfortunately become a part of our

identity and one of the main causes of our malignant spectral maladies, let us directly tackle the field problems.

## **Literature:**

Even though there has been a considerable effort in this field, it is still obviously felt that there is a scarce amount of literature which directly seeks to satisfy the non Muslims query.

Unfortunately, most Islamic books are authored with the Muslims in mind. A new set of dynamic writers should come up and address the countrymen directly in a simple and sweet language, keeping in view the mindset of the addressee. Basic topics of Islamic faith like *Tauhid, Risalat, Akhirah* should be dealt with from different angles targeting different sets of people like atheists, polytheists, tritheists, educated, semi-educated and uneducated etc. Logical and compassionate argument driven by *Ikhlās* in approach is needed.

Attractive and suitable title with systematically arranged material but subsidized price would help in wide distribution. The verses of the Holy Quran which address the polytheists in particular should be compiled separately with adequate explanatory notes.

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## **Ideological Dawah**

Books which present Islam as the only viable solution to all the problems of the country should be brought out with crisp observation dealing with each problem exhaustively and authoritatively with convincing solution. Our approach should be both ideological and religious. The loopholes and the failures of all other ideologies should be highlighted and aura around them shattered along with the people; faith in them. Of course this could require more scholarship and research than the religious and spiritual projection of Islam. Islamic Dawah does not mean calling people to a glossy yet, hollow spirituality, rather Islamic Dawah is an open invitation to the Islamic system which includes ideology and state which of course is based on Islamic faith and fortified with Islamic spirituality.

A judicious mix of Dawah of faith and Dawah of ideology depending upon the mental background of the audience is needed. This should be highly subjective and selective. All this 'trouble', because Dawah, according to the Quran, should be with wisdom and beautiful preaching.

## **Initiation Problems**

Even though many people are convinced about the need for Dawah work, they face an internal barrier due to which getting initiated in the work becomes difficult. One of the reasons may be naivety. This can be successfully tackled by beginners in Dawah teams along with someone who is a reasonably experienced player in this game. This would help remove the impediments in initiation and approach.

## **Dawah Kit**

Some questions and misconceptions regarding the Islamic faith and system are stereotypes. For example the status of women in Islam, Triple Talaq, Polygamy, Jihad, Inheritance, Purdah etc. It will be a good idea to provide our workers with such common questions and their answers to boost their morale and mental preparedness to jump in the Dawah field with confidence. The Dawah kit may include some basic guidelines of approach towards people of different backgrounds, leaflets and folders on basics of Islam etc.

## **Cornering**

Many a time it happens that for the sake of initiating a dialogue on Dawah with a non-Muslim who is not a very good acquaintance, the da'ee raises a few points regarding the general corruption in the society etc. So far so good, but it will not help in pinning down the listener and zero upon him and turn the dialogue into a personal talk, because as soon as the listener senses that he is being cornered, he tries to diver the topic and escape or he may simply pull down your confidence by retorting "You may be right but why are you telling all this to me?" And with this, our enthusiastic da'ee will be clean-bowled unless he has the guts to take up this challenge and bounce back by directly and confidently giving the Dawah of Islamic faith and showing concern regarding the listeners fate in the here after and clearly pointing it out that his future is in his own hands and correct faith in God is necessary for salvation.



## WOMAN'S SAY IN HER MATRIMONIAL MATCH-FIXING

As woman was denied the right to speak and express her opinion on an important issue or problem of life, she could not give utterance to her own will or desire in the matter of being given away in marriage. Her parents or elders of the family made such decisions and married her off to whomsoever they like. And she could not refuse or even protest. Her objection or opinion in this particular matters was considered extremely undesirable and most improper (violation of feminine decorum). The society interpreted it in ways reflecting on her moral character. Any remark on her part relating to her martial arrangement and rejecting the selection of the elders was considered a sign of her dissoluteness.

It is usually said that giving her a free hand in the matter of matrimonial arrangements is against her own interests. She is likely to take faulty decisions due to her immaturity and lack of experience. Her parents or guardians more experienced and having better knowledge of men and matters, are less likely to err in their decisions. Moreover, they are her well-wishers and cannot deceive her.

Undoubtedly, there is truth in it that her guardians can make a better selection of the partner in life for her, but it cannot be denied either that the guardians are guilty of excesses in this regard, and so often they make these matches a means of serving their own selfish ends. At least, it is difficult to deny the fact that the parents or guardians do not keep before them norms to which their daughter attaches great importance.

Therefore, it would not be in the fitness of things to leave the selection of partners for girls entirely to their guardians.

It is a fact that the entering of a girl in a contract of marriage with some man is an important event. Both of them start a new phase of life and the match had better in order with the mutual consent of the principle parties concerned (instead of leaving it entirely to the seconds). It would not be proper and reasonable to impose upon the girl the decision about her future life against her wishes.

Islam has certainly attached importance to the guardian of girls being given in marriage, but it has also stressed the point that her permission is essential in a marriage tie. If the ward happens

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to be a widow or a divorced woman her explicit consent (spelt out in so many words) is necessary. In case of a virgin, however her silence is to be deemed her consent and concurrence. Abu Hurairah reports the Prophet (peace be upon him) to have said: "The widow or a divorcee shall not be given in marriage without asking for her opinion (about the match) and a virgin without her consent."

The companions submitted that a virgin should not give utterance to her opinion. How are we to obtain her permission? The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "Her silence is her consent."

If a guardian of woman gives her away in marriage and she disapproves of it, it would stand null and void. So we find that when Khans' Bint-e-Khizam was given in marriage against her wishes (she complained) and the Prophet (peace be upon him) nullified the contract.

Many more such cases have come for mention in the Hadith literature. A minor girl can be given in marriage by her guardian. But the jurists are of the opinion that on attaining the age of majority she may retain or reject it at will.

Islam has ordained man that the woman, he marries, must be paid her dower, without which nikah is not valid. The concept of honorarium (mahar) existed during the period of Jahiliyah also before the advent of Islam. But the Arabs had practically deprived her of it in various ways:

The guardian of woman regarded her dower as his own property and took possession of

whatever she was given as dower. The Arabs regarded the daughter as a disgrace to themselves, and the news of the birth grief and shame. But from this angle it was a source of happiness also to them that her dower would increase their wealth. That is why they called the daughter Al-Nafijah. The means of increase, and in her birth they were congratulated: 'Happy birth to you of one who will increase your wealth'. Since they accepted only camels as dower, this meant that on marriage she will get camels for them as her dower and they will thus increase their wealth of camels.

It was also a common practice that on the death of a person his son from a different mother would cast a sheet of cloth over the widow (not his real but a step mother) and declare himself the owner of that widow also along with the father's inheritance. This declaration confined his claim over that woman. Neither any other person could claim her nor she could herself do anything against the step-son's will and claim. If he was serious about marrying her, he did so against the dower earlier paid to her by his deceased father. And in case he consented to give her in marriage to any other person, her dower would be his, depriving her totally of her legitimate right.

At times taking advantage of the weak positions was given less than the usual dower in vogue. Ayesha says that an orphaned girl under the care of a person, if she was beautiful and had property of her own and the guardian wanted to marry her, he would do so in preference to

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other suitors, and against much less dower than others were ready to pay her. The Quran put a check on this practice, instructing them to either pay their full dower according to usage or marry some one else (and not their poor helpless ward).

During the period of Jahiliyah (Ignorance) there was yet another stratagem for getting rid of a woman's dower, which has been called 'Shighar' in Hadith. This was a clever trick played on poor helpless women in as much as a person gave his daughter in marriage to another person on condition that he in turn would give his daughter in marriage to him. And in this cross-marriage neither of them paid either woman any dower (one canceling the other). Islam put an end to this unjust practice. Abdullah bin 'Umar says: "The Prophet (peace be upon him) has prohibited 'Shighar'."

In another report it has been said: "There is no 'Shighar' in Islam." In the report quoted by Bukhari the exchange of daughters without dower has come for mention. In another report quoted by Muslim, exchange of sisters too has been narrated. Both these are as examples, otherwise as remarked by Imam Navavi the ulama are unanimous on it that exchange of nieces, paternal aunts and cousins like uncle's daughters also come under the same prohibition.

There is consensus of the ulama that this practice of Jahiliyah has been declared unlawful by Islam. But they differ on the issue that the marriage contracts made on this basis shall be lawful or declared illegal and shall not hold. (Courtesy: *Radiance*, 13/7/2002)

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transmission to future generations; such values are generally not recorded in book form but are largely orally transmitted. The non-availability of document facts on such values does not invalidate their existence. This argument goes for the Hadith. Islam as generally acclaimed, changed the social norms of the Arabs. People continuously imbibe the culture from the primary source which the Hadith symbolizes. Despite the claim of the critics of hadith on the non-availability of writing materials, the Hadith were preserved and jealously guarded by the companions of the Prophet. It could be further observed that even if writing materials were available, the recording would be a very difficult task. This is because to comprehensively record the actions, utterances and tacit approvals of a political and religious leader during his lifetime will be a futile exercise. The Prophet did not train a particular community but the whole of humanity. The fact that proper official documentation of his teachings was made in the second and the third century of Islam does not in any way suggest pious forgery or fictitious expressions. The conclusion that can be drawn from the scholastic polemics on the recording of hadith is that, it was initially discouraged on fears that the Hadith might be confused with the Quran texts. Later when such fear was no longer entertained, the Prophet permitted the recording of Hadith. Indeed, Hadith records are beneficial to mankind in general and the Muslims in particular today as it will be everlastingly beneficial to all.

# MY HEART KNOWS WHAT PEACE FEELS LIKE

By Zakiyaa

I guess you could say I grew up Christian, although I never actually “felt” Christian; I knew that was what I was. I remember being baptized and I will never forget the whole Sunday service routine with my mother. Even though it was fun to sing along to the hymns in church and everyone around me looked so well dressed and happy, I did not take my religion seriously at all. I believed in heaven and hell the ever popular “Jesus Saves!” but honestly my faith was only a once-a-week deal. I wanted more, I wanted to live for more. I wanted not to feel less than the other people who would be sitting around me in church. I wanted to feel and know that I was equal, no matter where I went to school or how much my mother makes. I wanted answers, a logical explanation for why things are the way they are. During my first year of college I felt myself become lower and lower of a person, of a woman. There was so much hurt and confusion in my heart and I wanted it to be replaced with peace and contentment. I did not know much about any religion, not even my own at the time.

When people ask me why I embraced Islam, I have to pause for a minute, I really do not think

there are words that can express the feeling of anxiousness for my life to improve. I found everything I ever wanted or needed in Islam. In the past I had no way of life, I submitted to only bad things. Islam became my “new”, “better” way of life, my new submission now is to the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate Allah.

It took me a while for me to say my *Shahadah*. I kept waiting for some sign or symbol to come down to tell me I was finally ready to begin the first day of the rest of a whole different life. I soon realized that it was silly of me to hold such expectations, that the special sign is within me. Although it was seven months ago, I still clearly remember how unbelievably nervous I was! I felt as if every single word I uttered was bringing me closer and closer to something I never had before. Taking my *shahadah* felt like I was slowly walking, taking baby steps, inching forward and not knowing where I was going to end up when I stopped walking. Now as I am recalling my trepidation, I cannot help but smile because right now, seven months later I cannot imagine not being a Muslim woman. I feel as if I have always been this way.

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During the seven months since my conversion a lot has happened to me. One of the first things I did was to replace my American first name with my middle name "Zakiyaa". Alhamdulillah, I met so many nice sisters who immediately welcomed me into their community. There was so much to do, so much to learn! At times I felt really embarrassed, but that to me is part of the whole process of changing one's life. My first Ramadhan was so unbelievable! Ma'sha Allah I finally feel part of something meaningful, my life has direction now. When I was Christian, I remembered dreading church so much. I did not understand how a person can go through first communion and confirmation and still party. Now I look forward to *Jumaa* (Friday) and cannot wait to hear what the person who is leading the *khutba* (Friday sermon) has to say this week. Aubhan-Allah it feels as if I can actually see my life turn around.

One of the biggest things that happened to me when I converted was my mother's reaction. In the beginning she got so angry when I told her that she threatened to kick me out if I continued to be Muslim. So for the first 5-6 months I hid everything. I could not wear *hijab*, I had to hide all my Islamic books at my friend's house. I had to pray in secret when I knew my mother was occupied so she would not see me. Everything was a lie, it was the only thing I could do then. I tried the best I could to practice Islam in secret. Everything was going OK until about a month ago when my mother found some Islamic things

in my room. She stuck to her word and immediately told me to leave if this was the lifestyle I chose to take. I was on my own for a couple of days, until my mother found me and told me I can come home and practice and wear *hijab* and do whatever I chose to do! *Subhan Allah*... It is still very shocking to me when I think about it.

I guess this is my advice to those who are in similar situations as I was or to one whose life seems impossible to straighten. Only Allah can change someone's life completely. I emphasise that word because it is true, I have lived it. Only Allah can take the most stubborn woman who cursed me for being this way, and change her heart to the point where she actually buys me beautiful new *hijabs* to wear. *Alhamdulillah*, my worn-out heart finally knows what peace feels like.

(Courtesy: *Radiance*, 30th October, 1999)

### ***SPENDING OF BELIEVERS***

*"And give (O Prophet!) glad tidings) to those.... whose hearts shiver whenever Allah is mentioned, who patiently bear whatever affliction comes to them, who establish Prayer, and who spend (for good purposes) out of what We have provided them."*

*(Al-Quran-22:35)*