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BE PATIENCE AND HOLDFAST THE QURAN AND SUNNAH

Today Believers are being targeted in the country. Occasionally their mosques are attacked, their graveyards are assaulted and their Madarsahs are defamed. In the name of protection of cows, human beings are killed. Criminals are openly breaking the law of the land. It has become unsafe for Muslims to travel. For any disruptive act committed anywhere in the country, Muslims are routinely blamed, without any evidence whatsoever. The tendency of media is very strange in view of the fact that Islam does not permit disruptive acts. The Holy Quran says: *“If anyone killed a person unless it is for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he killed the whole of mankind. And if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the whole of mankind”* (The Holy Quran, chapter 5, verse:33)

However, despite all difficulties Muslims should observe patience and take no law in their hands. Mutual understanding is the best way for co-existence in the country. For Islam is peace and likes its followers to be peaceful with all His creatures.

Moreover the believers should remember that the religion (Islam) revealed by God is based on Truth. It provides comprehensive guidance for

people. It can eliminate mischief from the earth. This religion ensures everlasting peace and success in both worlds. Believers should convey the guidance of God politely and with wisdom to all people. They should guide mankind and invite it towards the right path. The religion of God seeks to establish peace, justice and Truth on earth and real peace as well as justice is possible through justice only.

Indeed God guides to the right path whom He Wills. The situation today demands that believers give up their lethargy. Let the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) be their guide. They should uphold its teachings in their lives and communicate its message of peace, brotherhood, co-existence and respect of each other to mankind.

The believers should march towards success in the light of the Holy Quran and they should lead mankind towards salvation. They should not become blind followers of the ignorant. Rather they should be enlightened teachers and guides and show the right path to seekers of truth.

Let all truth and justice-loving individuals, join hands to awaken the nation to be lover of peace, well-wisher of coexistence and respectful of mankind. It is not a difficult proposal to practice.

THE PRESENT LIFE IS SPORT AND AMUSEMENT

“What is the life of this world but amusement and play? But verily the Home of the Hereafter,-that is Life indeed, if they but knew”. (Surah Al-Ankabut:29:64)

The present worldly life is no more than child’s play, which soon comes to an end and once such play does end, the child heads towards his home. Even a king, who acts as a king in the world, is in reality not so. At an appointed hour his reign ends and he leaves the stage of the world empty handed.

Amusement and play have no lasting significance except as preparing us for the serious work of life. So this life is but an interlude, a preparation for the real life, which is in the Hereafter. This world’s vanities are therefore to be taken for what they are worth; but they are not to be allowed to deflect our minds from the requirements of the inner life that really matters.

However, no one irrespective of the position he holds, will live in this world for ever. Everyone is here for a short, pre-ordained term. Those who are swayed by worldly matters and even barter their faith and conscience to obtain worldly glory in fact commit a childish act. For they will enjoy this world for no more than a

few years, at best for around 60-70 years. In any case, they are bound to die one day and enter the Next World where they will be able to carry nothing; rather, their excessive worldliness will prove to be their bane. So viewed, this life is no more than sport and amusement.

Had people realized that this world is no more than a term of trial and that the Next Life is everlasting, they would not have wasted the time allocated to them on senseless play and amusement. On the contrary, they would have utilized each and every moment to engage in acts that would improve their prospects in the unending life of the Hereafter.

In *Sura Al-Zuha* verse 4, *Allah, the Most High, said: “And verily the Hereafter will be better for you than the present.”*

To the truly devout man, each succeeding moment is better than the one preceding it. In this sense the “Hereafter” refers not only to the Future Life after death, but also to the soul of goodness in things “in this very life. For even though some outward trappings of this Shadow-world may be wanting, his soul is filled with more and more satisfaction as he goes on.

OPPRESSION IS UNLAWFUL

1) Abu Hurairah (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: If any Muslim has oppressed his brother concerning his honour or anything else, let him obtain his pardon today (in this world) before the time comes when he will have neither Dinars nor Dirhams (i.e he will be penniless). If the aggressor may have some good deeds (in his account) the same would be deducted in equal proportion to his wrongs, if the aggressor will have no good deeds in his account, the wrongs of the aggrieved would be added to the account of the aggressor in equal proportion". (*Saheeh Bukhari*)

2) Jabir Bin Abdullah (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: Avoid cruelty and injustice for, on the Day of Judgement, the same will turn into severe darkneses, and guard yourselves against miserliness; for this has ruined nations who lived before you. Miserliness led them to bloodshed and to treat unlawful as lawful". (*Saheeh Muslim*)

3) Abu Dharr (R.A.A) reports Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) as saying that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: My servants! I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you; so do not commit oppression against one another" (*Saheeh Muslim*)

Here the Holy Messenger (S.A.W.) who was sent to the world as Mercy to mankind, has forbidden the believers to commit oppression against one another. It is a *hadith-e-Qudsi*; so though the narrator heard the Holy Messenger saying it but the words are those of Allah the Almighty. To commit oppression is such a heinous act that Allah, Who is Al-Rahman and Al-Raheem, first made it unlawful for His Exalted Self and then prohibited His Servants from committing it. This enhances the height, seriousness and the exalted significance of the commandment.

The Arabic word *zulm* generally means he did wrong or acted wrongfully, injuriously, or tyrannically. These English equivalents of the Arabic word are correct in their own ways, but in the Holy Quran the word *Al-Zulm* signifies the putting of a thing in a place not its own, or putting it in a wrong place or misplacing it, it may also mean transgressing the proper limit.

Thus the word *zulm* here implies that Allah does not wrong; whatever He does is based on justice; even when He punishes His servants He does what is good for them. So far as oppression on the part of human beings is concerned, it means commission of high handedness against one another.

INJUNCTIONS ON TAHARAH (Cleanliness) OF A PATIENT AND HIS SALAT

‘Allama Abdul ‘Aziz Bin Abdullah Bin Baz

(Translated by Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf)

Question: *A number of queries were put before the honourable Sheikh regarding the cleanliness of a patient and his As-Salat. So, he explicated this issue in detail, which is being reported in the following passages:)*

Answer: Allah, the Adjudated Blessing, One, the Most High, has declared *Taharah* (cleanliness) and purity to be *Mashroo*, (legalised in the Shariah). Gidding rid of impurity (*Hadath*) and removing filth and impurity, whether found on the body or the clothings or the place of observance of *As-Salat*, are two conditions among a number of conditions-to be met for observing *As-Salat* correctly and properly. Therefore, it is incumbent upon a Muslim to perform *Wudhoo* (ablution) as per prescribed procedure in case of minor impurity (*Hadathe-Asghar*-impurity which renders a *Wudhoo* deficient because of urination or excretion) and to perform *Ghusl* (full bath) in case of major impurity (*Hadathe-Akbar*-caused by sexual impurities), whenever he wants to observe *As-Salat*. Now, it is necessary for a person who urinates or excretes that he performs *Istinja* (getting rid of impurity) with the help of water

or removes the impurity with the help of a strong lump of mud so that he attains the state complete cleanliness, and neatness. Now, we describe some of the injunctions related to it in the following:

It is incumbent to perform *Istinja* with water whenever anything comes out of the organs of urinations and exertion. But, if persons falls asleep or flatulence is discharged, then, in this case, there is no need of *Istinja*. Instead, a *Wudhoo* is required, because *Istinja* is declared to be *Mashroo* (legalized by *Shareeah*) for removing the impurity and no impurity was found in this case.

After excretion, *Istinja* can be performed with the help of a stony lump of mud or with any other equivalent substance. It is necessary to use at least three neat and clean stony lumps of mud for performing this *Istinja*. Because the Holy Apostle. (S.A.W.) has said: “He who makes *Istinja* after the call of nature, should take odd numbers (of stony lumps of mud).

Another Place the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said: When any of you goes to relieve himself,

he should take with him three stony lump of muds to cleanse himself, for they will be enough for him.

And the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) has prohibited to perform Istinja (the process of getting rid of impurities of excretion) with less than three stony lump of muds.

It is not allowed to perform Istinja with animal's dung, bone, eatables and for any inviolable thing. It is preferable that Istinja is performed with some stony lump of mud or something having the same property e.g. toilet paper, or brick and then, water is applied, because the stony lump of mud shall obviate the impurity and water shall cleans, the organ and, in this way, complete cleanliness shall be obtained. A man has got the option of performing Istinja with water or getting rid of unholy impurities. With the help of stony lump of mud and similar things or using the both in combination: "Anas reported. The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) used to enter the privy and I and a boy used to carry a skin of water and a pointed stuff and he used to cleanse himself with water. "It is said about 'Aisha that she directed to a group of women to ask their husbands for cleansing themselves with water, as I am unable to look them up, for the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) used to cleanse like this:

Now, if someone has to contend with either water or stony lump of mud etc, then, water is preferable, because it nullifies the after effects of impurities too, besides cleansing the place. However, if one is to contend with stony lump

of mud, three lumps of the stony mud shall suffice, provided the place gets cleansed with their application. Otherwise, fourth and fifth lumps should also be used so that it is cleansed. Nevertheless, it is preferable that odd numbers of stony lump of muds are used. Because there is a tradition that whoever performs Istinja he should use odd number of stony lump muds. And it is not allowed to perform Istinja with right hand, because Salman Farsi reported: the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) prohibited anyone to perform Istinja with his right hand. There is another tradition: "When anyone urinates, he must not touch his penis with his right hand and when goes to relieve himself he must not perform Istinja with his right hand".

Now, if the left hand has been cut or has been broken or is suffering from some disease then, of necessity, there is no impediment in performing Istinja with right hand. But, it is preferable that both the stony lump of mud and the water are used.

Since Islamic Shariah is based on a framework appropriate for ease and convenience of people in working it out, therefore, Allah the Most High, has lightened the worship of handicapped people in accordance with their disabilities so that they may worship Allah without any hardship and/or trouble.

Allah, the Most High, said in the Holy Quran: *(And has not laid upon you in religion any hardship" (Surah Al-Hajj: 78)*

Another place Allah, the Most High, said: *(Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you)* (Surah Al-Baqrah: 185)

And on third place Allah, the Most High said: *(So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can)* (Surah Al-Taghabun, (:16)

And the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said: “When I bid you anything, receive it and practice on it according to your ability”. Another place the distinguished Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “Religion is very easy”.

A patient may perform Tayammum, if he is incapacitated of using water for obtaining Taharah (Chastising cleanliness for instance, he cannot use water to get rid of Hadathe-Akbar (major impurity), whether due to some anomaly or because of the fear that the disease would aggravate or on account of any fear of delay in recovery of his health. The procedure of Tayammum is to rub off the face with inner parts of fingers and the back of hands with the palms, after striking both hands on clean and pure mud. Allah, the Most High, said in the Holy Quran: *(But if you are ill or on a journey, or any of you come after answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (i.e. sexual intercourse), and you find no water, then perform tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands)* (Surah Al-Maidah; 6)

The person unable to use water (due to certain reasons) is if he is unable to find water. Because Allah, the Most High, has said: *(So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can)*”. (Surah At-Taghabun:16)

And the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said: “When I bid you anything, receive it, and act on it according to your ability”.

There may be following conditions of a patient:

- 1) If the disease is such a minor one that there is no risk of death or of any dangerous ailment or of delay in heading or of aggravation of pain or of headache or tooth ache because of any use of water or that the patient can use the warm water without any misfortune, then, Tayammum is not allowable for such person, Because Tayammum is made lawful for avoidance of impairment and here no chance of impairment is found, instead, he is capable of using water. Therefore, it is incumbent upon him to use water.
- 2) Now, if the disease is such that there is a danger of death or impairment of any organ or suffering from a life-damaging disease because of any use of water, then, in this case Tayammum is allowable. Allah, the Most High said in the Holy Quran. *(And do not kill yourselves)* (Surah An-Nisa:29)
- 3) Again, if the disease is such that the patient cannot even move and also that there is

no one to bring water to him, then, in this case too, Tayammum is allowable.

4) If a person has got some injury or a sore or some organ has got broken or he is suffering from such a disease in which any use of water is harmful and he becomes a junubee (impure because of sexual impurities), then, in the light of the arguments described above, Tayammum is allowable for him; although he will wash the healthy parts of his body, if it will be possible, and will perform tayammum over rest of the body.

5) A patient happens to be in such a place that neither water nor mud is found there and no such person is present there who possesses water or mud, then, he will observe salat in his present state and will not defer the Salat. Because Allah, the Almighty, has said in the Holy Quran. *(So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can) (Surah Al-Taghabun; 16)*

6) The patient of Salsalul-Baul (involuntary continuous dribbling of urine), who can not get healed even after the treatment, will perform fresh Wudhu (ablution) whenever the timings of next Salat approaches. Moreover he will wash the parts of the body polluted by urine and, if it will be possible, will keep another neat and clean piece of cloth for observing Salat. However, if it not be possible, there is no impediment otherwise. Because Allah, the Most High, said:

(And has not laid upon you in religion any hardship") (Surah Al-Hajj: 78)

Another place Allah, the Most High said in the Holy Quran: *(Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you) (Surah Al-Baqrah: 185)*

And the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said: "When I bid you anything receive it and act on it according to your ability". However, a patient of such disease must be cautious that the urine does not pollute his body, dress and prayer-mat.

Tayammum becomes deficient because of all those reasons which render a Wudhu imperfect. A part from these reasons the capability of using water and presence of water after initial lack of it also render the Tayammum imperfect.

**DO GOOD
WHILE YOU HAVE
TIME**

The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) while admonishing a person directed: "You should take advantage of five things before the other five; of your young age before your old age, your health before your illness, your prosperity before your poverty, your leisure before your engagement and your life before your death". (Mishkat)



PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.) THE PERFECT ROLE MODEL

By. Khaled Almaeena

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was born on Rabiul Awwal 9 of the Hijra calendar. His birth, on Monday, came 570 years after that of the Holy Prophet Jesus (A.S.). The Holy Prophet was born in the city of Makkah to Abdullah, the son of Abdul Muttalib, the venerable Sheikh of the Quraish, the ruling clan of Makkah.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), called Al-Ameen (The Trustworthy) even by his enemies, was the last of the prophets sent by Allah. There is no other prophet on whose life so much light has been shed. Born after the age of myth, living in the full glare of history, his sayings and actions were documented as no other prophets were recorded in minute detail, their authenticity has been questioned by no fair scholar.

The Holy Prophet life is a shining example for all to follow. It was the kindest of persons a sense of compassion that was directed at Muslims and non-Muslims alike. His care for those around him and even for those who caused him harm provides shining examples of true

nobility. His love for orphans was deep, and the kindness that he exhibited to the needy, the humble and the poor knew no bounds.

It is extremely difficult for the Muslims of today to imagine and much less to endure the hardships that The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and his companions underwent. In the ninth year of his mission, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) having been persecuted and terrorized by his people in Makkah headed for *Taif*, home to the *Banu Thaqif* tribe. There he went to preach his message but was treated rudely by the tribal elders, who told him to clear off and even sent street urchins after him to beat him and pelt him with stones. He bled profusely causing his entire body to be covered with blood and his sandals to become clogged to his feet.

He headed away from the town and took respite near a rock and made a heart-rending invocation to God Almighty beseeching mercy for the people who had persecuted him a few moments earlier.

It is said that the heavens were moved by the Prophet's prayer and the Archangel Gabriel

came and said that God Almighty is aware of what has passed and that he has deputed an angel in charge of the mountains then came forward and offered to bring the mountains overlooking Taif to collide with each other to destroy the inhabitants. However, being a mountain of mercy himself and the mercy of the worlds, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) refused. Note the conduct of our noble Prophet (S.A.W.). Irritated by a little trouble or abuse from someone we spend years scheming and devising ways to take revenge. How far removed are the Muslims of today from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) who they consider their exemplar.

In spite of suffering so much at the hands of the Taif mob, The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) did not curse or seek revenge, even when the opportunity arose. Instead, he pleaded for mercy.

When there was a stop in a Makkahn woman who would repeatedly throw garbage on him as he walked in the streets, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) being an icon of compassion asked people about her and even humbly visited her after hearing she had fallen ill.

Over 14 centuries have gone by since he, the Last of the Messengers, left us, but his message one that was earmarked by mercy for the entire creation lives on. His examples live on to lead us from darkness to light. His life was one of mercy, compassion, care, consideration, kindness and tolerance for all. His sayings, known as Hadiths, bear testimony

to this. One Particular theme found in his sayings relate to the rights of women. It is without a doubt that Islam afforded women an honourable and respected position. However, it is sad to see people, many Muslims included are ignorant of this.

On one occasion, he said: "Fear Allah in respect of women. He also said: "The best of you are they who behave best to their wives". In another he said. "A Muslim must not hate his wife, and if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, let him be pleased with one that is good." In one more Hadith, he said "The more civil and kind a Muslim is to his wife, the more perfect in faith he is". It is no wonder then that the Holy Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W.) employer was none other than a woman, Sayyadna Khadija (may Allah be pleased with her). So impressed was she by his kindness, compassion, manners and trustworthiness that they married, a model marriage that is often cited by scholars as a perfect example for Muslims to follow. Unlike those jihadists who preach hatred and dislike for non-Muslims and even to those Muslims who don't subscribe to their views, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) own behavior stands contrary to the way they call to. Let them take heed to the fact that it was the Holy Prophet who accepted Safiyyah and Mariya in his home as his wives of one being of Jewish and the second being of Christian heritage.

(Cont on Page No.15)

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HONOURED SUNNAH

By Harun Yahya

“I have left among you two things; you will never go astray as long as you hold fast to them, the Book of Allah and my *Sunnah*.” (Seerath Ibn Hisham)

As our Lord has revealed in the verse “*Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and I am pleased with Islam as a religion for you.*” (Surah Al-Maida:3). Islam is doubtless the final religion. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the Messenger of Allah and the Final Seal of the Prophet” (Surah Al-Ahzab:40). The faithful learn the kind of moral values they need to display in order to attain the approval, compassion and Paradise of Allah; what they must avoid and what they must abide by; what is lawful and what is forbidden; in short, all the details regarding the kind of life that will be pleasing to Allah from the Holy Quran. Another mercy and blessing of our Lord for the believers is the Sunnah of our Prophet (S.A.W.).

Our Prophet (S.A.W.) is a blessed individual, whom Allah has sent as a role model for all people with his moral values, as is revealed in the verse: “*You have an excellent model in the Messenger of Allah, for anyone whose hope is in Allah much.*” (Surah Al-Ahzab:21) He is a role model for everyone with his faith,

godliness, knowledge and superior moral values. With his patience, trust in Allah, courage, devotion and closeness to Allah, justice, compassion, love and affection for the believers and foresight he possessed moral values that are greatly admired by the faithful. All the believers strongly desire and strive to possess these features. That is because possessing superior moral values similar to those of our Prophet (S.A.W.) means abiding by the moral values of the Holy Qura’n. For all these reasons, therefore, all words, decisions, recommendations, advice and life – the Sunnah in other words – of our Prophet (S.A.W.) is a most valuable guide for all those who wish to understand and live by the Holy Qura’n.

Allah has revealed the importance of obeying the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and adhering to his path in many verses of the Holy Qura’n. One of these reads: “*Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah. If anyone turns away, We did not send you over them as a guardian.*” (Surah An-Nisa:80)

One of the most important signs of a person's obedience and total submission to the Will of Allah is the person's obedience and devotion to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) as well. That is because Allah sent the Holy Prophet to show

people the way, to the true path. If a person wishes to become someone who abides by Allah's path and of whom Allah will approve, he must obey our Prophet (S.A.W.) and full adhere to his path. Our Lord informs us of this fact in the verse, "*For this We sent a Messenger to you from among you to recite Our signs to you and purify you and teach you the Book and Wisdom and teach you things you did not know (before).*" (Surah al-Baqra: 151). Islamic scholars are unanimously agreed that the expression "Wisdom" in this verse means the Sunnah of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

The believers have been commanded to take the Holy Qura'n and the honoured Sunnah of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) as their guides on matters over which they disagree. In the Qura'n our Lord states:

"No, by your Lord, they can not have (true) faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) their judge in the disputes that break out between them, and then find no resistance within themselves to what you decide and submit themselves completely." (Surah an-Nisa:65)

As is clearly set out in this verse, the practices of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) are an obligation for the believers. That is because the Sunnah is the interpretation and explanation of, and commentary of the Holy Qura'n. Therefore, no believer, whether man or woman has any right of rejection with regard to the honoured Sunnah of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). This is revealed in these terms in the Holy Qura'n:

"When Allah and His Messenger have decided something, it is not for any man or

woman of the believers to have a choice about it. Anyone who disobey Allah and His Messenger is clearly misguided." (Surah Al-Ahzab:36)

".... Whatever the Messenger gives you, you should accept and whatever he forbids you, you should forgo. Have fear (and respect) of Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in retribution." (Surah Al-Hashr:7)

A person's submission to our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and complete compliance with his stipulations is a sign that the person acts with his stipulations is a sign that the person acts with a devout consciousness. If a person sincerely adheres to our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and feels not the slightest doubt in his heart about the stipulations issued by him, that person is aware that he is actually abiding by the commandments of Allah. In the words "*Nor does he speak from whim. It is nothing but Revelation revealed.*" (Surah An-Najm: 3-4). Our Lord reveals that our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) spoke solely through His revelation and that his words are under His protection. Indeed, our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) has stated the importance of adhering to his path, and that subsequent generations in particular need to be most sensitive to this matter:

"... those of you who live after me will see great disagreement. You must then follow my Sunnah and that of the rightly-guided Caliphs. Hold to it and stick fast to it. Avoid novelties, for every novelty is an innovation, and every innovation is an error. (Abu Dawud, Narrated Irbad ibn Sariyah.)

The best word is the Word of Allah and the best guidance is the guidance of Prophet Muhammad

(S.A.W.) (Sunan Ibn Maajah, Muqaddima,7)

In addition, it must not be forgotten that the Sunnah of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and the path to which he called the faithful is a path that will give life to the believers.

What devout believers must do is to adhere to the path of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and to take his Sunnah as their guide, in the knowledge that he has called them to a path that will give them life. Someone who wishes to attain the mercy and paradise of Allah must build his house on solid foundations right from the outset. Someone who has taken, the Holy Qura'n as his guide and the moral values of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) as a role model is someone who adheres to the true path. In the Holy Qura'n Allah refers to people who build on solid foundations right from the outset thus:

“Who is better: someone who founds his building on fear (and awareness) of Allah and His good pleasure, or someone who founds his building on the brink of a crumbling precipice so that it collapses with him into the fire of Hell? Allah does not love wrongdoers. (Surah At-Tawba: 109)

Anyone who acts out of a fear of Allah and strives to gain His approval is a loyal follower of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), and seeks to be like him in faith and moral values. Following in the footsteps of our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), however, is only possible by adhering to the Holy Qura'n and never departing from the honoured *Sunnah*.



(From Page No. 12)

In an attitude that was revolutionary at that time, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) taught his companions to remain in their mothers service, Saying that Paradise lies beneath their feet.

Today, as we stumble through a confused and turbulent world, as we grope in darkness and as we suffer from uncertainty and depression, we must look for and grasp at the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). So that they will act as a cure for many of the social ills that have befallen our world.

The world faces a host of seemingly insoluble problems. In the West, people speak of depression and decay in society. In the East, industrial and technological progress has created a vacuum in society. Many people are floundering in darkness. They cling to values that have nothing to do with life. They join cults. For role models they look to unworthy individuals who are moral vacuums.

For us the perfect role moral is the Last Messenger of God. His life, his dealings with young and old and both friend and foe are an inspiration to all of us. Let us teach ourselves and our children about the life of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and use it in our daily lives so that we may improve our conduct and become better human beings. Let us be more tolerant, more forgiving and show compassion to all our brothers and sisters in humanity, irrespective of their race or religion. Let us pray for a better world. Ameen!

(The author is Editor in Chief, Arab News, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia)

THE HOLY QURA'N AND GENETICS

By Ahmad Wahaj Ali-Siddiqui

Before we go into details of our main theme some introductory facts will help the readers to understand the complexity of the issue.

With the development of electron microscope and the phase contrast microscope human knowledge has jumped forward and covered a vast field of things which were undisclosed to the naked eye. Thus the man stepped into a new branch of Biology known as Cell Biology. The Cell is fundamental, morphological and physiological unit of structure of living beings. Several scientists contributed to the knowledge leading to the structure of the cell in 19th century.

M.J. Schleiden and Theodore Schwann (Germans) put all these developments together and formally spelled out the observation into a convincing doctrine that cell containing nuclei are the structure basis of the organization of both plants and animals. Rudolf Virchow, another scientist made some very important generalization. Cells come only from pre-existing cells, and an inanimate matter can never produce a cells (save divine creation). On these observations a cell theory was developed stating: (a) Cell arises from preexisting cells, (b) All organisms are composed of cells and cell

products. (c) Cells are the structural and functional units of life. The formation of Cell Theory marked a great conceptual advance and it resulted in renewal attention to the living process that goes on in the cells. The detailed distribution of the cell division was contributed by Strasburger, a German botanist who observe the mitotic process in plant cells and further demonstrated that nuclei arise from preexisting nuclei. The scientists were able to determine the components of nuclei by the help of ultraviolet or fluorescent microscopy and they found in it: (a) Deoxyribonucleic acid (D.N.A.) (b) Ribonucleic Acid (R.N.A.) (c) lipids (d) Basic Proteins (e) Complex Proteins including enzymes. (f) Some phosphorus containing organic components. (g) Inorganic compounds like salts.

Much of the DNA is located in chromosomes of nuclei. In fact chromosomes are compose of 40% of DNA, 50% histone and other basic proteins, 1.5% of RNA and 8.5% acidic proteins. There are 23 pairs of chromosomes in each human cell. The gene is a portion of DNA molecule containing more than thousand base pairs. Genes are linearly arranged on chromosomes. Each chromosome contains a

definite group known as a linkage group. Those who have sense should be amazed to see what a complex and the most sophisticated human cell which reflects God's creative power that is like a speck in its size.

The scientists have agreed unanimously that the same chemical substance, DNA in the form of genes accounts for all living matter to replicate itself exactly and transmit genetic information from parent to offspring. And on the basis of ubiquitous genetic code found in all the living organisms on earth, the scientists have concluded that life appeared only once and all the forms of plants and animal are the result of the primitive creation by the Great Creator Allah: For He is well versed in every kind of creation. (36:79) A biologist Ruther Platt says: these DNA specks have a similar chemical composition are about the same size, and look like those in your dog, or in a house fly, a bread mold or blade of grass. Yes somehow the specks are coded to make every living thing different from every other living thing. (*Reader's Digest, Oct. 1962. p 144*). Thus these discoveries finally established that every living organism remains in its basic kind and no mutation or evolution is possible from one basic kind to another basic kind as was assumed by Darwin. Finally the Holy Quran was held supreme which said: "*The nature ordained by Allah in which He has created man. There is no altering to the laws of God's creation. (30:30)* literal transaction.

DNA is a chemical compound of which genes are made. Geneticists have determined that heredity information of all species by the

sequence of nitrogenous bases in the DNA molecule. It is the carrier of the inheritance code in living things. In the nuclei there exists a system by which the genes pass on the instructions that ensures transmission instructions that ensures transmission of the heredity characters.

Allah has instituted a built in code in DNA, blue print, in all species that keeps all forms of life within their basic kinds. It keeps the organism within the bounds originally set out for it by its Creator.

A human Cell tens of thousand genes grouped into 23 pairs of chromosomes; each gene contains thousand or more unit that makes for a fantastic possibility of variety within a kind. That is why as in the case of human family, hardly any two people look exactly alike even though there are around 6 billion persons on earth today. Similar is the case of animals and plants. The Holy Quran mentioned: *He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. (3.6)* We have great variety of animals and plants yet each remains in its own basic kind. The scientific studies of living cell and its components, chromosomes DNA and genes etc, have finally held that there didn't exist the remotest possibility of any evolution. The living cell is such a compact and perfect unit of life that it stands as created by Allah on the first space of life. It has such an amazing mechanism, Ruther Platt, in his book, River of Life admitted : So perfect is the original one-cell form of life and so potent for body building, for activating nerves and muscles and for procreation that cell has never altered its basic size or nature from the beginning

of life even to this day (pp 100).

When the cell stands as it was from the beginning of life till this day, then where does the question of new life forms arises as Darwin had held. The Holy Quran referring to the built in code of every living cell states: *Our Lord is He who gave to each thing its form (i.e. constitution) then guided it aright (20:50)* The Arabic word *Kulla Shai* (every thing) includes the living cell and that he gave it, its forms or constitution i.e. He created it to His will and plan and guided it aright means it shall follow its built-in code only and cannot deviate from it.

The Holy Quran is very specific that there can be no change in the laws of creation and that the power of creation rests with Allah only. Emphasizing this fact the Holy Quran said: *Those on whom you call besides Allah can not create a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose and if the fly snatches away a thing from them, they will have no power to release it from the fly. (22:73)*

If all the scientists of the world got together to create the living cell of a fly, they cant. They acknowledged the truth of the 7th century revelation in 20th century and held that cells come only from pre-existing cells.

Elaborating the hereditary characters of every living thing the Holy Quran said: *There is not a moving creature but he doth grasp it by its forelock (11:56)* Grasp of the forelock means that any and every creature cannot deviate from course schemed in its DNA by its Creator. It will move and procreate in its kind only. Rather

Platt said: All the while that DNA sits in the nuclei giving orders that will spur growth, digestion, heart beat, thinking and feeling, it is following its built in plan which it has carried down the corridors of time. It makes no alteration in its plan (*Reader's Digest, Oct. 1962*).

The DNA's built in plan includes growth from mother's womb to childhood, young age and then to old age. Referring to this genetic code causing various stages of human life the Holy Quran said: *We have created you from dust (effigy of Adam then from a Nutfah then from Alaq, then out of chewed lump of flesh partly formed and partly unformed in order that We may make it clear to you. And We cause whom We will to keep you in the womb for an appointed term then We bring you out as infants then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength (22:5)* The above revelation states various stages of human life. The Arabic word *Nutfah* means sperm of a man and a woman (Lanes Arabic English Lexicon). That is to say that *Nutfah* in Arabic is used for male and female cells. However in English the word sperm means male reproductive cell. The Holy Quran has also used *Nutfatan Amshaj (76:2)* means mingling of male and female cells. Then Holy Quran explains the stage of *Alaq* meaning that something that clings. Male and female cell cling to each other and their union forms a zygote. The built in code of the Creator in the genes around nucleus of the fertilized cell works and gradually it transforms into *Mudgha* (chewed lump) i.e. having the identical marrs of teeth. This was

discovered by the scientists by the end of 19th century and was known as somite stage. After that the formation of organs begin. The Holy Quran starts this with words *Mukhlaqa* and *Ghair Mukhlaqa* partly formed and partly unformed. In embryology it is known as organogenesis stage. Then the Holy Quran states the formation of bones and flesh (23:14). All these embryological stages are defined in the Holy Quran and they are according to the rigid built in plan which God has decreed in the genes around the nucleus of human cell. There cannot be slightest diversion from it.

Herein the 7th century revelation quite amazingly describes the three animals of one family; And He has created horses, mules and donkey for you to ride and use for show. And He has created other things of which you have no knowledge. (16:8) The desert of Arabian peninsula including the barren land of Makkah is well known. The animal used here for carrying loads and travelers is camel. But the above verse mentions horses; mules and asses. Had it been for Muhammad (S.A.W.) to write the Quran as it is held by non-Muslims, he would have certainly made mention of camels. But only God can know the animals of one specie in those pre-scientific days. A horse and a donkey can produce a hybrid mule sterile. Hybridization is possible only in the same kind. Cats and dogs are from separate families. Their gene cannot mate and produce an offspring. It is impossible to transgress the limits of special. The above verse also mentions that God has created other things which you do not know. Certainly the men of those days knew nothing which vision could not grasp like germs

and small organisms.

The Holy Quran refers to another organizer stating its inherited characteristics: *And Your Lord taught the bee to build its cells in hills, on trees, and in that in which they inhabit. Then eat of all fruits, and follow the ways your Lord which were made easy for it. There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying colour wherein is healing for mankind, Verily, in this is indeed a sign for people who think (16:68:69)*

If we analyze the above revelation we find in it the following characteristics of the bee (a) God inspired bee to make cells. (b) Its eating of all fruits. The Arabic word *thama* means produce of all plants and trees i.e. flowers etc. (c) Its following the ways of its Lord which were made easy for it. (d) coming forth of a drink of various colours from it, which refers to honey. (e) In it are indeed sign for mankind.

Inspire means to direct by divine force or to instruct or to guide. The question arises how an inspiration was drawn into bee? To say inspiration was drawn into mind or heart of bee would be meaningless, as the creatures do not possess the mental faculties. After entering into the science of genetic, man learnt that every living cell is blessed with genetic code preserved in genes around its nucleus. Every creature is destined to act under the limits of its built in code. Therefore, when the Holy Quran referred: *And the Lord inspired the bee*, it meant that Lord the Creator when created bee destined in its genes the perpetual characteristics to be inherited **(Cont on Page No. 27)**

STATISTICAL MIRACLE IN HOLY QURAN

Compiled By Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Islam is unique by virtue of the fact that it is a religion based on a Book Holy Quran. In the same way that the Islamic Ummah, whose identity and historical personality have been derived from and fashioned by the Holy Quran, is unique so is Muslim culture and civilization. No influence has been greater than the Holy Quran, in shaping spiritual and ethos of Muslim culture and civilization. If we look at the long history of religions and civilizations, it may be said, without reservation, that if ever there was a book that produced a religion, a community, a culture and a civilization, it is the Holy Quran. For this reason, the origine and destiny of the Muslim Ummah rest with Holy Quran.

It would be no exaggeration to suggest that Tafseer literature mirrors Muslim religious and social thought at its best. The real genius of the Muslim mind has expressed itself in its unceasing efforts to understand and interpret the word of God as enshrined in the Holy Quran and as exemplified in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). And just as the Holy Quran deals with all aspects of human life, thought and behavior, so Tafseer literature constitutes a spectrum

reflecting Muslim ideas in all areas of human thought and behavior. From eschatology and metaphysics to prayer and worship, from epistemology to individual conduct and social behavior, from social philosophy to the problems of familial and societal organization, from theology to law and morality, from the most sensitive aspects of motivation to the explicit problems of war and peace, to justice and *Ihsan*, to history and futurology. A meaningful history of Muslim thought can not be written without delving deep into *Tafseer* literature.

The Holy Quran has been revealed so that we may know the way that leads to God's good pleasure, follow that way ourselves and direct the world along it. Recitation of Holy Quran is an act of worship and more than an excellent course of moral training; it is also an appropriate form for the expression of our thankfulness to God for the bounty of the Holy Quran.

It is well known that the Holy Quran claims to be capable of guiding all mankind yet the student of the Holy Quran finds that it is generally addressed to the people of Arabia, who lived in the time of its revelation. Although the Holy

Quran occasionally addresses itself to all mankind its contents are, on the whole, vitally related to the taste and temperament, the environment and history, and the customs and usages of Arabia. When one notices this, one begins to question why a Book which seeks to guide all mankind to salvation should assign such importance to certain aspects of a particular people's life, and to things belonging to a particular age and clime. Failure to grasp the real cause of this may lead one to believe that the Book was originally designed to reform the Arabs of that particular age alone, and that it is only people of later times who have forced upon the Book an altogether novel interpretation, proclaiming that its aim is to guide all mankind for all time.

The Holy Book's main aim is to expound, clearly and adequately, the intellectual and moral foundations of the Islamic programme for life. It seeks to consolidate these by appealing both to man's mind and to his heart. Its methods of guidance for practical Islamic life does not consist of laying down minutely detailed laws and regulations. It prefers to outline the basic framework for each aspect of human activity, and to lay down certain guidelines within which man can order his life in keeping with the Will of God.

The glory of Holy Quran is that of the rising sun: the more it rises on your mental and spiritual horizon, the more you are lost in admiration of its glory. Its meanings are manifest and inexhaustible. The greater your experience, the

more light is your spiritual eye able to bear. And in that glory is a beauty that none can tell who has not experienced it in his soul. It is in itself the proof of the mission of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

Let's us see some more wonders of statistical Miracle in Holy Quran described by Dr. Tariq Al-Suwaidan and published in *The Muslim World Leacue Journal, Makkah, March 2011*. He discovered some verses in the Holy Quran that mention one thing is equal another. i.e. men are equal to women.

Although this makes sense grammatically, the astonishing fact is that the number of times the word man appears in the Holy Quran is 24 and number of times the word woman appears is also 24, therefore not only is this phrase correct in the grammatical sense but also true mathematically. i.e. $24=24$.

Upon further analysis of various verses, he discovered that this is consistent through out the whole Holy Quran, where it says one thing is like another. See below for astonishing result of the words mentioned number of times in Arabic Holy Quran.

WORD/MEANING MENTIONED IN THE HOLY QURAN:

Al-Dunya (This word) 115 times;

Al-Akhira (The Hereafter) 115 times;

Al-Malaikah (The Angels) 88 times;

Al-Shayateen (The Satans) 88 times;

Al-Hayat (life) 145 times;
Al-Maut (Death) 145 times;
Al-Rajal (Men) 24 times;
Al-Mara (Women) 24 times;
Benefit 50 times
Corrupt 50 times
People 50 times
Messengers 50 times
Ebless (King of devils) 11 times
Seekrefuge from Ebless) 11 times
Museebah (calamity) 75 times
Thanks 75 times
Spending (Sadaqah) 73 times
Satisfaction 73 times
People who are misled 17 times
Dead people 17 times
Muslimeen 41 times
Jihad 41 times
Magic 60 times
Fitnah (dissuasion, misleading) 60 times
Zakat 32 times
Barakah (Increasing of wealth) 32 times
Mind 49 times
Noor 49 times
Tongue 25 times

Sermon 25 times
Speaking publicly 18 times
Publicising 18 times
Hardship 114 times
Patience 114 times
Muhammad 4 times
Shariah (Muhammad's teachings) 4 times
Al-Shahr month 12 times
Al-Yahom Day 365 times
Al-Bahar (Sea) 32
Al Bar (land) 13
If we add up the total words of both "Sea" and "land" we get 45. Now if we do a simple calculation:
 $32/45 \times 100\% = 71.1111111\%$
 $12/45 \times 100\% = 28.88888888\%$
Above is what we know today, the percentages of water (Sea) and land in the World. Yet another miracle in the Holy Quran.
The miracles of the Holy Quran will never end. There will never be a time where mankind can fully take in the knowledge that is in this Holy Book. It is a miracle to all mankind, the word of God. There is no value that one can set to the words of the Creator. It is a treasure of which guides those that want to succeed in this life and the Hereafter.



MADRASA EDUCATION

Past, Present and Future

As far as the present status of Muslim education is concerned, undoubtedly, it is one of the most important dimensions of our educational system which requires urgent attention. We cannot face the challenges of the 21st century without addressing the problems of Muslim education in India, because Muslims are the largest minority of the nation comprising 13.4 per cent of population. Madrasa education is an integral part of Muslim education.

CONCEPT OF MADRASA EDUCATION

The dictionary meaning of the word *madrasa* is school. The word is derived from Arabic word *darasa* which means to impart lessons. To this word *darasa*, the syllable *ma* is added as a prefix; and as per the Arabic grammar, with this addition the word *madrasa* implies the place at which the act (of imparting lessons) is performed. In other words, *madrasa* means the place of imparting knowledge. In common language, educational institutions like pre-primary, primary and secondary schools and even part time centres of Qur'anic education attached to mosques and full time and residential institutions of Islamic education are all called

madrasas. But technically the term madrasa is used for institutions of Islamic education, which are generally full time residential schools which impart education of Islamic theology and law. Further, there are part time morning or evening centres of basic Islamic education covering recitation and reading of the Qur'an and learning of basic tenets of Islam orally. They are attached to mosques. They are usually technically called *maktabs*.

As per a survey made by "UNI (United News of India) published in its weekly UNI Backgrounder April 2, 1992, there are 12,000 madrasas in India. The question arises as to what is the relevance of these madrasas in a secular nation which is preparing itself to emerge as one of the most modern countries of the 21st century?

I think the best way to find out the exact and correct answer to this question will be to examine the role of madrasa education.

IMPORTANCE OF MADRASA EDUCATION

According to Dr. Zafarul-Islam Islahi (Reader, Department of Islamic Studies A.M.U., Aligarh),

'The reality is that madrasas are the factories to develop the character in tune with the Holy Qur'an and Hadith and they are established with a view to supply the Muslim community with experts in the Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Islamic Law and provide it with the servants of religion, teachers, preachers and reformers.

The said task itself portrays the importance of madrasa education. It is because of this importance that there is not a single Muslim habitation howsoever small, without a madrasa or maktab. It is as important as the mosque itself. These madrasas and maktab serve as the pillars of Islam.

THE PAST

The History of madrasa education in India is a significant part of history of Muslim education. It starts from the arrival of Muslims in India. According to Narendranath, 'Madrasa education in India was officially established in the period of Qutubuddin Aibak. Hundreds of mosques during this period were the centres of education. Uch, Multan, Lahore, Jaunpur, Khairabad, Patna, Surat, Delhi, Agra, etc. were the main centres of madrasa education. The number of madrasas and maktab were multiplied during the periods of Muhammad Ghouri, Iltutmish, Allauddin Khilji, Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodhi, etc. According to historian Farishta, 'The first well known madrasa in India was established in 1191 at Ajmer. It was established by Muhammad Ghouri.

As per the report of *UNI Backgrounder the*

first madrasa was established in 1710. It was known as Madrasa-e-Ghaziuddin and the same madrasa was later known as Delhi College. This does not seem to be correct. It might have been the first centre of higher learning. The Mughal period starting from Babar (d. 1530) till Aurangzeb (d. 1707) and other emperors was a glorious period of madrasa education. The structures of various mosques, forts and madrasas found even today remind us the past of madrasa education during the Mughal period. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in his book *Aasar-us-Sanadid* writes that there was a network of madrasas and maktab throughout the length and breadth of the country during the Mughal period. He further writes, 'The downfall of Mughal empire started during the period of Aurangzeb; but establishment of madrasas and their assistance continued till the last Mughal king.'

The British period is generally considered a period of strong setback to Indian educational system. But we find that madrasa education continued, flourished and saved Indian Muslim from being affected by the western culture. It was during this period that several well known seminaries were established. They include Darul-Uloom, Deoband (1866) Nadwat-ul-Ulema, Lucknow (1894) and even Jamia Arabia Islamia, Nagpur (1938).

THE PRESENT

After achieving Independence, India became a democratic and secular country. There are many persons who believe that due to the influence of

secularism religious educational centres lost their relevance. But in fact the madrasa education is still strong and has been progressing by leaps and bounds in the country. Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, the then minister of human resources development, while addressing Muslim education conference held in Delhi on May 7, 1995, stated that there were 12,000 madrasas in India.

The report of all India survey by Hamdard Education Society published in June 1996 confirms the said figure. (Pl. see editorial)

Besides the figures, the contribution of madrasa education in India has been so important that we cannot think of educational development of Muslim community by neglecting the madrasas and the maktabas. Ulema produced by these madrasas even now provide leadership not only in religious matters but in social sphere as well. Starting from Shah Waliullah (1702-1763) till Maulana Syed Abdul A'la Maududi (d.1979), the great Ulema like Maulana Quasim Nanautwi (d.1980), Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad (d.1958) and Maulana Syed Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwi have been the most prominent figures from among Muslim leaders. They are basically associated with madrasas in some or the other way.

It is because of this important role of madrasas that people and particularly Ulema call them to be the castles of Islam. But we should keep the doors of these castles open so that fresh air may enter them.

Even after accepting and appreciating the

achievements of madrasa education in India, I cannot stop myself from stating some shortcomings of present madrasa education.

SHORTCOMINGS

The most important and alarming shortcomings of madrasa education are:

- 1) Absence of definite aims and objectives, though they may be present in the mind of authorities of madrasa education but they are never clearly spelt out.
- 2) Unscientific curricula of various madrasas.
- 3) Lack of basic facilities like proper building, classroom and especially furniture, blackboard and other teaching equipments.
- 4) Outdated traditional methods and learning.
- 5) Defective system of examination and evaluation.
- 6) Isolation from modern developments in the area of natural sciences and social sciences and over emphasis on only traditional subjects with a negative outlook towards modern subjects, by neglecting the fact that "Darse Nizami", whose basic structure is adopted by almost all madrasas, did include the modern subjects of its time.
- 7) Lack of coordination among various madrasas and maktabas.
- 8) Poor quality of planning and administration.
- 9) Poor financial condition and management.
- 10) Low status of teachers in the society.

11) Lack of innovations, experimentations and researches.

Having presented the shortcomings, I would like to propose a tentative action plan for the improvement of madrasa education in the country.

ACTION PLAN

First of all, the aims and objectives of madrasa education in this country should be specifically defined. The motto of madrasa education should be "To make the young generation true servant of Almighty Allah and true well-wishers of humanity." The objectives accordingly may be:

- 1) Preparation of a specialised class, capable of guiding the community in various fields of life.
- 2) Preparation of Imams, Muezzins and scholars of Islam.
- 3) Preaching of the religion by adopting modern democratic means.
- 4) Removing misunderstandings and doubts of the non-Muslim brethren in the country about Islam and Muslims.
- 5) Emphasis on the study of the Qur'an in modern scientific perspective.
- 6) Comparative study of various religions and faiths of the world.
- 7) Cultivating universal values so as to keep the human beings true to their name.

In the light of well-defined objectives for madrasa education, it would not be very difficult to arrive at a common curriculum for madrasa

education. It will be, however, necessary to specify the objectives at various levels like maktabas and various stages of education like Alim, Fazil and Takhassus i.e. graduation, post graduation and research level. Differences among various sects and groups of the Muslim community may prove to be a bottleneck in framing a common curriculum. But the community has to come on a common platform to perform this important task as it has done in the case of its personal law by forming All India Muslim Personal Law Board, representing all sects and schools of thoughts. There can be an "All India Madrasa Education Board" to shoulder the responsibilities of madrasa education. The curriculum must include some basics of modern subjects so as to enable the learners to play a dynamic role in the modern society. But at the same time proper care should be taken to see that:

- 1) Their special character of madrasa education is not affected, and
- 2) The students are not overburdened.

There should be provision of teachers training for the teachers who wish to associate with madrasa education. They should be either accommodated in existing training institutes affiliated with the universities or there should be separate system of training for them. The advantage of separate training institutes will be that the teaching methodologies suitable to teach various subjects of madrasa education may be taught with due emphasis. Almost 99 per cent of teachers associated with madrasa education

are professionally untrained. The training on modern lines may equip them with modern methods, techniques and strategies of teaching, learning and evaluation.

Madrassa education seems to be working on old traditional pattern as there is no emphasis on any research. Therefore research projects should be undertaken on various aspects of madrasa education. Scholars associated with madrasas and Jamias as well as modern universities should be encouraged to work meaningfully in the area of madrasa education.

The proposed common platform may act as a coordinating body for various madrasas and makhtabs spread throughout the country.

I believe that madrasa education can be improved in the country by making the process of assessment and programming to be a continuous one.

The proposed Action Plan may not be effectively implemented without raising required funds. The Muslim community of India should see to it that madrasa education shoulders this important responsibility, and the community should continue patronising madrasa education. At the same time it is the responsibility of the Union and State Governments to provide grants for these madrasas and makhtabs, without interfering in their academic and administrative affairs, as it has been proposed by Gopal Singh high power panel (1980).

(The writer is a lecturer in Marathwada College of Education, Aurangabad)

(From Page No. 19)

generation after generation. So the inspiration was in the form of a genetic code which included: (a) making of cells. The be in its honeycomb makes hexagonal cells in symmetrical order. A small insect making a geometrical design is amazing in itself.

(b) Allah appointed its nutrition from the produce of all plants i.e. flowers etc. (c) And follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for thee), this evidently refers to follow the inspiration destined in its genetic code. It is definitely made easy for the bees to act collectively under a perfect system. They make their living in a honey comb and take their nutrition from the nectar of the flowers. They procreate in their hives and manage their affairs under the guidance of their queen. They guard against their enemies, and fight them. They secrete honey from their alimentary canal. What an amazing perfect code. God has given to bee. It is therefore, Holy Quran invites the intention of the people to mediate.

Certainly, there is a sign of Creators Greatness who originated life and made the living cell of every creature a master unit of life not allowing slightest deviation from its life characteristics. To talk of evolution is to find defect in His creation and no doubt His creations are free of all drawbacks. The orientlists and Western scholars should open their eyes and see how this Great Book of Allah covers the modern advancement, and this Holy Quran will remain supreme emitting the beams of its knowledge till Doomsday. Would that the non-Muslims embrace Islam and bow to the dictates of the Holy Quran.

I ENDED UP TAKING MY SHAHADAH ON THE INTERNET

By Sigrun Valsdottir

I was born in Iceland in 1976. My family belongs to the state church of Iceland, which is Evangelical Lutheran (Protestant). However, although religion was always present to a certain extent in my life, it never played a very large role in my upbringing. When I was very young I attended Sunday School regularly, I went to summer camps which were run by religiously affiliated organizations and my grandmother used to come to me and tuck me in before I went to sleep and say prayer with me.

However, my family never attended church regularly and in everyday life religion was not an issue. In Iceland it is a tradition within the church that you go through “confirmation” around the age of fourteen. By that time you are considered an adult and should affirm your faith and baptism that your parents did for you at a very young age. When I had to make the decision whether to do this or not I remember thinking whether I should or not, whether I believed enough to do it sincerely or not. My conclusion was that I believed in God and that was more than most others that go through the confirmation do and I felt that if I did not

go through it I would be rejecting God, something that I could not imagine doing. While preparing for the confirmation we had to attend classes with the priest and go to church regularly. I tried to continue going to church after these classes and the mandatory attendance to church ended but somehow it just did not feel right. Going to church “did not do anything for me”.

So, for the next years I thought very little about religion and its effect on my life. I would often pray to God but that was about it. I did not go soul-searching or research different religions. I was quite content with things the way they were. I mean, after all, I believed in God, wasn't that enough?

Islam has very little presence in Iceland and I did not know very much about it growing up. In school, I was never taught about other religions than Christianity along with a little bit about Judaism in relation to the history of Christianity. Growing up I remember Islam mostly as being referred to as Mohammadanism and Muslims as Mohammadans, and even today people use

these words more often than the words Islam and Muslims.

I have even seen it several times in the major news papers in the past years. My knowledge of Islam was thus minimal and came mostly from what I had read in the media. Over all it was not a pretty picture, but despite reading off these horror stories such as “Not without my daughter” and other similar books as well as the horror stories in the news, *Al-hamdu lillah, I did not become prejudiced against Islam and kept my mind open*. One of the major reasons for that is probably due to my correspondence with an Icelandic girl who was an exchange student in Venezuela. In her letters and after we returned home she told me stories of her life and experience in Indonesia, which was all very positive and showed me a different view of Islam and Muslims than the books I have read and media portrayed. However, personally I did not really come into contact with Islam until I went to study in the United States on a one year Rotary Scholarship programme and in my university there was a guy from Egypt, who was a part of that same programme. We became very close and through my dealings with him I became interested in Islam. He often used to tell me things about Islam and I would watch him practice Islam.

Little by little I became interested in Islam. I started asking questions and debate Islam with him and then I started to research on my own, first on the internet and then by reading books

about Islam, including a translation of the Holy Quran. My research started for real last spring and continued over the summer while I was back home in Iceland and then in the fall when I went back to the US to finish my studies there on my own.

For a long time the only person I had discussed and debated Islam with was my friend from Egypt, but in December last year I stumbled a chat about Islam on the internet where I met some really wonderful Muslims that I chatted with and asked questions and they helped me a lot. Talking to someone else, someone neutral was really important to me. When I first started researching Islam I was very excited and I was discovering so many wonderful things about Islam that I did not know about and in a way I got just hooked so to speak, I could not stop thinking about Islam and I just wanted to read more and more.

But for a long time I was torn, there were many issues that I did not understand and many that I found a hard time accepting. For a period of time I went through a phase where I tried to find anything negative about Islam, I guess to convince myself that I did not have to become a Muslim, because to be honest I was terrified and confused and it seemed much easier to just continue living my life the way I had been, than accept the truth and change my lifestyle. I was really confused during this time. One moment I would feel that Islam was the truth and all I wanted was to submit to

God and become a Muslim, but the next moment I would find everything wrong with Islam, it was like in the cartoons, having an angel whispering into one ear and a devil whispering into the other. But finally I managed to stop listening to the “little devil” and see clearly that Islam is the truth and that all I wanted was to submit myself to God and live my life as a Muslim.

I was chatting with a Muslim lady that I had met at that first chat in December last year, when I decided that it was time to take my *SHAHADAH* (i.e. proclamation of the faith). I had already made plans to a ladies *halqa* (Islamic Study Circle) the next morning (we were chatting in the middle of the night, I told her I was going to take my *SHAHADAH* then, but that I wished I could do it immediately. So she decided to see if that was possible and found three other Muslims she knew on line and we all met in a chat room and I ended up taking my *Shahada* on the Internet on January 31, 1999, and now my name is Aminah.

Since becoming a Muslim, I have gone through both very happy times and difficult times. I am continuously struggling with learning more about Islam and how to be a good Muslimah as well as trying to keep strong despite negative reactions from my family and friends. All I know is that I made the right decision and I thank Allah for guiding me to the truth.



A TOUCHING MESSAGE

For the first time after 18 years of marriage, she prepared the worst dinner for her husband, the vegetables were over cooked, meat was burned and salad was salty.

At the dinner table, her husband kept silent while he was eating.

After that, when she was in kitchen washing dishes he came to her smiled at her and kissed her on her forehead “why is this kiss of?” she asked him not believing what he did.

“Tonight your cooking reminded me of your cooking in the first days of our marriage! It reminded me of your cooking as a new bride, so I wanted to treat you as it you are a new bride” This is the good righteous husband who turned the mistakes of his wife to positive sides in their life together, because the best Muslim man is the one who is best to his wife and should make her feel that she is so special to him.

Narrated Abu Hurairah that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: “The believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best disposition and the best of you are those who are best to their wives.” (Tirmidhi)

