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A PIECE OF ADVICE TO YOUNG MUSLIMS

Perhaps the most overwhelmed being on planet earth at this moment is the young Muslim. You are in the news. Every time you turn, on the television and listen to the radio, all you see and hear is news about you. "Young Muslims are "radicals", or "extremists", or "terrorists."

Of course, you know and I know that you are not a "radical" or an "extremist" or a "radical extremist" or a "terrorist". You know and I know that neither of us has actually ever come across a Muslim who is a "radical" or an "extremist" or a "terrorist". And yet the people shout from rooftops and which is repeated by media that there is an imminent threat to civilization from the growing numbers of young Muslims who hate society and are willing to kill themselves in the process, of destroying society is overwhelming, to say the least. But the real challenge is whether you can survive this phase and rise above the propaganda to demonstrate to the society that young Muslims are lovers of peace, justice and harbingers of tranquillity and human brotherhood.

Much of what the average person of another

faiths knows about Muslims and especially about young Muslims is based on some first-hand contact or on second or third hand information and mostly on inaccurate depictions of Islam and Muslims in the media.

In your role as ambassadors of Islam, you will often be called upon to clarify and defend Islamic teachings. Therefore, it is important for you to equip yourself with accurate information about Islam, internalize the Islamic teachings and practise those teachings in your daily life. The greatest advantage of the young Muslim must, in fact, be faith or Iman, which is Allah's greatest gift to mankind. The Holy Quran and the authentic agreed-upon sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are two accurate, authentic sources. However, outside of those two authentic sources, there is always the potential that a book written by a human being contains factual errors, misinterpretations and even outright skewed interpretations of Islamic teachings. Young people who do like to read articles and books or surf the Net or listen to audio tapes or watch video lectures are at risk of consuming

information about Islam that might not be accurate.

However to supplement your understanding of the two authentic sources read books by authentic writers aimed at helping people understand, appreciate and internalize Islamic teachings and bring better understanding between the communities.

Remember, you are not only a seeker of truth but you are an ambassador to all humankind. You can contribute most effectively to the realization of responsible citizenship and universal peace, mutual understanding and human brotherhood, freedom of conscience and maintenance of human dignity. All these principles are part and parcel of Islam. Further as a responsible citizen of the country, you must always be mindful of others who share the country with you and who will succeed you in the future. Adopt the concept of "each one teach one" which means to constantly be in the mode of teaching your fellow Muslims and non-Muslim friends about Islam; not simple theoretical knowledge, but showing and explaining how you have integrated what you know into your practical way of life.

For in your relationship with other fellowmen, you must show kindness to the kin, and concern for the neighbour, respect for the elderly and compassion for the young, care for the sick, and support for the needy; sympathy for the grieved and cheer for the

depressed, patience with the misguided, tolerance towards the ignorant and forgiveness for the helpless, disapproval of the wrong. You must respect the legitimate rights of others as much as you do your own. Your mind must be occupied with constructive ideas and serious pursuits. You should avoid *fitnah* (mischief), hate, destruction, disunity, discrepancy and turbulence in the society. Your heart must beat with compassionate feelings and good will; your soul must radiate with peace and serenity and your counsel must be sincere and courteous. You young Muslims need to have a sense of confidence in the truth of your religion, without attacking the religion of others, and not to reciprocate the prejudicial attitudes you might face.

In short your life must be exemplary. You must set the highest standards of performance and be the reference point for others. As a civilized people if you abide by the laws of the country you would be considered sound citizens and honest members of your respective society. Lastly seek solace and comfort in the company of Allah Most High through prayer and consistent remembrance of Allah.

May Allah continue to shower His Mercy upon our young Muslims in pursuit of that shaded place on a Day when there will be no shade, except that of Allah.



BENEFITS OF QURAN RECITATION

When you recite the Qurna, We place a hidden barrier between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter; and We place a covering on their hearts that they do not comprehend it, and We cause a heaviness in their ears; and when you mention the One and Only Lord in the Holy Quran, they turn their backs in aversion. (Surah Bani Israil; 17:45-46)

When a man denies the Hereafter, it naturally leads to his heart being sealed, and his ears becoming incapable of heeding the message of the Holy Quran. For, the very cornerstone of the Holy Quranic message to man is that he should not be deceived by external manifestations of this worldly life. For, even if we do not observe anyone calling people to account, this should not mislead us into believing that man is not accountable to anyone. Likewise, we also observe that people freely chose to become polytheists, atheists and monotheists, and the, consequences of such a choice seemingly remain such the same as far as the present world is concerned. This freedom should not give rise to the

misunderstanding that all the doctrines monotheism, polytheism and atheism are of equal value, and that they will ultimately lead to much the same results, it should be clearly understood that monotheism is the only sound and correct doctrine and all other doctrines are false. Likewise, the worldly consequences of righteous and evil behavior might not be very conspicuously different. But all this is illusory since the true consequences of the attitudes man adopts will surface in the Hereafter.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes: If all nature, external and within ourselves, declares Allah's glory, those unfortunate who cut themselves off from their better nature are isolated from the true servants of Allah and the revelation of Allah because (1) they are unfit for being in their company, and (2) because the servants of Allah and the revelation of Allah must be protected from the pain which blasphemay or rebellion must cause to their unsullied nature. The barrier is none the less real even though it is invisible.



ASKING FOR AUTHORITY

1) Abu Sa'eed Abdur Rahman bin Samurah (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said to him, "O Abdur Rahman bin Sumarah! Do not ask for public office or authority. Because if you are given an office without asking for it, you will be helped in this matter. But if you are assigned for it on your asking for it, you will be in its possession. If you take oath to do a thing and later on find a better substitute, adopt the later and make amends for your vow". (*Saheeh Bukhari & Muslim*)

2) Abu Musa reported: We went to the Prophet, I and two of my cousins. One of them said: O Messenger of Allah, make me governor of same land over which Allah gave you power. The other said like that. He said: By Allah, we appoint none in this post who seeks it, nor anyone who is greedy for it. In a narration he said: We do not appoint those in our post who wish it. (*Saheeh Bukhari & Muslim*)

These Hadiths have a good lesson for the Muslims aspiring for public posts. They have been enjoined not to yearn for public office and authority. If a person is given a post of authority, he need not reject it but rather should take it up

in the name of Allah. In this case, people will be obliged to help him in all relevant matters. And God the exalted will also help him in discharging his duties.

On the contrary, if a person seeks a post of authority on his own and canvasses for and ultimately succeeds in getting a post, people will not be obliged to come to his succor and he will be left alone. And he will not be able to fulfil his duties.

In another Hadith, the Holy Messenger (S.A.W.) said: Time is coming when you will aspire for public offices and authority, but beware, it will be a matter of humiliation and repentance on the Day of Judgement. "The time this hadith talks about is perhaps the one we are passing through.

As a rule, appointments did not go, at the time of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and the rightly guided Caliphs, by canvassing, but posts were offered to deserving men, proved integrity and honesty, and from rooted uprightness and justice. Consequently the best characters were offered appointed in the state services.



EVERYTHING WHICH PEOPLE BELIEVE IN, AND WHAT THEY CONSIDER AS 'IBADAH (WORSHIP), CONSTITUTES THEIR DEEN, EVEN IF IT BE FALSITY

Allama 'Abdul 'Ziz Bin Abdullah Bin Baz ; Translated by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Question: In the evening of Jumah (Friday), 4th of Safar 1304 A.H., the television presented a programme under the title of "World of Nature". The programme was related to India and it was introduced in this manner: "India is a country of different types of religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions are found here" Now the query is as follow: Are the religions described by the programmer truly "religions and Deens? Further, are they revealed by Allah, the Most High?

Answer: Everything which people believe in and what they consider as Ibadah (worships) constitutes their Deen, even if it be falsity, e.g. Budhism, Idolatory, Hinduism, Jewish religion, Christiamity and other false religions. Almighty Allah Stated in Surah Al-Kafirun (*to you be your religion, and to me my religion (Monotheism)*) (Surah Al-Kafirun:6). In this verse Allah has stated idol worshipping as deen. But the true deen is only Islam. As Allah the Most High stated: (*Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam*). (Surah Ale Imran: 19) Again Allah, the Most High, said: "*And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the*

Hereafter he will be one of the losers". (Surah Ale Imran: 85)

Allah, the Most High, further said: (*This day I have perfected your religion for you, computed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion*). (Surah Al Maeedah, 3)

Islam is simply this: Only Allah, the One, be worshipped, commandments of Allah are adhered to, forbidden things are avoided, the "limits" prescribed by Allah are not violated and all those happenings of the past and future are believed in which have been communicated by Allah, the Most High, to His Apostle (S.A.W.)

Not even a single "False Deen" is revealed by Allah, the Most High. Nor such any Deen is liked by Allah. All false religions are created by human beings and Allah, the Most High has not revealed them. It was Islam and only Islam which has been the Deen of all Apostles of Allah. However, their religions legislations (Shareeah) happened to be different Allah, the Most High, said: (*To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way*) (Surah Al-Maidah: 48)



A MOSQUE OVER A GRAVEYARD

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said that one of the favours which Allah has given to the nation of Islam is that the whole earth has been made a “masjid” for it; (Masjid is the Arabic word for mosque). Thus refers to the fact that a Muslim may offer his prayer anywhere on earth, provided of course that the place where he is praying is free from impurity. However, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) has made an exception in the two cases of a graveyard and a bathroom. Prayer facing a grave or a tomb or any burial place. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) curses the children of Israel for having “Turned the graves of their Prophets into praying places”. All this makes it clear that places of burial are not proper to build mosques in, nor is it permissible to build a mosque around a grave or a tomb. The reason for this is to prevent any possibility of enrobing the burial place of any person. That is a sure way which leads to entertaining polytheistic beliefs. It is not permissible to build a mosque within a graveyard. If such a mosque is built, then the only proper thing to do with it is to demolish it. If there is one in your locality, then it is preferable for you to pray at home than to pray in that mosque. Having said that, I wish

to take up the different case of a disused graveyard where there are no more dead people buried. Can we use that graveyard to build a mosque there? The answer is that it may be permissible if certain conditions are met. To state with, it should be reasonable to assume that those who were buried have perished altogether. A graveyard is thus demolished and a mosque built in its place. This is acceptable, but we should be careful when we dig the place and when we lay down the foundation. If there are any bones or traces of the dead people, they should be gathered and buried somewhere else. The Holy Prophet mosque in Madinah was built in a place where there were some graves. Those were dug out and the traces of those who were buried in them were taken away. No one associated the new mosque with the old graveyard. If these conditions are met, then it is permissible used to be a burial place. Your advice to the people should be on the basis of this answer. If there are graves around the new mosque then the mosque should be discussed altogether. It is better to be demolished.



SUNNAH AND ITS PLACE IN ISLAMIC SHARIAH

Compiled by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Allah says in the Holy Quran: "We never sent a Messenger but that he should be obeyed by the leave of Allah. If whenever they wronged themselves they had come to you praying to Allah for forgiveness, and had the Messenger prayed for their forgiveness, they would indeed have found Allah All Forgiving, All Compassionate" (Surah An Nisa:64)

"This is to impress upon us that Prophets are not sent so that people may pay lip service to their prophethood, and then obey whoever they wish. The purpose of sending Prophets is that people should follow the laws of God as brought and expounded by them rather than laws devised by man, and that they should obey the commands of God as revealed to the Prophets to the exclusion of the commands of others." *(Towards Understanding the Quran Vol.II M.A. Mawdudi, P.55 Markazi Maktaba Islami, Delhi-110006, 1997)*

"The application of the injunction embodied in this verse is act confined to the life time of the Prophet (S.A.W.). It will remain in force until the Day of Judgement. The guidance the Prophet (S.A.W.) proclaimed on God's behalf, and the manner in which he followed God's direction and inspiration, will for ever remain the universal touchstone for Muslims. In fact, recognition of that guidance as the final authority is the criterion of true belief. This principle was pronounced

by the Prophet (S.A.W.) in the following words.

"None of you can become a believer until his desires become subservient to what I have brought (i.e my teachings). *Cited by al Nawai in al Arbain.*

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and the Holy Quran are two separate entities, but they are both so closely allied that we can not conceive of their independent existence. It is through Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) that the Holy Quran has been vouchsafed to us, and it is in his august personality that we find its visible expression. Allah says in the Holy Quran: "He it is who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions. (IX:34)

The verse bears clear testimony to the fact that the fountain head of true guidance and true religion is the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), since he has been entrusted with the responsibility of showing to the people the path Righteousness and the path of salvation, as desired by the Lord. He is the trusted Messenger of Allah on earth, and it is through him that mankind has been able to know His Will with all its major and minor implications.

We have been told in clear terms that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) neither said anything nor did any thing of his own accord, whatever he said

and whatever he did emanated from his Lord.

“He does not speak of his own desire” (Surah An-Najm:3)

All the utterances and deeds of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) are thus divinely inspired, and in them alone can one find the true meaning and the real significance of the Will of Allah.

Mere transmission of the Book of Allah to the people faithfully and sincerely does not exhaust the Prophets duties. On him also lies the responsibility of explaining the real purport of the Quranic teachings and then giving them a visible shape, so that mankind may see, along with the injunctions of Allah, the process of their transformation into reality and the out-ward forms in which they are to be crystallized. Words alone, however powerful and however pointed, cannot be fully comprehended unless these conjure before our minds definite forms and shapes. Similarly, precepts however valuable, can be best understood only when these are illustrated by living examples.

It is indeed a boundless favour of Allah to humanity that, along with His message, He also sent to us His Messengers to elaborate and elucidate it, and then transmute it into practical reality under His direct guidance.

“We raised earlier Messengers with clear signs and Divine Book, and we have now sent down this Reminder upon you that you may elucidate to people the teaching that has been sent down for them, and that the people may themselves reflect (Surah An-Nahl; 16:44)

As a final dispenser of the Message of Allah, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) alone is best fitted and, therefore, divinely authorized to determine the meanings of the Holy Quran, to unfold before

humanity the deep wisdom contained in it, and then, on the basis of this wisdom, to purify the souls of the people and elevate them to the highest pinnacle of morality and God consciousness.

“Assuredly Allah conferred a favour on the believers when He raised into them an apostle from among themselves, reciting to them His revelations and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the wisdom” (III): 163)

Reciting Lord’s revelations, purifying the souls of the people, teaching the Book and the wisdom lying in it-these are the different aspects of the prophetic ministry and nothing falls outside the orbit of Allah’s revelation.

“Whatever the Apostle commands you, accept; and whatever he forbids you, avoid (LIX:7 Surah Hashar 59:)

What this verse implies is that the commands and prohibitions of the Prophet are not to be treated in the spirit in which are taken the wise sayings of sages or philosophers or the verdicts of rulers. The words and the deeds of the Prophet are, indeed, the perfect expressions of the highest wisdom ever conceivable, but this alone does not completely fulfill the demands of belief in prophethood. The basic point in this belief is that one should affirm with full confidence that it is Allah who speaks through the Prophet whatever he utters by way of spiritual guidance or practical legislation, and thus follow him in every walk of life with a view to achieving the love of the Lord and salvation in this world and the world to come. The Prophet is no doubt human, but his leadership is divinely inspired and none can be called a Muslim who does not accept this basic doctrine of the Holy Quran.

It is by following Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) that we can achieve the cherished goal of winning Allah's favour. The question arises: Did the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) utter not a word besides what was revealed to him by the Lord in the form of the Holy Quran? The answer obviously is: No. He did also explain the contents of the divine revelations. He gave practical demonstration of their significance by leading his life according to them, and was thus instrumental in moulding the lives of his companions after his own pattern of life. He did all this, of course, under Divine inspiration.

This is why the Holy Quran has been declared as a guide and a light and the Prophet's noble life as a model for the Muslims.

"Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light and a Book Luminous" (V:15)

"Verily in the Apostle of Allah you have the best example for everyone who looks towards Allah and the Day of Judgement" (XXXIII:21)

It is only from the Holy Quran and the authentic record of the Ahadith that we can obtain full view of this model. Thus, next to the Holy Quran the Hadith is the second source of the Islamic Law of social and personal behaviour, because the commandment of the Holy Prophet are as binding on the believers as the Commands of Allah.

"Whenever Allah and the Apostle have decided a matter, it is not for a faithful man or woman to follow a course of their own choice (XXXIII:36)

Some of the misguided people suggest that the commands of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) were valid only during his lifetime, and that now when he is no more amongst us, we need to follow

only the injunctions of the Holy Quran and the Hadith as an account of the past which has some allusions to the life of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), having no practical value as a code of life. These so called pseudo-reformers little realise that a denial of the eternal validity of the Sunnah amounts to a denial of the Holy Quran's claim that the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (S.A.W.) is not time bound; it is universal and the Prophets words and deeds are the timeless expression of the will of Allah."

Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the Messenger of Allah for the whole of mankind; no new Prophet is to be raised after him. His Prophethood is thus both universal and eternal. It is, therefore, an integral part of one's faith in the prophethood of Muhammad (S.A.W.) that his words and deeds should always be taken as one of the two most reliable source of right guidance. The code of Divine guidance, which does not regard Muhammad (S.A.W.) as the supreme guide from the Lord, cannot in any way be relied upon in Islam. One could seek this guidance directly from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) during his life time, but now it is the authentic traditions that serve this purpose admirably well.

Right from the time of the Companions down to this day, there has been a consensus of opinion among the Muslims that whatever is transmitted to us from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) on the authority of reliable transmitters of *Ahadith* is the valid explanation and enunciation of Allah's commands and the opinion of any one else is subservient to it. It is acceptable only if it conforms to the sayings or the deeds of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) but if it conflicts with a *hadith*, it must be outright rejected.



The Collection of Hadith

Compiled by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

“After the Prophet's death his Companions and followers became all the more careful to remember and act upon his statements and directives. Many of them kept written notes of such statements and utterances of the Prophet. At any rate since the middle of the first century H. We have specific references to the systematic collection and writing down of Hadith by a number of Companions and Tabiun (the generation immediately succeeding the Companions) (*Sirat An-Nabi, Vol IA, P.9 Muhammad Mohar Ali, King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Quran Madina, 1997*).

“Thus we know for certain that 'Aban ibn Uthman ibn Affan (born between 15 and 20 H.) collected and transmitted some reports relating to Maghazi and taught fiqh and adjudication based on Hadith to a number of persons including Abu Bakr ibn Hazm (*Ibn sad, V.151; Al Dhahbi, Siyar IV 35/53, Seerat An, Nabi, Vol. IA, P. 9, Muhammad Mohar Ali, King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Quran, Madina, 1997*).

“During the same period a junior contemporary of 'Aban ibn Uthman, namely, Urwah ibn al Jubair (born 26H.), gained fame as a *muhaddith* and *faqih*. “His relationship alone”,

(Urwah's mother Asma was Aishah's elder sister) as J. Horovity points out, “placed him in the position to obtain numerous accounts concerning the early days of Islam at first hand; from his father, from his mother, and above all from his aunt Aisha whom he was never tired of visiting and questioning” (*Sirat Al Navi Vol I A, P.9-10, Muhammad Mohar Ali, K.F. Complex For the Printing of the Holy Quran Madina, 1997*). A large number of reports of Urwah have indeed come down to us, especially through his son Hisham and Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri.

“There were also others at that time who devoted themselves to the collection and preservation of *Hadith*. Particular mention may be made of Abu Bakr ibn Hazm. His grand father, Amr Ibn Hazm was appointed governor of Najran by the Prophet and was instructed by him to teach Islam to the people of the region. As indicated above, Abu Bakr received his knowledge of jurisprudence from 'Aban ibn Uthman and, by 86 H. become the Qadhi of Madina when Umar ibn 'Abd Al-Aziz was its governor. Abu Bakr continued in that post for long and was made governor of Madina in addition to its judgeship in 96 H. Besides being himself a great *Muhaddith*, he trained and encouraged his son 'Abd Allah to specialize in collecting and preserving hadith. (Ibid P.10).

“Thus by the last quarter of the first century H. the collection, preservation and study of *hadith* had been well under way. So far, however, the work was done mostly on the initiative of individual scholars and experts. Even then, the scale of individual efforts in the matter was indeed very wide. It is reported about Ibn Shihab Al Zuhri (51-124H) that he made a huge number of compilations of *Hadith* and these were kept in the state store. On the death of Khalifah Al-Walid in 96 H. These were carried away from there on the back of a number of animals. (*Ibn Sad II, 389 through Sirat Al-Nabi, Vol IA, P.10, Muhammad Mohar Ali, K.F. Complex for printing of the Holy Quran, 1997*).

The first systematic state initiative in the work was taken when Umar ibn Abd Al Aziz became the *Khalifah* (99-101). His own learning and interest in the subject, coupled with his experience as governor of Madina and his consequent contact with the muhadditheen of that city, particularly with its well known judge (and subsequently governor) Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad, had doubtless a good deal to do with his resolution in this respect. It was this Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad, along with Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn Ubaid Allah ibn Shihab Al- Zuhri and two other scholars whom he commissioned to make a systematic collection and compilation of *hadith* (*Ibn Hajar, Fatah al Bari , I, 160 through Sirat al Nabi, Vol I A, P.10, Muhammad Mohar Ali, K.F. Complex for printing of the Holy Quran Madina 1997*).

These scholars diligently carried out their task and by the beginning of the second century H. a considerable collection of hadith came into existence.

Basing upon such primary collections and making further investigation and painstaking search the subsequent generations of muhaddithun compiled a huge corpus of hadith during the succeeding centuries. Of such collections the most important are the following.

1. The *Muwatta* of Malik ibn Anas (93-179 H.)
2. The *Musnd* of Sulayman Ibn Daud Ibn at Jarud Abu Daud al Tayalisi (133-204 H.)
3. The *Musnad* of Abu ‘ Abd Allah Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal (164-241H.)
4. The *Sunan* of Abu Muhammad Abd Allah Ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Darimi (181-255 H.)
5. The *Sahih* of Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (194-256H.)
6. The *Sunan* of Abu Daud Sulayman Ibn Al Ashath al Azdi Al- Sijistani (202-275 H.)
7. The *Sahih* of Abu Al-Husayn Muslim Ibn Al-Hajaj Al-Qushayri Al-Nay- Saburi (206-261 H.)
8. The *Sunan* of Abu Abd Al-Rahman Ahmad Ibn Shuayb Ibn Ali Ibn Bahr al-Nasai (214-303 H.)
9. The *Sahih* of Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Ishaq Ibn Khuzaymah, Al-Sulami, Al Naysaburi (223-311 H.)
10. The *Sunan* of Abu al- Hasan Ali Ibn Umar Ibn Ahmad Al-Daraqutni (306-385 H.)
11. The *Mustadrak* etc. of al- Hakim Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Abd Allah ibn Muhammad al-Naysaburi (321-405 H.) ;and

(Cont on Page No.26)

COMMUNAL HARMONY A QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE

By: Dr. Tariq Kifayatullah

National integration is, no doubt, one of the urgent needs of the hour today. It's particularly a must for a nation like India, which is a land of diversities. But the goal of national integration cannot and will not be achieved until an atmosphere or total harmony between different sections of society or between various communities, religious or otherwise, is not created. Misunderstandings between them prove fatal and result in communal riots which sometimes reach uncontrollable extents as we have seen in the recent past.

Religion is generally understood to be a dividing force and not a force of uniting the masses while we discuss the subject of communal harmony. Maybe, it is true to some extent as we see a sharp reaction of masses on religious issues. Passions are aroused spontaneously when there is an issue having some kind of religious tone. Anti-social elements as well as petty politicians exploit this situation to their narrow ends apathetically. Since religion is considered to be a sensitive topic, people belonging to different faiths, even educated ones, rarely discuss it openly and rationally to avoid any embarrassing situation. They know very little and also don't try to know, about the faith and religion of "other

party" whom they take as their opponent. In most of the cases their sphere of knowledge hardly goes beyond the rites. The matter of fact is that there is no religion in the world which in theory preaches intolerance, hatred, enmity, fanaticism, etc. and provokes for the killing or elimination of the followers of other religions. So is the case with Islam as well.

Islam is not founded by Muhammad (S.A.W.). It is the religion sent by God first to the first man on earth i.e., Adam, who also happened to be the first prophet of God. In the golden chain of Prophets and Apostles came countless persons; some prominent among them are Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Dawood and Eisa (peace be upon them). Finally Muhammad (S.A.W.) was sent by God as the final Prophet. Hence, Islam is the faith and religious code revealed to, and presented latest by Muhammad (S.A.W.).

Islam, like many other religions, contrary to the general misconception of the day, is a religion of peace (the word Islam itself is a derivative of *salm/silm* which means: peace; one who cultivates peace and friendship), tolerance, brotherhood, universal unity, co-existence, love, amity and certainly a promoter of communal harmony both within its followers and among the

believers of different faiths and creeds. This fact is evident both from its doctrine and practice.

The Holy Qur'an, the sacred book of Islam, revealed to Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the basis of all Islamic tenets, practices, social behaviours and more significantly the fundamental source of Shariah, the Islamic law and jurisprudence and total code of life. Rightly the Qur'an may be taken as parameter for gauging the temperament and mindset of Islam.

It may seem odd, but the Qur'an's viewpoint on communal harmony and its related issues must be presented here in plain words without decocting it with any commentary.

The Qur'an's appeal, as it asserts, is not particular but universal in nature. Its addressees are all the worlds and creations therein, not a single race or class or Muslims only, as it says:

"Verily this is no less than a message to (all) the world." (Al-Qur'an-81:27)

The Qur'an treats all of the human races as one community and addresses it by calling it "O Mankind" or "O you people" alongside where its address to Muslims is like "O you who believe" and to the Jews "O Children of Israel" and to both Christians and Jews it addresses like "O people of the Scripture". This means that this message is not confined to Muslims, or Jews or Christians rather to the whole mankind. The Quran does not differentiate between man and man, whosoever he may be. The only criterion for the favour of Allah is righteousness:

"Those who believe (in the Quran) and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures) and the Christians and the Sabians, any who believe

in Allah and the last day and works righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve." (Al-Quran-2:62)

And *"Nay whoever submits his whole self to Allah and is doer of good, he will get his reward from his Lord, on such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."* Al-Qur'an-2:112)

Also there is no discrimination on the basis of sex either:

"And he that works a righteous deed whether man or woman and is believer such will enter the garden (of bliss)." (Al-Qur'an-40:40)

The Qur'an tells that all human beings are not only equal in status but they are brothers and sisters to one another as they are born from the same womb. The apparent diversities and variations of race, colour, physical stature or facial features are just for identification. On the basis of them one cannot be graded nobler or viler.

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the most honoured of you is (he who is) the most righteous of you." Al-Qur'an-49:13)

According to the Qur'an divine admonition and guidance has been provided for man since day One, is one and same in its nature. The only difference is of language medium and time factors. Prophets and Apostles of Allah had been coming in all the ages and to all the races-nations, though some of the names are mentioned yet the Qur'an does not give the exact number

however according to tradition it is no less than, 1,24000 (Wherry, Rev. EM, *A Comprehensive commentary on Qur'an, vol. 1, page 125*). They came to every nook and corner of this earth. Not a single human race or a region has been kept deprived. They came with their respective scriptures, of these names of five revealed scriptures figure in Qur'an. These are 1. *Suhf-e-Ibrahim* (Scriptures of Ibrahim), 2. *Zaboor* (Psalms of Dawood), 3. *Taurat or Torah of Musa*, 4. *Injeel (Gospel) of Jesus Christ* and 5. Quran. The Quran further tells that all of them are from the same source that is Ummal-Kitab (The Mother of the Book) or Lauh-e-Mahfooz (Preserved Tablet), hence bore the same message as they were the different version of a single text. All former scriptures were corrupted later. Every revealed book bore the testimony of the other. e.g., the Torah has been testified by Gospel and the Qur'an bears the testimony of both Torah and Gospel as it reveals:

It is He who sent down to you (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it, and He sent down the Torah (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus). (Al-Qur'an-3:3)

That's why the Quran asks its followers to acknowledge and respect all the Prophet/Apostles as well as all the sacred revealed books (prior to the Quran) without exception and forbids them from drawing distinction line between them. (Al-Qur'an-2:136)

Naturally question arises, if whole of the mankind is one and all the religions and their sacred

books have the same root why such vast contradictions are there today. Quran answers this question also. According to Quran whole of the humanity was a single race and had a single religion in the beginning, then appeared fractures and they were divided into numerous sects and communities having different religions of their choice. In the words of Qur'an:

But people have cut off their affair (of unity) between them into sects: Each party rejoices in that which is with itself. (Al-Quran-23:53)

The Quran further explains that every sect adopted its own style of worshiping and invented different rites and rituals.

To every people have We appointed rites which they must follow. Let them not then dispute with you on the matter. (Al-Qur'an-22:67)

This phenomenon the Quran says is nothing but natural and on expected lines, diversity is the guiding principle in the realm of nature and also it was not against the Will of Almighty Allah, if Allah had willed he might have created them all alike and they would have come together in agreement on a single religion more so. He has promised to grant, absolute freedom to adopt the faith of their choice He would not interfere (till the day of judgment).

If it had been your Lord's will they would all have believed, All who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind against their will to believe. (Al-Qur'an-10:99)

But at the same time it does not please Allah that the difference of opinions, or contradiction of faith turn into main cause for bloodshed, or

rioting and permanent hostilities between the groups of people. Allah likes construction and development not destruction and devastation on earth. He wants an order to prevail not the anarchy and disorder. He dislikes and warns those people who spread mischief and plunder:

Allah loves not, those who do mischief (Al-Quran-5:64)

And Call on your Lord with humility and in private. For Allah loves not those who trespass beyond bounds. Do not mischief on earth after it has been set in order; but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts) For the mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good. (Al-Quran-7:55-56)

Certainly it is not desirable that people belonging to different communities have a scuffle with each other and kill one another in the name of God (read religion). Islam strictly forbids its followers to be indulged in such disputes. It simply asks them to put their point of views, the set of beliefs and so more their own virtuous lives built on the basis of these principles before their fellow beings convincingly and let them decide on their own without any force or compulsion. This was conveyed to Muhammad (S.A.W.) by his Mentor in the following verse:

To every people have we appointed rites which they must follow. Let them not then dispute with you on the matter; but you invite (them) to your Lord. For you are assuredly on the right way. (Al-Quran-22:67)

In the event of provocation and being the target of hatred, the Quran advises its followers not to be violent or infuriated rather they should be

serene, tolerant, mindful and just in their behaviour and actions, as it is only justice and equity that bring peace and pleasantness to society:

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just that is next to piety; and fear Allah. For Allah is well acquainted with all you do. (Al-Qur'an-5:8)

The goal of harmony between various sects and section of state can only be achieved by building a harmonious social structure and harmonious social structure can be built by individuals in accord with each other and each one with and within the self. Islam's primary endeavour is therefore to create the inner peace within individuals by filling hearts with faith and conviction which streamlines all the gifts of brain and body. Its important task is to guarantee an environment which promote the certainty that justice, rule of law, social acknowledgement and mutual love prevails. For this Quran conceptualizes a model welfare society in which:

(a) Each and every individual does possess dignity and self respect which is respected by others fully:

O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor let some women laugh at others: It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor defame, nor be sarcastic to each other; nor call each other by (offensive) nick names: III seeming is a name connoting wickedness,

(to be used of one) after he has believed: And those do not desist are (in deed) doing wrong. (Al-Qur'an-49:11)

(b) His or her personal privacy is fully maintained and none dares to violate it even in one's absence itself:

O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that you may heed (what is seemly).

If you find no one in the house, enter not until permission is given to you: if you are asked to go back, go back: that makes for greater purity for yourselves: and Allah knows well all that you do. (Al-Qur'an-24:27-28)

(c) There is no room for rumours, ill speaking, back biting and suspicion: *Woe to every kind of scandal monger and back biter. (Al-Qur'an-104:1; 49:12)*

(d) Everyone is bound to lend a helping hand to his neighbour irrespective of latter's faith:

Serve Allah and join not partners with Him: and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are of kin, companion by your side, the wayfare (you meet), and what your right hand posses. For Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious... (Al-Qur'an-4:36)

(e) Individuals are persuaded to forgive and have mercy instead of retaliation and if they find themselves unable to do so they have to follow the law of equality and are not allowed to transgress:

O you who believe! The law of equality is prescribed for you. In case of murder; the free for free, the slave for slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. After this who ever exceeds the limits shall be in grave chastisement.

In the law of equality there is (saving of) life to you. O you men of understanding. (Al-Qur'an-2:178; 17:33)

(f) In which every individual is responsible for his own deed. No one is held guilty for the sins of other. No group or section of people is blamed for an action of a person belonging to it.

Every soul draws of need of its acts on none but itself: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another. (Al-Qur'an-6:164)

(g) Every member is taught to be generous and control his anger against others and to adopt the habit of forgiving:

Those who spend (freely). Whether in prosperity or in adversity who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men: For Allah loves those who do good. (Al-Qur'an-3:134)

(h) Every individual is free to chose any religion according to his/her faith, whims and conviction. Faith is a matter of personal conviction. For their ways the responsibility is theirs. For our ways the responsibility is ours.

SALAM: THE BLISS OF MUSLIM GREETING

By. Syed Akbar Hassan

On getting closer to the Holy Quran we find that Allah Almighty tells us the etiquette of offering and returning greetings known as Salam among Muslims.

In Islam the Standard form of greeting As-Salamu-Alaikum; commonly, though incompletely, translated into English as “Peace be to you” the greeting actually broadly means: “May you remain safe from every pain, sorrow and distress”. The word Salam is one of the good names of Allah, that is Allah Almighty is your guardian and caretaker.

A hadith reports that the Holy Prophet (S.A. W.) said: “Salam is one of the names of Allah Almighty with which He has blessed the people of the earth. So, make Salam a common practice among you because, when a Muslim goes to a gathering of people and offers his Salam to them, he is blessed with a station of distinction in the sight of Allah Almighty as he reminded everyone of Salam, that is, reminded everyone of Allah Almighty. If people in the gathering do not return his greeting, others will respond who are better than the people of this gathering, that is, the angels of Allah Almighty.

All civilized people around the world have the custom of saying something to express mutual familiarity or affection when they meet each other. If compared with these broadmindedly, the Islamic form of greeting will stand out significantly for its comprehensiveness because it does not simply restrict itself to an expression of affection alone. It rather combines it with the fulfillment of the demands of love and affection. It means that we pray to Allah that He keep you safe against all calamities and sorrows.

Along with it, the Islamic Salam is an expression of the reality of our relation with Allah Almighty, that we, the greeter and greeted, are all dependent on Allah Almighty, needing Him all the time and no one can bring any benefit to someone else without His will and leave. Taken in this sense, this form of greeting is an act of worship in its own right, and quite functionally indeed, a medium of reminding a brother-in-faith of Allah Almighty.

To sum up, it can be said that this Islamic form of greeting has a universal comprehensiveness as it is a medium of the remembrance of Allah while reminding the person greeted of Him. It is

a vehicle of expressing love and affection for fellow brother and, in fact, a wonderful prayer for him. Then, it also carries a commitment that the greeted will in no way face harm or discomfort from the greeter as it appears in a sound hadith where the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: A Muslim is the one from whom all Muslims remain safe (Safe) from his tongue and (Safe) from his hands. (*Tirmizi, Kitabul Iman*)

At this point one may fondly wish that Muslims would not utter the words of this greeting as some sort of habitual custom which commonly prevails among other people of the world. How beneficial it would be if this greeting is offered out of a full understanding of its reality which, perhaps, may turn out to be enough for the reform of the whole community. This is the reason why the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) laid great emphasis on popularizing the practice of Muslims in greeting each other with Salam, and he identified it as the best of deeds and took time to explain its merits, graces, blessings and rewards. In a Hadith of Saheeh Muslim the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) has been reported to have said:

“You cannot enter Paradise until you are a believer and your belief cannot be complete until you love each other. I tell you something which, if you put it in practice, will establish bounds of love among you all. Make Salam a common practice among you which should include every Muslims, whether an acquaintance or a stranger”.

The Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Abu Daud report that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“Nearest to Allah is the person who is the first one to offer salam. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) is reported to have said: “A big miser is the man who acts miserly in offering salam. (Tabrani)

Refer to Ayat 4.86 of the Holy Quran which says: “And when you are greeted with a salutation, greet with one better than it, or return the same,” was explained by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) through his own action in the following manner. Once someone came to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) through his own action in the following manner.

Once someone came to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and said: *As-Salam, O-Alaim ya Rasoolullah* (peace be to you, O Messenger of Allah) while returning the greeting, he added a word and said: *We Alaimus-Salam wa Rahmatullah* (And peace be to you, and the mercy of Allah). Then someone else came and offered his salam using the following words: “*As-Salam Alaikum ya Rasul-Allah wa Rahmatul-Allah*”. In response, he added yet another word and said: “*We Alaikumus Salam wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatahu* (And peace be upon you too, and the mercy of Allah, and His blessings. Then came a third person. He combined all three salutations in his initial Salam and greeted him by saying the whole thing, that is “*As Salualaikum ya Rasulullah wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatahu*”. In response, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said only one word “*Wa alaik*” (And to you). Disappointed in his heart, he said: Ya Rasoolullah, ransomed by my

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IMAM MUHAMMAD IBN ISMAIL BUKHARI

By Owais Mateen

Who is not aware of Imam Bukhari and his work *Saheeh-al-Bukhari*? However, in the present day, a majority of Muslims use his *Kitaab* to refer to whenever in need of a supporting reference for their actions or deeds without the knowledge of the life of the great Muhaddis.

Saheeh-e-Bukhari has been given the status of being the most authentic book only next to the Holy Quran. But why?

How much do we actually know about this great, rather exceptional scholar of Hadeeth?

More importantly, what can we learn from the exemplary life he led?

Imam Bukhari was born on Friday, 13th Shawwal 194 A.H. He lost the use of his eyes in his early childhood. However, thanks to the pious and lengthy prayers of his mother, his eyesight was restored miraculously.

Ismail, the father of Imam Bukhari, died in Imam Bukharis childhood, leaving him to the care of his mother who brought him up with love and care. At the age of 16 after having memorized the compiled books of Imam Waki and Abdullah Ibn Mubarak, he performed Hajj with his elder brother and mother. After the completion of

Hajj, Imam Bukhari remained in Makkah for two more years; and, upon reaching the age of 18, headed for Madinah, and spent his nights next to the grave of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) compiling the books of *Qadhaayas Sahaba Wat Tabieen* and *Tarikhul-Kabeer* with the moonlight as the only means of light.

Imam Bukhari travelled a great deal in order to expand his knowledge. He made two trips to Syria and Egypt and stayed six years in Arabia. He also happened to return to Kufa, Baghdad and Basra four times and at times remained there for a period of five years. Also at Hajj season he used to return to Makkah.

Among the most powerful tools that accompanied him on his mission to study Islam and collect Ahadeeth was his exceptionally powerful memory. There is one spectacular incident which took place in Baghdad when Imam Bukhari took up temporary residence there. The people having heard of his many accomplishments, and the attributes which were issued to him, decided to test him so as to make him prove himself to them. In order to do that they choose one hundred different Ahadeeth and changing the testimonials and the text of the Ahadeeth they were then recited by ten people to Imam Bukhari.

There was a crowd of people from within and outside the city to witness the outcome of such a test. When the Ahadeeth were recited, Imam Bukhari replied to all in one manner, "Not to my knowledge". However, after the completion of all the Ahadeeth, Imam Bukhari repeated each text and testimonial which had been changed, followed by the correct text and testimonial. Such was the memory of Imam Bukhari.

There are a number of books compiled by Imam Bukhari. However, Bukhari has gained great esteem and high status in the learning and memorizing of Ahadeeth. Imam Bukhari memorized over 2,00,000 traditions and written over 3,00,000. Unfortunately, some of these traditions were not genuinely authentic and thus unreliable, for he was born at a time when traditions of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) were being forged and distorted either to please kings and rulers or to corrupt the religion of Islam.

It was because of this reason that Imam Bukhari decided to dedicate the rest of his life to compiling a book that would strictly comprise of authentic traditions. The Imam's mission was further strengthened when he was advised by his respected teacher, Sheikhul-Hadith Ishaq Ibn Rahway to compile such a book that would exclusively contain "Saheeh" (authentic) Prophetic Traditions.

Imam Bukhari devoted not only his entire intelligence and exceptional memory to the writing of the momentous work, *Saheeh Bukhari*, he attended to the task with utmost dedication and piety. He used to take a bath and pray whenever he sat down to write the book. A part of

this book was written by him sitting by the side of the Prophet's grave at Madinah.

An interesting aspect of his memory power can be observed from the life of Imam Bukhari. He Started learning the Ahadeeth at a very early age and kept learning till an age that is considered to be beyond the learning age. This shows us that the more a person keeps learning, the more his learning power increases even at an extremely old age.

Imam Bukhari returned to his native place, Bukhara, at last and was given a rousing reception by the entire populace of this great cultural city. But he was not destined to live here for long. He was asked by the Ruler of Bukhara to teach him and his children the Ahadeeth of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) at his palace. This he declined and migrated to a town near Samarqand. Here he breathed his last on 30th Ramadhan, 256 A.H. (13 August 870 A.C)

There are several qualitative aspects of the Imam's life from which we can learn a lot.

In today's world, a person with doctorates, Ph. Ds, and holders of various other degrees are accorded with a lot of respect. It is interesting that the same respect was given to the Muhadditheen (Scholars of the Ahadeeth) in the by-gone era of the Muslim glory. The knowledge of the Holy Quran and the Ahadeeth along with that of this world are on equal footing and there should be no doubt or misconception in relation to this.

It seems that the moment our Ummah stopped studying the Holy Quran, and Hadeeth and all those research centres were forgotten and the

Muslims started to ignore them, did the downfall of Muslims come about. In today's world we have an excess of huffaz but lack of muhadditheen. True scholars who can rightly interpret the Hadeeth are the need of the day. Hence it is of utmost importance that today, we learn the hadeeth and more importantly implement it.

The life of Imam Bukhari truly embodies the importance of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) traditions that we so blatantly ignore today. We must realise that it was the hard work and patience of these early scholars that enable us to access the Hadeeth so easily.

It also brings out an important aspect of our lives. The scholars of the bygone days devoted their entire lives to the study of the Prophet traditions. Today we donot lack huffaz of the Holy Quran but how many scholars of the hadith do we have? Is it not imperative on us that we make a studious venture into this extremely important world of the Prophet's traditions?

After all it is the Ahadeeth that help us interpret the Holy Quran, Islam and most importantly the various laws of the Islamic jurisprudence that cannot be interpreted in a clear and lucid fashion. Imam Bukhari's life is truly a model for us. Lessons should be learned from the Imam's steadfastness, piety and manners. May Allah strengthen our love for the beautiful traditions of the chosen Messenger of Allah and may Allah bless us and accept our efforts in the cause of Islam like He accepted the man who has left a mark on the pages of Hadeeth literature forever.

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parents for you, you said many words of prayer while returning the greeting of those who came before me. But when I greeted you with all those words, you limited your response to "wa alaik" (and to you). He said: "You left nothing for me to add in the response. Since you used up all those words in your initial Salam. I found it sufficient to return your greeting on the principle of like for like in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Quran". (Ibn Jarir).

In summation, we can say that it is obligatory on a Muslim to return the Salam offered to him. If he fails to do so without any valid excuse admitted by the Shariah of Islam, he will become a sinner. However, he has the option to choose the mode. He can either respond with words better than those used an offering the Salam; or the response could be in identical words.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "Nearest to Allah is the person who is the first to offer Salam". So, from the emphasis on Salam and its many merits that we have learnt from the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) cited earlier, we get to understand that offering the initial Salam has also been emphasized as part of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

According to a hadith in Tirmizi, when a person enters his house, he should offer Salam to the members of his family as this act of grace will bring blessings for his as well as for his family.



CORRELATE EDUCATION WITH MORAL VALUES

Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Education is the backbone for the development of a community. The Muslims in this country are really struggling hard to find a judicious balance between secular education and Islamic studies for its young ones. The Muslims parents are striving to give their children the best education in science and technology as well as impart instruction in Islamic knowledge. However, if you have a large Muslim Community in your area whose educational level is not that advanced, obviously they cannot help themselves. Also if they have low income they cannot afford to give tuition to their children. Moreover, if the parents themselves are unable to help either because they are not sufficiently educated to teach their children and don't have spare time to cater their educational and cultural needs. In a situation like this, the parents/students should turn to National Open Schooling and Indira Gandhi National Open University.

“The great challenge we have to meet in the 21st century is the correlate education with moral values and knowledge with ethics.” This is an age of technology and five affiliates of technology have overwhelmed all the educational system viz, biotechnology, material technology, en-

ergy technology, space technology and above all information technology. The world has become a “global village” through internet and computer. The Muslim students should learn computer and seek IT profession. There is the waning popularity of social and humanities sciences and therefore the right orientation and full bloom of man and society is not possible without the promotion of languages and literature as well as social sciences.

Man today has become a “money making machine” and he has to seek mental rest sooner or later. So it is the responsibility of the intelligentsia associated with Islamic movements to recast knowledge and the educational system in the light of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah and the experiences recorded on the pages of History.

Another challenge in the field of education that he focused is saffronisation of education. The advocates of Hindutva want to saffronise education under the garb of whimsical terminologies like “Indianisation”, “Spiritualisation” and “Nationalisation.”

It must be noted that education for the sake of education is of no avail today; education should

aim at strengthening cultural identity and economy.

The Muslim students should get benefit with “distance education” the view and vista of which have been totally revolutionised. Open universities are challenging education through television, computer and internet. The students should tune to “Gyan Darshan”, an educational TV channel sponsored by IGNOU. Some points should be noted in order to bring out a revolution in the field of education:

- Activate academic movement;
- Impart adult education;
- Get benefited with informal education;
- Make as educational survey of your area;
- Senior Student should spent a few hours with the children of neighbourhood;
- Generous persons should invest money for this cause, and
- Float an academic organisation.



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12. The *Sunan* of Abu Bakr Ahmad Ibn al-Husayn Ibn Ali ibn Abd Allah al-Bayhaqi (384-458 H.) (*Sirat Al-Nabi and the Orientalists vol I A, P.11, Muhammad Mohar Ali, King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Quran, Madina, 1997*).

“As the work of collection and compilation of hadith continued over centuries, quite a number of fabricated and forged reports and modified

versions of original reports came into being, due mainly to the desire to further personal, party, group of sectarian interests. A good deal of forged reports got into circulation due also to subversive motives on the part of insincere converts from heterogeneous backgrounds. Many such false and fabricated reports as also Judaeo-Christian traditions found their into most of the commentaries of the Quran and the chronicles written during those centuries. (*Sirat Al-Nabi and the Orientalists, Vol IA, P.11-12, Muhammad Mohar Ali, K.F.Complex, Madina 1997*).

Fortunately however, the *muhaddithen* and scholars were aware of this fact and they took special care to subject the reports and narrations to rigorous scrutiny and tests. In fact before long, and independent branch of academic discipline, the principles or science of *hadith usul al hadith*) came into existence. Broadly, the process of scrutiny and investigation took two distinct lines (a) a through investigation into the character, personality, capacity and background of each and every transmitter of a particular report (this line of investigation led to the emergence of an extensive biographical literature (*tabaqat* and books on *Rijal*) and (b) textual criticism with special reference to internal evidence, compatibility or otherwise with the Quran and well established facts and in general, with the rules of rational criticism. (*Sirta al Nabi and the Orientalists Vol IA, P.12, Muhammad Mohar Ali , King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Qruan Madina, 1997*).

WORSHIP THE CREATOR, NOT HIS CREATIONS

By Muhammad Abdus Samad

Some of my no-Muslim friends once asked me, “Whom do the Muslims worship?” I replied, “Allah alone!” Why Allah alone? Because He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. He is the Life-giver and Life-taker. While man is the best creation of Allah, the Almighty and Exalted. Man is bestowed with precious powers like understanding and reasoning that distinguish him from God’s other creations.

Then came my turn to ask them, “Whom do you worship?” One of them said, “We worship some gods and goddesses.” I said, “A number of people like you worship different gods and goddesses, and objects seen or unseen, living or dead, celestial or worldly, Now a question arises: Are the gods and goddesses, objects and beings worshipped by you the creators or creations?”

After a little pausing they said slowly, “They are creators!” I again asked him, “Do you believe in many creators?” Another friend broke his silence, “No, they are not creators but creations.”

I again asked them, “Do you worship God’s creations instead of God? The Creator has created man to worship Him, not His creations.

In spite of being the best creation of God, you worship His creations that are inferior to you! Doesn’t it belittle your status of being the best creation of God?”

Then yet another friend came with his argument, “We don’t in fact worship the creations but we simply want to get access to the Creator through these beings or objects.” I submitted, “Do you mean to say that man cannot get direct access to his Creator; so he has to seek the help of some objects or beings inferior to him? Does it not amount to humiliation to man’s dignity?”

They, almost in one voice, finally told me that there is enough reason and justification in what I said. But they maintained that religion is a subject which requires profound study. Afterward I continued to say that we the Muslims worship only the Creator and pray to Him alone for the welfare and success of both the worlds. In fact the true religion must have this characteristic that it teaches worship of and surrender to the Creator. Islam is the only religion in the world that teaches the man how to worship and pray to the Creator.

Why should the mankind worship Allah? Firstly, because Allah is the Creator of man and secondly, because man has been endowed with

knowledge and dignity and placed at a very high position compared to other creations. Through knowledge man can understand what is right and what is wrong. Allah announces in the Holy Quran: "Verily We honoured the progeny of Adam." (Al-Qur'an-17:70) "And He has subjected to you, as from Him all that is in the heavens and on earth: behold, in that are signs indeed for those who reflect." (Al-Quran:45:13) "He has subjected the night and the day and the sun and the moon for you, and the stars have also been made subservient by His Command." (Al-Qur'an-16:12, 31:20) Furthermore, Adam was honoured by directing angels to prostrate before him. The angels did so except Iblis who was cursed forever for the same. (Al-Quran-38:72-78)

Thus it appears that man has attained the authority and control over the heavens, earth and sea and it became possible due to the knowledge and power granted to him by Allah. No creature of Allah, as far as our knowledge goes, has been granted such honour and status as man. Hence the man is regarded as the best creation of Allah. Now a question arises: Is it justified on the part of man that he who is created as the best Creation by Allah should worship and pray to any object (creation) inferior or equal to him other than his Creator (Allah)? If the answer is in negative, we must admit that a large section of people have committed a serious crime against the Creator (Allah). He can no longer be called the best Creation of Allah. So the man is highly obliged to worship and pray to his Creator for his welfare and success in both worlds. The Qur'an invites: "O mankind, serve

your Lord, who has created you as well as those before you; do so that you are saved." (Al-Quran-2:21) "Your God is the One and Only God." Hence, whoever looks forward to meet his Lord, let him do righteous works, and let him associate none with the worship of his Lord." (Al-Qur'an-18:110,16:22) "O men! Fear your Lord Who created you from a single being." (Al-Quran-4:1)

How has the worship of creation crept into the human society? The answer to his question needs some explanations. The Quran tells that the religion that has been prescribed for man since his arrival on earth is Islam meaning submission to the will of Allah, the Creator. The Quran states: "The true religion with Allah is Islam. The people of the Book adopted many different ways rather than follow the true way of Islam even after the knowledge of truth had reached them, and his merely to commit excesses against one another. Let him who refuses to follow the ordinances and directives of Allah knows that Allah is swift in His reckoning." (Al Quran-3:19) All Prophet of Allah right from Adam, the first Prophet, to last Prophet, Muhammad (S.A. W.) established submission to the will of Allah (divine law) revealed to them and also taught their respective people to do so for their redemption in the next world. Submission to the will of Allah (divine law) is called the worship of Creator (Allah) in Islam and one who does so is called Muslim. The Quran announces: "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian; he was a Muslim, wholly devoted to God." (Al-Quran-3:67) When death approached Jacob, he asked his sons: what will you worship after

me? They said: we shall worship your God, the God of your fathers Abraham and Ismael and Issaac and we have surrendered unto Him. (Al Quran:3:133) And (Allah) have raised in every nation a Prophet proclaiming: "Serve Allah and shun the Evil One." (Al Quran-16:36, 21:25) Abraham prayed: "Our Lord! Make us submissive to You and make out of our descendants a community that submits itself to You, and show us the ways of Your worship, and turn to us in mercy. You are Much Relenting, Most Compassionate." (Al-Quran-2:128) But when a section of people, having given up the worship of the Creator started to worship His creations and preachers (Prophets), the worship of creations emerged giving the birth to various man-made religions in human society. And it still continues among the humans. The basic reason of unrest and clash between man and man is the worship of creations instead of the worship of the Creator (Allah). No Prophet ever told his people to worship the creation or himself but the creator. When Israelites considered Jesus to be God he expressly prohibited it. The Quran states: "They are surely disbelievers who say: Lo! Allah is the Messiah (Christ), son of Mary. The Messiah said: "O children of Israel! Serve Allah, who is your Lord and my Lord. Allah has forbidden Paradise for those who associate anything with Him in His divinity and their refuge shall be the Fire. No one will be able to help such wrong doers." (Al-Quran-5:72) When Prophet Moses was away for 40 days from his people (Israelites), they started worshipping a calf. When Prophet Moses came to know it, he strongly rebuked them. The

Holy Quran says: *Verily those who worshipped the calf will certainly incur indignation from their Lord, and will be abased in the life of this world. Thus do We reward those who fabricate lies. As for those who do evil, and later repent and have faith, such shall find their Lord All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate after (they repent and believe).*" (Al-Quran-7:148-153).

The worship of Allah the Creator as prescribed in Islam is not confined only to some rites and rituals, but to the management of both individual and social life in accordance with the will of Allah. And it is called "Ibadat" (worship and obedience to Allah) in Islam for which Allah has created mankind. (Al-Qur'an-51:56) The success of man in the next world depends on ibada the establishes in this mundane world.

We must one day leave this mundane world. Our death is certain but its time is uncertain. Birth is the warrant of death. We must present an account of our belief and action before the Creator (Allah). Allah will not be pleased with us if we worship His creations instead of Himself. Consequently we will be consigned to the Hell fire. Conversely Allah will be pleased with us if we worship and pray Him alone. The Quran announces: "Wosoever acts righteously whether a man or a woman and embraces Belief, We will surely grant him a good life, and will surely grant such persons their reward according to the best of their deeds." (Al-Quran-16:97) For those who believe and do righteous deeds, will be in Gardens. Beneath which rivers flow. That is the great Triumph." (Al-Qur'an-85:11)

THE DAILY PIONEER'S NEWS CLIP IS DISGUSTIVE AND SHOCKING

The Ameer Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind, Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi, in a press release has expressed his grief and shock over daily Pioneer's news clip appeared on January 20, 2019 calling Dr. Zakir Naik as Salafi Preacher of Terrorism and linking Salafiyat with terrorism is unfounded and baseless. This strange, disgusting and shocking report is condemnable and deserve to be rejected. We consider it violation of media ethics and rule of conduct.

Dr. Zakir Naik has never been an Ahle Hadeeth or Salafi nor has any link with a Madarsa, Organization or School of thought. His way of work was independent and varied from others. He Personally did not like to be called Salafi or Ahle Hadeeth and has frequently been disapproving it. Moreover, calling him as Salafi Preacher is a bad repute against Salafi way of life and hurting the feelings of Salafi people. Therefore, we condemn in strongest words the Pioneer's malicious report and extend our protest over it hoping an apology from the said newspaper. Dr. Zakir Naik's activities and related matters are under Government's investigation and the law of land

will pursue his case.

As far as Salafiyat is concerned they pursue the teachings of Quran and Sunnah, the bright path of dignified companions, their followers in succession and their next offspring who had pristinetime Fatih and pure mode Whose comprehensive teachings of peace, brotherhood human benevolent and tenderness were of the highest order and are followed by Salafis or Ahle Hadeeth. This is the reason that no any Salafi has ever been found taking part in any sort of demonstration, rally, protest, shouting slogans and encouraging others of this notion in any part of the world.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

The letters to the Editor Section wants to hear from you

Are you concerned about certain issues that are being talked about? Your opinions are important to us. How do you like this magazine. Kindly send your opinion.

The Simple Truth