

**The
SIMPLE
TRUTH
MONTHLY**

September, 2021

Vol. No.15 Issue No. 9

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Publisher
Mohammad Irfan Shakir

Subscription
Rupees 100/= per annum
Rupees 10/= per copy

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Editorial

Islam is a complete code of life. It doesn't teach us to leave aside all the affairs of the world and limit ourselves only for the spiritual and religious pursuits rather it inspires and exhorts to dive deep into the world while remaining pious and fearful of Allah, the Great.

Finance is one of the most crucial things of the world. The wheel of the world moves on the axis of finance. Money power is in no way less than muscle power or knowledge power. There are occasions when this power beats other powers. This is not to belittle other powers but only to make its importance realized.

Poverty and particularly self imposed poverty has never been appreciated in Islam. Neither the Holy Qur'an nor the Sunnah ordains Muslims to be slack and lazy while disdaining money and the ways of earning money. On the contrary, Islam asks Muslims to earn their livelihood rightfully and spend their money carefully.

It is true wealth cannot be earned only by your hard-work or smartness. There are so many factors which play their pivotal roles in the creation of wealth. Destiny is also one of those factors and it happens quite often that those endowed with so much

knowledge and wisdom remain poor while those bereft of all mental and physical capabilities succeed in earning lots of money. "Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit." {03:37}

However, there are a few things which have better to be kept in mind. Earning money and having it are quite different things. It is with so many people that they earn lots of money but are devoid of a penny most of the time. There is something in their habit and behavior which doesn't allow them to save money and utilize it in the best possible way. They happen to spend much more than they ever earn resulting in their multifarious financial problems.

Islam being a religion of all practical reasons offers so many beautiful solutions for such situations and one of them is never to be extravagant and spendthrift. "Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayatin (devils), and the Shaitan (Devil-Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord." {17:27} At another place the Holy Qur'an ordains, "Eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not Al-Musrifun (those who waste by extravagance)." {07:31}



Pearls from the Holy Qur'an

Say (O Muhammad): "Shall We tell you the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds? "Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good their deeds. They are those who deny the Ayat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of their Lord and the Meeting with Him (in the Hereafter). So their works are in(a) vain, and on the Day of Resurrection. We shall assign no weight for them. That shall be their recompense, Hell; because they(b) disbelieved and took My Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and My Messengers by way of jest and mockery. Verily, those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, shall have the Gardens of Al-Firdaus (Paradise) for their entertainment wherein they shall dwell forever. No desire will they have for removal therefrom. Say (O Muhammad to mankind); "If the sea were ink for (writing) the Words of my Lord, surely, the sea would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord would be finished, even if We brought (another sea) like it for its aid." Say (O Muhammad): I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your Allah

(God) is One Allah (God i.e. Allah). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." (Al Kahf:103-110)

For the acceptance of the righteous deeds it is stipulated that the following two basic conditions must be fulfilled:

(a) The intentions while doing such deeds must be totally for Allah's sake only without any show off or to gain praise or fame.

(b) Such a deed must be performed in accordance with the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger Muhammad ibn Abdullah the last of the Prophet and the Messengers. Narrated Aishah: Allah's Messenger said, "if somebody innovates something which is not present in our religion (of Islamic Monotheism), then that thing will be rejected." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 3, Hadith No. 86)

In another Hadith narrated Aishah: The Prophet said: "Whoever performs a (good) deed which we have not ordered (anyone) to do (or is not in accord with our religion of Islamic Monotheism), then that deed will be rejected and will not be accepted," (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol.9, Chapter No. 20, Hadith No. 449).

VIRTUES OF READING THE HOLY QUR'AN

1. Hazrat 'Usman bin Affan (R.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) said, "The best among you are those who have learnt the Quran and teach (to others). (Bukhari)

2. Hazrat Ayesha (R.A.) says that the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) said, "A person who recites the Quran, and reads it fluently, will be in the company of the obedient and noble angels, and he who reads the Holy Quran halting and with difficulty will have a double recompense. (Bukhari and Muslim)

3. Hazrat Abu Musa Ashari (R.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) said, "The case of a Muslim who studies the Holy Quran is like the orange which is aromatic and delicious, and the example of a Muslim who does not recite the Holy Quran is like a dried date which has no aroma but is sweet; and the case of a hypocrite who recites the Holy Quran is like the fruit which is although scented yet it tastes bitter; and the case of a hypocrite who does not recite the

Holy Quran is like the fruit which has no aroma and is bitter in taste." (Bukhari and Muslim)

4. Hazrat Bra'a ibn Aazi (R.A.) states that a person was reading surah Al-Kahaf and his horse was tied near him with two ropes. It so happened that a patch of cloud reached the horse and covered it whereupon the animal began jumping. Next day in the morning the man went to the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) and related the incident to him. The Holy Quran Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) said, "it was 'sakeenat' (mental and spiritual peace and satisfaction) that came down as a result of the recitation of the Holy Quran, (Bukhari and Muslim).

5. Hazrat Abu Umamah (R.A.) relates that he heard the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) saying, "study the Quran (regularly) for it will act as an intercessor and entreat for its readers on the Day of Judgement. (Muslim)



THE RITUAL ACTS OF WORSHIP IN ISLAM

THE PURPOSE, GOAL AND SCOPE

The Islamic term for worship implies “servitude” to the Lord. To worship God is actually the only goal for which all of humankind has been created. Indeed, the noblest and greatest that anyone could ever be is being a true servant and worshipper of God.

Al-Miqreezee notes that the proper form of worship entails four aspects:

- (1) Determining what Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) love and are pleased with;
- (2) The embodying and enacting of those beloved aspects in one’s own heart;
- (3) Enacting those aspects in one’s speech;
- (4) Further enacting those aspects in one’s actions.

Each one of these aspects is necessary if a person desires to fulfill his goal of being a true worshipper and servant of Allah. The individual first recognizes that the manner that he is to worship Allah is not based on his own individual inclinations, logic or whims. Instead, it must be based on what comes from Allah Himself. Allah is the only one who can state how He is to be worshipped. Hence, the first step is to determine what

Allah wants from the individual and what is pleasing to Him. This is achieved by getting the knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah. This knowledge must then be transformed into an acceptance and desire for those things in one’s heart. One must recognize those things as the true good things and one, hence, must have a feeling of love for those things in one’s heart. When this is accomplished, the proclamation of one’s acceptance and belief as well as the application of this acceptance via one’s deeds should automatically accompany it. In general, these four aspects are usually summarized in two very important points. For anyone’s worship to be proper it must be (1) performed sincerely and purely for the sake of Allah and it must be (2) in accordance with what Allah has revealed in the Quran and Sunnah. Another very important aspect to keep in mind is that “worship” is not restricted to the ritual acts of worship or acts that one may consider “religious” or “spiritual.” As noted earlier, the goal is to become as complete a servant of Allah as one can. The correct concept of servitude is very comprehensive. “Worship” or *ibaadah* is, as ibn Taimiyyah stated in his well-known and widely

accepted definition of the term, a noun comprising every word or deed, internal or manifest, that Allah loves and approves. This includes prayer, zakat, fasting, pilgrimage, speaking the truth, fulfilling trusts, doing good to parents and relatives, keeping promises, enjoining good, forbidding evil, jihad against the disbelievers and hypocrites, good behavior towards neighbors, orphans, the poor, travelers, slaves and animals, prayer and supplication, remembering God and reading the Quran and so on; similarly it includes to love Allah and His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), to fear Him and turn to Him in repentance, to be patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity, to resign oneself to Allah's decrees, to put one's trust in His help, to hope for His mercy, and to fear His punishment. All of these form part of *ibaadah* (worship and servitude) to God.

Hence, worship permeates every part of a person. It touches upon his internal characteristics as well as his outward actions.

In sum, worship is inclusive of:

- (a) One's relationship with the Lord,
- (b) One's relationship with his own soul and its rights to him,
- (c) One's relationship with society as a whole,
- (d) One's relationship with one's relatives, spouse, children and

others who have special rights to a person,

(e) One's relationship with the animals that Allah has placed in this creation,

(f) One's relationship with the environment and all the resources that Allah has created which are supposed to be used in a responsible and ethical manner. Allah, though, did not leave humans clueless as to how they are going to be able to grow, persevere and continue in these acts of worship. Instead, Allah ordained for humans specific ritual acts of worship. These deeds are acts of worship in and of themselves but they are also acts that aid the individual in continuing along the path of worshipping Allah alone. The most important of these acts are what is known as the "five pillars of Islam." As quoted earlier, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated, "Islam is built upon five [pillars]: testifying that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the prayers, giving the zakat, making the pilgrimage to the House and fasting in the month of Ramadhaan."

A brief discussion of the four ritual pillars, as well as the important concept of supplication, follows.

Supplications and Words of Remembrance:

An important act that makes the bond between the individual and

Allah strong is the act of supplicating or praying to Allah. These supplications may be done at any time and under any and all circumstances. They are to be done directly between the individual and Allah, with no intermediaries ever between the two.

Supplicating, in itself, is an act of worship of Allah. When a person prays or supplicates to another, he is showing his trust and reliance in that other. He is demonstrating his need for the one he is praying to. He is demonstrating his trust in that person or being's ability to know, understand and fulfill his need. This kind of feeling in the heart that is reflected in supplication must be directed towards Allah only. When supplicating, the individual turns to Allah and, in doing so, he is admitting his own weaknesses while affirming Allah's ability to respond to His call and Allah's ability to fulfill His own will. In fact, the Prophet said, "Supplication is the [essence of] worship." Indeed, supplicating is beloved to Allah. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Allah is angry with whomever does not ask from Him."

Hence, nothing but good should be expected from supplicating to Allah. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "There is no Muslim who supplicates Allah with a supplication that does not

contain anything sinful or asks for the ties of kinship to be broken save that Allah gives him one of three things: either He will give him what he asks for soon, or He will delay it for him for the Hereafter or He will keep a similar evil away from him."

In fact, the true believer always desires of having Allah's guidance at all times, never having to rely on himself. Thus, a Muslim is always in direct and constant interaction with Allah, his beloved and his Lord.

The Prayers

The importance of the prayers lies in the fact that no matter what actions one performs in his life, the most important aspect is one's relationship to Allah, that is, one's faith, God-consciousness, sincerity and worship of Allah. This relationship with Allah is demonstrated and put into practice, as well as improved and increased, by the prayer. Therefore, if the prayers are sound and proper, the rest of the deeds will be sound and proper; and if the prayers are not sound and proper, then the rest of the deeds will not be sound and proper, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself stated.

In reality, if the prayer is performed properly— with true remembrance of Allah and turning to Him for forgiveness— it will have a lasting effect on the person. After he finishes the prayer, his heart will

be filled with the remembrance of Allah. He will be fearful as well as hopeful of Allah. After that experience, he will not want to move from that lofty position to one wherein he disobeys Allah. Allah has mentioned this aspect of the prayer when He has said, "Verily, the prayer keeps one from the great sins and evil deeds" (29:45). Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi has described this effect in the following eloquent way, its aim is to generate within the subliminal self of man such spiritual power, light of faith and awareness of God as can enable him to strive successfully against all kinds of evils and temptations and remain steadfast at times of trial and adversity and protect himself against the weaknesses of the flesh and the mischief of immoderate appetites.

The prayer is a source of strength for the believers, as they turn towards the one and only true source of strength in the entire creation. The prayer thereby purifies the soul of many diseases, such as despair and cowardice. This powerful effect of the prayer is alluded to in the verses, "And seek help in patience and the prayer and truly it is extremely heavy and hard except for who are humble (before Allah). (They are those) who are certain that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return" (2:45-46).

Besides being a source of strength, the prayer is also a joyous occasion

and a chance for the soul to rest as it journeys in this world. It is a time for the soul and mind to completely and absolutely concentrate on the one matter that it knows is the only matter of extreme importance: its relationship with and proper worship of Allah. The soul realizes that in the act of prayer (when performed properly), the person is doing nothing other than getting closer to Allah and partially fulfilling the only purpose for which he was created. Hence, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to tell Bilaal, "O Bilaal, make the call to the prayer and give us rest by it."

When the person does slip and commits acts of filth and sin, the prayer can also purify the soul from those sins. In other words, it has a cleansing effect on the soul. Everyone is bound to make mistakes and commit sins. But these sins need not remain forever on the soul, causing it harm. Instead, there are means to remove them. One of the most important of those means is the performance of good deeds and, in particular, the prayers. These are just some of the matters that point to the greatness and importance of the prayer. They are actually just the tip of the iceberg. The one who prays will feel for himself many other beneficial emotions that cannot be adequately captured in words.

The Zakat

The concept of being obliged to give up portion of one's wealth for the sake of God as an act of worship of God is something that one finds in the message of the previous prophets. Its important place in the purification of the soul is touched upon by Sulaiman Nadwi who wrote,

The main cause of spiritual illnesses of human beings is the absence of hope and of Allah and lack of love and attachment to Him. Cure to these illnesses is Salat [prayer]. There is also another cause of these illnesses, namely, attachment to worldly possessions, riches and wealth, instead of attachment to Allah. Zakat is the remedy for this second cause of illness.

Zakat is also a strong reminder that wealth is a blessing from Allah. A wealthy person sees around him and throughout the world the kind of misery and destitution that, if Allah willed, he himself could be experiencing. This should develop a very strong feeling of humility and gratitude towards Allah.

Indeed, the believer should be actively seeking means by which he can thank Allah for the bounties Allah has given him. This feeling should drive him to perform more and more good deeds. The beautiful paradox of this is that if the zakat has this effect on him he grows more thankful to Allah, Allah will in turn give him more blessings in this life and in the Hereafter. Allah says, "And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: 'If you give thanks, I will give you more (of My Blessings), but if you are thankless (i.e. disbelievers), verily! My Punishment is indeed severe'(14:7). This act of worship highlights a fact discussed earlier concerning the scope of worship. Worship does not deal simply with one's interaction with his Lord (if one can somehow compartmentalize that and remove it from all other interactions) but it also deals with one's interaction with the other believers in particular and the rest of humanity in general. One directly fulfills the needs of others through the zakat. The basis by which one should interact with others is, once again, the worship of Allah. One interacts with others not on some secular

basis or some philosophical view of human rights. Instead, one interacts with others based on a much stronger and moving foundation: on the basis of how Allah has instructed one to interact with others. In this way, that interaction actually becomes a form of worship, pleasing to Allah and aiding in the purification of one's soul.

Zakat develops within the soul a desire to sacrifice and assist others for the sake of Allah. The true believer cultivates in his heart the joy of giving for the sake of Allah, recognizing how pleased Allah is with such a deed. It is not simply a matter of removing the disease of selfishness, the misappropriation of wealth and the harms of egotism from one's heart. It is more than that. It is the replacement of those possible ill feelings with the feeling that a believer should sacrifice and work for others as a means of getting closer to Allah. This positive feeling should be so strong that even the one who has nothing or very little will want to sacrifice and give to get closer to Allah. Allah describes such believers when He said, "They give them preference over themselves, even though they were

in need. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful" (59:9). Hence, the feeling of not just thinking about oneself but of going out and doing good for others as an act of worship of Allah is embedded in the heart and soul of the true believer.

Zakat obviously has a very important role to play for society as a whole. There are some obvious factors that may be stated here. For example, zakat helps the poor of society as they receive wealth that they need. This should also help to strengthen the ties of brotherhood within a Muslim society, as the poor know that the rich will come to their aid through zakat and other means of charity. Even for those who are not very rich, it makes them realize that they can afford to give for the sake of Allah. They may realize that they will not starve or die if they give some of their wealth for the sake of Allah. Furthermore, it can make those who possess wealth realize that such wealth has actually come as a blessing from Allah. Hence, the person must use it in the way that is pleasing to Allah.



The Pilgrimage to Mecca (The *Hajj*)

Another of the pillars and essential obligatory practices of Islam is the pilgrimage or Hajj to the House of Allah (Kabah) in Mecca. It is a very comprehensive and potentially very moving rite.

One practical aspect that occurs from the Hajj and that anyone who has performed the Hajj can testify to is that during the Hajj one can see the willingness of other humans to sacrifice for the sake of Allah. While circumambulating the Kabah, one sees people with no legs or unusable legs pulling themselves around the Kabah. One can feel the poverty of some of the fellow pilgrims and realize how much and how long they must have sacrificed and saved to make this one Hajj for the sake of Allah. This definitely moves a person and makes him reflect upon his own sacrifices for the sake of Allah. It makes him wonder whether he himself would be willing to make such great sacrifices for the sake of Allah if or when needed.

The pilgrimage requires a great deal of sacrifice on the part of the Muslim, such as the sacrifice of time, money and effort. Every

believer must realize the relationship between his faith and sacrifice. Sacrifice is an essential aspect of this religion. A true believer should be willing to sacrifice one's time, wealth and even life for the sake of Allah. In addition, the true believer must sacrifice all desires and pleasures that are not consistent with the Quran and Sunnah. In fact, a true believer must sacrifice anything that comes between him and the true worship of Allah alone. Selfishness, arrogance, looking down upon others and greed are some of the dangerous diseases that despoil the soul. One must work valiantly to remove any remnants of these diseases. The Hajj should be a helpful step in this process. This is fulfilled through a number of means:

First, in most cases, the Hajj requires a great deal of expenditures (travel, purchasing the animal to be sacrificed and so forth). These are all eagerly spent for the sake of Allah. This helps in purifying the soul from selfishness and greed. It allows the soul to experience the joy of spending

some of his wealth directly for the sake of Allah.

Second, as all of the pilgrims gather at one place, in one dress, all submitting to and calling upon their one Lord for forgiveness for the multitude of sins that people commit in this world, the feeling of brotherhood and love should fill the heart of the believer. He should realize that he himself and all the Muslims all only have one purpose in life, are all marching towards one end and they are all the servants of Allah and Allah alone. There is no room for pride and arrogance here. The reality sets in that the only ways by which these different Muslims differ is in their sincerity to Allah and their good deeds. Otherwise, there is no preference nor distinction given to anyone based on nationality, race, wealth or standing in society.

All the events that one performs at the Hajj and the historical and spiritual significance of the place in which the person performs them—a place where Adam laid the foundation for the first house of worship, a place where Abraham rebuilt that house, leaving his family all alone there and a place where the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his

Companions lived during the early days of Islam—should have a profound effect on the believer. He should view his own life in the light of the lives of the prophets. He should recognize his own shortcomings and the insignificance of the other aspects of this world that he gives preference to. This should drive the person to repent and ask for forgiveness from his Lord. Indeed, the feelings that should be boiling in his heart at such a place may be those which make his supplications so sincere that Allah will not turn down his pleas.

THE TRUE BELIEVERS

The true believers are those who, when Allah's name is mentioned, their hearts quake, and when His verses are recited to them their faith grows, and who put their trust in their Lord; Who establish prayer and spend out of what We have provided them. Such people are indeed true believers. They have high ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness for their sins and an honourable sustenance”
(Surah Al-Infal, 8:2-4)

THOUGHTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Protecting Humans:

“At the core of our concept of human rights is the idea of protecting individuals (and perhaps groups) from the abuse of power.”

Today the paramount question is: who is going to save individuals from the abuse of power done by the human rights lawyers, politicians and activists? These people have a great deal of power today and they have no qualms in wielding it in various different ways. They use their economic and military strength to threaten nations, communities and people all over the world. They demand that people change their culture, society and even religion to conform to the demands of this new movement.

“Human rights” has come a long way from some basic fundamental principles that nations throughout the world could agree to within the contexts of their own cultures. Now human rights law has permeated into the most private of individual’s affairs, be it the relationship between husband and wife or one’s own attitude toward others, chosen sexual preferences. Undoubtedly, this has been an abuse of power.

Actually, the abuse of power goes well beyond that. It touches upon the most sacred aspect of a person’s life i.e. an individual’s relationship with his or her Creator. Even that relationship is overruled in fact, dominated by the

laws laid down by professional bureaucrats, politicians and lawyers. One is not even allowed to submit to God in any other way to which these supposed super guardians of morality object.

Even well-intended individuals can easily slip and abuse their newly acquired powers. Perhaps one need only look at the aftermath of the French Revolution to see how power can be grossly abused even by those who claim that they are bringing freedom to the people. Perhaps human rights advocates need to reassess exactly where they have come from and where they are now. Although everything is stated in terms of “human rights,” one can definitely get a feel of “totalitarianism” in the writings of human rights advocates, especially when it comes to the place and role of religion in human society.

The Moral Choice:

Rights ought to be balanced with other values, and it would be dogmatic to assume that rights are always more fundamental than other values....I should identify and evaluate the moral weight of the other values at issue. Rights are important, but they are not the whole of morality.”

There are a number of tricky questions that are related to the issue of human rights and morality. Human rights activists could argue that morality is for states and individuals to give

everyone the rights that they deserve and to fully respect those rights. That sounds excellent and very convincing. However, it leads to obvious follow up questions: What are those rights that everyone deserves? As discussed earlier, this is actually an unanswerable question in the human rights paradigm. One could answer that it is those rights that have been agreed upon as rights. That does not answer the question, especially given that “agreed upon” simply means by the human rights lawyers and state representative for whom morality need not have been a guiding principle. Again, the answer could be those rights that are consistent with a secular, democratic or free society. Once again, morality has been left out.” Those sources for rights are supposed to be, in a sense, “morality neutral.” There is no true secular or democratic morality. Hence, one is truly left with a system that is void of “morality.” It was actually meant to be that way because subjective questions of morality means that one is forced to “judge” certain ways of life and behavior. This is what the human rights paradigm theoretically seeks to avoid. But taking morality out of the equation simply opens the door for immorality. One would hope that it would be one’s “human right” to be concerned about morality. One definitely should not have to sacrifice one’s concern for morality in the name of some vague concept of “human rights”. If one does allow the question of

moral choice to enter into the equation again, then with respect to the contemporary human rights paradigm, the Muslim is facing a moral choice of momentous proportion. What can be a greater moral question or a greater moral dilemma for a Muslim than disobeying God or believing in a system that (he knows) violates his fundamental beliefs about God? Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) explicitly touched upon this question when he stated, “There is to be no obedience to a creature if it involves disobedience to Allah.” If it is *allowed* to put forth the notion that something may take precedence over human rights, certainly, in an internal discussion among Muslims, obedience to God must be preferred even to so-called human rights.

Secularism and Human Rights: Is there more to Life?

Human rights are not, and can not be, grounded on religious conviction. Such a contention is factually and historically mistaken and it is conceptually imperialistic. The human rights ideology is a fully secular and rational ideology whose very promise of success as a universal ideology depends on its secularity and rationality. No one can expect merger or full comfortable cooperation between religious and human rights organizations.

Here, Henkin is representing a secular approach. If the secularists are willing to make such clear and unequivocal statements, it is high

time that the Muslims also recognize that such is truly the case. One can argue that two distinct *religions or ideologies* are being spoken about when any comparison is being made between the contemporary human rights doctrine with Islam. It will not work if one tries to bend Islam in such a way that it fits to the contemporary human rights schemes, in particular the more extreme versions of it, nor will it work if one tries to bend and manipulate the human rights platforms to fit with Islam. In both the cases, the contradictions and illogical arguments will be such that it will weaken the resolve of all the concerned.

Later, actually, Henkin completely contradicts himself probably because his conception of religion or ideology is very restricted. At the same time, he points out a very important reality: the contemporary human rights schemes cannot offer humankind all of what it needs.

In fact, however, the idea of rights is not, and does not claim to be, a complete, all-embracing ideology. It is not, in fact, in competition with other ideologies. Religion explains and comforts; tradition supports; development builds. The human rights idea does none of these. In the world of either today or tomorrow there may be no less need for what religions and traditions have always promised and provided. Representatives of religion have been right to reject any claims for human rights as a total ideology. Human rights -cold

rights- do not provide warmth, belonging, fitting, significance, do exclude the need for love, friendship, family, charity, sympathy, devotion, sanctity, or for expiation, atonement, forgiveness. But if human rights may not be sufficient, they are at least necessary. If they do not bring kindness to the familiar, they bring as religions have often failed to do respect for the stranger. Human rights are not a complete, alternative ideology, but are a floor, necessary to allow other values - including religions- to flourish. Human rights not only protect religions but have come to serve religious ethics in respects and contexts where religion itself has sometimes proved to be insufficient. Human rights are, at least, a supplemental "theology" for pluralistic, urban, secular societies. Religions can accept if not adopt the human rights idea as an affirmation of their own values and can devote themselves to the larger, deeper areas beyond the common denominator of human rights. Religions can provide, as the human rights idea does not adequately provide, for the tensions between rights and responsibilities, between individual and community, between the material and the spirit. Henkin is recognizing the vacuum of the human rights paradigm but, at the same time, he is failing to recognize that once the authority of religion is undermined, then the religion can actually no longer fulfill other roles that he is describing in the passage. By

accepting the human rights doctrines as paramount over the religious doctrine, what does it then mean to be worshipping and submitting to God? An individual cannot have two gods or two ultimate authorities in his heart. As An-Na'im once said, "The most serious objection to secularism as the foundation of the universality of human rights is its inability to inspire or motivate believers, who are the vast majority of the world." Similarly, those believers will not be willing to relegate their belief system to a secondary role, second to the demands of the human rights paradigm.

Unless, of course, as a secularist, Henkin is thinking of religion from a secularist perspective. "Religion" simply provides those other aspects, like "comfort" but it does not provide a complete way of life. In this way, the human rights advocate is once again, ironically, forcing his view of religion upon others in the name of universal human rights. This simply cannot work and is illogical in its premise.

Eventually, one must reign supreme: the secular theology of the human rights movement or the theology of one's religion. There is definitely a "theology" behind the human rights movement:

Max Horkheimer, an early exponent of the critical theory of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, and an existentialist and atheist, suggested that "behind every genuine human endeavour stands a theology." He argues that

a political and ethical paradigm that "does not preserve a theological moment in itself, no matter how skilful, in the last analysis is mere business".

This "theology" behind the human rights movement cannot take a back seat to any other type of theology. In the words of Donnelly, If human rights are the rights one has simply because one is a human being, as they usually are thought to be, then they are held "universally," by all human beings. They also hold "universally" against all other persons and institutions. As the highest moral rights, they regulate the fundamental structures and practices of political life, and in ordinary circumstances they take priority over other moral, legal, and political claims. These dimensions encompass what I call the moral universality of human rights.

One can find these admissions throughout the theoretical literature on human rights but one has to be a devoted researcher to find them. They are not part of the message that the human rights proponents are stating to the masses when they speak of their glorious human rights platform.

This "secular religion" of human rights has become the religion of contemporary times. In the words of Ignatieff,

Fifty years after its proclamation, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has become the sacred text of what Elie Wiesel has called a "worldwide secular religion." UN secretary General Kofi

Annan has called the Declaration the “yardstick by which we measure human progress.” Noble Laureate Nadine Gordimer has described it as “the essential document, the touchstone, the creed of humanity that surely sums up all other creeds directing human behavior.” Human rights have become the major article of faith of a secular culture that fears it believes in nothing else. It has become the lingua franca of global moral thought, as English has become the lingua franca of the global economy.

In recent decades, the world has seen a resurgence of religion, “fundamentalist” and even “extremist.” One cannot doubt that part of this resurgence has been in response to this secular religion of human rights that has become so dominant yet strikes at the very core of what so many humans believe about themselves, this world and God. Unfortunately, as human rights proponents become bolder and bolder in their demands, this clash between the secular religionists, especially the extreme among them, and the traditional religionists, especially the extreme among them, will become more and more bitter and, sadly, even violent. Part of the blame for that must fall upon the human rights advocates who are not willing to say openly that they are replacing the people’s religions with a secular religion of their own. Many people realize this fact only when it is too late and the human rights paradigm has been entrenched. Once the human rights

paradigm is entrenched, its view of “freedom” does not actually allow any true voice for any competing paradigm. Hence, the friction begins.

Freedom Lost:

It was on these Western traditions of individualism, humanism, and rationalism and on legal principles protecting individual rights that twentieth-century international law on civil and political rights ultimately rested. *Rejecting individualism, humanism, and rationalism is tantamount to rejecting the premises of modern human rights.*

Individualism, humanism and rationalism are what the human rights movement is truly all about according to Mayer. Humanism, of course, replaces God as the center of one’s life and replaces it with the human. Rationalism such as it is called although one could argue that it is not truly rational implies giving preference to human thought over what has been revealed from the Creator.

This passage from Mayer is one of the most explicit and honest passages from a human rights proponent. This author can speak from his own personal experience as a convert to Islam and from the experience of others that he has known that there are many even from the “West” who reject the concepts of individualism, humanism and rationalism as the basis for life. In this one passage, Mayer has aptly described why “modern human rights” morally should not be forced upon any

human in this world, not to speak of those who believe in a religion like Islam.

Beyond Dogmatism and Blind Faith:

Islam, in its essence, is not about blind faith and dogmatism. Muslims should believe in Islam because it is the truth and they can recognize the truth of Islam. This is what true faith (*imaan*) is about in Islam. One of its founding principles is *ilm* or knowledge.

The Quran teaches Muslims that if people make claims, especially great claims about life or belief, then they should be asked to present the proof for their claims, if they are truthful in what they are claiming. In fact, if they can bring a teaching better than the Quran, the Muslim should follow it: “Say: Then bring you a Book from Allah, which is a better Guide than either of them, that I may follow it! (Do so), if you are truthful! But if they hearken not to you, know that they only follow their own lusts: and who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah? For Allah guides not people given to wrongdoing” (al-Qasas: 49-50).

The reality is that the human rights theorists do not present any earth shaking new theory that dispels the beliefs of a Muslim and that should convince the Muslim to put human rights paradigm above the Islamic paradigm, even if he keeps the Islamic paradigm as a secondary source. The proofs are simply not there. It may be a very sincere attempt to establish something that

seems very noble and praiseworthy but, like all the other man-made systems that came before it and which these same human rights theorists now scoff at, it falls short. It is admittedly foundationless. In the long-run, it will produce much more harm than good, as it contradicts the truths that have been revealed from God. Contradicting those truths means going against the very nature by which this cosmos was created as Allah says in the Quran, “If the Truth had been in accord with their desires, truly the heavens and the earth, and all beings therein would have been in confusion and corruption! Nay, We have sent them their admonition, but they turn away from their admonition” (*al-Muminoon* 71)

The contemporary human rights schemes, especially the more extreme but widespread and very vocal branch of it, has offered nothing that should convince a Muslim that he should give up tenets of his faith to bend them to meet to meet their demands. Indeed, the case is opposite. When one realizes how baseless their claims are, the Muslims should be more convinced in the truth of Islam. They have a very noble goal bringing people the rights that they deserve. But they are lost and confused. They have no way of knowing what rights should be promoted. They do not even know what they should base their claims on. After studying the human rights paradigm in detail, a Muslim should flee quickly and return to

Allah, realizing that without Allah's guidance there is no hope for humanity.

Furthermore, the ultimate question is not whether Islam is compatible with human rights, the question is what is the ultimate truth and way of life that a human should live. Obviously, human rights are calling to a path that is definitely deeply "religious" in its essence meaning deeply philosophical touching on some core issues of what it means to be human. However, for the most part, one only finds them taking their assumptions as true without argument (very dogmatic, irrational, argument to authority) and enforceable by law. However, truth does not even seem to enter into the picture.

In fact, one can even go a step further than that. If one is truly interested in giving humans the rights that they deserve and need for life, then, according to Islamic beliefs, it is Islam that gives them all of those rights and prepares an entire society around allowing them to take advantage of those rights in the most beneficial manner. Islam does not give those human rights that will eventually be harmful for themselves but it does provide for them all that they need for a sound life.

The Good Life:

The enforcement of human rights in the international arena does not guarantee that anyone whose rights are effectively protected will live a wonderful life. Or even a (morally or immorally) good life.

"Whoever does righteousness,

whether male or female, while he is a believer- We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do". (al-Nahl 97)

"O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you [true] life" (al-Anfaal 24)

The human rights paradigm probably admitted even by its most staunchest supports is an empty hole. It does not offer anyone anything except, at the most, to say, "Here do as you please, just don't trample on the rights of others".

Obviously, Islam on the other hand, makes a much bolder claim. It claims to give human beings a "good life" in both this world and the next. Regardless of whether the reader believes in that claim or not, the reader must realize what Islam claims for itself and what the Muslim believes about Islam. Islam promises the good life, the life that is consistent with a person's nature and which leads to God being pleased with the individual and the individual being content.

However, the promise of this good life is conditional. It is contingent upon one's sincere acceptance of its principles and one's honest effort in living by those principles. It does not come by being submitting to Islam in X percentage of one's life and then submitting to some other god/ideology/paradigm

in Y percentage of one's life. These compromises are recipes for disaster as they strike at the very foundation of what it means to be a worshipper of God. Allah says in the Quran, "O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy" (*al-Baqarah* 208). Allah also says, "And whoever desires a way other than Islam (submission to Allah) as religion, never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the loser" (*ali-Imraan*, 85)

This ultimate choice of life has been left to the discretion of the human being. God has granted humans limited free will. But when the choices are laid out in front of an individual between the empty vacuum of the man-made human rights paradigm and the divine way of the religion of Islam that brings about real contentment in both this life and the Hereafter, it is difficult to see how any Muslim would choose the former over the latter. The saddest plight for humans, though, is if they are not given this choice and the man-made human rights paradigm is simply forced upon them in the name of freedom.

Engaging the Muslims with Human Rights: The Concept of Maroof:

There is no reason to end this work on a negative note. Human rights advocates and theorists seem to be

sincere people who wish to bring good to their fellow humans. For that they are to be commended, even if a Muslim completely disagrees with their theory and ways.

It is an obligation upon the Muslims to stand for truth and righteousness, order good and eradicate evil wherever it may be. Allah says, "Help one another in righteousness and piety, be help not to one another in sin and rancor: fear Allah for Allah is strict in punishment" (*al-Maaidah* 2). It is narrated in many of the books of seerah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), before being a prophet, had joined a pact known as *hifl al-fadhool*, which was dedicated to redressing the wrongs done to individuals in Makkah. After receiving his message, the Prophet said, "If they were to call me to respond to it today, I would respond to it."

It must be made very clear here at the end that the conflict between Islam and the contemporary human rights movement has nothing to do with the support of numerous and various human rights. Many, if not most, of the human rights called for by the human rights paradigm are sanctioned by Islam. This means it is the obligation of Muslims to support them, as part of the overall ordering good and eradicating evil. As was noted earlier, even within the practice of Islam itself, there

are many avenues by which mutual support could be given to ensure that women, children and the poor receive some of their due rights.

In the end, it must be recognized that the ideologies and the belief systems of the human rights paradigm and Islam are actually at odds with each other. That impasse cannot successfully be broken without one of the two sides suffering irreparable damage. However, if Islamicists and human rights advocates are sincerely interested in bringing good to people, there are many avenues in which they could cooperate to make this world a better place for its inhabitants.

Independence Day Celebration At Ahle Hadees Complex:

While unfurling the tricolor at Al-Mahadul-Aali lit-Takhassus fid Deraassat-il-Islamiah (the Higher Institution for the Specialization in Islamic Studies) situated at Ahle Hadees Complex, Abul Fazal Enclave, New Delhi Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mehdi Salafi, Ameer-e-Markazi Jamiat-e-Ahle-Hadees Hind delivered his customary address to the people and said, "It is Independence Day today and all India is full of joy and happiness and celebrating the independence festival. I offer my heartiest congratulations and warm wishes to all my countrymen on this happy occasion of our national festival. Freedom is the most basic

thing for the life of all the nations. Our forefathers got freedom with perseverance, struggle and a lot of sacrifices. All communities of our beloved country put their best efforts during the freedom struggle and we fought the British with complete communal harmony, solidarity and mutual brotherhood. If we wish to keep this hard earned freedom intact, we would have to imbibe and put in practice the highest ideals which had lead our forefathers in their struggle for freedom and which is part of our Constitution as its Preamble because this is the duty of all of us to secure to all of us citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;
LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among us all **FRATERNITY** assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation."

Maulana Mufti Jamil Ahmad Madni, Dr. Mohd. Sheesh Idrees Taimi, Engr. Quamruzzaman, etc. were amongst the office bearers and teachers of Al-Mahadul-Aali lit-Takhassus fid Deraassat-il-Islamiah and lots of other local people who attended the national festival celebration programme held at Ahle Hadees Complex. National songs were also sung and sweets were distributed after unfurling the tricolor.



What Humans get from Islam

In reality, all of the benefits of Islam accrue to the human. It is solely for his own benefit that Allah has provided His guidance to the humankind. Allah, Himself, is not in need of humankind's worship. He is free of all needs but in His Mercy He has shown mankind the proper mode of behavior to meet His approval. Thus, He says, "Whoever goes right, then he goes right only for the benefit of his own self. And whoever goes astray then he goes astray to his own loss. No one laden with burdens can bear another's burden" (17:15). In addition, it is important to note that those who reject Islam are only harming themselves. Allah says, "Truly! Allah wrongs not mankind in aught; but mankind wrong themselves" (10:44).

It would be impossible to list all of the benefits that humans get from Islam. A brief mention of some of the major issues is called for.

First and definitely most important, by following Islam the individual is following the only way of life that is pleasing to his Creator and Lord. This motivation should be so great that no other point need be made. Allah says, "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" (3:85).

Islam is the only way of life that is truly consistent with one's own human nature, having been revealed by the One who also created the human. Thus, it is the only source for true contentment and tranquility. Islam, as Allah has described it, is a cure for all of the diseases that afflict the human's heart and soul. Those who refuse to submit to God spend their entire lives chasing after other things, many times material things, that can never bring them true happiness.

This point is not related simply to what will occur in the Hereafter. This is also something true while a person is living in this worldly life. Allah says, "Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter)" (16:97). Allah also says, "But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Quran nor acts on its orders, etc.) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise

him up blind on the Day of Resurrection” 20:124).

Hence, Ibn al-Qayyim wrote,

Do not consider that Allah’s words, “Indeed, the righteous will be in pleasure and indeed the wicked will be in Hell-fire” [*al-Infitaar* 13-14] are restricted only to the pleasures and hell of the Hereafter alone. Actually, it applies to their [humans’] three stages, that is, the life in this world, the life in *al-barzakh* [after death and before resurrection] and the life in the permanent abode [after resurrection]. Those [who submit to God] are in pleasure while the others are in a hell. Isn’t pleasure only the pleasure of the heart and punishment only the punishment of the heart? What punishment can be harsher than fear, worry, anxiety and uneasiness [faced by those who refuse to submit to God]? [What can be harsher than the soul’s] turning away from Allah and the abode of the Hereafter, its clinging on to something other than Allah and its being disconnected from Allah?

Ibn Taimiyyah, a well-known scholar in the history of Islam, attempted to express the joy that one feels from his faith in Allah. He once said, “In this world there is a Paradise that whoever does not enter it will not enter the Paradise in the Hereafter.” He also said,

“What can my enemies do to me? Certainly, my paradise and garden are in my chest.” In fact, Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Taimiyyah’s closest student who would visit him often, stated,

Allah knows that I have never seen anyone having a better life than him. [This was true] even though he was in straitened circumstances and not living in luxuries and comforts. On the contrary, he was on the opposite extreme. Even though he faced imprisonment, torture and threats, he still had the most pleasurable life among the people, with the most relaxed feelings, strongest in heart and happiest of all of them. The experiencing of joy could be seen on his face. Whenever we were very fearful, feeling bad expectations and felt the earth constricting upon us, we would come to him and we only needed to see him and listen to his words that all of those emotions would leave us. Instead, we would be filled with rest, strength, certainty and tranquility. Exalted be the One who allows His servant to witness His Paradise before he meets Him.

Of course, such a beautiful feeling from one’s faith was not restricted to Ibn Taimiyyah. Ibn al-Qayyim quotes another devout Muslim as saying, **(Cont. on Page No. 29)**

STATEMENTS OF UNBIASED OBSERVERS IN THE EAST AND WEST

Throughout history, many unbiased observers of Islam have written testimonies concerning the beauties or excellence of Islam, the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad. To this day, many who write about Islam are very positive in their appraisal of this noble religion. Some contemporary non-Muslims are actually quite active in trying to refute many of the false claims that one hears about Islam in the media.

Actually, some of the greatest thinkers and historians of the West and the East were extremely complimentary in their overall discussion of the religion of Islam. The author of *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, John Draper wrote, "Four years after the death of Justinian, A.D. 569, was born at Mecca, in Arabia, the man who, of all men, has exercised the greatest influence upon the human race." More recently, Michael H. Hart's *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History* put the Prophet Muhammad number one among all the world's influential leaders.

The early American writer

Washington Irving wrote a book about the Prophet Muhammad, entitled *Mahomet and His Successors*. In this work, he gives a very glowing and praising description of the Prophet. For example, he writes, "His intellectual qualities were undoubtedly of an extraordinary kind... He indulged in no magnificence of apparel, the ostentation of a petty mind... In his private dealings he was just. He treated friends and strangers, the poor and rich, the powerful and the weak, with equity, and he was beloved by the common people... His military triumphs awakened neither pride nor vain glory, as they would have done had they been effected for selfish purposes....."

Lamartine, the French intellectual, wrote, "If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often

crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls. On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race....

Professor Nathaniel Schmidt wrote, The essential sincerity of Muhammad's nature cannot be questioned; and an historical criticism that blinks no fact, yields nothing to credulity, weighs every testimony, has no partisan interest, and seeks only the truth, must acknowledge his claim to belong to that order of prophets...

One can find similar important glowing statements from noted historians and intellectuals such as Edward Gibbon, Arnold Toynbee, H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Will Durant, Marshall Hodgson and others.

Besides historians and thinkers, even dignitaries of other faiths have stated their respect and admiration for the Prophet Muhammad. The Rev. Montgomery Watt honestly proclaimed, "To suppose Muhammad an imposter raises

more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad." The Hindu leader Mahatma Gandhi said about the Prophet,

I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind....I became more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle... When I closed the second volume [of the Prophet's Biography], I was sorry there was not more for me to read of that great life.

In recent decades, many scientists, in particular, have marveled at the miraculous nature of the Quran and have concluded that it is inconceivable that such a work could have been produced by a human some 1400 years ago. For example, the French medical doctor Maurice Baucaille, at the end of a comprehensive study on the Bible,

the Quran and Science, wrote, In view of the level of knowledge in Muhammad's day, it is inconceivable that many of the statements in the Quran which are connected with science could have been the work of a man. It is, moreover, perfectly legitimate, not only to regard the Quran as the expression of a Revelation, but also to award it a very special place, on account of the guarantee of authenticity it provides and the presence in it of scientific statements which, when studied today, appear as a challenge to explanation in human terms.

Dr. T.V.N. Persaud, a specialist in Anatomy, Obstetrics and related fields and a Professor at the University of Manitoba, stated, "You have someone illiterate [meaning the Prophet Muhammad] making profound pronouncements and statements that are amazingly accurate about scientific nature. I personally can't see how this could be a mere chance. There are too many accuracies and, like Dr. Moore, I have no difficulty in my mind that this is a divine inspiration or revelation which led him to these statements.

Prof. Tejatat of Chiang Mai University in Thailand stated, During the last three years, I became interested in the Quran...

From my study...I believe that everything that has been recorded in the Quran fourteen hundred years ago must be the truth, that can be proved by scientific means. Since the Prophet Muhammad could neither read nor write, Muhammad must be a messenger who relayed this truth, which was revealed to him as an enlightenment by the one who is eligible [as the] creator..... Therefore, I think this is the time to say...[at this point, Prof. Tejasen makes a declaration of Islamic faith].

The last personality quoted above declared his faith and became a Muslim. Actually, this has been the fate of millions who have studied Islam throughout the East and the West. Some maybe famous people, such as rock star Cat Stevens or German diplomat Murad Hoffman, but the vast majority are simply honest people who understand that there is some truth behind this reality and via honest and unbiased study and contemplation realize and accept the truth of Islam.

Of course, a very important question may be raised at this point: Why did not all those who have such great things to say about Islam embrace Islam? Each individual case may be different

but many may have their own personal reasons for not embracing Islam. For example, many who have grown up in the West have developed a bad taste for any form of “organized religion” and hence they see the truth but practice on their own. Others may be “happy and satisfied” with what they have and do not understand the vital necessity of moving on to the complete truth in the sight of God. Others simply do not wish to make a drastic change in their lives, even though they see the truth in something. Yet other may have social barriers to accepting such a different religion given their society or status. The reasons are various. In any case, though, Islam stands upon its own great merits. The individual should not be too concerned about what others, with their own biases and dislikes, may do or say. Instead, he should take the initiative on his own to try to search for and discover the truth. Thus, he is encouraged and invited to make his own unbiased study of Islam. As if often the case, this may lead him to the truth of Islam and a desire to then embrace Allah’s religion.



(From Page No. 25)

“If the kings and the children of the kings knew what [felicity] we are in, they would fight us over it with their swords.” Yet another stated, “The inhabitants of this world are miserable. They leave this world and they do not taste the most wonderful aspect that it contains.” When asked what that was, he replied, “Love for Allah, knowing Him and remembering Him.” Ibn al-Qayyim also quoted another who said, “There comes some times in which I say, ‘If the people of Paradise are in a state like this, they are enjoying a good life.’”

Finally, the individual will be able to experience the truest and most enduring life in the Hereafter. Allah says, “Verily, the home of the Hereafter, that is the life indeed, if they but knew.” (29:64).

It is not simply the individual who benefits from Islam. Society as a whole benefits—indeed, all of humanity benefits from the teaching of Islam. Again, Allah says about the Prophet Muhammad, “And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a mercy for the world” (21:107). The teachings of Islam bring about truth and justice for the entire community, allowing all members to live in a community of love, harmony and compassion.

TWO DAYS' VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ON THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ALLAMA DR. MOHAMMAD LUQMAN SALAFI

On 27th-28th August, 2021, a grand virtual conference was held on the life and works of Allama Dr. Mohammad Luqman Salafi, the world-renowned commentator of the Holy Qur'an and biographer of Prophet Muhammad PUBH under the auspices of the Old Boys of Jamia Imam Ibn Taymiyyah, Madinat-ul-Salam, Chandanbara in Bihar.

Top leaders of religious organizations and Islamic scholars from India and abroad paid rich tributes to Dr Luqman for his seminal works on the Quran and the life of Prophet Muhammad (PUBH). They said his body of works cannot be overlooked by scholars as well as common knowledge seekers.

Among the notable religious leaders and scholars who addressed the conference were Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mehdi Salafi, Ameer-e-Markazi Jamiat-e-Ahle-Hadees Hind, Engineer Syed Sadatullah Hussaini, Ameer-e-Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Dr. Sohaib Hassan Abdul Ghaffar, the Chairman of Jamiat-ul-Quran, London, Naved Hamid, President of All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushaurat, Maulana Ata-ur-Rehman Qasmi, President of Shah

Waliullah Institute, Prof. Akhtar-ul-Wasey, President of Maulana Azad University, Jodhpur, Maulana Syed Athar Hussain Dehlvi, President Anjuman Minhaj Rasool, Maulana Shamshad Rahmani, Naib Emir of Emirate Sharia Bihar, Maulana Syed Zahid Raza Rizvi, the former Chairman State Hajj Committee Uttarakhand, Professor Kausar Mazhari, Jamia Millia Islamia, etc.

On the last day of the seminar, a resolution was passed on a wide range of issues including terrorism, nation and humanity. It also announced of a special chair on Allama Luqman at the Jamia Imam Ibn Taymiyyah.

The seminar was inaugurated by the President of Jamia, Dr. Abdullah Muhammad Luqman Al-Salafi. He has warmly welcomed the proposal to set up the Allama (Dr) Luqman chair and award after his name.

On the occasion, Maulana Asghar Ali, Imam Mehdi Salafi released a souvenir which spreads over 400 pages. In the last, Dr. Muhammad Sheesh Idrees Taimi, the convenor of the two days' virtual conference presented the vote of thanks to all the participants.