

The SIMPLE TRUTH

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April, 2023

“The Simple Truth”

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Editorial:

PROMOTING PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

Over half a billion Muslims, nearly one-third of the Islamic nation population, live as a minority in many countries. With the increasing challenges that Muslim minorities face, there is a need for promoting the culture of national belonging and interaction with other components of society, in addition to the intellectual challenges. The Muslim minority which should have been in the fore-front of uniting humanity on divine principles is itself divided and confused. It is very sad that the false allegation of terrorism is emanating from some elements.

However, this requires all to work hand in hand towards the integration of those minorities in their countries and societies protecting them against cultural and race discrimination and ethnic cleansing. It is necessary to promote values of good citizenship among the inhabitants and contribute as active members in the development of their societies through correcting the misconception about Islam and

Muslims while preserving the rights of these minorities in practicing their faith in accordance with International conventions on religious and ethnic minority rights, and respecting the societies rights to cultural and religious pluralism.

Our aim should be at coordinating the efforts of Muslim minority for the purpose and encouraging Muslim communities to contribute positively to the civil and economic development of their countries, and correcting the misconception and stereotypes about Islam and Muslim minorities in addition to bridging the intellectual and cultural gap between the components of the human society.

We should make mechanism for making the role of individuals more positive in serving our country for affecting exchange of experience and mutual work and building a better future for the coming generation.

DON'T CALL THE MARTYRES AS DEAD

“Think not of those slain in the way of Allah as dead. Indeed they are living, and with their Lord they have their sustenance. Rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them out of His bounty, jubilant that neither fear nor grief shall come upon the believers left behind in the world who have not joined them”.
(Surah ‘Al-‘Imran, 3:169-170)

A beautiful passage about the about the Martyrs in the cause of Truth. They are not dead, they live- and in a far higher and deeper sense than in the life they have left. Even those who have no faith in the Hereafter honour those that die in their cause, with the crown of immortality in the minds and memories of generation unborn. But in faith we see a higher, tracer, and less relative immortality. Perhaps “immortality” is not the right world in this connection, as it implies a continuation of this life. In their case, through the gateway of death, they enter, the true real life, as opposed to its shadow here.

There is a tradition from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) that he who

leave the world after having the word “death” as well as its general concept has a depressing effect. People have there-fore been instructed not to refer to martyrs who Laid down their lives for as “dead” since this might lead to the dissipation of the spirit which enables people, to struggle and make sacrifices in God’s cause. Instead, people have been instructed to bear in mind that anyone who lays down his life for God has in fact attained immortality. As well as being a statement of fact that also helps to arouse and sustain courage.

There is a Tradition from the Prophet (S.A.W.) that he who leaves the world after having lived righteously is greeted with a life so felicious that he never wishes to the world. The only exception to this are martyrs who wish to be sent back to the world so that they may once again attain martyrdom and thereby enjoy that unique joy, bliss and ecstasy which one experiences at the time of laying down one’s life for God.

WIDE PUBLICITY OF AUTHENTIC HADITH

(1) Abdullah Bin Amar reported that the Messenger of Allah said: Circulate from me though (it be) a sentence, and narrate about the children of Israhil and there is no harm. And whoso fabricates falsehood against me intentionally, let him seek his abode in the fire". (Saheeh Bukhari)

(2) Samorah Bin Jundab and Mughirah Bin Shubah reported that the Messenger (S.A.W.) said: Whoso narrates from me a Hadis knowing that it is a false one, he is then one of the liars. (Saheeh Muslim)

(3) Abdullah Ibn Amar reported that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said: Certainly Allah will not destroy knowledge outright by taking away from the servants, but He will destroy knowledge by taking away the lives of the learned till when there will remain not a single learned man, people will then take the illiterate as leaders. They will be consulted and so they will give decision and will lead to error. (Saheeh Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) enjoined on us to give wide publicity to his saying which are authentic and prohibited us fabricating false traditions knowing them to be false. This is because false traditions, being factured by interested uninspired persons, are susceptible of imperfections and errors which may not satisfy human minds and may ultimately lead to destruction and difference just as the Jews and Christian were misled as the true teachings of Moses and Jesus (peace be on them) did not reach them. The teachings of these prophets have been exaggerated, interpolated and misinterpreted and some of them were lost to them world for want of pen and press and some of through lapse of time.

There will remain no learned man versed in the Quran and Hadis and other religious scriptures. This Prophecy has been literally fulfilled. Present education is not what has been recommended by the Prophet.

Fasting-History and Objectives Reforms in pre-Islamic Fasting

By Sayyid Sulaymaan Nadwi

Islam, however, takes the opposite stance in the period of fasting. To apply oil on the head, to use collyrium (Surmah) in the eyes, and to apply perfume while fasting are not prohibited in Islam.

With Miswak have also been encouraged. In addition to cleanliness, the aim is that the fasting person should not fall victim to show hypocrisy and may not appear to be undergoing a great hardship and anguish in discharging this commandment of Allah. On the contrary, an appearance of joyfulness, happiness and willingness should be presented.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) used to fast very often. He had fixed certain days in the week and in the month for this purpose. For the followers of Islam, these fasts were considered commendable (*Mustahab*) but not obligatory. In addition to these, the Prophet (S.A.W.) sometimes used to fast continuously day and night. Fasting, in comparison to other worships, is obviously to some

extent an act of hardship and suffering. It was, therefore, necessary to prevent the followers of Islam from indulging in it to excess. This practice of *wisaal* (continuous fasting of day and night) was declared strictly forbidden by the Prophet (S.A.W.) for his followers. When certain companions asked for the reason, he replied, "I am not like you, for I am provided food and drink (by Allah)". (Bukhari)

The Objects of Fasting

The divine teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) are in accordance with Allah's commands and prudence. These teachings include in them all spiritual, moral and material benefits. The principles and the purpose of the commands revealed by Allah have been explained and exemplified by the Prophet (S.A.W.) himself.

The purposes and intents of fasting have also been explained in the Glorious Quran in three short sentences:

"To glorify Him in that He has guided you." (2:185)

“And that ye shall be grateful.”
(2:185)

*“That ye may (learn) self
restraint.”* (2:183)

As has been described in previous pages, the life histories of all the Prophets who were recipients of Divine Laws show that they had led an angelic existence for a certain period before they received revelation of Divine Guidance. During this period, they abstained, as far as possible, from food, drink and other human needs. Thus they enabled their souls to have communion with Allah and finally were rewarded with His Revelation.

Prophet Moosa (peace be upon him) spent 40 days in this way and then the commandments of the Torah were entrusted to him. Prophet Eesaa (peace be upon him) also spent 40 days in the same way and only then did the fountainhead of wisdom flow out of his heart and tongue. Muhammad (S.A.W.) the final Messenger of Allah, had been busy in worship for 30 days in the Hira cave when the light giving Message of Allah started to be revealed to him.

From the above, it is clear that the foremost purpose of the duty of fasting was to follow the actions, which the Prophets performed in

those days of confinement. The Jews, following Prophet Moosa (peace be upon him) think it appropriate to fast for 40 days, but consider it compulsory to fast on the 14th day. The Christians should have done the same and fasted for 40 days following Prophet Eesaa (peace be upon him) but in the same way as they did not comply with other commands and traditions of Eesaa (peace be upon him) following Paul, they did not follow this duty of fasting either. The Muslims were commanded by Allah to follow their Prophet (peace be upon him) and spend fixed number of days in the same manner.

“O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you.” (2:183) The teachings of the Prophet of previous religions were forgotten by their followers in a short time but the thousands and millions of followers of Islam still remember the teachings of their Prophet (peace be upon him) and follow them. They do not eat and drink in the daytime and abstain from other sensual desires for one month, thus leading an angelic life this period.

Blessings of Recitation of Holy Quran

By Hakim Mohammed Said

“Recitation of the Holy Quran is the form of worship which brings a servant nearest to Allah.” According to a well known Hadith the best amongst the believers are they who learn and teach the Holy Quran. Learning and teaching are not anything different and distinct from recitation, but a mode of the same act. It is because of this that recitation of the Holy Quran has been declared as the best of all human actions and the reciters are recognized as the elite of the Ummah in virtue and righteousness.

The term Ahlul-Allah (the people of Allah) is understood and used by all of us. There is Hadith, in Ibn Maja, that by "Men belonging to Allah" is meant the people who regularly recite the Holy Quran. According to a hadith, in Miskhat, on the Day of Judgement three categories of men will be on the top of the mount of the Black Musk and one will be of those that recite the Holy Quran solely to seek Allah's approbation.

Abu Imam Bahli quotes the Holy Prophet as saying that a reciter of the Quran gets the reward of ten noble deeds for each letter of the Holy Quran that he

recites. “I do not say that Alif-Lam-Mim is one letter- Alif is one letter, Lam is another letter and Mim still another.” The Holy Prophet has also said that the true believers should cultivate in his heart the inclination and the desire to recite the Holy Quran, because it is this act which is an undeniable proof of the believer's love of Allah and of His Prophet. Everything that belongs to the beloved, his disposition, his habits, his manners of speech, his bearing is adorable and lovable for the man who loves. The Holy Quran is the Word of Allah. The Momin, therefore, should have profound love for it in his heart. Those who repeat the words of their beloved lovingly often attract the attention of their beloved and succeed in winning his regard. Accordingly those who devote much time to the recitation of the Holy Quran invite the kindness and mercy of Allah to their person.

A companion of the Holy Prophet Amr bin al-As says that every verse of the Holy Quran means specific grade in the paradise and a lamp for the home. Another Companion, Abu Hurayra says that a house in which the Holy Quran is recited is blessed

with many bounties of Allah and that where it is not recited has to face hardship and adversity.

Sufyan Sori says that when a man recites the Quran angles kiss him between his two ears.

According to a Hadith quoted by Baihaqi, Companion Khalid Bin Aqiba came into the presence of the Holy Prophet and requested him to recite the Holy Quran before him.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) started the recitation from the verse and concluded it at the end of the chapter. The companion asked the Holy Prophet to recited them again. When the Prophet finished, the Companion exclaimed with great fervour, "It is so sweet, it is inner part of the sweetness of the drops of rain and its manifest portion has the freshness and succulence of sweet fruits.

Abdullah Bin Masud, a close Companion of the Holy Prophet and a profound exegete has said that on the Day of Judgement there will be no intercessor better than the Holy Quran. Recitation will intercede on behalf of the reciter in the Court of Allah, the Almighty, the World Sustainer. It is true that the best form of recitation is that which is accompanied by full understanding of the verses and an analytical insight. But even he who just recites, will not be deprived of the benefits and the blessings that are inherent in the recitation.

Recitation, pure and simple, brings a great recompense. Continuous recitation over and over again does at some stage create the state of contemplation and the meanings begin to reveal themselves. In reality, recitation of the Holy Quran is one of the primary acts of Islamic worship. To enable a person to be pleased with the excellences attached to the recitation of the Holy Quran the only conditions is the belief that he is in communication with Allah and what he is reciting is the Word of the Creator.

Mullah Ali Qari has written on the authority of Hafiz Ibn Hajar that the recitation of the Holy Quran, irrespective of the fact whether the reciter understands the words or not, is an act of worship and undoubtedly has a recompense, because the mere utterance of the words of the Quran constitutes devotion to, and remembrance of, Allah. That mere recitation, without knowledge of the meaning of the text, is accepted as recompensible is a proof of the virtue of reciting the Quran.

Abdul Wahab Sherani writes that one thing in which the Imam sought divine guidance in particular was whether a man who recites the Holy Quran without understanding its meaning will get a recompense....

(Cont on Page No. 13)

From Darkness to light:

I FOUND WORDS OF JESUS IN THE QURAN MORE APPEALING

By. Kaighla um Dayo

I was raised in a generally non-religious, typical mid-western American home. I became a very practicing Evangelical Christian when I was 15 years old, much to the chagrin of my family. Everyone called me a “Bible thumper” because I was always advising people to behave in Biblically-sound ways. This, of course, made me less-than popular in high school.

By the time I got around to college, I had found my calling: Mission. I wanted to travel the world for Jesus, showing people his love by helping them in practical things in life.

In Bible college, I learned how the Bible was compiled and changed across thousand of years, and what the Bible actually teaches.

Many of these teachings bothered me. Primary among them was the concept of “original sin”, or

the belief that because of the sin of Adam and Eve-and the Bible story blames Eve-all people are born with a sinful nature, inclined toward sin, and doomed for hellfire until and unless they decide to accept Jesus as God and worship Him.

Despite my inner doubts, in the summer of 2007, I embarked on a missionary journey to India and I was changed forever by the experience. I met people from all walks of life and was forced to confront my doubts and questions head-on for the first time in my life.

By the time I left India, I had lost all my faith, gotten married to a virtual stranger, and dropped out of Bible college. I had two words for God: “See ya”.

For two years, I ignored God and searched for fulfillment elsewhere. And then, in January of 2009, I shattered my left leg in an accident and was forced to lie in bed, essentially, for 6 months.

Let me tell you that accident is my greatest joy now, and every time I walked somewhere and the pain in my leg is unbearable, all these years later, I thank God, because it was those months of being forced on the meaning of life and my role in it that led me eventually to Islam.

Later that year, I had learned to walk again and moved to Chicago. I found myself a dream job and a great apartment.

But in one strange day, I lost my both my job and my apartment. I had nowhere to go, nowhere to turn. I was homeless with my young son, living in a motel. But rather than focusing on finding jobs, I spent my days and nights, while my baby slept, watching video after video on you Tube of people who had chosen to embrace Islam, many against violent odds.

Finally, after weeks of this I decided to call the local mosque because I wanted to speak with someone in person who had embraced Islam.

I received a phone call later that same evening from a woman who was Puerto Rican/Italian convert to

Islam. We arranged to meet at her home the following day. She was so kind and so welcoming and seemed like a normal American to me.

She asked about my work experience and when I told her I was an experienced ESL teacher, She jumped at the chance and called her old workplace, a small Islamic school near Chicago. She knew they needed an English teacher right then, and arranged an interview for the next day.

As long as I live, I will never forget the Principle of that school made me feel. Like a dignified, respected, respectful woman who deserved kindness and straight talk. He told me that he believed I was qualified for the job, and was hiring me based on that assessment alone. He told me that he had no interest in hiring me in order to “convert me”, and that my job was absolutely not conditional on my acceptance of Islam. Since it was a boarding School, there were rooms for students to stay in, dorm-style rooms, and my baby and I were welcome to come stay in a room there.

In just a few days, the holiest month of the year for Muslims

began Ramadhan. The students who were my age and were studying Islam in depth (so not my middle School Students) moved into the dorms and I found myself surrounded by women who understand their place in their faith and their communities, which were rich and varied.

I read whatever books I found in the library, and eventually decided to read the English meaning of the Quran. I came to the middle of the chapter called Al-Maidah (the Tabli laid with Food, referring to the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples). In that chapter, God says about Jesus: And that was the day I knew, for sure, that Islam was the truth.

I became Muslim on August 28th 2009, on the 7th of Ramadhan in the Hijra year 1430. It was then that the real struggle began, my internal Jihad to hold strong to my faith in the face of a culture and people began who were and are ruled by fear and paranoia and would forever be a stranger among my own people.

(From Page No. 10)..... and will be allowed to come close to Allah. He was given the tidings that even a person who recites without understanding will be blessed with nearness to Allah.

Shah Waliullah has written in his treatise *Chahar Bab* that the recitation of the Holy Quran is superior to Takbir (the call to Allah), Tasbih (humbly repeating His name as a form of worship), Saum (fasting), Sadqah, (charity), Nawafil (voluntary prayer). It is therefore, obligatory for every Muslim to recite some portions of the text everyday, conforming to the standard enunciation, with clarity and distinctness. Because the virtue of reciting with proper Tajwid enunciation, has been reiterated in a large number of Ahadith.

If a man can learn to understand the meaning of the text, it will undoubtedly be better for him. But if he cannot, then it will suffice, if, while reciting the Holy Quran, he keeps conscious of the fact of its being Allah's Word and that all its injunctions, positive as well as negative what it orders one to do and what it requires one to abstain from and the incidents narrated in it, are all true and he has complete faith in their veracity.

ISLAM AND ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

By. Anees Ismail

Though most of the countries gained independence from Britain back in the 1980s. The African Muslims are still straggling from racism, from their fellow Muslims from Asia who dominate trade and business.

The arrival of Islam in Southern Africa dates back to the early Arab traders who along with their business disseminated the message of Islam among the local population. The teachings of Islam on One God, Equality, Human Dignity, etc. attracted the Africans to the faith of Islam. The colonization of countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana by the British rulers made these countries enter a phase of slavery and humiliation they are yet to come out of. The British ruled these countries around 100-200 years. After an armed struggle the countries finally gained independence in 1960s. Zambia gained independence in 1964, followed by Botswana in 1966 and Zimbabwe in 1980.

When the British left the

African countries, there were three classes among the population the white British who ruled and administered the country, the brown Asians who dominated the business sector and the Blacks who worked as slaves or for every minimal wages. From the railway coaches to the post office counters, everything was segregated into three different categories.

The Muslim population of Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana is around 3-4%. This includes the local African population as well as Asian Muslims especially from India who have settled down there long time ago.

CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN MUSLIMS:

The Local African Muslims have been plagued by numerous challenges like poverty, illiteracy, diseases, hunger, malnutrition, sanitation etc. Education is still a privilege for few of the locals. The child of a farmer stays with the parent in the farm and ends up his future in farming; similarly, the child of a mine labourers stays with

his parent in the mine and ends up his future as mine labourer. This has been a custom over there for a every long time.

This trend is changing slowly now that there are some NGOs run by Local African Muslims who have understood the importance of education. As of now it is still primary and secondary education which is being paid attention to by these NGOs.

University level education and research studies in foreign Universities are still a distant dream. A part from education there is a dire need for the local Muslims to get support in terms of capacity building, personality development, entrepreneurships etc. With very scare resources, the local NGOs are struggling to venture into these areas. The trading community in these countries is dominated by Indian businessmen. Some of these companies have been doing business for around 100 years. Most of the Muslims businessmen have been supporting the Charitable cause of Muslims. Some contribute to the ongoing charitable and some have set up their NGOs for the cause. Almost all these NGOs came to the basic requirement of hunger, diseases, disaster management and building

Masjid. A huge amount of Zakat is collected through these business and is being spent through the NGOs being setup and controlled by Indians there. The statistics provided by these NGOs in terms of beneficiaries gives a rosy picture but in terms of educational and social uplift, the local African Muslims are still on ground Zero.

One of the reasons for this terend is the Thawab mentality among Muslims. Even the Ulema who guide them give references to those teachings which stress on the Thawab aspect rather the Hisab aspect. Building of a Masjid and feeding the hungry are definitely important teachings of Islam and there is no doubt about it, but living among the local African Muslims for around 100 years and leaving them in the same condition even after the passage of 100 years is definitely an aspect of Hisab they will have to be accountable for before Allah. Investing in educational and social development of Muslims is a moral and social responsibility of Muslims. If the Indian Muslim community can do this. Insha Allah within a decade or two, the local African Muslims can come out of their inferiority complex and live a life with dignity and honour.

Another big issue is that the Indian Muslims do not mix with the local Muslims. Their living areas are different from the locals. They still consider them inferior and their place is only among the working and labour class. They are just meant to be helped and not to be developed. When the Prophet (S.A.W.) migrated to Medinah, he ensured that the Muhajireen and the Ansar had brotherly relations not just in the matter of Imaan but in all aspects of life as well.

ISLAMIC ORGANISATIONS:

Tablighi Jamaat is the most dominant Islamic organization working among the local Africans followed by the Salafis and Barelwis. The leadership of all these organizations is still with the Indians and the local African Muslims are not encouraged to take up leadership position. The ulama are all imported from India to guide the locals. There are a lot of delegations which come from India to preach among the locals. Apart from the theoretical teachings of Namaz and Deen, the Locals are not given much guidance on Islam as a complete way of life which comprises social, economic and political aspects. Though they claim to a huge following among the Muslims,

many locals say it is the food that attract them to Tabligh Jamaat programmes. The members of Tablighi Jamaat do not invite the locals to their family gatherings nor do they develop them in business. During one of my trips to Zimbabwe, I was surprised by their attitude towards the local Africans. My host was a local African and I had stayed with an African brother. Some Tablighi Jamaat senior members were surprised that I trusted a local African and came from India to be with them. One of the Tablighi brothers didn't know anything about business and I would achieve much if I stayed with them and advised me to be among the Indians there.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS:

Local Muslims realize that though they are being helped by Indian Muslims, their growth is stagnant. The issues and challenges which had been there before still exist Local Muslims are not growing in education and entrepreneurship. They still have to depend on the Indian Muslim brothers to meet their needs of hunger and diseases. They are still taken as inferior due to their complexion. They never had a say in matters of charity and development. This made the locals

to form their own organization for charitable and social development. On one hand they had to fight for a place in general society and on the other fight for their own cause within the Muslim community. It was a struggle within a struggle. This was the basis for the formation of youth organizations in countries like Zambia, Zimbabwe and Bastwana. Once they started to form network and find similar initiatives, they came in contact with Islamic Movements like Ikhwan and Jamaat-Islami Pakistan. But due to scarce resources, there has been no much direct interaction among them. They are mostly connected with the Muslim youth Movement in south Africa.

The Zimbabwe Muslim Youth Organisation has been spearheading the cause of Islamic Movement for the last 36 years. The age group is 12-35 years and the members who retire after this have no platform to continue their activities. The organization has been trying to get help by emulating the programmes of similar movements of similar movement in South Africa, Egypt and Pakistan. Programmes like youth Campus, Interfaith Dialogues, Programmes for sisters

and women are some of the activities being organized by ZMYo.

On the social development side, the Movement brothers run a trust called “Charitable Foundation for Development” with a vision of being a leading humanitarian organization in serving humanity, alleviating poverty through economic empowerment. Its activities include.

- Orphan and vulnerable children Support Programmes;
- Education and skill development;
- Water, health and sanitation;
- Women support programmes;
- Endowment, Waqf funds management and infrastructure development and
- Relief and disaster management.

There is much potential and hope among the cadres of ZMYo, who believe they shall succeed in their struggle if they are exposed more to other Islamic Movements across the globe.

The Preservation of Hadith

Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Introduction:

“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 sent down for them, and that the people may themselves reflect”(Surah An-Nahl, 16:44)

“As the people of the Book had received “Clear Signs” and inspired Books before, so also Allah’s Message came to the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) through the Holy Quran, which superseded the earlier revelations, already corrupted in the hands of their followers. *(Meaning of the Holy Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali)* In this verse, “the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) is instructed to elucidate the teachings embodied in the Holy Quran-the “Admonition”. He is required to elucidate those teachings not merely by word of mouth. He is also required to do so by his conduct, by establishing a full fledged Islamic society under his supervision, and by establishing and operating a whole

order of human life consonance with that “Admonition”. *(Towards understanding the Quran p.332 vol.IV Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, Delhi-6 1997).*

“The triangular formula is take the position that what people are bound by is the Book of of God, but not its elu cidation by the Prophet (S.A.W.) this verse in very instructive. The role of Allah as the Law giver is emphatically stressed. The role of the Prophet as the teacher of the Divine messages, who is to give interpretations and detailed information of the messages, is equally stated. The recipients (i.e. the companions or Sahabah) are also encouraged to functionally use their intellect and to ask for guidance from the Teacher, and to formulate their own ideas where the Quran and the Teacher are not categorical”.*(The preservation of Hadith, Dr. Abubakr Imam Ali Agan ,the Muslim World League Journal, March, 2011, P.37)*

“This verse (also) furnishes a weighty argument against those who do not believe that human beings can serve as God's message-

bearers. Likewise, it refutes the stand point of those who reject the hadith and seek to derive guidance from the Book of God alone without considering it necessary to be guided by the elucidation and elaboration of the Book by the Prophet (S.A.W.). Such people take a variety of positions. One of these is that the Prophet (S.A.W.) did not elucidate the Book. His task was simply confined to delivering it to people. Some of them take the position that what people are bound by is the Book of God, but not its elucidation by the Prophet (S.A.W.). Others are the the view that the Book is sufficient to guide people and its elucidation was, therefore, unnecessary. They also argue that only the Quran is proved to be *extant* in an authentic form, and that the Prophet's true elucidation of it is either no longer extant or at least is not found in any trustworthy form. Regardless of which of these positions they may take, each one of them comes into sharp conflict with the verse in question". (*Towards understanding the Quran Vol. IV, A Mawdudi Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, Delhi 6, 1997.*)

“As for those who regard the Prophet's elucidation as untrustworthy, this amounts to an annulment of the Quran as well as of the Prophethood of Muhammad

(S.A.W.). In fact, if we were to follow this assumption, it would require acceptance of a new Prophet and a new revelation. For in this verse, God describes the Prophet (S.A.W.) as indispensable for elucidating the Book, emphasizing that a Messenger is necessary to explain the intent of the Quran. (Ibid p.333.34)

“Now, we come to those who reject the Hadith on the grounds that the Prophet's explanation and elucidation can no longer be found in the world. This inevitably leads to two conclusions. First, that the ideal character of the Prophet (S.A.W.) is no longer available to mankind for emulation. Thus, Muhammad (S.A.W.) is similar to that with the Prophets of the past such as Hud, Salih, and Shuayb (peace be on them). For we believe in them but do not consider them models to be emulated in our own lives of the simple and obvious reason that we lack reliable information about them. If we were to hold the same view about the Prophet (S.A.W.), this necessarily calls for the advent of a new Messenger. For if that is the case, only a fool would still insist that Muhammad (S.A.W.) is not the final Messenger. The second conclusion to which this line of thinking leads is that the Quran has become incapable of guiding mankind. This

is so because the Quran itself declares that without the elucidation of its teachings by the Prophet (S.A.W.), it, in itself, does not suffice man's guidance. Hence, once it is accepted that the elucidation of the Quran does not exist in a trustworthy form, the need for a new revelation and the advent of a new Messenger is automatically established. Those who deny the Hadith are therefore, undermining the very foundations of Islam. (*Towards Understanding Islam Vol. IV P.334 A Mawdudi Markazi Maktaba Publishers, Delhi-6 1997*)

What is Hadith?

The Holy Quran, however, does not elaborate any event, nor does it give the details of the Prophet's life and activities. For these as also for the chronology we have to turn to hadith, also termed sunnah. (*Sirat al-Nabi and the Orientalists, vol I A Muhammad Mohar Ali P.8, K. Fahad Complex for the printing of the Holy Quran Madina 1997 CE*). The term *hadith* is applied to the reports of the Prophet's sayings and doings, his practices and his explicit or implicit approval of the words or deeds of anyone else. It applies also to the reports of the statements, acts and approvals of his Companions and their immediate successors. As such these reports are of prime historical importance,

being the statements and accounts given by eye witnesses and participants in the events. (Ibid p-8).

As stated:” the Quran clearly asks the Prophet (S.A.W.) to explain and elucidate its meaning and teachings to the people and he did so throughout his Prophetic life. In this task also he depended on divine guidance and instructions and did not speak anything out of his whim or imagination. Many of them were in the habit of writing down his statements and utterances (*Sahih Bukhari, No 111-113*), so much so that once he had to interfere and ask them not to write down all his statements and utterances lest those should be mixed up with the texts of the Quran” (*Sahih Muslim No.3004*)

“Incidentally, this very report shows, besides the Companion's practice of writing down the Prophet's statements, that not only was each passage of the Quran written down as soon as it was revealed, but also that the Prophet took care to see that nothing extraneous was mingled up with the sacred text, not even his own explanations” (*Sirat Al-Nabi and the Orientalist vol IA, Muhammad Mohar Ali , P.9, K Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Quran, Madina 1997*)

The Prophet's elucidations and statements and his addresses to his people are extant in the works of *Hadith* which in language and style are very different from that of the Holy Quran ." The difference is so pronounced that anyone who has the least sense of language and literature cannot dare to say that both the Quran and the material preserved in the collections of Hadith are the work of the same author. (*Towards Understanding the Quran, vol V p.72 M. A. Mawdudi , Markazi Maktaba Islami Publisher, Delhi-6 1998*)

Prof Ismail R. Al-Faruqi writes:"Its (Quran) language and style are so elegant and distinctive that not much training is needed to recognize it and separate it from other writings. But Muhammad's own language is like that of the rest of humanity. Identifying authentic traditions of the Prophet was therefore a task demanding great care.

The *Sunnah* has come down in reports, called *hadiths*, carried by the Prophet's companions and passed to the generations after them. Muslims are aware that the *Sunnah* was tampered with as it was transmitted between the first four generations after Muhammad. Hence, Muslims are always careful to quality of the *Sunnah* with the word *al-Sahihah* ("veritable" or "

verified"). To sift the veritable from the weak or spurious *hadiths*, Muslims developed the science of textual criticism and elaborated sophisticated disciplines to ascertain the historical reliability of each *hadith*, of the chain of narrators, of the form or language, of the editing of the text, of the coherence and rationality of the content of the text and its correspondence with the Holy Quran and with other historical reality and the accumulated wisdom of human kind. Using the disciplines of grammar, syntax, lexicography, etymology, philology, redaction, and literary aesthetics, the Muslims developed the tools of textual, form, topical, and historical criticism to examine the texts of the *hadiths*. They further developed other disciplines such as biography, historiography, and social analysis to investigate the truthfulness of the narrators of the *hadiths*. They established canons of both internal and external criticism for this task."

Their determination could not be absolutely definitive because of the nature of the case. Hence they did not throw away what they found falling short of absolute authenticity, but categorized it as such, reminding the reader that God knows better than they. Their researches did enable them to

classify all the traditions of the Prophet's doings and sayings according to their degree of authenticity in descending order. First are reports of an act of the Prophet which he taught Muslims to do and which they have performed repeatedly ever since. This is an "actional" Sunnah and is hardly capable of error, considering its universal, repeated, and public nature. Second are those *hadiths* of juridical nature which had visible and public consequences in history and had thus been verified by the incontrovertible facts of that history. Third are those *hadiths* of a religious or moral nature which are obviously consistent with the Quran and were thus meant to illustrate or exemplify its ideas and injunctions. Last are those *hadiths* which carry some creative, innovative direction or tell something that is not reported by other known narratives or traditions.

Muslims look to the Prophet's *Sunnah* under these categories. They are careful to call the Prophet's actions that are canonized by the Quran *al-Sunnah-al-Sahih* (*The Verified Sunnah*). Thus keeping the door open for the possibility of human error. It is then imperative for human beings to remove error from the precincts of the divine will which, after all,

really is religion." (*Islam by Dr. Ismail R. Al-Faruqi p37-40 International Graphics 4411 41 street Brentwood, Maryland- 20722, U.S.A.*).

HADITH AND SUNNAH

"In the context of Hadith literature these two terms are considered to be synonymous. There is, however a slight difference in them. The word *Sunnah* means a trodden path, a precedent, a practice and a custom. In technical sense, it is a model behaviour of the Prophet (S.A.W.). It represents his doings and practices."

Hadith originally means a news, a tale a story, a talk or report. Technically, it denotes the report of the words, deeds, and approval or disapproval of the Prophet (S.A.W.) some scholars have differentiated them in another manner. According to them, *Sunnah* is a norm, a rule of law, a principle and a pattern, whereas *Hadith* is a vehicle through which this norm or law, i.e. the *Sunnah*, is conveyed. *Sunnah* is thus a behavioural concept, while *Hadeith* is the narration of the behaviour, Both are interlinked and sometimes identical." (*Sunan Abu Daud, Vol I Translated by Prof Ahmad Hasan p.XI, Kitab Bhawan , New Delhi- 110002, 2000*)

The Collection of Hadith

Compiled by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

“After the Prophets 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 Tabium (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, Muhmmad 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”, (Urwaha’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, Mohammad 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

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 way 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 Orintalists Vol IA, P.12, Muhammad Mohar Ali , King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Qruan Madina, 1997*).

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.

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