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Editorial:

INFLATION IS HURTING THE PEOPLE

During the recent years the inflation has been abnormal and it has threatened the stability of our economy, independence and individuality. Although Inflation is all over the world. Inflation is a vicious circle and it becomes difficult to get rid of it once a nation is caught in its net. But In India inflation has become a chronic disease. The inflation has made a negative impact on man.

One of the important reasons for inflationary tendencies is the deficit budgeting. As a result of it there is a greater circulation of paper money. And the prices of the various commodities have risen abnormally because the purchasing power of the people has increased. The wrong taxation policy has also been responsible for the rise in the prices. Consequently black money has accumulated and it plays an invisible role in raising the prices of the commodities. Black money also gives greater power for indulging in speculation which always contributes to inflationary rise of prices.

The rise of prices in India can also be attributed to the unethical attitude of the traders. Their only motive is to get maximum profit and so they try to fleece the customers as much as possible.

This has created a class of people who are becoming richer and other class of people who are becoming poorer. It is only if the poor are raised from their state of poverty that India could really be proud of its independence.

The rise to the prices of petrol has also affected the prices in our country. India is producing, despite her best efforts, not more than 25% of the total consumption of oil. So we have to import a huge amount of oil every year. Consequently freight charges have increased abnormally and the prices of the commodities have shot up.

Failure of crops has resulted in the scarcity of essential commodities like wheat and rice etc. The prices of other commodities are closely linked up with the price of essential commodities. That is why the prices of other commodities also rose up abnormally. The government is making the effort to increase the industrial output so that the inflationary tendencies are neutralized. But unfortunately the government has not met with success. So the poor have not benefited from it and the poor have remained unchanged by the general improvement.

SUBMIT TO YOUR GOD

“We have sent you forth as a Mercy to all men of the world. It is revealed to me that god is only God. Will you, then, submit to Him? “If they turn away, say to them; “I have warned you all alike; and I cannot say whether what you have been promised is near or distant. Indeed He knows what you say loudly and what you hide (in your heart)” (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:107-110)

This may alternatively be rendered as the following: “We have sent you only as a mercy for mankind. “Be that as it may, the verse clearly means the Prophet Muhammd’s (S.A.W) advent was a result of God’s mercy towards mankind. It was Muhammad (S.A.W.) who warned and cautioned man and enabled him to gain that knowledge which might help him distinguish truth from falsehood who explained in clear terms, the way which leads man’s advantage and the way which leads to his perdition. The Makkan unbelievers viewed the Prophet advent as a curse, holding that he caused

dissension among them. They are once again told that what they consider a cause is in fact God’s Blessing and Mercy.

The reference in the third verse is to God’s promise to punish the unbelievers for their rejection of the Prophet’s call a punishment which might be meted out in a wide variety of forms.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) was directed to tell the Makkans that God hears and is well aware of all that they say. The unbelievers should not remain under any illusion that their utterance had evaporated into thin air and that they will not be questioned about them.

Allama Yusuf Ali writes that there is no question now of race and nation, of a “chosen people or the “seed of Abraham”, or the “Seed of David”, or of Hindu Arya-varta; of Jew or Gentile, Arab or “Ajam (non-Arab, Turk or Tajik, European or Asiatic, white or Coloured; Aryan, Semitic, Mongolian or African; or American, Australian or

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LOVE THE PROPHET

It is reported on the authority of Anas Bin Malik that the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) said: None of you is a believer till I am dearer of him than his child, his father and the whole of mankind. (Saheeh Muslim)

This Hadith sets us think as to why the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) has been made the test of a man's faith. Quite simple. It is in his august personality that we can know the will of the Lord. His love for humanity and His view of how man should live in this world. In him all the values which our Lord wanted us to uphold took flesh and blood without compromise and without alloy. He has been, therefor, made for us the focus of loyalty because it is through him that we have learnt the true concept of God, the real implication of Tawheed (Monotheism), the role of man his accountability in the Hereafter In fact the whole of the deen (way of life), It is Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) who has shown us the way to love Allah, our Creator, Nourisher, Sustainer

and Guide. He (the Prophet Muhammad) is the central figure in Islam; that is the reason why the Holy Quran says: "*Say (O Muhamamd); If you love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you, and will forgive your sins; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful*) Surah 3:30)

We can manifest our love and dearness for our beloved prophet by sending Darud upon him. But our true love for him will be that we follow his teachings and act according to his practices and above all strive hard to sustain and establish the religion that was perfected with the revelation of the Holy Quran upon him.

Establish Prayers

Establish Prayer and dispense the Purifying Alms (Zakah) and bow in worship with those who bow. Do you enjoin righteousness on people but forget your own selves even though you recite the Scripture? Have you no sense? And resort to patience and Prayer for help. (Surah Al-Baqrah, 2:43-45)

Fatwa:

MEANING OF BELIEF OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

By. Allama Abdul Aziz Bin Baz
Translated by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Question: What is the meaning of belief on the Day of Judgements?

Answer: Belief in all those unseen happenings are included in the belief in life hereafter which occur after the death as informed by Allah and His Apostle, for instance, trials in the grave and sufferings or comforts over there, intense and frightful happenings of the day of final judgement. Sirat Bridge (which one shall have to pass through in order to enter the Paradise), accountability of ones worldly activities and their written records, reward and punishment, and disbursement of the records of worldly activities among people with some of them receiving it with their right hand, while others getting it in their hand backwardly.

Also, the belief in the life hereafter includes the belief in Haudhe-Kauthar (the celestial pond named Kauthar) which shall be offered to the Apostle of Allah

(S.A.W.) on the day of the final judgement. Belief in Jannah (the Paradise) and Jahannam the life hereafter. The believers glance of their Lord, Exalted His Majesty and the conversation of Allah, the Most High, with them and besides it all those happenings of the day of the final judgement which are attested by the Holy Quran and the authentic tradition of the Apostle of Allah (SAW), belief in all of them and their confirmation in the manner taught by Allah and His Apostle, is necessary.

Question: What is the meaning of Belief on the Destiny?

Answer: Belief in Qaza-wa-Qadar (destiny) entails four requirements. First, that whatever has happened and what is yet to happen, Allah has complete gnosis of it from ever since and that Allah, the Most High, is perfectly apprised of entire conditions of His servant. He has total gnosis of their livelihood, their activities, their

ages, and all other happenings and nothing is hidden from Him. As Almighty Allah said: *“(Verily Allah is the All knower of every-thing)”* (Surah Al-Tawbah; 115) Allah farther stated:

“That you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in (His knowledge)” Surah Al-Talqa: 12)

Second, that whatever Allah, the Most-High, has decided to be done and whatever He has predestined, all that is written in Lauhe Mahfooz (the Eternal Celestial Tablet). Almighty Allah said:

“We know that which the earth takes of them (their dead bodies) and with us is a Book preserved (i.e. the Book of Decrees)” Surah Qaf: 4) Again Allah said: *“(And all things We have recorded with numbers (as a record, in a clear Book), (Surah Ya-sin; 12) And Allah stated:*

“Know you not that Allah knows all that is in the heaven and on the earth? Verily it is (all) in the Book (Al-Lauhe al Mahfooz) verily, that is easy for Allah” (Surah Al-Hajj:70)

Third fact that, in each and every event, destiny willed by Allah is excuted. So, whatever, has

happened, it has happened as Allah has willed and what He did not willed, it did not happen. Almighty Allah said:

“Verily, Allah does what He wills” (Surah Al-Hajj:18)

And He said:

“(Verily, His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, “Be” and it is” (Surah Al-Yasin; 82) And He further said:

“And you cannot will unless (it be) that Allah wills-the Lord of the worlds” (Surah Al-Takweer:29)

Fourth fact is that Allah, the Most High, alone has granted existence to entire extent world. There is no creator and sustainer except Allah. As Allah stated:

“Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian over all things”. (Surah Al-Zumar; 62)

And Allah farther said:

“(O man-kind! Remember the Grace of Allah upon you! Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the sky (rain) and the earth? There is none worthy of worship except He. How then are you turning away from Him)” Surah Fatir; 3)

Hence, according to Ahle-Sunnah wal-Jama-ah, belief in

destiny consists of four facts, as opposed to Ahle-Bidah (heretics) who refused over some of them.

Regarding the belief in Allah, it should also be clear that it includes the belief in the fact that Iman (the belief) is the name given to the combination of words and deeds which grows with obedience and compliance and recedes with commitment of sin and disobedience; and that Takfeer (charge of unbelief) of a Muslim on account of any sin lesser in graveness than that of infidelity and idolatry e.g. adultery, fornication, theft, usurious income, consumption of alcohol, intoxication, disobedience of parents, is not allowable unless the sinning Muslim declares these sins to be Halal (rightful). That's why Almighty said:

("Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (any-thing else) to whom He wills). (Surah Al-Nisa 48)

One more reason is that it is proven by frequently recurring traditions of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) that Allah, the Most High, shall ultimately move out every

such person from the hell whose heart shall be possessed of even so negligible quantum of Iman (the belief) as that equivalent to the quantum of a mustard seed.

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(From Page No.5)

....Polynesian. To all men and creatures other than men who have any spiritual responsibility, the principles universally apply.

If you do not realize the significance of the Message, I at least have done my duty, I have given the good News for the Righteous and the warning for the unjust, without favour or partiality, and without abating one jot of the truth, openly and squarely for all. Do not ask me when the Good News and the Warning will be fulfilled. That is for Allah to decide, not for me or for you to know.

The Messenger of Allah freely and impartially teaches all how to carry out Allah's Will and live a good life. If some of them are hypocrites and come into the ummat (brotherhood) from baser motives and not the pure motives of the love of Allah, their motives and conduct will be judged by Allah and not by the men.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

Al Haj Wakeel Parvez M.A, B.Ed
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(1)

Today the human race is facing two important major problems. The rapid increase of pollution and Global warming. Our environment is dynamic in nature. The rapid increase in population has had serious consequences in pollution and global warming. According to 1994 WHO report issued by UNO seven cities are most polluted in the world among them 5 are from Asia. They are Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Beijing and Jakarta.

In India, Delhi and Bombay are the cities which are most polluted. The 2000 and 2001 report also include the Chennai in polluted city list. The recent WHO report covers Iran, India, Pakistan, and Mongolia as most polluted countries in the world in which Kanpur (India) and Karachi (Pakistan) are also included. Moreover, the city of Ahwaz in Iran is considered the most polluted city of the world.

The recent Report says that growing density of population and vehicular traffic activities are dominant factors causing Delhi atmosphere to a dangerous level resulting it equalent to Beijing, Cairo and Mexico Polluted capitals. The contents of dust-particles in air is very dangerous for human

health. The WHO describes the tiny substances in the air subsiding in the human lungs and causing millions of illness and death every year. The WHO had established 20 particles maximum per makab meter as a lawful level. While today the Delhi Adminastration had fixed the 100 partiles per cubic meter. Today 300 partiles per cubic meter is found in Delhi causing deleterious effects on environment. It is abnormal and a high level.

At the end of 20th century especially the first ten years of 1990 is considered worst years of environmental disaster. The several countries soldiers under the leadership of America attacked Iraq from 16th January to 26h of January 1991. The US led coalition launched air and missle attacks during the Gulf war on Iraq causing heavy casualties in Iraq and Kuwait. One Lakh bomb of one ton each were dropped at different places in Iraq. Each bomb has made 27 ft deep ditch and 45 ft diametrical pitch causing piteous conditions over there producing heavy black smoke and dust. During ten months periods 700 oil producing wells were burnt in Kuwait causing 80 million ton Carbondioxide and 36 million ton Sulphur dioxide coming out from

per day. Which effected the North Eastern part atmosphere of Arab countries badly. The months of bombing on Iraq brought oil crises in the world. We can say in other words it harmed the Asian countries in a way or the other too. The huge building and roads in Kuwait and Iraq can be reconstructed but it will take years to bring back the clean environment and the same earlier condition for the next generations. The coming generations will face its bad consequences. However, according to a report, the following plan is made for the improvement of environment in the next five years.

- 1) The electricity power producing factories run by the coal should be converted to high density of gas power. Usually Solar energy and wind power should be used for the same
- 2) In the big cities the vehicles producing more and more smoke should be penalized.
- 3) The Beutin and Beromin etc. should be used instead of Chlorofluoro and Carbons (CFC) in the airconditioners and refrigerators.
- 4) Cutting off the forest trees and cruelty against animals should be minimized.
- 5) The population growth should be reduced by 30 percent during next 5 years. Otherwise the mankind would

face the dire consequences.

- 6) Mithin and Khazra gases should be less consumed in the houses.

It should be noted that when the above said suggestion will be implemented and who will execute it? While each powerful countries Use their influences on weaker countries to dominate it, and sometimes do not hesitate to use weapons of mass destruction. European countries did not leave a chance to make a nugatory attitude towards Asia. The population growth is not in our hands but it is the commandment of Almighty God in which we do not have to interfere. We are suffering from its consequences. The population growth directly effects the means of transport. New companies are coming up and human being are becoming accustomed of unnatural resources. The human being became an agent in changing the environment to suit their needs.

I think we should not be an looker only but spread the message of responsibility and feel our obligation. So that the increase in pollution of our environment should be reduced. We should make individual efforts in this regard. All individuals should work to control environment pollution in their respective areas. Only then we can prove our superiority over other creatures of the world.

(To be continued)

DAWAH: MISSION OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S.A.W.)

What was the Prophetic mission of Muhammad (S.A.W.)? In one word it was Dawah. But when we ponder over this one word and delve deep into the aspects of Dawah, we have a firmament full of galaxies with countless stars within.

Generally it is mistaken that the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) mission was only to establish a religion named Islam. No doubt he perfected Islam, a system of faith and worship. But he bestowed much more in his Prophetic Mission.

SOCIAL ASPECT OF DAWAH:

He was a Messenger for human beings. So his mission was to bring forth a society of brethren- loving, helping, cooperating, protecting and living in peace and harmony, saving its members from harms and evils, and creating social order, harbour of justice, fraternity and equality.

He propounded brotherhood in many forms layer by layer. He said that the whole humanity is the offspring of one man and his only wife. So by birth all men and women are brothers and sisters. It can further be extended to territorial brotherhood of a country upto neighbourhood. He eliminated all discriminations on the basis of colour, creed, and race. He explained many rules to develop high standards of social and moral values. He said that a person, who is beneficial to other human beings, is really good. He exclaimed he, whose neighbour is

not safe from his artifice and deception, wouldn't enter the heaven.

He said one who believes in Allah and Day of Resurrection should extend hearty welcomes to one's neighbour and guests. He postulated two ways of human upliftment. An individual is the unit of social order. If individuals are uplifted in thoughts and behaviour, the society is uplifted. And, when a society strives for the uplift of its members, it raises its own standard. Thus the mission of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was to enforce a social order of ethically high sophisticated behaviour in all aspects.

ETHICAL ASPECTS OF DAWAH:

The principles of good conduct and behaviour of human beings towards his fellow beings have been propounded and preached throughout the history by a galaxy of great human reformers, thinkers and Prophets. But the peculiar feature in the perspective of human affairs is the perfection and appealing from that we find in the patters of principles of *akhlaque* i.e. good conduct and behaviour taught by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) brought grace, glorification and guided mankind onto the path of truth, Prophet righteousness and peace. The world through Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) got a final, complete and the highest code of

conduct for the human race. He declared that he had come to complete moral and ethical standards, to refine human behaviour and conduct upto the highest level. The world witnesses that he did it.

He became the greatest promoter of learning. Passion for knowledge drove Muslims to every nook and corner of the globe which resulted in enlightening the whole world. He taught the lesson of fraternity to the world. He eliminated the difference between the white and the black. He made the master and the slave stand side by side. He declared that man's eternal peace and contentment is under the feet of mother, thus raising high the status of woman. His teaching surpassed not only the previous laws and code of conducts but also the so called modern ones.

In these modern times it is a fashion of the day to talk of human rights, fundamental rights and constitutional guarantees of citizens. Modern philosophers have laid maximum stress on rights of the apt and equal stress on the duties and obligations arising out of these rights. It is here that we find all the difference in the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

In his teachings we find priority being given to the obligation of every individual to protect and presume rights of fellow beings. In every individual, in the light of teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), were in a continuous state of struggle for preservation of rights of fellow beings, the process by itself would ensure the protection of their own rights. Let us take the illustration of an individual, who day in

and day out is struggling for the betterment of his neighbours, relatives and fellow beings. By such conduct he will in fact create around himself almost an army of people for whose rights he has been fighting. If to them his conduct is truly and in full measure in accordance with the teachings of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), the affected people who had been benefited through his conduct, are bound to respond in equal measure when and if his personal rights are in jeopardy.

The theory of human rights as propounded by modern philosophers gives rise to two separate and conflicting streams of rights and obligations, while the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) prescribe these two channels to flow in the same direction, supporting each other and not in conflict to each other.

The mode and manners in which proposition of rights of fellow beings has been taught by Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is more logical and more rational and much conducive to much more harmonious and happy social order.

POLITICAL ASPECT OF DAWAH:

Politics is the science and art of governance for better human life on earth. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) brought up and raised such noble personalities who presented a model of governance in which an old destitute woman couldn't remain unnoticed from the eyes of the Head of State i.e. Caliph Umar, who loaded food material upon his own shoulders for her hungry children. The world, which was formerly full of dacoits, turned into such a

citadel of peace and safety that a woman travelled from Yemen upto Makkah and from Makkah to Yemen but she had no fear except of beasts.

Justice was quick and without burden of money. Society was safe from exploitation, injustice and profiteering. National natural resources were not the property of a few but the whole society was blessed with prosperity and riches. One simple citizen had courage to put a question to the ruler concerning the possession even of a piece of cloth. Muslim rulers used to stand side by side of slaves and citizens but sometimes stood where shoes were left over while offering prayer to the Almighty. Numerous events history puts forward to show the governance truly for the people, not showcase of by the people and of the people. Prophet Muhammad's politics and governance was for the welfare of the whole humanity and till the Resurrection.

ECONOMIC ASPECT OF DAWAH:

The world has got mountains of wealth yet humanity is not safe from anxieties and atrocities in human treatment of tyrant and powerful personalities. At one side a man has captured such a big position of wealth that it is not going to finish even if it is lavishly spent on dogs, wines and nude shows. While the bigger chunk of humanity is bond to spend life below the standard of dogs and cats. They don't have medicine, food and clothing for their children, who die in front of poor mothers. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) provided so noble a

system of economy that even modern scholars have started to demand Islamic banking, and ablation of interest which is the basis of inhuman disparities. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) discarded hoarding and monopolistic tendencies. He thus saved the society from clutches and cruelties of traders and hoarders. With a single phrase of *Halal* and *Haram*, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) provided key to justice, fraternity, equality in the economic field.

EDUCATIONAL ASPECT OF DAWH:

Progress, growth and extension of knowledge after the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) witnesses as if it was destined for being the last but one. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) gave no high dimensions to knowledge and education that there were a few persons able to read and write but after a short period the sky of knowledge was shining with countless stars. In Exegesis, branches of Traditions, Ilm-ul-Kalam, Geography, Technology, Scientific inventions, History, Travelling we see a galaxy of luminaries. They became the originators of many sciences and arts. A few out of so many we can name are Jabir bin Hayyan in Chemistry and Physics (103-199H), Al-Khawarizmi in Astronomy and Algebra (159-233 H), Ibn Sina in Medicine and Chemistry (371-427H) Ibn Rushd in Philosophy and History (520-594H). Thirst for knowledge never quenched and the journey of education didn't stop, it lapped the world.

Islamic Feature:

ISLAM TODAY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

By Prof. Abdul Mughni

The first and foremost challenge faced by Islam today in the whole world is that Islam is being equated with terrorism, though the Muslims are being made the victims of state terrorism, signally by the U.S.A. and its satellites in the Middle East and Central Asia, such as Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan. Etc. The only Big Power is constantly threatening to “smoke out” many a Muslim country. Even then Islam is being projected by the media as the source of terrorism. So much so that the Islamic Madrasas, with the picture of the Quran displayed openly, are being presented as the seminaries teaching violence, militancy, and malevolence. In India, terrorism reached its climax, when the 500-year old Babri Masjid, at Ayodhya, the fictitious birth place of Sri Ram, was shattered by the Sangh Parivar, whose political wing is ruling over India, in the guise of NDA.

This challenge to Islam is ironical and paradoxical. But it may become an opportunity for propagating the true teachings of Islam, which is desired in Arabic from the root word *Silm*, literally meaning peace, and actually signifying obedience to God, the Lord and Sustainer (*Rabb-al-Aalameen*) of the universe, whose Last Prophet, Muhammad (S.A.W.) has been hailed by the Quran as the “Blessing for the universe” (*Rahmat-al-lil-Aalameen*).

However, the challenge to Islam has made the religion a question mark, once

again in the history of modern obscurantism, just as it had made it so, about a millennium and a half, in the age of ancient obscurantism (*Jahiliyah*). The Islamists of the world today have to answer this question with overwhelming majority in more than 50 countries, containing the biggest population of the world. Subscribing to one creed, the largest resources, the most strategic geographical position, and the richest contributions to mankind, it is only the Muslims who are expected to usher in the New World Order in the third millennium, rather than the chauvinist, jingoist, and belligerent America and its satellites in the west or the time is, how to propagate true Islam, as the only universal ideology of human integration, in the modern world fast disintegrating under the inhuman philosophy and technology of the U.S.A. and its camp followers? By way of an answer, the following point should be duly considered:

1. An Islamic United Nations, bypassing the practically defunct U.N.O., may come forward to protect and promote humanity, irrespective of creed, caste, class, and region, as taught by the Quran and Sunnah.

2. The Muslims should take initiative, everywhere and in any form, to serve mankind, with whatever resources at their

disposal.

3. They have to trust the blessings of God, for advancing their noble humanitarian objective, discarding any consideration of the might of the hostile power that be.

4. The Islamists ought to emerge as a moral force in the society of any country and every country.

5. They must better pool their resources and act up to a concerted plan.

6. They have to safeguard and utilize their natural advantages in geography, raw material and finished products in all areas of interest and importance.

7. They should never be according to the injunctions of Islam, either aggressive or abrasive, rather than being peaceful and polite, that Islam requires them to be.

8. The Muslims should be up to date in their approach and appliance of the means available to them.

9. Any lack of technical know how may not be allowed to handicap the community of Islam, spread the world over, in all the continents.

10. Islam, properly and effectively practiced, ought to be taken as the strongest positive means against all the negative instruments deployed by the powerful adversaries, equipped with the most lethal weapons of history.

The above 10 points may be considered to be facts of experiences, throughout the 1422 years of the existence of the Islamic community formed by the last Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (S.A.W.). It is matter of faith, which can move mountains. The belief in the Message of God, revealed to the Prophet, it and

when practiced fully and disseminated by the invincible power of character, can bring about a revolution in the modern age, so pathetically ravaged by the pride and prejudice of wrong ideologies and their destructive effects.

The challenges posed to Islam have themselves created opportunities. All the media and the technologies behind them can be mastered by the Muslims and utilized for the propagation of the Message of God and the betterment of the lot of a demoralized or immortalized humanity of our times. Mankind has been pushed to the edge of annihilation, in the name of material progress devoid of any spiritual development. The military appears to have done away with the morality, in all the developed or fast developing nations of the world. Finances have ruled out ethics. This horrible imbalance can be redressed by the Islamic concept of life, which is the most comprehensive and balanced view of cosmos. This universal ideology and the Code of Conduct prescribed by it had brought about the most beneficial system of life, replacing the barbarities of ancient Greece and Rome and Persia. It may again reform the modern age, that it had itself ushered in. There is no question of time scale, which is very short and small in the cosmic scale of millions of years. In the light of the, Ascension (*Meiraaq*) of Muhammad (S.A.W.) man can go on to the last frontiers of the universe, provided that he subscribes to Islam (obedience to God), for the elevation of humanity, as suggested by the ideal of life in the character of the last Prophet of God.

Islamic Feature:

PROPHET MUHAMMAD: THE LAST RESORT OF THE POOR AND THE DOWNTRODDEN

By Prof. U. Muhammad Iqbal

All Prophets were interested in the welfare of humanity in general and of the poor and the downtrodden in particular. For example, Jesus identified himself with the poor and said, Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth (Matt. Chap.5). He narrated the parable of Lazarus the beggar who was admitted to heaven and kept in the company of Prophet Abraham. This parable reassures the poor and forewarns the rich. Jesus went to the extent of saying, "It is easier for camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Saint Mark, 10:25)

The Prophet's tilt towards the poor may be due to the fact that the poor find it difficult to breathe in the oppressive gloom and despondency of their lives and desperately need a ray of hope and a promise of bright prospects. The Holy Prophet's mission was to raise the status of the poor and downtrodden who promptly responded to God's Message and the Prophet's call.

The rich, the affluent, the opulent have made a success of their worldly lives. Having reached the top of the ladder, they

compliment themselves on their talents and skills, remain at the helm of affairs, mould public opinion, and set the social agenda. When they are in the drivers seat, they overfeed their ego and refuse to be led by others. When Samuel appointed Saul King, the rich objected saying, "*He is not even gifted with wealth in abundance.*" (Al-Quran, 2:247) When Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) went to Taif to spread the message of Islam, one of the three leaders of Thaqeef said, "Could not God get a more suitable person than you?" Wealth corrupts and huge wealth corrupts hugely. It is but natural that the Prophetic mission and the poor section of humanity are made for each other and they march hand in glove. Religion emancipates them from the stranglehold of emotional frustration and inculcates in them a positive outlook and breathes into them a new spirit of courage, determination, and dynamism to ameliorate their condition. The poor and the downtrodden pledge their loyalty to religion and persecution only strengthens their resolve to dedicate every ounce of their energy to promote the cause of religion. Hazrat Bilal, Sumayya, Yasser,

(may Allah be pleased with them) were illustrious examples of this symbiotic relationship between the poor people and the cause of Islam.

Like all Prophets preceding him, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) made no bones about his preference and partiality for the unprivileged classes of humanity.

As a first step in this direction, he used the identify himself with them to the extent of showing empathy explicit: "O Allah! Let me blessed with the life of a Miskin, and with the death of a Miskin and let me be blessed with resurrection in the company of the poor." According to a Tradition of *Saheeh Bukhari* the Miskin is not the one who goes round asking people for a meal/date or two but the one who does not have enough money to make ends meet and whose condition is not known to many so that they may feel obliged to give something in charity and whose self-respect prevents him from begging.

As the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) lived up to the Holy Quranic precepts, the following verses indicate how he would have espoused the cause of the poor and the downtrodden.

(A) *"And give to the kinsman his due and to the Miskin and to the wayfarer."* (17:26)

(B) *"Speak unto them a soft, kind word."* (17:28)

(C) *"And come not near to the orphan's property except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength."*

(6:152, 17:34)

(D) *"Therefore treat not the orphan with oppression and repulse not the beggar."* (93:9-10)

(E) *"Have you seen him who denies the Recompense? That is he who repulses the orphan (harshly) and urges not the feeding of the poor."* (107:1-3)

These precepts influenced the Prophet's outlook and he persuaded Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique to continue his financial grant to that poor family one of whose members participated in the character assassination of Ayesha. The injustice to his own daughter Abu Bakr was persuaded to overlook.

When Hazrat Zaid came to him as a slave to run errands for him, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) treated him with such unique affection that he refused to go back to his kith and kin in the company of his father and uncle. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) appreciated this attachment by adopting him as a son and when he came of age he arranged for his marriage with his cousin in spite of disparity of tribal origins between them.

He set personal example by marrying some widows and guaranteed that widows deserved a better deal in society.

When the poor died leaving debts unpaid, he repaid their loans on their behalf by withdrawing sums from the state Exchequer. He established the institution of Zakat under God's orders and this institution extended help to those including

the poor, the needy, the Zakat personnel, the neophytes, the emancipation of the slaves, the debtors, the way of God the way farers.

He advised Muaz bin Jabal to ensure the collection of Zakat from the rich people of Yemen for the benefit of the poor.

Prof. Khalid Alawi in his *Insane-Kamil* (Lahore, 1947, 77-78) says in a very effective manner. "The exalted Prophet (S.A.W.) conferred self respect upon the poor. He told Saa'd bin Abi Waqqas once that it was on account of the poor that one was given all help and provisions. He informed Usman bin Zaid that standing at the entrance of heaven he saw that it was mostly the poor and the downtrodden who had been admitted to heaven.

The slaves were subjected to despicable treatment in that society. He extended to them special affection. He used to say, "These are your brothers; feed them with what you feed yourselves on; clothe them with the finery you prefer for yourself." He set free all those slaves who were given into his ownership. He described the emancipation of slaves as the most blessed act. The terms of address he preferred for the slaves were "Son" and "Brother."

The last advice he tendered in his terminal illness was, "Fear Allah while dealing with the slaves."

Among those who readily responded to his preaching a large number consisted of the poor and the

slaves. Likewise he took special care of the orphans and the widows who were exploited in the Arab society, Misappropriation of the orphan's property was common. Orphan girls were ill-treated and widows had no sympathiser. In Makkah, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had no enforcing power and so he confined himself to highlighting moral duties. He used to remonstrate against the atrocities perpetrated by the wicked Quraish, when he assumed reins of power in Madinah, he defined principles for the welfare of the orphans and arranged for the protection of their property and their wealth. He observed that the worst Muslim home is that wherein an orphan is ill-treated. By his personal example he transformed that social structure into an abode of affection for the orphans. After Makkah was conquered, he ordered Hazrat Bilal, a negro, to pronounce the Azan at the Holy Kaa'bah. The widows were scorned. They had no share in the property of their deceased husbands. To lead a dignified existence they had to strive very hard. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) came to their help and gave them the right of inheritance and formed rules for their re-marriage to enable them to uphold their dignity. Service rendered to an indigent widow was described as an eminently virtuous deed. He said, "One who is....(Cont on Page No.30)

Islamic Feature:

PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF BASIC NATURAL RESOURCES

Throughout the universe, the Divine care for all things and all pervading wisdom in the elements of creation may be perceived, attesting to the All-Wise Maker. The Glorious Quran has made it clear that each thing and every creature in the universe, whether known to man or not, performs two major functions: a religious function in so far as it evidences the Maker's presence and infinite wisdom, power, and grace; and a social function in the service of man and other created beings.

God's wisdom has ordained that His creatures shall be of service to one another. The Divinely appointed measurement and distribution of all elements and creatures, each performing its ordained role and all of them valuable, makes up the dynamic balance by which the creation is maintained. Over exploitation, abuse, misuse, destruction and pollution of natural resources are all transgression against the Divine scheme. Because narrow sighted self-interest is always likely to tempt men to disrupt the dynamic equilibrium set by God, the protection of all natural resources from abuse is a mandatory duty.

In the Divine scheme by which all

creatures are made to be of service to one another, God's wisdom has made all things of service to mankind. But nowhere has God indicated that they are created only to serve human beings. On the contrary, Muslim legal scholars have maintained that the service of man is not the only purpose for which they have been created.

"And He has made the ships to be of service unto you, that they may sail the sea by His command, and the rivers He has made of service unto you. And He has made the sun and the moon, constant in their course, to be of service unto you, and He has made of service unto you the night and day. And He gives you all you seek of Him: If you would count the bounty of God, you could never reckon it."

Similar verses in which God declares that He created His creations for the children of Adam. It is well known that God in His great wisdom has exalted purposes in them other than the service of man, and greater than the service of man. However, He makes clear to the children of Adam what benefits there are in these creatures and what bounty He has bestowed upon mankind.

Vitality important, as the social

functions of all things are, the primary function of all created beings as signs of their Creator constitutes the soundest legal basis for conservation of the environment. It is not possible to base the protection of our environment. It is not possible to base the protection of our environment on our need for its services alone since these services are but a supporting value and reason. Because we can not be aware of the beneficial functions of all things, to base our efforts at conservation solely on the environmental benefits to man would lead inevitably to distortion of the dynamic equilibrium set by God and misuse of His creation, thereby impairing these same environmental benefits. However, when we base the conservation and protection of the environment on its value as the signs of its Creator, we cannot omit anything, for every element and species has its individual and unique role to play in glorifying God, and in bringing man to know and understand his Creator by showing him God's infinite power, wisdom, and mercy. It is impossible to countenance the willful ruin and loss of any of the basic elements and species of the creation, or to think that the continued existence of the remainder is sufficient to lead us to contemplate the glory, wisdom, and might of God in all the aspects that are intended, because species differ in their special qualities, and each evidences God's glory in ways unique to it alone.

Furthermore, all human beings, and indeed livestock and wildlife as well,

enjoy the right to share in the resources of the earth. Man's abuse of any resource is forbidden, and the best use of all resources, both living and lifeless, is prescribed. The following is a discussion of the basic natural elements:

Water:

God has made water the basis and origin of life. God says, *And "We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe"* Plants, animals, and man all depend on water for their existence and for the continuation of their lives.

God says, *"Verily.. in the rain that God sends down from heaven, thereby giving life to the earth after its death...."*

He says, *"It is He Who sends down water from the sky; and thereby We have brought forth the plants of every kind." And you see the earth barren and lifeless, but when We pour down rain upon it, it stirs and swells, and puts forth growth of every resplendent kind".*

The Quran also says, *"And We send down pure water from the sky, thereby to bring to life a dead land and slake the thirst of that which We have created cattle and men in multitudes."*

God has called on man to appreciate the value of this so essential source of life: *"Have you seen the water which you drink? Was it you who sent down from the rain cloud, or did We send it? Were it Our will, We could have made it bitter, why then do you not*

give thanks?

And He has reminded us, "Say: Have you considered, if your water were one morning to have seeped away, who then could bring you clear-flowing water?"

In addition to this vital function, water has another socio religious function to perform, which is purification of the body and clothing from all dirt, impurities and defilement so that man may encounter God clean and pure. God has said in the Glorious Quran, *"And He caused rain to descend on you from heaven to cleanse you therewith."*

God has also shown us other functions of lake, sea, and ocean water. He has made it the habitat of many created beings, which play vital roles in the perpetuation of life and the development of this world. God has said, *"It is He Who has made the sea of service, that you may eat thereof flesh that is fresh and tender, and that you may bring forth from it ornaments to wear, and you see the ships therein that plough the waves, that you may seek of His bounty,"* He also says, *"Lawful to you is the pursuit of water game and its use for food a provision for you, and for those who travel."*

There is no doubt that conservation of this vital element is fundamental to the preservation and continuation of life in its various forms, plant, animal, and human. It is therefore obligatory, in Islamic law, whatever is indispensable to fulfil the imperative obligation of preserving life is

itself obligatory. Any action that obstruct or impairs the biological and social functions of this element, whether by destroying it or by polluting it with any substance that would make it an unsuitable environment for living things or otherwise impair its functions as the basis of life. Any such action necessarily leads to the impairment or ruin of life itself, and the juristic principle is, *"What leads to the prohibited is itself prohibited"*.

Owing to the importance of water as the basis of life, God has made its use the common right of all living beings and all human beings. All are entitled to use it without monopoly, usurpation, despoilment, wastage, or abuse. God commanded with regard to the people of Thamud and their camel, *"And tell them that the water shall be shared between that the water shall be shared between them"*, and the Prophet, upon him be blessings and peace, said, *"Muslims are to share in these three things: water, pasture, and fire, "Extravagance in using water is forbidden; this applies to private use as well as public, and whether the water is scarce or abundant. It is related that the Prophet, upon him be blessings and peace, passed by his companion Saad, who was washing for prayer, and said, "What is this wastage, O Saad,? "Is there wastage even in washing for prayer?" asked Saad; and he said, "Yes, even if you are by a flowing river?"*

The long experience of Muslim jurists

in the allocation of water rights in arid lands has given rise to an outstanding example of the sustainable use of a scarce resource; an example of which is of increasing relevance in a world where resources were once abundant are becoming progressively more scarce.

Air:

This element is no less important than water for the perpetuation and preservation of life. Nearly all terrestrial creatures are utterly dependent on the air they breathe. The air also has other functions which may be less apparent to men but which God has created for definite purposes, as we have been made aware of by the Glorious Quran such as the vitally important role of the winds in pollination. God says, *“And we send the fertilizing winds”* The winds are also clear evidence of God’s Omnipotence and grace, and the perfection of design in His creation. He says, *“Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of night and day in the alternation of right and day in the change of the winds, and the clouds compelled between heaven and earth surely there are signs for a people who have sense”*.

“And He it is Who sends the winds as tidings heralding His grace: until when they have raised a heavy laden cloud, We drive it to a dead land and cause the rain to descend upon it, and thereby bring forth fruits of every kind.”

Since the atmosphere performs all

these biological and social functions, its conservation, pure and unpolluted, is an essential aspect of the conservation of life itself, which is one of the fundamental objectives of Islamic law. Again, whatever is indispensable to fulfil this imperative obligation is imperative obligation is itself obligatory, Therefore any activity which pollutes it and ruins or impairs its function is an attempt to thwart and obstruct God’s wisdom toward His creation. This must likewise be considered an obstruction of some aspects of the human role in the development of this world.

The land and Soil:

Like air and water, the land and soil are essential for the perpetuation of our lives and the lives of other creatures. God has declared in the Quran. *“And the earth He has established for living creatures”* From the minerals of the earth are made the solid constituents of our bodies, as well as those of all the living animals and plants. God has said in the Quran, *“And among His signs is that He has created you from dust; then behold you are humans scattered widely.”* He has also made the land our home and the home of all terrestrial beings. *“And God has made you grow, as a plant from the earth; then to it He returns you, and He will bring you forth a new...”*

And as our home, the land has value as open space: *“and God has made the earth a wide expanse, that you may traverse its open ways.”*

God has made the land a source of

sustenance and livelihood for us and other living creatures: He has made the soil fertile to grow the vegetation upon which all animal life and we depend. He has made the mountains to catch and store the rain and to perform a role in stabilizing the crust of the earth, as He has shown us in the Glorious Quran: *“Have We not made the earth a vessel to hold the living and the dead? And We have made in it lofty mountains and provided you sweet water to drink”*.

“And the earth, after that He has spread it out; from it He has brought forth its waters and its pastures, and He has made fast the mountains, a provision for you and for your cattle”.

“And the earth, We have spread it out, and made in it mountains standing firm, and grown in it every thing in balance. And We have provided in it sustenance for you, and for those whom you do not support”.

And a sign for them is the lifeless earth: We bring it to life and bring forth from it grain of which they eat. And we have made therein gardens of palms and vines.

Finally, the Prophet Muhammad God’s blessing and peace be upon him, declared that *“The whole earth has been created as a place of worship for me, pure and clean.”* Accordingly, we are charged with treating it with the respect due to a place of worship, and with keeping it pure and undefiled.

Plants and Animals:

There is no denying the importance of plants and animals as living resources of enormous benefits, without which neither man nor other species could survive. God- be He exalted- has not made any of His creatures worthless; every single form of life is the product of a special and intricate development by God, and warrants special respect. As a living genetic resource, each species and variety is unique and irreplaceable. Once lost, it is lost forever.

By virtue of their unique function of producing food from the energy of the sun, plants constitute the basic source of sustenance for animal and human life on earth. God has said, *“Then let man consider his nourishment: that we pour down the rain in showers, and we split the earth in fragments, and therein make the grain to grow, and vines and herbs, and olives and palms, and gardens of dense foliage, and fruits and fodder- provision for you and your cattle.”*

In addition to their importance as nourishment, plants enrich the soil and protect it from erosion by wind and water. They conserve the water by detaining its runoff: they moderate the climate and produce the oxygen, which we breathe. They are also of immense value as medicines, oils, perfumes, waxes, fibers, timber, and fuel. God has said in the Glorious Quran, *“Have you seen the fire you kindle? Was it you who grew its timber or did We grow it)? We have made it a reminder, and a comfort for the desert dwellers.”*

(Cont on Page No. 30)

UNDERSTANDING ISLAM IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

By Shamim A Siddiqi

The age we are passing through is very challenging for the Muslims throughout the world, especially in America. Islam is being presented with many distorted and “ugly” faces due to their centuries old prejudices and surmounting ignorance about Islam, the Qur’an and Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). However, it is remarkably astonishing that there are a lot of Christian brothers and sisters who are serious and want to understand the true face of Islam and get rid of the “ugly” faces that are being depicted frivolously by the missionary zealots and Evangelical churches and preachers.

Unfortunately, Islam in its truest form was never presented or able to reach to the West and what one understands through his or her own commendable efforts needs explanation, putting the Quranic verses in correct perspective in which they were revealed, the stages through which the Islamic Movement as launched by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) passed through and the point of climax (perfection) when it reached in the ninth/tenth year of Hijrah with what natural end-results. These are the vast topics and need elaborate discussion.

Historical Perspective:

But before I talk about the Quran and what it presents and what one understands through his or her personal studies, it is desirable to evaluate the history of Islam from Adam to Muhammad (S.A.W.) in the

continuity of the process ordained by God.

1. Islam was the Deen (the way of life) of all the Prophet of Islam from Adam- Abraham to Jesus. It was neither Judaism nor Christianity (Yahudiyat or Nasraniyat). All the Prophets were the Prophets of God (Allah) and their Deen was Islam (obedience to God) to which they all invited mankind to follow. Their God was only one God, Allah (God is correctly translated in Arabic Bible as Allah). It was the people, their respective followers who subsequently deviated into different channels and called or pronounced themselves as the Jews and the Christians. In fact, all were Muslims and their Deen was Islam. Prophets Moses and Jesus (Peace be upon them) never called themselves Jew and Christian respectively. My book, *The Greatest Need of Man*, available on www.dawahinamericas.com in Section A Islam elaborate it further.

2. Similarly, each Messenger had the same mission of and applied same process for establishing the authority of God (the Kingdom of God) on earth. Each of them invited his fellow human beings to monotheism, accountability on the Day of Judgment and accepting the authority of the Prophet of the time. Through continuous and ceaseless efforts, all the Prophets of God called the people of their respective times to these basic concepts of the Deen of Islam. It was their Dawah

Allah (calling the people to the fold of their Creator and Sustainer). Whosoever responded to their call became their companions, formed into the Party of God. The Prophet of the time helped them individually and collectively to purify their character and make them trustworthy people of the time. Some succeeded in building the party of God but most of them were denied, opposed tooth and nail by the tyrants, the secularist and the vested interests of the age. Even some were killed. Only Prophet David and Solomon (peace be upon them) succeeded in establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.

3. Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) departed from this world at a very early stage of his life due to the conspiracy hatched by the Jews. He had no time to establish a society even in terms of the Ten Commandments of Torah. He could not lead a married life and give a socio-economic-political system to his people. It means that this big gap was to be filled by some other Prophet after Jesus (peace be upon him) in order to deliver Justice and a comprehensive system of life to mankind. As planned by God, Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was elevated to heaven but before that he professed that another Prophet, the “Comforter” (Ahmad or Muhammad), is to come after him (Jesus). One can read John 14:16, 15:26 and 16:7. The word “Comforter” pinpoints directly to the coming of the next Prophet of God and he could be none but Muhammad, the son of Abdullah of Makkah. But it is the greatest human tragedy that the arrival of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), after a lapse of about 600 year after Jesus and the Book of Guidance that was revealed to him by

Allah were and are being denied knowingly by the Christians and the Jews together just to meet their political expediencies. History confirms it. The end-result is that most of humans and their societies are living a disbalanced life on earth and heading to encounter an uncertain future in the life Hereafter.

4. This world belongs to God. He is not only the Creator but Sustainer and controlling this universe meticulously. We are not its masters but trustees of what we possess only for a very temporary phase of life. He is not only our Creator and Sustainer but Lawgiver too. He has ordained a system of life for mankind as how to live, act and behave on this earth. The job of each Prophet of God, as explained earlier, was to deliver the Guidance, purify the character of his followers, present his life as model to his people, explain the difficult situations that occur in this process and establish a model society as it is envisaged in the Book of Guidance of the time. The only Prophet of God, after David and Solomon who succeeded in establishing the Kingdom of God on earth was Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). He had left a practical model for all of us to follow till eternity. Muhammad was the prophecy of Prophet Jesus and the last Prophet of God on earth as no prophet was to come after him.

After Prophet Jesus, Prophet Muhammad undertook the mission of the Prophets of Allah in order to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

5. We have no choice but to study the process and the stages through which his movement towards establishing the Kingdom of God continued all through his

23 years of struggle: 13 years in Makkah and 10 years in Madinah. Only then, one will be able to understand what Verse of the Qur'an was revealed to him and at what time; what was the situation of the movement when it was revealed; what were the conspiracies being hatched against the Prophet and his mission by the people at the helm of affairs and the vested interests of the time; how the inside and outside hypocrites were behaving to harm the Islamic Movement; what armed resistance was let loose against the growing Islamic State (Kingdom of God) to get it annihilated from the surface of the earth and how Allah guided His Messenger Muhammad (S.A.W.) through revelations as what to do and how to deal with that particular situation. Islam was and is a movement irrespective of time and place. The Prophet had to face all situations with wisdom, acute sense of responsibility, justice and compassion for mankind. Allah, in His infinite mercy, guided the Prophet of the time and for all times to come at every occasion through revelations in the Quran.

In fact, every verse of the Quran will tell the reader when and under what condition or circumstances it was revealed. The situation at Makkah was quite different from that at Madinah. In Makkah it was just a movement but in Madinah it was gradually becoming a state with its own policy, programme and a well-defined system of life at individual and collective levels.

6. It is, therefore, essential that one who wants to understand the Qur'an and what it contains must equally labour to study the life of Prophet Muhammad in detail. The Quran was revealed to him to

guide the destiny of mankind under the strict guidance of Allah, coming in bits and pieces during 23 years of time. If the life pattern of the Prophet Muhammad is ignored, the readers will never reach the depth of the Quran and will remain just like one who recites its verse like a parrot. They get nothing out of the Quran and remain "fishing" in its "shallow" waters and make its understanding worst and worst for him and others. That is the reason the orientalist, the missionaries who claim to have "studied" the Qur'an get nothing except some twisted facts, wrong connotations and misguided conclusions out of their "shallow knowledge" of the Qur'an as they do not collaborate the revelations through the Qur'an with the actual situation in which Muhammad was piloting the movement under the guidance of Allah. Thus, they do disservice both to Islam, their own destiny and the destiny of mankind.

Evolutionary Process:

Now I would like to put some fundamental questions to anti-Islam forces for understanding the situation that appears anomalous to their limited concept of Islam as a "religion" (like Judaism and Christianity) and not as a Deen, a way of life. It will make the position of Islam crystal clear for those who want to understand it with all sincerity.

1. Every State worth its name does have an ideology, a declared state policy, programme and objective to struggle for its existence and survival. It prepares its citizens to be worthy of that idealism. If one revolts, denies or works against the declared policy of the state, will anyone tolerate that individual within the premises

of that state? If the Communist Russia could not tolerate the preaching of capitalism within its bounds; if the USA could not tolerate the preaching of communism in the midst of capitalism, how can an ideological Islamic State give full liberty to its individuals to preach against its ideology, policy and programme and let them damage the very genesis of its foundation? Where will one put the people committing rebellion against an established state? An Islamic State gives them at least some time to think and reconsider their attitude even during midst of war. (Reference: Quran 9:6)

2. The verses 1 to 9 of the Quran from Chapter 9 (*Al-Tauba Repentance*) were revealed in the 9th year of Hijrah while Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was on his return journey from Tabuk where the Roman emperor of the time was amassing his troops in hundreds of thousands, but retreated seeing the Messenger of Allah advancing towards him with only 30,000 Muslim army. The Christian Emperor Hercules was well aware of the Holy Prophet's position as the Prophet of Allah and he could not dare to face him. The Emperor left the scene of the battlefield vacant. Those verses pertain to that stage when the Islamic State has practically been established in the entire Arabian Peninsula and in its outskirts.

The people of Scriptures the Jews and Christians were told that if they want to retain their faith, they can live in peace within the bounds of the Islamic State just by paying only a toll tax of about five to ten Dirham per head, enjoying all their civil and religious rights. Now and Evangelic priest of today, without having any idea

under what circumstance these verses were revealed stands up, pronounces and concludes that these verses from the Quran are "oppressive" and Islam "promotes" coercion. Only ignorance will cry at their wisdom.

3. Similarly, Verses 12 to 16 from the same Chapter 9 of the Quran pertain to the settlement with Jews and Christians. As stated above, the choice was left in their hands. Could there be any other just solution than what is ordained by Allah in both the cases: The idolaters and that of the Jews and Christians? It was the best solution to enable the Muslims, the Jews and the Christians to live together. The history of Muslim Caliphate subsequently showed that both the communities of Abrahamic faith always lived in peace and prospered living with Muslims side by side. However, unfortunately, the Jews are proving otherwise under the country of their domination and the behavior of our Christian American brothers have become lately shrouded with "doubts and presumption" simply on unproven "flimsy" grounds. I invite the Jewish and Christian Communities to think about this anomalous situation and declare how much these priests are bigoted and far from the truth.

4. So is the case of the Qur'anic verses from Chapter Al-Baqarah (2), Al-Nissa (4) and Al-Maidah (5) that deal with the condition of hypocrites. If I start taking each verse and deal with its historical perspective, the article will become unmanageable. Mostly, in these Verses, Allah has dealt with the condition of Hypocrites (*Munafequeen*) of the time who were fast becoming a menacing danger for the nascent Muslim society. So Allah has

dealt with them decisively; and you know it would have never been good if they were left as an integral part of an ideological society without purification and correcting their attitude of life. In such a situation, I would suggest that our Christian priests must study some Exegetical explanation or Tafseer of some prominent Islamic scholars like Maulana Maudoodi: English Translation of his “Meanings of the Qur’an,” Then he will be able to speak about Islam with some authority and knowledge from the original source.

5. From the above discussion, at least, one can gather the impression that the propaganda going on against Islam, the Quran and Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is based just on heresy, false “allegations” and talking out of context only. No one cared to verify the allegations from the original text and ascertaining about the references and the background in which each verse was revealed as one can see in the cases referred above.

6. Similarly, the derogatory remarks that are usually “passed” against Prophet Muhammad are simply made without any knowledge about his character and the enormous contributions that he had made to human history and civilization. At least our “Knowledgeable” priests, before opening their “mouths”, could go through the reading material about the life of Muhammad written by scholars like Toynbee, M Watts, Professor Hitty, Prof, T.R. Irving, Haykal and latest by Y. Emerick and learn about his contributions in enriching human history whose many visible signs one can find in the American Constitution too. The First Charter of

community right to live together in harmony was presented by Prophet Muhammad when he executed the Covenant of Madinah with Jews and Arab tribes and the first Charter of Human Rights was presented by him during his first and the last pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah in 632 A.C. Equally, the concept of equality, justice and fair play, consultation, accountability of the rulers and the executives, respectability of law, liberty and freedom of expression, all were introduced by Islam and practiced by Muhammad and his first four Caliphs. Europe and America learned these values and virtues from Islam, flourished and maintained them magnificently but unfortunately the undemocratic regimes of the Muslim world lost them at all counts and so they are nowhere.

7. A close study of the Holy Quran and the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) reveals that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism of any sort under any circumstances. If one studies Islam sincerely, he or she will try to raise himself or herself above the propaganda going on against Islam and Muslims and the “misguided” war of USA-UK to capture the heart of the Muslim world, control its oil-rich land to guarantee its free flow for the oil-hungry West one way or the other. That wild and uncivilized game of neocolonialism will go on unabated on “flimsy and fake” grounds for decades together. History will soon give its unbiased verdict about these wars of “greed” and “domination” over the weak and the innocent. And that will be very harsh.

(From Page No.19)

..... proactive in the service of the widow and the poor is like the one who is engaged in the service of God.”

The narrator of this Hadith had an impression that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) also said that such a person could be likened to a Muslim who never grows weary of a devotional act or who never breaks his fast. A Bukhari tradition likens the pro-orphans and pro-widow social worker to a crusader in the way of God and makes him equal to one who fasts during the day and prays during the night.

His abiding interest in the welfare of the orphans and the poor was a fact, acknowledged by friends and foes alike. One cannot encompass the greatness of a citizen whose societal concerns have reached such maximal limits. The Holy Prophet participation in *Hilful-Fudul* is a living example of social service, people friendliness and human welfare. One of the tenets of the treaty was that the oppressed would be helped and oppressors would be restrained from the act of repression.

When Abu Bakr assumed office as the first Caliph, he declared that he would defend the weak against the strong. Caliph ‘Umar used to say that he would be responsible before God, if a sheep died of starvation on the bank of the Tigris. Such observation were the result of the training they had under the supervision of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

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Animals in turn provide sustenance for plants, for one another, and for man. Their dung and their bodies enrich the soil and the seas. They contribute to the atmosphere by respiration and by their movements and migrations contribute to the distribution of plants. They provide food for one another and provide mankind with leather, hair and wool, medicines and perfumes, and means of conveyance, as well as meat, milk and honey. And for their highly developed senses and perceptions and their social inter relationships, animals are accorded special regard in Islam. For God considers them living societies exactly like mankind. God has declared in the Glorious Quran, “*There is not an animal on the earth, nor any being that wings its flight, but is a people like unto you*”.

Islam emphasizes all measures for the survival and perpetuation of these creatures so that they can fully perform the functions assigned to them. The absolute destruction of any species of animals or plant by man can in no way be justified: nor should any be harvested at a rate in excess of its natural regeneration. This applies to hunting and fishing, forestry and woodcutting for timber and fuel, grazing, and all other utilization of living resources. It is imperative that the genetic diversity of living beings be preserved both for the good of mankind and all other creatures.

(Courtesy: Monthly Youth, July, 2003)