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European Edition

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THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world reformer and the Promised Messiah. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Movement has its headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan, and is actively engaged in missionary work.



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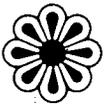
A monthly magazine devoted to the dissemination of the teachings of Islam, the discussion of Islamic affairs and religion in general.

The Review of Religions is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents the pure and true Islam. It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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Guide Posts

Role of an Ahmadi

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

An Ahmadi is a Muslim who believes that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) and by earlier prophets including Jesus. Nevertheless, this is merely a theoretical acclamation and in itself is no more than a label.

The Promised Messiah was a Messenger of God. He called upon all mankind to accept the truth of his divine office; but this was not all: Islam, he declared, was a practical way of life which demanded total resignation to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). The attainment of this ideal must be the resolve and goal of every Ahmadi in whose life the principles of Islam should be manifested in every manner of living. The Promised Messiah declared:

“The real object of man’s life according to the Holy Quran is, therefore, a true knowledge and worship of God and a total resignation to His Will that whatever is said or done is said or done for His sake only.”

“What is Islam? It is the burning fire which consumes all low desires and, setting fire to false gods, offers our life, property and honour as a sacrifice before God.”

(Philosophy of the Teaching of Islam).

An Ahmadi is expected to demonstrate his love for God and the Holy Prophet by moulding his life in strict accordance with the teachings of Islam. He does not allow the lure of material wealth and comforts to override his spiritual obligations and responsibilities. His first and foremost thought is to regulate his conduct in accordance with the will and pleasure of God.

The Promised Messiah was not concerned solely in clarifying points of theoretical dispute such as the meaning of Khatamun Nabuwat, death of Jesus, Miraj, life after death, etc. Notwithstanding the importance of these

subjects the ultimate purpose of his mission was the reformation of mankind through the recognition and resignation to Islam.

The distinctive characteristic of an Ahmadi should be his undivided and consummated attachment to Islam; and this devotion should control his life to such an extent that the slightest deviation from God's laws is abhorrent to him. The Promised Messiah stated that if there is as much as an atom's weight of worldliness in the behaviour of an Ahmadi then he cannot be counted as his true follower. That is to say no law or principle of Islam should be trampled upon or neglected in order to satisfy some worldly interests or inclinations. An Ahmadi is expected to reflect not only the basic teachings of Islam but also the finer aspects of faith which others may overlook as unimportant.

An Ahmadi is:

1. A soldier of Islam.
2. An ambassador of Islam.
3. A preacher of Islam.
4. A servant of Islam.
5. A defender of Islam.
6. An embodiment of Islam.

Soldier of Islam

A soldier has many traits. Among them is his ability to serve and fight under the most hazardous conditions. He exerts his energies to the full for his flag and country.

An Ahmadi is a soldier of God dedicated to the flag of Islam and the fight for the defence and propagation of his faith through peaceful means.

As a soldier he is not a sit-at-home Muslim. He goes forth in all directions wielding his spiritual sword. He is not deterred by the heat of the sun, snow and icy winds, downpours of rain or other discomforts when beckoned by the call of duty.

The readiness to undergo severe hardships for the love of Islam is a sign and test of true faith. An Ahmadi takes inspiration from the great lives of those who have gone down in history as pioneers and stalwarts of glory. He is anxious to imbibe and cultivate their inspiring qualities in order to enable him to fight more effectively for Islam.

Ambassador of Islam

An Ahmadi has a grave and privileged responsibility for he is a representative of the Promised Messiah whose advent in the latter days had been foretold by the Holy Prophet of Islam.

The Promised Messiah entreated his followers to be practical Muslims in every detail. An Ahmadi should be a worthy ambassador of Islam and enthusiastically endeavour to adhere to all its teachings.

It has truly been said that faith without works is dead. Knowing this an Ahmadi endeavours to be meticulous in living up to the teachings of Ahmadiyyat (True Islam). The eyes of the world are upon him; but of greater consequence is the fact that the eyes of God are also upon him.

An ambassador faithfully symbolises the government which he represents; so must an Ahmadi faithfully symbolise the teachings he represents.

Preacher of Islam

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) was a prophet of God commissioned with a Divine message for all mankind. It is incumbent upon every Muslim to preach his faith to others; also, when the occasion arises, to guide and advise his own Muslim brothers. Thus in the Holy Quran Muslims are enjoined to exhort one another to truth.

The Ahmadiyya Movement works to convey and expound the message of Islam to everybody and to hasten the coming of the day when Islam will be the dominant faith of the world.

An Ahmadi is a missionary of Islam. He preaches to all and sundry; and in order to do this successfully he must practise what he preaches. This he well knows because it is the epitome of Quranic teaching and so becomes the most necessary of all requirements in the mission field.

Servants of Islam

An Ahmadi is a servant of God. A good servant is imbued with two outstanding qualities:

1. He is respectful.
2. He is obedient.

Respect for God and his creatures is an essential aspect of the Islamic faith. God is the Master of masters worthy only of the highest respect and love. The creatures of God are the creation of God and must, therefore, be given due respect.

Being a servant of God an Ahmadi is obedient to God. He is extremely careful in observing the commandments of God and ever watchful in avoiding His displeasure. He is regular in namaz and observes those fasts required by law. He pays zakat and other dues required by Islamic law. He also contributes in accordance with instructions and recommendations of the Promised Messiah and Khalifas. He completely shuns gambling, dancing,

wine, pork, lending money on interest, lying backbiting, cheating and other forbidden things. Obedience to God is always his watchword.

Defender of Islam

Islam is assailed on all sides by its adversaries who through ignorance or prejudice endeavour to smear the fair name of Islam. Islam is, perhaps, the most misrepresented faith.

An Ahmadi educates himself in Islam not only for his own guidance and upliftment but also that he may be able to defend Islam against its critics.

It is asserted that Islam is a man made religion bereft of true spiritual values. On the contrary Ahmadi illustrates in his own life that Islam is a living religion which can beautify and purify the soul and character of a person.

An Ahmadi strives to build an exemplary character for this more than anything else is able to prove the spiritual efficacy of Islam.

An Ahmadi defends Islam best by living Islam.

Embodiment of Islam

An Ahmadi is a Muslim whose mind has been opened to wonderful spiritual truths which remain hidden to others. These truths have impressed themselves so deeply upon him that he finds his only solace in the bosom of God. Being human he possesses natural attachments of love for his family, relatives and friends; but despite the ardour of these relationships he never forgets his loyalty to God.

When an Ahmadi has become in the true sense a soldier, ambassador, preacher, servant and defender of Islam then, and then alone, does he blossom into an embodiment of Islam whereupon, according to the Promised Messiah:

“God becomes his eye with which he sees, his tongue with which he speaks, his hand with which he repels attack, his ear with which he hears, and his foot with which he walks.”

(Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam).

Birth of Islam

(Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad)

The birth and rise of Islam took place at a time, when the greater part of the world still lived under primitive conditions. Communication between one country and another was slow and difficult, the printing press had yet to be invented, and even the art of writing was in its infancy. A few countries did possess these elementary arts, but Arabia was not one of them. Arabia was on the whole illiterate. Its condition was indeed very peculiar. Externally, it was cut off from the rest of the world. Internally it was without any social, political, or intellectual movement which might have raised it in the scale of culture and national consciousness. Learning, where it did exist, amounted only to literacy. Beyond, therefore, a few relics and inscriptions belonging to those times, we have no records of Arabia before the rise of Islam, and it is obvious that such records cannot provide the basis of a history. Records of the empires and kingdoms which flourished on the borders of Arabia — the empires of Rome and Persia — refer occasionally to Arabia. But, as one would expect, these references are very slender, and yield only very trifling details, from which no idea can be had of the conditions of the country as a whole. The same may be said of the Biblical records and the books of the Old Testament which contain occasional references to Arabia.

Pre-Islamic Traditions and Poetry

Our main source of pre-Islamic Arabian history is to be found in Arabia's own historical traditions. As already stated the Arabs were not used to writing. Still, they were able to conserve the floating traditions of their country, and these passed intact from one generation to another, thanks to the wonderful memory possessed by the Arabs.¹ Every tribe had its members who carried in their heads the history not only of their own tribe, but the history also of many neighbouring tribes. Arabian genealogy has had many votaries distinguished in pre-Islamic Arabia, and to them we owe whatever knowledge we have of the tribal history of the country before the advent of Islam.

1. Sir William Muir, *Life of Mohammad* (1923 edition), Introduction p. 16.

In pre-Islamic poetry also, we have sources of early tribal history. The art of poetry had attained to a high level of development before Islam, in some respects even higher than that of Islamic poetry. Every tribe had its poet who depicted in powerful *bedawin* verse, the achievements of his tribe. These verses were regularly recited at their meetings.² Of pre-Islamic poets: (1) Imra al-Qais, (2) Nabigha Dhubyani, (3) Zuhair, (4) Ṭarafa, (5) 'Antra, (6) 'Alqama, (7) 'Asha, (8) 'Amr b. Kulthum, (9) Ḥarīth b. Ḥilliza, (10) Omayya b. Abi Ṣalt, (11) K'ab b. Zuhair, (12) Labid, (13) Ḥassan b. Thabit, and (14) Khansa are particularly well-known. Much of their poetry has been preserved, and the powerful reading which it makes is, in a sense, without a parallel in the poetry of any other people or country. The last four of these poets — of whom the very last was a poetess of good repute — entered Islam in the time of the Holy Prophet himself.³

Many would perhaps wonder and ask, how centuries of history of a great country can at all be preserved in its oral traditions? But we should remember that at that time the historical culture of most peoples was confined only to oral traditions of this kind. The difference between these and Arabian traditions was that while the former were carried in their heads by all and sundry, and were eventually collected as they were found, the latter were carefully preserved in verse and oral tradition, in the wonderful memory of the Arabs. In any case, the oral traditions of the Arabs, which were later committed to writing, constitute our great source of pre-Islamic Arabian history. But for them, we should know nearly nothing of this history. It is impossible to ignore them.

These pre-Islamic traditions are recorded in several books, but their completest record is contained in the work of the famous Muslim historian Abu Ja'far Muḥammad Ibn Jarir al-Ṭabari.⁴ Ṭabari collected the greater part of these traditions and gave them a systematic form. To him most of the later historians turn for material. I will have more to say about him later on.

With the advent of Islam there opened up a new chapter of Arabian history. The Holy Prophet (born 570 A.D., died 632 A.D.) made his advent to the dreamy people of Arabia, and then, as a man dead asleep wakes up to a loud and sudden sound, Arabia woke up to his message. That message made history for Arabia. It put an unknown desert on the map of the world. It was as though something, which had long been enwrapped in the dark, was suddenly turned to the fullest light of the sun. For the life of the Holy Prophet and for the early history of Islam we have material which is as extensive as it is reliable. No religious founder ever left behind him such material as did the

2. Muir, *op. cit.*, Introduction p. 52.

3. *Kitab al-Sh'ir wal-Shu'ara*, by Ibn Qutaiba.

4. Born 224, died 310 A.H.

Holy Prophet, to enable coming generations to reconstruct his life-history. This material is to be found in several forms, and to an account of these forms I now turn.

The Holy Quran

First and foremost is the Holy Quran. According to Muslim belief, the Holy Quran was, to a letter, revealed by God to the Holy Prophet. The revelation of it was spread over all the twenty-three years of the Prophetic ministry which began with a revelation, and closed with a revelation. If the verses of the Holy Quran are distributed over the whole of the Prophet's ministry, the mean quantum of revelation per day turns out to be something less than a verse or 10 words on an average. The ministry lasted for about 7970 days and the number of verses in the Holy Quran is only 6236 and the number of words is 77,934.⁵ From this it appears that the Holy Quran was revealed at a very slow pace, and even admitting that breaks in revelation on some days were made up by longer revelations on other days, the quantity of Quranic revelation, on any single day, was never so long as to make its commission to writing or to memory at all a difficult task.

The Holy Prophet used to dictate the verses as they were revealed and, under divine guidance, he used also to prescribe the places in which they were to be recorded. There are a number of reliable traditions supporting this view. According to one, attributed to 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas, the Holy Prophet's cousin, 'Uthman, the third Khalifa (and one of the scribes who wrote down the Quranic revelation in the Prophet's lifetime) used to say that when a number of verses were revealed together, the Holy Prophet would summon one of the scribes and dictate to him the verses revealed, assigning to each its *Sura* (chapter) and its place in the *Sura*. If only one verse was revealed, even then a scribe was sent for, the verse dictated and its place assigned.⁶

The scribes of the Holy Prophet are well-known in Islamic history, their names and their lives being on definite record. The best known among them were Abu Bakr, 'Omar, 'Uthman, 'Ali, Zubair b. al-'Awwam, Obayy b. Ka'b, 'Abdullah b. Rawaha, and Zaid b. Thabit — all devoted companions of the Holy Prophet most of whom accepted Islam in the very beginning.⁷ It is evident from this list that from the very beginning of divine revelation the Holy Prophet had a reliable and trustworthy company of scribes to take revelation down as it came. The Holy Quran was thus committed to writing as it was revealed, and with the writing down of it naturally grew the present order of its verses, which order divine design had conceived differently from their chronological order. The death of the Holy Prophet marked the

5. *Kitab al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Quran*, by Suyuti, Vol., 1, pp. 66 and 72.

6. *Tirmidhi* chapter on *Tafsir al-Quran*.

7. *Fatḥ al-Bari*, Vol. IX, p. 19; and *Zurqani*, Vol. III, pp. 311-326.

completion of the revelation of the Holy Quran. Accordingly, Abu Bakr, the first Khalifa, in consultation with 'Omar, ordered Zaid b. Thabit, one of the scribes, to collect together the different portions of the text, and secure it in the form of a book. Zaid b. Thabit, who was a hard-working and a very intelligent young man, applied himself with great industry, and guided by the strictest oral and documentary evidence, for every single verse, prepared a complete copy of the Holy Quran in the form of a book. This authoritative copy was later placed in the safe custody of one of the wives of the Holy Prophet — Ḥafṣa daughter of 'Omar.⁸ When Islam spread to different countries, 'Uthman, the third Khalifa, ordered the preparation of accurate copies of the text collected by Zaid, and then had them issued to all parts of the Muslim Empire.⁹

The Holy Quran was also committed to memory as it was revealed, and wonderful arrangements existed to this end. A number among the Companions of the Holy Prophet memorised the text in the order in which the Holy Prophet dictated it and which the Holy Quran was ultimately to have, and while the number of those, who had learnt up small portions of the text, was very much larger, the number of those, who had learnt up the whole of the Quran during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, was also pretty large. Four of them were certified by the Holy Prophet himself and, having been found satisfactory in every way, they were appointed by him to teach the Holy Quran to other companions.¹⁰

At the death of the Holy Prophet when the Holy Quran was gathered as a book, the number of those who knew the whole of it by heart, mounted very rapidly. During the reign of 'Omar, the second Khalifa, a Muslim army in a single cantonment included no less than 300 *Huffaz* i.e., men who could recite the whole of the Holy Quran from memory.¹¹ These arrangements, designed and determined by God, secured the Holy Quran against all possible interpolation and interference. Subsequently so many accurate copies became available in all countries, and so large became the number of those who knew the Holy Book by heart, that the possibility of interpolation was completely eliminated. And to-day, as admitted by friend and foe alike, there is not the least doubt that the Quran which we possess is the very Quran which was revealed to the Holy Prophet. It is the same text, and has the same order which the Holy Prophet, under divine guidance, prescribed for it. I quote some European Christian writers in support.

Says Sir William Muir:

“There is probably in the world no other work which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text.”

8. *Bukhari, Kitab Faḍail al-Quran*, Chapter, “The Collection of the Quran.”

9. *Bukhari, Kitab Faḍail al-Quran*, Chapter, “The Collection of the Quran”; Also *Faḥ al-Bari*, Vol. 9, pp. 17 and 18.

10. *Bukhari, Kitab Faḍail al-Quran*, Chapter, “The Reciters of the Quran.”

11. *Kanz al-'Ummal*, Chapter on the Quran, Section: *Faḍail al-Quran*.

Again:

“To compare their pure text with the various readings of our Scriptures is to compare things between which there is no analogy.”

Again:

“There is every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Mohammad himself gave forth and used.”

Yet again:

“We may upon the strongest assumption affirm that every verse in the Koran,¹² is the genuine and unaltered composition of Mohammad himself.”¹³

Similarly Noeldeke, the great German Orientalist, says:

“The Koran of 'Uthman contains none but genuine elements.”

Again:

“All efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Koran have failed.”¹⁴

The value of the Holy Quran as an historical document does not merely lie in the fact that it has been protected since the time of its revelation. It also lies in the fact that having been revealed gradually during the twenty-three years of the Holy Prophet's ministry, it is a contemporary record of his life. There is not a period of his life which is not illumined by some part or another of the text of the Holy Book. This is the deeper significance of what Hazrat 'Aisha (the Holy Prophet's consort) said of him, *viz.*:

“Verily his character is the Quran.”¹⁵

The Holy Quran in a way is a record of the daily round of activities, the moral qualities and all the little ways of the Prophet. No other historical person possesses such an authentic, and such a powerful contemporary record of his life. There have indeed been those — and there are some even to-day — whose “lives” have been written and published in their life-time or soon after. But the distinction which the Holy Prophet possesses in the Quran, as a day-to-day record of his life, is possessed by no one else.¹⁶ Western writers have openly acknowledged this fact.

12. The same as Quran. While quoting I have retained the form used by the authority quoted.

13. Sir William Muir, *op cit*, Introduction, pp. 22, 23, 27, 28.

14. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, Article on Koran.

15. *Musnad* Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, Vol. 6, p. 91.

16. The fact that the Holy Quran is not recorded or read in its chronological order does not destroy its value as an historical document. For, we know the order in which the different parts of it were revealed and can study it in its chronological as well as in its present order.

The Significance of Prayer

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

The importance of the injunction relating to prayers can be understood easily from the frequent repetition of that injunction in the Holy Quran. But the Holy Book at the same time warns the Muslims against a misconception or ignorance of the true nature of prayers, for it says: "Woe is to those who pray but are utterly regardless of the true nature of their prayers." Prayers are a supplication addressed to Almighty God by a man to purify him and to make him attain union with Him, for unless a man is purified by the hand of God, he cannot be pure, and unless Almighty God makes him attain His union by His powerful hand, he cannot find it. Many are the chains and fetters with which a man is bound, and his own exertions, however hard, are not sufficient to liberate him from them. He desires that he may become purified, but his efforts without the helping hand of God are of no avail, and sometimes he does stumble. To purify one from sins is the work of God only and there is no other power on the earth's surface which can bring about that object. Hence Almighty God has enjoined prayers that they may be the means of bringing about a pure transformation and creating holy promptings and pure impulses within a man's heart. Prayers are a humble and earnest supplication to Almighty God that evil desires, evil passions and evil impulses may be suppressed and a pure love and a pure connection with the Divine Being may be generated in their place which should enable a man to walk in obedience to Divine commandments. The word used for prayers in the Muslims Law is *Salat*, and the presence of the idea of burning in the root meaning shows that prayer is not the utterance of certain words with the lips, but that true prayer should be accompanied with a burning of the heart for the attainment of the object prayed for. Very few persons are acquainted with the philosophy of prayer. A kind of death comes over the person who sets himself to pray for the attainment of an object. It is then that prayer is accepted. But very few persons know this. I daily receive letters in which men complain that they prayed for an object, but that their prayer was not accepted. They do not know that the utterance of certain words with the lips is not prayer. It is a necessary condition for the acceptance of prayer that the heart should completely melt before God, and the grace of God should be sought with

patience and perseverance. Such prayers are generally accepted. The daily prayers which are enjoined by the Muslim Law afford to a Muslim the best occasion for addressing his supplications to God, but the Muslims are unaware of their blessings. It is due to ignorance that the different sects have invented different forms of devotion for seeking the nearness of God. It is through prayers only that His nearness is attained, and this was the way which the Holy Prophet followed. It is my personal experience that nothing can make a man attain that nearness of God which can be attained through prayers. All the movements in prayers are expressive of the deepest humbleness before God. First we stand with our hands folded on the breast, as a servant stands respectfully before his lord and master, expressing by this attitude that like a humble servant, we are ready to obey all the Divine commandments. Next we bend low before Him as a servant does before his master and thus express further humbleness while we praise the holiness and greatness of God. The highest degree of humbleness which is expressive of utter human weakness in the majestic Divine presence is shown in the act of prostration. The tongue utters the praises of God and thus while the words express His glory and greatness, the heart shows its sincerity in this praise and glorification of the mighty Lord of earth and heavens by the physical act of prostration. The physical movements of the body in prayers are therefore only practical expressions of the deep humbleness of the heart and both the tongue and the heart, the body as well as the soul, join in singing praises of the glory and greatness of God and expressing by words as well as practice the utter weakness and humility of man.

As there is a deep significance beneath the physical movements of the body in the prayers, so there is a hidden meaning in the five times appointed by the Islamic law for the five daily prayers. They represent the five conditions of man. They are photographs of man's changing conditions. The life of man is subject to five different changes which he undergoes in the time of adversity. These five changes are necessary to human nature. First of all he is informed of the misfortune that is going to befall him, as, for instance, when a warrant is issued from a court of justice for his arrest. For the first time then his comfort and happiness are suddenly interrupted and a cloud of melancholy is cast over his sunshine of glory. This stage corresponds to the time for the first prayer immediately after noon. As the sun begins to decline from the zenith after noon, so a man who is at the height of his prosperity and success witnesses the first stage of his declination when he comes to know of an impending misfortune. This stage of the human condition finds its representation in the prayer which is said at the first decline of the sun i. e., the *zuhr* prayer. The sun declines farther to the west and the troubles increase. In the illustration already stated, the person upon whom the warrant is executed is brought before the magistrate. Difficulties, then encompass him all around, and the light of comfort is on the verge of extinction. Corresponding to this state of man is the time of the day when the sun has declined far to the west and his

light is turned pale so that the eye can rest upon him. The zenith of glory is left far behind and the setting of the sun after a short time is apparent. The latter after-noon prayer, i. e., *asr* answers to this spiritual state. A third change then comes over the man. There is no hope left of being delivered from the trouble. To continue the illustration already suggested, evidence being taken against the accused person which shows his guilt, a charge is framed by the magistrate. He is then frightened out of his senses and deems himself already a prisoner. The sun of glory is then set. This state corresponds to the time when the sun actually sets and the light of the day vanishes away. The evening prayer said after sunset represents this condition. The culminating point of adversity is reached when darkness encompasses a man all round, and its force is fully realised. The verdict goes against him and he is sent to gaol. Then there is before him the darkness of night. Corresponding to this state of physical adversity are the night-prayers which are said when the darkness of night fully sets in. This long interval of darkness is again followed by a light in the East which gives news of the rising sun. The period of imprisonment is over, and the sun of prosperity again begins to shine upon the man. In accordance with this change the next prayer-time is the morning which brings the glad tidings of the new sun.

Allah Answers Prayer

Allah it is Who answers the cry of the distressed person when he calls upon Him and removes the evil.

(Quran 27:63)

Dedication to God

I urge you to fear God. Stick to the Law of God. Listen to him upon whomsoever God has entrusted your affairs—and obey him, for he who will obey him will get rid of low passions, greed and unwieldy anger. Do not feel proud. It does not behove that he who is created from dust and has to go back to dust should display pride; he has to be eaten up by worms. Today he is alive and tomorrow he will be dead. Every moment that passes, carries him nearer to the time of his death.

(Hazrat Abu Bakr)

The Concept of Mission in Islam

(Matiullah Dard)

In essence every religion possesses a missionary character. It starts with an individual and seeks to persuade and convince others of its truth and of the beneficent nature of the values it propounds. It must, therefore, stand for freedom of conscience, including the freedom to change one's religion and the other freedoms which are conducive to the beneficent adjustment of human beings. The Holy Quran explains that it is only within the competence of God, the All Knowing, the Almighty, to make a person believe, but even He does not force anyone to believe. He leaves everyone to exercise his or her reason and judgment. "If thy Lord had enforced His will, surely, all who are on the earth would have believed together. Wilt thou, then, force people to become believers?" (The Quran, Ch. 10 v. 100).

It is clear beyond any shadow of doubt that Islam does not allow the use of force for its propagation.

It is worth noting that the first revelation that came to the prophet of Islam commanded him "Recite in the name of thy Lord". The Arabic word "Iqra" connotes both recitation and conveying by word of mouth. The call was Muhammad's first experience of verbal revelation.

A tremendous concept is conveyed by the verses revealed to him on this occasion. Muhammad is warned that God has chosen him as the instrument for conveying His message to mankind.¹

Professor Max Muller defined what the term — a missionary religion — should be taken to mean *viz.* one . . . in which the spreading of the truth and the conversion of unbelievers are raised to the rank of a sacred duty by the founder or his immediate successors . . . It is the spirit of truth in the hearts of believers which cannot rest, unless it manifests itself in thought, word and deed, which is not satisfied till it has carried its message to every human soul, till what one believes to be the truth is accepted as the truth by all members of the human family.²

1. Khan, M. Z., *The Excellent Exemplar Muhammad*, (London, 1962) p. 14.

2. Arnold, T. W., *The Preaching of Islam*, (London, 1913) p. 1.

Sir T. W. Arnold observed:

“It is such a zeal for the truth of their religion that has inspired the Muhammadans to carry with them the message of Islam to the people of every land into which they penetrate and that justly claims for their religion a place among those we term ‘missionary’ . . . the spread of this faith over so vast a portion of the globe . . . is due to various causes, social, political and religious: but among these one of the most powerful factors at work in the production of this stupendous result, has been the unremitting labour of Muslim missionaries, who, with the Prophet himself as their great example have spent themselves for conversion of unbelievers.”³

Professor Arnold has also suggested in his introduction to the “Preaching of Islam” which is highly esteemed by orientalists:

“Moreover it is not in the cruelties of the persecutor or the fury of the fanatic that we should look for the evidences of the missionary spirit of Islam, any more than in the exploits of that mythical personage, the Muslim warrior with sword in one hand and Quran in the other, but in the quiet, unobtrusive labours of the preacher and the trader who have carried their faith into every quarter of the globe. Such peaceful methods of preaching and persuasion were not adopted, as some would have us believe, only when political circumstances made force and violence impossible or impolitic, but were most strictly enjoined in numerous passages of the Quran.”⁴

Another research scholar writes:

“It is ironic then that Western Christendom should have represented Islam as the religion of the sword. The impression given by much Christian polemic is that of Muslims converting by the sword in a savage and bloody attempt to extend their spiritual and temporal sway, and such biased readings of the early spread of Islam have been used to interpret the religion of Islam, and even the Quran itself, as war mongering. And yet the Quranic instructions about the manner of preaching and propagating Islam are clearly set forth in terms which introduce social and spiritual criteria into the discussion and which remove the subject from the simply military or polemical level to that of mutual responsibility, respect, reason and patience.”⁵

In the history of the Christian Church missionary activity is seen to be intermittent, and an age of apostolic fervour may be succeeded by a period of

3. Arnold, T. W., *op. cit.*, pp. 1-3.

4. Arnold, T. W., *op. cit.*, Introduction.

5. Craig, David A., “The Military and Spiritual Aspects of Jihad in the Quran”, (M.A. Dissertation. University of Birmingham) 1969.

apathy and indifference or persecution and forced conversion may take the place of the preachings of the Word; so likewise does the propaganda of Islam in various epochs of Muhammadan history ebb and flow. But since the zeal of proselytising is a distinct feature of either faith, its missionary history may fittingly be singled out as a separate branch of study, not as excluding other manifestations of the religious life but as concentrating attention on an aspect of it that has special characteristics of its own.

Thus the annals of propaganda and persecution may be studied apart from one another, whether in the history of the Christian or the Muslim Church, though in both they may be at times commingled.⁶

Islamic Jihad

The word Jihad is entirely misunderstood by most people and it is often translated as Holy War. Islamic Jihad is to strive with the help of the Quran. It is to expound by word and deed the beauties and wisdom of the Quran.

“So obey not the disbelievers and strive against them by means of the Quran with a mighty striving.”

(25:53).

The real Jihad is to preach the Message of Islam, to invite all people to accept and promote the teachings of the Quran.

Etymologically the root is JHD which means the using or exerting of ones utmost power, effort, endeavours or ability in contending with an object of disapprobation whether it be an actual human enemy, the devil, or oneself; all of which are included in the term as used in the Quran.⁷

Basically Jihad is of two kinds: (a) Jihad against ones evil desires and propensities; and (b) Jihad against the enemies of truth which includes fighting in self-defence. Jihad in the sense of actual fighting is allowed only against those who choose to suppress free belief by violence or the use of arms. Jihad against any other people would be contrary to Islam. The first kind of Jihad may be termed “Jihad in Allah” and the latter kind of Jihad, “Jihad in the way of Allah”. The Prophet of Islam has termed the first kind of Jihad as the greater Jihad and the latter kind as the smaller Jihad.

“There shall be no compulsion in religion, for guidance and error have been clearly distinguished.”

(2:257).

This verse not only forbids Muslims in most emphatic words to use force for converting people to Islam, but also gives reasons why force should not be used

6. Arnold, T. W., *op. cit.*, p. 8.

7. Lane, E. W., *Arabic-English Lexicon*.

for this purpose. Because truth stands out distinct from error, so there is no justification for using force.

“And if any one of the idolaters seeks protection of thee grant him protection so that he may hear the Word of Allah: then convey him to his place of security. That is because they are a people who have no knowledge.”

(9:6).

The verse shows that war with idolaters was not undertaken in order to force them to embrace Islam, even when a state of war existed, idolaters were permitted to come to the Muslim camps if they wished to investigate the truth. Then after the truth had been explained to them, they were to be safely conducted to their place of security, if they did not feel inclined to embrace the new faith. In the face of such clear teachings, it is the height of injustice to accuse Islam of intolerance or of using force for its propagation.

“Proofs have indeed come to you from your Lord: so whoever sees it is for his good; and whoever becomes blind it is to his own loss. And I am not a guardian over you.”

(6:105).

The duty of a divine prophet is confined to conveying what is revealed to him by God. It is not his concern to compel people to accept it. The verse refutes the allegation that Islam encourages the use of force for the propagation of its teachings.

“If thy Lord had enforced His Will, surely all those on the earth would have believed, without exception. Will thou, then, take it upon thyself to force people to become believers.”

(10:100).

“And if Allah had enforced His Will, they would not have set up gods with Him. And We have not made thee a keeper over them nor art thou over them a guardian.”

(6:108).

In His infinite wisdom God has made man a free agent. The verses make it clear that Allah does not compel any person to accept the truth but leaves it to his option. Just as God does not compel man, so Muhammad cannot compel anybody, for he is only a Messenger of God.

The words “keeper”, “guardian”, or “disposer of affairs”, are intended to signify that Muhammad is neither responsible for the actions of disbelievers nor is he the disposer of their affairs.

“Those of the believers who sit at home excepting the disabled ones, and those who strive in the cause of Allah with their wealth and their persons are not equal. Allah has exalted in rank those who strive with their wealth

and their persons above those who sit at home. And to each Allah has promised good. And Allah has exalted those who strive above those who sit at home, by a great reward.”

(4:96).

This verse explains the different categories of believers only and not of hypocrites. Believers are of two classes:

- (1) Those who sincerely accept the truth and try to live up to the teachings of Islam but take no part in the struggle to defend and propagate the faith. Those are passive believers — “sitters” as the verse names them.
- (2) Those who not only live up to the teachings of Islam but also actively participate in the work of its propagation are the “strivers” or “Mujahids” as they are called. The Mujahids are far superior to the former in the sight of God. There is, however, a third category of believers who even though they do not join their brethren in actually fighting disbelievers get an equal reward with those who take part in the actual struggle. These are mentioned in the words “excepting the disabled ones”. Their inability to participate in actual fighting is due to circumstances over which they have no control. They are heart and soul with the Mujahids but their particular circumstances; disease, poverty, etc., do not allow them to join the expeditions in person.

It is with the Jihad for preaching that this essay is mainly concerned, to justify the missionary zeal of Islam, according to the Holy Quran and precepts and example of Muhammad. Jihad in the context of fighting is beyond the scope of this study, however, the following verses will show that the Islamic war is allowed only in self-defence and the Quran has also taken care to explain the necessary conditions and limitations of this kind of Jihad before permitting it.

“Permission to take up arms is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged. And Allah, indeed has power to help them. Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly, only because they said ‘Our Lord is Allah’.”

(22:40–41).

“Do not transgress, surely Allah does not love the transgressors.”

(2:191).

The conception and allegation of Jihad (Religious War) — which sanctions the use of the “sword” to spread the faith — is definitely and entirely un-Islamic and recent research does prove it.

Mission and Preaching Methods in the Quran

The following Arabic roots BLGH (deliver, convey); DA’A (call, invite);

BSHR (expose, glad tidings); NDHR (warn); and QWL (say, proclaim) used in different contexts in the Quran amply elucidate the concept of mission and various methods of preaching since the very inception of Islam.

BLGH

The word BLGH as used in the following verses means: The bringing, conveyance, delivery or communication of a message. It often occurs in the Quran as meaning the communication or announcement of what is revealed.⁸

“O Messenger, proclaim widely that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord; for if thou do it not, thou will not have conveyed His Message at all. Allah will safeguard thee against harm by people.”
(5:68).

“On the Messenger lies only the conveying of the Message. And Allah knows what you disclose and what you hide.”
(5:100).

“My responsibility is only to convey what is revealed to me from Allah and His Messages.”
(72:24).

“And if you reject the truth then the generations before you also rejected it. And the Messenger is only responsible for the clear delivery of the Message.”
(29:19).

“This is a sufficient admonition for mankind that they may benefit by it and that they be warned thereby, and that they may know that He is the only one God and that those possessed of understanding may ponder.”
(14:53).

This is a sufficient admonition for mankind, means that the truth has been properly communicated and brought home to men by means of this Book, and now it is up to them whether to accept or reject it. The Quran on the one hand, warns erring people of their errors, and on the other hand, it exhorts those who have shown the right path to make further progress in wisdom and knowledge.

DA'A

“And let there be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness and enjoin virtue and forbid evil. And it is they who shall prosper.”
(3:105).

8. Lane, E. W., *ibid.*

The words "And let there be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness" do not mean that the duty of preaching is confined to a few only. What is meant is that, whereas all should try to preach and propagate the truth of Islam, there should be a party of men among Muslims who should be entirely devoted to this work. Every Muslim is not enjoined to devote himself wholly to the preaching of Islam: for if it were so, Muslims could not earn their livelihood nor take part in other healthy pursuits of life. So, though all must contribute their quota, only a section of the community is required to devote itself exclusively to the work of propagation.

"Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortations and argue with them in a way that is best, surely thy Lord knows best who has strayed from His way; and He knows those who are rightly guided."
(16:126).

The word "Hikma" (wisdom) in the verse means:

- (1) Knowledge or science;
- (2) Equity or justice;
- (3) Forbearance or clemency;
- (4) Any saying or disclosure dealing with the exigencies of the occasion;
- (5) Gift of prophesy; and
- (6) What prevents or restrains from ignorant behaviour.⁹

The word may be used in all these senses. Taking it in the first sense, the verse would mean that Muslims should invite others to Islam by argument based on knowledge and reason and should not confine themselves merely to making appeals to sentiments and emotions. Using it in the second sense would be that, when arguing with the followers of other Faiths, Muslim missionaries should not bring forward such objections against those faiths as can be advanced against Islam itself, for such a course is not only inconsistent with justice, but is also unsound. In the third sense, the verse would mean that Muslims should explain the beauties of Islam with patience. In the fourth sense the verse would mean that while inviting other people to Islam, Muslims should not say anything which is not true and is not in accordance with facts, for if they resorted to falsehood while preaching truth they would be ruining their own souls in order to save those of others.

Moreover, their discourse should be conformable to the exigencies of the occasion and should not wound other people's susceptibilities. Using the word in the fifth sense, the verse would mean that Muslims should invite men to Islam by using susceptibilities. Using the word in the fifth sense, the verse means arguments contained in the Quran and not arguments which are the creation of their own fancy. Lastly, in the sixth sense, the verse would mean

9. Lane, E. W., *ibid.* Book 1, part , p. 617.

that the talk of Muslims should not be beyond the comprehension of those to whom the appeal is made. They should say things which may help to resolve the doubts of others and not display or demonstrate their own talents and learning.

The words "goodly exhortations" mean "a discourse which softens the hearts of the hearers and makes a deep impression on them". Thus the Quran exhorts its followers not to content themselves with mere cold and dry reasoning but to reinforce and support philosophical dissertations with an appeal to sentiments. This appeal, however, should be "goodly exhortations" i.e., it should be based on pure truth and there should be no prevarication or tampering with facts.

The expression, "Thy Lord best knows those who have strayed from — who are rightly guided", contains a word of encouragement and good cheer for the Muslim evangelist. He is told that if in spite of his best efforts he finds that his preaching has not had the desired effect, he should not get discouraged and think that his preaching was defective, but should continue his noble work without slackening, leaving the result to God, because He alone knows who is deserving and destined to be guided to the right path. As Islam was to spread abroad and was to be preached to the people who claimed to possess revealed Scriptures, Muslims have been told in this verse that a much more difficult task lay ahead of them. While dealing with idolaters it was easy enough to refute idolatry, but in the case of "the People of the Book" the excellencies of Islamic Teachings would have to be proved regarding details and auxiliary matters also.

"And who is better in speech than he who invites men to Allah and does righteous deeds and says 'I am, surely, of those who submit?' And good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with that which is best. And lo, he, between whom and thyself was enmity, will become as though he were a warm friend. But none is granted it save those who are steadfast; and none is granted it save those who possess a large share of good."

(41:34-36).

There could be no better avocation for a person than to call men to God and to conform his own conduct to the teachings he preaches to others and to submit entirely to the will of God. This is the essence of Islam. Preaching entails many hardships, therefore, the verse enjoins bearing them patiently and with fortitude, and to return good for evil He receives at the hands of one's persecutors. The very high standard of good moral conduct referred to in the verse can only be attained by putting up, without grumbling or fretting, with hardships one has to face in the way of God.

BSHR

“Verily, We have sent thee with the truth as the bearer of glad tidings and as a warner; and there is no people to whom a warner has not been sent.”
(35:25).

The verse reveals a great truth which had remained unknown to the world till the Quran revealed it, viz.: that there had been sent to every people in the past a heavenly Messenger who preached to them the same Message of truth and righteousness. This great and noble principle leads to belief in the divine origin of all religions, and in their Founders as Divine Messengers. It is an article of faith with a Muslim to believe in and equally respect and revere all of them. With the introduction of this sublime truth, Islam has sought to create an atmosphere of amity and good will among different creeds, and to remove and banish rancour and bitterness which has embittered relations between the followers of these creeds all over the world. Thus Islam establishes peace among all religions.

“And we have not sent thee but as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner for all mankind, but most men know not.”
(34:29).

Muhammad has been repeatedly declared in the Quran as having been sent as a Messenger to all mankind till the end of time.¹⁰ The Message of Islam is a universal message and the Quran is the last revealed Book which has laid claim to finality.

“O people of the Book! there indeed has come to you Our Messenger, after a break in the series of Messengers, who makes things clear to you lest you should say, ‘There has come to us no bearer of glad tidings and no warner.’ So a bearer of glad tidings and a warner has indeed come to you. Allah has power over all things.”
(5:20).

“We have sent thee with the truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner.”
(2:120).

NDHR

“O Prophet! Truly we have sent thee as a witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner, and as a summoner unto Allah by His command, and as a Lamp that gives bright light.”
(33:46–47).

10. See also Holy Quran ch. 21:108 and ch. 25:2.

In these verses five distinctive qualities of Muhammad have been mentioned to show that he possesses all the necessary qualifications which a spiritual leader, who is charged with Divine mission "to bring men out of darkness into light" should possess:

- (a) he is a witness, i.e. a promulgator of the law and a model;
- (b) he is a bearer of glad tidings, i.e. God has not lost interest in men and continues to send His Messengers and Prophets to reclaim lost humanity when there is need for one;
- (c) he is a warner telling men that if they did not benefit by his teachings and persisted in their evil way, they would come to grief;
- (d) he is a summoner unto Allah by His command, i.e. he is not a self-appointed reformer but a Divinely commissioned teacher; and
- (e) he is a lamp that gives light, i.e. now, he alone is "the light and the way".

QWL

The word "QUL" — a derivative of QWL — has been used at the beginning of some chapters and in many verses of the Quran. It applies to every Muslim. Thus Muslims are enjoined to proclaim repeatedly in best ways the Truth of Islam.

"And argue not with the People of the Book except with what is best as an argument, but argue not at all with such of them as are unjust. And say, 'we believe in that which has been revealed to us and that which has been revealed to you; and our God and your God is one, and to Him we submit'."

(29:47).

This verse expounds a sound principle to guide Muslims when preaching their faith to others. They should begin preaching and emphasising those beliefs and religious principles which are common to both. For example, while preaching to the People of the Book they should start with the two cardinal principles of the Unity of God and Divine revelation.

According to Islam God revealed Himself to man in every age. Prophets have been raised among all peoples, but the followers of other religions claim to have the exclusive privilege of being:

"Gods' sons and His loved ones."

(5:19).

"Say 'O People of the Book! come to a word equal between us and you — that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for lords beside Allah'. But if they turn away then say, 'Bear witness that we have submitted to God'."

(3:65).

“Say, ‘O People of the book, you stand on nothing until you observe the Torah and the Gospel and what has now been sent down to you from your Lord’. And surely what has been sent down to thee from thy Lord will increase many of them in rebellion and disbelief; so grieve not for the disbelieving people.”

(5:59).

“And say, ‘It is the truth from your Lord; wherefore let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve’.”

In this latter verse “let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve”, clearly shows the peaceful and amicable way of Islamic preaching.

Special Methods of Propagation

The method of conveying Allah’s message has also been set forth in the Quran. Due regard has to be given to every factor which influences the conveying of “Glad Tidings” or “Warnings” in a preaching situation. The Quran furnishes ample guidance in this respect as well. 16:126; 29:47; 41:34–36 have already been commented upon previously with regard to preaching methods. The following verses particularly speak of the ways to be adopted by the preacher. Instructions given to Moses and Aaron are as follows:

“Go, thou and thy brother, with My signs to be diligent in remembering Me, both of you to Pharaoh, for he has transgressed grievously; but speak gently to him, perchance he may take heed or be humble. They urged: Lord, we fear lest he commit some excess against us or press us hard. Allah reassured them: Fear not at all; for I am with you both hearing and seeing. So go ye both to him and say: We are the Messengers of thy Lord.”

(20:43–48).

A preacher should use gentle language and also show due respect to those in worldly authority.

Sir Zafrulla Khan says in his introduction to the Holy Quran:

“The Quran is uncompromising on the Unity of God and brooks not anything that may savour of ascribing partners to Him. Yet it makes allowances for the sensitiveness of those who are in error, for to them that to which they hold seems fair.”¹¹

“Revile ye not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, shall revile Allah in their ignorance.”

(6:109).

11. Khan, M. Z., *The Holy Quran*, (English translation), Introduction.

The verse not only inculcates respect for the feelings of others but also assures amity among peoples.

The Example of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad

“And We have not sent thee but as a mercy for all peoples.”
(21:108).

“From its very inception Islam has been a missionary religion, both in theory and in practice, for the life of Muhammad exemplifies the same teaching, and the Prophet himself stands at the head of a long series of Muslim missionaries who have won an entrance for their faith into the hearts of unbelievers.”¹²

Muhammad was a mercy for his followers and a mercy for his opponents. He was a mercy for the Arabs whom he raised from the depths of moral depravity to the highest pinnacle of spiritual eminence as well as entitling them to worldly honours, and he was a mercy for the future generations in as much as he left in the Quran and in his teachings safe and sure guidance for them. The preaching of Islam, was vigorously carried out by Muhammad throughout his ministry at Mecca and Medina. The first converts included his faithful and loving wife Khadijah, his adopted children Zayd and Ali, and his bosom-friend Abu-Bakr, about whom he said: “I never invited any to the faith who displayed not hesitation, perplexity and vacillation — excepting only Abu-Bakr, who when I told him of Islam tarried not, neither was perplexed.”¹³ Muhammad and his early followers had to face the cruellest persecution, especially the Muslim slaves who had no protector, in order to preach the doctrines of Islam.

Muhammad went on a missionary journey to Taif, a small town about sixty miles to the south-east of Mecca, where he was badly treated. Pilgrims of the Khazraj tribe from Medina were converted by the Prophet in the Valley of Mina and through them the new faith spread rapidly from house to house and from tribe to tribe in Medina. Soon after the Hijra (migration), Medina became a Muslim town, from where many teachers and preachers were sent out at the request of neighbouring tribes. However, eighty of them were treacherously and cruelly murdered by two of the tribes. After concluding the Treaty of Hudaibiya, Muhammad instituted another plan for the spread of Islam. He sent ambassadors to different capitals, each with a letter from him, inviting the rulers to accept Islam. They went to Heraclius, the Roman Emperor, the Kings of Iran, Egypt, Abyssinia and other Chiefs.

“But the message of Islam was not for Arabia only; the whole world was

12. Arnold, T. W., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

13. *Ibid.*

to share it. As there was but one God, so there was to be one religion into which all men were to be invited. This claim to be universal, to hold sway over all men and all nations, found a practical illustration in the letters which Muhammad is said to have sent in the year A.D. 628."¹⁴

It is clearly shown that from the very beginning Muhammad believed in the universality of the message of Islam as well. Thus, Islam is a missionary force inculcated by the teachings of the Quran. One of the cardinal duties of a Muslim is to convey the Message of Allah, taking into consideration all the factors which affect ones attitude, intellectual capability and position in society because it is the object of all missionary religions to convert mankind to the Truth.

Holy Living

Let all your power be exerted to establish His Unity upon earth. Be kind and merciful to the creatures of God. Let not your tongue speak evil against them or your hands do injury to them. Do not oppress them but try your best to do good to them. Speak not the word of pride and vanity to any one though he be your subordinate or servant. Abuse not any one though he might abuse you. Walk upon earth in humility and meekness and sympathise with your fellow beings, that you may be accepted of God. There are many who show meekness outwardly but inwardly they are ravening wolves. There are many who are smooth in appearance but they have the nature of a serpent. You cannot be accepted of your God until your tongue conforms with your heart. If you are in a high place, glory not in your greatness and do not look down upon the lowly but have mercy upon them. If you are learned, glory not in your learning, and do not despise the ignorant with vanity but give them a word of kind advice. If you are rich, glory not in your riches and behave not proudly towards the poor, but serve and assist them. Shun the paths that lead to destruction. Fear God and be righteous. Worship not the creatures but severing all your earthly connections, be ye wholly devoted unto God. Let not your delight be in this world. Serve God only, and devote your life to His service. Hate every impurity and evil for God's sake, for your Lord is holy. Let every morning bear you witness that you have passed the night with righteousness, and let every evening bear you witness that you have passed the day fearing God.

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

14. Arnold, T. W., *op. cit.*, p. 28.

Islam and Christianity

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

The beneficent teachings of Islam aim to unify mankind within the fold of one spiritual brotherhood. God commands in the Holy Quran:

“Show kindness to parents, and to kindred,
and orphans, and the needy, and to the
neighbour that is a stranger, and the
companion by your side, and the wayfarer,
and those whom your right hand possess.”

(4:37).

These sublime injunctions call upon Muslims to extend kindness and assistance to everyone irrespective of colour, race or creed. It is within the light of this fraternal spirit that I make the following observations.

God

All Messengers of God proclaimed the Unity of God and Jesus was no exception. He never claimed to be Divine or God Himself. He is reported to have declared:

“Why callest me good? There is none
good but One, that is God.”

(Mark 10:18).

It is unfortunate that the majority of Christians have lost the correct conception of the Unity of God and profess the untenable doctrine of Trinity which propounds the existence of three gods — God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. No amount of mathematical jugglery can make three equal to one or one equal to three.

The Bible speaks of the “God of Israel” and not the God of all people:

“Blessed be the God of Israel for ever
and ever.”

(1 Chronicles 16:36).

Jesus also claimed to be a Messenger only for the tribes of Israel:

“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep
of the House of Israel.”

(Matthew 15:24).

Islam teaches the absolute Oneness of God. We read in the Holy Quran:

“Say He is Allah, the One.
Allah the Independent and Besought of
all. He begets not, nor is He begotten,
and there is none like unto Him.”

(112:2-5).

This refutes the idea that God has co-partners. Again He proclaims:

“They surely disbelieve who say Allah
is the third of three, there is no
God but the One God.”

(5:74).

The Quran refers to God as:

“The Lord of all the worlds.”

(1:2).

The original text means that God is not only the Lord of all mankind but also of every kind of creation. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) was not commissioned by God to preach only to the Arabs or any other particular section of humanity but to all mankind:

“We have not sent thee but as a
bearer of glad tidings and a
warner for all mankind.”

(34:29).

Sin

Christianity teaches the doctrine of original sin which states that everyone is born tainted with inherited sin due to the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden. It also teaches that through death on the cross Jesus cleansed and atoned not only the stain of original sin of man but also absolved him from all kinds of sin by bearing the punishment on himself instead. This is known as the doctrine of Atonement.

Islam teaches that Allah is a just God and that it is not justice for an innocent person to be compelled to suffer the punishment of a guilty person. God is All-forgiving and Merciful possessing the power to forgive sins without the need of a human sacrifice by crucifixion or any other form of execution:

“Whosoever does evil or wrongs his soul, and then asks forgiveness of Allah, will find Allah most Forgiving, Merciful.”

(4:111).

True and sincere repentance draws the Mercy and Forgiveness of God as it always has done throughout the ages.

Peace

Jesus was, no doubt, a man of peace. He is reported to have said:

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

(Matthew 5:9).

“Thou shalt not resist evil.”

(Matthew 5:39).

Nevertheless, he seems to have reversed these gentle teachings on a later occasion when he said:

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.”

(Matthew 10:34).

“He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.”

(Luke 22:36).

This message seems to have been well understood by Jesus’s disciples for at the time of his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest. Since that event the prayers and blessings of Church leaders have accompanied Christian armies which have sallied forth in all directions down the centuries.

The word Islam means peace. A Muslim should be one who strives to keep the peace. Aggression is prohibited although fighting in self-defence is permitted:

“Fight in the cause of Allah against those who fight against you but do not transgress. Surely Allah loves not the transgressors.”

(2:191).

Muslims hail one another with the greeting “Peace be on you” and, if they

remain steadfast in faith, they will be met by angels at the gates of paradise who will say:

“Peace be unto you.”

(13:24).

Islam seeks to promote universal peace and provides the necessary guidance for its achievement.

Peace Through Righteousness

If there be righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there is beauty in the character there will be harmony in the home. If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. When there is order in each nation there will be peace in the world.

(Chinese proverb)

Daily Living

Religion is bread for daily use, not cake for special occasions.

(James Learmont)

Distinctive Features of Islamic Teaching

(Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad)

The Islamic teaching is fully consolidated and strengthened on a rational basis, which has planted the roots of Islamic tasawwuf (mysticism) in the holy book itself: here there has been no need for any other Prophet to draw attention to those aspects, as happened in the case of the Jews. The earlier Scriptures set down the teaching generally without stating the rational basis. The Holy Quran on the other hand fully states the rational basis of its teaching, dwelling convincingly on the benefit which would accrue if the teaching was observed, as well as on the harm that would result if it was not duly observed. Islamic mysticism thus has come to rest on the Holy Quran itself, unlike the case of the Jews among whom the deeper and finer aspects of the Mosaic teaching remained unexpounded until the need was met by the mystic movement started by Jesus Christ which came to be known as Christianity.

The second great point which establishes the superiority of the Islamic teaching is that it carefully avoids the extremes and picks out a middle course, maintaining an elasticity which fully meets the requirements of changing human faculties from individual to individual, and from time to time.

Thirdly, Islam eliminates the priestly class. There is no ordained clergy, no highborn pundits, as among the Hindus, to stand as a link between God and man. In the days of both Moses and Jesus the important role of the priest was greatly emphasised, but not so in Islam where any private individual can officiate at a prescribed ritual prayer, a wedding, a funeral, or any other occasion where among the Jews and Christians the participation of an ordained priest is essential. This too was indeed a far reaching revolution, since, by taking this stand, the Holy Quran at one stroke broke the chains which had kept humanity bound for thousands of years and ruled that for worship of the Divine Being no intermediary was needed.

This aspect of the Islamic teaching so astonishes the Christians that they are found wondering how the Muslims can worship when there are no priests among them to officiate on these occasions.

Fourthly, Islam broke away completely from the former practice which tied down acts of worship to particular premises: In Islam the only role of any locality for the purpose is confined to the requirements of organisation for occasions when worship best fulfilled its purpose if done as a corporate act by an assembly of people of the same way of thinking. Prior to the time of the Holy Prophet worship to be performed at the synagogue, the church or the temple, the Holy Prophet said: "The whole earth for me has been made into a mosque, so that I can worship anywhere and everywhere when the time comes for worship." One might say that since the earlier teaching were confined to certain periods or localities, the act of worship too had to be performed in certain specified localities; but when in the Islamic dispensation the order came for the whole surface of the earth to be purified as embodiment of the Kingdom of Heaven, the Muslims were directed to sanctify every inch of the ground with their acts of adoration.

Fifthly, all the revelations came to the Holy Prophet in specific precise words, which not only had to be preserved as they stood, but God Himself guaranteed their preservation in the fullest sense. This, for the future, made great difference for the purpose of discussion and research. Formerly the question had to be answered as to whether a certain phrase or expression was to be attributed to Moses or to God, and the corresponding difference in the value of the two had always to be kept in mind. In the case of the Scripture brought by the Holy Prophet Mohammad, however, the question no longer stood, since every word and vowel in it came from God as it stands, so that the utmost reliance can be placed on it for the purpose of inference and deduction.

I once saw in the course of a dream that some one was asking me why there was so much repetition in the Holy Quran. I replied that there was no repetition at all — that not to speak of there being no repetition of words, there was no repetition even of the vowel points each repeated word and vowel point yielding some different or additional shade of meaning. No other Scripture can match the Holy Quran in this respect.

Sixthly, the Islamic teaching contains the fullest and finest exposition of the Divine attributes, in comparison with which even the Jewish teaching fades into insignificance. Undoubtedly the Jewish Scriptures mention the divine attributes in great detail; but their interplay is rarely brought out. As I mentioned earlier, once when I studied this question with attention I did not find even one attribute mentioned in the Holy Quran which had not been mentioned in Jewish Scriptures. There is however, one thing which we find in the Holy Quran but do not find anywhere in the Jewish Scriptures. The Holy Quran goes into the question as to where the field of one divine attribute, for instance *Rahmaaniyyat*, commences, or where that of another ends, and how these attributes work in interrelation. In other words, the Holy Quran contains a full exposition of the manner in which the various categories of

divine attributes act and react, while in the case of the Torah the various categories are mentioned, but nothing is said about their interplay, restricting thus the benefit one can draw. This is a very weighty argument in favour of the superiority of the Holy Quran.

The seventh exclusive advantage which belongs to the Holy Quran is that it discusses questions of metaphysics connected with the spiritual life of man on a philosophical and highly intellectual basis, while the same cannot be said in regard to the Jewish or other Scriptures. So much so that among the Jews those who denied the possibility of the final Day of Judgement predominated, there have been only a few who believed in it. The Holy Quran is the first book that has discussed these questions in detail; and it has thrown such a flood of light on them that after listening to its arguments one can deny the truth of the Day of Judgment only from sheer cussedness and perversity of mind, not on any rational basis.

The eighth advantage which the Holy Quran enjoys over the other Scriptures is that it has opened a new door for the clarification of human thought on spiritual and religious matters by establishing a terminology that facilitates thinking. Concepts which previously were embedded in lengthy discourses, the Holy Quran has embodied in expressions and terms which can easily be picked up to facilitate discussion of and penetration into spiritual truths. It has invested these terms with precise meaning and content which leaves no room for doubt on the points involved. For instance the Holy Quran uses the word "Nabee" commonly rendered as prophet in English, which it defined very precisely, explaining when nabees are raised, the signs by which to know them, their function in society, the connection between them and the rest of the people, etc. There are scores of such questions which the Holy Quran discusses in full, but in regard to which the earlier Scriptures have had nothing to say, this being a distinctive feature of Islam which even enemies and hostile critics cannot deny.

I once wrote to a number of the religious leaders of other religious communities such as Christian Bishops, Sikh Gurus, Hindu Pundits and Jewish Scribes asking them how their Scriptures described and defined a Nabee (Prophet). From some, I got no reply at all, while some replied that in their religious literature there was no specific teaching bearing on the point, this being also the answer returned by a well known Bishop. Similarly there are a host of other problems. What are angels? What is their function? and so on. All these are questions on which the earlier Scriptures throw no light. Islam on the other hand has coined the word "Malaikah" for certain spiritual beings and proceeds to define them, their being and their work. Similarly in regard to the Divine Being, His attributes, prayer, qaza-o-qadr, hashro-o-nashr, heaven and hell, life in heaven, etc., the Holy Quran has set up specific expressions and terms which help one to grasp the idea, and has thus given light and guidance to the human mind to enable it to understand these subtle things with almost as much ease as it can pick up concepts in the field of the

material sciences. By doing this the Holy Quran has safeguarded knowledge against being dissipated for lack of a proper vehicle, on the one hand, while on the other it has saved the human mind from the strain of a great deal of confused thinking.

Ninthly, the Islamic teaching embraces all aspects of human life more thoroughly and comprehensively than was the case ever before, knitting up a properly interrelated system of life. Though in the dispensation of Moses politics, worship and culture on the secular side were all brought into the purview of the law, Islam took the matter much further and has flung its guidance so far afield that now no conceivable activity of the human mind or body can overflow the circle of light created by the Islamic teaching.

Tenthly, the Holy Quran, by placing the word of God as represented by religious teaching vouchsafed to man, and the act of God, as represented by the universe in its widest sense, on a parallel basis of mutual support, has brought religion to a point where it stands on the plane of observation and experiment. Formerly religion was taken as something metaphysical. The Holy Quran says that the universe represents the act of God, while religious teaching represents his word, it being impossible that one should clash with or contradict the other. This point yields the golden principle for the guidance of man that when he confronts a situation which perplexes him he should try to harmonise the act and the word of God to ensure that a religious or a scientific theory was correct. It should be carefully grasped that the age old struggle between religion and science completely disappears at this point. Whenever we come across any contradiction between a scientific view and the teaching of a religion, we should always understand that either we have misunderstood the religious teaching or the scientific truth which appears to contradict it. This point of view is of tremendous importance for the future of mankind for it removes religion from the field of philosophy and places it in the field of observation.

The eleventh great advantage of the Holy Quran over other Scriptures is that its message is not meant for this or that nation, but for all mankind as a whole. The Holy Quran says: "We have not sent thee except as a universal Messenger for all the people, to give them glad tidings and to warn them, but of course most men do not understand."

Here we have a most staggering revolution indeed. Formerly every Prophet was raised for his own specific national or geographical group; Krishan in India, Zoroaster in Iran, Confucious in China. Some owed allegiance to Moses, others to Jesus. But then at one stage God said that henceforth there would be only one religion for all mankind, being all the children of the same father, now risen to a point of mental culture where they could take in this stupendous concept which smashed geographical and racial barriers to unite the whole human race. The Holy Prophet has himself referred to this characteristic which distinguishes him from all other Prophets of God.

The Efficacy of Prayer

(Ismail B. K. Addo)

Allah states in the Holy Quran:

“Certainly We have created man to
toil and struggle.”

(90:5).

“And that man shall have nothing but
what he strives for and that his
striving shall soon be seen: Then
shall he be rewarded for it with the
fullest reward.”

(53:40–42).

The above verses imply that one should earn one's livelihood by the sweat of one's brow. One can only achieve the object of one's life after incessant and persistent striving and readiness to make sacrifices for the purpose of one's goal.

It may be asked what use are prayers if man has to work to attain his objective. The answer is that man sometimes finds himself hopeless against a hard struggle and he finds himself quite helpless. In such a case prayer is a source of gaining help, strength and succour. Even when everything seems lost man should not despair for he may know that nothing is impossible with God to Whom he should earnestly pray in his hour of need. Prayer is the means of gaining an end after all other means have failed. We read in the Holy Quran:

“And seek help with patience and
Prayer; and this indeed is hard
except for the humble in spirit,
who know for certain that they
will meet their Lord, and to Him
will they return.”

(2:46–47).

Nowadays most people find the very existence of God questionable and

find it hard to accept; yet in every nation and community there have been people who, through prayer, have realised the eternal truth of the existence of God within the inner recesses of their hearts. Let me take the instance of the Prophet Abraham. Centuries ago, in pursuance of Divine command, he and his righteous son Ishmael laid the foundation of the sacred town of Mecca. They prayed to God that it should become the centre from which spiritual light would illumine the world. Both father and son made great sacrifices in obeying the commands of God. The following prayer of Abraham was answered in the person and advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him):

“Our Lord, make both of us submissive to Thee and make our offspring a people submissive to Thee. And show us our ways of worship and turn us with mercy; for Thou art Oft-Returning with compassion, and art Merciful. And, Our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them. Surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.”

(2:129-130).

Prayers enable man to face difficulties and tribulations with vigour and hope. Testimony of this truth is born out by the early history of Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) and his companions were undoubtedly the greatest believers in the efficacy of prayer. The Quran mentions them as spending from one to two thirds of the night in prayer (73:21).

Prayers fortified them to face great difficulties with iron determination. They underwent severe persecution in Mecca for ten long years. In battle they successfully combated their aggressive opponents whose armies outnumbered them even by ten to one.

Never has a man demonstrated the power of prayer in daily affairs more than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). On retiring at night, awakening in the morning, on entering or leaving his house, on entering the mosque, when eating or visiting the sick, embarking upon a journey or even visiting a cemetery he recited special prayers for the occasion. He remembered God both in adversity and prosperity. It was through his prayers that hundreds of thousands of disbelieving and hostile people became converted to Islam.

Sincere Muslims all over the world can testify to the wonderful acceptance of their prayers.

I would like to end with an illustration of the acceptance of prayer related by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad:

“I recall an extraordinary instance of the acceptance of prayer of the Promised Messiah. One Ahmadi friend, Munshi Ataullah Patwari reported it to me. He said ‘I was quite indifferent to and ignorant of religion; nay I used to mock at religious matters. I drank liquor profusely and accepted bribes. When some Ahmadi friends, living in my locality preached their faith to me I used to mock at them too. One day an Ahmadi friend pressed me hard with his preaching. I retorted that I am going to write to your Mirza Sahib, asking him to pray for the achievement of an objective of mine. If the objective is achieved, I will believe that he is true in his claim. I then wrote to him stating that you claim to be the Promised Messiah and friend of God. The prayers of the friends of God are accepted. I have now three wives. Twelve years have past since my last marriage, but I have no issue by any one of them. I desire to have a handsome, promising and auspicious son, and that too by my first wife. Please pray for the fulfilment of this desire of mine. In reply, Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib wrote to me on behalf of the Promised Messiah in these words:

‘Hazrat informs you that prayers have been offered for you, and that God will bless you with a handsome, promising child by your first wife as desired by you, but there is one condition; you must turn to God like Zacharia.’

Munshi Ataullah says: I thereupon sincerely repented and turned to God. Seeing this change in me, people began to say what charm has been practised upon the devil, he has given up all evil ways in a trice.

Four or five months after this, my first wife developed symptoms of pregnancy and I started saying to people you will soon see, I shall have a son and he will be handsome and promising. At last one night my wife gave birth to the promised child. I at once went to Qadian, several other people accompanying me, and we took initiation at the hands of the Promised Messiah.”

Declaration of Faith

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

The Pakistan Government took upon itself to make the unjustifiable decision that Ahmadi Muslims are kafirs (non Muslims).

Allah alone is fully aware of the truth and is able to know what is in the heart of a person. If a person in all sincerity proclaims himself to be a Muslim no man on his own accord can say he is not a Muslim.

A person may be a good Muslim, a bad Muslim or a misguided Muslim; but no body has the right to tell him that he is not a Muslim.

The meaning of "Muslim" is one who resigns himself to the will God. How many Muslims are there who do, in fact, totally resign themselves to the laws of Islam? When a person is not a true Muslim himself then who is he to tell another Muslim that he is outside of the pale of Islam?

Mohd Ali Jinnah the Founder of Pakistan said: "Whoever recites the kalima is a Muslim." Ahmadi Muslims recite the same kalima (declaration of belief) as other Muslims. It is exactly the same. It appears that the present Government of Pakistan no longer agrees with Mohd Ali Jinnah.

The Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement declared on oath:

"I swear by the Glory of God and His Majesty that I am a faithful Muslim, and believe in Allah the High, in His angels, in His Books and His Messengers and the life after death. I believe that our Prophet the elect of Allah, on whom be peace and blessings of Allah, is the most eminent of the Prophets and is Khatam un Nabiyyen, the Seal of the Prophets."

(Hamamatul Bushra).

It should be well understood that Ahmadi Muslims are and will for ever remain Muslims—servants of Allah—until the end of the world.

Ahmadis believe that in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was fulfilled those prophecies in the Hadith concerning the coming of Imam Mahdi. If other Muslims do not accept his claim to be the Promised Messiah

or Imam Mahdi that is their concern. We are Muslims. Ahmadis believe that Muhammad (peace be on him) was the last prophet with a shariat (revealed law) as taught in the Quran "khatam un Nabiyyen". That prophets can appear as followers of Muhammad (peace be on him) bringing no new teaching is not contrary to Islamic teachings. In fact this belief has been proclaimed by eminent Muslim scholars throughout the centuries. The Mother of the faithful Hazrat Ayesha said:

"Do not say that there will be no prophet after him (Muhammad) but say that he is Khatam un nabiyyeen (Seal of Prophets)

(Muslim Vol 2).

Commenting on this saying of Hazrat Ayesha Hazrat Imam Mohammad Tahir (A.H. 914–986) explained that it does not conflict with the Prophet's status as a Prophet in as much as there would be no such prophet as would change the shariat. (Takmilah Majmaul Bihar p. 85).

Hazrat Shaikh-i-Akbar Mohayyuddin Ibne Arabi who was a great divine in the middle ages of Islam said:

"In so far as the law-bearing prophethood is concerned it has verily ceased and terminated in Muhammad (Allah bless him) and therefore there is no law giving prophet after him; but Allah has in His graciousness to His servants continued general prophethood without the law bearing elements."

(Fursal Hikam).

According to these great divines the door to non-bearing prophethood after the holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) has not been closed. There are others also who have testified to this truth. If Ahmadis are to be condemned as kafirs because they believe a non-law bearing prophet can appear after the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) then those who condemn them will also have to declare these former saints and divines of Islam as kafirs. Hazrat Ayesha would also have to be included.

Ahmadis have been declared as non Muslims because they believe that a prophet without a shariat can appear for the purpose of guiding people back to the pristine pure teachings of Islam. Their opponents assert that no prophet of any kind can come after Muhammad (peace be on him). Ahmadis do not care for their pronouncements of kafir because nowhere in the Quran does Allah Himself permit them to be called kafirs.

According to our detractors Jesus has been alive in heaven for the last two thousand years and is to return again on this earth. Was not Jesus a Prophet? In one breath they say no prophet can appear after Muhammad (peace be on him) and in the next breath say the Prophet Jesus will come again! If they proclaim Ahmadis to be kafirs because they do not believe in the complete finality of prophethood in the appearance of Muhammad (peace be on him)

then they must also admit that they are kafirs—non Muslims—for believing Prophet Jesus is yet to come. They claim no prophet of any kind—former or new—can come after Muhammad (peace be on him) but at the same time they believe in the coming again of a prophet—the prophet Jesus.

We call upon all Muslims of good sense, tolerance and fair mindedness to ponder calmly over this matter. Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood. Bigotry is foreign to Islamic conduct.

Let it be known without a shadow of doubt that Ahmadis are indeed Muslims and most devoted Muslims.

The Holy Quran states that in the sight of Allah what distinguishes one person from another is his or her degree of righteousness. Keep this always in mind. Allah is our Judge. He knows who is a Muslim and who is not a Muslim. Instead of taking satanic delight in calling other Muslims kafirs it would be better if those people take a look at themselves and see to what extent they are manifesting the high teachings of Islam in their own lives.

SIGNS OF THE CREATOR

“Do they not look up to the heaven above them, how We have made it and adorned it and it has no gaps. And the earth We have spread it forth and cast upon mountains and We have made to grow therein of all beautiful kinds. To give sight and as a reminder to every servant who turns (to God) again and again! And from the cloud We send down water abounding in good, then we cause to grow thereby gardens and grain that is reaped, and the tall palm trees having spadices closely set one above another. It is a sustenance for the servants, and We give life thereby to a dead land; thus is the resurrection.”

(I: 6-11).

“Who created death and life that He may try you—which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving; Who created the Seven heavens alike; thou seest not incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent God; then look again, canst thou see any disorder? Then turn back the eye again, thy look shall come back to thee confused while it is fatigued.”

(LXVII, 2-4).

“In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which profits men, and the water that Allah sends down from the clouds, then gives life with it to the earth after its death, and spreads in it all kinds of animals, and the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between the heaven and the earth, these are signs for a people who understand.”

(II, 164).

What is Islam?

Islam literally means *Peace, surrender of one's Will*; and to be in amity and concord. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the Will of God. The Quran — the Holy Book of the Muslims — interprets it to be the religion whose teachings are in consonance with human nature. Islam, as the Quran has stated (5:4), is the completion of the religion inaugurated by God in the beginning of the world, on His sending the Quran through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him). As a child is taught his alphabet, so God taught the religion to the world gradually and little by little, by sending His prophets at different times and to different peoples.

When the world reached that stage of understanding when it was ready for the final lesson, He sent the last and complete Book through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him). This Book not only corrects the errors which had found their way into various religions, but preaches the truths which have not been preached before, on account of special circumstances of the society or the early stage of its development. At the same time it gathers together in itself the truths which were contained in any Divine revelation granted to any people for the guidance of men (The Quran 98:4). Lastly, it meets all the spiritual and moral requirements of an ever advancing humanity.

This is Islam which is wrongly called Muhammadanism.

According to Islam, the object of man's life is its complete unfoldment. Islam does not support the idea that man is born in sin. It teaches that everyone has within him the seed of perfect development and its rests solely with a person himself to make or mar his fortune. *We created man in the best make* says the Holy Quran (95:5).

The cardinal doctrine of Islam is the Unity of Godhead. *There is none worthy of worship but the one and only God, and Muhammad is His Prophet.* He is free from all defects, Holy and Transcendent. He is All Good, All Mercy and All Power. He has no partner. He neither begets nor is He begotten, because these are the traits of frail and weak humanity. Furthermore, Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God and to realise Him during our earthly life as our Helper in all our affairs and undertakings. This Unity of God is the first and foremost pillar of Islam and every other belief hangs upon it.

Islam requires belief in all the prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius and Zoroaster. We regard them all (and many more not mentioned here) as heavenly teachers born to reform and regenerate man and lead him to God. Adherents of some other religions may consider it an act of piety to use disrespectful words and heap abuse on the prophets of other religions, but if a Muslim were to show the slightest disrespect towards the founder of any other faith, he does so at the cost of his own faith. He has to utter the respectful benediction *Alaihis-Salam* (peace be on him) after mentioning the name of every prophet. Thus Islam establishes peace between all religions.

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

The Review of Religions is the oldest magazine of its kind published in the English language in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent. Its first issue was published in 1902 and it has been continuously published since.

It bears the distinction that it was initiated under the direction of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah himself.

During more than eighty-one years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to hundreds of readers and many fortunate persons have recognised the truth of Islam and accepted it through studying it.

The articles published in it deal not only with the doctrines and teachings of Islam but also set forth a comparative appreciation of the teachings of other faiths.

One of its outstanding features is the refutations of the criticism of Islamic teachings by orientalists and non-muslim scholars.

It also presents solutions in the light of Islamic teachings of the problems with which the Islamic world is from time to time confronted.

A study of this magazine is indispensable for the appreciation of the doctrines of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the teachings of its holy Founder.



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