



THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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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 whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). 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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The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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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EDITORIAL

SEXUAL MORALITY

There is no doubt that the sexual urge is a powerful impulse which is hard to check and resist especially when the opportunity presents itself. Human nature is the same everywhere. The impulse may involve various kinds of inclinations. Now-a-days the subject is widely talked about and discussed on radio, television and in the press. Today a common question is who has the authority to declare what is right and what is wrong in the matter of sexual behaviour?

In present times open discussions and views are being voiced on the delicate and deplorable practice of homosexuality. Many homosexuals proudly boast of their way of life without feeling any qualms of shame. They argue that because they have a natural inclination to do what they do they should not, therefore, be censored for their sexual activities. If this line of argument be accepted then all kinds of sexual behaviour and perversions would also have to be tolerated merely because people feel inclined in different directions to satisfy their desires. This kind of thinking and practice would lower humanity to the level of animals as far as their sexual conduct would be concerned.

The root and cause of immorality is that most people recognize no code of sexual conduct. They do whatever they feel or please. The result is a society ridden with sexual chaos.

Throughout the ages God has from time to time revealed laws of sexual conduct for mankind but unfortunately most people do not mould their lives in accordance with God's directions which are intended for their spiritual welfare. They hardly pay any attention to them. Certainly there are some people who recognize and strive to adhere to Divine Guidance but sadly in this irreligious age most people just to do what they feel like doing and, thereby, loose their self-respect and the approbation of God.

Islam provides Divine Guidance on matters of sexual behaviour pronouncing what is right and what is wrong. A sincere Muslim strives to regulate his life in accordance with the laws of God and to shun everything not permissible. God alone is his authority on the subject of sexual morality and a sincere Muslim does not act according to his own inclinations regardless of God's injunctions.

GUIDE POSTS

PRAYER

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

God hears and reponds to all sincere prayer but not always exactly in the manner requested and anticipated by the supplicator. Sometimes there appears to be no apparent result but God knows what He is doing. It may be that He is testing our patience and steadfastness. He knows what is best for us and what is harmful for us. Sometimes He grants us even more than what we requested or expected. Prayer causes God to work in our favour even though we may be unaware of it even as we may be unaware of the process of digestion. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad — the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, laid great stress on the efficacy of prayer and despite his vast spiritual knowledge declared that prayer was his only weapon.

Prayer in one form or another is a common feature in all religions. One should pray for specific objectives and preferably for one's spiritual betterment rather than for one's material benefit although the latter need not be ignored. This aspect of prayer is contained in the opening prayer of the Holy Quran:

“Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help. Guide us in the straight path, the path of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy favours, those who have not incurred Thy displeasure, and those who have not gone astray.”
(1:5-7)

A prerequisite for effective prayer is the direction of one's prayer to the One and True God. One should know to whom one is praying and not pray to any vague or false deity. One should pray direct to the One Supreme Being - the Creator of the universe. The same God Who created Jesus and to Whom he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane and not to anything or anybody else as the Bible also states:

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord your God is One Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” (Deutr 7:4,5)

“You shall not go after gods, of the gods of the peoples who are around about you.” (Deutr 7:14)

The unity of God has been the cardinal teaching of all revealed religions since the time of Adam. The worship and association of anything or any person with God is condemned and repudiated by the Holy Quran:

“And worship Allah and associate naught with Him.” (4:37)

“Surely associating partners with Allah is a grievous wrong.”
(31:14)

“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)

The most important essential, therefore, for the supplicator is to possess the correct conception of God and then to prostrate himself before Him alone.

LOST ART OF PRAYER

Praying to the Lord is a wonderful thing but the pity of it is that those who pray, do not know the requirements which must be observed while praying. Nor do the people who pray in this age know the ways and manners in which prayers become acceptable to the Lord. Rather the fact is that people are quite ignorant of the very nature of prayer. There are some who do not have any faith in prayer; and there are others who do have faith in prayers but do not have their prayers accepted because they do not know how to pray.

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

ISLAM AND RUSSIA

PART 6

(Dr. Qazi Muhammad Barkatullah)

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

'Money makes the mare go' is a proverb. It is thus of great significance to understand the economic structure of both Islam and the Soviet Union. The readers are advised to look into the books by the late Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II relative to the subject. These books are: 'The Economic Structure of Islamic Society' and the 'New World Order of Islam'. The books are published by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, Rabwah (Pakistan).

The 'Economic Structure of Islamic Society' is an English version of an Urdu speech given in Lahore, Pakistan, in 1945. This book examines minutely the teachings of both Islam and Communism. It is evident through the period that Communism has failed to promote the classless society it had advocated. The greatest danger which Communism holds to our civilization is its negative attitude towards religion. The idea of God is meaningless in Communism and so are the moral and spiritual values which spring from it. Concerning the economic system of Islam, the book develops the thesis that Islam combines the policy of free enterprise with state control in a proper manner.

The 'New World Order of Islam' is an English version of an address which answers the question: How does Ahmadiyyat, the True Islam, propose to deal with the problem of social inequality in the world? The Ahmadiyya solution is the solution of Islam shaped under divine guidance for present needs by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It builds on Islamic teaching and emphasises the progressive nature of that teaching.

Islam assimilates the essentials of an economic structure which provides for the needs of all human beings. Individual efforts should not be weakened in this process; and that the system devised should be voluntary and not invoke forcible dispossession or confiscation. While Communists proclaim to create a classless society they actually have people who on one side roll in luxury and on the other side people who live in want and distress and in order to have their needs provided for they must undergo manual labour.

Czarist Russia was not a paradise for the people living in Russia. Karl Marx diagnosed that all ills in the Russian society were brought by wealthy people. So he suggested a remedy that capitalists should be crushed. Their wealth should be taken away by force. It would create a society where every body would be equal. So he exploited the wage-earner proletariat through violent revolution. Practical experience through the time, however, has shown that Russia has been unable to create the classless society which brought the Communist regime to power.

The idea of everybody being equal and that the basic needs of everyone should be fulfilled, were borrowed from Islam which was actually being practised during the early days of Islam. During the days of the Holy Prophet of Islam, the social and economic teachings of Islam proved fully equal to the demands made upon it. The Holy Prophet practised a simple mode of living for himself and his companions who then followed suit. However, as soon as the Muslims achieved political power, the needs of the poor were fulfilled.

The companions of the Holy Prophet made great sacrifices. Hazrat Abu Bakar, on one occasion, contributed the whole of his property. On another occasion, Hazrat Usman contributed almost the whole of his belongings in order that the needs of the people be fulfilled. As time passed, and the boundaries of the Muslim State became wider, the needs of the poor were fulfilled in a more organized manner.

During the time of Hazrat Umar, regular records of the whole population was maintained. Necessities of life were provided for everybody according to fixed scales. In this way, everybody rich or poor, was adequately provided for and the means adopted were suited to the circumstances of that time.

People are given the wrong notion that the principle of providing the necessities of life to every individual was invented by the Bolsheviks. As already explained this is entirely incorrect. This principle was laid down by Islam and was practised in an organized manner during the early period of Islam. Under the scheme invented by Hazrat Umar, a breast-fed child did not qualify for any relief. The treasury became liable to provide relief for a child only after it had been weaned.

Hazrat Umar was accustomed to go on rounds to be sure that everybody was secure and comfortable during the period of his Khilafat. It so happened that he heard a child crying in a cottage. Hazrat Umar went to inquire why the child was crying. The mother did not recognize that it was Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momeneen Umar who was inquiring about the child. So she said: Umar has made a law that an allowance can be drawn for a child only when he has been weaned. I have stopped suckling the child prematurely to draw the allowance on my baby's behalf. The child is hungry and therefore he is crying. Hazrat Umar relating the incident himself says that on hearing this he blamed himself that by those rules he might have interfered seriously with the physical growth of the next generation. He then issued directions immediately that the child allowance should be paid as soon as a child is born.

PROVISIONS

Lenin said in 1921 'those who do not work will not eat.' But the Communist Lenin has since perished. The Creator of the heavens, earth and everything in between Almighty Allah is here from the beginning to the end. And there is only One God:

“And your God is One God; there is no god but He, the Gracious, the Merciful.” (Holy Quran, 2:164)

It is Allah who makes provision for His creation:

“And there is no creature that moves on the earth but it is for Allah to provide it with sustenance.” (Holy Quran, 11:7)

“God has provided sustenance for all His creatures. He has even provided the means of subsistence for worms and reptiles that dwell in the bowels of the earth. Human reason is at a loss to know how and whence the worms and insects found in such unlimited numbers on and inside the earth get their food. Man who presumes to have solved the mysteries of the universe is not yet fully acquainted with all forms of life, to say nothing of the different kinds of food on which they subsist. But God has made ample provision for them all. The verse points out that God, having supplied the physical needs of the meanest of His creatures, certainly could not have neglected to make similar provision for the moral and spiritual needs of man who is the acme of His creation. The verse refers not only to the temporary and permanent abode of every living thing but also to the utmost limit to which its powers can develop.” (F.N. 1297: English Commentary).

“He enlarges the provision for whomsoever He pleases. Surely, He knows all things full well”. (Holy Quran, 42:13).

“It is We Who distribute among them their livelihood in the present life, and We exalt some of them above others in degrees of rank, so that some of them may make others subservient to themselves. And the mercy of Thy Lord is better than that which they amass”. (Holy Quran, 43:33).

Whatever is created on earth is for the benefit of all mankind. No single individual, nation or country has any monopoly on it: The Holy Quran says:

“He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth.” (2:30)

This is the concept of human ownership of wealth according to the teaching of Islam. All the wealth contained in this world belongs to all mankind. The real owner of this wealth is the Creator, Almighty Allah. Accordingly, the rivers, mountains, mineral wealth and everything else has been created for the benefit of all mankind. As such, any race, country, class or single individual should not make any claim for its ownership. For, mines could be worked to greater advantage, rivers too and also mountains produce

wealth in a number of ways. Agricultural crops, chemicals of various kinds having medical or commercial value are obtained from the earth directly or indirectly. All these resources constitute an immense wealth and make it common legacy for all mankind. So no single country or individual is justified to claim exclusive rights. All the people of all races, all the creeds, all nationalities, rulers and the ruled together have a due share of all the natural wealth and no one should be permitted to deprive them of any part of it.

Islam also seeks to reduce the power and influence of those who are engaged in the production of wealth by harassing or utilizing natural resources. These people then claim complete control over the wealth so produced. But according to Muslim principles the community at large is entitled to share such wealth because the natural sources which have been created for the benefit of the whole of mankind have been used in the production of this wealth. For instance, all mineral wealth belongs to the nation or to the community and no particular individual is entitled to its complete appropriation. Islam prescribes that 20% of all mineral wealth must be paid to the State to be utilized for the benefit of the community at large. To sum up thus it is Almighty Allah who provides sustenance for His creation no matter where they are; an individual is free to utilize his or her talents for an individual enterprise to have better chances to improve his or her prospects in this world and the world to come; the natural resources are to be shared by all irrespective of race, colour, creed, nationality and the wealth generated should be treated as a trust from God and subject to obligation and responsibility.

DIVERSITY

There is evidence of diversity in nature throughout the ages to this time. Islam recognizes diversity in human life. The hollow claim of Russian equality proved simply hollow throughout the Russian Bolshevik period. There are rich people in Russia and poor people in Russia. Islam recognizes people having "more or less" wealth. Islam, however, also recognizes that all righteous people, rich or poor, are equal in the sight of Allah; and most near to Allah are those who are most righteous:

"Verily the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is most righteous among you." (49:14)

Unlike the claim of equality by Russia, which in no way has become evident and practical, Islam recognizes diversity and its beauty in all walks of life. The verses in the Holy Quran are explicit on this topic:

"And in the earth there are diverse tracts, adjoining one another, and gardens of vines, and cornfields, and datepalms, growing together from one root and others not so growing; they

are all watered with the same water, yet we make some of them excel others in fruit. Therein are signs for a people who use their understanding." (13:5)

"Behold, how we have exalted some of them over others in the present life; and surely the hereafter shall be greater in degrees of rank and greater in excellence." (17:22)

"Dost thou not see that Allah sends down water from the sky, and We bring forth herewith fruits of different colours; and in the mountains are streaks white and red, of diverse hues, and others raven black." (35:28)

"The verse purports to say that when rain falls upon dry and parched land it gives rise to a vast variety of crops, flowers and fruits of different colours, tastes, forms and kinds. The rain-water is the same but the crops, flowers and fruits it produces are vastly different from one another. This difference is evidently due to the nature of the soil and the seed. Similarly, when Divine revelation, which at many places in the Quran has been likened to water, comes to a people, it produces different effects upon different men according to the soil of their hearts and to the way in which they receive it." (F.N. 2418; English Commentary).

"And in like manner, there are men and beasts and cattle, of various colours. Only those of His servants who are endowed with knowledge fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Mighty, Most Forgiving." (35:29)

"The kaleidoscopic variety in form, colour and kind to which reference has been made in the preceding verse does not only exist in flowers, fruits and rocks but in men, beasts and cattle as well. The words, an-Nas (men), ad-Dawabb (beasts) and al-Anaam (cattle) may also represent men of different capabilities, dispositions, and natural aptitudes. The expression 'Only those of His servants, who are endowed with knowledge fear God', lends weight to the view that these three words stand for three classes of men from among whom only those endowed with right knowledge fear God. Knowledge, here, however, does not necessarily mean spiritual knowledge but also knowledge of the laws of nature. A reverent study of nature and its laws inevitably leads one to realize the great powers of God and consequently makes him hold God in reverential awe." (F.N. 2419; English Commentary).

"And Allah has favoured some of you above others in worldly gifts." (16:72)

“Briefly, but very beautifully, the verse has laid down the Islamic Law with regard to private ownership. Whereas on the one hand Islam has recognized the right of private ownership by emphasizing the word “their” in the expression “of their worldly gifts” it has, by using the words ‘will restore’, also laid down all things by all human beings as such, because only that thing is “restored” to another person which belongs to him. In fact, the Quran has accepted the principle of dual ownership of everything — the right to possess a property to be recognized in the person who earns it by the sweat of his brow and the right in that property of all human beings. Islam, in reality neither believes in the right of unrestricted private ownership nor in complete and unreserved possession of wealth and the means of its production by the State. It adopts the middle course.” (F.N:1558; English Commentary).

WEALTH

Wealth in Islam is not something to be discarded and looked down upon. Its acquisition is not prohibited. A procedure, however, has been laid down in Islam, that the amassing of wealth in one hand would not be possible. Rather an individual's wealth would be treated like a trust to look after the needs of other members of the community. Islam, as such, does not outright condemn capitalism but puts a strong hold on the evils of capitalism to spread.

Communism on the other hand takes away the hard earned money of individuals, crushes individual capitalism and has created a sort of collective capitalism. All that glitters is not gold. A classless society that Communism advocated has not come into existence. There are rich people these days as well as poor people in Russia. Recently, when Mr. Gorbachev toured India, his wife displayed a very expensive ring on her finger. But when the couple came back to Russia, the ring became invisible from the sight of the Russian people. (Reference: Photos in National Enquirer, issue July 7, 1987)

In early days when the idea of classless and equality of Russian people was very fresh, Mr. Churchill paid a visit to Russia. Mr. Stalin was in power those days. A banquet was held in honour of Mr. Churchill in Moscow. On returning to England, Mr. Churchill spoke on an occasion that he wished his capitalist country could afford to feed him on the same sumptuous scale as in a country ruled over by a proletariat government. The fact is that a new class of wealthy people have come into existence as compared with the common people in Russia. In restaurants food served is graded into five classes. Tickets are available according to the party influence or the nature of the job a person may be on. (Reported in Australian Newspaper - Sun)

The idea of classless society is not working even in Russia. There is a good deal of difference in the Russian people in different segments of the Soviet Union. People who can still be labelled as poor are not on equal steps,

for example, in Bukhara and Moscow. They are not equally well-housed, well-clothed, well-fed, well-educated and well-taken care of medically. The same is applicable in other parts of Russian territories. It is evident that the doctrine of equal rights is not fully lived up to in the day to day life of the country. And the claim of creating a classless society has not become practical. It can thus be concluded that lofty claims about equality of people in Russia have been made theoretically. But the fact is that the awkward problem of inequality in the lot of mankind has not been solved in Russia any more than it has been solved in the rest of the world.

Communism portrayed itself to devise an ideal economic system and advocated compulsory acquisition of all surplus wealth. Communism has failed in its pretensions of promoting a classless society which would be free from the evils subsisting in capitalist countries. Communism, on one hand, has been curbing individual freedom and initiative and has reduced human beings to mere nuts and bolts. On the other hand, taking away the wealth of people has grown itself into a sort of capitalist state and has posed an ominous threat to the economy of the free world.

Islam forbids amassing wealth for wrong use. Islam discourages accumulating money to be used for attaining illegitimate ends. Islam has warned time and time again that life on this earth is temporary, and that the life to come in the hereafter is everlasting. Muslims are therefore enjoined to do good in this world and to reap its good fruit in the world to come. Thus Islam encourages people to spend money in the path of righteousness. But the misuse of wealth to follow worldly pursuits and low passions is strictly discouraged. The injunctions from the Holy Quran are :

“And of them there are some who say ‘Our Lord’, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come, and save us from the torment of the fire.” (2:202)

“The verse mentions that class of men whose efforts and aspirations are not confined to this world only. They seek the good things of the next. *Hasana* also means success. The Prayer is very comprehensive and the Holy Prophet very often made use of it — Muslim.” (F.N: 239; English Commentary)

“And it is not your riches nor your children that will bring you near Us in rank, but those who, believe and do good works, will have a double reward for what they did. And in lofty mansions will they be secure.” (34:38)

“Wealth, power and position are not the means of achieving nearness to God. On the contrary, they tend to keep men and women away from Him. It is right belief and good actions which are man’s real wealth and which can bring him salvation and God’s pleasure.” (F.N: 2400; English Commentary)

“Eat of that which Allah has provided for you.” (6: 143)

“Apart from its primary meaning the verse also hints that eating of lawful things is a means of safeguarding one against the attack of Satan.” (F.N: 922; English Commentary)

“Whoso desires the present life, We hasten for him therein of its provision....then We appoint Hell for him.....” (17:19)

“And whoso desires the Hereafter and strives for it — their striving shall be duly appreciated.” (17:20)

“Whoso does right, it is for the benefit of his own soul.”
(41:47)

“Fair — seeming to men is made the love of desired things — women and children, and stored-up heaps of gold and silver, and horses of mark and cattle and crops. That is the provision of the present life; but it is Allah with whom is an excellent home.”
(3:15)

“Islam does not prohibit the use or seeking of the good things of this world; but it certainly condemns those who are wholly engrossed in them and make them the very object of their life.”
(F.N: 379; English Commentary)

“And even of gold. But all that is nothing but a temporary provision of the present life. And the comfort of the Hereafter with their Lord is for the righteous.” (43:36)

“Were it not that by the obliteration of disparity of means, wealth and position, all men would have become of one type, and human society would have ceased to function. God would have provided disbelievers with houses made of silver, having doors and stairways made of gold, because these things possess no value or worth in His sight.” (F.N: 2678; English Commentary)

“Say, Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants and the good things of His providing?”
(7:33)

“The good and pure things provided by God are really meant for believers though they are also shared by disbelievers in this life; but in the life to come they will be enjoyed by believers to the exclusion of disbelievers.” (F.N. 968; English Commentary)

"Say, My Lord has only forbidden indecencies, open or secret and sin and wrongful transgression and that you associate with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and that you say of Allah what you know not". (7:34)

"Who amasses wealth and counts it over and over." (104:3)

"The verse constitutes a sad commentary on man's passion for worldly riches. Worship of Mammon is the bane of the materialistic civilization of the day."(F.N: 3432; English Commentary)

"He that thinks his wealth will make him immortal." (104:4)

"The ill-fated miser goes on earning wealth by all sorts of means, good or bad, and amassing and hoarding it taking pride in it and refraining from spending it on good causes, thinking that this will immortalize him, will rescue his name from oblivion and will render his prosperity abiding. But he labours under serious misconception." (F.N: 3433; English Commentary)

"And you love wealth with exceeding love." (89:21)

"The verse drives home to hoarders of wealth the evils of hoarding. Inordinate love of money creates in man an excessive desire to keep on adding to his wealth, without spending it for the furtherance of good causes. It makes him regardless of the means he employs to acquire it, which leads to his moral ruin. Islam takes as much care of the moral health of society as it takes of that of the individual; and society's health requires that material goods be widely distributed and wealth kept in easy circulation." (F.N:3339; English Commentary)

"O ye who believe! surely, many of the priests and monks devour the wealth of men by false means and turn men away from the way of Allah. And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah - give to them the tidings of a painful punishment." (9:34)

"O ye who believe! let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah...." (63:10)

"And spend out of that which We have given you." (63:11)

"Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (49:14)

“Aye! it is the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort.” (13:29)

That is to say it is not wealth, children or worldly pursuits that bring contentment to a person. Rather it is the remembrance of Allah that brings comfort and consolation to an individual.

BOLSHEVIK SYSTEM

Communism sets up an economic system which, at a cursory glance, makes a misleading appeal to many people in many countries. The Bolsheviks advocate that the services of all the members of society should be fully utilized to the best of everybody's capacity. That the needs of all should be provided for by the State which should hold the surplus proceeds of all this labour as a trustee of the people. This philosophy rests upon the idea that there should be evenness in wages among all men. For, as long as a man worked to the best of his capacity he was entitled to payment on the same scale as any other person who also rendered his services to the best of his ability. In that way no one was entitled to possess wealth in excess of what was held by others. Thus all wealth should be confiscated to the State. Therefore under the Bolsheviks people are dispossessed of their wealth and property by force and violence.

Generally speaking the object of an ideal economic and social system is to bring about conditions of peace and harmony among the people. It should be based on justice and promote the spirit of progress in a nation. But the Bolshevik system brings about an upheaval by confiscating the wealth of people. In one stroke, based on one sided opinion, it deprives the proprietary classes of all their wealth. In this way, instead of peace and harmony, it creates a bitter resentment between different sections of the people.

It is evident that depriving a wealthy person of his house, property money and other forms of wealth is bound to bring about an unbearable shock to the person. It would plunge him into misery and resentment. Thus the bitter enemies of the Bolsheviks are the aristocrats. The Russian wealthy people, at the time of revolution, were deprived of all their wealth, property and privileges. And many people were driven out of their mother land in a destitute and penniless condition. The late Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II says that he had seen some of the old wealthy Russians reduced to poverty. Generation after generation of those people had believed that they were entitled to the ownership of the estates. So having been ejected forcibly from their property, they were full of resentment and bitterness about the Bolshevik government.

The Bolsheviks exalt manual labour at the expense of intellectual effort. The reason why intellect is not regarded as a valuable asset by the Bolsheviks is that they are unable to subject it to compulsory equal distribution and to deal with it as tangible property. Thus Bolshevism ignores the fact that intellectual capacity is as much an asset as property and wealth. And to exalt manual labour at the expense of intellectual effort simply means that at sometime intellectual initiatives would begin to decline. Actually Russian administration is treating human beings like nuts and bolts. Human beings have little to offer in terms of individual potentials; rather they are required to work wherever their services are required. Nature endows different persons with different kinds and degrees of tastes and intellectual capacity. But the Bolsheviks have failed in bringing about an equal distribution of this asset by checking an individual's intellectual potentials and initiatives depending upon myriad capabilities. The serious defect caused by the Bolsheviks forbidding individual effort may not be realised fully at this time, but as time passes, its disadvantages are bound to be felt. As personal initiatives are taken away, people are likely to become lethargic and inactive. Personal motives secure comfort for oneself and for one's dependents. But the incentive being removed, the Russian administration would award the same reward for everyone irrespective of education and training. Intellectual efforts are likely to suffer and are bound to decline. The Bolsheviks having created a barrier in intellectual development have failed to recognize that nature has endowed different nations with different intellectual qualities. It is narrated that in the Mughal palace in New Delhi, India, there was a marble bath which could be heated with the help of a single lamp. However, at the time of British rule, the mechanism was torn apart in order to discover the secret of the heating arrangement. The British, however, were unable to detect anything. Also the original mechanism could not be restored. How a single lamp heated the marble bath remains a mystery to this day. The point here is that for the intellectual progress of a nation, there should be provision for the study of intellectual activities of other nations. For that reason there should be unrestricted travel of doctors, lawyers, educators, and people of other professions to share information with their counter-parts in other countries.

Such frequent visitations are restricted in the Soviet Union. The intellectual advancement of a nation has an impact on the economic conditions of the people. The Russian administration simply treats its people like nuts and bolts and to use their services wherever deemed necessary.

The greatest danger which Communism holds to our civilization lies in its unrelenting attitude towards religion. The idea of God is meaningless in Communism and so are moral and spiritual values which spring from it. Communism professes to destroy the cherished heritage of the religious world and to build its own atheistic edifice on it. By opposing religion, the Communists have turned the religious part of the world against them.

The Communists believe in this material world only. The Holy Quran exhorts the people to go and roam about the world and to see how even the mightiest civilizations have perished in the past. Communism will be no exception. On one hand they believe in the rule of the masses; and on the other hand they are afraid to hand over political power to the masses. Taking away the wealth of the people, the Russian administration has created another sort of aristocrats to rule over the wage-earning proletariat. The Russian administration is seeking to promote itself by force and violence rather than persuasion. If the Bolsheviks had sought to bring about an equitable distribution of wealth by means of persuasion, the results might have been beneficial. The Communists sought to gather the wealth by force depriving the wealthy sections of their wealth and property. Thus they forced the old aristocrats to go into exile.

ISLAMIC SYSTEM

Islam does not prohibit capitalism but offers conclusive channels to remedy the evils of capitalism. Nevertheless, Islam forbids the amassing of wealth, accumulation of wealth and misuse of wealth. Otherwise, wealth is not something to be discarded in Islam and its acquisition by proper and legitimate means is not prohibited.

Islam has prescribed rules and regulations about amassed and accumulated wealth in a single hand and how it should be diverted for the benefit of mankind. Wealth, in Islam, remains in constant circulation. Voluntary as well as obligatory contributions make money available for the needs of the people and propagation of Islam. Whatever remains with an individual is distributed at death among the heirs of the deceased.

Some of the provisions of the economic system in Islam are:

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions are synonymous with charity. It consists of spending out of one's income. It is Allah who provides sustenance to mankind. And Allah desires that people should spend in His way to gain righteousness.

"You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend Allah surely knows it well." (Holy Quran, 3:93)

"In order to attain true faith which is the essence of all righteousness and is the highest form of good, one must be prepared to sacrifice everything that one holds dear. The highest stage of righteousness can be attained only by spending in the way of God that one loves best. High morals cannot be attained without imbibing a true spirit of sacrifice." (F.N: 438; English Commentary).

Again and again Allah says spend out of that which has been bestowed upon you. (Holy Quran, 2:3) That is to say, those who believe sincerely and are anxious to attain nearness to God should go on spending whatever has been given to them by Allah. This means that whatever has been given by Allah, the intellectual and physical capacities, wealth and property, should be utilized for the service of mankind. In this way, Islam secures all kinds of capabilities, capacities and wealth not by force or violence, but through voluntary persuasion. This method secures all the benefits resulting from a general application of all talents and property to the service of mankind. The contributions being perfectly voluntary, it leaves no sense of bitterness or resentment behind.

Sometimes the voluntary contributions are to be made so secretly that even the left hand should not know what was given in charity by the right hand. But to persuade others to do good, too, the charitable contributions should also be made openly sometimes:

“Surely, only those who follow the Book of Allah and observe prayer and spend out of what we have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a bargain which will never fail.” (35:30)

The voluntary contributions are to be given to the people who are in need of money to look after themselves. Nevertheless, needy people who do not ask for monetary help, should not be forgotten.

“And in their wealth was a share for those who asked for help and for those who could not.” (51:20)

“In the wealth of a rich Muslim, according to Islam, those who can express their needs, as also those who cannot, have a share, as of right. Thus a Muslim's wealth is a trust to the benefit of which the poor are also entitled. So when he satisfied the need of a poor brother, he, in fact, does him no favour but only discharges the obligation he owes to him and returns to him what was his due.” (F.N: 2830; English Commentary).

“And spend in the way of Allah and do not expose yourself to destruction with your hands, and do good to others, surely Allah loves the doers of good.” (2:195)

That is to say, a person must give voluntary contributions towards the relief of the poor. If not then it would be a sort of destruction for a wealthy person. The verse also means that people who are wealthy will suffer no real loss by contributing towards the relief of the poor. In the verse referred to above, Allah enjoins that those who have surplus means should employ themselves in the service of humanity and in turn they would save themselves from destruction.

“And do good; surely Allah loves those who do good.” (2:196)

That is to say, it exhorts Muslims to go a step further by reducing their own requirements and spending the money thus saved in the service of mankind. The main point here is that it should be done voluntarily and cheerfully. The object of spending for the cause of Allah is to win Allah's mercy and pleasure.(3:16)

Besides orphans, the needy, and wayfarers, the near of kin also are to be the recipients of the monetary contributions, The verse in the Holy Quran, (59:7) uses the words "Zil Qurba" which is generally translated as "those near of kin." But the late Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II says that by Zil Qurba is meant those people who are exclusively engaged in devotion and worship day and night. That is people who are devoted to the service of religion should not be despised as worthless people. Rather, what the society can do is to maintain them on a standard commensurate with their needs so that they would devote themselves to their holy duties without any distracting cares. (Reference: The Economic Structure of Islamic Society, Rabwah, Pakistan, P. 63)

OBLIGATORY CONTRIBUTIONS

The obligatory contribution is known as Zakat which literally means purity (Holy Quran, 19:14); or act of purification. The obligatory contribution is due not on earning or income but on savings. All accumulated wealth and capital are subject to payment of Zakat under the Muslim law.

Muslims regard the accumulation and amassing of wealth as an unclean act because it is contrary to the teachings of Islam. The amassing of wealth moves a person towards the love of worldly goods and inclines the heart towards a sort of impurity. Thus paying Zakat under the prescribed rate would wash off the tinge of uncleanness and make the wealthy person a righteous and useful member of the society. Even though Zakat is obligatory yet it carries with it a person's own belief that amassing of wealth is an unclean act. And to keep the money in circulation for the benefit of the needy people the payment of a prescribed portion would bring purity to the life of the wealthy person Zakat for some people could be looked upon as a sort of tax. But this tax has a moral value attached to it. As such Zakat, stands unique both as an obligatory charity and a tax. No doubt charity is obligatory but the obligation has a tinge of morality.

In the early days of Islam, Zakat was not only obligatory charity but a State institution as well. In the absence of the Muslim State, Zakat became a national institution. An individual was not at liberty to calculate and spend his or her Zakat as he or she liked. The Zakat could not just be given to a deserving person according to the choice or liking of a wealthy person. It was required that Zakat contributions be made to a fund which, of course, was used for the benefit of the needy people of the community. Officials were appointed to collect the Zakat contributions and the salary of the collectors was also paid from the same fund.

The Holy Prophet of Islam did not interfere with private enterprise, ownership, industry or property. Also, one was not deprived of the fruit of one's labour. An open field was left open for competition, hard work and utilization of intelligence. As such, the Holy Prophet of Islam laid down rules in order to bring about a just distribution of wealth. The capitalists were induced and persuaded to give away a portion of their wealth, on their own, for the benefit of the needy members of the community. Thus capitalism was not despised but the Holy Prophet aimed at destroying the evils of capitalism. The interested needy members of the community were provided a small fund out of the Zakat fund to start their own business. They were thus enabled to self-supporting members of the community and to increase their own wealth by diligence and hard work. Wealth as such was made accessible to wider and wider circles. Zakat therefore played a vital role to bring about a proper distribution of wealth.

Under the institution of Zakat, it is the duty of a Muslim state to collect an amount of 2.5% on average upon all wealth and capital which has been in possession or under the control of a person. The proceeds of this obligatory contribution must be devoted exclusively towards the relief of poverty and raising the standard of living of the poor. In case of jewellery which the women use themselves or lend to poor women free of charge, there is no Zakat payable. But some authorities in Fiqha feel that Zakat should be paid on jewellery which is not lent to the poor. But it is essential to pay Zakat on jewellery which does not remain in use. If a person holds coins, Zakat is payable if the minimum number remains 40, and that figure never falls below.

It should be clear that Zakat is payable every year as long as the wealth in one's possession does not fall below the minimum requirement. Zakat is collected only on the capital and accumulation and not on wages, salary or income. The Holy Quran says about those who pay Zakat:

“but whatever you give in Zakat, - seeking the favour of Allah - it is those who will increase their wealth manifold” (30:40)

LAW OF INHERITANCE

Another check to spread the evils of capitalism is the law of inheritance in Islam. Rules and regulations have been laid down by which the wealth of one man is distributed to his heirs after his death. The Holy Prophet of Islam made the female also co-sharer with the male and ordered the division of the person's property among all the heirs on a democratic basis. In this way, one big Muslim capitalist is replaced by small capitalists at the time of his death.

The Muslim law of inheritance has explicitly been mentioned in the Holy Quran. (4:7-9)

Under this law, details have been laid down regarding the property of the deceased. Accordingly, the distribution would be made among the daughters, sons, mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, brothers, sisters and so on.

The heirs are divided into two categories. The first group consists of children, parents, husband or wife. The second group consists of brothers, sisters and other relatives. All the persons in the first group are immediate sharers in the property of the deceased according to the prescribed rules and regulations. Under the law, the members of the second group would inherit only if all the members or some of the first group had already passed away. Both these groups are capable of further extensions to grand children or still further descendants or higher ascendants, grand parents etc.

The law of inheritance in Islam is therefore another check to stop the evils of capitalism. Islam compulsarily distributes property of the deceased to a large number of heirs. The Holy Quran has laid down specific and clear-cut rules as to how the property of the deceased is to be divided. Everyone, parents, widows, sons and daughters, all succeed to their shares in the property left by the deceased. It should be noted that nobody is at liberty to modify in any manner the share to which each heir is entitled under this system. The Holy Quran says that any attempt to interfere with this system is sinful.

Islam teaches that property and wealth should be widely distributed for the progress of the community as a whole. So under the Muslim system, the accumulated property of the deceased is distributed among widows, children and parents. In this way, in a generation and later on, the inherited wealth and property would have been so divided and sub-divided that the original accumulation would be very much reduced.

PAYMENT OF DEBTS

In order to wipe off the evils of capitalism, Islam has regulated the relationships between the lender and the debtor. The Holy Quran instructs that a loan transaction should be written down. (2:283) Thus the Holy Prophet forbids any shady transaction. Besides contractual agreement, it becomes an ethical duty of a Muslim to pay his debt. Delaying the payment of a debt by a well-to-do person is injustice (Bukhari). And delaying the payment of a debt by one who has the means to pay legalizes his punishment (Bukhari). Among the best of you are those who are good in payment of debts (Bukhari). And whoever contracts a debt intending to waste it, Allah will bring him to ruin. (Bukhari)

Regarding the debtor who is in straitened circumstances, the Holy Quran says:

“And if the debtor be in straitened circumstances, then grant him respite till a time of ease. And that you remit it as charity shall be better for you, if only you knew.” (2:281)

“Islam urges the giving of loans but they should be beneficent loans, without interest. If the debtor finds himself in straitened circumstances when the time for repayment of a loan arrives, he should be given respite till he finds himself in easier circumstances.” (F.N: 353; English Commentary).

Thus if the debtor is in straitened circumstances, there should be postponement until he is in ease. And if the lender remits that amount as alms, it is better for the lender to know (Bukhari). This principle was worked out most liberally by the Prophet as the Head of the Muslim State. The Holy Prophet said "I am nearer to the believers than themselves so whoever of the believers dies and leaves a debt, its payment is on me. And whoever leaves property, it is for his heirs. (Bukhari) As such, a debt contracted for a right cause was thus to be paid by the Muslim State if the debtor was unable to pay it.

There are explicit instructions regarding the transactions in the Holy Quran as:

"O ye who believe! when you borrow one from another for a fixed period, then write it down. And let a scribe write it in your presence faithfully; and no scribe should refuse to write, because Allah has taught him, so let him write and let him who incurs the liability dictate; and he should fear Allah, his Lord, and not diminish anything there from. But if the person incurring the liability be of low understanding or be weak or be unable himself to dictate, then let someone who can guard his interest dictate (F.N: 354) with justice and call two witnesses from among your men; and if two men may not be available, then a man and two women, of such as you approve as witnesses, so that if either of the two women should forget, then one may remind the other. And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called. And be not averse to writing it down whether it be small or large, along with its appointed time of payment. This is more equitable in the sight of Allah and makes testimony surer and is more likely to save you from doubt; so write it down except that it be ready transaction which you make among yourselves on the spot in which case it shall be no sin for you that you write it not. (F.N: 354A) And have witnesses when you sell one to another (F.N: 354B) and let no harm be done to the scribe or witness. And if you do that, then certainly it shall be disobedience on your part. And fear Allah. And Allah teaches you and Allah knows all things quite well." (2:283)

Foot Note 354:

"The borrower, and not the lender, is to dictate because; (1) it is the borrower who incurs the liability; and justice demands that the words defining the liability should be selected by him. (2) the document is to be deposited with the lender and not the borrower. So the borrower has been asked to dictate so that the fact of his having dictated may serve as a proof of the correctness of the amount and the conditions about the payment, and he may have no cause or ground to deny it."

Foot Note 354A:

The implication is that it would be better to have a writing even in such a case like a cash memo or a voucher.

Foot Note 354B:

This refers to big transactions. (Ref: English Commentary)

HOARDING NOT PERMITTED

Islam has stopped in another way the evils of capitalism by forbidding the hoarding of money. It means that Islam directs that money should remain in constant circulation. The money, as such, should either be spent or invested so that it constantly fulfils its primary object as a means of exchange to promote commercial and industrial activity. If, for example, people were at liberty to accumulate money and precious metals which are equivalent of currency, a considerable wealth would be withdrawn from circulation. This would make the community at large poorer. If, on the other hand, money constantly stays in circulation, it helps to promote beneficial activities of all kinds. This would encourage positive activities to relieve poverty and distress by providing employment and other stimulating efforts. For example, if a person having money, decides not to keep the money to himself but use it for constructing some building etc., it will return the money to himself and use it for constructing some building etc., which will bring the money into circulation. The construction business, for example, will provide many jobs for many people and put money in their pocket for their efforts. There could be other projects which instead of hoarding, the money in circulation would become production both for the rich and poor people of the community.

THE HOLY QURAN WARNS AGAINST HOARDING

“And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah give to them the tidings of a painful punishment.”
(9:24)

The Holy Prophet of Islam has condemned hoarding. Some Ahadees (traditions) in this connection are cited here:

1. Whoever holds back grain to profit by its shortage is a sinner.
2. If a person holds back grain for forty days in the hope of making a profit from scarcity, he forsakes Allah and Allah forsakes him.

In order to place obstacles in the way of the excessive accumulation of wealth in a few hands, Islam demands that supplies should not be withheld from the market. It is not permissible that supplies should be held over in expectation of higher prices. For, any interference in the natural flow of supply and demand process is harmful to society. Some people seem to understand that state control over the market is a modern economic development. But it is not so. Islam in early days recognized that the need of

such control when it forbade ihtikaar, that is to hold back a commodity from consumers in order to force up the price. The Muslim state would compel such dealers or producers to bring out their stock in the open market. The word ihtikaar literally applies to holding back grain. But by wider inference it would mean all kinds of supplies indispensable for the daily needs of society.

There are also injunctions regarding forcing down prices. Islam does not permit that prices should be forced down by improper and artificial means. For, this too, would enable the unscrupulous dealers to make undue profits and to strangle other dealers. Once, during his Khitab, Hazrat Umar came across an outsider in Medina selling dried grapes at lower rates than the local producers and dealers who could neither match with nor compete against it. Hazrat Umar then asked that man either to remove his supplies from the market or sell at the price level prevailing in Medina. When asked on what ground he had issued those orders, Hazrat Umar replied that otherwise he would have caused an irreparable loss to the local dealers.

INTEREST PROHIBITED

To remedy the evils of capitalism Islam prohibits any sort of interest in any transaction under any circumstances. Islam has assigned a broad definition to interest. It is defined interest in terms which cover also certain transactions and economic acts which the popular general view does not take to fall in this category. The proceeds of any economic venture which by its nature or circumstances makes profit absolutely certain, eliminating all risk, are called interest. Islam therefore strictly prohibits lending and borrowing money on interest. The institution of interest results in the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few. Those who receive interest go on multiplying their wealth practically without limit to the detriment of the rest of the community. If the money is borrowed on interest, all the savings are absorbed by interest on paying the loan because the original amount still remains to be paid even after paying a considerable amount against the loan. The additional payment goes under the category of interest. Interest, as such, is a curse for the poor. For the sake of world peace, interest should be abolished. In that way wealth will not be permitted to be monopolized by already wealthy people of the world. Islam has given hope that the day would come when the institution of interest would be abolished throughout the world:

“Allah will blot out interest and will cause charity to increase.”
(2:277)

“O ye who believe! fear Allah and give up what remains of interest, if you are totally believers.” (2:279)

“O ye who believe! devour not interest involving diverse additions, and fear Allah that you may prosper.” (3:131)

“Whatever you layout at interest that it may increase the wealth of people, it does not increase in the sight of Allah.” (30:40)

All interest, excessive or moderate, is prohibited in Islam. An economic system based on interest will eventually disappear. (F.N: 277;52; English Commentary) Those who devour interest are admonished in the Holy Quran. (2:276)

Explanation relative to prohibition of interest appears in the English Commentary as:

“Riba literally meaning an excess or addition, signifies an addition over and above the principal sum.” (Lane)

“It covers both usury and interest. According to Hadees every loan advanced to draw profits comes under this definition.”

“In fact, any sum stipulated to be received or given over and above what the owner advances or receives as a loan is “interest”, whether the dealing is with an individual or bank. Interest is not confined to money. It extends to any commodity which is given as a loan with the condition that it will be returned with an agreed access.” (F.N: 350; English Commentary)

“Riba causes a touch of insanity in the money lender. Riba is prohibited in Islam because it tends to draw wealth into the hands of a small circle and thereby adversely affects its equitable distribution. It promotes idleness in the money-lenders and kills in him all incentive to help others and chokes all springs of sympathetic behaviour. The money lender takes advantage of and makes profit from, the need and distress of others. Islam has therefore prohibited all kinds of interest.” (F.N. 351; English Commentary)

KHUMUS

Islam checks the evils of communism in another way called Khumus. Literally, this word means 1/5th. But in Muslim terminology it means that 1/5th of total proceeds received from mines of all kinds should be paid to the Muslim State. This 1/5th should be paid before dividends and profits are distributed to the share holders. Of course, when the share holders collect this money they must include this amount to pay Zakat for that year.

AHMADIYYA CONTRIBUTIONS

Ahmadiyya Muslims have to make additional contributions as instituted by the Founder of the Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, and his Khulafa, the successors. These contributions are both voluntary and compulsory in nature.

An Ahmadi can seek permission from the Khalifat-ul-Masih for remission, reduction and deferment in certain cases. However, some programs are such that he or she is required to fulfil his or her obligation.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah announced under Divine command that God had ordained for the people who desire to win real paradise to-day, that they must volunteer from 1/10th to 1/3rd of their properties and belongings. The Promised Messiah further said that the properties obtained by this means would be devoted toward the strengthening of Islam through propagation and the teaching of the Holy Quran, spread of literature and missions of Islam, securing the welfare of the orphans and needy who do not possess adequate means of subsistence. (Al-Wasiyat) The Promised Messiah reiterated: it will be permissible for the Anjuman (known as Sadar Anjuman Ahmadiyya) to increase these funds through commercial investments. This scheme is apparently voluntary, but really a test of one's faith. If some one is anxious to win the pleasure of Allah, he or she should make it incumbent to participate in it like obligatory contribution. Those who could not participate in the Wasiyat scheme, should, any way, make contributions in the Chanda Aam, Tehriki-Jadid; Waqf-Jadid; Buyut-ul-Hamd, Mosques etc. and other funds. In this way an Ahmadi is obliged to make contributions in addition to the already prescribed contributions in Islam. The arrangement also concurs with the Holy Quran which teaches that among the Muslims there should always exist a body of men entirely devoted to the task of calling people to the right and dissuading them from wrong (3:103) That is to say, even though Islam does not uphold priesthood, it upholds a religious order devoted exclusively to call people to righteousness.

SUMMARY

The righteous, to win the pleasure of Allah, spend out of what has been given to them by Allah, is a recurring theme in the Holy Quran. All Muslims fervently pray to have all the goods in this life as well as in the life hereafter.

Islam does not abolish capitalism but condemns its evils in strong words. Islam does not forbid the acquisition of wealth but prohibits the amassing of wealth. Wealth is not something to be discarded rather its acquisition is a necessary condition of life on this earth. Islam does not deprive a person the fruit of his or her labour and it does not matter whether a person has more or less wealth. Islam seeks a just distribution of wealth. And the capitalists or wealthy people are asked to give away or share a part of their wealth for the benefit of deserving members of the society. Wealth could be earned, received as a gift or inherited, but it should be spent in the many ways that Islam has prescribed for righteousness.

Both men and women can earn money because it is the means of support. It could be possessed, but simply possession did not raise the dignity of man/woman in the sight of Allah. The amassing and accumulation of wealth

in itself leads to moral debasement. Therefore money should be spent in charity, zakat, and other schemes, funds initiated by the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. It is prohibited to lend or borrow money on interest. There are severe injunctions against hoarding and withholding of supplies from the market. Whereas individual enterprise is permissible, forcing prices down is forbidden. Whatever is left of property and wealth of an individual, at death, it is divided according to the law of inheritance. The economic system in Islam thus promotes a community where the needs of everybody are taken care of democratically.

The economic system in Islam recommends that money and wealth should be constantly in circulation and utilized in the service of the community. Also that all accumulation, capital and profit, should be made to contribute towards the relief of poverty and raising the standard of living. If the injunctions laid down in Islam are followed and carried into effect then even the most miserly person will be compelled to invest his savings. In this way he would contribute towards general prosperity in addition to taking care of prescribed financial help.

HOLY LIGHT

O Allah, diffuse light into my heart and ears;
Diffuse light on my eyes and on my tongue;
Diffuse light on my right and on my left;
Diffuse light above me and under me;
Engulf me in Thy light.

(The Holy Prophet)

SIMPLE LIVING

Beware of leading a life of luxury for verily the servants of God
never live luxurious lives.

(The Holy Prophet)

FOR LOVE OF THE KALIMA

(In this letter Dr. Mumtaz Ali of Jampur, Pakistan, a respected member of the Ahmadiyya community, describes some of the events which happened in a Pakistani jail. He was arrested recently for writing the Declaration of Faith known as Kalima Tayyaba, [there is none worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah] on the walls of his house. This is not an account of one Ahmadi. In fact throughout the length and breadth of the country, hundreds of Ahmadi Muslims have been arrested on the same charge and subjected to the same or even worse treatment.)

Reciting the Kalima, La ilaha illalaho Muhammad-ur-Rasoolulah, I entered the prison gates and exactly 24 days later, I came out singing the glory of God. I was released on bail. All the inmates of the prison came upto the main gate to see me off.

There were all sorts of criminals, from petty thieves to fierce looking dacoits and murderers, to whom human life is of little value. They embraced me one by one and asked for prayers. I pray that they prove themselves to be the servants of mankind when they come out of the prison.

You might ask why was I put behind bars. It is now two years since I wrote the Kalima Tayyaba on the water tank on the roof my house. Recently I erected an extension to my house as was the wish of my martyred son Sarfraz. This new building blocked the view of Kalima Tayyaba, so out of love for the Kalima, I wrote it again on the second storey wall so that it was clearly visible from a distance. That was my crime. Yes, the writing of the Kalima, the declaration of faith: there is none worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, is a crime in Pakistan but only for an Ahmadi Muslim. To tell you the truth, I was proud to commit that 'crime'. I was determined to lay down even my life for its sake like any other Ahmadi Muslim.

I was arrested on the 5th of October 1987, and spent two days and two nights in the police cell at Muhammad Pur. I could neither sleep at night nor during the day. During daytime extreme heat prevented me from sleeping and during the night I had regular 'visitors', high singing mosquitos, and blanket bugs which kept me awake. This gave me the opportunity to cry out to my Lord, to converse with my Beloved and to pour out my heart to Him.

From behind the bars I could see the long bearded, haughty mullahs (Muslim priests) come and go from the police station. The purpose of their visits, as I learned later, was to pressurise the police authorities not to be lenient with me under any circumstance. The police regarded me as a dangerous criminal and therefore tried their usual tactics to humiliate me. They paraded me handcuffed in the streets of Muhammad Pur and Jampur to gain praise from the local mullahs and their followers. All along they remained apologetic to me saying that they were forced by the higher authorities to behave in such a manner.

A bail application was filed with the local magistrate at Jampur, on my behalf. For several days he tried to evade the request. At last the hearing of the application for bail began on the 17th October. I had received the news in jail that the mullahs of the area had made fiery speeches in their mosques threatening the Administration and Judiciary with dire consequences if bail were granted. Various deputations met the magistrate in this connection. The court room was full on the day the hearing began. The discussion took about an hour and a half. Most of the time my solicitor, Mian Iqbal Ahmad, advocate, the District Ameer of the Ahmadiyya community, Rajanpur put forward his arguments. The magistrate nodded his head occasionally, but he seemed to be baffled. He rejected my bail application.

This is the gist of what he wrote in his judgement:

The accused has every right to believe in the Kalima and recite it according to his Qadiani faith, but Qadianis have been declared as non-Muslims by the National Assembly. This has now become a law and order problem. The Ahle Hadith Ulema have passed several resolutions in their mosques that Qadianis cannot write the Kalima. Hence, the bail application is rejected.

The next stage was to file the bail application with the session judge. The hearing took place on 29th October. The mullahs came in wagon loads to witness the scene, but they were disappointed, because the session judge had already granted bail in my case.

I had sent a message to my lawyer from the jail not to pursue my application because I wanted to prolong my stay in the prison. Those bare walls of the cell gave me the solitude I had longed for in my supplications. This inside world needed a DAI ILLALAH (Preacher) to deliver the divine message of Ahmadiyyat, and I took that opportunity readily, but my happiness was short lived and I was released from the prison.

I came back to a relatively luxurious life, but believe me I could not sleep on the mattress for the first three days. I had become accustomed to sleeping on the hard floor of the prison cell. Thinking back, I can say for sure that I have experienced the love of God as I never have experienced it before. My imagination took me back to the days of the Holy Prophet. He and his followers were also persecuted for the sheer love of the Kalima. The feelings were indescribable. I wanted to prove to the world that the Kalima is the life and soul of every Ahmadi and for its sake no Ahmadi would hesitate to sacrifice his life and honour. How far I have succeeded in proving my point only God knows. As for myself I am willing to go back to prison again for that 'crime'.

May Allah grant our enemies the wisdom to see the Truth. Amen.

A REPLY TO: "THE QADIANI DANGER IN SOUTH AFRICA" BASELESS PROPAGANDA REFUTED

(Sheikh Nasir Ahmad)

(During my brief stay in Cape Town, South Africa, in September 1987, I came across an anti-Ahmadiyya pamphlet which had been distributed on a large scale among the large Muslim community in that country. I was asked by the local Ahmadi Muslims to write an article in refutation of the misleading statements regarding the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. The article written by me is being reproduced below.)

We have recently received a pamphlet entitled: "The Qadiani Danger in South Africa" from one of our "Al-Asr" readers for our perusal and comment. We wish to express our thanks for this anti-Ahmadiyya pamphlet. The fact is that we are used to such malicious propaganda against the Ahmadiyya Movement which seeks to mislead the innocent through distorting, twisting and often inventing things against us. The pamphlet is a typical example of the utterly baseless and unfounded propaganda made against Ahmadi Muslims. We entirely agree that a Prophet will never make such audacious and insane statements. But unfortunately the inference is wrong in the case of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam since the reader took the false allegations at their face value. However, it is gratifying to note that he does wish to investigate and that is why he has forwarded the pamphlet to us for a reply. We have decided to deal with all the points raised in the pamphlet even at the risk of a lengthy reply.

Let it be stated at the outset that practically all the statements made and quotations reproduced are either wilful distortions or pure fabrications, a fact which casts doubts on the truthfulness and reliability of the author of the pamphlet.

In answer to the first question, the author refers to Ahmadis also as "Qadianis" and "Mirzaïs". These last two terms are derogatory and we Ahmadis do not use them for ourselves. Ordinary decency requires, and also the Holy Qur'an says, that one should refrain from giving names to others.

A NEW RELIGION?

In answer to question No.2 where it is stated that the Founder of the Movement was "the son of an employee of the British Government", it is quite untrue, since the father of the Founder was a landowner and not an employee. The Founder was born in 1835 and not in 1839 or 1840. He did not start "a new religion in conspiracy with the full support of the British in 1880", as the following will show:

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, writes in his book "Noor-ul-Haq", Part 1, page 5:

"We are Muslims and we believe in One God Who has no partner and we also believe in LA ILAHA IL-LALLAH. We believe in the Book of God, the Qur'an, as well as in His Prophet Muhamad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is KHATAM-UL-ANBIA. We have our faith in the angels, in the Day of Resurrection, in Heaven and Hell. We offer the prayer (Namaz/Salat) and observe the Fast. We turn to the Qibla. We consider that to be forbidden (Haraam) which God and His Prophet have forbidden. We consider that to be allowed (Halaal) what has been declared as such. We neither add anything to the Shariat nor do we detract anything from it; we do not alter an atom of it. Whatever we have received from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we accept it whether we understand it or whether we do not arrive at its basic truth. By the grace of Allah we are Momin, Muwahhid and Muslim."

In "Malfoozat", Volume 8, pp. 233, 234 he says:

"I say in all clarity - and the same is my belief and faith, that no human being can attain to any spiritual grace and bliss without following in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)."

In the same book we read on page 252:

"The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is Khatam-un-Nabiyyin, and the Holy Qur'an is Khatam-ul-Kutb. Now there can neither be another Kalima nor another Namaz. What the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) said or did in practice, and whatever is contained in the Holy Qur'an - no salvation is possible by forsaking it. One who forsakes it, will go to Hell. This is our faith and belief."

THE PROMISED MESSIAH AND THE BRITISH

As to the accusation that the Founder was in "conspiracy with the British" and had their "full support", it must be said that this amazing statement is a concoction and has not a shred of truth in it. Had it been so, he could never have exposed the false beliefs of the Christians and criticised them so vehemently. He could never have declared that Jesus, God and Son of God for the Christians (as the British were), was not alive but dead, that the belief in Trinity was not taught by Jesus Christ and that the vicarious death of Jesus on the cross did not mean the redemption of sins for Christians. Further, he could under no circumstances have invited the then reigning British monarch to accept Islam.

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement was a champion of Islam at a time when Christian missionaries, who found themselves in a favourable position because of the British colonial power, were recklessly attacking Islam and large numbers of Muslims in India were forsaking their religion for Christianity as they were unable to resist the thrust of the onslaught of Christian missionaries. The Ulema of those days had neither the knowledge nor the courage to support the cause of Islam and to refute the propaganda of Christian missionaries. The person of the Holy Prophet was being made the target of venomous attacks and filthy invective was hurled at our beloved Master. Had Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and the spiritual son of the Holy Prophet, hatched up a conspiracy against Islam and Muslims with the "full support of the British", he would never have taken the stand he took in the defence of Islam. He not only assumed a defensive stance, but also attacked the false beliefs of Christianity. Although he as a Muslim and a true follower of the Holy Qur'an believed that Hazrat Isa (Jesus) was a true Prophet of God, for whom he showed great respect and when he held in honour as such, he nevertheless did not hesitate to expose the true character of the "Yasu" (Jesus) of the New Testament, as the Christians had depicted him. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad knew fully well that the "Yasu" of the Bible was an imaginary figure and an altogether different person from Hazrat Isa of the Holy Qur'an, but he also knew that the Christians believed in a person they called "Yasu" of the Bible. Therefore, not out of his personal conviction, but because of the belief of the Christians, he quoted from the New Testament in order to make the Christians feel themselves ashamed of their unholy attacks on the holiest of all persons, Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Thus whenever there is a mention in derogatory terms of a person called "Yasu" in the writings of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, the reference is not at all to Hazrat Isa of the Holy Qur'an but to an imaginary character whom the Christians take for their Saviour. Moreover, those writings are mere quotations from the New Testament and cannot as such be attributed to the Promised Messiah.

He writes in his book "Ayyam-us-Sulah", on title page 2:

"I have also been commanded by Almighty God to believe that Hazrat Isa - peace be on him - was a true, holy and truthful Prophet of God and to believe in his Prophethood. Thus there is no derogatory word about his esteemed status in any of my books. If anyone thinks otherwise, then he is under an illusion and is a liar."

Further we read the following in "Ishtehar" 27th December 1897, margin note in "Tabligh-i-Risalat" vol.7 page 70:

"Whereas I claim to be the Promised Messiah and to have a similarity to Hazrat Isa, it becomes apparent to everyone that if I had, God forbid, defamed Hazrat Isa, I could not have emphasized the fact of my being similar to him."

Finally, the Promised Messiah says:

“It is a fact that these people (i.e. Christians) do not at all believe in the historical Messiah (Christ) who had in reality appeared. Instead, they have invented of their own whim an imaginary Messiah whom they regard as God.” (“Tafheem-ul-Qur’an”, vol. 1, page 491).

All this makes it abundantly clear that the Messiah of the Holy Qur’an is a different person from the “Yasu” of the Bible.

MISQUOTED AND MISINTERPRETED PASSAGES

As to the passage (a) under “His Claims”, the quotation from “Khutba Ilhamiya” is wrong. Not on page 176, but on page 206 of the book, we read:

“In reality you are far, far away from (the meaning of) it (i.e. Sura Al-Fateha), and you do not believe in a single letter of it, unless you accept that the Messiah who has been one of you and raised from the very midst of you, and whose truth Sura Al-Noor has testified.”

The passage (c), as quoted from “Taryaq-ul-Qulub” is found on page 6 and not on page 3. It runs:

“I am the Messiah of the time and I am the one to whom God has spoken. I am Mohammad and Ahmad - the Chosen one.”

This is metaphorical speech. The Promised Messiah, the true follower and the spiritual son of the Holy Prophet, the greatest champion of Islam, has been raised to accomplish the task of all the Prophets, not least that of the Holy Prophet. He, therefore, represents the Holy Prophet and through his mission he serves the mission of his noble and exalted Master.

The passage (d) has been wilfully distorted and by the interpolation of one word it has been given a shameless twist. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote nowhere that “it is a fact that Mohammad worked only three thousand miracles.” The passage in “Tuhfa Golarwia”, page 40 (not page 63), runs as follows:

“Such is the case of a mischief-seeker, who, for instance, instead of mentioning three thousand other miracles of our Prophet - peace and blessings of Allah be upon him - simply insists on repeating ever again the prophecy of Hudaibiya, criticising that it was not fulfilled within the fixed time-limit.”

The author of the passage has torn the passage (e) on page 41 of

“Tazkiratu- Shahadatain” from its context in such a misleading manner such as to create the impression with the innocent reader that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement was claiming to have shown more miracles than the Holy Prophet, God forbid.

The same treatment has been meted out to passage (f) from “Khutba Ilhamiya” page 55,56 the full text of which reads as follows:

“I have been endowed with the power to destroy and also to imbibe life. And this power has been given to me by God the Almighty. But this majestic power granted to me is the manifestation of that reflex of mine which is the reflex of the Spirit of Hazrat Isa. This is from God in order that I may crush and destroy the evil of SHIRK (polytheism) which has crept into and is present in the beliefs of those who have gone astray.”

Passage (g) has been amply dealt with earlier. Suffice to say that the attempt to confuse the issue of the real Hazrat Isa and the “Yasu” of the Gospels is a heinous one.

Passage (h) which purports to say that “the Qur’an mentions the names of three cities with great respect: Makkah, Madinah and Qadian” is nowhere to be found in the Promised Messiah’s writing “Khutba Ilhamiya.” It is the product of the imagination of the author and constitutes a pure fabrication.

JIHAD

Passages (i) and (j) from Taryaq-ul-Qulub on page 15 (and not pages 25,26) deserve a detailed note. The fact must be put straight that the passage refers to the ill-conceived idea of Jihad, prevalent among ignorant Muslims, who in their age of deep darkness had removed themselves from the light of the Holy Prophet. Whereas Islam taught peace and did not admit of any violence, compulsion or coercion in matters of faith and belief, Muslims had in their hour of despair chosen to console themselves with the idea of a coming Mahdi who was to spread Islam among non-Muslims by the force of the sword.

This expectation was a clear negation of the peaceful teachings of Islam and also of the noble example set by the Holy Prophet who suffered and suffered at the hand of his blood-thirsty enemies but never took to the sword until the enemy himself forced him to do so.

The wrong notion of Jihad had acquired such deep roots in the thinking of ignorant Muslims that they would not face the situation but simply wait for the bloody Mahdi to come and help them regain their past glory. Jihad literally means struggle and effort and its warsome connotation presupposes the fulfilment of certain conditions when it becomes obligatory for Muslims to retaliate and defend themselves. There is no room either in the teaching of

Islam nor in the practice of the Holy Prophet for taking up arms in an aggressive manner. It was imperative for the Promised Messiah to take the necessary steps to raise the Muslims to the pinnacles of glory, to give them real new life and to crush and destroy their wrong notions. The wrong concept of Jihad was one of them. Now we quote the full passage as mentioned above. The Promised Messiah writes in "Taryaq-ul-Qulub" (page 15):

"O the progeny of Muslims! What sin have I committed against you that you are bent upon causing me pain through multifarious designs. The Maulvis among you cease not to preach that this man is devoid of faith, the Dajjal and one who praises beyond extreme the British rule and is an opponent of the Turkish empire.

The employees among you seek to turn me into a rebel against this beneficent government. I understand that everyone is constantly trying to spread untrue matters regarding me, notwithstanding the fact that you know it well that I am not a person with rebellious inclinations. The greater part of my life has been spent in support and favour of this British rule. I have written so many books and published so many tracts on the prohibition of warsome struggle - "Jihad" — and the obedience to British rule that if these pamphlets and books were put together (meaning total copies), they could fill fifty bookcases. I have sent such writings to all Arab countries, to Egypt, Syria, Afghanistan (Kabul) and Turkey. It has always been my aim that Muslims should become true well-wishers of this government and should banish from their minds the unfounded stories about a bloody Mahdi and a bloody Messiah as well as the emotional concept of Jihad which leads astray the foolish people. How was it, then, possible for me to be an ill-wisher of this government or to introduce in my community unlawful and rebellious designs. Since I have been inculcating for twenty years obedience to the British rule, and have been instructing my followers to this effect, it was not conceivable that I should preach any rebellious designs contrary to my own precepts. In fact I know that God the Supreme, through His Special Grace, made this government a haven of safety for me and for my community. The peace we have under the protection of this government cannot be had in Makkah Muazzamah or in Madinah (of today), neither under the King of Turkey nor under the rule of Constantinople. Why, then, should I act against my own interests in that I should entertain in my mind any rebellious design against this government? I consider those amongst the Muslims who nurture in their hearts such ill notions about Jihad and rebellion, to be extremely ignorant, unfortunate and wrongdoers. For we are witness to the fact that the renaissance of Islam has become possible under the peace-giving protection of the British government".

Considering the unrest elsewhere and the lack of religious freedom, the

British rule in the then India was certainly conducive to the propagation of Islam.

KALIMA — THE CORNERSTONE OF FAITH

Regarding the beliefs of Ahmadi Muslims it has been alleged that they negate the Kalima. Quite the reverse is true. Ahmadis regard the profession of their faith Islam as contained in the words "There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah" to be the cornerstone of their faith. Their beliefs do not negate the Holy Qur'an. This is an audacious insinuation and one wonders from which source the author of this pamphlet borrowed this concoction. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement says:

"The sum-total and the quintessence of our religion is: LA ILAHA IL-LALLAH MOHAMMAD-UR-RASULLALAH. [There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah]." ("Ayyam-us-Sulah", page 86).

Another insinuation contained in the pamphlet is to the effect that the beliefs of Ahmadi Muslims negate the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet. The author seems to be an avowed enemy of truth and a master at distortion. The accusation is entirely fictitious. The more such baseless allegations are made the less trustworthy and reliable the author will become to the intelligent reader. Only the totally ignorant may be misled by such crude methods. What the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has to say on this point is diametrically opposed to the utterance of the author of the pamphlet. Read:

"We believe with firm conviction that the Holy Quran is the khatim of all the heavenly Scriptures and not an iota or a dot can be added or deducted from its laws, penal codes, commandments and injunctions. No such revelation (wahy or Ilham) can now come from God which should amend or revoke the commandments of the Qur'an or change or alter any single dictate of it." ("Izala Auham", Part 1, pages 137, 138).

"I say it in all clarity and the same is my faith and belief, that no one can attain to spiritual grace and bounty without obediently following in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him." (Ibi. pp. 233, 234).

KHATAM-UN-NABIYYIN

The beliefs of Ahmadi Muslims do in no way negate the "finality of the Prophethood" of the Holy Prophet Mohammad [peace be on him], as has been alleged in the said pamphlet.

Much too much has been made by the opponents of Ahmadiyyat of the word 'Khatam' in the Holy Qur'an in respect of the Holy Prophet, and the word is interpreted to mean that no Prophet will appear after the Holy

Prophet. It must be stated here with all emphasis that the accusation is totally false that Ahmadi Muslims do not believe in Khatam-un-Nabiyyin. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement declared:

“ I am a believer in the Prophethood of the Khatam-ul-Anbiyya, and I regard everyone who denies Khatem-e-Nabuwwat to be devoid of faith and out of the pale of Islam.” (“Taqreeh Wajib-ul-I‘lan” 23rd October 1891).

He writes further:

“What God requires of you in matter of belief is only this that God is One and that Mohammad sallal-laho alaihi wasallam is His Prophet; and he is Khatam-ul-Anbiyya and the greatest of all.” (Kishti-i-Nooh”, page.15).

The whole thing revolves around the word “Nabi” which is misunderstood, misinterpreted and misrepresented, and an aura of emotion is permitted to build around it. Ahmadi Muslims believe that the Holy Prophet brought the final code of laws in the form of the Holy Qur’an and that no one can come now to replace the Holy Qur’an or to amend and alter its teachings. It must be understood that a Holy Book alone cannot of its own lead mankind to the path of righteousness if there is no exemplar to put the theory into practice and serve as a model. Compared with the Muslims in the time of the Holy Prophet and his successors, the Muslims of today are depraved in the extreme. The quality of their faith and righteousness bears no relationship to the quantity of their numbers. Those who once stood at the pinnacles of glory and were torch-bearers of knowledge and wisdom for the rest of the world have sunk to a very low level of ignorance. The selfless have become selfish, the truthful have turned into cheats, the lambs have assumed the garb of wolves. Islam has become a synonym for terror, violence and intolerance. The Holy Book Qur’an is there all the same, but its spirit has been banished from the hearts of the so-called Muslims. They are no longer an invitation to Islam, the world rather feels repelled by the conduct of Muslims of our time. This is a very tragic state of affairs and should be a cause of grief for those who cherish the love of Islam and the Holy Prophet. Today the Muslim world needs an exemplar, a true servant of Islam who can by his precept and example revive Islam for the good of mankind. This task can only be accomplished by a Prophet of God. But that Prophet can only be a spiritual son of the Holy Prophet who comes to re-establish and reaffirm the truth of Islam and of the Holy Prophet. Without this there is no hope for Islam.

The Holy Prophet had spoken of our sad times and given the glad tidings of Imam Mahdi and Promised Messiah whom he called a Nabi. Such a prophet must of necessity bear the Seal of the Holy Prophet — which is Khatam — who should attest to his truth. Only one who comes to serve the faith of Islam can have the attestation of the Holy Prophet. The word

Khatam does not and cannot by any stretch of interpretation mean absolutely last in the temporal sense of the word.

A verse in the Holy Qur'an is very significant in this context. It says:

“O children of Adam, if Messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing My Signs unto you, then whoso shall fear God and do good deeds, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve.” (7:36).

Leaving all other factors aside, this verse alone is a standing challenge to those who think that no Prophet whatsoever can ever come after the Holy Prophet. Qur'an is the Word of God and it says categorically that whenever there is need God will raise a Prophet to lead mankind to Him. If no Prophet was ever to come after the Holy Prophet, what meaning could be attached to this verse which forms part of the Eternal Qur'an? We reject the idea of some ignorant Muslims that some verses of the Holy Qur'an have been abrogated and have thus lost their validity.

Another point worth pondering is that there is excellence in being the greatest of all Prophets and in having been the bearer of the final, perfect and comprehensive Divine Dispensation — which is the Holy Qur'an. But there is no excellence in being the last Prophet in the absolute sense of the word. How can the blessings of Prophethood be supposed to have come to an end if evil continues to hold its sway. The excellence of the Holy Prophet Mohammad [peace be on him] lies in the fact that under his spiritual guidance and by following his footsteps one can attain the rank of a Prophet as a servant of the cause of the Holy Prophet, as his pupil and disciple. This is the one excellence which is exclusive to the Holy Prophet. No other Prophet before him enjoyed this high status of spirituality of the Holy Prophet.

The Promised Messiah never claimed to be a Prophet with a new Law. His Shariat is the Shariat of the Holy Prophet. He writes:

“All sorts of Prophethood except the Prophethood of Mohammad (Mohammadi Nabuwwat) have now come to a close. No Law-bearing Prophet can come, and a Prophet without a new Law can come on the condition that he is in the first instance an UMMATI (follower of the Holy Prophet). (“Tajalliyat-i-Ilahiya”. page 20).

He writes further:

“It is not permissible to apply the epithet of Nabi (Prophet) to any one after the Holy Prophet without calling him in the same breath also an Ummati which means that he is the recipient of every favour by following the Holy Prophet, and not directly.” (Ibid, page 9).

It is erroneously propagated that belief in the absolute finality of prophethood in the sense that no Prophet whatsoever can appear after the Holy Prophet is a fundamental of Islam. But this is an innovation of our times. Although Ahmadi Muslims believe from the depths of their hearts that the Holy Prophet was Khatam-un-Nabiyyin, they do not consider this belief to be one of the fundamentals of Islam. The only fundamentals of Islam as enumerated by the Holy Prophet of Islam are:

- the Article of Faith - the Kalima
- the Prayer — Salat
- the Fast — Ramadhan
- the Zakat
- the Pilgrimage - Hajj

The attempt of the Maulvis to add something to this list is very daring indeed.

The pamphlet states that in 1974, 140 countries participating in the world Muslim Congress “passed a unanimous resolution” declaring Ahmadis to be out of the pale of Islam.

Our comment to this bold statement is that the quoted number of 140 “Muslim” countries betrays the untruth behind this exaggerated statement. Can the writer enumerate those 140 countries? Moreover, even if the number of countries were 14,000, they would not have the authority to declare anyone to be outside the pale of Islam.

AHMADI MUSLIMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

About the number of Ahmadi Muslims in South Africa the pamphlet says:

“There are a handful in Cape Town.”

This reference to the number of Ahmadi Muslims is typical and reeks of the pride inherent in a majority on the basis of numbers. The question of majority or minority is irrelevant and no measure of truth. Muslims too were a small minority in Mecca and were called by the Meccans as:

“shirzimatun qalilun”, (26:55) i.e., a small group

No doubt the number of Ahmadi Muslims in South Africa, or for that matter in the entire world, is yet small. But they are the torch-bearers of that Olympic flame of Islam which was kindled 1400 years ago and which was later extinguished by the maulvis. This flame has been rekindled in our age and it is in the hands of “a handful” who are going to give light to the rest of the world as did the early companions of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The pamphlet says that Ahmadi Muslims in South Africa had "one court battle with the Muslims." This statement is absolutely wrong. Ahmadi Muslims of South Africa (the pamphlet refers to the "Qadianis") never went to court.

If the writer of the pamphlet wants to appeal to the innocent "Muslims" to part with their money in order to replenish and augment the funds of the Muslim Judicial Council, then he should not resort to untrue statements, distortions and false allegations and make them a basis and springboard for his appeal.

The time is not far when the real face of our opponents will be exposed, the untruths contained in their claims unveiled, and those with insight and sound judgement will start asking questions instead of taking everything they are told at its face value.

Our job is simply to convey the messsge. May Allah guide those who seek the truth.

FRIDAY PRAYER

Of all the obligations of a Muslim, the most important is prayer, and of all the prayers, none is so essential to be recited in congregation as the Juma (Friday) service prayer. The Juma is in fact the greatest Muslim festival. The Holy Quran regards it as a holiday. A whole chapter of the Holy Book entitled the Juma has been devoted to it. In that chapter Almighty God commands Muslims to quit all their worldly affairs when they are summoned to prayer on Friday, to assemble in mosques and to say the Juma prayers with due observance of all the requirements of the Law. The person who does not act in obedience to these injunctions is regarded by the Holy Quran as guilty of a deadly sin and almost outside the circle of Islam. Far more stress has been laid upon attendance at the Juma sermon and prayers than upon Eid. It is on account of this importance of the Juma in the Muslim faith that Friday has universally been observed as a holiday among the Muslims from the very earliest time that Islam took its rise.

(The Promised Messiah)

THE HOLY QURAN ITS UNIQUE PRESERVATION

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

One of the distinctive features of the Quran which has not been shared by any other revealed scripture is its purity of text which has been preserved in its original form free of interpolation of any kind. This subject has been dealt with at length in Volume 2 of the Holy Quran with English translation and commentary published by the Ahmadiyya Community, Rabwah, Pakistan and extracts from the commentary follow:-

Sir William Muir, the well known critic of Islam, says about the Quran: "We may, upon the strongest presumption affirm that every verse in the Quran is the genuine and unaltered composition of Mohammad himself." Again, "There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Mohammad himself gave forth and used." Again, "To compare (as the Muslims are fond of doing) their pure text with the various readings of our scriptures, is to compare things between which there is no analogy." (Introduction to "The Life of Mohammad"). Prof. Noldeke, the great German Orientalist writes as follows: "Slight clerical errors there may have been, but the Quran of Othman contains none but genuine elements, though sometimes in very strange order. Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Quran have failed. (Encyclopaedia Brit). Professor Nicholson says in his "Literary History of the Arabs". "Here (in the Quran) we have materials of unique and incontestable authority for tracing the origin and early development of Islam such materials as do not exist in the case of Buddhism or Christianity or any other ancient religion."

The importance of this security of the Quranic text is further enhanced when we compare it with other revealed scriptures. The Quran was revealed among an illiterate people, while most other scriptures were revealed among peoples who were comparatively more literate and therefore better qualified to preserve the purity of their scriptures. Yet they failed to do so, while the Quran, the most widely read of all revealed scriptures, enjoys complete immunity from all sorts of corruption. This miraculous preservation of the Quranic text is no mere accident. It has been brought about by the special providence of God in accordance with an openly declared prophecy of the Quran.

The following additional factors also very much materially contributed to the preservation of the Quran:

1. That God has inspired the Muslim with an extraordinary love for the Quran. They enjoy the reading of the Book even if they do not understand the meaning of the text. This leads to its being preserved in their hearts.

2. That the rhythm of the Quran is so sweet and its language so charming and so easy to learn and the construction of its sentences so beautiful that it can be committed to memory with great ease.

3. That God so ordained that immediately after the Quranic revelation became complete, it spread far and wide, to the remotest corners of the world, among all nations and all peoples, so that it became practically impossible for anyone to tamper with its text.

4. That from the beginning the Quran formed for Muslims the basis of all the sciences and learning they acquired and developed with a view to serving it. Various branches of knowledge, such as Grammar, Rhetoric, History, Philosophy and Logic were cultivated and developed by Muslims for the sake of a better understanding of their holy Book.

5. That God has preserved Arabic, the language of the Quran, as a living language, while the language of all other revealed books, which were not meant to last for ever, have become practically dead.

Again it is not the text of the Quran only that has been preserved intact by God. He has provided for the preservation of its spirit, also. This has been done by raising divinely inspired Reformers among the Muslims from time to time. These Reformers, known in Islamic terminology as Mujaddids, receive revelations from God and interpret and explain the true meaning of the Quranic text. Such Reformers appeared among the followers of other religions also, but that was only for so long as such scriptures served as guides for their followers. After the advent of Islam, however, all other religious systems and their Scriptures, which were intended only for specific periods and specific peoples, became abrogated and divinely inspired Reformers ceased to appear among them. Now, therefore, the Quran alone among all revealed Scriptures of the world holds the field as a living book and hence divinely inspired Reformers now appear only among the followers of Islam. In our own time God has raised Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, to demonstrate the truth and excellence of the Quran in a manner unparalleled in the history of Islam. Ahmad's presentation of Islam is not like one praying for a hearing as was the vogue among the apologetical school of Muslim writers, but as a victor challenging the protagonists of all other religious systems and the so called modernists and Higher Critics to find fault with any teaching of Islam; and also as a judge passing his judgement on them. The appearance of such Reformers in itself constitutes proof of the living power of a religion and its scripture inasmuch as they are really the fruit of their religion and their appearance proves its efficacy.

The above commentary has revealed a great truth which no non-Muslim can deny. It is surprising how many Christians there are who believe that the Bible is the perfect word of God free of all interpolations and contradictions. When they are told that interpolations certainly do exist and contradictions abound they usually answer by saying that they are only "seeming" contradictions etc, etc. Let us quote what are the findings of certain Christian Biblical scholars:

Matthew 17:21 is omitted in the best M. S. S. and was probably added with some alterations from Mark 9.21. (A New Commentary on the Holy Scriptures by Bishop Gore)

1 John v 7 is recognised as an interpolation (Doctrine of Trinity by Theodore Christbel. D.D.)

The text of Hosea has been imperfectly handed down. A multitude of passages are corrupt, some incurably. (Dictionary of the Bible by J. Hastings)

Most of the ancient authorities omit John 7:53 - 8:11. Those which contain it vary much from each other. (Marginal note in the Authorised Version of the Bible.)

Malachi 14:18 'The text is probably corrupt' (Marginal note in the Authorised Version of the Bible)

Revelations 2:13. 'The Greek text here is somewhat uncertain.' (Marginal note in the Authorised Version of the Bible).

That Muhammad really lived cannot be disputed. The development of Islam at least when compared with the other world religions is open to the clear light of history, and presents us with yet another proof that the Prophetic personality is the original source of the new religious creation....

Even today, after a period of development of thirteen centuries, one may clearly discern in genuine Islamic piety the uniqueness which is ultimately derived from its founder's personal experience of God.

(Tor Andrea, Muhammad: The Man and his Faith.)

BOOK REVIEW

JESUS LIVED IN INDIA

Author: Holger Kersten

Publisher: Element Books: Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset Limp

Cover, Pages 242 : Price: not stated

The life of Jesus after his supposed resurrection from death has been a subject of controversy for many centuries but the theory of his emigration to India which first came to light with the claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, generated a new interest in the question.

For nearly a century, the entire question was suppressed by the threat of inquisition but in recent times, scholars of Christology have begun to show more courage in their dealing of this question.

One such scholar, Holger Kersten retraces the steps of Jesus's life in his excellent research, Jesus lived in India.

The first chapter of the book discusses 'the unknown life of Jesus' and the discovery made by the famous Russian explorer, Nicolai Notovitch who found references to the Israelite prophet in the Gnopos preserved in the Buddhist monastries in Tibet.

The author then details his own expedition to India and the evidences he discovered substantiating the theory of Jesus's emigration, life and death in the northern hemisphere of the sub-continent.

The book traces the existance of Israelite posterity in India, particularly in the state of Kashmir, the tomb of Mary in Muree (Mari), Pakistan and also the tomb of Jesus Christ at Khanyar Street in Sirinagar, India.

This excellent work is based upon extensive literary research. The authors own expeditions to northern India verify many of his opinions and leave a conclusive impression that Jesus must have travelled to and lived in India.

One basic deviation from established facts however, is the authors theory that 'at the age of thirteen, Jesus must have followed the Silk road towards India and studied Buddhism before embarking upon his own ministry, 'This hypothesis is based upon the author's findings of a unique similarity between the teachings of the Buddhist Gnopas and the Gospels. Whereas the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement believed that the influence of Christ's teachings was made to prevail over the Gnopa's , Kersten expresses an opinion that Christ was influenced by the teachings of Buddhism.

On the whole, the book is an excellent piece of research and although it involves some very heavy reading on occasions, it is positively a valuable addition to the large volume of books already available on the topic.

PROGRESS OF AHMADIYYAT — THE TRUE ISLAM

The study of history shows that those who are vilifying and persecuting are subsequently put in the position of those who have been vilified and persecuted. No amount of misrepresentation or vilification or persecution has ever succeeded in destroying a community more particularly a religious community. Remember this that whatever circumstances a man passes through, those are meant for his preparation and his training. I firmly believe that our community is at present passing through a course of tribulation by way of preparation for the obligations that are bound to be laid upon our shoulders as time passes, and for the functions that we must discharge if we are to be torchbearers of truth and the spiritual leaders of mankind. In order that we should carry this message to the uttermost ends of the earth we must be tried, persecuted and vilified and put to all sorts of inconveniences and annoyances and troubles and if we are able to bear that vilification and persecution, we shall have discharged the obligation laid upon us. We cannot fit ourselves for our great task until we pass through that fire. It is necessary that we should qualify ourselves by service. Persecution will purify us and outward good work help us to serve the best interest of mankind as torch-bearers of enlightenment for the human race.

(Sir Zafrullah Khan)

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 it 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 Religion is the oldest magazine of its kind published in 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-six years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to millions of readers and many fortunate persons have recognized the truth of Islam and accepted it through its study.

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 refutation 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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