



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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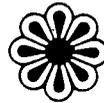
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EDITORIAL

PEACETHROUGHTOLERANCE

The object of revealed religions is to establish a harmonious relationship among mankind. The message of Jesus was: '... have peace with one another' (Mark 9:50) and Christians have named him the 'Prince of Peace'. Islam means 'Peace' and the Muslim greeting *Assalamu Alaikum* means Peace be on you, in accordance with the Holy Quran which advocates '... the making of peace among men.'(4:115).

This is the real Islam - the way of life and conduct which promotes peace. Aggression in any form is forbidden in Islam (2:257). The Holy Quran teaches that a Muslim is one who submits himself completely to God, that is to say one who strives to do His will and to win His pleasure through righteous deeds and conduct thereby manifesting the peaceful teachings of Islam. A Muslim is expected to maintain an atmosphere of peace with all whom he meets though, it should be borne in mind, Islam does permit one to resist aggression. Paradise has been described as 'the abode of peace and, as heavenly life begins in this world, a devout Muslim should live peaceably with others in every sphere of life.

Addressing mankind at large, God says in the Holy Quran: 'This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam as religion'(5:4). It is natural and incumbent for a Muslim to convey the message of Islam but in doing so he is instructed to do so in the best way: 'call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in a way that is best' (16:126). This means that Muslims should preach in a courteous and agreeable manner. God says in the Holy Quran: 'There is no compulsion in religion' (2:257) therefore there is no question of endeavouring to compel a person to accept the faith by means of verbal or physical pressure. Elsewhere the Holy Quran expressly states: 'let him, who will, believe, and let him, who will, disbelieve' (18:30). Such is the tolerant attitude of Islam.

GUIDE POSTS

FAULT FINDING

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

There is a difference between finding fault and constructive criticism. No doubt drawing the attention of another to a fault in aid of his betterment is a meritorious act providing he is approached in the proper manner. Here however attention is being drawn to those persons who find fault for the sake of fault-finding. It is they who should not throw stones in glass houses and bear in mind the words of Jesus:

“Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thy own eye?
(Math7.3)

On this matter God says in the Holy Quran:

“O ye who believe! Let not one people deride another people, haply they may be better than they, nor let one group of women deride other women, haply they may be better than they.”
(49:12)

Gossip is a very common fault. It would not be so bad if we speak of people in a charitable manner; but often we do not. Our eyes and ears are keener to pick out blemishes than features of beauty; and our tongues like to talk of other’s shortcomings. The Holy Quran instructs us not to be censorious and adversely critical of others. God commands:

“O ye who believe! avoid much suspicion, for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not on one another, neither backbite one another.”
(49:13)

Nobody likes to be the subject of unkind fault-finding and censorious criticism. We like to be judged fairly. We like others to show forbearance and charity in our shortcomings. That being so we should show charitable forbearance in our attitude towards them. We would resent and abhor unfair and unkind fault-finding levelled at us.

It is strange how unaware we may be of our own faults and yet how

clearly we see those of other people. We see a speck in the eye of another while being apparently oblivious of a large beam in our own eye. We observe and criticize the smallest fault in another while a much greater fault lies in us. We have been well advised:

In speaking of a person's faults
 Pray don't forget your own;
 Remember that those with homes of glass
 Should seldom throw a stone.
 If we have nothing else to do
 Than talk of those who sin,
 Its better to commence at home
 And from that point begin.

It is a fact that those who talk about the faults of others usually have far greater faults in themselves. This truth should make us extremely careful before voicing the faults of others. We would do far better to speak well of them and remain silent regarding their faults. The Holy Prophet of Islam said:

“Do you know what backbiting is? He was answered: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: Your saying of your brother that which he would dislike. Someone said: But if my brother should be as I say? The Holy Prophet said: If he should be as you say then you have been guilty of backbiting and if he should not be as you say you are guilty of calumny.”

(Muslim)

God directs that we should not involve ourselves in exposing and discussing the faults of others but, rather, we should strive to prevent and mend our own.

We should be so attentative to improving ourselves that we have no time to backbite, fault-find and criticise others. If we want to enjoy the sweet peace of God within ourselves then we should strive to keep our minds free of all bitter criticism.

DIVINE DREAM

(Nearly twenty years before being acclaimed by God to be the Promised Reformer of the fourteenth century of the Muslim Calendar as foretold by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, saw the following dream predicting the revival and progress of Islam through him. —Editor)

In my early youth I saw in a dream that I was in a magnificent building which was very clean and neat where people were talking about the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace. I enquired from the people where the Holy Prophet was and they pointed to a room which I entered along with other persons. When I presented myself to him he was much pleased, and returned my greeting with a better greeting. I can still recall and can never forget his charm and beauty and the kind and affectionate look that he directed towards me. He won my heart with his love and the beauty and glory of his countenance. He asked me: *Ahmad, what are you holding in your right hand?* I looked and found that I had a book in my right hand and I felt that I had written it myself so I answered him: *This is something I have written.* He inquired: *What is the name of your book?* I was surprised and looked at the book a second time and felt that it resembled a book in my library which was called Qutbi, so I answered him: *Messenger of Allah, this book is called Qutbi.* He said: *Show me this book Qutbi.* When he took it in his hand it immediately became a delicious and attractive fruit. He cut it as fruit is cut and pure honey began to flow out of it like water and I perceived the wetness of honey on the Holy Prophet's right hand and arm from his fingers to his elbow which were dripping with honey. I also felt that the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, was showing me all this in order to make me wonder. Then it occurred to me that there was the dead body of a person lying outside the door who had been destined by Allah, the Exalted, to be brought to life by that fruit and that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, was to bestow life upon him. When this thought passed through my mind I saw that the dead person had suddenly come to life and had come up to me running and was standing behind my back but that he was in a weak condition as if he was hungry. Then the Holy Prophet looked at me smiling and cut the fruit into several pieces and ate one of them himself and gave the rest to me while they were dripping with honey and said to me: *Ahmad,*

give one of the pieces to this person so that he might draw strength from it. I gave him a piece and like a greedy person he devoured it immediately.

I then saw that the chair in which the Holy Prophet was sitting began to rise till it reached up to the ceiling and I noticed that his face began to shine as if reflecting the rays of the sun and the moon. I was watching his blessed countenance and my eyes were running because of my strong emotion. Then I woke up and I was still weeping.

Allah, the Exalted, put it in my mind that the dead person in my dream was Islam and that Allah, the Exalted, would revive it at my hands through the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace. You cannot know that this time may well be near, so wait eagerly for it. In this dream the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, nurtured me with his blessed hands through his holy words and his light and the gift of fruit from his blessed garden.

(*Ayena Kamalat-e-Islam pp.548-549*)

My humble self saw the Seal of the Prophets, on whom be peace, in a dream in 1864-1865 in my early youth when I was still pursuing my studies. In my dream I had in my hand a religious book which I felt was of my own authorship. The Holy Prophet seeing this book enquired from me in Arabic: *How have you named this book?* I submitted: *I have named it Qutbi*. The interpretation of this has now come to my mind on the publication of this book that it is a book which in its reasoning and arguments is firm and unshakeable like the polar star. Presenting the firmness of the contents of this book I have issued a challenge and announced the award of a prize of 10,000 Rupees for anyone who might be able to refute it.

The Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, took that book from me and the moment his blessed hands touched it, it became a lovely fruit resembling a guava but it was as big as a water-melon. When the holy Prophet cut it into pieces it yielded so much honey that his blessed hand and fore arm began to drip with it. Then a dead person whose body was lying outside the door came to life as a miracle of the Holy Prophet and came and stood behind me. My humble self was standing before the Holy Prophet in the attitude of a supplicant and the Holy Prophet who was occupying his chair in great glory and majesty was like a ruler., as if he was a great champion.

Then the Holy Prophet handed over to me one piece of the fruit so that I might give it to the newly revived person and he bestowed upon

me all the remaining pieces. I gave that one piece to the revived person which he ate immediately and when he finished eating it I perceived that the chair of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, had risen much higher and the Holy Prophet's countenance began to shine forth like the rays of the sun which was an indication of the revival and progress of Islam. While watching this display of light I woke up. Allah be praised for all this.

(Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya part III pp.248-249 sub footnote 1).

PROMISED MESSIAH ON THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Islam, the message of peace, has been maltreated by its enemies. God sent His Messiah to regain its lost glory and to defend it against the assaults of the opponents. In order to achieve the motive of proving superiority of Islam over other religions, the Promised Messiah inaugurated a monthly magazine in the name of 'The Review of Religions' in 1902. Since then, the magazine has been serving the cause of Islam faithfully.

In the issue of Al-Hakam of September 30, 1903 the Promised Messiah expressed his intense desire in connection with The Review of Religions in the following words:

"If for the assistance of this Magazine ten thousand members of the Jamaat volunteer for its subscription in Urdu or English, it will make its debut and create an impressive impact on public. In my opinion the people who realise the significance of their initiation and the always keep its importance in view, this number is just nominal."

this Magazine is an effective organ of Tabligh. Every Ahmadi family should read it and also present it to their non Ahmadi friends.

The men of letters are requested to write articles for it regularly and their suggestions for its progress and perfection are most welcome.

Managing Editor.

THE RED DROPS

(A. R. Dard)

It was in May or June, 1884, that Hazrat Ahmad, after offering the Fajr prayer one morning, retired into a tiny room on the East (now north-eastern corner) of the Masjid Mobarak. It was a cool place on account of the fresh plaster on the walls. He lay down on a charpai (an Indian bedstead) which used to be kept there. There was no mattress or pillow on it. He lay facing the north, with his head to the west. One arm was pillowed underneath and other was resting over his head. M. Abdulla Sanauri began to press his feet—an eastern custom of massaging to show respect and devotion; and he says it was a Friday, the 27th of Ramazan. He was meditating upon the manifold blessings of the moment upon himself when he saw that the whole body of Hazrat Ahmad suddenly trembled. Hazrat Ahmad looked at M. Abdulla Sanauri, who saw that Hazrat Ahmad's eyes were filled with tears. A little later, he saw a drop of red liquid on one of his feet, just under his ankles, and it appeared to have just dropped there at that moment. "I touched it with a finger of my right hand," he says and then smelt it, but there was no smell of any kind. Then I noticed another big drop on his shirt, over his ribs. It was also fresh. I got up quietly and looked all round, to find out the source or cause of these drops. It was a very small and low-roofed room and I searched every nook and corner in order to satisfy myself thoroughly but could not trace anything visible which could have caused the red drops. Therefore I sat on the charpai again and began to press the feet of Hazrat Ahmad. After a while he got up, went out and sat in the Mosque. I followed him there and sat behind him to press his shoulders. I then asked him about the drops. He answered with indifference, but I asked him again the same question. Thereupon Hazrat Ahmad inquired as to what drops I meant. I pointed out the one on his shirt. He looked at it, and then explained to me by a few illustrations the phenomenon of Kashf by which certain things seen in vision actually materialise in the physical world. What had happened was related by Hazrat Ahmad as follows:- "Whilst in a waking vision, I saw a beautiful big building. There was a couch in it on which sat an imposing figure. He was God Himself. I thought myself to be a humble officer of the Divine Court. I had written certain decrees which I placed before the Almighty for His signatures. I was asked to sit on the couch with deepest fatherly affection and love. Then He dipped His pen in the red inkstand, shook it a little, and then signed the papers.

The red drops you see are those that fell from His pen whilst He shook it." Hazrat Ahmad asked M. Abdullah Sanauri to see if any of the drops had fallen on his clothes or cap; and to his boundless delight he found one on his own cap also.

M. Abdullah Sanauri was deply moved and impressed by this mysterious phenomenon; and, being a personal witness of this little act of Divine creation, he requested Hazrat Ahmad to give him the shirt which bore the red drops. Hazrat Ahmad imbued with the same spirit as the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings be upon him, hesitated a little, fearing that in the future his followers might begin to worship his shirt; but when M. Abdullah Sanauri pressed him for it Hazrat Ahmad gave it to him on condition that it should be buried with him when he died. M. Abdullah Sanauri was at that time twenty years of age. He had come to Qadian for the first time two years previously. He remained a most devoted disciple of Hazrat Ahmad for the rest of his life. He passed away on October 7, 1927, on a Friday. He was buried clothed with the same memorable shirt bearing the divine ink which he had carried with him day and night, at home and abroad, for 43 years. He never parted with it. It was a veritable sign of God and the most precious gift that a man could receive from on high. He treasured it, prized it and loved it as the greatest memento of his most beloved Master, whom he loved with all his soul and with all his heart. He had put it in a wooden box, specially made for it, with a glass top and had so folded the shirt as to show the red drops. I have myself seen it many a time. Under the orders of the Khalifatul Masih II, he showed it to a great number of people so that the witnesses of this divine sign might be numbered by thousands. Often would he look at it himself with eyes full of mixed feelings of sadness and joy. His face would glow at the sight of the priceless gift only to make him sadder at the painful idea of the gulf that separated him physically from one whom he had served every moment of his life.

How interesting is this attituded when compared with both the belief and practice of early Christians concerning the so called holy relics of Jesus and the saints. According to the authorities, these were said to be endowed with many miraculous powers, which emanated from them. Tradition asserts that many miracles were actually wrought merely by touching these relics; and in the end this became so widespread that there is little doubt that the whole of the church relapsed into a form of paganism not far removed from the vicious superstitions of animistic customs.

Materialistic unbelievers will laugh and mock at the incident of the drops mentioned above. "In 1926 there died the author of a once famous book called Flat Land. It described a world of two dimensions in which everything was flat. The flat inhabitants of this world were in no way impressed with the strangeness of their condition for they had no conception of the possibility of a third dimension. One of their number, a square, did become enlightened, but he was put in prison for life lest his heresy should disturb the minds and excite the curiosity of his fellow citizens. From their own point of view his judges were perhaps justified. They had no senses by which they could perceive three-dimensional space, for their eyes were in their sides, and it seemed preposterous to allege the existence of that which could never be perceived". So unbelieving materialists live in a kind of Flat Land. Their senses enable them to perceive only certain aspects of the world. They have no reason to suppose that their knowledge is exhaustive or complete. They should not therefore forget that there may be other "dimensions" of which they are quite unconscious.

They do not possess the eyes which open up vast vistas of spiritual world has its own system of laws. It would be idle for materialists to deny facts which belong to it. Before a man can claim knowledge of a thing, he must have some experience of it. An expert biologist or a chef, for instance, would only make a fool of himself if he interfered with a wireless set without knowing anything about radioactivity. It is impossible, however, to argue with the arbitrary.

The sceptics will doubt because they have always grovelled in the darkness of doubt. They are incapable of seeing the light. They are intellectually blind and bankrupt. They are not sure even of their own existence.

Honest seekers after truth will require proof. Proof they can have if only they are able to recognise it as such. Experience is a proof by itself and observation is the greatest reason. Seeing is believing. Here are two most truthful persons who have never been accused of falsehood in any shape or form. They are not insane or feeble-minded. There is no ulterior motive behind what they actually saw. One of them sees the vision without knowing that the drops had actually materialised in this world, and the other simultaneously finds the drops without knowing anything about the vision. The drops were then seen by thousands of people. A search into the possible causes was immediately made on the spot and no explanation was found. What else, therefore, is required to give the occurrence the positiveness

of proof? I maintain that in everything else we generally form our opinions only on such data; why, then, should people hesitate to believe in the happening just related?

Ahmad was surrounded by all kinds of enemies and they could easily have raised all kinds of objections and have destroyed the significance of the sign; but, in spite of its repeated and emphatic publication, no one seriously tried to refute it. The only demand that was made was for a declaration of facts by M. Abudllah Sanauri, under a most solemn oath, the words of which were proposed by the enemies; and they were all stunned into complete silence when, in accordance with their wishes, he took the oath at Amritsar in 1919 amid a bitterly hostile gathering.

Muslims cannot object to these drops because they believe that Hasan Basri once dreamt that Shamoon had returned to him the certificate which he had given to Shamoon. When Hasan Basri woke up, he found that he had actually got the certificate with him. (*Tazkiratul Auliya*, p.40). Similarly, Abdullah bin Jala dreamt that the Holy Prophet Mohammad had given him a loaf of bread of which he ate one half. When he woke up he found the other half of the loaf still with him (*Tazkiratul Auliya*, p.498). Christians believe that "about five thousand men, besides women and children" were fed with "five loaves, and two fishes". "And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full." (*Math. 14:17-21*).

DEMEANOUR OF THE HOLY PROPHET

His politeness to the great, his affability to the humble and his dignified bearing to the presumptuous, procured him respect, admiration and applause. His talents were equally fitted for persuasion or command. His simple eloquence rendered impressive by the impression of a countenance wherein awfulness of majesty was tempered by an amiable sweetness, excited emotions of veneration and love, and he was gifted with that authoritative air of genius which alike influences the learned and commands the illiterate. As a friend and a parent, he exhibited the softest feelings. With all that simplicity, which is so natural, to a great mind, he performed the humbler offices.

(*Thomas Carlyle*)

AUTHENTICITY OF BIBLE AND QURAN EXAMINED

(Zikrullah T. Ayyuba)

A study of the Bible reveals that it does not contain the exact words revealed and spoken by the Prophets such as Moses and Jesus. It was committed to writing by numerous writers during a period of many centuries during which time it also underwent changes. Dr. Stanley Cook writes:

“Human fallibility being what it is, the Bible is not free from contradictions and errors, and is by no means of equal religious value throughout.”

(pg. 193 An Introduction to the Bible)

Again the eleventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica states under the title Bible:

“...it is beyond dispute that a large number of corruptions were introduced into the Hebrew text.”

We learn from the history of Israel that during the time of Nebuchchadnezzar the books of Israel were burnt and destroyed. Later they were re-written by the Prophet Ezra:

“It was forgotten but Ezra restored it.”

(p. 322, Vol. V, Jewish Encyclopaedia)

It is further written on the same page:

“He showed his doubts concerning the correctness of some words of the text by placing dots over them. Should Elihah, said he, approve the text, the points will be disregarded. Should he disapprove, the doubtful words will be removed from the text.”

This needs no further comment of mine. It is clear that the general text of the Old Testament could no longer be regarded as the Word of God preserved in its pristine purity. Such is the state of the Old Testament.

The New Testament is in much the same condition. There is no assurance as to exactly when it was written. We learn that in the early days after Jesus's departure they were awaiting for his return. While those who had lived with Jesus were passing away and at the same time there was no sign of his return, a need was felt that the Gospel should be written down for the benefit of those who could not hear from those people who had lived with him. A noted Oxford scholar has written:

“The first important point to bear in mind here is that none of the Gospels could have been written until many, many years after Jesus. The Gospel according to Mark is by common consent recognised as the earliest. The date usually assigned to its composition is about A.D.65. The crucifixion is generally assumed to have taken place in the year A.D. 29 or 30. The Gospel is, therefore about thirty five years later than the story it records. The other Gospels were written subsequently ... During the early years that succeeded the death of Jesus no written records appear to have been made of his life and teachings. A few of his most striking sayings were perhaps embodied in some simple liturgy. As, however, the years passed by and memories grew dim, the need was felt for committing his words into writing ... These early writings must have been based upon the reminiscences of the disciples who had lived with Jesus and hear his words, and it is upon the reminiscences and traditions that our existing Gospels are built.

When it is realised how impossible it is for a story to pass from mouth to mouth, even a short time after the occurrence of an incident, without undergoing some modification, it is inevitable that narratives and sayings which had been passed from mouth to mouth over a period of thirty years should become transformed in process. Moreover, we must remember that in ancient times it was the common practice for even the most conscientious chroniclers and historians to put into the mouths of the characters, of whom they wrote words which they considered appropriate to the occasion without any intention of implying that they were the exact words used. nor did an ancient chronicler scruple on occasion, to modify his record in such a way as to bring out the particular point of view which he was anxious to stress in his writing. There is no doubt that the Gospels, which were written not only for the purpose of record

but also for dedication have been affected by this attitude of mind. We have, therefore, no security that the narratives and sayings as given in the Gospels necessarily represent what acutally happened and what was actually said."

(The Story Behind the Gospel by Bernard M. Allen)

Thomas Paine writes in his book 'The Age of Reason':

"The councils of Nicea and Laodicea were held about 350 years after Christ and the books which now make the New Testament were then voted for by yeas and nays as we vote for a law. A great many that were offered had a majority of nays and were rejected. This is the way in which the New Testament came into being ... Be this as it may, they decided by vote which of the books out of the collection they had made should be considered as the word of God and which should not. They rejected several, they voted others to be doubtful such as the books called Apocrypha; and those books which had majority of votes were voted to be the word of God. Had they voted otherwise, all the people, since calling themselves Christians, would have believed otherwise, for the belief of one comes from the vote of another."

We read in Peakes Commentary on the Bible:

"We have no final and unquestionable text of Holy scriptures to which we can turn to as the original version. The original have long since perished."(p.4)

"If the claim of the New Testament is true that all scriptures is given by the inspiration of God." (2 Timothy 3:16) then why did the Church have to decide by votes which books were revealed and which were not.

It is asserted by our Christian friends that the first five books of the Bible were written by Moses under divine inspiration. But how could it be when it is written in the last chapter of the last of the five books:

"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord ... but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

(Deuteronomy 34:5,6)

It is obvious that Moses was not the inspired writer of the books or, for that matter even the writer, as he could not write about his own

death. In fact, so much time had elapsed before they were written that no one any longer knew the whereabouts of his grave! Similarly the the next book could not have been written by Joshua as it is written at the end:

“And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died being a hundred and ten years old.”

(Joshua 24:29)

If Muslims are fond of comparing their scripture with those of other religions it is due to the authenticity of the Holy Quran to be the Word of God in which God states:

“This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the righteous.”

(2:3)

“Verily We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian.”

(15:10)

“Those who disbelieve in the Reminder when it comes to them are the losers. And, truly, it is a mighty Book. Falsehood cannot approach it either from front or behind. It is a revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy.”

(41-42-43)

These verses speak for themselves and clearly promise divine protection for the Holy Quran. This promise and prophecy has been literally fulfilled throughout the centuries as it exists in its pure original Arabic text. The Holy Quran was not written by Muhammad (peace be on him) or anyone else. It was, as it claims, revealed by God to the Prophet:

“He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book.”

(3:8)

“All praise belongs to Allah who has sent down the Book to His servant and has not put therein any crookedness.”

(18:2)

These passages from the Holy Quran show clearly that it claims to be the Word of God as it truly is. Furthermore the language and style of the Holy Quran is such that it can be easily committed to memory.

Not only did the companions of the Holy Prophet commit it to memory but even today there are hundreds and thousands of Muslims who have done so and recite it regularly to keep it fresh in their minds.

A characteristic of the Holy Quran is that it refutes every objection brought against it by its opponents who, for instance, asserted that the Holy Prophet had forged it. God challenges them in the Holy Quran:

“If you are in doubt as to what We sent down to our servant then produce a chapter like it, and call upon your helpers besides Allah, if you are truthful.”

(2:24)

“Do they say he has forged it? Say, ‘Bring then a chapter like unto it, and call for help on all you can if you are truthful.’

(10:39)

This challenge has never been taken up. No doubt many critics have endeavoured to refute the claims of Islam but no one has met this particular challenge even insofar as to produce a single verse better than the standard of Arabic in the Holy Quran. How could they when God Himself has ordained:

“Say, ‘If mankind and the Jinn gathered together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even though they should help one another.’

(17:89)

Not only has the text of the Holy Quran been well guarded and preserved but also its spirit and meanings for in every century God has been raising a spiritual reformer from among the Muslims who attains direct communion with God and revives the faith of Islam through perfect obedience to the Holy Quran, and the Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) thereby showing a clear sign of the existence of God and His Living Word. This is a unique feature of Islam. No wonder, therefore, that the Holy Quran is a living Book which manifests a Living God. In our time God has raised Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam to explain the truth and excellences of the Holy Quran. He said:

“The real perfect parts of salvation have been opened only by the Holy Quran, all others were only its shadows. Therefore you

should study the Holy Scriptures with utmost attention and deepest thoughts and you should love it as you have never loved anything else.”

Another characteristic of the Holy Quran is prophecy. It abounds with prophecies the fulfillment of which puts at rest the minds of its followers. Some of the marvellous prophecies have been fulfilled while others still await to be fulfilled.

In the Holy Quran God says about the corpse of Pharaoh:

“So this day We will save thee in thy body alone that thou mayest be a sign for those who come after thee. And surely many of mankind are heedless of our signs.”

(10:93)

This verse refers to the proud Pharaoh who had drowned with his hosts after wrongfully and aggressively pursuing Moses and the Israelites. When the calamity of drowning overtook him he acknowledged and declared his belief in the God of Moses. But it was too late. Even so God showed mercy on him and promised to save his body as a sign for those who came after him. It is a remarkable fact that of all religious scriptures it is only the Holy Quran which mentions this fact. The Bible nor any book of history mentions it. In a wonderful manner the Holy Quran, the Word of God, has proved true. After the lapse of more than 3000 years the body of the same Pharaoh was discovered in Egypt about the turn of the 20th century. It now lies in a preserved state in the Cairo museum. His name was Menaptah.

Again it has been prophesied in the Holy Quran that the Persians would be defeated by the Romans and the latter would be defeated by the Muslims:

“The Romans have been defeated, in the land nearby, and they, after their defeat will be victorious in a few years - Allah’s is the command before and after that - and on that day the believers will rejoice.”

(30: 2-5)

The Persians had almost over run the Roman Empire and by 615 they had reached the gates of Constantinople. They had already conquered Palestine, Syria and Egypt. The Romans were in disarray having suffered defeat after defeat. They seemed to be doomed. Yet in 624 the Romans struck back and crushed the Persians who were also

later conquered by the Muslims.

There is also grand prophecy in the Holy Quran regarding the joining of two bodies of water:

“He has made the two bodies of water flow. They will one day meet. Between them there is at present a barrier; They cannot encroach one upon the other.”

(55:20-21)

This prophecy has been literally fulfilled by the construction of the Suez and Panama canals linking the Mediteranean and Red sea and Atlantic and Pacific ocean respectively.

There are also prophecies of the enormous progress in the science of astronomy (81:12), and of great development in the science of geology and minerology, and interplanetary communication. The Holy Quran also makes mention of those who shall acquire great material power so much so that they would conquer every elevation they come across. God says in the Holy Quran:

“It shall be so even when Gog and Magog are let loose and they shall hasten forth from the top of every wave.”

(21:97)

Gog and Magog refer to the great powers comprising Russia and America in particular. We read in the Holy Quran:

“Soon shall We attend to you, O ye two big groups.”

(55:32)

What a graphic picture these verses have drawn of the Western nations today who by virtue of their achievements and political strategies have on the eve of the promised time, acquired the same attributes.

FRUITS OF HOLY ASPIRATIONS

Spiritual achievements are the consumation of holy aspirations. He who lives constantly in the conception of noble and lofty thoughts, who dwells upon all that is pure and noble and unselfish, will, as surely as the sun reaches its zenith and the moon its full, become wise and noble in character, and rise into a position of influence and blessedness.

(James Allen)

SEAL OF THE PROPHETS

(Kenneth Moakan, Canada)

One of the very many excellences which has been conferred by Allah on the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, is that of *Khatame Nabuwwat*, loosely translated as the Seal of the Prophets, This title of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, is mentioned in the Holy Quran as follows:

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatamun Nabiyyin and Allah has full knowledge of all things.”

(33:41)

The rank of our Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, is here stated as a very high one, but unfortunately, the Muslims of today, have put a very limited interpretation to this very high and exalted title which was bestowed by Allah Himself on our Holy Prophet, on whom be peace.

To understand the dignified status which our Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, occupies in relation to all humanity, including the Prophets, we have to study it in great detail and in order to do so we have to understand the circumstances under which this reality becomes a phenomenon.

The Arabs, like present day humanity, had believed that an adopted son holds a similar rank and position as that of a real son. From the verses which precede this, we have been told of this misconceived belief and practice. To remove this false belief, Allah revealed that the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, was not the father of any man, but he is Khataman Nabiyyin which is by far higher and greater an honour than ordinarily being the father of a man.

Unfortunately, it has been argued from this verse by the opponents of the Promised Messiah that after the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, there can never appear in the House of Islam anyone who could be bestowed with the rank of prophethood in one form or the other. They further claim that with the advent of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, as Khatamun Nabiyyin, not only has the rank of prophethood in any form been cut off, but that Divine revelation has also ceased to descend.

Basing our interpretation on the Holy Quran, Hadith, and the accepted usage of the Arabic term and its dictionary meaning, we find that our Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, occupies a unique position by his being Khatamun Nabiyyin and that he has not appeared as being the one who was sent to put an end to Prophethood of all forms. On the contrary, we believe that with his advent, a new system was opened up, a new world was given birth, a new humanity was created, a new Adam was born and a new heaven and earth began to unfold, opening up unlimited avenues of spiritual advancement for humanity.

This uniqueness is very significant, in that no other Prophet has been designated as such. The Arabic term Khatam carries the significance of embellishment, ornament, best and most perfect. It also signifies a seal or a stamp or a mark. It follows, therefore, that the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, being Khatamun Nabiyyin is the most perfect prophet in all respects. When we take into consideration the different meanings and applications of the term, we find that it fits perfectly to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace.

The perfection which the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, has attained is attested by the Holy Quran when it says:

“And he revealed His word when he was in the uppermost horizon. then the Prophet drew near to Allah; then Allah leaned down towards him. So that he became, as it were one chord to two bows, or closer still.”

(53:8-10)

The significance of this, is that the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, on the one hand, while being a mortal, was drawn towards Allah, yet maintaining his humanity, on the other hand, he attained such perfection that he is the connecting link between man and God. The two bows when meeting at one chord form a circle and the central point in this circle stands the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace.

The affinity that the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, has progressed to, is of such a degree that he has attained such nearness that the fine line of one chord to two bows, or closer still depicts, the Arabic term *قَاب قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَى* indicates, nearness to the point of merging, where distance becomes, as it were, extinct. thus the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, became the epitome of Allah's creation. this is a stage to which no other Prophet has ever reached.

The Miraj or Spiritual Ascension of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, which is referred to in the verses under discussion, has been graphically depicted in the books of Hadith. It is recorded that the angel Gabriel accompanied the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, to a certain distance, beyond which even angels cannot tread. He (the angel Gabriel) advised the Holy Prophet; on whom be peace, to proceed alone since he cannot go any further. The Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, proceeded and exhausted all the stages of spiritual glory, while reaching the highest pinnacle of spiritual eminence to this point of *قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ* or total immersion. Hence he became the central point between the two bows -Divinity and Humanity.

Since the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, has attained such a high degree of excellence, it follows, that in order to attain any degree of spirituality one must receive it through him. The Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, was commanded to proclaim:

“Say, if you love Allah, follow me: then will Allah love you and forgive you your faults. And Allah is most Forgiving, Merciful. Say, ‘Obey Allah and the Messenger’: but if they turn away, then Allah loves not the disbelievers.”

(3:32-33)

Again the Holy Quran says:

“O ye who believe obey Allah and His Messenger and let not your works go vain.”

(47:34)

This shows that only by following and obeying the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, can one win Allah’s pleasure, forgiveness and mercy.

Here it might be argued by the Christians, that Jesus is the way and the light and only through him can one reach the Father. Yes, this was true and it was limited in its connotation by virtue of the fact that Jesus was not sent to the entire humanity, but only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matt. 15:24). In his time, the Children of Israel could not have attained any blessing without accepting Jesus; in this way he was the way through whom the Children of Israel could have attained any degree of spirituality, but with the advent of the Khataman Nabiyyin the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, that became extinct and obsolete.

Another aspect that the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, *being*

Khatamun Nabiyyin, is the fact, that unlike all the other Prophets who preceded him, he was sent to all the nations and peoples of the world. The Holy Quran testifies to this when it says:

“And We have sent thee not but as a Mercy for all the peoples.”

(21:108)

Having been sent as a mercy for all, he was informed:

“There is no people to whom a warner has not been sent.”

(35:25)

In this way the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, has put the seal of attestation to the truth of all the Prophets who preceded him. He it was to whom was revealed the necessity and importance of belief in all Prophets:

Believe in ... His Messengers, saying, ‘We make no distinction between any of His Messengers’.

(2:286)

No other prophet conveyed to his people that prophets were raised in nations and peoples other than theirs except the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace. Hence, every religion prior to Islam believed that guidance was only sent among their people to the exclusion of all others. They even believed that God only spoke to their people and that they were thus the chosen ones of God. This is believed in even up to this day. The Jews believe that they are God’s chosen people, the Hindus believe that light and guidance only descended in India many ages ago and of late, the Germans were advocating that the Aryan race was the superior people. With the advent of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, a deathblow was struck to all these false notions and beliefs and all humanity was declared as being equal.

As Khatamun Nabiyyin, the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, not only shed light on this very important aspect, but taught that all the prophets were sinless and cleared them of all the false charges which were levelled against them by followers and enemies alike. This is the greatest service which the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, performed towards all the prophets.

The advent of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, was foretold by all the prophets who preceded him and the nations of the world were looking forward with great expectations for his advent. His advent was to have dawned when the world was at its climax to be able to receive the most perfect and complete law and religion,

All the prophets who appeared before the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, were only national prophets, who came within a certain geographical and climatic limitation and only for a certain period of time were their teachings meant. Some of these prophets were sent within a limited tribal population and for specific purposes.

The world before the advent of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, was not in a state to accept and follow a universal and perfect religion. The people had not the capacity to bear the weight of the perfect religion. It was still in the growing process, but at the advent of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, the world was ripe enough to receive the universal law.

This fact is attested by no other book than the New Testament of the Bible and by no other a person than the Prophet Jesus, who as the history of religions tells us, was the prophet who was nearest to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, Jesus said:

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: And will show you things to come.”

(John 16:12 & 13).

This prophecy goes to show and prove what we were saying all along. The important elements of this prophecy are ‘Ye cannot bear them now’ and ‘he will guide you into all truth’. This spirit of truth was destined to guide all humanity, including the Children of Israel into all truth, because up to the time of Jesus they could not have been able to conceive the whole truth, or in other words, they were not in the mental framework to understand, accept and apply in their lives all truth.

The prophecy, in all its entirety, clearly points to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace. About him it is declared in the Holy Quran:

“Truth has come.”

(17:82)

All Truth was revealed to him in the form of the most perfect religion. The Holy Quran states:

“This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as Religion.”

(4:4)

Religion having been perfected and completed upon him, the necessity of any other religion does not arise. The religion vouchsafed through him is of such a perfect nature that Allah states in the Holy Quran:

“And whoso seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from Him, and in the life to come he shall be among the losers.”

(3:86)

We know from the Bible, that the guidance it contains, or for that matter, what was necessary for man to know was not of a complete and perfect nature, since its teachings were limited in their application. It was not therefore meant to withstand the test of time, but to help in a way to prepare the Children of Israel for the eventual deliverance of the perfect teaching, so that when this teaching was to have been vouchsafed to the world they would be in an enviable position to be able to understand and thereby be prepared to receive and accept it, yet being able to follow it and apply it in their lives.

Projecting its imperfection and eventual demise with the appearance of that which is perfect, we read in the Bible:

“For We know in part, and We prophesy in part. But, when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

(1 Cor. 13:9-10)

This signified that the prophetic period of the prophets of Israel will come to an end when the whole and perfect teaching comes into being and that the teachings which were granted to the prophets of the Children of Israel will lose its efficacy, in the sense, that it will no longer be necessary to revert to them in order to achieve the purpose of the creation of man.

It has been argued by our Christian friends, that what is prophesied in 1 Corinthians 13:9-10, is in reference to and was fulfilled at Pentecost, when it is believed that the Holy Ghost descended on the disciples of Christ. It may be pointed out, that Pentecost is derived from the Greek word Pentecoste, meaning fiftieth. Pentecost finds mention in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and is believed to have occurred on the seventh Sunday after the supposed ascension of Jesus, hence the term Pentecost. In fact, on that day, the disciples of Jesus had gathered, as was the tradition of Jews, whom

they were, to celebrate the ancient Jewish feast of Shabuoth. Further to be remembered, is that the supposed event of Pentecost is believed to have occurred long before the writing of 1 Corinthians. This Epistle was addressed by Paul, who, it must be noted, did not see Jesus, to the people of Corinth. From this it follows, that up to the time of the writing of that Epistle, which was probably in 54 A.D., a Master-Prophet was being awaited, as distinctly being mentioned in the New Testament when John the Baptist was questioned whether he was Elias, Christ or that Prophet (John 1:19-21)

To further prove that the Holy Ghost is not the point of reference to the fulfillment of Biblical prophecies about a great appearance, it may be noted that the Holy Ghost was in existence before Jesus, hence it could not be the object of the prophecies, but that a pre-eminent Prophet was being awaited as prophesied by Moses in Deut. 18:18. We read the following in the Acts of the Apostles which is an account about the events after the supposed crucifixion and ascension of Jesus.

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said Unto the fathers, a Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the People. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.”

(3:19-24)

The prophecy of Moses in Deut. 18:18 is again mentioned in the said Acts of the Apostles 7:37. It follows that the second advent of Jesus cannot take place until and after the prophecy about the great Law-Bearing Prophet has been fulfilled.

As Khatamun Nabiyyin the most perfect Book The Holy Quran was revealed to him, the contents of which cover every conceivable aspect of human endeavour. It is the only Book which claims Divine origin and that it is perfect. It says:

“This is perfect Book there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the righteous,”

(2:3)

“A revelation from Him who created the earth and the High Heavens.”

(20:5)

The scientific knowledge which it expounds leaves one dumb-founded and breathless. The beauty and accuracy with which it foretells events is a marvel to behold.

All revealed books which preceded the Holy Quran suffered interpolation, which is a fact of history; but on the other hand, the Holy Quran is in every word and form as it was revealed to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace. Allah not only revealed the Holy Quran to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, but has also promised to protect it.

“Most surely We will be its Guardian.”

(15:10)

All in all, the Holy Quran stands as a unique tribute to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, as being the Khatamun Nabiyyin.

The perfection which our Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, achieved is the totality of all that was possessed by all the prophets who preceded him. He was the epitome of perfection, hence, by virtue of his many sided perfection, he is the model in every walk of life. His examples and precepts, if followed implicitly could lead to spiritual glory. He was the personification of the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job, the power and charm of David, the strength of Moses, the eloquence of Aaron, the foresight of Isaiah, the meekness of Jesus, the humility of Luqman, the patriarchate of Abraham, the handsome features, high morals and administrative qualities of Joseph, the bravery of Krishna, the contemplative character of Buddha, the fiery zeal of Zoroaster, the philosophic mind of Confucius, in short, he was the personified exemplification of the combined lofty ideals of all those who preceded him and his station is so high that he has exhausted all the possible stages of spiritual and moral perfection and excellences that can ever be attained by man. Allah shower His blessings on him.

HIGHLIGHTS OF HUMAN EMBRYOLOGY IN THE KORAN AND THE HADITH

(Keith L. Moore)

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Human beings have always been interested in where they came from and how they developed before birth. We know from the earliest records that primitive people realized that the birth of a baby was the sequel to sexual union or intercourse. However, for many centuries the ideas about human prenatal development were based on speculation and mysticism. The absence of knowledge about embryological processes and the dominating influence of superstition resulted in a non-scientific approach to human development.

As far as we know, Aristotle wrote the first embryology book in the 4th century B.C. In it he recorded some observations on comparative embryology, especially on the general progress of the developing chick. He promoted, however, the incorrect idea that the human embryo developed from a formless mass that resulted from the union of semen with menstrual blood.

Scientific knowledge of embryology did not progress significantly for nearly 2000 years. It was not until near the close of the 17th century, when the microscope was discovered, that the early stages of human development could be effectively studied. After it was possible to examine cells under the microscope, it was reasoned in the 18th century that development resulted from growth and differentiation of embryonic cells.

Almost a year ago I was consulted about the meaning of certain verses in a Koran and some sayings in the Hadith which referred to human reproduction and embryological development. I was amazed at the scientific accuracy of these statements which were made in the 7th century A.D. I have selected several verses and sayings for which I shall provide personal interpretations based on my knowledge of embryological history and of the modern science of human embryology.

The realization that the embryo develops in stages in the uterus(39:7) was not discussed or illustrated until the 15th century

A.D., although Galen had mentioned the placenta and fetal membranes in his book *On the Formation of the Foetus* written in the 2nd century A.D. and must have known about the uterus.

After the microscope was developed in the 17th century, descriptions of the early stages of the developing chick were made, as observed with simple lenses (Arey, 1974). The staging of human embryos was not proposed until the 1940's (Streeter, 1942), and the stages used nowadays were not adopted worldwide until a few years ago (O'Rahilly, 1972; Nishimura et al., 1974).

It is reasonable to interpret the *three veils of darkness* mentioned in the Koran as: (a) the mother's abdominal wall; (b) the wall of the uterus; and (c) the amniochorionic membrane composed of the fused amnion and chorion. These three anatomical layers protect the embryo from external injury.

Another verse in the Koran (23:13,14) to the early stages of human embryonic development. Observe how much the embryo of 24 days looks like a leech (Arabic, *alaaqa*, a thing which clings), and that it later appears like a chewed substance (Arabic, *mudgha*, chewed flesh) after most of the somites form during the fourth week.

During the embryonic period, the embryo acquires distinctive human characteristics as the bones and muscles begin to form. By the end of the embryonic period, the beginnings of all the main organical systems have been established. The external appearance of the embryo is greatly affected by the formation of the brain, heart, liver, somites, bones, limbs, ears, nose, and eyes. As these structures develop, they affect the appearance of the embryo by forming characteristics that mark the embryo as unquestionably human. Because the beginnings of all essential external and internal structures are formed during the embryonic period, *these five weeks constitute the most critical period of development*. Developmental disturbances during this period may give rise to major congenital malformations.

The second major stage of prenatal development is the *fetal stage*. This is a period of rapid growth and differentiation. The eyes are open by 24 weeks, by which time the foetus may be capable of survival if born prematurely.

A human being develops from a single cell, the *zygote*, which forms when an ovum is fertilized by a sperm. The two verses from the Koran (32:9; 75:38,39), and the saying from the Hadith, make it clear that the sperms are derived from a very small part of the fluid or semen that

gushed forth or is ejaculated from the penis. They are expelled from the urethra via the same route followed by the urine which is sometimes referred to as a 'despised' fluid.

There are several references in the Koran which indicate that a human being develops from a part which is slowly drawn out or extracted (Arabic, *sulala*). It is reasonable to interpret the *nutfa* as the small sample of sperms which are extracted from the ejaculated semen, because it is well established that only a few hundred of the several million sperms in the semen are able to pass through the uterus and surround the ovum in the uterine tube.

The *mixed drop* mentioned in the Koran (76:2) could refer to the mixture of a small quantity of sperms with the oocyte and its associated follicular fluid. There are other references in the Koran to the origin of man from a small quantity of 'mingled fluids', undoubtedly the male and female sexual secretions. As we know, a secondary oocyte is expelled from the ovary during a process known as *ovulation*. The oocyte and the follicular fluid pass into the uterine tube, where, if coitus has occurred, they are mixed with several hundred sperms. The resulting mixture (drop) composed of the ovum and the penetrating sperm, becomes the *zygote* or primordium of the embryo.

A popular idea in the 17th century among scientists was that the sperm contained a miniature human being that simply enlarged inside the sperm. Another equally strong idea was that the ovum contained a miniature human being that was stimulated to grow by the semen.

It was not until the 18th century that Spallanzani showed experimentally that both male and female sex products were necessary for the initiation of development. From his experiments, including artificial insemination in dogs, he concluded that the sperm was the fertilizing agent. It is difficult not to interpret the mixed drop mentioned in the Koran in the 7th century as a reference to the mingling of the male and female sex cells described eleven centuries later.

The idea that development results from a *genetic plan* (80:20) contained in the chromosomes of the zygote was not discovered until the end of the 19th century. The verse from the Koran clearly implies that the *nutfa* contains the plan or blueprint for the future characteristics and features of the developing human being.

The realization that sex determined at fertilization (53:47) was established about 60 years ago when the sex chromosomes were discovered. The determination of sex is one of the main results of fertilization. The strong male influence of the Y chromosomes on sex development was discovered about a decade ago.

The blastocyst or early embryo implants in the uterus about 10 days after fertilization. It assumes a human appearance during the eighth week. Hence, 40 to 45 nights after its implantation in the uterus, there is an Hadith according to Moslem which states that 42 days after the nutfa forms, God sends an angel to its features and to create its hearing, vision, skin, flesh, and bones. 'Oh, God', the angel asks, 'male or female?', it would be 50 to 55 days old and have a distinctive human appearance. Prior to this time, the human embryo is similar to the embryos of other mammalian species.

An understanding of the implantation process of the human blastocyst is also implied in the Koran(2:224) A tilth refers to the cultivation of land and the comparison of implantation of the blastocyst to the planting of a seed is a very appropriate one. Just as soil covers the seed, the uterine epithelium covers the implanted blastocyst. The blastocyst soon develops chorionic villi for acquiring nourishment from the maternal blood. Similarly the embryo formed from the seed develops roots for acquiring nourishment from the soil.

It is well established that there is a lag or delay in the development of the embryo during implantation (23:15) For entire week, very few changes can be observed in the developing embryo or bilaminar embryonic disc. The agreement between the lag or gap in development mentioned in the Koran and the slow rate of change occurring during the second and third weeks is amazing. These details of human development were not described until about 40 years ago.

Another verse in the Koran (23:15) refers to the leech-like appearance and the chewed-like stages of human development.

Another one (22:6) states that during this chewed stage the embryo has both differentiated and undifferentiated parts. It is well established that the brain and the heart are only partially differentiated at the end of the fourth week when the embryo resembles a chewed substance.

After the chewed-like appearance, bones develop which are soon clothed with muscles (23:15) The bones begin to form in the sixth week

and muscles attach to them shortly after this. By the beginning of the seventh week, the bones give a human shape to the embryo's body.

The ears and the eyes begin to form in the fourth week and are clearly visible at six weeks, 42 days after the zygote or *nutfa* forms. Sex is not distinguishable at this stage. Is this the basis of the angel's question?

Human features become recognizable about 42 days after the zygote forms, but are not distinctively human until the eighth week. Note that the sex of the embryo is not clearly distinguishable at this stage. The external genitalia are not distinctly male or female until the 12th week.

There are other statements in the Koran and sayings in the Hadith about embryology that are meaningless to me, but very likely they will make sense later when new knowledge is developed. The agreement I have found between statements in the Koran and sayings in the Hadith may help to close the gap between science and religion which has existed for so many years.

AVOID SIN

You should always keep in mind that one day you have to pass away from this world.

There is no better recipe than this. The reason why a man commits sins is that he loses sight of the fact that one day he has to leave this world. Whoever keeps it in mind that he is to die does not find much satisfaction in worldly affairs. On the other hand he who loses sight of the fact that he is mortal becomes hard hearted and begins to hope for long life programme.

People should ponder over the situation of a sinking boat. Do they think of committing sins at that time? Similarly when the earth is shaken by an earthquake or bubonic plague is prevalent and they come face to face with death, they do not commit sin or indulge in evil thoughts. you should always remember, therefore, that one day you will have to pass out of this world.

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

80 YEARS AGO

(The following is an extract from an article on the subject of the appearance of the Mahdi which appeared in the September issue of the Review of Religions, 1908.)

Another important event in the life of the Mahdi was also predicted by the Holy Prophet. He said that in his day, a holy soul with a brother of his would be murdered. This will excite the wrath of God and a crier shall cry from the heavens, such and such a man is your Amir' and that man shall be the Mahdi. (Vide Iqtirab-us-Saah, page 102 and the Hujaj-ul-Karamah, page 350). This prophecy was fulfilled in the murder of two disciples of Ahmad at Kabul by Amir Abdur Rahman and the present Amir respectively for their accepting Ahmad as the Promised Mahdi and openly rejecting the doctrines of Jihad and a Ghazi Mahdi. Such beliefs could not be tolerated in Afghanistan, the land of Jihad and Ghaziism. The result was that the Mullas of Kabul declared both of them to be heretics that deserved to be murdered and both were put to death with utmost cruelty. One of these two martyrs was a renowned Mullah of Afghanistan who enjoyed a reputation for sanctity of character which was shared by few in the land. 50 000 Afghans revered him as their spiritual leader and are still proud to call themselves his disciples. This Mullah was called Sahibzada Abdul Latif and was among the distinguished members of the Kabul Durbar. He was not only a Pir, with 50 000 Afghans as his devoted followers, but was also possessed of a great estate in the province of Khost in Afghanistan. But the chief reason for which he commanded the esteem, not only of the masses, but also of the king on the throne, lay in his vast learning and unparalleled sanctity of his life. He was a man of great moral courage and feared neither the Amir nor the people in declaring what he believed to be the truth. He happened to see some of the writings of Ahmad and was so overpowered with the light of truth that he met with in the writings that he could not rest at home in Afghanistan but came to Qadian to see Ahmad. Some of his followers, learning from their master that the Mahdi was at Qadian, had already come here to see Ahmad. Among them was Abdur Rahman who on his return was assassinated by the late Amir Abdur Rahman for the reasons stated above. But the example of his disciple could not deter Maulvi Abdul Latif from leaving his home in the fastnesses of Afghanistan to pay a visit to Ahmad in whom he had

recognised the long-promised Mahdi. He knew that to come down to Qadian or to express a faith in Ahmad was certain death, but he was too much lost in the love of the Mahdi to care for death. He knew that the Mahdi was at Qadian, he had read his writings and was convinced of his truth (even conviction does not fully express the degree of his faith in Ahmad), 'and he obeyed the commandment of the Holy Prophet who said when you hear that the Mahdi has made his appearance, go to see him even if you have to scramble over mountains of snow and ice.' He came to Qadian with a few of his followers; and saw the man, a desire to see whom had drawn him to Qadian from his distant home in the land of the Pathans. A look at Ahmad afforded him a bliss as great as the enjoyments of paradise, and a word from the lips of the Mahdi was sweeter to him than the sweetest honey. He stayed here for about three months. Ahmad asked him to take up his abode permanently in Qadian and not to go back to Afghanistan where he was sure to meet with death; but he replied. "To part with you is more than I can bear, but there is a duty which calls me back to Kabul. I know that certain death awaits me there, but death has no terror for me. Being a son of Afghanistan, I must carry this news to my native land; and it shall be with my own blood that I will deliver this message to my country. I know, my country demands my blood, and I will willingly shed it in order to deliver this message to my brethren in Afghanistan. This kind of death will be a pleasure to me rather than a pain. I must part with you, and you will soon hear that I have been murdered in Kabul." With these words the brave son of the mountains of Afghanistan departed from Qadian, and the first thing he did on reaching his home was that he wrote a letter to the court at Kabul informing the Amir of his visit to Qadian and inviting him to accept Ahmad as the Promised Mahdi and to renounce the idea of a Ghazi Mahdi whose sole means to propagate Islam was to be jihad a doctrine which was an insult to Islam and a disgrace to its followers. The result was exactly what was expected. He was at once summoned to Kabul where he was put in prison. The Muftis and Mullas gave their verdict that he was a heretic who deserved to be stoned to death before the eyes of the whole city. The Amir who had hitherto held him in high esteem promised him deliverance and restoration to his former dignity and honour if he only apparently recanted his belief before the people, holding privately any opinion he liked, but Maulvi Abdul Latif was too noble to make such a mock confession, and he replied like a true hero, 'I will not barter my faith for my life.' So he was stoned to death before the whole city of Kabul, the Amir being himself

amongst those who cast stones at him. Abdul Latif nobly laid down his life for his faith and his murder was immediately followed by a severe outbreak of cholera in the city which in a few days swept off thousands of the inhabitants. What further punishment the murder of the holy man and that of his disciple, Abdur Rahman, by the late Amir, may bring down on Kabul is known to God alone. Thus, as the tradition said, a holy soul and a brother of his were murdered at Kabul and the fulfilment of this prophecy of the Holy Prophet served as a sign of the truth of Ahmad. It should also be remembered that the murder of these disciples was also predicted by Ahmad about a quarter of a century before the occurrence in his work, the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya, which contained the following revelation of God: **مَاتَانِ تَذْبَحَانِ** which means that two sheep will be slaughtered. Thus the death of these two martyrs served as a double sign of the truth of Ahmad, inasmuch as their death not only fulfilled the prophecy of the Holy Prophet but also the Word of God revealed to Ahmad about 25 years before these occurrences. The heroic way in which both these martyrs laid down their lives for the sake of their faith constitutes an additional evidence of the truth of Ahmad, for it reveals the strong faith with which Ahmad had inspired them. Peace to the ashes of these two heroic martyrs!

WHO ARE THE BLESSED?

Those who have kept their sympathies awake,
 And scattered joy for more than custom's sake;
 Steadfast and tender in the hour of need,
 Gentle in thought, benevolent in deed;
 Whose looks have power to make dissensions cease;
 They who have lived as harmless as the dove,
 Teachers of truth and ministers of love;
 Love for all moral power - mental grace,
 Love for the humblest of the human race;
 Love for that tranquil joy that virtue brings;
 Love for the Giver of all lovely things
 Who wait in peace their hour of final rest;
 These are those who are truly blessed.

ETIQUETTE OF MUSLIM GREETINGS

(Dr. Qazi Muhammad Barkatullah)

THE HOLY QURAN

1. And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet ye with a better greeting or at least return it. Surely, Allah takes account of all things.”
(4:87)
 2. “O ye who believe, enter not houses other than your own until you have asked leave and saluted the inmates thereof.”
(24:28)
 3. “And the true servants of the Gracious God are those who walk on the earth humbly and when the ignorant address them, they avoid them gracefully by saying ‘Peace’.”
(25:64)
 4. “They (the righteous) will be received (in Paradise) with greetings and peace.”
(25:76)
- In a single word, ‘Salam’ means ‘Peace’. The other greetings are the various blessings of the paradise.
(Ref.No.: 2456; English Commentary)
5. “They (the inmates of Heaven) will be greeted with ‘Peace’-a word of greeting from the Merciful Lord.”
(36:56-59)
 6. “Their greeting on the day when they meet Him will be peace.”
(33:45)
 7. “And when those who believe in Our Signs come to thee, say: ‘Peace be unto you.’ ”
(6:55)
 8. “And Our reply was, ‘So turn aside from them (people who do not believe) and say, ‘Peace.’ ”
(43:90)

9. "But when you enter houses, salute your people with the greeting of peace—a greeting from your Lord full of blessing and purity."
(24:62)

Commenting on the last verse above, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II, the second Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, emphasized the significance of the greeting 'Assalaamo Alaikum' (Peace be on you). It is exhorted that when you enter your own homes, you must first say Assalamu Alaikum, that is convey a salutation to yourself as well as to the inmates of your household. You must convey salutation to your relatives as well as friends. Salutation must be conveyed to the inmates of all the houses where you enter with permission. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II says that we should always remember that the salutation is not merely the word of your mouth but is a great gift from Allah. It appears that the word Salam is very simple to utter but it brings forth very significant results because as a supplement to the word Salam, there is a promise of peace from Allah. So when you say the salutation to another individual, it is not from you but rather you convey Allah's words of Peace to the other person.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II observed that people entering their own homes do not generally utter the salutation. It means that the salutation is a prayer for others but not for their own kith and kin. Allah, however, has ordained all Muslims to convey the salutation whenever they enter their own homes. The Holy Prophet of Islam has instructed that one should say Assalaamo Alaikum to every Muslim one meets whether he is known or not. But, alas, a section of the Muslims has ignored this command altogether. Such Muslims instead of saying Assalaamo Alaikum confine themselves to words like Adab Arz (Humble respects). Anyone who utters proper words of salutation is looked down upon by these Muslim people. Whereas they themselves are guilty of ignoring the instruction of Islamic injunctions of the Holy Prophet of Islam. As such, one section of the Muslims has completely given up conveying the salutation. There is another group which has not properly understood its significance. Such people, if they come to a meeting, take a seat quietly. If they go to their own homes, they enter quietly. They never recall that the Holy Prophet of Islam has given salutation instructions for certain occasions. If they are asked why they did not convey the salutation, they simply answer by asking what difference does it make whether they say it or not. Another group says that the salutation was not conveyed because of

shyness or more appropriately because of Haya. But these three groups are in error. Haya according to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II means check or obstruction. Matters which are undesirable should be checked. But there should be no obstruction in matters which are useful. Again the Holy Quran describes salutation as an extraordinary gift in nature. Even after death the gift which would be received will be the salam or the salutations. The angels would welcome the righteous entering the everlasting life saying salam on behalf of God. So if any so-called great man makes an excuse that he does not need to convey salutations then he should always remember that he is in no way greater than God. If God welcomes His righteous people with salam, then what excuse do these people have not to say salam to others? Again, according to Ahadeeth, when the angel Gibrael came to visit the Holy Prophet of Islam, he would first say salam and then the Holy Prophet would also greet him with salam. So no one should hesitate to greet others with Assalaamo Alaikum which should be responded to with Wa Alaikumus Salam (Peace be on you too).

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II observed that Muslims educated in the West were especially hesitant to exchange salam greetings. Sometimes these Western-educated Muslims just make a gesture with the hand without uttering the salutation. At other occasions, they open their conversation by asking others, 'How are you?' Sometimes some will say, 'Brother, how are you?' and the response would be, 'Brother, I am O.K.' But the teachings of Islam demand the exchange of Islamic salutations. The people, therefore, should know that Almighty Allah, Angel Gabriel (Gibreel) and the Holy Prophet of Islam convey salutations. As such, no person should be so arrogant as not to greet others with proper salutations.

Proper salutation greetings also help to revive unity. The companions understood the secret of the exchange of salutations. Once a Sahabee (companion of the Holy Prophet) came to another Sahabee and asked him to accompany him to a market. They went together and returned after some time. They apparently did nothing and purchased nothing. They went empty-handed and returned empty-handed. After two or three days, the Sahabee came again and asked the same Sahabee to accompany him to the market. The other Sahabee inquired whether they were going again for the same purpose, and would not buy anything. Yes, said the first one, let us just go and meet people to exchange salutation greetings. The Sahaba understood that the value of salutation greetings was a gift of God for

strengthening the bond of love among mankind. They frequently exchanged salutation greetings in homes, meetings, places of business in the streets and among people who they knew and those they did not know as well. The Holy Prophet said: "Convey salutation to those who you know and also to those who you do not know." (Tafseer-i-Kabeer, vol.6, p.40)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II, following the example of the Holy Prophet of Islam as well as the Promised Messiah, encouraged us to exchange salutations. It should not be set aside considering it as something unnecessary. It should be properly pursued and freely exchanged among ourselves. The elders should greet the young ones and the young should properly greet their elders. The salutation is a part of the muslim law and should be cheerfully conveyed.

Peace and Allah's mercy and His blessings be on you.

These are the words of greeting which one Muslim says to another. Americans have different ways of greeting people. As a rule, the greeting is according to time; for example, "good morning," "good evening," etc. Once the writer, while a student, stayed in a dormitory. One fine morning, while passing by, the writer greeted a student saying, "good morning". But to the surprise of the writer, the other student said, "what is so good about this morning?" The writer thus discovered that normally people hesitate to utter the word "good" and confine themselves to saying "morning" and "evening", etc. These words, therefore, cannot stand for greetings, because, morning, evening are like other mornings and evenings.

Americans do say "Hello" sometimes. But in a cheerful mood they say "Hi". These are pathetic words in urdu language. Having reached America, the writer could not understand why the Americans who apparently seem to be happy, utter "Hi", as if they were in some kind of pain!

Do Christians, have a mode of greeting? They may say "Hello, Hi, morning," etc. but these are, as such, devoid of any spiritual significance.

The Muslims, on the other hand, shower blessings of Almighty on one another. One says, Assalamu Alaikum, peace be on you. The other responds, Wa Alaikum Assalam, peace be on you too.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, has exhorted that the Muslims should begin their conversation with Assalamu Alaikum,

There is no specific time when these words should be uttered. These greetings can be exchanged any time, any place, whenever and wherever Muslims meet each other.

When, someone is leaving the house, he or she will say, Assalamu Alaikum. Similarly, when one is returning home, one will say, Assalamu Alaikum. No matter how many times a person leaves home and returns, he or she utters these words and in return, hears Wa Alaikum Assalamu, which invokes peace and blessings on him or her too. It is equally a good practice to say Assalamu Alaikum while going to bed and saying Assalamu Alaikum, while seeing each other in the morning. The idea is that one should get used to invoking the blessings of Almighty upon members of the family also.

If someone goes to someone else's home, or she must first say Assalamu Alaikum and then seek permission to enter the house. If someone does not like to express Assalamu Alaikum, on the threshold he or she should not be given permission to enter the house. Once, someone came to the door of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, and wanted to come in. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, asked someone to tell that person the proper way to seek such permission. The person then said Assalamu Alaikum, and sought permission. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, came to someone's door, he would stand to one side to avoid looking inside. he would then say Assalamu Alaikum, and the occupants knew he was there.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, has said that saying more and more Assalamu Alaikum, will increase the bonds of affection among mankind. He has, therefore asked his followers to spread the greetings of Assalamu Alaikum, among themselves. Every Muslim, therefore, greets the other person with the words Assalamu Alaikum, so people should know each other. Rather, the greetings can be extended to even those who do not know one another. Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, passed by a group of people where there were both believers and non-believers and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, said, Assalamu Alaikum.

He also said that Muslims should not stay on non-speaking terms with one another for more than three days. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, has said that the better of the two will be the one who is first to say Assalamu Alaikum, to the other.

It is a matter of rule that the Junior should first say Assalamu Alaikum, to the senior. One who is riding should say Assalamu Alaikum, to the one who is walking. One who is walking, should say Assalamu Alaikum, peace be on you, to the one who is sitting. A small gathering should be first to say Assalamu Alaikum, to large gathering. If, one person, from a gathering, says Assalamu Alaikum, , it will be sufficient to be considered as group representation. As such, one person saying Wa Alaikum Assalam in reply, will be considered to represent the whole group. Anyone who is coming to join a gathering should be the first to say Assalamu Alaikum.

Anyone who wishes to attract attention should say Assalamu Alaikum, peace be on you. On the telephone, it is a good practice to start the conversation with Assalamu Alaikum, instead of saying Hello, on the phone, it is good to say Assalamu Alaikum, to get the attention of the other party.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, once passed by a group of youths, and he was the first to say Assalamu Alaikum. Similarly, it is reported that while passing by ladies, he would say Assalamu Alaikum, . Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, was sitting among others. Someone came and said Assalamu Alaikum, . The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, responded and some one heard him uttering ten. then another person came to join the company and said Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, responded and then said "twenty". Afterwards, another person came and said Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, responded and said "thirty". It is said that these numbers referred to the blessings the person would receive, on the principle that a good deed gets a tenfold reward.

Generally speaking, if someone says Assalamu Alaikum, peace be on you, the response is : Wa Alaikum Assalam, peace be on you too. If someone says Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah, peace and Allah's mercy be on you, or if someone says Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu, peace and Allah's mercy and His blessings be on You, the response is , Wa Alaikum Assalam wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuhu, peace and Allah's mercy and His blessings be on you too.

It is obligatory on every Muslim to say Assalamu Alaikum, to

another Muslim and it is equally obligatory on every Muslim to respond to the greeting. It is also recorded that nearest to God are those who are first to say Assalamu Alaikum. The companions of the Promised Messiah always took the lead in saying Assalamu Alaikum, whenever they met. It is reported that Hazrat Maulvi Sher Ali, for instance, would call Assalamu Alaikum, to others as soon as he reached within hearing distance to them; thus he never allowed to slip by any opportunity of earning the promised blessings.

The Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, were very keen to say Assalamu Alaikum, and Wa Alaikum Assalam. In case they were going together on a journey and one of them became separated from others for a short while, he would say Assalamu Alaikum, on rejoining.

The Muslims are a people who love peace. So if someone quarrels and disputes with them, they avoid unpleasantness by saying peace when leaving the scene. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, once said, "should I tell you one thing that you would start loving each other? Make it your habit to say Assalamu Alaikum, frequently among yourselves."

Once the Companions wanted to know one good deed in Islam. It is recorded that the Holy Prophet told them to say Assalamu Alaikum, frequently.

It is said about the Promised Messiah that he would look affectionately at a person who said Assalamu Alaikum, peace be on you, or responded to this greeting. It is also known that the Promised Messiah would invariably write Assalamu Alaikum, while writing any letter. Once the Promised Messiah, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, asked some of his followers who were sitting together, to trace certain reference. They got to work and began sending him the references on small slips of paper, beginning with Assalamu Alaikum. One of them forgot to write this greeting on one of his slip of paper. The Promised Messiah reminded the person that he should not have forgotten to write Assalamu Alaikum, no matter how numerous these slips became. The Promised Messiah said that no matter how frequently and how often you meet and address someone, you must say or write Assalamu Alaikum.

It is recorded that the Promised Messiah fell sick and more than once he received the revelation 'Assalamu Alaikum', and he recovered soon afterwards. The Tazkirah (book containing revelations

of the Promised Messiah) records several revelations of the Promised Messiah which say 'Assalamu Alaikum'.

It is known that Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III, while on a European tour, despatched several times a gift to the Community, and his gift was Assalamu Alaikum.

It is refreshing to know that it is the custom of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community) to greet the congregation with Assalamu Alaikum, when he comes to lead prayers and also when he leaves after prayer.

Salam is also part of Salat daily prayers. At the time of "Attashahud", one fervently says:

"All reverence and all prayer and all piety is for Allah. Peace be upon you O Prophet and the Mercy and the Blessings of Allah. Peace be on us and the righteous servants of Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is His Servant and His Messenger."

Again, on bringing one's Salat (prayer) to an end, one turns one's face to the right and says: 'Peace and Blessings be on you and then turns his face to the left and repeats the words of the salutation.

Muslims, according to the Holy Quran, also believe that Peace will be the word heard in paradise. Islam is, therefore, the religion through which one can find peace, not only in this world, but also in the Hereafter. Muslims, therefore, should make it a habit to exchange frequently the greetings of Assalamu Alaikum, Peace and Allah's mercy and His blessings be on you.

GUARD WELL THY HEART

Everything thou hast in thy mind,
 Every thought thou nourisheth,
 Other than that of God
 And of winning His approbation
 Is an idol which thou worshippeth.
 O thou weak of faith!
 Beware of these hidden idols!
 Guard well thy heart,
 And keep it always
 Out of their reach.

ECONOMIC RELEVANCE OF ISLAM

(Dr. Ijaz A. Qamar)

The present day world can be broadly divided into three main economic spheres or ideologies, i.e. Communism, Capitalism and Islam. These three systems are contending for supremacy. Capitalism and Communism are openly ranged against each other, while Islam is waiting for the outcome.

Before going into any details, let me stress that the modern study of economics began as a branch of moral philosophy. Adam Smith, the originator of Capitalist theory was a moral philosopher. His work entitled Wealth of Nations was not written to show us how to make a lot of money, rather how to promote just and equitable relationship among people. Someone has said: economics possesses a hidden agenda and that agenda concerns the deeper question of quality of life. That's why historically economics has been a branch of moral philosophy, rooted in ethics and therefore economic questions are ultimately religious questions. The hidden agenda in all economic discourses had to do with human values and the kind of society we want to build. Therefore, burning questions in economics are not those of macro, micro or other economics, but are about quality of life.

The question arises whether capitalist system or its rival communist system is adequately responding to today's challenges. Are these ideologies individually or collectively satisfying human needs and aspirations? The simple and straightforward answer is 'No' and that is not my answer but the answer of experts. They say both of these systems are on the defensive and in the present struggle between them lies the possibility of the destruction not only of civilization as we know it, but also of the whole life on this planet.

Both Communist and Capitalist ideologies differ in philosophy and action but have some similarities as well. Both are swayed by materialistic philosophy in practice, if not in theory. Both tend to limit their focus of achievement on the physical side of man. Both systems treat human beings as mere units of production and consumption and not relationship beings. Both reject or at least neglect the fact that human beings are made in the image of a superior being. Both seek the

meaning of life in the abundance of things possessed, but not in the quality of relationship with that superior being God, with one another and with nature. In a recent book entitled *Marxism-Thoroughfare or Dead End*, Eugene Loeb, a Czechoslovakian Economist, says both Communism and Capitalism have failed to realize the needs of people. The problems of a mature society cannot be solved by Marx. Engels and other reformers of Communism, teachings of the classics of capitalism and their reformers.

The world is facing an economic crisis with double digit unemployment figures in some countries and even negative economic growth in others. The problem is in the structure of the current economic system which is centered in the West and controlled by the North, which does not have the same interests as the South and the East. The deficiencies of the system make it unstable and weak. Will today's form of Capitalism be replaced by state Capitalism, Socialism or perhaps facism with a friendly face? Could the failure of applied Marxism in the East provide valuable lessons for the Capitalist West?

We dont know the answers to these questions at least in the short run, but we do know that the world is looking for an alternative. What we need is a new economic order which is equitable and fair to everyone. My thesis in this short paper is that the Islamic order is that alternative and is relevant to the needs and requirements of this age.

Islam being a holistic and comprehensive religious order provides for a system which secures the widest and most beneficent distribution of wealth through institutions and devices it has established. As a matter of fact mal-distribution of economic wealth between and among the rich and poor individuals and nations is the basis of most of the animosities and conflicts of today. A full and complete equality, however, may be an economic misnomer and may not be desirable as a public policy. In Capitalism the wealth of a nation is amassed into the hands of a limited few and the rest of the nation becomes their prey. It is on account of this inequality that Communism originated and gained its roots and went to the other extreme.

No economic system could be regarded a just system unless it dealt with both the production of wealth and its distribution in such a manner that the wealth does not get amassed in the hands of a few only. Communism tried to achieve equality at a very high and bloody

cost and tried to allocate wealth according to the needs without even attempting to define needs which have to be catered for. The history of capitalism shows us that the Capitalist countries tend to rob other countries so that they get more and more rich by grabbing the rights of individuals and seizing the wealth of other people and nations. As apposed to this, the Communist nations not only ravished and pounced upon the wealth of individuals but also put them to torture. Islam does not at all favour tyranny and injustice. It recognizes the diversity of capacities and talents and consequently the diversity in earnings and material rewards. Islam does not approve of a dead level equality in the distribution of wealth as that would defeat the very purpose of diversity and would amount to denying the favours of God.

It is obvious that if the incentives of proportionate rewards of labour, effort, skill and talent were to be removed, not only would initiative and enterprise be adversely affected, but also intellectual progress would be arrested as well. That is why theoretical doctrines of equal reward irrespective of the diversity of skills etc. has never been maintained for long despite state policies. On the other hand, Islam does not leave the principle of competition and proportionate reward to work itself out mechanically, that too would lead to injustice and hardship.

Islam lays down that God has created the means of producing wealth for the good of mankind as a whole. It does not admit monopoly of any one individual or a section of the society. The means of production are open to all without distinction. Natural results of individual capacities are accepted in Islam. It is true that to help others and to work for others is a noble human instinct and Islam takes full account of this side of human nature.

Islam is peculiar in establishing equality of opportunity for all human beings. Holy Prophet Mohammad has said: an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor has a non-Arab any superiority over an Arab, nor do the white have any preference over the dark, nor have the dark any preference over the white, excepting, of course, what an individual can acquire by personal qualities, morals, intelligence, and self-effort.

Now let us come to some specifics. Islam has banned usury (roughly equivalent to interest). By doing this Islam has destroyed an instrument of upsetting economic balance. For it is this taking of

interest that destroys the equilibrium between man and man. The institution of interest turns capital into a dreadful monster. If we stop dealing in interest we will find trade and business slipping out of the hands of the few owners. The general wealth of the country will either pass into the hands of the government or become fairly distributed in the whole community. The prohibition of interest also prevents the rich from exploiting the poor. To say that the present day business cannot be run without the institution of interest is an illusion bred by present westridden conceptions. It may be true that the prohibition of interest, if taken in the broad sense, does not fit in the frame of modern world conditions, but the high ideal which Islam brought is not unworkable. After all, before the rise of the West, trade and commerce were carried on in great part of the world without this capitalist device of interest. Under present economic strategies followed by various nations, it may be difficult to operate a zero rate of interest which was first introduced by Islam some 1400 years ago and is being advocated by leading economists of today.

Secondly Islam instituted the paying of Zakat which is levied at varying rates on certain assets. This is not a tax on the rich on their income but on a specified limit of capital held by Muslims. The proceeds from this levy are devoted entirely to the service of the poor who have a right to this fund under Islam. This device not only advocates the cooperative basis of society but is also meant to disperse and spread accumulated wealth for the general good.

The philosophy behind this levy is that the wealth is mainly due to the industry of the poor. The poor, therefore, have a rightful claim upon the wealth of society. The word Zakat signifies purifications and arguementations. This is because this tax releases the giver from the obligation he owes to those who have been instrumental in the production of wealth and because this adds to the resources of those who receive it. In addition to Zakat tax, Islam also encourages charity. The idea is that not only should the rich and well-to-do part with a goodly portion of what they have earned with the help of the poor but should also be inspired and actuated by mutual love, affection, sympathy and fellow-feeling.

Another device for a fair and equitable distribution of wealth is the Islamic law of inheritance. It lays down that on the death of a property holder, the property must be fairly divided among the near relations. Islam does not recognise primogeniture (i.e. the oldest son inheriting the whole property) and stipulates that surviving spouse

and children have an equitable and set proportion of the property. It is not merely the division of heritage that is aimed at but a fair and equitable distribution of the national wealth is also the object of the law of inheritance.

After this general treatment of the subject and specific injunctions of the Islamic system, let me say that contrary to Capitalism and Communism, one excessively individualistic and the other excessively collectivistic, Islam adopts a *via media*, combining the good points and discarding the abuses of both. It steers clear of their evil effects and adds its own special provisions to safe-guard society. Islam admits the right of an individual to what he has earned by his effort and at the same time devises a machinery for a fair distribution of the national wealth. It leaves an open door to everyone to make use of the natural resources of wealth. Islam dictates certain acts as obligatory and certain voluntary and strengthens the economic structure with state intervention to correct wrongs being committed. It keeps alive and strengthens sentiments of love, sympathy and fellow feelings and keeps in view the spiritual relationship between the Creator and the created.

It should be stated that numerous solutions have been offered to solve world economic problems at the micro and macro levels. Over the decades the most constant criticism of capitalism has been its heartlessness. The critics argue that it works for the rich, the achievers, the able, the gifted and the privileged. It oppresses and exploits the poor, the weak, the unhealthy, and the disadvantaged. Communism condemned Capitalism but in this attempt debased man further and conceived of man as merely an animal, subject to manipulation and sacrifice for the collective good of the community.

Some reformers have intended to give Capitalism a heart, rather than discard the system altogether. Introduction of labour laws, for example, is such an attempt. But radical conservatives would defend pure capitalism and say that no wizard need find Capitalism a heart it really has one in the charitable and kindly acts of individuals. To work properly, the arguments says, the economic system must recognize man as an individual governed by self-interest. Adam Smith contended that individuals seeking self-interest by earning profits would naturally produce what society needs most. Competition would keep profits from becoming excessive. Thus the business-man seeking his own interest would be led by "an invisible hand" to the common good.

The modern society, however, does not fully trust that invisible hand. A constant and increasing intervention of governments in the economy has been motivated by a desire to improve Adam Smith's invisible hand on behalf of the less fortunate. Thus current economic system is far from pure Capitalism. It is a mixed system, part government, part private, part non-profit, and part in between. This has urged a well-known Harvard economist Kenneth Galbraith to argue that governments should manage the economy without turning Socialist Communists. It is a fact that Socialism may not be a dirty word it was a decade ago, but is still far from being popular. Another Harvard professor George Lodge proposes comprehensive state planning without state management and ownership. All such ideas are trying to give capitalist corporation a human face by asking it not to consider only its profits but also matters of broader community welfare and interest.

There are other new suggestions for improving Capitalism. Thus the stereotyped economic thinking of the past is phasing out. There is more willingness to think innovatively. This willingness to consider alternatives of the prevalent system, to give it a bigger heart or a human face, can be seen by the popularity of such books as British economist E. F. Schumacher's *Small Is Beautiful & Economics As If People Mattered*.

Schumacher calls for technology and economy with a human face. He suggests that society should think small in regard to organization and the accumulation of material things. The patterns of production and consumption must fit into the laws of the universe. A harmony between those with wealth and power, and those without cannot exist as long as there is no idea of enough being good and more than enough being evil. Schumacher is advocating a life style which accords to material things their proper and legitimate place which is secondary and not primary.

This approach is very close to what Islam takes and the moral philosophy it espouses. This takes us back to where I started that the study of economics compels us to concern ourselves more with the questions of quality of life and less with the quantitative aspects. That involves morals, ethics and religion. Islam is the only religion that can be called the most secular religion of all as it guides us in all the spheres of our life from morals and ethics to the production and distribution of wealth.

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.

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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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