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Editorial

Words In Print

[We set out below the article written especially for the readers at our request by the former Editor in Chief of the *Review of Religions* (1984 to 1993) who passed away on 8 July 2002. This was the last article from this famous author.]

The *Review of Religions* has been serving the cause of truth for one hundred years and there lies in its printed words a wealth of spiritual knowledge and guidance: a treasure house of religious knowledge.

Many a life has been awakened and inspired by the printed word and often more than by the spoken word. Lives have been turned around completely through the reading of the biography of a great man or woman. Even a few lines, a quotation or a poem has stirred and revolutionised the life of a person. Some people have described a particular book or books as their best friend or friends. Such can be the impact of the printed word.

No doubt the eloquent words of a magnetic speaker can cast their influence upon the listeners but their impact is more often than not only temporary during the duration of the speech. It wears off when all is over. It is said of him, 'A great speaker', 'magnificent speech', etc. but his message fails to take root. This is often the case and the listener does not implement the good advice to which he enjoyed listening. It fades from his memory in no time. This is not necessarily so in all cases but it is a common occurrence.

'O men, how long will you keep listening to sermons and turning a deaf ear to them?'

Hadhrat Ali

Surely Allah changes not the condition of a people until they change that which is in their hearts.

(The Qur'an: Ch.13.v.12)

A moving, cheerful or invigorating piece of music may captivate the listener at the time it is being played but the

inner emotions aroused fade away after it has ended. A tired and exhausted column of soldiers will pull back their shoulders and quicken their step in time with the music when the band strikes up a lively march; but when finished their energy saps. Similar is the case often with those who enjoy a good speech while it lasts. At the time it sounded inspirational but its effects seem to disappear afterwards. On the other hand the printed word is always there and can be read over and over again; but not so an oral speech from which it is not usually possible to remember all the points, quotations and references mentioned. The printed word is a permanent record from which one can constantly draw inspiration and guidance whenever one chooses to do so.

The lives of scores of people have been elevated in one way or another through the reading of the printed word. The biography or autobiography of a great personage has fired the ambition of many a youngster to emulate him or her in character and successful achievement. An

inspiring book has uplifted many a soul towards God. The godless have become God-fearing. Evil doers have become saints. This is why Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as), the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya community in Islam, peace be upon him, urged his followers to read at least three times the eighty odd books of various lengths which he wrote for the glory of Islam. He knew the power of the printed word. Accordingly, he also founded the *Review of Religions* a century ago in 1902 which has done yeoman service in the dissipation of religious knowledge.

Let it be our prayer that this magazine may continue to be a beacon of light for its readers in the years ahead.

By Bashir Ahmad Orchard

Notes & Comments

POLITICAL ECONOMICS - by *Fareed Ahmad, UK*

I was amused to discover that in my dictionary the word 'politics' lay between 'police' and 'pollute', something that one could argue was a definition rather than a setting! It is certainly not beyond belief, especially when one looks at how the political machinery of government enforces *its* will on people. The impact of this has ramifications on the financial, social and environmental well being of society - a society that has outgrown national boundaries and now encompasses the entire globe. The end of the 20th century saw the phenomenal rise in the wealth of certain nations accompanied by an ever-increasing poverty of others: a phenomenon that has gripped many third world economies across Africa, Asia and South America, and has been slowly choking them to death.

When such issues are talked about then mutterings about globalisation can often be heard, but what paved the way and created the opportunities for global corporate bulldozers to run amok north, south, east and west?

It is often noted that this is a post-colonial phenomenon and its roots lie in the way that imperial powers abandoned such fledgling countries to fight for themselves in the gladiatorial arena of world trade. If that were not enough it is now also generally accepted that the measures taken by the powerful nations to assist the developing world proved counter productive - the loans made and measures taken by the World Bank and IMF to enable redevelopment were in essence the makings of a false economy. They tied down poor nations to unbearable levels of interest repayments, which resulted in a bizarre situation that countries were ending up worse off *after* accepting the help from the first world! But this was not all. Realising that merely giving loans would not solve the economic woes of the Third World, countries were forced to adopt measures that they were told would help their economies and markets perform better on the international platform. However, the package of economic structural reforms, that was inseparable from the loans,

served to rationalise public finance, privatise state industries and attract foreign investors (i.e. ownership). One unfortunate result has been that foreign firms have established themselves there and siphoned the profits back to the developed world. This left the Third World economies with enormous loan repayments, depleted natural resources and no indigenous firms that could function and compete nationally, let alone internationally. Additionally, the Third World had to combat tariffs and overcome trade barriers and at the same time develop the infrastructure and promote literacy.

This has considerably weakened, if not removed, any chance of such countries being able to tackle their biggest problem - the huge debts themselves - and this factor, which is the crux of the problem, is rarely reviewed.

However, it would be wrong to place all the blame on the developed world, for the situation in the developing countries has in many cases been made worse by the people in power there as well. Their domestic pool of capital was often in government hands. Central banks were often riddled with regulations. Their economies were also the victims of corruption.

Sometimes the capital was wasted on buildings that no one wanted. Rather than promoting the domestic economy, there was a desire to acquire foreign imports: instead of fruit juice, it had to be some foreign drink. Indeed with such home-grown problems, the West may well ask the question: what have you done to help yourselves? There is some hope that the Third World has now woken up to this. Many countries have begun to realise that they cannot look to other countries for help simply because it can come and go at any time. They have to strive to live within their means and promote investment in the domestic economy. This will help to make their economies grow and hopefully reverse the flight of intellectual capital and encourage their citizens to work for their own country and economy rather work abroad. However, whilst they can seek to address internal issues, the stranglehold of the enormous debts can only be overcome with the genuine help of the developed world.

In respect of this the teachings of Islam of not charging interest and of encouraging remittance of such burdensome debts as charity address both the human and economic sides of this equation. For example:

The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and for those employed in connection therewith, and for those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and for the freeing of slaves, and for those in debt, and for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarer - an ordinance from Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.
(Ch.9: v.60)

The forgiveness of debts in such circumstances nurtures nobility and respect and the principle of not charging interest is also a factor that is slowly gaining recognition in the west as a positive economic tool.

The advanced world also has its share of poverty, primarily in inner cities and in areas where earlier industries have either ceased or have moved out. In such places commercial lenders refuse to lend money for fear of the repayments not being met, but from this bleak outlook a 'new' methodology is emerging in the form of social investment. The economists are realising that to turn such situations around the role of interest has to be either minimised or eliminated. Thus, the investments are targeted to assist small business get off the ground and expand. As they develop they

generate employment, skills and attract more investment - a result of this is that more money is circulated in the local economy allowing more people to benefit. Thus, in a nutshell, if interest is effectively removed then the problem areas are given a fighting chance to regenerate and develop, as the money circulates among those who need it most.

This concept is being piloted and promoted by some western countries yet it is odd that this is not promoted on a bigger scale in the Third World as well. This is something that prompts one to think of other reasons why this may be so - for if it is evident that debt forgiveness and interest-free financing works at home then why do governments not encourage and adopt this abroad as well?

Until they do, it seems that for the Third World interest remains and any money earned by those countries will continue to be used primarily for loan repayments, so that for the sake of a few dollars some can enjoy themselves whilst they live at the cost of the misery of many others as they die.

Progress of Islam is Dependant on Khilafat

Based on a speech by Imam Ata ul Mujeeb Rashed, Imam of the London Mosque given at the Jalsa Salana (Annual Convention of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community) Germany 1989.

[Translated into English by Mrs Shermeen Butt]

Allah has promised those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear: They will worship Me, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious.

(Surah Al-Nur 24:56)

1,500 years ago from today the heavens saw an astonishing sight to which no similitude can

be found in the history of the world. No sooner had the sun of prophethood risen on the horizon of the world that the earth that was steeped in dense darkness dazzled instantly with light. From the blessed appearance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) for whom this universe was created, humanity that was once lost in the abyss of deviation, found the way to prosperity. In the shape of the religion of Islam the spring of Divine Beneficence gushed forth that saturated the earth parched for centuries and barren lands bloomed with the evergreen fields of spirituality.

A magnificent revolution was brought about in the entire universe by a mortal com-

pletely absorbed in God and by the prayers he made in the darkest of nights. Those dead of soul for centuries became spiritually alive and those astray for generations were tinted in the Divine colour. The blind became clear sighted and the mute spoke words of Divine knowledge. At that time such a revolution came about in this world that no eye had seen before and no ear had heard of.

This beautiful splendour of Allah the Almighty's most excellent manifestation in the shape of a most perfect human was at its climax when our beloved master the Holy Prophet Muhammad's (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) time to pass away came. How melancholy must have the sincere Companions felt at his demise; it is not that straightforward to conjecture the extent of their sadness! How accurately it has been said:

'With the arrival, that had inherent happiness, of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) Medina illuminated like the moon,

and today with his passing away our eyes have not seen a place as dark as this'.

The poet of Islam, Hadhrat Hassaan bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) had lost his sight for quite sometime. However this was the day when he first realised that he had indeed lost the light of his eyes! How much grief and sorrow is veiled in the verses that he uttered then:

'O Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him), you were [like] the pupil of my eye that I am blinded of today. Whosoever may die now, I feared your death alone.'

This anguished condition was not just Hassaan's (may Allah be pleased with him) rather all the Companions were insane with grief. Their one grief was that of losing a beloved being whose love was greater than mother's love and the other anguish confounding them was: who was going to be the defender of their beloved's

sacred trust, what was to become of the sapling of Islam? Who was to irrigate it? It was only in the stage of sowing, who was going to nurture it with blood and life? And who indeed was going to conclude this mission? The anxiety of defending, propagating and promoting Islam was breaking up their souls; how would the Divine promise of the universal triumph, victory and advancement of Islam be fulfilled? At this critical juncture in the history of Islam, completely vanquished by these anxieties the revered Companions were enduring extreme distress when True to His promise God supported His beloved's people and His benevolent hand held the wounded hearts through the medium of Khilafat.

This tranquil hand of Allah the Almighty came forth in the form of Khilafat and filled the tremulous and fearful hearts with calm and serenity. The pallid hearts were revived that the Living, Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining God had placed the coronet of Khilafat on the head of a bereft and dying

ummah [people], granted them a leader who was a successor of their beloved master and through that affinity was declared their beloved master. The Companions faces beamed with happiness. The body had found a head; the convoy had found a leader who wore the garland of Divine victory. This was the appearance of the Second Manifestation; the reward of the Rightly Guided Khilafat and it was the completion of that Divine promise that God had made to the believers regarding the exaltation and victory of Islam.

Listen to the details of this Divine promise and its grand manifestation from the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace), who says:

'It has always been the way of God, a way which He has demonstrated since the day He created mankind, that He comes to the aid of His Apostles and Messengers and grants them predom-inance. He has stated in the Holy Qur'an:

Allah has decreed: 'Most surely I will prevail, I and my Messengers.'

(Surah Al-Mujadilah. Ch. 58: V.22).

'Prevalence' or 'predominance' in this context can be explained as follows: It is the fervent desire of all Prophets that arguments in favour of God become firmly established on the Earth in such a manner that none should be able to refute them. So with mighty signs, God makes manifest their truth and at their hands He sows the seed of the righteousness which they wish to spread. However, He does not complete this mission at their hands. Instead He causes them to die in such circumstances and at such a time when it would seem as if they had failed in their mission. This gives the opponents the opportunity to heap ridicule on them. But once these people have had their laugh, He shows another manifestation of His power and creates a set of circum-

stances that eventually lead to the fulfilment of those partially achieved aims. In short, His power is manifested twice:

During the lifetime of His Apostles and through their works He shows the power of His Hand.

After the demise of His apostles when their followers are subjected to various hardships. The enemy gains force and begins to think that the mission of the Prophet has been fatally injured. They even begin to believe that the community of his followers will be destroyed. Even members of the Movement fall prey to doubt (as if their backs had been broken). Some unfortunate ones take to the path of apostasy. Then, once again, God shows His Power and His Might and He saves the faltering community. So he who is steadfast to the last witnesses the miracle of God Almighty.

This is similar to what

...WHEN ALLAH THE EXALTED SENDS A PROPHET OR A MESSENGER IN THE WORLD, THE MOTIVE IS NOT FOR ONE INDIVIDUAL TO COME IN THIS WORLD, TO GIVE OUT A CALL AND THEN RETURN. RATHER AT THE TIME OF EACH PROPHET AND MESSENGER, IT IS THE DESIGN OF ALLAH THE EXALTED TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE AND A REVOLUTION.

happened at the time of Hadhrat Abu Bakr^(ra). The death of the Holy Prophet^(sa) was considered untimely and many ignorant Bedouins turned apostate. The companions of the Holy Prophet^(sa) were consumed with grief. At that critical hour Allah made Hadhrat Abu Bakr^(ra) stand firm and through him He once again showed a manifestation of His Power. Islam was thus saved from annihilation and His following promise was fulfilled, which said:

And that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear.

Surah Al-Nur (Ch. 24: V.56)
(Al-Waseeyat - Roohani
Khiza'een, Vol. 20 pp.304-305

This tremendous Power of Allah the Exalted, the Second Manifestation, is that spiritually blessed system of Khilafat, after prophethood, on which depends Islam's advancement, and its victory is reliant on it as well. This blessed system, is a representative of prophet hood and is the definite guarantee of advancements of all kinds. This indeed is the Promised Divine system of guidance that has been promised to the believers in Ayah Istikhlaaf (Al-Nur V.56).

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad (may Allah be pleased with him) has given a most splendid elucidation on the significance of Khilafat. He says: It is inferred from the study of the Holy Qur'an and the history of prophethood that when Allah the Exalted sends a prophet or a messenger in the world, the motive is not for one individual

to come in this world, to give out a call and then return. Rather at the time of each prophet and messenger, it is the design of Allah the Exalted to bring about a change and a revolution. Subject to the apparent means and motives of this, an extensive system and continuous endeavour is needed. As man's age is nevertheless limited, he is only employed to do the 'sowing'. To take this process of sowing to its conclusion, after the death of a prophet, He makes worthy people from among his community his continuous successors and thus finalises his work. In Islamic idiom, these successors are called Khalifa. *Monthly Khalid*, Rabwah May 1960.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) writes about the greatness of the system of Khilafat, its wisdom and blessing, in his book *Shahadatul Qur'an*:

'A khalifa is in actual fact a prophet's shadow. As no human has eternal life, therefore Allah the Exalted

willed to everlastingly establish the prophet's beings, which are more eminent and superior to all beings in the world, till the Day of Judgment in a shadow-like manner. Hence for this motive Allah the Exalted planned Khilafat so that the world may never, in any age be deprived of the blessings of prophet hood'. (*Shahadatul Qur'an* - Roohani Khiza'een Vol. 6, p.353).

A study of the Ayah Istikhlaaf of the Holy Qur'an tells us that the system of Khilafat, which is granted to the believers as a reward is a most blessed and magnificent system of leadership. Allah the Exalted Himself establishes this system in that community of believers that is adorned with faith and good deeds. Khilafat is an appendix of prophethood and is the perfect shadow of that light alone. In this respect the complete image of the blessings and the light of prophet hood can be seen in this reflection of prophet hood.

This is a system that changes each fear of the Muslim *ummah* in peace. It establishes the worship of the One and Only God with such splendour that it becomes the death knell for the idolatrous way of life. It is indeed Khilafat that becomes a testimonial of the faith and the good deeds of the community of believers thus gives them a lesson in unity and harmony. Khilafat is that cord of Allah that threads the entire *ummah* in the link of unison and love, transforming it into a firm, solid base.

The most magnificent grace of the blessings of Khilafat that Allah the Most Holy the Exalted mentions first of all in Ayah Istikhlaaf is the stability of Islam and the honour of the faith. The noble verse reads:

And that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them
(Ch.24:v.56)

That is to say that Allah the Almighty and Incomparable, promises and makes a definite

announcement that Islam shall be granted strength and honour through the system of Khilafat and the Divine destiny of the global victory of Islam shall be manifested with full splendour and glory through Khilafat. The warning that in isolation from the system of Khilafat, the possibility of any blessing, any advancement and any success cannot be envisaged is included in this challenging and perfectly clear declaration.

Success and prosperity will curtsy to those who will be within the sphere of Khilafat and those who will turn away from this grace will always be lost in the void of failure and misfortune.

The 1,400-year-old history of Islam bears witness that up till the time when the correct system of Khilafat, that is, the Rightly Guided Khilafat was established, Islam had advancement and victory. The sun of their successes and prosperity declined when the Muslims, as a requital of their bad deeds were deprived of this Divine reward. At the

....SOON AFTER THE SYSTEM OF KHILAFAT WAS ESTABLISHED, THE ISLAMIC FLAG FLEW IN THE EAST IN AFGHANISTAN UP TO THE BORDERS OF CHINA, UP TO TRIPOLI AND THE VERGES OF NORTH AFRICA IN THE WEST, IN THE NORTH UP TO THE CASPIAN SEA AND UP TO ETHIOPIA IN THE SOUTH. THIS VICTORY AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE RIGHTLY GUIDED KHILAFAT STUNS THE WORLD EVEN TODAY.

passing away of our guide and master the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) when Allah the Exalted granted the Muslims with Khilafat according to His promise, then during the blessed era of the Rightly Guided Khilafat, which only encompassed 30 years, Islam's glory was established not only in Arabia but the length and breath of this world. Allah the Exalted had promised the community of the believers that 'You shall certainly have the upper hand if you are believers' (Ch.3: V.140). In accordance with this promise the Muslims were granted success and victory in each field and each direction. While the situation at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet^(sa) of Islam was very

critical for Islam, soon after the system of Khilafat was established, the Islamic flag flew in the East in Afghanistan up to the borders of China, up to Tripoli and the verges of North Africa in the West, in the North up to the Caspian sea and up to Ethiopia in the South. This victory and advancement of the Rightly Guided Khilafat stuns the world even today.

This was that age of the advancement and climax of Islam that even the colossal opponents were powerless to contend with. Such was the state of the grandeur of Islam and the awe of the Muslims that the great empires of kings and emperors would tremble at their name and would bow down to them. The truth is that during this golden era of the

Rightly Guided Khilafat Islam attained such glory and eminence that even today when an impartial historian casts his eyes on this era he is wonder personified. He fails to understand as to how the inhabitants of the desert of Arabia became the conquerors of the world. He does not realise that it was all the fruits of the Rightly Guided Khilafat. That Rightly Guided Khilafat with which the destiny of the triumph of Islam is linked.

This brief mention of the advancement and eminence of Islam in the blessed period of the Rightly Guided Khilafat cannot be complete without a little account of the problems and seditions that arose one after the other, in particular during the beginning of the Rightly Guided Khilafat and were vanquished by the greatness of the Khilafat. The tumult of apostasy arose, protestors of Zakat raised a revolt, the hypocrites tried to stop the organization of the Muslim *ummah*, false claimants to prophet hood tried to scale the walls of the palace of

Islam. It seemed as if these headstrong seditions would ruin the greatness of Islam. However the God Who had granted the Muslims with the reward of Khilafat according to His promise and Who had made this promise:

And that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them.
(Ch.24: v.56)

The God of these true promises granted the Khalifa of the time, Hadhrat Abu Bakr Sadeeq (may Allah be pleased with him) with such resolve, courage and iron nerve to take measures that before their very eyes all these revolts were subjugated and the harvest of Islam was completely safe and secure from these whirlwinds.

I shall only relate one incident to establish the facts: Before his demise the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had directed to send an army of Muslims in the leadership of Hadhrat Usama bin Zaid (may Allah be pleased

with him) towards Syria. The army had not yet left that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) passed away. This instantly altered the circumstances. In the changed circumstances it seemed expedient by all accounts to apparently stop this army. Hadhrat Umer Farooq (may Allah be pleased with him) whose political insight and courage is widely acknowledged, presented himself in the court of the Khilafat and submitted, 'O Khalifa of the Prophet! The circumstances demand that some changes are made regarding this army. In consideration of the defense of the Centre this army should be halted.'

Reflect on the blessing and the greatness of Khilafat, that the one who was considered kind-hearted and thus weak, the very same Abu Bakr, who was now granted with the status of Khilafat by Allah the Exalted answered, 'Stopping the army aside, by God! Even if birds start scavenging my flesh I shall not commence my Khilafat by stopping something that was

commanded by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in his lifetime. What the prophet of God has said is final and absolute. This army shall leave and shall definitely leave and there is no way that this army should be stopped'.

The Companions submitted respectfully to at least delay the departure of the army a little. Hadhrat Abu Bakr Sadeeq (may Allah be pleased with him) said, 'this is also impossible. I swear by the Being save Who there is none worthy of worship, even if the dead bodies of the women of Medina are ravaged by dogs and cats in the streets of Medina, I would still never ever stop this army that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had prepared himself. This army shall leave and shall leave immediately.'

The Companions tried once again and most respectfully submitted their advice that if nothing else was possible, then another experienced person should replace the young and

in-experienced Usama as the leader of the army. Hadhrat Abu Bakr replied 'certainly not, Ibn Abi Fahaqa would not dare change whoever has been appointed by the Prophet of God. This army will leave in the leadership of Usama and will certainly leave'.

Therefore the world saw that despite extremely unfavourable circumstances the Khalifa of the Prophet, Hadhrat Abu Bakr Sadeeq (may Allah be pleased with him) fulfilled word for word what the Prophet of God^(sa) had uttered from his blessed lips. How faith arousing was the sight when Hadhrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) went outside Medina to bid farewell to the army. He asked Hadhrat Usama (may Allah be pleased with him) to mount the horse and walked along side. Hadhrat Usama (may Allah be pleased with him) repeatedly requested that 'O Khalifa of the Prophet of God, either mount yourself or allow me to dismount. The reply was ' No, none of this will be, neither I shall mount nor you shall walk on foot'.

Therefore Hadhrat Usama's (may Allah be pleased with him) army departed Medina with glory. The circumstances that followed proved that the decision of the Khalifa of the time was most blessed and it became the source of Islam's eminence. The enemy was so browbeaten that they did not dare to attack Medina and this army, having achieved their objective, returned victorious. This magnificent episode in the very beginning of the Khilafat established its greatness and it was evident to all that Islam's honour, the triumph of the true faith and its stability is dependent on Khilafat.

After this magnificent era of the Rightly Guided Khilafat, due to the ingratitude of the Muslims the reward of Khilafat could not maintain its original form. Monarchy and sovereignty became the norm in place of Khilafat and along with this, the curtain came down on all the blessings that are associated with Khilafat. During this era of tyranny and sovereignty the advancement and triumph that was gained in

the corners of the world through Khilafat began to wane. The prominence of the Muslims bid farewell to them. Their magnificence turned away and left them. Dissension and discord grew to such an extent among the ranks of the Muslims that they completely disregarded unity and accord and started fighting amongst themselves. As a result the nation that had been illuminated by the sun of prophet hood and the moon of Khilafat and had trodden the pinnacles of advancement and exaltation fell into the ignominious abyss of decline and degradation. Each day and each night of this period bore witness to the fact that the Muslims had achieved all that they had accomplished only by means of Khilafat. Once they abandoned that Khilafat their fortune ran out.

After being deprived of the Rightly Guided Khilafat, the lengthy night of abjectness for the Muslims lasted more or less a thousand years. In exact accordance to the prophecy of the embodiment of truth,

Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) in this period of dense darkness the state of Islam became unspeakable. Faith had reached the Pleiades and the condition was such that:

*Neither faith nor Islam remains
Just the name of Islam remains*
(Maulana Hali)

At long last the God of true promises, according to His promise laid the foundation of the revival of Islam in the time of the Latter-Days through a divine reformer. Allah the Exalted sent Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (on whom be peace) as the Second Manifestation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and granted him the high station of the Imam Mahdi and the Promised Messiah. The objective of his advent was described as the revival of Islam, and establishment of the Shariah and to take the work of the completion of the propagation of Islam to such an extent that ultimately results in Islam's triumph. Without exception all

commentators of the Holy Qur'an agree regarding the following noble verse:

He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over every other religion, even though the idolaters may dislike it. (Ch.9:v.33)

that the triumph of Islam over the false religions that is being prophesized will be manifested in all its glory and splendour during the time of Imam Mahdi (on whom be peace).

Hadhrat Syed Muhammad Ismaeel Shaheed (may Allah have mercy on him) writes in his book *Munsab e Imamat*:

'The manifestation of faith commenced in the time of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and it will be concluded with the hands of the Hadhrat Imam Mahdi (on whom be peace).' (Munsab e Imamat. p 76)

The Promised Messiah^(as) has himself written:

'It is God's wish that all people of pious nature living in various parts of the world-regardless of whether they belong to Europe or Asia-be brought together under the banner of Tawheed (The Unity of God). It is His intention that all His servants be gathered into one religion and it is for the fulfilment of that goal that I have been sent into this world.'

(*Al-Wassiyat Roohani Khaza'in*, Vol. 20, p.306-307).

We are witnesses to this that the foundation of this global triumph was laid with the sacred hands of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and that he sacrificed each moment of his pure life for this objective. May thousands upon thousands of Allah the Exalted's blessings and grace be on this most beloved spiritual son of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) who rendered the dues of service to faith. This is not the occasion for a detailed mention of his services to the

faith. However, I must say that this champion of Allah the Exalted rendered such magnificent services in Islam's defence and for its exaltation and advancement that even the most extreme opponents openly acknowledged this fact. He was declared as the victorious general of Islam and it was affirmed that he had strengthened extremely solid foundations for the global triumph of Islam.

Eventually that day arrived in his life that comes in the life of each mortal. However, before his demise he gave the glad tidings that the Mighty and Powerful God would never abandon the mission that had started through him and that the divine operation of the triumph of Islam will blossom and will continue to thrive in the shelter of Khilafat. He said:

'Most definitely consider it a sapling planted by God's hands, God will never let it dissipate. He will not be pleased until it has been taken to an excellent stage. He will irrigate it and shall

encompass it and will give it astonishing advancements.'
(*Anjaam Aatham, Roohani Khaza'in*'. Vol. 11, p.64)

27th May 1908 was the historic day when Allah the Exalted bestowed the Ahmadiyya community - established by the blessed hands of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) - with the reward of Khilafat and bestowed them with that means of victory and success with which the advancement and triumph of Islam is associated. Today this divine reward completes its 90 years. God is our witness that, whilst prostrating before Him with utter gratitude, we acknowledge that every single day of these 90 years bears testimony that through the bona fide Islamic Khilafat Ahmadiyya, Allah the Exalted has granted the Islamic faith with such glory and dignity and such global advancement that it has the authority of a continuous, living, luminous miracle.

By means of the Ahmadiyya Khilafat, the tale of the triumph of Islam, alongside being heart-

THE TRUTH IS THAT IN THE AUSPICES OF KHILAFAT, THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT HAS ATTAINED SUCH A GLOBAL PERSONA THAT TODAY NO AREA OF THIS WORLD IS DEPRIVED OF ITS BLESSINGS AND IT CAN BE SAID IN THE LITERAL SENSE OF THE WORD AND WITHOUT ANY FEAR OF REPUDIATION THAT THE SUN NEVER SETS ON THE WORLD OF AHMADIYYAT.

warming and faith arousing is so splendid and glorious that the pen falters chronicling it and words fail me as I endeavour to bring the ever-increasing global advancements of Islam through the Ahmadiyya Khilafat to the tip of my pen. The truth is that the seed of service and propagation of Islam that the sacred hands of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) had planted has today developed into a magnificent tree growing in the shelter of the Khilafat Ahmadiyya. Like the holy *Kalima* the roots of this tree are firmly established in the corners of this world and its branches have filled the breadth of atmosphere. The establishment of missions outside of India started in the era of Khilafat Ahmadiyya and now with the Grace of Allah the Exalted, the Ahmadiyya

community is established in more than 170 countries. The convoy that started with forty devotees has now reached in excess of 40 million and is ever-increasing. The voice that rose in the obscure town of Qadian is now echoing in the corners of this world. Allah the Exalted has granted this voice so much acceptance and greatness that, in light of its significance and usefulness the intellectuals of around the farthest corners of the world listen to it with care and acknowledge its truth.

The truth is that in the auspices of Khilafat, the Ahmadiyya Movement has attained such a global persona that today no area of this world is deprived of its blessings and it can be said in the literal sense of the word and without any fear of repudiation that

the sun never sets on the world of Ahmadiyyat. Rather it should be articulated that at each moment and in each place Allah that Exalted lets the sun of His support and triumph continuously shine on the world of Ahmadiyyat and in the shelter of Divine successes this promised morning of the global victory of Islam is getting brighter by the moment.

Along with spreading a network of centers to propagate Islam worldwide, under the auspices of Khilafat Ahmadiyya the publication of Islamic literature in numerous languages of this world is a feat on its own. In the area of literature the most significant are the translations of the Holy Qur'an. Is it not short of a miracle that during the last few years of the fourth Khilafat Ahmadiyya, the Ahmadiyya community has had the privilege to present Qur'anic translations in twice as many world languages than the translations of the Holy Qur'an done in various languages by the Muslims worldwide in the last 1,300 years! Selected verses of the

Holy Qur'an, Ahadith and excerpts from the writings of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) have been published in more than a hundred different languages. Islamic literature is being published and distributed with extraordinary profusion. An extensive scheme of 'book exhibitions' is playing an important role in the propagation of Islam.

The Ahmadiyya community holds a distinction in building mosques around the corners of the world. The credit of building mosques in the thousands goes to the community. Application of the Islamic teachings in the shape of establishment of educational and health institutions in East and West Africa and the consequential unconditional service of humanity is winning the hearts of the people of these areas towards Islam. In this age of plunder and loot, in rendering selfless service to orphans and widows the Ahmadiyya community has had the privilege of presenting them with living accommo-

dations under the housing project of 'Baiyoot Al-Hamd'.

The Ahmadiyya Community has always played a leading and exemplary role in the defence of the honour and reputation of Islam. As far as sacrifices and indeed continuous sacrifices for the glory and advancement of Islam are concerned, each era of the history of the Ahmadiyya community is abound with faith-inspiring incidents. This indeed is the community that makes sacrifices of life, time and honour for the propagation of Islam and with these sacrifices has refreshed the memory of the Companions of the earlier times. Who does not love life? To devote this very dear life for the cause of beloved Islam, to present the life of one's unborn children for devotion to Islam, to migrate from one's country in order to propagate Islam and eventually give one's life for Islam and be buried in those strange lands, to be beaten for the sake of the glory of the *Kalima Tayyaba*, to wear shackles and kiss them lovingly, to be imprisoned for the crime

THIS INDEED IS THE COMMUNITY THAT MAKES SACRIFICES OF LIFE, TIME AND HONOUR FOR THE PROPAGATION OF ISLAM AND WITH THESE SACRIFICES HAS REFRESHED THE MEMORY OF THE COMPANIONS OF THE EARLIER TIMES.

of the love of Islam and spend years upon years of one's life in darkened cells, to bear pain and to give away one's life in time of need and thus write the tale of devotion with one's sacred blood - these are all manifestations of the same devotion.

In short there is no turn on the road to the advancement of Islam where the Ahmadiyya community is not engaged in various operations. There is no high station along this road where the footprints of the zealous Ahmadis who hold Islam dearer than life cannot be found. The truth is that Allah the Exalted has bestowed

this exclusive honour and privilege on the Ahmadis for the reason that this day on the face of the earth theirs is the only community that truly validates and presents a very strong foundation under the auspices of a venerable Imam who is accorded full obedience.

This is the only community that is facilitated with the blessing of Khilafat; who knows to rise at the voice of a spiritual leader and to be seated at his signal. Yes indeed, this is the very same community whose Imam's love for the people of the community is greater than mother's love and all the people of the community adore their Imam. The blessing of Khilafat, having assembled them under one hand, has granted them this miracle that these 40 million Ahmadi devotees have performed such prominent actions in the service and propagation of Islam that those who call themselves Muslims and number well in excess of one hundred million, have not had the power to do. The reason behind this honour and good

fortune is nothing else but the fact that Allah the Exalted has granted the Ahmadiyya community with the great blessing of Khilafat with which the advancement of Islam is linked. In fact the truth of the matter is that to be granted the opportunity to strive and sacrifice in the cause of Islam is also associated with Khilafat.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) says:

'Look, we are propagating Islam all over the world but have you ever reflected as to how this propagation is taking place? There is a center under which all those who have the love of Islam in their hearts are assembling and are jointly endeavouring for the triumph and revival of Islam. Apparently these are just a few people, however they have developed such strength that they can perform enormous, significant tasks. Just as water comes down from the sky in drops and these drops turn

into a trickle and this very trickle takes the shape of a flowing river, similarly we keep on getting greater strength and dignity. The reason for this is simply because Allah the Exalted has granted you with the blessing of Khilafat.'

(*Daily Al-Fazl*, Rabwah 25th March 1951)

He also said:

'Islam cannot prosper unless there is Khilafat. Islam has always prospered through the Khalifas and in future will also advance through this means.'

(*Dars ul Qur'an* by Hadhrat Musleh Maud (may Allah be pleased with him). Published November 1921)

The century old history of the Ahmadiyya community, the standard bearer for the dignity of Islam, is a history of hardships, difficulties and Divine Graces. During this period there have been raging storms of opposition, the opponents have 'tried all the arrows in their case', colossal

personalities have collided with Ahmadiyyat but according to the Divine promise the truth has always prevailed and falsity disgraced. At the passing away of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) suspicion and doubt about Khilafat raised its head, this was crushed by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih the 1st (may Allah be pleased with him) with the resolve and dignity of the kind that Hadhrat Abu Bakr Sadeeq (may Allah be pleased with him) had.

At the beginning of the 2nd Khilafat the rejecters of Khilafat once again raised a huge upheaval and having separated themselves, took to Lahore. Despite his relative youth at the time of this revolt, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih the 2nd (may Allah be pleased with him) led the community so supremely that all the tricks of the hypocrites were unsuccessful.

During the second Khilafat the disturbance of Misri arose, Mistaris' raised a tumult. The Ahrar started a country-wide movement to obliterate the

community. The tremor of the partition of the country took place that forced the community to move away from its permanent center and make a new center. The community had barely found its feet when in 1953 a national uproar against the community arose. The Haqiqat Pasand Party took advantage of the situation and tried to internally disperse and mislead the community. These commotions raised their heads one after the other, however, each time a revolt collided with the great rock that Khilafat is, it was crushed to smithereens! The Ahrar were staggered and the defiled plans of the hypocrites bit the dust. The Powerful hand of God granted advancement and triumph to Islam through Khilafat.

In the era of the 3rd Khilafat, during the uproar of 1974 the opponents once again tried their utmost to blot out the community, but as always they were unsuccessful and disgraced. Many fortunate Ahmadis gave their lives away, their properties were plundered, their houses were burnt

down but no one could take away their resolve and the smile from their countenances.

At the commencement of the 4th Khilafat, the opponents were stunned by the swift-footed charismatic personality of the Khalifa of the time and took their opposing attempts to the highest point when in 1984 an all-time infamous ordinance was issued and they tried their level best to obstruct the advancement of Ahmadiyyat. There is no doubt that as a result of this a few virtuous people gave their lives and were martyrs and numerous captives in the way of Allah are still illuminating dark and dingy prison cells, but God be our witness that the progressive sun that rose on the horizon of Ahmadiyyat, each day seals the attempts of the opponents with failure. The Mighty Powerful God blew those who were impudent in the presumption to blot out Ahmadiyyat to bits. Where is that tyrant who said that his power was very strong and that he would ensure that the Ahmadis ended up with a beggar's bowl? Where is that

SUCH GOOD FORTUNE AND PRIVILEGE IS OURS THAT TODAY IT IS ONLY AHMADIYYAT ON THE SURFACE OF THIS EARTH THAT HAS BEEN GRANTED THE BLESSED SYSTEM OF KHILAFAT. VARIOUS TYPES OF LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS CAN BE SEEN BUT THERE IS NO LEADER APPOINTED BY GOD.

tyrant, who in the footsteps of the Pharaoh, had declared that he would erase the cancer of Ahmadiyyat? Observe, our God has obliterated these enemies of Islam from the face of the earth. The prayers of the champions of truth, the Ahmadiyya Khalifas crushed tyrannous arrogance. One was seen on the hangman's scaffold and the others' body was blown to dust and dispersed in the desert. Such has always been the fate of the opponents of Ahmadiyyat in each era and their future destiny is not much different either. One after another triumph is awaiting the Ahmadiyya community under the blessing and auspices of Khilafat and our opponents are destined to face failure after failure.

Listen to the one who speaks with the support of God, the one who has God's shelter

above him, the one who is appointed by God as the defender of the vessel of Islam and leader of the believers in this age. Listen and pay heed to what he says! Our beloved Imam Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV says:

'There will be definite opposition in the future, there is no denying it because it is in the destiny of the community that it will go through many difficulties and then enter stage upon stage of advancement. It is these difficulties that equip the community for life. After this opposition the next extensive opposition that I can see is not a tale of one or two governments. Many powerful governments will get together and conspire to blot out the community. The bigger the conspiracy,

the bigger the failure will be their fate.

The Khalifas before me gave courage to the future Khalifas and told them to put their trust in God and not to fear any opponent. I swear upon God and say to the future Khalifas to have courage and exhibit patience and determination like I have done and not to fear any power of this world. The God who has blotted out lowly oppositions before shall also shatter greater and stronger powers and shall obliterate them from the face of this earth. The Ahmadiyya community is, in any case, going to enter stage upon stage of triumph. No worldly power can change this destiny in any way.’
(Speech by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih 1V delivered on 29th July 1984 at the European Ijtema of Khuddam ul Ahmadiyya)

Such good fortune and privilege is ours that today it is only Ahmadiyyat on the surface of

this earth that has been granted the blessed system of Khilafat. Various types of leadership systems can be seen but there is no leader appointed by God. There is no manager who has God’s shelter over him; there is no one who has been granted the knowledge of Divine help and victory. There is but no one in whose feet triumphs are laid out with Divine consent.

It is a further favour and Grace of God, who is the Source of all Beneficence, that we have had the honour to be servants of this Khilafat. Allah the Exalted has made us the trustees of a great trust and has bestowed a magnificent reward on us. However, be mindful that this privilege brings great responsibilities with it. This reward invites us to obedience. An obedience in which nothing remains one’s own and each motion and quietude is ever ready to be forfeited at the gesture of the master. This reward summons us to the fields of sacrifice and uprightness - the fields where the tales of the sacrifices of

the earlier times and the companions of this era of Latter-Days are recorded. It is our obligation to revive those tales today.

Today, it is our obligation to replicate Hadhrat Bilal's (may Allah be pleased with him) resounding sound of *Ahad Ahad* that echoed in the valleys of Mecca. Watch and listen, the spirits of the martyrs of *Ahad* are calling out that just as they valiantly presented the homage of their lives and did not dare let the torch of prophet hood flicker, we too should be fearlessly reverential towards Khilafat and if the time and need arise everyone of us should be ready to offer the greatest sacrifice.

Finally, I would like to conclude by presenting a very beautiful and comprehensive quotation from the writings of Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) that summarizes the whole subject very nicely. He says:

'Friends! My last counsel is

that all these are indeed the blessings of Khilafat. Prophet hood sows a seed; later Khilafat spreads its effect in the world. Hold on firmly to the bona-fide Khilafat and warn the world about its blessings so that God has mercy on you and raises you high in this world and raises you high in the other world as well. Keep fulfilling your promises till death over takes you and keep reminding my progeny and also the progeny of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) about the promises of their family. May the missionaries of Ahmadiyyat prove to be true soldiers of Islam and may they become workers of the Holy God in this world.'

(*Daily Al-Fazl*, Rabwah 20th May 1950)

Patience and Steadfastness

Presented below is a compilation, in translation, of excerpts taken from two volumes of *Malfoozat* which is the title of the ten volumes containing the collection of discourses, speeches and addresses of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).



The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as)

In 1891, he claimed, on the basis of Divine revelation, that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) and by the scriptures of other faiths.

His claim constitutes the basis of the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

[Translator's Note: All references to verses of the Holy Qur'an are given in Arabic as they occur in the text. The English translation, presented in Italics, is taken from the translation of the Holy Qur'an by Hadhrat Maulvi Sher Ali Sahib^(ra). Where the Promised Messiah^(as) has himself stated a certain interpretation of the Arabic verse, this is incorporated in the main body of the text].

Compiled and translated by Amatul Hadi Ahmad

All the Prophets faced difficulties and experienced great tribulation - none has been without it. That is why there are great rewards for the people who bear all ordeals and afflictions with patience. In the Holy Qur'an God addresses the Holy Prophet^(sa) stating that he should give glad tidings to those who are patient and to those who, when faced with an ordeal, say that there was a time when we did not exist - God created us and we are his trust and to

Him is the final return. There are glad tidings, indeed for such people. Through their [patience in the face of ordeals] they attain many blessings. One does not become deserving of the special tidings given by God simply through observing prayers, fasting and the payment of Zakat. If prayers are offered with all the relevant requirements - that is an excellent thing but the direct aim towards God [through various trials] hits the target and is the best [means of spiritual progress]. It is through this that one gains guidance and support.

The people of my Community should listen carefully and understand this point well that God has intended both types of ordeals for you. The first type is one relating to the practice of religious commandments, that is the Shari'a and you should endure these. The second type is the tribulation meted out by 'fate' that one has to suffer and bear. Most people wriggle out of some aspects of the rules of religious practice but who can run away from the decree of fate! Man has no discretion over this.

Remember, for man there is not just the world [here on earth]. There is another world after this. Life here is very brief indeed. One person may die after fifty or sixty years, another may add a further ten or twelve years to that. The troubles of this world end with death but there is no end to the other world. When the event of the *Qayamah*, the final reckoning, is a truth and a belief in it is part of faith then what is so difficult about patiently enduring the troubles of this life that will last only for a brief period. One should make an effort for that other world which is eternal. What 'provisions' can a person gather [for that eternal world] if he does not face any hardship [in this world]?

The distinguishing sign of a believer is that he should not only be one who shows patience but that he should go further and cheerfully accept his situation even during times of hardship. His pleasure and God's pleasure should become as one. This state is the best. At times of trouble it is God's pleasure that should be given priority - the Bestower of Bounties [that is God] should be

given precedence over the bounties. There are many that start complaining when they are faced with a difficulty and that is as if they break their relationship with God. Some women start grumbling and cursing. Some men too are weak in their faith.

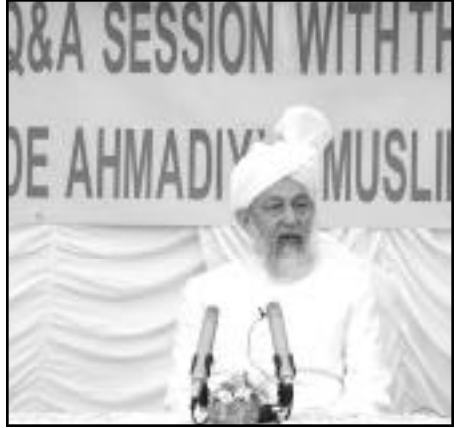
This is an important piece of advice and it should be remembered that if a person is facing difficulties he should be fearful of the possibility of an even greater hardship befalling him. This world is a place of trials and to live in it in a state of oblivion is not a good thing. Most difficulties come as a warning. In the beginning it is light in appearance and a person does not consider it to be a hardship but then it turns into a most distressing ordeal. The fact is that if someone is gently pressed with the hand, he would find this quite soothing but if the same hand is used to slap hard, it would become a source of pain. Yet another type of tribulation may become a threat to life itself. The Holy Qur'an has mentioned both types of tribulation (mild as well as severe).

Trial and tribulation are there for the achievement of higher states. The Prophet Abraham^(as) did not bemoan the fact that God had asked him for his son. Instead, he was grateful to be presented with the opportunity of serving God. The son's mother gave her agreement and the son himself also agreed [to his own sacrifice]. It is related that once the minaret of a mosque collapsed and the King of the land fell down in prostration, thanking God, that he too had been granted the opportunity to serve the mosque that had been the noble work of his predecessors.

Time passes in any case. Ultimately, even those who are used to eating delicious and well prepared food [the wealthier people] also die but he who is patient in the face of hardship finds his reward. One hundred and twenty four thousand Prophets bear witness to the fact that patience is certainly rewarded.

[*Malfoozat*, Vol. 10, pp.86- 89]

Interpretation of Sharia - Part One



During his visit to Nigeria in 1988, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the Fourth Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam was invited by BTV, a Nigerian television company, to take part in a series of televised interviews in which a number of questions regarding Islam and Ahmadiyyat were raised. Presented below are answers to some questions that were raised by the BTV presenter in some of these sessions.

Prepared by Amatul Hadi Ahmad

QUESTIONER

What are the human rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic society?

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad: This is a very pertinent question in view of current affairs and I am grateful to you for raising it. The fact is that Muslim opinion is, unfortunately, divided on this issue. Those who hold the 'orthodox' view believe that Islam does not give equal rights to non-Muslims. By 'orthodox' I mean the views that belong to the

'medieval' period of Islamic history when there appeared many scholars who began to interpret Islam according to their own wisdom and their own views - views that are at variance from the Islam that was practiced by the Holy prophet Muhammad of Islam. The 'orthodox' scholars, unfortunately, believe that Islam does not give equal rights to the non-Muslims in Muslim states and sometimes they define the unequal rights as to what they should be and in what way they should be inferior. Even to the extent

that some of the religious clerics of this class would claim that the non-Muslims do not have the right to choose their own dress - the form of their dress should also be decided by the so-called Muslim government and they should be forced to wear that dress so that they may not appear like the rest of the Muslims. Hence, they should be kept distinctly apart. The 'orthodox' scholars hold that there are many aspects in which the non-Muslims have inferior rights. I will give example of one. They hold that the non-Muslims, living in a Muslim society, have every right to become Muslims but they have no right to preach their faith to Muslims. Furthermore, having become Muslims, should they later decide that they made the wrong decision and wish to revert back to their faith, according to the 'orthodox' view, they will not be permitted to do so - they will be killed. This is the punishment. In short, there exists in Islam only one way

traffic according to their interpretation of Islam with which we totally disagree. We reject it entirely, not simply because we do not like it but because we know that the Holy Qur'an specifically and categorically rejects this barbarism and declares 'war' against such an attitude.

The Holy Qur'an is full of incidents of the past religious history and goes on condemning one incident after another where the opponents of truth took exactly this same attitude [of attempting to destroy the Prophets of God who rejected their beliefs]. The Holy Qur'an declares such people to be with Satan and bound for hell. Recounting these events, the Holy Quran reminds us that the Prophet Noah was told by such people that you have no right of believe in whatever you decide and because you have abandoned our religion, we will either make you return to that religion with force or we will turn you out of our land, or we shall kill you. The same

happened to Prophet Sho'aib and other Prophets after him. The Holy Qur'an repeats this history and mentions Prophet Abraham, Prophet Moses and many others. The same situation is faced by all of them and the Holy Qur'an condemns all the people who opposed the Prophets in this manner. We may well ask as to why it should be the case that with the appearance of the Holy Prophet of Islam, the Leader of the Prophets, the very best, the Seal of the Prophets, the situation should be completed reversed? It is absurd even to imagine this - it is totally untenable.

The Holy Qur'an categorically declares: *La ikraha fiddeen*, that is, there is no compulsion whatsoever in any faith, in any religion in any 'ism'. *Deen* is a term that has a very wide application [and includes such groupings as different schools of thought]. Not only, the Holy Qur'an tells us that if anyone chooses to be a Muslim and reverts back to his old faith, denying Islam, and then

becomes a Muslim again, and reverts yet again to his old faith, even after all this the Holy Qur'an does not state that such a person should be killed - it tells us that the case of such a person should be left to God.

QUESTIONER

Is there anything in the Qur'an that says that adulterers must be stoned?

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad: One thing that needs to be brought into focus as far as the Shari'a law is concerned is that the opinion of experts differ on fundamental points. In view of this, it must necessarily be the case that some of them would be right and some of them would be wrong. Consequently, we need to ask whether it could in fact be the case that those who take a lenient interpretation of the Shari'a law may be right. Scholars who hold the more lenient view, base their argument on the same verses of the Holy Qur'an as used by

those who use a more stern interpretation of the verses regarding punishment. The logical question that arises here is to ask whether it is not possible that those who take the lenient view may be right. If the answer to this question is in the affirmative, then would it not be the case that those who enact an incorrect interpretation of Islam, in the name of Islam, would be responsible for those cruel acts? Suppose further that the government change and another government comes or a sect that was prevalent in an area is reduced in number and another sect becomes the majority. Should the interpretation of the Shari'a used by the majority be different from the previous sect, would that be Islam changing its position over fundamental issues? Certainly not. One should, therefore, be very careful and cautious in assessing Islamic practice.

The accepted principle of justice is always this that when deciding upon punish-

ment, the criminal should be given the benefit of doubt. Even if the guilt of a criminal is fully proven, the benefit of doubt that should be exercised in such a case would be that the minimum punishment should be enforced, not the maximum.

As far as the punishment of stoning to death is concerned, the Holy Qur'an declares that those who indulge in fornication or adultery, (the same Arabic word *zana* is used for both), should be flogged one hundred times. Here in this verse there is no mention of stoning at all anywhere. Moreover, it is also stated immediately after this that those who indulge in fornication or adultery should marry amongst themselves and should not marry the innocent Muslims so that they may not destroy the social and cultural values of Islam. In other words, those who indulge in such immoral acts should marry amongst themselves. The point to note here is that if the adulterers are killed, if

they are stoned to death, how can they marry. If they are to be killed, why is the Holy Qur'an raising the question of their marriage immediately after prescribing this punishment?

The Holy Qur'an describes the punishment to be one hundred floggings. This flogging is not to be with something like the army hunter or the whip - it is definitely not like that.

The nature of the 'flog' to be used in enforcing this punishment is, again, a point of difference. In some Sheikdoms in some states of the Gulf, they still maintain that the manner of flogging that was carried out in the time of the Holy Prophet has come down to them through centuries. They maintain that the 'flog' is a piece of some hide of a relatively small size and that is all. The fact is that the 'flog' has not been described or defined in the Holy Qur'an. This is something we need to find out from history - we need to know

what the Holy Qur'an means and what the Arabs of the early days of Islam used for the purpose of 'flogging'. Without determining such facts, the second issue will not be determined at all.

I have made investigations and have come to the positive conclusion that the present day whip as introduced to us through the army or through some other ways of torture was not at all the instrument of 'flogging' used by the Arabs of the early Islamic period. *Jaldatan* is the Arabic word used in the Holy Qur'an [where reference is made to the punishment of flogging]. The Arabic word *Jalda* means animal skin or hide - it does not mean a cane of some sort. It should be noted here that *Jalda*, that is, a hide of some sort, is incapable of killing. Moreover, it is believed by many Muslim scholars that during the 'flogging' one should not raise one's arm to the extent that the white of the arm is revealed, that is to say that the arm should not be

raised very high. In short, it is impossible for a person to be killed as a result of 'flogging' where a small piece of hide is with the arm not fully raised. However, even this is not the whole story. It is important that this aspect of Islamic teaching should be studied together with its relevant background.

The Islamic teaching of chastity is of such a high level that it produces an atmosphere of chastity in the whole society. With its various injunctions, it creates a sense of chastity that pervades the whole society. It engenders a culture and a set of values that is different from that found in western societies or in African society today. There you find that generally a promiscuous attitude is prevalent while in Islamic Societies with all the appropriate application of the Islamic way of life it becomes a very different type of society. In that society there would be a very small likelihood of such matters arising. Moreover, should an

accusation of adultery be made, Islam enjoins upon the law enforcing agencies to demand four witnesses to this act. Given this injunction, it is not difficult to appreciate how remote the possibility of such punishment would become. It is a threatening posture but in reality its application would be very rare indeed.

How to Get Rid of the Bondage of Sin

This article appeared in the *Review of Religions*, January 2002.

In the following pages we propose to point out the remedy for the devouring evil of the times. It is plain that the marvellous material progress of the world is more than counterbalanced by its deplorable spiritual decline. The souls of men have so far fallen away from their natural nobility that they eschew pure truths and shun their very contact. It seems as if some forcible energy were dragging them down with an accelerated motion into the sink of iniquity and the lowest depths of vice. Such an entire change has passed over the intellects of men that what is spiritually ugliest and most detestable is admired for the dazzling beauty of its polish. Tender conscience, that inward monitor to man, feels that it is falling off from its natural purity under the demoralizing influence of some unseen power. The poison is so generally spread that it has

destroyed almost a whole world. Pure and noble truths are laughed at and trifled with, and a turning to God and total resignation to His will is looked upon as an absurdity. Every soul upon earth seems to be bent upon earthly cares and advantages, as if some hidden power had constrained it to that course.

Such is the evil attraction of vice, and the truth is, as we have already pointed out, that there are attractions working in the world. The efficiency or inefficiency of an attraction depends upon the certainty or uncertainty of our views with regard to any matter; and if the certainty is greater, the attraction too is more powerful. It is a principle the truth of which is no less unquestionable in the spiritual than in the material world, that an attraction can only be counterbalanced by its opposite, if the latter is more

powerful than the former. Since the world in its present state is being dragged down under the influence of an evil attraction, it can never raise itself up the level and soar into higher regions, unless an opposite and more powerful attraction from heaven overpoises the existing earthly tendencies and brings about a greater certainty in the opposite direction. To make it more clear, no change for the better can be brought about until people begin to see with certainty that there are real and more substantial and lasting advantages and delights in submission to the commandments of God than can be felt by indulging in carnal passions and evil desires, that these advantages and delights can be palpably felt in a virtuous life, and that transgression is not only equal to but worse than death. This certainty, when it has an entire control over the mind, can alone be a safe protector against sin.

It is further necessary that there should reign in the heart

the absolute conviction that the light is granted to man from heaven only through the sun who is the *Imam* (the spiritual head) of his time. Hence it is that ignorance with regard to such a spiritual head is followed by a death of ignorance. The person who thinks he can do without that real source of light is deluded, for he sets himself in opposition to the unchangeable laws of God. The eyes have a light, yet to avail themselves of it they must borrow the light of the sun. The Imam resembles the sun in being the true source of all light; he comes from heaven and illumines the world, and the eye is blind that does not borrow light from him. On the other hand, the person who, with the aid of this light, stands on a firm footing of certainty is attracted towards virtue. Between the earthly and heavenly attractions a struggle would naturally follow and each will try to overcome the other. The one shall be drawing a man to virtue, the other to vice, the one to the

East and the other to the West. The more powerful the opposite attractions grow, the more fearful shall the struggle be. It is a necessary consequence of great material progress that these two attractions should display their highest powers. When the world has attained the highest stage of material advancement the days of heavenly advancements are not far. It is certain that upon the heavens also preparations are, then, being made for a spiritual reformation. An attraction is produced upon heavens and the two contend with each other for supremacy.

Dreadful is the day when neglect and vanity reign supreme upon earth, for it is the day of vengeance and the promised day of the great spiritual struggle. That terrible struggle has been described in metaphorical language by the holy prophets of God. Some have represented it as the final struggle between the angels of heaven and the devils of the bottomless pit, at

the close of which comes the end of the world; while others have from crass ignorance taken it to be a physical struggle which shall be carried on with steel and gunpowder. The latter view is, no doubt, the result of misjudgement and superficial notions, and metaphorical words describing a spiritual contest have been misconstrued as meaning a physical war.

In short, a hard struggle is now going on between the darkness of earth and the light of heaven. The prophets of God from Adam to Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon them, foretold of this mighty struggle. It has leaders on both sides, the concealer of truths on the side of darkness, and the revealer of truths on the side of light. The one comes from heaven with a host of angels and is manifestation of Michael, and the other enters the lists with the powers of darkness and is an incarnation of the Devil. Now, when the inhabitants of Pandemonium are standing

fully equipped in a battle-array, and have either done or are engaged in doing their wicked deeds, we are naturally led to hope that the heavenly host is also making preparations for crushing the evil ones, and good judgement enables us to draw the conclusion that the host of heaven is not negligent of its duties. But the heavenly government is averse to hubbub and clattering and carries on its operations in solemn silence. Superficial observers can hardly be aware of its doings until a sign appears in the heavens, and a *minaret* (light-house) is erected upon earth, silvery white and shining with light. The heavenly light descends upon this minaret which then enlightens the whole world.

The closing remarks of the last paragraph require to be explained. The spiritual system notwithstanding its coincidence in all prominent points with the physical world, displays certain peculiar marks which a superficial observer

cannot detect in the latter. An instance of this is to be found in the way in which the earthly attraction becomes the *premium mobile* of heavenly attraction, although the two are directly opposed to each other. It is therefore reasonable to assert that at a time when both these attractions shall act in their full force - in the last days of the world's history, when material progress shall have attained the highest stage - the two attractions shall contend with each other for supremacy, for true success is not attained unless the enemy is destroyed. Where therefore the two rivals are equally thriving and powerful, the contest must necessarily be a hard one, for each one of the rivals has at heart the destruction of the other. Reason therefore also supports the prophetic utterings of all the great patriarchs and prophets in as much as the struggle between good and evil is the necessary consequence of the collision of the two rival forces, of which either one must overcome the

other, or both be annihilated in the contest.

According to the prophetic utterances this final contest between good and evil may be thus described that after the lapse of a thousand years from Jesus which was the millennium of the Devil's imprisonment, an evil attraction gained ground upon earth. This was the time in the world's history when the Muslims had renounced the true and noble principles of Islam, and therefore that religion was in a declining state. Its spiritual progress had at that time been hampered and its conquests had come to an end. It was born in the days when the author of evil lay in chains in the bottomless pit. Its rise and decline at these two periods was necessary that what the prophets and last of all St. John had spoken, might be fulfilled. It was therefore in fulfilment of these predictions that the religion of Islam began to decline after a thousand years from Jesus, and its further

progress was then and there checked. Satanic movements and operations thenceforth assumed different shapes and appeared in many-coloured garments. The tree of evil took root in the ground and ramified to an enormous extent. Some of its branches spread into the East, others reached the uttermost settlements of the West, and not a few shaded the North and the South. No corner of the world was spared the evil. But the time during which the Devil had been let loose was like the time of his imprisonment limited to a thousand years, and the prophets of God bore testimony to the same effect. With the close of the thirteenth century, [...after Hijra...], the period of Satan's freedom came to an end. For it must be noticed that in the computation of periods of prophecies we must start with the lunar year as our basis, this system of reckoning the prophetic periods being taught by Almighty God to both Jews and Muhammadans. The solar

year is an innovation of man, and therefore being against the sacred Scriptures of these two religions, cannot be applied in reckoning prophetic times. In short, the days in which we are living mark the termination of the respite granted to Satan. The period for which he was set at liberty has come to an end ; but as he does not like that his freedom be restrained and his authority taken away, a struggle between the good and evil attractions must naturally be the result. It had been so ordained from the beginning and the Words of God cannot pass away.

Other facts also uphold the same view, *viz.*, that the thousand years of Satan's supremacy have come to an end, and we are now living in the millennium of God's reign and the dawn of it has already appeared. The sixth thousand from the appearance of Adam has come to a close, and the seventh, in which the second Adam should have appeared, has begun. God made Adam on

the sixth day, and the sacred Scriptures further bear testimony to the fact that a day is equal to a thousand years with the Lord. The promises of God, therefore, make it absolutely necessary that the second Adam must have been born already, although not recognized as yet by the world. We cannot further avoid the conclusion that the place fixed by God for the appearance of the second Adam must be in the East and not in the West, for from genesis II:8 we learn that God had put the first Adam in a garden *eastward*. It is therefore necessary that the second Adam should appear in the east, in order to have a resemblance with the first in respect of his locality. This conclusion is equally binding upon the Christians and the Muhammadans, if they admit the authority of their Scriptures and are not of an atheistic turn of mind.

The way has been smoothed for a clear understanding of the true facts. The spiritual

atmosphere of the world is overcast with dense clouds of darkness and the time has come when light should shoot out its beams and dispel the overhanging gloom. But it is vain to expect that the dim torches lighted by earthly hands should penetrate the darkness visible. Only clear and radiant heavenly light can drive it away. Pitchy darkness has overshadowed the world, and the faint and flickering lamp of righteousness is ready to die out. Traditional beliefs, unfruitful knowledge and formal prayers cannot bring back the light. The blind cannot lead the blind, nor is it possible that darkness should dispel darkness. A new minaret is now needed which should raise its head far above the low huts made by earthly hands, so that heavenly light may descend upon it and the celestial lamp enlighten its top and thence shed its pure lustre upon the whole world. The higher the minaret is, the farther shall the light reach and thus illuminate distant corners of the world.

It remains to be explained what a *minar* (minaret) is. Minaret is the name given to the pure, hallowed, noble and magnanimous spirit granted by God to the perfect man by reason of which he gets his *light* from heaven-an idea existing in the literal signification of the word. The loftiness of the minaret represents the magnanimity of the soul of the perfect man, its firmness stands for the constancy and determination which he shows at the time of the greatest trials, and its whiteness is a symbol of his guiltlessness which is ultimately establishes. When the perfect man has passed through all these stages and undergone all these trails, when his magnanimity, constancy, patience and determination shine forth in their full glory and his innocence is established with conclusive arguments, then is the time of his advent in glory, and the period of his first advent, which was a time of trials and persecutions, comes to an end. Then does the holy spirit

invested with the glory of God descend upon his person, and the Divine attribute of glory is manifested in him. All this takes place in his second appearance.

The same reality underlies the peculiar manner of the advent of the Promised Messiah. The Muslims hold that he shall descend near a minaret. The descent spoken of in that tradition really stands for his advent in glory which shall be accompanied with a manifestation of the Divine power and attributes. It does not exclude the idea of his previous presence upon the earth, but it is necessary that the heavens should hold him so long as the appointed time of God does not arrive. It is also an unchangeable Divine law that spiritual realities are symbolized by physical emblems. The temple at Jerusalem and the Ca'ba at Mecca are illustrations of the same law and represent the manifestations of Divine glory. The same explanation holds good in the case of the

tradition which describes the descent of the Promised Messiah upon or about a minaret in a country to the east of Damascus. The word 'east' should be especially noted, for Adam also had been put in a garden east-ward. The object of the prophecy is in no way interfered with so long as the minaret is built before the glorious advent of the promised one, for it appears from the prophetic utterances that the minaret is to be a sign that shall indicate his advent in full glory. It had been ordained that the Promised Messiah should appear in the world in two characters. At first he shall come as an ordinary person suffering under trials and persecutions of every sort. When the days of suffering are over, then shall be the time of his advent in full glory. It is before that time that the minaret must be completed, for it appears from the traditions that a minaret must stand as a symbol of the reality, and it shall be a physical picture of the spiritual minaret to which we

have before referred. The world shall not recognise him before his glorious advent for he is not of the world. Nor shall the world love him, for he comes from God whom the world does not love. It is therefore necessary that he should be abused, persecuted and charged with all manner of crime. The Islamic prophecies testify that the Promised Messiah shall not be accepted in the beginning. On the other hand, he shall be subjected to malignant and bitter treatment from the ignorant and to oppression and outrage from the mischief-makers. A man shall do violence to him and think that he has done a deed of virtue, another shall do him injury and regard his deed as most pleasing in the sight of God. Thus shall he suffer and undergo every trial and face every difficulty till the coming of the appointed time of God and the fulfilment of the Divine law of persecution against prophets. Then shall come the time of his glory. Capable hearts shall have their eyes opened and they shall

begin to think of him with unprejudiced minds. 'Can this be a liar', they shall say, 'who cannot be subdued and crushed.' What is the reason," they shall reason with themselves "that Divine assistance is without intermission granted to him and never to us.' The inspiring angel of God shall then descend upon their hearts and admonish them that every one of the circumstances related in the traditions which had been a hindrance in the way of their acceptance, need not occur to the very letter. It was possible - nay highly probable - that some of those traditions were errors and fabrications and others were couched in metaphorical language and could not be fulfilled literally. What was the cause of the misfortune of the Jews in rejecting Jesus? Nothing but that they waited till every word of prophecy should have been fulfilled in a literal sense, and exactly according to their own notions of it. But their expectation was vain and their hope a delusion. With

that Divine law before them and with the God of their fathers above their heads, the opponents of God's messengers should consider lest they were tried by God in the same manner as the rejecters of the prophets before them. In short, such considerations, when duly weighed, shall at last turn their minds to accept the rejected and suffering messenger of heaven, as was the case with the prophets of by gone times.

There is not the least truth in the assertion that it is the time for resorting to the sword and gun for spreading the true religion and righteousness. The sword, far from revealing the beauties and excellences of truth, makes them dubious and throws them into the background. Those who hold such views are not the friends of Islam but its deadly foes. They have low motives, mean natures, poor spirits, narrow minds, dull brains and short sight. It is they who open the way to an objection against Islam, the validity of which

cannot be questioned. They hold that Islam needs the sword for its advancement and thus brand its purity and cast a slur upon its holy name. The religion that can easily establish its truth and superiority by sound intellectual arguments, heavenly signs or other reliable testimony, does not need the sword to threaten men and force a confession of its truth from them. Religion is worth the name only so long as it is in consonance with reason. If it fails to satisfy that requisite, if it has to make up for its discomfiture in argument by handling the sword, it needs no other argument for its falsification. The sword it wields cuts its own throat before reaching others'.

The 'Blind Watchmaker' Who is also Deaf and Dumb

This is an extract taken from the book Revelation, Rationality, Knowledge and Truth, written by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad.



In keeping with the promise made in our introductory remarks we now turn to the book entitled *The Blind Watchmaker*¹ by Richard Dawkins - now Professor Dawkins.

At first it was rather discomfoting to read through the said book because Professor Dawkins seems to avoid confronting the real problems of life despite knowing them and admitting their existence. He loses no time in hiding his, theories behind a smokescreen of grandiose confusion of his own creation. It is impossible to take up all the points he has made because most of them are irrelevant and unrelated. However, when he writes of real life and the mysteries it possesses, he does so purely as a scientist and, does not interfere with realities to gain any ulterior motive.

Here Dawkins is at his best. But the problem is that when he is at his best, he is at his worst in relation to the cause of natural selection. No honest treatment of the realities of life can lead to the idea of life having been created with all its complexities without a preceding conscious creator, which natural selection is not. It is to avoid this inevitable logical conclusion that he hastens to escape into an unreal phantom world of his own creation - a land of computer games and biomorphs. Then, he attempts to

draw a line between the complexities of man-made machines and the apparent Complexities of nature. He attempts to mislead the reader by claiming that the complexities of man-made wonders are real, purposeful and well-designed but the complexities of nature, though they far exceed in the element of wonder they contain, lack purpose and design. He would have the reader believe that it is only his impression that they are complex and pre-designed with a goal to achieve. Here he confuses the mind of the unwary reader by taking him to and fro, from hindsight to foresight, from foresight to hindsight - an amazing attempt at deceit. He would have the world believe that all man-made products are made with foresight, thus they must have purpose, design and complexity which are the work of a conscious mind. When turning to nature, he has to admit that in the products of nature the element of wonder is greater by thousands of factors than in the man-made products. Yet he insists that because we are accustomed to attribute design to human products, our hindsight, when we look at natural products, creates in us an illusion of purpose and design. Thus we are tricked into believing that they too must also have a conscious designer. Evidently, he has no argument to support this illusion theory except his authoritative word for it. On the contrary, whatever illustrations he chooses from real life most powerfully contradict his conclusion and prove the converse.

Take for instance his scholarly work on bats. As we have already discussed bats and some of the wonders related to them, we shall only refer to some of the observations made by Dawkins on this subject and remind him of his promise made on the first page of the preface of his book that:

'...having built up the mystery, my other main aim is to remove it again by explaining the solution.'²

Regrettably, this is a promise he does not keep. To bats he devotes the better part of the chapter *Good Design*. He writes:

'Their brains are delicately tuned packages of miniaturized electronic wizardry, programmed with the elaborate software necessary to decode a world of echoes in real time. Their faces are often distorted into gargoyle shapes that appear hideous to us until we see them for what they are, exquisitely fashioned instruments for beaming ultrasound in desired directions.'³

So ably does he sum up the mystery. Further enlarging upon it, he pays the unique compliment to the bat's ability of being a past master on sonar. He states:

'When a little brown bat detects an insect and starts to move in on an interception course, its click rate goes up. Faster than a machine gun, it can reach peak rates of 200 pulses per second as the bat finally closes in on the moving target'.⁴

Having raised the questions,

'If bats are capable of boosting their sampling rates to 200 pulses per second, why don't they keep this up all the time? Since they evidently have a rate control 'knob' on their 'stroboscope', why don't they turn it permanently to maximum, thereby keeping their perception of the world at its most acute, all the time, to meet any emergency?'⁴

he answers, informing the readers,

'One reason is that these high rates are suitable only for near targets. If a pulse follows too hard on the heels of its predecessor it gets mixed up with the echo of its predecessor returning from a distant target.'⁵

He goes on to speak of amazing wonders about bats' aeronautical and sonar potentials, and concludes by affirming:

'we can only understand it at a level of artificial instrumentation, and mathematical calculations on paper, we find it hard to imagine a little animal doing it in its head.'⁶

Speaking of the complexities of similar but less complex man-made machines, he observes:

'Of course, a sophisticated conscious brain did the wiring up (or at least designed the wiring diagram), but no conscious brain is involved in the moment-to-moment working of the box.'⁷

'...our experience of technology also prepares us to see the mind of a conscious and purposeful designer in the genesis of sophisticated machinery.'⁸

From here the conclusive absurdity begins because he claims that the designer is the unconscious natural selection, *the blind watchmaker*. Regarding the impossibility of a blind know-nothing Darwinian principle having created the living wonder of the bats' auditory system, he addresses the question:

'How could an organ so complex evolve?'

The answer he gives is:

'This is not an argument, it is simply an affirmation of incredulity.'⁹

If Dawkins is told that the 64 kilobyte computer he claims to have worked upon is not the creation of a conscious mind nor does it have any design whatsoever, will he readily agree with the

suggestion? He will certainly not, despite the fact that his elementary computer is far less complicated than a bat's auditory system.

If he refuses to agree with the suggestion that any computer could have been built without a competent conscious designer, he must honestly examine himself to discover the reason for his refusal to believe in a creator of life. The only answer he can find will be that he does so because of the computer's Complicated design and orderly construction which could not have happened by itself. Yet when it comes to life, he completely transforms his attitude, as though he had undergone a metamorphosis. Being a biologist he must realize that, as against a computer, life is far more complex. The figure of a trillion raised to the power of a trillion is a mere nothing by comparison. If the enormous complexity of life is an illusion then a computer has a far greater right to be dismissed as one. How can Dawkins forget, even for a moment, that if his verdict is correct, his own mind with all its intricacies must itself be described as an illusion. We do not want to be impolite to him, so let him speak for himself Which of the two will he choose? Will he prefer his mind to be described as a mere illusion of a disorganized mass of grey cells, or will he rather dismiss his own theories as hallucinations of a healthy mind. However much we may desire, we see no third option for him. If the human mind is an illusion then all its products must also be an illusion multiplied by itself, like a profusion of dreams created by the dreams of a madman, or hallucinations giving birth to hallucinations. The great scholar that he is, with a perfectly organized intellect, we are loathed to refer to his mind as an illusion. It is here that Dawkins begins to display his jugglery with words. Life is not complex, will be his simple answer. It is the illusion of those who behold it to be so. Hence, not being complex, it can be created by itself. To call the complexity of life an illusion and the mechanism of a computer a complexity is tantamount to turning reason upside down. To call the day night, and the night day, is

less bereft of sense than Dawkins' somersault. Incredulity is the crux of the matter. Evidently it is incredible for Dawkins to believe the construction of a mere Boeing 747 by itself yet it is not incredible for him that far greater complexities in nature have erupted into being without a creator. To dismiss this dilemma and to hide his prejudice against God he refers to the complexities of nature as illusions of an over-credulous religious people. But before this, he has to dismiss the existence of the builders of the Boeing 747 as an illusion of his own mind. The same arguments he uses against the believers in God can apply with even greater force to him. If a simple computer cannot be justified to have been built by itself, the building of a Boeing 747 becomes far more impossible. Yet Dawkins believes in these impossibilities. He only believes in them because he insists that they present complexity of design which demand the pre-existence of a conscious mind. When it comes to nature, to escape belief in a pre-existing mind, he simply dismisses nature's complexities as an illusion. If the coming into being of a Boeing 747 by itself is incredulous for Dawkins to believe, the creation of life by itself should have been far more impossible. This attitude only exposes his predetermination not to believe in God.

Dawkins has to explain and differentiate between his assertion and that of others who confront him with the type of logic he employs to suit himself. The only argument he builds in his defence comprises the following:

'.....we have no intuitive grasp of the immensities of time available for evolutionary change.'⁹

By this he means that we do possess the intuitive grasp of the changes during the time taken for the building of a Boeing 747. But we can demonstrate that his argument of time is irrelevant. The shortness or longevity of time simply does not apply. In the case of a Boeing 747 he knows that a conscious human mind was

at work prior to its construction. That is the only reason why he believes in pre-design and purpose. Hypothetically, it can be proved that time is absolutely irrelevant to his argument. If any part of this machine was discovered from the archives of nature, to have been buried there for half a billion years, would he then believe that time could have shaped it? Most certainly not! He would have to believe in an unknown creator with a conscious mind. Dawkins may extend the time to any impossible number but he cannot himself believe that even the wheel of a Boeing 747 could have been created bit by bit. Life or no life is irrelevant to the issue. Complexity, design and mechanical wonder are the issues involved.

Again to insist that the bat was created by the unconscious blind forces of nature is only an attempt to replace an unknown conscious creator with an unconscious blind principle of Darwinism. Only those scholars can agree with this proposition who, despite their great knowledge and dedication to rationality, set them aside momentarily to escape the reality of God.

The main service Dawkins has done to Darwinism lies in his ingenious device to rebut a common objection against the principle of natural selection which rejects the proposition that natural selection has any role to play in the internal intricate workings of genes. This in fact is the main thrust of his approach to biology. He proposes a completely new idea of the interrelationship between natural selection and genes. He does not deny attributing the role of development and mutative changes to genes at all. He does not apparently claim that these changes are directly subservient to natural selection. All he claims is simply that whatever bodily changes are brought about by genes are governed by natural selection. When natural selection approves of such changes in bodies as are worthy of survival, this approval is also automatically extended to the genes which brought them about. But that is what he has already done with the

help of the science of chance. Referring to the possibility of the haemoglobin's creation, merely by factors of chance, he most emphatically declares that it is impossible. On page 45 he further elaborates this improbability. He writes of four chains of amino acids twisted together comprising 146 amino acids in a single haemoglobin cell. From here he starts a rather complicated mathematical calculation and concludes that for a haemoglobin to have been created merely by a game of chance is next to impossible. In his own words:

'This is a staggeringly large number. A million is a 1 with 6 noughts after it. A billion (1,000 million) is a 1 with 9 noughts after it. The number we seek, the 'haemoglobin number', is (near enough) a 1 with 190 noughts after it! This is the chance against happening to hit upon haemoglobin by luck. And a haemoglobin molecule has only a **minute fraction of the complexity of a living body.**'¹⁰

It is an ingenious argument which for him is mainly responsible for solving the riddle of life by the application of Darwinian principles, which evidently it does not. The genes along with the haemoglobin which contain them are in this way dismissed by the above argument as impossible to exist. This is what we have understood from our in-depth study of Dawkins' relevant chapter. In fact, it is this brainwave of his which is largely responsible for influencing the younger generation of natural scientists today. But we shall presently demonstrate that this is only an illusion created by him because the realities of nature do not support his theory.

We draw the attention of the reader to the fact that approval or disapproval of environmental factors do not in any way alter, command, or influence the activities of genes, despite the fact that the bodies which contain them themselves lie at the mercy of environmental factors.

As we are convinced that this is the most important argument which Dawkins has managed to contrive, we should explain our position more elaborately. In fact we have already discussed the evolutionary processes in our book in a pre-emptive manner so that Darwinian principles cannot be misapplied. We hope that the students of natural science will find this work helpful in their re-evaluation of the concept of evolution. Our approach is radically different from that of other religious and scientific scholars who have specifically written against Darwinism. The present work is based entirely on our study of general scientific literature. Despite the fact that we have not read the books written against Darwinism, how can we claim that our work to be radically different from theirs? It is so because throughout this work we have been taking our guidance from the Holy Qur'an which they unfortunately could not have done.

Returning to Dawkins' revolutionary approach, it should be remembered that the activities of genes are governed by laws inbred into them by forces unknown to him. Genes work without any reference to environmental changes. When the principle of natural selection approves some bodily features of the living, it still does not command and direct the activities of genes within those bodies. Again when natural selection disapproves of certain bodily features, with reference to their quality of survival in a competitive world, it still has no influence on their genes. This is absolutely evident from the study of evolution from beginning to end. The primitive organisms, like the amoebas and other elementary species of life which followed them on the rising ladder of evolution, were created by cellular activities commanded by genes. All these apparently inadequately equipped organisms and animals have survived the entire span of evolution along with the genes they contain.

Finally, man appeared at the pinnacle of evolution. Between the animal kingdom and man the difference is so vast and varied that

no scientist in truth can envision any bit by bit progressive changes which can fill this vastness. We are not talking of simple physical similarities of which Darwin has taken note of. The evolutionists talk of a missing link which may have been a chimpanzee according to some or a gorilla according to others. Of course a tail is missing in some species of apes, but for a tail to be or not to be is not the question. The question is how the great void can be explained between man and animals in their behavioural patterns and mental potentials? Which animal has learnt to read and write, and to express himself in languages as sophisticated as human languages? A comparison between humans and animals in all these fields will show that human potential is many billion times greater than that of the animals. This is a conservative estimate when we turn to the realities. Look at all the libraries of the world and what they contain. Can a scientist show even a tiny library of the most elementary things in the cave of a gorilla or the private home of a chimpanzee? Show us a page authored by either of the two, dearly preserved upon their library shelves and we shall admit that our statement was rather exaggerated. They talk of animal languages of course but they also talk of those languages as expressions not consciously created. They even talk of dolphins mimicking human language, even uttering a word or two, but nowhere in the animal kingdom can they demonstrate such languages as humans have coined with such immense variety.

Perhaps Dawkins' imaginary monkey could write a line of Shakespeare on Dawkins' computer by randomly pressing any keys on the board but the time needed for that chance single sentence of Shakespeare's drama is not only remote, it is impossible. It is incomprehensible why Dawkins should have employed a hypothetical monkey while real monkeys were easily available. He should have employed a real monkey for the task without training him to press the keys. All he should have done was to tie a monkey in the vicinity of the computer. Next morning if he had returned

to watch what the computer had produced with the help of that monkey he would be far more likely to see the computer shattered into pieces instead of discovering a single word of Shakespeare. But we know the time is too short. Each day a new computer should have to be bought and left at his disposal, and on the day the monkey breathes his last, the room would have been turned into a junkyard of shattered computers with not a trace of Shakespeare to be found anywhere, not even over the body of the deceased. Still, time may be far too short if measured by Darwinian standards. But did the apes not exist and evolve for 5-8 million years before man? Is it not enough time for the bit by bit building of a Shakespeare among them? After all, the difference in brain between them and man is just a single, though long, leap.

Turning to the question of haemoglobin once again, if godhead were to be attributed to anyone other than God, it must have been attributed to haemoglobin and not to the blind, dumb and deaf principle of natural selection. Whatever follows in the making of life up to the creation of the human body - which according to him is far more impossible to be created by chance - must be accredited to haemoglobin and not to Darwinism. Thus Professor Dawkins seems to identify his god, yet denies him. He must admit that haemoglobin is the god of all creation, yet there has to be a God of haemoglobin. That god according to him is a fabulous number of chances, a number which certainly does not exist.

The sum total of his argument therefore, is that haemoglobin could not exist because the number of chances needed to create it are impossible. The next logical step for him should have been to explain why haemoglobin exists while it just could not have existed. The only inevitable answer to this dilemma is that its very existence rules out the game of chance being its creator. However, its immense intricacies and complexities of design cry out for another Creator to replace chance. Professor Dawkins has simply

no third option. Either he should put his foot in the boat which cannot exist, or in the boat which will willy-nilly carry him to the presence of God the Creator. This is when he may have come nearest to God. But the moment he realizes his unavoidable folly, he immediately flies away, from Him in the direction of Darwinism, his pseudo-god, which he knows full well had no hand to play in the creation of haemoglobin. He has no right whatsoever to attribute the cellular wonders created in the human body to Darwinism without first explaining how their creator, the haemoglobin itself, came into being. What factors, other than chance, must have shaped the basic cells of life is the real question he must answer. Hence all his clever contrivances to subjugate genes to environmental factors are absolutely meaningless and as we have shown they are in fact counterproductive. This is the main problem of Professor Dawkins - avoiding the real issues and diverting the attention of the reader to issues that are imaginary.

In the light of this analysis, all his attempts of employing computers and his theory of bit by bit cumulative factors are rendered useless. The shortage of time or its longevity has never been a problem. He himself informs us that the time needed for the cumulative bit by bit creation of even the first bricks of life is trillions into trillions of times greater than the real available time. When he again informs us that the time needed for the creation of living bodies is far greater by comparison, he is left with no right whatsoever to discuss his cumulative bit by bit theories. It is absolutely a sheer waste of his time and that of his readers because what he wants to pack into a mere one billion years - 1 with 9 noughts written on its right side if taken as an American billion, or 1 with 12 noughts as the British write it - could not have been packed by nature in a much larger number of years. In truth, the figure which has to be available for life with its cumulative bit by bit production could be as great as 1 with 1000 noughts written on its right side which in reality amounts to a total denial of

existence. The reality of existence must therefore be dismissed by Professor Dawkins as a mere illusion.

The final analysis Professor Dawkins has made in his concluding chapter relates to a choice between the belief in a deity and a belief in natural selection. Who is the creator, that is to be identified. Whether he can discover Him or not, he certainly has no right to replace God with natural selection. Natural selection cannot be referred to as a creator, because it does not create but only works on whatever has already been created. It is exasperating to find Professor Dawkins pointing his finger at a mere principle, without a personal identity, to be the deity - a principle which is deaf, dumb and blind, and has no physical or spiritual existence. That most certainly is not the creator. If Professor Dawkins persists in denying the existence of any Creator, while he has no right to replace him with a principle, he once again has only two logical options. Either he should admit that creation exists, yet he has failed to identify the creator; or he should proclaim that there is no Creator yet the creation exists. This would be tantamount to saying that there is the book *The Blind Watchmaker* but there has never been a Professor Dawkins who penned it!

In our previous chapter we have described the anatomy of an eye and the whole optic system. When we read Professor Dawkins' remarks on the creation of the eye, they appeared so trivial and deficient in a sense that we are deeply disappointed. He has depended entirely on his cumulative bit by bit theory to be at work, a theory which we have roundly rejected in accordance with his own admissions. Still we should like to draw his attention to the fact that to treat the eyeball as an independent organ is wrong. It is an interdependent part of a full optic system otherwise it ceases to play any role in the faculty of sight. Just to indulge in the futile exercise of proving that a small percentage of vision is better than no vision at all does not serve any purpose.

To prove that vision is possible even without a lens is just as meaningless. We have described the human optic system with scientific details provided by scientists. It is to this system that his bit by bit theory should be attempted to be applied - an exercise which he manages to avoid.

Let him begin for instance with the retina and inform the world how the rods and cones it contains evolved bit by bit and nanometre by nanometre to ultimately begin to recognize colours, light and darkness. Their recognition, if confined to themselves, could not have served any purpose. He should begin to apply his bit by bit theory to all the components of the system which play a collective role in realizing what rods and cones have achieved. A rudimentary weak eye with a mere 1 % vision is still a weak eye but half an eye is no eye at all. Retina, rods, cones, the ganglia and the sequence in which they are placed, are essential for conveying the pulses to the brain. Many more such things about their complexities defy the wisdom of Professor Dawkins' theory. We have every right to request Professor Dawkins to suggest how, and for how long, the retina waited for its completion? If cones were not pre-designed with all their amazing potential, if rods were not preconceived with the fascinating scientific know-how which is visible in them, how could they have ever created themselves falling into step with each other in perfect harmony far more exquisitely than the best orchestral symphony ever conceived by man? Even the minutest constituents of this grand organ require an in-depth study in their own right. How they developed slowly and gradually into meaningful components, completely synchronized to become an eyeball, to begin to perform the functions which are bred into them is incomprehensible. These are just a few questions but there are hundreds and hundreds of questions which have to be answered by godless naturalists. The entire eyeball, including all the delicate and complex features it contains has to be explained in the light of his bit by bit theory. The optic system is far more complex and

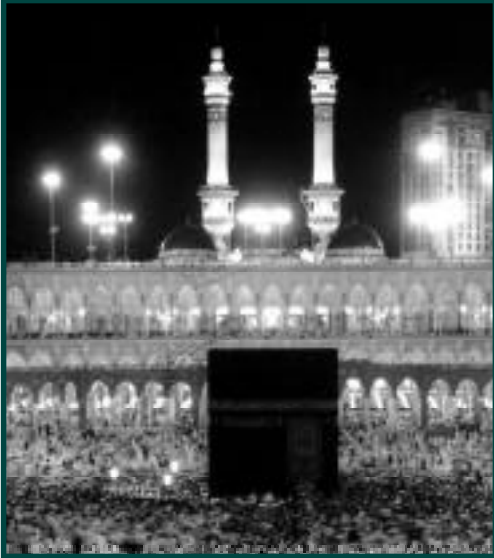
harmonized than any layman can ever understand. Even Professor Dawkins, a great naturalist that he is, is only hovering above its surface. But to cover the surfaces alone is a supreme task. So he has a lot more work to do in the same field. There are so many other illustrations from the sensory systems in animal life, which despite being hundreds of million years remote from us, present the same fundamental structural design. The differences are only peripheral but they too are precisely designed for the specific requirements of the animals which possess them.

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