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The following press release was issued by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association following the terrorist attack in London on 7th July 2005

For Immediate Release

**“London Terror Bombings –
An Act Against Humanity”**

**Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad
Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community**

July 7, 2005, London - The Spiritual Head of the 200 million strong Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, today, strongly condemned the deplorable acts of terror in London. Reacting to the terrorist acts Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

‘The events of this morning constitute pure acts of violence and terror and I condemn these unequivocally. The perpetrators have demonstrated a total disregard for the sanctity of human life and an obsession for violence. These heinous acts are against humanity and have no justification whatsoever. Terrorism of any kind has no place in religion. Islam is no exception, for it is a faith that professes peace and respect for all. Indeed, the Holy Qur’an likens anyone who takes the life of innocent people, as one who has committed a crime against all of humanity.’

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad also conveyed the sympathies of the community to the victims of the tragedy:

‘I wish to extend the sincere condolences of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to the families who have lost

loved ones in this human tragedy. They, together with hundreds who have been injured by these violent acts, are all in our prayers at this time. We share in their grief. May God Almighty grant fortitude to them all.” [end of release]

Notes to editors

1. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is based in over 175 countries of the world and is renowned for its services to the community in the fields of education and health.
2. This is the most dynamic denomination of Islam in modern history. The Ahmadiyya Movement was established in 1889 by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908). He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days, the Awaited One of the world community of religions (The Mahdi and Messiah). The Movement he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam – peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God – in its pristine purity.
3. Wherever the Movement is established, it endeavors to exert a constructive influence of Islam through social projects, educational institutes, health services, Islamic publications and the construction of mosques, despite being bitterly persecuted in some countries. Ahmadi Muslims have earned the distinction of being a law-abiding, peaceful, persevering and benevolent community.
4. The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, and diligently defends Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. It firmly believes in and acts upon the Qur’anic teaching: ‘There is no compulsion in religion’ (Ch.2:V.257). It strongly rejects violence and terrorism in any form and for any reason.

EDITORIAL

By Fazal Ahmad – UK

Understanding the true Nature of God and man's place as His creation, and the position of Prophets and Angels, has been a challenge for mankind throughout history. Before Islam, scholars of other faiths such as Origen, the great Christian scholar, tried to grapple with these concepts. The heritage he had to work from was confusion over whether Jesus^(as) was human or divine, and the intrigue surrounding his virgin birth. Origen sparked a new line of theology that was to have an impact on Christianity for centuries and eventually led to the formulation of the concept of Trinity three centuries after Jesus^(as).

The Promised Messiah^(as) explained these concepts to us with that certainty that is only born of personal experience and Divine Guidance. The series of excerpts from the *Essence of Islam* that we have featured in the *Review of Religions* of late has gone into great detail on the nature of God

and His relation with various Prophets including Jesus^(as). In this issue, the Promised Messiah^(as) describes the Throne of God as a metaphorical representation of God's separation and majesty as compared to that of His creations.

We can see a cycle here. The Jews, over a period of time, had interpolated new thoughts into the Torah to the point that a Messiah was needed to guide them back to a proper understanding of their maker and their faith. Among his followers, a new faith emerged in the form of Christianity. Just three centuries later, the Christians had misinterpreted the Gospels to such an extent that after Origen, a Canon had to be set up of authentic Gospels. Islam emerged just three centuries after this. The Messiah^(as) of Islam has guided us back to the original teachings of the Qur'an, and also saved the Prophets from the ravages of history.

Notes & Comments

Revenge or Rebuild?

The middle of July 2005 will be remembered for many events, but for me, living in London, two key events stand out.

Firstly, on the 6th of July, London won the right to stage the Olympics. This was partly on the basis that London is such a cosmopolitan city. Every race and religion on the planet is represented here.

Yet, the euphoria turned to distress less than 24 hours later when a series of explosions on buses and trains in the city left more than 50 dead, and hundreds injured.

It did not take long for the spotlight to be on Islamic extremists. This pathetic and cowardly crime had been inflicted upon ALL Londoners of all faiths and cultures. The Mayor of

London, Mr Ken Livingstone, stated that we need to rebuild our community, and ensure that the terrorists are not able to divide us.

Just four days later, the 11th of July marked the 10th anniversary of the atrocities in Bosnia when 8,000 Muslim men and boys were massacred at Srebrenica at the hands of the Christian Orthodox Serb extremists. At the memorial service, the Imam of Srebrenica turned to his congregation and spoke of the rebuilding the community of Bosnia. He declared that revenge was not the religion of the Bosnian Muslims and not the Bosnian way of doing things. As a first step to rebuilding relations in this troubled part of the world, there were Serbs present at the service.

Given the ethnic and religious strife that we have seen around

the world in recent decades, these messages are heartening and commendable. Rebuilding communities is the only way of putting an end to the trauma, and preventing a vicious and never-ending cycle of violence. Revenge is a disease of the heart that only leads to escalation and a circle of hate and violence. It is much better to analyse the causes of tension and dispute and find ways to bring diverse people together. Terrorists think that they are brave when they attack ordinary civilians, and sometimes commit suicide in the process. Yet, they often mask their faces, change their identities, and attack innocent and defenceless civilians – men, women, children, young and old. Where is the bravery in that? Where are the ethics in that? What theology would ever sanction that from its followers?

It would also not be unreasonable for the families of victims to harbour some form of distrust against the communities involved in the deaths of their loved ones. Yet, Islam teaches that

forgiveness is better, and helps to heal the soul. In both tragedies in July, how uplifting that the injured parties were talking about rebuilding lives and communities rather than being hellbent upon revenge. History may look back on this approach with pride and satisfaction. Taking such a stance takes a lot of bravery, maturity and wisdom, and that is what we should look for from our leaders also.

May God help ease the pain of the suffering, and help to mend rifts in their societies. May God also avert the hands of the mischief makers and terrorists and guide them to the true teachings of their faiths that they tend to distort

Tanveer Khokhar – UK

The True Nature of the 'Arsh Throne - Part 13

This series sets out, in the words of the Promised Messiah^(as), Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a summary of his exposition of four outstanding topics: ISLAM; ALLAH, THE EXALTED; THE HOLY PROPHET^(sa) and THE HOLY QUR'AN. The original compilation, in Urdu, from which these extracts have been translated into English, was collated with great care and diligence by Syed Daud Ahmad Sahib, Allah have mercy on him and reward him graciously for his great labour of love. Amin. The English rendering is by the late Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, may Allah be pleased with him, and is quoted from *The Essence of Islam*, Volume 1. All references throughout, unless otherwise specifically mentioned, are from the Holy Qur'an.

All praise belongs to Allah alone, Lord of all the worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help. Guide us in the straight path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favours, those who have not incurred displeasure and those who have not gone astray.

(Ch.1: Vs.2-7)

worthy of all praise. There is no deficiency in His kingdom. Nothing is awaited out of His excellences which does not exist today, but would be achieved tomorrow. There is nothing vain in His kingdom. He provides for all the worlds. He bestows His mercy absolutely without any prior action on the part of man, and also in return for man's actions. He awards reward and punishment at their due time. We worship Him and seek His help and pray that He should show us the way of all bounties and

This means that: God alone is

should keep us away from the ways of His anger and of error.

This prayer which is set out in Surah Fatihah is the antithesis of the prayer taught in the Gospel, inasmuch as God's present kingdom of the earth is denied in the Gospel. Thus according to the Gospel neither God's *Rububiyyat*, nor His *Rahmaniyyat*, nor His *Rahimiyyat* nor His *Malikiyyat* is in operation on the earth because God's kingdom has not yet arrived upon the earth, but Surah Fatihah indicates that God's kingdom is in operation on the earth and thus all the essentials of the kingdom are set out in the Surah.

It is obvious that a king should possess the following qualities: He should have power to provide for people and Surah Fatihah proclaims that God is the Sustainer of the worlds. The second quality of a king should be that whatever his subjects should need for settling down in the earth should be provided out of his kingly mercy and not in return for any service. Surah Fatihah affirms this quality in God by calling Him

Rahman. The third quality which a king should possess is that he should help his subjects towards achievement of that which they cannot achieve by their own efforts. The Surah affirms this quality by the use of the word *Rahim*. The fourth quality that a king should possess is that he should have power to reward and punish so that social conditions should not be disturbed. The Surah affirms this quality in God by describing Him as *Malik-i-Yaum-id-Din*. In short, the Surah presents all those essentials of kingship that prove that God's kingdom and kingly control are in operation on the earth...

Listen, the greatest understanding is that every particle of the earth is as much under the control of God as every particle of heaven is part of His kingdom, and that as there is a grand manifestation in heaven there is also a grand manifestation on earth. The manifestation in heaven is a matter of faith. An average person has not ascended to heaven nor witnessed that manifestation, but the mani-

festation of God's kingdom upon earth is clearly visible to everyone's eyes.

Every human being, however wealthy he might be, tastes of death contrary to his desire. Observe, therefore, how the manifestation of the command of the true King is visible upon the earth such that when His command comes, no one can delay his death for a second. When a person is afflicted with mortal illness, no physician is able to cure it. Reflect, therefore, what a manifestation of God's kingdom upon earth it is that His command cannot be rejected. How can it then be said that the kingdom of God upon earth is not yet, but will arrive at some future time?

In this age, God's commandment from heaven has shaken the earth with the plague so that it should be a sign for His Messiah. Who is it who can remove it without His command? Then how can we say that God's kingdom has not yet arrived upon earth? The wicked one carries on like a prisoner on



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

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 Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and by the scriptures of other faiths.

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

earth and does not wish to die, but God's true kingdom destroys him and the angel of death finally seizes hold of him. Then how can it be said that the kingdom of God has not arrived upon the earth? Every day by God's

command millions of people die in an hour and millions are born by His Command and millions of the poor by His command become rich and millions of the wealthy become poor. Then how can it be said that God's kingdom upon earth is not yet?

In heaven there are only angels, but on the earth there are men and also angels, who are agents of God and are the servants of His kingdom. They guard the various enterprises of man, obey God all the time and send up their reports to Him. Then how can it be said that there is not the kingdom of God upon earth?

God has been known mostly through His earthly kingdom for everyone imagines that the mystery of heaven is a secret and cannot be witnessed. In recent times all Christians and their philosophers have denied the existence of heaven on which the Gospels base the whole kingdom of God, but the earth is in fact a globe under our feet and thousands of Divine decrees are manifested thereupon, which

make us understand that all this change and birth and death is by the command of some Master. Then how can it be said that there is not yet the kingdom of God upon earth?

God, the Lord of Honour and Glory, has named neither heaven nor earth in Surah Fatihah and yet He has disclosed the reality to us by saying that God is *Rabb-ul'Alamin*. That is to say, all through creation, wherever there are bodies or souls, God is the Creator and Sustainer of all, Who provides for them all the time and administers them. His *Rububiyyat*, *Rahmaniyyat* and *Rahimiyyat* are in operation all the time in all the worlds. It should be borne in mind that by the phrase *Malik-i-Yaumid-Din* in Surah Fatihah, it is not meant that reward and punishment would be awarded only on the Judgement Day. The Holy Qur'an has repeatedly made it clear that the Judgement Day will be the time of the grand recompense, but that one type of recompense begins in this very world, which is indicated in the verse:

He creates discrimination between you.

(Ch.8: V.30)

(Kashti Nuh, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.19, pp.32-42)

According to the Holy Qur'an, God is on earth as well as in the heaven, as He has said:

He it is Who is God in heaven, and God on earth.

(Ch.43: V.85)

He has also said that no three are gathered together for secret consultation, but that God is the fourth among them.

He is Limitless as is said in the verse:

Eyes cannot reach His limit, but He reaches their limit.

(Ch.6: V.104)

It is also said in the Holy Qur'an:

We are closer to him than his jugular vein.

(Ch.50: V.17)

At one place, it is said that God

comprehends everything and it is also said:

Allah surely supervenes between man and his heart.

(Ch.8: V.25)

It is also said:

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.

(Ch.24: V.36)

That is to say: The heavens and the earth are lit up by the light of Divine countenance without which it is all darkness.

It is also said:

All that is on earth will pass away; and there will abide for ever only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour.

(Ch.55: Vs.27-28)

That is to say: Everything is subject to change and destruction, and the only One Who will endure is God.

Human nature is forced to

confess that in this universe there is a Being Who is not subject to change and destruction and Who continues to survive all conditions, and He is God. But as sin and disobedience and all manner of unholy things are manifested in the earth, those who confine God to the earth in the end become worshippers of idols and created beings as has happened to the Hindus.

Concept of 'Arsh in Islam

The Holy Qur'an has made it clear that on the one side God has a close relationship with His creatures and that He is the life of every soul and the support of every being. On the other side, it is stated that He is above everything and is beyond everything and that His station is 'Arsh (Throne) to safeguard against the error lest anyone should conclude from the relationship that God has with man, that man himself is God, as do the Vedantists. The 'Arsh is not something that has been created or something material. It is the name of the Divine rank which is beyond of beyond from

creation and is a station of transcendence and holiness. As the Holy Qur'an says, after establishing the relationship of Creator and created with everything, God settled Himself on the 'Arsh. That is to say, despite all relationships He remained apart and did not mix with His creation.

God's being with everyone and comprehending everything is His attribute of resemblance. He has mentioned this attribute in the Holy Qur'an to demonstrate His nearness to man. His being beyond of beyond from all creation and being above all and higher than all and farthest of all and being at the station of transcendence and holiness, which is far from creation and is called 'Arsh, is the attribute of transcendence. God has mentioned this attribute in the Holy Qur'an so that He should establish His Unity and His being without associate and having withdrawn from the qualities of creation. Other people have either adopted God's attribute of transcendence and have called

Him *Nargau*, or they have accepted Him as *Sargan* and have attributed such resemblance to Him as if He was the very creation itself. They have not combined these two attributes, but God Almighty in the Holy Qur'an has shown His countenance in the mirror of both these attributes and this is His perfect Unity.

(Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, pp.97-99)

It is not the belief of the Muslims that the 'Arsh is a physical or created thing on which God is seated. You may go through the Qur'an from the beginning to the end and you will not find it stated that the 'Arsh is a limited and created thing. God has repeatedly said in the Holy Qur'an that He is the Creator of all things that have any existence. He is the Creator of heaven and earth, and souls and all their faculties. He is Self-Existing and everything exists because of Him. Every particle that exists is His creation. He has nowhere stated that the 'Arsh is something physical of which He is the Creator... Wherever the

word 'Arsh has been used in the Holy Qur'an its meaning is the Greatness and Majesty and Supremacy of God. That is why it is not included among created things.

There are four manifestations of the Greatness and Majesty of God Almighty. The Vedas call them four gods, but according to the idiom of the Holy Qur'an they are angels.

(Nasim-e-Da'wat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 19, pp.453-456)

In the Holy Qur'an by 'Arsh is meant the station which is higher than the rank of resemblance and is superior to every world and is beyond of beyond and is the station of Holiness and transcendence. It is not anything which is made of stone or brick or any other thing on which God is seated. That is why it is described as uncreated. As God Almighty says He manifests Himself to the heart of a believer, in the same way He says that He manifests Himself upon the 'Arsh. He affirms clearly that He supports everything and has not

MAN'S FUNCTION IS THAT HE SHOULD IMPOSE A DEATH UPON HIS EGO AND SHOULD DISCARD THE SATANIC VANITY THAT HE IS A LEARNED PERSON. HE SHOULD DEEM HIMSELF IGNORANT AND SHOULD BE OCCUPIED WITH SUPPLICATION. THEN THE LIGHT OF UNITY WOULD DESCEND UPON HIM FROM GOD AND WOULD BESTOW NEW LIFE UPON HIM.

said anywhere that anything supports Him. The 'Arsh which is a higher station than the whole universe, is a manifestation of His attribute of transcendence.

We have explained it several times that from eternity, God has two attributes: the attribute of resemblance and the attribute of transcendence. As it was necessary to set out both attributes in His Word, for the declaration of His attribute of resemblance, He mentioned His hand and eye and love and anger in the Holy Qur'an, and then to remove the suspicion of resemblance He stated at one place:

There is nothing whatever like unto him.

(Ch.42: V.12)

and at other places it is said that He settled Himself on the 'Arsh as, for instance, in the verse:

Your God is the One Who raised up the heavens without any pillars, as you can see. Then He settled Himself on the Throne.

(Ch.13: V.3)

From the literal meaning of this verse, it would seem to follow that God was not settled on the 'Arsh before. The explanation of this is that the 'Arsh is nothing material, but is a state of being beyond of beyond which is God's attribute. God created heaven and earth and all other things and bestowed upon the sun and the moon and stars light from His own light by way of reflection and created man, metaphorically speaking, in His Own image and

breathed into him His Holy attributes. He thus created a resemblance unto Himself. But as He is free from any resemblance He described His transcendence by the expression of 'settling on the Throne.' Despite having created everything He is not His very creation itself, but is apart from everything and is at a station which is beyond the beyond.

(Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khazai'in, Vol. 23, pp. 276-277)

Another objection which is sometimes raised is that it appears from the Holy Qur'an that on the Day of Judgement eight angels will bear aloft the 'Arsh, from which it is concluded that in this world four angels bear the 'Arsh aloft. Here a question arises that God Almighty is above having His Throne borne up by anyone. The answer is as you have just heard that the 'Arsh is nothing material which can be borne up or is capable of being borne up. The station of transcendence and Holiness is 'Arsh and that is why it is described as uncreated. A

material object cannot be outside the creation of God. Whatever has been stated with regard to the 'Arsh is by way of metaphor. A reasonable person can understand that this objection is baseless.

The truth is that when God Almighty withdraws to the station where His attribute of transcendence covers all His other attributes and makes Him beyond of beyond and hidden of hidden, which station, in the idiom of the Holy Qur'an, is called 'Arsh, then God rises above human reason and reason cannot reach Him. Then four of His attributes which have been named four angels which have been manifested in the world, disclose His hidden Being.

The first of these is His *Rububiyyat* through which He perfects man physically and spiritually. The manifestation of the body and soul is in consequence of the demand of *Rububiyyat*. In the same way Divine revelation and the manifestation of extraordinary

signs are in consequence of the demand of *Rububiyyat*.

The second attribute which has been manifested is His *Rahmaniyyat* whereby He has provided numberless bounties for man without any action having preceded from man. This attribute also discloses His hidden Being.

The third attribute is His *Rahimiyyat*. That means, that at first He bestows upon righteous people by virtue of His *Rahimiyyat* the capacity for righteous action and then, as demanded by His *Rahimiyyat*, He enables them to perform righteous actions and thus safeguards them against calamities. This attribute also discloses His hidden Being.

The fourth attribute is *Malik-i-Yaum-id-Din*. This also discloses His hidden Being as by virtue of it He rewards the righteous and chastises the wicked. These four attributes bear aloft His 'Arsh. That is to say, His hidden Being is recognised in this world

through these attributes. This recognition will be doubled in the hereafter, that is to say, eight angels, instead of four, will bear aloft the 'Arsh.

(*Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, pp.278-279*)

The Unity of God is a light which illumines the heart after the so-called outer and inner deities are totally negated, and it courses through every particle of man's being. It cannot be acquired by anyone on his own, but only through God and His Messenger. Man's function is that he should impose a death upon his ego and should discard the Satanic vanity that he is a learned person. He should deem himself ignorant and should be occupied with supplication. Then the light of Unity would descend upon him from God and would bestow new life upon him.

(*Haqiqat-ul-Wahi, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 22, p. 148*)

As ever since the creation of the world the recognition of God is tied up with the recognition of a Prophet, it is impossible that the

knowledge of Unity could be obtained except through a Prophet. A Prophet is a mirror for the beholding of God. It is only through this mirror that the countenance of God may be seen. When God Almighty desires to manifest Himself to the world, He sends a Prophet into the world who is the manifestation of His Powers and to whom He displays His *Rububiyyat*. Then the world realises that God is.

It is a part of the Unity of God to believe in those who have been, under the eternal law of God, appointed as a means of the recognition of God. Without this belief, faith in the Unity of God cannot be perfected. It is not possible to achieve faith in the pure Unity of God, which is created from the fountain of perfect certainty, in the absence of heavenly signs and wonders which are displayed by the Prophets whereby they lead people to full understanding. They are a group that points to God and through whom God, Whose Being is imperceptible

upon imperceptible and hidden upon hidden, manifests Himself. That hidden Treasure, Whose name is God, has ever been recognised through the Prophets. The acquisition of faith in the Unity of God, which is estimated as true Unity by God Himself, except through a Prophet, is as much opposed to reason as it is contrary to the experience of all seekers after God.

(Haqiqat-ul-Wahi, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 22, pp. 115-116)

The true Unity of God, the affirmation of which is demanded by God and upon which salvation depends, is to believe that God in His Being is free from every associate, whether it is an idol or a human being, or the sun or moon or one's ego, or one's cunning or deceit; and to conceive of no one as possessing power in opposition to Him, nor to accept anyone as sustainer, nor to hold anyone as bestowing honour or disgrace, nor to consider anyone as helper or assistant; and to confine one's love to Him and one's worship to Him and one's

humility to Him and one's hopes to Him and one's fear to Him. No Unity can be complete without the following three types of particularisation. First, there is the Unity of Being, that is to say, to conceive the whole universe as nonexistent in contrast with Him and to consider it mortal and lacking reality. Secondly, the Unity of attributes, that is to say, that *Rububiyyat* and Godhead are confined to His Being and that all others who appear as sustainers or benefactors are only a part of the system set up by His hand. Thirdly, the Unity of love and sincerity and devotion; that is to

say, not to consider anyone as an associate of God in the matter of love and worship and to be entirely lost in Him.

(*Siraj-ud-Din 'Isa'i ke Char Sawalon ka Jawab, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 12, pp. 349-350*)

In this journal, for the ease of non-Muslim readers, '(sa)' or 'sa' after the words, 'Holy Prophet', or the name 'Muhammad', are used. They stand for '*Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*' meaning 'Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him'. Likewise, the letters '(as)' or 'as' after the name of all other prophets is an abbreviation meaning 'Peace be upon him' derived from '*Alaihis salatu wassalam*' for the respect a Muslim reader utters.

The abbreviation 'ra' or (ra) stands for '*Radhiallahu Ta'ala anhu* and is used for Companions of a Prophet, meaning Allah be pleased with him or her (when followed by the relevant Arabic pronoun). Finally, 'ru' or (ru) for '*Rahemahullahu Ta'ala* means the Mercy of Allah the Exalted be upon him.

The Role of Women in Shaping Society

Address on 10 May 2005 to Lajna Imaillah (ladies' Auxiliary Organisation) of Tanzania delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V. Reproduced at the exclusive responsibility of The Review of Religions.

I am very pleased that I am addressing Ahmadi sisters in TANZANIA directly today.

At this time I just want to say a few things and draw your attention to the fact that a woman enjoys a very special status in Islam. Every Ahmadi lady who has taken part in the bai'at (the oath of allegiance) of the Imam of the age and has pledged that she would try her best to act on the teachings of Islam, should fully try to understand this noble status.

The Holy Qur'an has mentioned the taking of bai'at by women separately. This reflects the significance of women in Islam. The Holy Prophet^(sa) was given those specific conditions for women as the basis on which the

bai'at from women should be taken. All this was so that women should stand firm on their pledge and should undertake a Jihad or strive against all evils and adopt all good values so that the purity and righteousness of the future generations may be preserved. Therefore the Holy Qur'an states:

O Prophet! when believing women come to thee, taking the oath of allegiance at thy hands that they will not associate anything with Allah, and that they will not steal, and will not commit adultery, nor kill their children, nor bring forth a scandalous charge which they themselves have deliberately forged, nor disobey thee in

what is right, then accept their allegiance and ask Allah to forgive them. Verily, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.
(Ch.60: V.13)

So this is the high status of believing women that they associate no one with Allah. Now, shirk, or associating anyone with Allah, is not just idol worship. Ladies have a natural weak tendency and are generally suspicious. As a result of this weakness, they are generally prone to such acts that fall close to associating partners with Allah. For example, she may think that someone has bewitched or cast a magic spell on her husband and he has left her and has begun to take interest in others. Or she may think that someone has done magic on her child and this is why it is weak or ill. Or, perhaps something has happened and that it is a bad omen, and now her horoscope or star-sign is on the move and she will suffer a loss.

So all these things are included in shirk or believing in something

other than Allah. Allah has said that those who do shirk are most sinful. They may be men or women – but because in this verse women are mentioned, I am quoting their example – who have supposed that God Almighty does not have the power but that so and so, a witchdoctor or magician, has the power.

What was needed was that whenever such a situation arose, one should have turned to God alone in the way shown by God. They should have prayed. They should have given alms and helped the needy. They should have sought the help of Allah and bowed before Him that O lord! Cause my husband to do good and enable him to honour my rights and enable him to obey Thy commandments. If the child was sick, then in addition to material means, greater emphasis should have been placed on prayers and the giving of alms.

There are many similar examples in everyday life where instead of placing her trust in God

‘ THERE ARE MANY SIMILAR EXAMPLES IN EVERYDAY LIFE WHERE INSTEAD OF PLACING HER TRUST IN GOD ALMIGHTY, A WOMAN RELIES ON THE WAYS OF THE WORLD AND FORGETS THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. WHEN SUCH A SITUATION DEVELOPS, SHE PAYS NO ATTENTION TO TURNING TOWARDS GOD AND WORSHIPPING HIM. IF THIS CONDITION DEVELOPS IN A WOMAN, IT WOULD MEAN THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS WOULD BECOME CORRUPT. ’

Almighty, a woman relies on the ways of the world and forgets the existence of God. When such a situation develops, she pays no attention to turning towards God and worshipping Him. If this condition develops in a woman, it would mean that future generations would become corrupt. In that case, instead of yielding sweet and wholesome fruit, the seed of Ahmadiyyat and true Islam that you have sown in yourselves will yield sour and tasteless fruit which may apparently seem fine but would in reality be rotten. In fact, it is possible that when such children grow older, they will cause others to become just as bad. Therefore, the responsibilities of women increase tremendously because they have not only to

take care of themselves but the future generation as well.

Moreover, in this verse many other evils are also mentioned. Do not steal. Do not commit adultery. Do not make false accusations. By mentioning all these bad things, it asks you to avoid these things because their avoidance is vital to save your future generations. This is why after mentioning these evils, it mentions and obtains your pledge that you shall not kill your children.

Now, which sane person will kill one's own offspring? When a woman is about to become a mother, before she gives birth, strong feelings of love and affection for her baby develop in her. So when her sentiments are

such, who can say that she can kill her child? Then after the birth of the baby, a mother endures immense difficulties in nourishing and taking good care of the baby. All the time, she holds the newborn next to her. Then can any person with common sense say that this woman who is clinging to this baby in this manner will kill this baby? Of course not! So, most certainly, there must be some other meaning. That meaning is the same that I mentioned earlier that as long as a woman does not train her children in the correct way, and does not demonstrate by her actions the difference between good and bad, the child will not be trained properly. When a child learns evil ways and bad things, it will ruin society and would be worthy of being cut and thrown away.

Let me explain this by telling you a story. Once there was a man who had committed many crimes and had exceeded all limits. He had committed many murders and robberies and many other crimes. Finally, he got caught.

Because of his past crimes, he was sentenced to death by hanging. When they were about to hang him, he was asked whether he had any last wish. He said, 'Yes!' He had one last wish and that wish was that he should be permitted to meet his mother and that she should be brought close to him and that all others should leave them two alone. So when this wish was granted, he said to his mother that I want to love you before I am hanged but I want to love you on your tongue. So in accordance with the wish of her son, she stretched her tongue out. But the son bit the tongue with his teeth so hard that the tongue was cut in two halves. The mother began to cry very loudly with pain.

Hearing all this noise, the guards rushed forward and cursed this man that have you no shame that despite having committed so many crimes and being about to be hanged, instead of doing one good deed, you have cut off the tongue of your own mother. The criminal replied, 'Indeed today is when I have done the good deed.

When I committed petty crimes and people used to come and complain to my mother, she took my side and even though she knew it, she did not prevent me from these acts. As a result, I became bolder and became a big criminal. Had at that time this tongue of my mother distinguished good from bad, I would have not become a criminal. Therefore, the punishment given to me and the one that I have given to my mother are both justified and such mothers should be treated as such.' So you see that by improper training, whereas the child was indeed cut off from society, his physical killing occurred when he was hanged.

So always pay attention to the good upbringing of your children so that you may save them from being killed. The status of those women who train their children in a good manner is very high. Indeed it is equivalent to giving up one's life for the sake of Allah as is related in one Hadith (Tradition):

Hadhrat Ibn Abbas^(ra) relates that a woman came to the Holy Prophet^(sa) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah! The women have sent me as their representative and have asked that has Jihad been made obligatory on men that if they get injured, they will be rewarded and if they are martyred they will live forever with their Lord and benefit from His bounties? But what about us women who look after their children after they have parted? What reward will we get?'

Upon this the Holy Prophet^(sa) said: 'Say to the women you meet that obedience to your husbands and to recognise their rights is equal in status to Jihad, but there are few women who do this.'

Now see, how anxious were Muslim women to do virtuous deeds and to earn Allah's pleasure. They used to take care of and nurture the children of the Companions with the intention that the Companions should take

part in their Jihad in peace without any worries about their children. Nevertheless, they were also concerned whether they were going to get any reward from Allah for their spirit. So, the Prophet^(sa) of Allah confirmed that if they cared for and trained the children, they would most certainly get Allah's reward.

The real lesson to be drawn from this Tradition is not that the wife of the one who participates in the Jihad would earn a reward for looking after the children, but the lesson is that when a woman discharges the trust and respects the rights of her husband, and takes care of her child and that of her husband so that descendants are not destroyed by falling into bad habits but become a good part of the society, then Allah gives the woman a good reward.

With the advent of the Promised Messiah^(as) and in accordance with the prophecy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(sa), the jihad of the sword has now come to a halt. Now, Jihad is to worship Allah, promote good deeds in the

world, and to become obedient to your husbands. Do not think that everyone who trains her children in a good way does a virtuous deed and that it does not matter or that you can do whatever you like. A Tradition, however, states that just as the man of the house is the shepherd of the home, and is responsible for feeding and clothing his wife and children, giving them accommodation and providing for their other needs, so too is the woman responsible for taking care of her husband's home and his children, for nourishing them, and for drawing their attention to good education and training. If she does not do this, then as a shepherd of the household and its custodian, God Almighty would hold her accountable.

So, this is a very grave responsibility on an Ahmadi Muslim woman and as such each one of you should pay great attention to this responsibility. You are somewhat fortunate in this day and age that there is a Jihad or a struggle for tabligh (preaching), tarbiyat (religious

‘ TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN IN SUCH A WAY THAT APART FROM AN INCLINATION TOWARDS PERFORMING GOOD DEEDS THERE SHOULD BE NOTHING ELSE AND EVERYONE WHO OBSERVES THEM SHOULD EXCLAIM HOW WELL-MANNERED THE CHILDREN OF AHMADI WOMEN ARE; THAT THEY POSSESS SUCH HIGH MORAL VALUES AND PAY NO ATTENTION TOWARDS THE UNCLEAN THINGS OF THE WORLD. ’

training) and promoting the doing of good deeds in which women can participate just like the men. You would earn a higher reward from Allah that you trained the children of your husband in a good way and discharged the obligations of the household. Now you can participate in two Jihads: the training of your children and undertaking Tabligh.

So every Ahmadi should vie with others in taking part in this Jihad. You should pay greater personal attention towards worship and in spreading good deeds in society. Train your children in such a way that apart from an inclination towards performing good deeds there should be nothing else and everyone who observes them

should exclaim how well-mannered the children of Ahmadi women are; that they possess such high moral values and pay no attention towards the unclean things of the world. When you try to promote such values in society, your heart will be content and pacified and you will be pleased that Allah is pleased with you.

Shamelessness and promiscuity and the inter-mixing of sexes are common in today's society. If Ahmadi ladies become pure and clean and tell the others that a woman's respect lies in her chastity, then this would be a source of spreading exemplary good deeds.

Today Aids is rampant in the

world. Unfortunately, African countries are heavily afflicted with this epidemic. The Holy Qur'an has urged that adultery should be avoided and by avoiding this sin, this disease can be avoided. Ahmadi women should, therefore, engage in a Jihad against this disease. Other women should be told that the further away they go from the ways of God Almighty, the greater would be His censure about them and whatever lifespan remains for them, it would be an existence of extreme distress and suffering. 1500 years ago, this disease and the many deaths resulting from it had been prophesied by the Holy Prophet^(sa). Thus, according to one Hadith, it is narrated that he said that the people amongst whom adultery spreads would suffer many deaths. Although men are just as responsible as women in the causes of this disease, a woman needs to make greater effort to preserve her dignity and respect and in spreading deeds that are good. If today you launch a Jihad to arrest this disease in your country, then

remember well that future generations will never forget your kindness and benevolence. But, if on the other hand, you do not pay attention towards it, future generations will point the finger of accusation at you and question why despite having listened to the words of Allah and His Messenger, you ignored it. Though, at this time this disease affects only a small percentage, when epidemics erupt, one loses all count. May Allah enable you to pay attention towards this matter.

Furthermore, in the tarbiyat of children, in addition to getting knowledge of secular subjects such as history and science, you should also pay attention to religious and spiritual knowledge. Even if you cannot read or write, get it firmly imprinted on the minds of your children right from early childhood that you have to become educated and that you have to learn at least up to the final class of secondary school. Then if they are not to continue in education, they must learn some skill with which they

can help their country instead of becoming a burden on the state. Then, as I said earlier, the most important thing is to get religious education. Try and get this yourself. Learn how to teach the Holy Qur'an and make sure that you teach your children to read the Holy Qur'an. If after becoming an Ahmadi, whether man or woman, he or she is unable to read the Holy Qur'an, then his or her being an Ahmadi is of no use. So when you study the Holy Qur'an and teach the Qur'an to your children with great attention, then as a result of its blessings, you will be instrumental in bringing about a revolution not only in your lives but the lives of your children as well. If your husbands have gone away from the doing of good deeds, then you would become a source of their reformation. I am confident that if you resolve to do this, you will most certainly be able to cause this revolution in society.

African women are generally very hardworking and sacrifice a lot. Therefore, use this special

quality for your own reformation, the reformation and training of your children, the reformation of the environment and the society. As I said earlier, if you try and undertake a Jihad to promote and spread good deeds, for which the Lajna Imaillah organisation would have to be very proactive, then you will be able to advance this country from its existing condition to further progress.

May Allah enable you to do that. May your future generations make Tanzania a progressive nation and a nation with high moral values that should be an example of a beautiful and healthy society and a befitting model for a progressive people. May Allah enable you to do that. Amin.

The Reformer of *Islam*

The following speech by Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan was delivered at the inauguration of the Pedroabad Mosque in Spain on the 10th of September 1982. It was the first mosque built in Spain for over 500 years since Islam was driven out of Spain.

In this speech, the author covers the need for a reformer of Islam, and his personal experiences and feelings in having met the Promised Messiah^(as).

The greatest event in the whole long and fascinating course of the history of the evolution of man, physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual, was the advent of Muhammad^(sa), the Prophet of Islam, the Messenger of Allah, par excellence, the Perfect Man. The tremendous revolution initiated through him has helped shape the destiny of man through the ages. The impact of this revolution was miraculously reinforced and re-invigorated, just short of a century ago, through his second advent, spiritual in character, in the person of his perfect reflection, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as) of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (1835-1908). He laid the foundation of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1889. He was to establish the superiority of

Islam over all other faiths, which he did.

The reason why I have been bestowed the honour of being graciously directed by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV, Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, to address this august assembly this morning, is that I am one of the still surviving members of the company who had, by the Grace and Mercy of Allah, the good fortune of being enabled to make the covenant of allegiance at the blessed hands of the Promised Messiah^(as) himself. I am fully conscious of my unworthiness, and realise that I am the least of the company among whom I have the honour to be included, and am most deeply grateful to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih, one of whose humblest servants I am,

for the honour he has so benignly bestowed on me.

September 3, 1904, was a red-letter day in my life. On that day I was, by Divine Grace, granted the inestimable privilege of beholding for the first time, the blessed countenance of the Promised Messiah^(as) and Mahdi, while his speech was being read out by one of his principal disciples, Hadhrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib, to a public audience in Lahore. From the moment my gaze rested on that glorious vision, it remained riveted to it throughout the reading of the lecture, which took more than an hour. I was deeply stirred and my soul poured forth its homage to him. I felt myself deeply and completely committed. There has never since been a shadow of a doubt, nor a moment of hesitation. I have, through the sheer Grace and Mercy of Allah, been throughout firmly based on the unshakeable and immovable rock of certainty of faith. Alhamdulillah. I was then only eleven years of age. Soon after completing my fourteenth year, I

swore formal allegiance to the Promised Messiah^(as) and Mahdi, at his own blessed hands, on September 16, 1907, in Qadian. That Roll of Honour was closed, less than a year later, by his demise at Lahore, on May 26, 1908.

For my own satisfaction I have never felt the need of any reason or argument. The torch that was by Allah's Grace and Mercy lit within my soul seventy eight years ago, has shined ever more brightly with the passage of time, reinforced by my observation and experience and by the witness of Allah. I have always had a feeling that though reason and argument are useful and helpful in the case of an earnest and sincere seeker after truth, they yield little profit in the case of a person who has recourse to them only for the sake of opposition.

The history of the Ahmadiyya Movement, though still short of a century, is studded with divine proofs of the truth of its Holy Founder, and of Allah's continuous support of it. That is

evidence which no reasoning can refute or dispel.

The basic claim of the Holy Founder of the Movement was that he was the constant recipient of Divine verbal revelation. That claim was either true or false. If it was true, then whatever that Divine revelation proclaimed as his status and mission must be accepted. If that claim was false, he was (God forbid) an impostor, and no further attention need be paid to him. How can this issue be conclusively determined? The Holy Qur'an sets forth a decisive criterion (Ch:69:Vs 45-48) that an impostor is most surely destroyed by God. How did God deal with this claimant? This is not a matter of argument; it is a question of fact. He who yearns may read. It is a long and continuous spectacle of Divine favours and bounties; a series of triumphs.

A tree is known by the fruits thereof. Carry out an honest and unprejudiced comparison of the fruits of the trees of Ahmadiyyat and of the trees of its opponents, and abide by the result.

The Holy Qur'an recites a series of blessings which characterise the faithful; so does the Holy Prophet^(sa). I venture to draw attention to one out of each category.

(a) The Holy Qur'an says:

Allah has promised those among you who believe and act righteously 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 after their state of fear He will grant them peace and security. They will worship Me and will not associate anything with Me. Those who disbelieve there-after, they will be the rebellious ones.

(Ch.24.V.56)

The Holy Prophet^(sa), explained that he would be followed by Spiritual Successors, and that after a time their place will be taken by monarchy, and that in the

latter days Spiritual Succession would be restored. That is what has happened. The Promised Messiah^(as) has been followed by Spiritual Successors, one after the other since his death, and today, almost three quarters of a Century later you find his fourth successor present here among you. Thus has Allah, the Exalted, once more fulfilled His promise set out in the Holy Qur'an.

(b) A Hadith says:

Abu Hurairah^(ra) has related: Among that which I learnt from the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was that he said: Allah will raise for this people, in the beginning of every century, one who will revive its faith.

(Abu Daud, Kitabal Malahan, p. 589).

This prediction of the Holy Prophet^(sa) has been fulfilled throughout. In the early part of the fourteenth century of the Islamic era, Allah raised Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as) for the

revival of Islam. No one else made that claim.

The fifteenth century of the Islamic era has only just begun, and almost with its beginning Allah has raised Sahibzada Mirza Tahir Ahmad Sahib, Khalifatul Masih IV, for the revival of Islam. He has no competitor.

Why is it that outside the Ahmadiyya Movement, the rest of the Islamic world has been bereft of two of the principal bounties promised by Allah to those who are faithful and righteous? Reflect, O ye, who are gifted with insight.

Is it not perchance because Allah is the Patron of the faithful, and those who lack true faith have no patron (Ch.47: V.11).

Our last word is: All Praise belongs to Allah, Lord and Sustainer of the Universe.

MEDICAL ASPECTS of the *Crucifixion of Jesus*^(as)

By Dr. H.U. Rehman – Chelmsford, UK

Much has been written and many theories have been put forward as the cause of Jesus^(as)' death on the cross. None of these theories, however, explain the historical, biblical as well as medical accounts of the event.

Pontius Pilate (the Roman Governor responsible for the trial of Jesus^(as)) believed in Jesus' innocence, but delivered Jesus^(as) to his enemies when they threatened to complain against him to Caesar, were he to release Jesus^(as)¹. Nevertheless, he secretly did everything possible to save Jesus^(as) from death. He prolonged the trial until a very late hour on Friday, knowing that it was unlawful for Jews to keep anybody on the cross after nightfall on the Sabbath day. The time left for crucifixion was so short that it would be impossible

for Jesus^(as) to die on the cross. The two thieves who remained on the cross for the same duration as Jesus^(as) were both alive, and to kill them, their legs had to be broken. Jesus^(as) was spared this ordeal². Joseph of Arimethea, a secret disciple (follower of Jesus^(as)), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus^(as), and contrary to the prevailing custom, Pilate allowed him to do so. Then he and Nicodemus, a physician, took the body, but did not bury him in a common burial ground. Instead, they laid him in a tomb. Jesus^(as) had in fact fainted on the cross, was believed to be dead, but recovered after a period in a state of coma. When told of Jesus' death, Pilate wondered how Jesus^(as) could have expired so soon³.

Jesus^(as) had to undergo scourging before he was put on the cross. This would have consisted of being flogged with a whip that had approximately twelve strips of braided leather extending from a handle, tied to small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones. The first few strokes would cause bruising and contusions, then as the flogging continued, the sheep bones would cut into the subcutaneous and muscular tissues. Pain and blood loss would result in circulatory shock, depending on the extent of the blood loss.

Jesus had to pick up the *patibulum* (wooden cross weighing 75 - 125 lb) over his shoulder and walk up a rock path through the streets of Jerusalem to Golgotha, the place of the crucifixion. He fell many times. A Roman centurion summoned the aid of Simon to help Jesus^(as) carry the cross to Golgotha which was around 600 metres away. The fact that Jesus^(as) was able to carry the cross at least part of the distance to Golgotha, albeit with difficulty, points to a

reasonable circulatory status for Jesus^(as) after his scourging, since a man in circulatory shock would not be able to carry even his own weight on his feet. The crucifixion took place around noon and Jesus' apparent death occurred suddenly around 3pm. Jesus^(as) only remained on the cross for 3-6 hours, while the true purpose of crucifixion was not to cause an immediate death; on the contrary it was intended to be a drawn-out torture lasting three or four days.

The duration of suffering on the cross varied with the state of nutrition of the victim, the amount of blood and fluid loss, the weather conditions and the age of the victim. According to Barbet, it was usually 24 to 36 hours⁴. A healthy young man of 33 years and of strong physique could not have succumbed within so short a time. He became unconscious, was taken down from the cross, and had his wounds treated with an ointment (which has since been known as the ointment of Jesus^(as)).



JERUSALEM

According to one theory, Jesus^(as) died of asphyxia. The asphyxiation theory states that the weight of the body pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, would result in the intercostal muscle being stretched to its limit, thus hindering exhalation. In order to exhale fully, Jesus^(as) had to push himself up against the spike in his feet, permitting the chest wall musculature to relax. The common practice of breaking the femurs with a heavy metal rod would prevent the victim from pushing himself up, resulting in rapid asphyxiation. This ritual

was usually carried out at a time when the victim was severely exhausted and close to death.

However, Zugibe showed conclusively that the asphyxiation theory would hold true if the hands of the victim are tied directly above the head, but not if the victim is suspended with the arms spread apart at an angle of 65-70 degrees with the stipes, as was the case with Jesus^(as). He performed the most important experimental studies on crucifixion using volunteers⁵. He suspended healthy young men between the ages of 20 and 35 on

a cross, using leather gauntlets for the wrists and a strap for the feet. The period of suspension lasted from five to forty-five minutes. Abdominal breathing developed and after four minutes, the respiratory rate quadrupled. He noted other symptoms such as profuse sweating, tachycardia, muscular twitching and cramps, and feelings of panic. Interestingly, none of the volunteers reported difficulties in breathing, either inhaling or exhaling. The oxygen saturation and arterial pH remained unchanged and muscle enzymes increased. Moreover, the reconstruction of the position on the cross confirmed that the legs were not broken to prevent the individual from lifting himself to breath because the body was already in a lifted position⁶.

An analysis of the Shroud of Turin confirmed that the body of a crucified man lay in the holy shroud and that this man would have suffered exactly the same fate that Jesus^(as) did. It also confirmed that the man did not

die on the cross and was taken down and buried alive. The twenty-eight blood stains on the Shroud support this theory. The investigators stated that it would be impossible for a dead body to bleed in the manner in which the body wrapped in the Shroud had bled. An analysis of the wounds caused by the spear of the Roman soldier showed two wounds; one on the right side of the thorax as the spear penetrated the chest wall, and another high on the left side of the thorax caused by the point of the spear as it came out of the body. If a horizontal line is drawn towards the left side of the body starting from the wound made by the spear as it entered, and angle at which the spear moved as it entered the body with reference to the entry wound is 29 degrees. As the spear entered between the fifth and sixth ribs, the straight line traced in this way made by the spear, passes above the heart. It is therefore wrong to assume that the reason that blood and water flowed from the wound was due to the penetration of a chamber of the heart. They are more likely

to be pleural effusion secondary to small pulmonary emboli causing haemorrhagic collection. A second outflow of blood from the side wound occurred when the body was placed in a horizontal place, and this supports that view since this would be expected in a pleural effusion because of the gravity effect, but would not have been the case had it been the result of a penetrative wound of the heart⁷.

Several factors were involved as a cause of death in crucifixion victims. These were acute renal failure secondary to traumatic shock, hypovolaemia and rhabdomyolysis, metabolic acidosis and later in the course of the crucifixion itself, respiratory acidosis. Traumatic chest injury would result in atelectasis. However, a hypercoagulable state due to dehydration and rhabdomyolysis would cause recurrent small pulmonary emboli. This as well as some degree of cardiac failure secondary to acidosis would have caused pleural effusions.

Millions of people still believe that the Turin Shroud is the very linen cloth in which Jesus^(as) was wrapped after he was taken down from the cross. There are others who believe that it is fake and therefore challenge its authenticity. However, those who regard it as a fake and declare that the imprint on the Shroud was the work of an artist have never given a satisfactory explanation of how and why a negative image was created on the cloth. The marks left by the crown of thorns, the semi-coagulated blood on the middle thorax, the multiple wounds caused by scourging, the holes made by nails in the wrists and feet, and the significantly unbroken legs of the victim, and the presence of fossilized pollen from eleven different species, six of which were identified as coming from plants now extinct, but known to have existed in Palestine 2000 years ago, makes it unlikely that the image is man-made, and that the person on the Shroud is anyone other than Jesus^(as).

It is interesting that Jesus^(as) was taken to a tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea and that this tomb was not filled with earth as was the Jewish custom of the time. A large stone or rock only closed it. On Sunday, the Jews were free to visit the spot where Jesus^(as) was kept. But early in the morning while it was still dark, Jesus^(as) was not there. Shortly afterwards, he was seen by Mary, who at first took him for the gardener⁸. Later, Jesus^(as) talked to his disciples, travelled to Galilee, ate bread and fish, showed the wounds on his body to his followers, and escaped secretly from the jurisdiction of Pilate⁹. To his disciples who thought he was a spirit, he said:

Behold, my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.¹⁰

Having survived the cross, Jesus^(as) was a persecuted man and had to disappear from Palestine. He had some final contact with his disciples (at

which he would have imparted instructions on how to carry on spreading his message) and went on his way towards the East. If he had in fact died on the cross, Jesus^(as) would have failed in the task he had been given to save the lost tribes of Israel.

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Intellect and Conscience of the **Muslim World**

By Dr. Yulduz N Khaliulin – Moscow, Russia

The outstanding Pakistani scholar, one of the coryphaei of theoretical physicists of the last century, the Nobel Prize winner, professor Abdus Salam (1926-1996) has forever entered world science as a great researcher of the laws of the interaction of elementary nuclear particles and their structure. He has made a major contribution to the study and understanding of the multi-complex and the probabilistic picture of the world at a level where Newton's classical mechanics come to an end and where the laws of Quantum Physics start to take effect.

Professor Abdus Salam is one of the creators of the modern 'standard model' of an atom's structure. The most modern concept of theoretical physics (for which professor Abdus Salam and two American

scientists S. Gleshou and S. Vajnberg were awarded the Nobel Prize in 1979) has resulted in the construction of a theory which has united electromagnetism and the weak interaction of nuclear particles. The great Albert Einstein unsuccessfully tried all his life to create this very theory. To put it in simple terms, it means that a devoted Muslim scientist stood at the sources of disclosing the fundamental laws, which are common for both a microcosm and a macrocosm. These laws at the dawn of the 21st century have started a new era of philosophical understanding of the Unity of the Universe.

The talented organiser of science recognised all over the world, the founder and, for a period of thirty years, the permanent head of the International Centre of theoretical physics (ICTP) in Trieste,

Italy, Professor Abdus Salam today is quite fairly perceived as an original symbol and an inspiration behind the revival of science in the Muslim world. And not only in the Muslim world, but everywhere in the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

According to the most moderate estimates, more than 70,000 young scientists from 80 countries of the world, and mostly from developing countries graduated from the scientific Centre that is named after professor Abdus Salam. Thanks to his titanic efforts, for a short period of time this Centre became known as the ‘forge’, where several generations of physicists have studied. Here they were able to mix with outstanding representatives of the scientific world.

Way to the heights of science

The well-known physicist of the future was born on January 26, 1926 in the town of Jhang, a small rural town situated in the vast north-west outskirts of then

colonial India. Since 1947, this area has been a part of Punjab, one of Pakistan's four provinces. Abdus Salam died in November 1996 and according to his will, he was buried not far from his native place – at a Muslim cemetery in the town of Rabwah, near his parents’ graves.

Between these two dates there are 50 years of his continuous active research work in different parts of the world. Those years were filled with creative success and political disappointment, dramatic strains and periods of spiritual peace. And the final result is really great. Abdus Salam wrote dozens of books and scientific monographs besides over three hundred articles on the most complex problems of nuclear physics and on actual questions of the preparation of young scientists for developing countries.

And as a triumphal final act, these fundamental studies in the field of theoretical physics have resulted in his worldwide recognition and fame.



**PROFESSOR ABDUS SALEM WITH AYYUB KHAN -
(EX-PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN)**

The proof is that Professor Abdus Salam was elected as a foreign member at about 50 different national scientific academies as well as several scientific associations of the world. He was awarded twenty of the most prestigious international prizes and gold medals in the field of physics, including the Nobel Prize. For his major contribution to the struggle for world peace and the

development of international scientific co-operation, this scientist was honoured with the top awards of 14 international organizations as well. He was also titled *Doctor Honoris Causa* at over 40 famous universities on five continents.

Few physicists of the twentieth century have received such honours and world recognition, except for his three great pre-

decessors – Albert Einstein, Ernest Rutherford and Niles Bore. According to several historians of science, Professor Abdus Salam, as an author of the universal theory of electromagnetism and weak interaction of nuclear particles, certainly has the right to be one of a constellation of distinguished scholars.

His way to the heights of science was rather unusual, therefore it will be interesting to look briefly at his life from the very start and through those serious obstacles he had to overcome, as a little boy from a small Punjabi village gradually transformed into a prominent world scientist.

He had a solid Islamic upbringing at home among many children. His mother regularly read Muslim prayers to her children. She was the first person to notice the phenomenal memory of the boy. Abdus Salam could easily and absolutely correctly memorise whole chapters from the Holy Qur'an. His father Hadhrat Mohammad

Hussein, being a teacher, quickly realised that any future stay at a local school would not add anything more to his son's education. Therefore he did his utmost to send his son to the state college for intensive studies.

Subsequently in 1938, the twelve-year old Abdus Salam was sent to Lahore, a major cultural and political centre of the Indian subcontinent. This city is also known for its masterpieces of medieval Muslim architecture. In 1940 in this very place, the well-known Lahore Declaration was adopted and proclaimed. This step paved the way to the creation of the state of Pakistan in 1947.

But when Abdus Salam first came to Lahore as a boy from the backwoods (qasba), where he for the first time in his life saw electric lights, he had other thoughts and ideas. He enthusiastically started to study the basic laws of electromagnetism, which had been discovered by Faraday and Maxwell a long time before. The

boy had to study the most complicated formulae in mathematics and in other subjects. After a while, he would surprise the whole scientific world with his own discovery in an even more complex sphere of knowledge. A new term by the name of 'Electroweak' (electroweak interaction) would appear in nuclear physics. And this concept, introduced initially by Professor Abdus Salam in London, the native place of many great physicists, would get a prominent place in modern science. Abdus Salam was to become the first winner of a prestigious Maxwell premium and of a Maxwell medal instituted by the Scientific Organisation of the United Kingdom. Then there would also be other, no less prestigious awards and nominations like the Robert Oppenheimer premium (1971), the Einstein medal (UNESCO, Paris), Birla Premium (India), Lomonosov golden medal (USSR Academy of Sciences) and many more.

He was a diligent student of the

Punjab University, from which he graduated with distinction in 1946. And he was at the top of the list in all the subjects at his final exams. Successes in studies gave him a chance to get a grant to continue education in England, at the world famous Cambridge University. In 1949 he got his MA degree with the highest distinction in mathematics and physics.

From 1950 to 1952, the young scholar was busy with pioneering studies in Quantum Physics at the famous Cavendish Laboratory, an Institute that as early as in the first half of the twentieth century became the major centre of theoretical physics. This laboratory, so to say, produced a full dozen Nobel Prize winners. Such great scientists as the New Zealander Ernest Rutherford, the Dutchman Niles Bore, Russian Peter Kapitsa and many other world-famous physicists worked there.

The young Muslim scholar from Pakistan, the country whose name had only recently appeared

‘ IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND ARTICLES, HE ALWAYS STRESSED THAT THERE ARE 750 VERSES IN THE HOLY QUR’AN, THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEACHINGS OF ALLAH THE MIGHTY, CALL ON MAN TO STUDY NATURE AND TO OBTAIN THE MEANS FOR ITS CONTROL. “I HAVE DEVOTED ALL MY LIFE TO IMPLEMENT THESE ORDERS OF THE HOLY QUR’AN” HE SAID.

on a political map of the world, unexpectedly dashed into this world constellation of theoretical physicists! In 1952 he successfully got his doctor’s degree in theoretical physics. His thesis was about quantum electrodynamics, and was awarded the Smith premium even before being formally approved. After this the way to ‘Science’ with a capital letter and all the doors of the best world research laboratories were open to Abdus Salam.

With the publication of his thesis, Abdus Salam became a rising star in the field of theoretical physics. His new and original approach to the topic of study

and an impeccable mathematical apparatus used by this young scientist had put him at the focus of attention of the whole international physics community. As a result he got a number of promising offers in Europe.

Despite all of these lucrative opportunities, he decided to return to his motherland. He became a Professor of Mathematics of the State College at the Punjab University. Abdus Salam tried unsuccessfully to create a national school of theorists in the field of physics in Pakistan. But quite soon he realised that in the given circumstances, there was no chance for him to realise his

vision. Moreover he understood that being so far from the leading European research centres, he was unable to continue his studies in theoretical physics.

In 1954, Professor Abdus Salam returned to Cambridge where he started to read his lectures on Mathematics. During the next 35 years (1957-1993) he held the office of the professor in theoretical physics of the London University. He also actively carried out significant pioneering research in a number of areas of modern physics. These studies were awarded with numerous international premiums. London, where he spent in total about forty years of his life, was for Abdus Salam a cozy place for scholarly reflection. He visited this city every month even during the period when he was in charge of the Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste.

Secrets of the Quantum Microcosm

When in 1946 Abdus Salam (who was then a twenty-two-year-old young man from a

distant Punjabi village on the outskirts of the British Empire) arrived in a dilapidated London in search of 'scientific truth', the whole of Europe was in ruins after the terrible Second World War. This does not have analogies in the history of mankind. Soon the 'Cold war' between East and West began. Leading physicists from both camps found themselves involved in secret projects aimed at the development of nuclear and hydrogen weapons.

They were deprived of free communication, of any meetings, discussion and international conferences. As a sad result there was an almost complete absence of serious publication in scientific magazines. As is known, without such interactions progress in science is impossible.

Yet, not so long before, prior to the beginning of the Second World War, the science of quantum mechanics had made huge leaps forward through the united efforts of hundreds and thousands of scholars from all

over the world. These advances cardinally changed a scientific paradigm and in general the views of scientists on methods of cognition and the basic organisation of the universe. Quantum Mechanics, as though after having asked for pardon from the authors of classical mechanics – Newton and Galileo – offered essentially a new system of laws that govern our world. It was necessary by all means to move quantum mechanics further to new heights.

By God's Grace, from the 50's to the 70's, Professor Abdus Salam was in the midst of further theoretical research, which had shown that a great number of natural phenomena and processes such as the division of a nucleus and the formation of neutron stars, forms of chemical compounds and the structure of the DNA spiral, the workings of semi-conductor transistors, lasers and many other things, all obey the laws of Quantum Mechanics.

With infinite belief in the

strength of Almighty Allah, and armed with a lost precise mathematical apparatus and the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, the young scientist became fully absorbed in this mysterious microcosm of elementary particles. The results did not keep us waiting long. Even the initial research had resulted in quite unexpected conclusions. He had put forward a theory of a two-component neutrino. Abdus Salam also was the first who forecast the inevitability of decay in a chain of weak nuclear interaction. I have already mentioned that for a designation of this phenomenon, Professor Salam brought to life a new term 'Electroweak' into the language of nuclear physics.

From 1970 to 1980, Professor Salam together with the Indian scientist and Professor of Maryland University (USA) Jagesh Pata, during ten years, closely dealt with the problems of interaction of three forces – electromagnetic, weak and strong nuclear forces. For this purpose they needed to

‘contradict’ theoretically by mathematical means one of the main accepted postulates of modern nuclear physics about the strength and indivisibility of the proton, which is a main component of a nuclear nucleus.

(Note: It is known that the nuclear nucleus is the central part of an atom, that constitutes only one trillionth part of its volume, but it constitutes more than 99 % of its mass! A nucleus, in its turn, consists of particles of two kinds – protons and neutrons (the common name of nucleus is nucleons). The nucleons form a nuclear nucleus and are kept together by very powerful forces of mutual attraction, which are named nuclear forces of strong interaction).

As a result of this research, two well-known scientists from the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent had put forward a daring hypothesis. In accordance with this theory even a proton (that keeps the strength of a nucleus of an atom) is exposed to disintegration. Though, the duration of a

proton's decay period takes an astronomically great time of 10^{32} years.

Spiritual grandeur

Being a scholar with diversified scientific interests and having an encyclopaedic knowledge, Professor Abdus Salam maintained a constant interest in the history and modern problems of science in the Muslim world. He was one of the few scientists of the last century who on the basis of his constant analysis of historical sources managed to study almost all of the development of natural science in the Muslim world from its origins in the 7th century up to the end of the twentieth century. Brilliant scientific articles and reflections of the scientist about the past and the future of the Muslim world testify to this. The majority of those articles are included in the collection of his works titled *Ideals and Realities*. This book ran into several editions during the life of the author. The collection was published in western (English, French, Italian and Romanian),



**PROFESSOR ABDUS SALAM MEETING
KING HASSAN OF MOROCCO**

and in Eastern languages such as Chinese, Arabic, Persian, Bengali, Punjabi and Urdu, the last 3 of which the author freely used.

Professor Abdus Salam's other monograph *Revival of Science in Islamic countries* was published in Singapore in 1994 is also of great interest. Authors of many articles devoted to the life and works of Professor Abdus Salam underline that in the 20th

Century, he was the first and unique representative of the Muslim world, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for his great scientific achievements. It is certainly true, but I think that it is necessary to understand the significance of this extraordinary person from a wider perspective.

Perhaps he, more clearly than any other of his contemporary scholars, understood the imperative need for scientific progress

in the developing world. Only fruitful scientific co-operation between the North and the South, coupled with the centuries-old co-operation of the East and the West, could help modern civilisation to avoid inevitable confrontation.

Professor Abdus Salam was a sincere religious man. He offered five prayers daily wherever he was and in any environment. He combined his intellectual skills with a spiritual side. In his public statements and articles, he always stressed that there are 750 verses in the Holy Qur'an, that in accordance with the teachings of Allah the Mighty, call on man to study nature and to obtain the means for its control. *'I have devoted all my life to implement these orders of the Holy Qur'an'* he said.

In 1979 Professor Abdus Salam recited some verses from the Holy Qur'an in the famous Nobel Hall. This was the first time in the history of that Hall that Qur'anic verses had been recited. And later while giving

his Nobel lecture, professor Abdus Salam cited another verse. He said that 'in fact Islam is the belief of all physicists, it inspires and supports all of us: the deeper we search, the more excited becomes our amazement and at the same time more new mysteries appear'.

Pakistan's patriot

Most of his life professor Abdus Salam spent far from his Motherland – he was engaged in scientific research in London and Trieste in turns and travelled all over the world – participated in international conferences and scientific forums. But during 40 years of living on foreign soil among predominantly Christians, he always remained an orthodox Muslim and despite different approaches, he did not become a citizen of any country where he stayed. He remained a Pakistani citizen and never lost the link with his Motherland. He always remembered and respected his roots (the land of his parents, fellow Muslims and academic colleagues) and wanted to help his country 'to escape from

poverty'. During a long period of time (1958-1974) he was a member of the Atomic Energy Commission of Pakistan, where he rendered scientific assistance in building an atomic power station near Karachi. From 1961 to 1974, Abdus Salam was the Chief Scientific Advisor to the President of Pakistan. At the first opportunity he returned to Pakistan, gave lectures and tried to convince Pakistani leaders of the necessity of training specialists in science and to create conditions for technological development. As far as possible he rendered assistance in this area. But not everything was in his control, and very often governmental structures could not understand his sincere efforts and scientific offers.

Meetings in Moscow

Professor Abdus Salam visited Moscow more than once and was a welcome participant of the great scientific conferences and academic jubilee celebrations that were held here. He enjoyed immense authority over the scientific circles of the USSR.

The eminent soviet theorists and physicists knew his scientific works and treated him with profound respect.

It is in particular confirmed by the fact that in 1971 long before being awarded the Nobel Prize, Professor Abdus Salam was unanimously elected as a foreign member of the USSR Academy of Science. Later in 1983, he was awarded the Lomonosov Gold Medal that was the highest prize of the USSR Academy of Science. In 1995 he was awarded the Maxwell prize and gold medal instituted by the Academy of Russian creative workers. In 1992 the head of the St. Petersburg University visited Trieste (Italy) especially to present the Diploma of the honorary doctor of science of the University to Professor Abdus Salam.

As a humanist scientist, a man of democratic convictions and high moral beliefs, he keenly responded to the political and moral pressure upon scientists. In particular he was publicly meeting and talking with the

academic A. Saharov while he was out of favour and his Soviet colleagues avoided meeting him in public view. This way Professor Abdus Salam gave him moral support. After A. Saharov was exiled to Gorky, Professor Abdus Salam sent him a friendly letter and several scientific articles. They met for the third time in 1987 when A. Saharov was back in Moscow. 'Every time I was surprised by Saharov's comprehensive knowledge. As a person and as a physicist he deserved admiration and became a legend in his lifetime' – professor Abdus Salam wrote soon after the Russian scientist unexpectedly died.

In 1987, Professor Abdus Salam took part in the big international conference in Moscow on the reduction of nuclear arms. He firmly supported the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. He always called the world community to use the potential of nuclear studies and nuclear power only for peaceful and constructive purposes.

The Memory of Generations

Recently after this essay was finished, I had a wonderful dream that after thirty years I am again in Lahore as a foreign tourist. Everything was like in a documentary film. My guide-interpreter was a Pakistani woman dressed as a stewardess of the PIA airlines and she offered me an extraordinary tourist trail through Lahore: 'Following in the tracks of the history of quantum physics'. I could not fully understand such a strange combination – Lahore and quantum physics, but I agreed hoping to see something absolutely unusual.

And then this woman carried me on a motor rickshaw along the wide Abdus Salam avenue right to the gates of the Government College of the Abdus Salam Punjab University. The guide-woman competently and hastily explained to me that the name of Abdus Salam had been given to the University according to a Special Resolution of the Government of Pakistan on the

occasion of the 80th anniversary of this eminent well-known scientist. He had graduated from this University and was a professor, and it was from here that he started the swift flight to the very peak of world science.

With the students applauding, we went through the Abdus Salam scientific library to the spacious lecture-hall where the bas-relief was engraved with the gilded notice in English and Punjabi: 'From 1951-1954, the prominent world-famous physicist Professor Abdus Salam who dreamed of creating the Pakistani school of theoretical physics was giving lectures on higher mathematics in this hall'.

Ms Nahid announced that the completion phase of our tour would be the mausoleum of Abdus Salam that was not far from Lahore near the town of Rabwah. There were only two such modern buildings here in Pakistan, one of them was the mausoleum of the founder of Pakistan Mohammed Ali Jinnah in Karachi, and the second was

the mausoleum of the founder and inspirer of Pakistani science in Rabwah.

Then I woke up and felt that my mind was still stuck in the dreamscape. I think that this dream can be and should be realised to some extent in the foreseeable future. Pakistan owes very much to its great son who glorified his country in the world of 20th century science.

Origen

By Fazal Ahmad – UK

Origen (c.185-254 CE) was one of the most influential Christian teachers and philosophers of his time. His views and teachings had a profound effect at a time when Christianity was still trying to break loose from Judaism and form its own identity. Moreover, at this time, the concept and nature of Jesus^(as) was also under scrutiny and there was no common understanding on this subject across the Christian world.

This article attempts to explore the environment into which he emerged, his teachings, and the impact they had on the development of Christian teaching and thought. Our main sources about him come from a few quotations preserved from his writings, and the History of the Church written by Eusebius at the start of the 4th century which has the best part of an entire chapter (*Book VI : Severus*

to Decius: The work of Origen: widespread persecution) largely dedicated to Origen. The fact that Eusebius was writing about the first 300 years of Christianity, and that he chose to devote the greater part of one of his ten chapters to Origen, illustrates the huge impact that Origen had on the development of Christianity at a crucial stage in its development.

His Background

Origen was born into a devoted Christian family in 185 CE and grew up in Alexandria, modern northern Egypt in the second century of Christianity. As a boy, his family encouraged him to study Biblical texts and memorise them, just as young Muslim boys do today. His interest soon went beyond the literal verses to the deeper meaning of the texts. Whilst this level of critical study was not always encouraged at the time (the common perception was that many meanings were beyond human comprehension, and therefore Christians must not question the Scriptures), his

family were delighted by his studious attitude.

At this time, Christianity was spreading across the Mediterranean region, with centres across the Middle East, North Africa and Southern Europe. It was during the lifetime of Origen that the official date of Easter was first set. Also, the term 'catholic' was first coined. More importantly, while he was a youth, the New Testament Canon (orthodox books) was fixed for the first time. There would have been much debate about which books should or should not have been included in that Canon, and this would have influenced his study in later life as we will see.

As Christianity sought to distance itself from its Jewish roots and grew in stature, it also became more of a threat to the Roman Empire. Under the persecution of Emperor Severus, Leonides (father of Origen) was arrested and imprisoned. While in captivity, his young son Origen (just 18 at the time) also

wanted to join him and had a zeal for martyrdom, but his mother held him back. Instead, Origen then wrote to his father saying:

'Mind you don't change your mind on our account.'
(Eusebius VI, p.180)

This illustrates the passion that Origen had from a very young age for his faith. His father Leonides was beheaded in 203 CE while Origen was still very young. This was just one of many sacrifices that the Christians of Egypt made, and must have had a lasting impression on Origen. He was now left to try to look after his widowed mother and as many as six younger brothers.

He was able to study under the theologian and philosopher Ammonius Saccas who also taught Plotinus. He learned Hebrew such that he could study the Old Testament in its original form. He decided to lead a simple life, and for years denied himself worldly goods which were being offered to him by his community.

He chose to walk the streets of Alexandria without shoes, ate the minimum of food, and stayed away from wine. He also enhanced his spiritual mood through fasting. So while training himself in the Scriptures, he also heightened his own spiritual state to a level that inspired his students.

He began to write (or rather dictate) many books on Christianity, and some sources suggest he wrote as many as 2000 books. He wrote on a variety of subjects including *Christian Doctrine and the Nature of Jesus*^(as). One of his most well-known books is *Contra Celsum* (*Against Celsum*). Note – Celsum had written against Christianity, and Origen's work was a comprehensive response and defence of Christianity. He also wrote commentaries on most of the books of the Bible. When we refer to the Bible, we mean that collection of Gospels and letters which is today accepted as the New Testament; however at the time of Origen, there were many books held as authentic by

groups across the Church. Different scholars had their own views on what was authentic, and which were apocryphal (not authentic). Origen illustrates this point in a debate over which books were considered authentic by various churches:

‘... this work (The Teaching of Peter) is not included among ecclesiastical books. For we can show that it was composed neither by Peter nor by any other person inspired by the Spirit of God.’ (Origen 4.241).

Origen was studying his faith at a time when the Canonical Books of the Church were still disputed. As we will see later, he also had a thirst for knowledge and so readily studied books outside the pale of the Orthodox Gospels.

Origen also became the Teacher of Catechumens (people being taught about the faith prior to their baptism) at the Church of Alexandria. Many students came to him for advice and to learn about the faith. After a while, he

began to focus on more advanced study and teaching scholars, and delegated teaching new adherents (catechumens) to his colleague Heracles (Williamson p.400).

Origen's Work

Origen taught many people who approached him for advice. One of these was Gregory Thaumaturgus who wrote of Origen around 255 CE (just after he died) :

‘With respect to these human teachers, indeed, he counselled us to attach ourselves to none of them - not even if they were attested as most wise by all men. Rather, he counselled us to devote ourselves to God alone and to the prophets.’ (Gregory 6.36)

So he was very open-minded and encouraged his students to study diverse sources as Gregory testifies:

‘No subject was barred, nothing was kept from us ...

SOME BOOKS OF ORIGEN

Comentarii:

In Canticum Canticorum

In Matthaem

In Ioannem

(Commentaries of many Biblical books such as the Song of Songs, Matthew and John.)

Contra Celsum

(Against Celsus)

De Oratione (On Prayer)

De Principiis

(On First Principles)

Exhortatio ad Martyrium

(A Call to Martyrdom)

Homiliae:

In Genesin

In Exodum

In Librum Iesu Nave

In Lucam

In Ioannem Fragmenta

(Sermons on Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, John and many others).

Selecta:

In Exodum

In Ezechielem

(Selected comments on Exodus, Ezekiel etc.)

We were allowed to make ourselves familiar with all kinds of doctrine, from Greek and Eastern sources, on spiritual or secular subjects, ranging freely over the whole field of learning.'

(Bettenson, p.19)

In studying the Bible, Origen was not content to accept the standard line, or to view texts as perfect. He knew that he was dealing with variations of the Bible both in terms of translation and actual content. Eusebius writes about him:

'Moreover, he hunted out the published translations of Holy Writ other than the Septuagint ... he discovered several alternative translations. These had been lost for many years - I do not know where - but he hunted them out of their hiding places and brought them to light. These were wrapped in mystery, and he had no idea who wrote them: the only thing he could say was that he found one at Nicopolis near

Actium and the other at some similar place.'

(Eusebius, VI, 16)

We cannot be sure which versions of the Bible he discovered. At a guess, he was looking at Gospels which are now considered to be Apocryphal or unauthentic, such as the Gospel of Thomas, because they deviate from the accepted norms of Christianity. Living in Alexandria, he is highly likely to have come across Gnostic texts, and possibly even some of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

One of the greatest pieces of work that Origen did was in the area of Biblical textual studies. He recognised the variances between different versions of the Old Testament. So he decided to lay out six versions side by side in what came to be known as his *Hexapla* (sixfold). In this, he laid down the versions of the Hebrew text, a Greek transliteration, Aquila's literal version, the Septuagint, Symachus' Greek version and Theodotion's revision. This allowed discre-

SO ORIGEN CLEARLY SEEMED TO IMPLY THAT JESUS^(AS) WAS SUBSERVIENT TO GOD (THE FATHER). PERHAPS HE HAD ONLY DEVELOPED THE IDEA TO THE EXTENT THAT JESUS^(AS) WAS LESS DIVINE THAN THE FATHER (GOD), BUT HIS CONCEPTS WERE HEADING TOWARDS A VIEW THAT OTHER MONOTHEISTS WOULD BE ABLE TO ACCEPT.

pancies to become more apparent. This mammoth effort took almost 25 years to complete. In particular, he used this approach to look for a deeper meaning within the text. His style, now known as allegorical interpretation, acknowledged that beneath the literal meaning of any given verse, there must be a deeper spiritual meaning.

Origen's Beliefs

In the third century of Christianity, scholars were trying to understand the nature of Jesus^(as). There was confusion over whether he was a Jew or not, whether he was human or divine, and what happened to him after the crucifixion.

The historian, Gwatkin, describes the dilemma in the following words:

‘Either Christ is in the fullest sense divine, or else he is not. If he is, the Christians worship two gods: if he is not, they worship a creature. Either way there was no escape from the charge of polytheism.’
(*Gwatkin, Vol. II, p.183*)

Origen exhaustively studied the nature of Jesus^(as). He appeared to test the concept of Trinity to its limits in a way that would draw others later to question the concept altogether, as one scholar says:

‘... he seems to stress the distinctions in the Trinity at the expense of the Unity; to subordinate the Son too definitely; and to limit the activity of the Spirit.’
(Bettenson, p.21)

In his book *On First Principles*, Origen betrayed his doubts about the Trinity as he wrote:

‘In regard to him {Jesus} it is not yet clearly known whether he is to be thought of as begotten or unbegotten, or as being himself also a Son of God or not.’

(Origen, De Principiis, I, Preface 4)

He goes on:

‘The God and Father, who holds the universe together, is superior to every being that exists, for He imparts to each one from His own existence that which each one is; the Son, being less than the Father, is superior to rational creatures alone (for he is second to the Father); the Holy Spirit is still less, and dwells within the saints alone.’

(Origen, De Principiis 1.3.5)

Trinity was not a concept that Jesus^(as) had himself talked about, so it was even harder for the

scholars that followed to make sense of it.

Origen settled for a notion of the Logos (the Spirit) and the human soul co-existing. He believed that at his birth, Jesus’ human soul was united with the Logos. In the body of Jesus^(as), he believed that the soul and the Logos became closer to the extent that his soul began to share the properties of the Logos. However, as we have just seen, Origen also insisted that the Logos was subservient to the Father (God). So Origen clearly seemed to imply that Jesus^(as) was subservient to God (the Father). Perhaps he had only developed the idea to the extent that Jesus^(as) was less Divine than the Father (God), but his concepts were heading towards a view that other monotheists would be able to accept.

This was the seed that Arius picked up on many years later. He took the ideas further to show that Jesus^(as) was created by the Father and was therefore not just subservient to the Father (God) but was also not eternal, i.e. he

was created at a point in time. The views of Arius led to the formulation of the Trinity at the Council of Nicaea in Turkey in 325 CE as a reaction to what the Church regarded as ‘heresies’ such as this.

He was later accused for not accepting the resurrection of the body of Jesus^(as) (Jerome, Adv. Ioann. Hier., 7) as again he struggled with this. Whilst Origen’s own interpretation was vague, it highlights the uncertainty that existed at this time amongst the greatest Christian minds over concepts which are now taken for granted in the Christian world. If these were unclear just 200 years after the life of Jesus^(as), this casts doubt over them.

Modern Christianity has the view that only those that accept Christ can enter heaven, and all of the rest of mankind are doomed to hell. Origen was a ‘universalist’ in that he believed that God’s power was overriding, and that ultimately, all men would be saved, whether they accepted

Christ or not. Those that had been unable to perform good deeds in this life could be ‘*purified by fire*’ in the next life and eventually achieve salvation. This is different to current Christian thinking where failing to accept Christ in this world is believed to lead to eternal damnation.

Atonement was also a new and strange concept in Christianity. Origen struggled with it. He decided that if Jesus^(as) had died on the Cross as a ransom for mankind, that ransom would have to be paid to the devil as God would not be holding mankind (His own creation) to ransom. This is illustrative of a range of diverging concepts which emerged in the first four centuries of Christianity as followers could not understand concepts such as Trinity and Atonement.

Falling out with the Church

As discussed, there were several schools of thought emerging in Christianity, particularly around centres such as Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Rome. None of these had global

coverage or acceptance, and this would later lead to the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE at which a single doctrine would be imposed upon the Church.

Origen grew out of favour with the Bishop of Alexandria, Demetrius, and was expelled from his local church in 230 CE after two Palestinian bishops (Alexander of Jerusalem and Theoctistus of Caesarea) ordained him as a layman. Some scholars such as Eusebius actually claim that Demetrius was really jealous of him (Origen was a layman who had been given greater honour than many trained Bishops of his time, and this caused envy, possibly from Demetrius himself) and hence took such drastic action. At around the same time, the Romans were responsible for another massacre known as the 'Fury of Caracalla' in Alexandria. A combination of these factors would have encouraged Origen to move to Palestine and up to the coastal town of Caesarea where he established a new teaching

academy under the patronage of Ambrose. Origen had been engaged in Caesarea for a few years before he ended up moving there. Ambrose had already established a printing house for him with a team of writers, copyists and expert calligraphers (Bettenson, p.19).

Ironically, although Origen had grown out of favour with elements of the Church, it was the Romans under Emperor Decius who imprisoned and tortured Origen, and it was this cruel fate that led to his end at Tyre a few years later in 254 CE.

Influence of Origen

Origen had a direct influence on many scholars that came through his academy in Caesarea, but his influence lasted well beyond his death through other scholars and philosophers such as Arius. He had written a phenomenal amount of articles and books, but following the Church Council of 553 CE² at which he was declared a heretic, many of his works did not survive. However, there were some works which



have been preserved through translations into Latin by Jerome, Rufinus and others.

Although he was later to be condemned for his views, Jerome, who compiled the first Canon, was initially very enthusiastic about this great scholar over a century after he died:

‘He stands condemned by his bishop, Demetrius, only the

bishops of Palestine, Arabia, Phoenicia, and Achaia dissenting. Rome consents to his condemnation, she convenes her senate to censure him, not – as the rabid hounds who now pursue him cry – because of the novelty or heterodoxy of his doctrines, but because men could not tolerate the incomparable eloquence and knowledge which, when he opened his lips, made others

seem dumb.’

(Jerome, Epistle XXXII.4)

Jerome had written this around 384 CE, at a time when the Church had now become the state religion of the Roman Empire, and forced the concept of Trinity on the rest of the Church in order to create a single unified Church. The zeal and vigour with which they pursued any dissenters forced them to flee into the deserts of Egypt. Luckily for Origen, he died a century before all of this took place.

We also get a sense of the strength of feeling soon after in a letter by the Bishop of Rome in 400 CE to his friend Simplician in Milan:

‘ ... everything written in former days by Origen that is contrary to our faith is also rejected and condemned by us.’

(Anastasius c, 400 CE)

For the Christian world to have such strong feelings against Origen and his views 300 years

after he had passed away, shows the strength of his influence upon early Christianity. We probably could not agree with some of the conclusions that he reached, but his quest to seek a deeper meaning and question innovative concepts shows that many of the basic tenets around Trinity and Atonement which are accepted as basic facts 2000 years after the events of Jesus^(as) were not seen in this way just 200 years after the Crucifixion.

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