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EDITORIAL

Waqar Ahmad Ahmedi – Birmingham, UK

There has been much speculation and comment in the media attempting to explain the psyche of terrorists and their passion for causing maximum death and destruction in the name of God.

Following the convictions in May of five men who were plotting attacks in Britain, less than two years after the 7/7 tragedy, the question still burns: what motivates an extremist minority to commit such evil?

Mohammad Sidique Khan's video message, recorded prior to the bombings, confirmed the most cited theory: Western foreign policy. He blamed not just leaders but even everyday citizens for atrocities against Muslims, an obvious reference to Iraq, Palestine and Chechnya.

The British Government, of course, denied any wrongdoing that provoked the attack. For Prime Minister Tony Blair, this has always been about a 'perverted and

poisonous' few with a mission to crush Western civilisation itself (*The Independent*, 14 July 2005).

Indeed, the avowed motivation of militants like Khan, Khayam and the rest has never just been to 'protect and avenge' their brethren in faith, but is inspired by the vision of global Islamic hegemony that bullies the whole of mankind into submission. And much less apparent, though no less interesting, is a connection with probably a famous man to have walked this planet – Prophet Jesus^(as).

Muslims, like Christians, expect Christ to revisit the earth, a belief based on prophecies contained in their sacred scriptures. Yet the image of the returning Messiah, as painted by certain mullahs, would even send a shiver down George Bush's spine.

According to the mullahs' literal interpretation of the prophecies, when the Prophet of Israel

reappears, he will carry a sword, smash every crucifix in his sight and kill anyone rejecting Islam. This, for them, is Islam's predicted pathway to success!

To all who know and love Jesus^(as), as one who personified love and forgiveness, the very thought is intolerable. It is also an interpretation founded on a gross misreading of religious texts that reject such notions outright. The Qur'an, for instance, opposes coercion in matters of conscience, declaring: *'There should be no compulsion in religion...'* (Ch.2:V.257).

To the young and impressionable, though, such dramatic portrayal of a quick and ruthless victory can be an attractive and exciting concept, avoiding the more arduous and intellectual route to solving world problems. Thus, what some are taught is that to be counted as true believers, and to help pave the way for such a Christ, they too must offer their lives. It is the highest form of sacrifice they believe will earn them eternal bliss.

Equally, if not more worrying, is

that this vile perception of Jesus^(as), contrary to the Qur'an though it is, is espoused by many (though not all) of the same so-called 'moderate' Muslim leaders frequently heard denouncing terrorism. Be they imams or community spokesmen, most of them also believe in a warrior Christ.

Whilst they may speak out against suicide missions, and deny responsibility for wannabe martyrs attending their mosques, matters are hardly helped by their own belief in a doctrine so deadly.

It also seems hypocritical for them to condemn the callous murder of non-Muslims by radicals, whilst praying for Jesus^(as) to come and do precisely that.

Fortunately there are some groups – like the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community – who have since their establishment consistently rejected outright the notion of a violent Jesus^(as). As a result they have no problem of militancy (and certainly not terrorism) amongst their members. The solution, therefore, lies in addressing and

challenging the erroneous and misguided ideology of many Muslims.

Such change can only be brought about by believers through *jihad* waged within their own communities that not only fights all forms of extremism, but roots out the very ideas that encourage it. This *jihad* must start with a reappraisal of the tenet of a cold

and cruel Christ^(as) – and booting out the so-called ‘moderates’ and militants who preach it.

Failure to do so will mean that violence, discord and misery shall continue to plague the Muslim world. It will also ensure the breeding of yet more terrorists ready to strike anyone, anytime and anywhere.

Verse references to the Holy Qur’an item count ‘*Bismillah...*’ (In the Name of Allah...) as the first verse of each Chapter. In some non-standard texts, this is not counted and should the reader refer to such texts, the verse quoted in *The Review of Religions* will be found at one verse earlier than the number quoted.

In this journal, for the ease of non-Muslim readers, ‘(saw)’ or ‘saw’ 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*’ which are words that a Muslim utters out of respect whenever he or she comes across that name. 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 *Rahemallahu Ta’ala* means the Mercy of Allah the Exalted be upon him.

In keeping with current universal practice, local transliterations of names of places are preferred to their anglicised versions, e.g. Makkah instead of Mecca, etc.

ESSENCE OF ISLAM:

Part 20 – The Holy Qur'an – The Universal Book

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.

Holy Qur'an – the Universal Book

The Book that would have been revealed at the beginning of creation could not, according to reason, be a perfect Book. It would be like a teacher who teaches children the alphabet. It is obvious that for such elementary instruction, no great ability is needed. When human experience increased and man fell into many errors, detailed instruction became necessary especially when the darkness of error became widespread and human souls became involved in diverse types of intellectual and

practical misguidance. At that time a superior and perfect teaching was needed and that came in the Holy Qur'an. In the beginning instruction of a high grade was not needed for human souls were simple and no darkness or misguidance had settled on them. Superior teaching was needed in the book which appeared at the time of extreme misguidance and came for the reform of the people whose false doctrines had become confirmed and whose evil conduct had become a habit. [*Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, p.70, footnote*]

It is true that man was bestowed a revealed Book in the beginning of creation, but that Book was not the Vedas. To attribute the current Vedas to God Almighty, is to offer an insult to the Holy Being. If it is asked why was only one revealed Book given to mankind in the beginning and why was not each people given a separate book, the answer is that in the beginning mankind's number was small and they did not amount even to a people, and one Book was sufficient for them. When mankind spread over the earth and the dwellers of each region of the earth became a people, and on account of long distances one people ceased to be in touch with another, Divine wisdom demanded that at such time there should be separate Messengers and revealed Books for different peoples, and so it came about. When mankind increased in numbers still more and communications were established, and means of communication became available, and it became known that different parts of the earth were inhabited by man, and God



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.

Almighty determined that they should all be made one people, and should be gathered together after their dispersal, God sent one Book for all regions. In this Book it was commanded that as it

reached different parts of the world, it should be accepted and believed in. That Book is the Holy Qur'an which has been revealed to establish a relationship between different regions.

The books that were revealed before the Qur'an were confined to one people each. Books and Messengers appeared among the Syrians, Persians, Indians, Chinese, Egyptians and Romans and they were each confined to one people and were not concerned with the others. Last of all came the Holy Qur'an which is a universal Book and is not for any one people, but for all peoples. It came for a people who were henceforth to become one. Now means have become available which are bestowing a unity upon different peoples. Mutual intercourse which is at the root of converting mankind into one people has become so easy that a journey that used to take years can now be accomplished within a few days, and such facilities have become available for communication that news that

took a year to travel from one far country to another can now be transmitted within an hour. So great a revolution is in progress, and the river of culture is flowing in such manner, that it appears obvious that God Almighty has determined that all the peoples who are scattered in the earth should be made into one people and that those who had been separated over thousands of years might now come together. This is intimated in the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Qur'an alone claims that it has come for all the peoples of the world, as it is said:

Proclaim 'O mankind, truly I am Allah's Messenger to you all'...
(Ch.7:V.159)

Again it is said:

And We have sent thee not but, as a mercy for all the peoples.
(Ch.21:v.108)

And it is said:

Blessed is He Who has sent

IN EACH CENTURY THERE HAVE BEEN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO HAD COMMITTED THIS HOLY WORD TO MEMORY AND THUS SAFEGUARDED IT IN SUCH A WAY THAT IF THEY WERE ASKED ABOUT ONE WORD THEY COULD RECITE ITS CONTEXT. IN THIS WAY, THE HOLY QUR’AN WAS SAFEGUARDED AGAINST VERBAL PERVERSION IN EVERY AGE.

*thee so that thou shouldst be
a Warner for all peoples.*
(Ch.25:V.2)

I declare with all the emphasis at my command, that no revealed Book made this claim before the Holy Qur’an. Each confined its message to its own people. Even the Prophet who was deified by the Christians affirmed:

‘I have not been sent but to
the lost sheep of Israel.’
(*Matthew 15:24*)

The conditions of the world also bear testimony that the claim of the Holy Qur’an of a universal message was timely for at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet^(saw) the door of general propagation of the truth had been opened.

(*Chashma-e-Ma’rifat, Ruhani
Khaza’in, Vol. 23, pp. 74-77*)

Safeguarding of the Holy Qur’an

There is a promise in the Holy Qur’an that God would safeguard Islam at the time of trials and dangers as is said:

*Verily We Ourselves have sent
down this Exhortation, and
most surely We will be its
Guardian*
(Ch.15:V.10)

According to this promise, God Almighty safeguarded His Word in four ways. First, by means of those who have committed the Holy Qur’an to memory, its text and sequence were safeguarded. In each century there have been hundreds of thousands of people who had committed this Holy Word to memory and thus safeguarded it in such a way that if they were asked about one word they could recite its context. In this way, the Holy

Qur’an was safeguarded against verbal perversion in every age. Secondly, through great divines who were bestowed an understanding of the Qur’an in every century, who interpreted the Qur’an with the help of the *Ahadith*, and thus safeguarded the Holy Word of God and its holy teaching against the perversion of its meaning in every age. Thirdly, through scholars who set forth Qur’anic teachings in the light of reason and thus safeguarded the Holy Word of God against the attacks of short-sighted philosophers. Fourthly, through those upon whom spiritual bounties were bestowed who safeguarded the Holy Word of God in every age against the attacks of those who denied miracles and spiritual insights.

(Ayyam-us-Sulah, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 14, p.288)

Lest it should be imagined that the Muslims believe that revelation began with Adam and came to an end with the Holy Prophet^(saw) and that, therefore, after the Holy Prophet^(saw)

revelation ceased altogether, it should be remembered that we do not believe like the Hindus that God’s Word was confined to that which He had already disclosed. According to the Islamic doctrine God’s Word and His knowledge and His wisdom, like His Being, are unlimited. God Almighty has said:

Say, ‘If the ocean became ink for the words of my Lord, surely, the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord came to an end, even though We brought the like thereof as further help’.

(Ch.18:v.110)

... If the ocean were to be used as ink for transcribing the Words of the Lord, surely the ocean would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord come to an end, even though We augmented it with the like thereof.

We understand the cessation of revelation with the Holy Prophet^(saw) in the sense that though the Word of God is unlimited, yet as the corruption

for the reform of which the Word of God descended, and the needs that were fulfilled through revelation were limited, only that much of the Divine Word was revealed as was needed by mankind. The Holy Qur’an was revealed at a time when all possible needs had become apparent and all moral and doctrinal and verbal matters and human conduct had been corrupted, and all kinds of excesses and vices had reached their limit. Therefore, the teaching of the Holy Qur’an was all comprehensive. It is in this sense that the law revealed in the Qur’an is perfect and final, and previous revealed laws are incomplete, as the evils for the reform of which previous revealed Books had come, had not arrived at their climax, but at the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur’an they had reached their maximum. Now the distinction between the Holy Qur’an and other revealed Books is that even if those Books had been safeguarded in every way, their teaching being incomplete, a perfect teaching, that is to say, the

Holy Qur’an would have been needed to be revealed; but no other Book is needed after the Holy Qur’an as there can be nothing beyond perfection.

If it was to be supposed that the true principles of the Holy Qur’an would be perverted like the Vedas and the Bible and associates would be set up with God Almighty, and the teaching of the Unity of God would be altered and perverted, and that the millions of Muslims who are established on the Unity of God would fall into *shirk* and worship of creatures, then in such case another law would have to be revealed and another Messenger would arrive, but all this supposition is out of the question. The perversion of the teaching of the Holy Qur’an is not possible as God Almighty has said:

.... *We Ourselves have sent down this Admonition and We shall continue to be its Guardian.*
(Ch.15:V.10)

The truth of this prophecy has been demonstrated over 1,300

years. So far, no pagan teaching has found its way into the Holy Qur’an, as it had into previous revealed Books. Nor can reason imagine any such contingency. Millions of Muslims have learned the Holy Qur’an by heart, and thousands of commentaries safeguard its meaning. Its verses are recited in prayer services five times a day, and it is read every day. It is being published in all countries in millions of copies, and its teaching being known to every people are factors on the basis of which reason decides that in future any change or perversion in the text of the Holy Qur’an is beyond the range of possibility.

(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol.1, pp.100-102, footnote 9)

Critique of Brahma Samaj Answered

It is objected that all the verities of Divine knowledge cannot be comprehended in anyone Book, then how can it be expected that imperfect books can guide a person to complete understanding?

The answer is that this objection would be worthy of attention if one of the Brahma Samajists were to put forward on the basis of his reason some new verity relating to the recognition of God or other such matter which is not mentioned in the Holy Qur’an. In such case the Brahma Samajists could claim with pride that all the verities relating to the hereafter and to the recognition of God are not comprised in the revealed Book, and that such and such a verity has been left out which they have discovered. If they were to do so, they might succeed in misguiding some ignorant persons. The Holy Qur’an claims:

We have left out nothing in the Book.

(Ch.6:V.39)

That is to say: no verity relating to Divine knowledge which is needed by man has been left out from the Holy Qur’an.

Again it is said:

A Messenger from Allah recites Scriptures purified.

Therein are the everlasting teachings

(Ch.98:Vs.3-4)

It is a decisive word, And it is not a useless talk.

(Ch.86:Vs.14-15)

That is to say: the Messenger of God recites Holy Scriptures comprising all perfect verities and the knowledge granted to people of the earlier ages and those of the latter days.

That is to say: This Book resolves all the contentions that might arise with regard to the hereafter and is not just vain talk.

Again it is said:

Again, it is said:

ALIF LAM RA (I am Allah Who is All-Seeing). This is a book whose verses are fortified and made flawless and then they have been expounded in detail. It is from One Wise and All-aware.

(Ch.11:V.2)

And We have not sent down to thee the Book except that thou mayest explain to them that concerning which they differ, and as a guidance, and a mercy for a people who believe.

(Ch.16:V65)

This means that: 'This Book has two qualities: one is that the All-Wise One has set it out in a firm and well argued manner, that is to say, in the way of wisdom and not merely as a story; and, secondly, it sets forth all that is needed about the hereafter.'

That is to say: 'This Book has been revealed so that the differences that have been created by defective reasoning, or by deliberate excess, may be removed and the straight path might be indicated for the believers.' There is also an indication here that the mischief that has been wrought by differences in human compositions can be set right only by the Word which is free from all

Again it is said:

defects. It is obvious that he who has been misled by words can be brought to the straight path only through the Divine Word. Indications contained in the law of nature cannot decide between differences of composition, nor can they convince a misguided one of his error. If a judge does not record the pleas of the plaintiff nor meets the objections of the defendant with strong arguments, then how is it possible that the parties should discover the answer to their questions, objections and pleas in the hints contained in his judgement, and how can a final judgement be propounded on the basis of confused hints which do not satisfy either side? In the same way, the commandments of God are conclusively established to the satisfaction of His servants when He informs them of their error into which they have fallen by the false statements of people, through His perfect and true speech, and makes known to them their falling into misguidance by a reasoned and clear statement, so that if they do not mend their ways even after being

informed and do not give up their error, they might be condemned to chastisement. Would it be just on the part of God Almighty that He should seize a person as an offender and should be ready to punish him, without proving the error of his arguments in support of his innocence by a clear statement removing his doubts by His express Words?

Perfect System of guidance of the Holy Qur’an

Again it is said:

The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur’an was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination.
(Ch.2:V.186)

This means that: The Holy Qur’an has three qualities. First, it guides people to the knowledge of the faith that had disappeared. Secondly, it sets forth the details of such knowledge as had been briefly stated. Thirdly, it sets forth the decisive word concerning matters over which differences had arisen and thus

distinguishes between truth and falsehood.

Concerning the comprehensiveness of the Qur’an it is said:

And We have made the night and the day two Signs and We erased the Sign of night replacing it with day and the Sign of day We have made a light, that you may seek bounty from your Lord and that you may know the computation of years and the science of reckoning...
(Ch.17:V.13)

.... meaning that: All knowledge of faith has been set out in detail in this Book and it points out those means and teaches that perfect knowledge which should lead man not only to partial progress but to full development.

...And We have sent down to thee the Book to explain everything, and a guidance and a mercy, and glad tidings to those who submit to God.
(Ch.16:V.90)

..meaning that: This Book has been revealed so that every religious verity might be plainly stated and this perfect statement might prove the means of guidance and mercy for those who submit wholly to God.

Then it is said:

ALIF RAM RA. This is a Book which We have revealed to thee that thou mayest bring mankind out of every kind of darkness into light by the command of their Lord, to the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy...
(Ch.14:V.2)

This means that: We have revealed this magnificent Book to you, so that you may move people out of darkness into light. This is an indication that the Holy Qur’an removes every kind of doubt that passes through a man’s mind and puts down false notions, and bestows the light of perfect understanding: that is to say, it bestows all the insights and verities that are needed for turning to God Almighty and

believing in Him.

Again it is said:

... It is not a thing that has been forged, but a fulfilment of that which is before it and a detailed exposition of all things, and guidance and a mercy to a people who believe.

(Ch.12:V.112)

This means that: The Qur'an is not a Book which could be composed by man. The signs of its truth are patent for it establishes the truth of previous Books, meaning that the prophecies contained in the previous Books concerning the Holy Qur'an have been fulfilled by its being revealed. Also the Qur'an has supplied the arguments in support of true doctrines which had not been set forth in previous books and thus carried their teaching to perfection. In this manner the Qur'an proved the truth of the previous books, which also establishes its own truth. It is a sign of its truth that it sets forth

every religious verity and states all those matters which are necessary for perfect guidance. This is a sign of its truth inasmuch as it is beyond the power of man that his knowledge should be so comprehensive that no religious verity and fine truth should be left out of it.

In these verses God Almighty has clearly stated that the Holy Qur'an is comprehensive of all verities and this is a very strong argument in support of its truth. Centuries have passed after this claim of the Holy Qur'an, but no Brahmo or any other has come out to contest it. It is obvious that, without setting forth any new verity that might have been left out of the Holy Qur'an, to put forward false notions which have no reality like the insane, is strong proof that such people do not desire to seek the truth like the righteous, but to please their evil-directing selves they are seeking ways whereby they should be freed from God's holy commandments and from God Himself. For procuring such freedom they tum away from the

true Book of God, the truth of which is brighter than the sun, and they neither discuss any matter in the spirit of scholarship, nor listen to anything said by the other side. They should be asked when did anyone present a religious verity in opposition to the Qur’an and found no answer from the Qur’an? For 1,300 years the Holy Qur’an has claimed that all religious verities are comprised in it. Then how vile it is that without a test such a grand Book should be held to be defective, and what kind of arrogance is it neither to admit the claim of the Holy Qur’an nor to refute it? The truth is that though their lips sometimes utter the name of God, their hearts are filled with the filth of the world. If they start a religious discussion they do not continue it till the end and cut it short lest a truth should be manifested. Then they describe this perfect Book as defective which proclaims:

... This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon

you and have chosen for you Islam as religion...

(Ch.5:V.4)

This day, by revealing this Book, I have perfected your religion for your benefit, and have completed all My favours for the believers.

Have you no fear of God? Will you go on living like this? Will your false mouths not be cursed one day by God? If you think that you have discovered a high verity after great labour, and research and you falsely assume that the Holy Qur’an has failed to mention it, we call upon you to put aside everything else and present that verity to us so that we might exhibit it to you from the Qur’an.

(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 1, pp. 223-227, footnote 11)

Restoring World Peace

An address by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community delivered in Baitul Futuh, Morden, on 24 March 2007

All the distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. *Assalamu alaikum, Peace and blessings of Allah be upon you*

Before I start my formal address, I feel it appropriate and necessary to thank Lord Eric Avebury. You might think that how can a person who is not from the community introduce the Head of the Community, but I think and I consider him from amongst us since he has been very kind to us for a long time. We cherish the concern that he always extends towards the community. I wish we would have some more people of such friendly caring nature.

Now I come to my formal address.

The pace at which peace is fast disappearing from the world

today has caused each sane and sensible person to worry. This includes religious people and those who do not believe in any religion. It includes believers in God, whether one God or many gods, and atheists who deny the very existence of God. Each group has its own arguments. However, I do not wish to get into a debate at the moment as to who is right and who is false.

They all have valid concerns that peace is disappearing from this world. Man who considers himself to be educated and civilised, is reverting back to the period of ignorance when personal ego and false pride led people to cut each other's throat and on a collective basis made tribes and dynasties indulge in such barbaric acts.

It is a matter of great sadness,

therefore, that educated man has become so soft-hearted that he turned out to be kind to animals of the wild so much so that there are societies and organisations established to provide protection to some species. These organisations compel governments to protect the wild species and legislate against their destruction. Even the parliaments pass laws prescribing punishments if these animals are killed. Yet, on the other hand, man who is the most superior of all creations, is made to starve and restrictions are placed against him. Economic and trade sanctions are imposed against those countries that do not follow or tow the line.

It is beyond one's understanding that when governments confront other governments, in order to gain their political and economic objectives, it is the poor and peace-loving people of these countries that suffer in the ensuing tug of war. They are ground in the millstone of hunger, poverty and cruelty. What is the fault of the innocent children who

do not even understand this struggle for political and economic superiority? Even if they do understand all this, they have no connection with causing any harm to others for this purpose.

Then, we observe that this matter does not stop there. The anger and prejudice reach such ugly heights that bullets and bombs are showered without discrimination. Innocent citizens, women and children risk their lives in such areas and countries. Some of them are being killed by the foreign forces and some become targets of the internal fellow countrymen who are the enemies of humanity, who, in their vanity, think that they are demoralising the external enemy. In this way, whereas only one enemy is killed, twenty innocent lives of their own are lost in this process. I do not consider such so-called nationalists as lovers of humanity.

Today, some people maintain, and they preach as well, that these destructions are caused because religions have created these



divisions and believers in God are committing these crimes in the name of God. This is an absurd calumny against religion and God. Just think, how many wars have been fought in the name of religion? Although many historians count wars fought in the name of religion in their list of all kinds of wars, there are very few wars fought in the name of religion. Yet, if we look at the history of any religion, we see that no Prophet ever preached the killing of others in the name of

God. If subsequently the teachings are twisted and given wrong interpretation, it is not the fault of the prophet nor is it the fault of his teachings. Neither can we blame God that he sent a prophet to create discord nor can we, God forbid, ever visualise that the prophets gathered the people in the name of God to try and create disorder in the world instead of peace. If we continue with such unfounded allegations, we may even reach a stage where the very purpose of creation of

human beings could be attributed to cause disorder in the world.

As I said before that God has made man the most superior of all creations. He has been given the faculty to think and to rationalise. He is endowed with the ability to increase his knowledge, to excel in high moral values, but above all, to surpass in spirituality, to recognise his Creator and to learn to bow before Him and seek His help in difficult circumstances. This, indeed, has been the teaching of all prophets. Now if someone does not act on these teachings, we can neither blame the prophets nor God.

Nevertheless, if we go into the details of all the wars, whether right or wrong and whether or not they were fought in the name of religion, it will become a very long discussion that time does not permit.

At the moment, I will present to you the teachings that are given in the Holy Qurān to establish peace on earth. The vision of God that is

given in the Holy Qur'an with reference to peace is:

He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah, far above that which they associate with Him.
(Ch.59:V.24)

It is quite obvious from this verse that the One Who is the Source of Peace, and the Bestower of Security, how can He tolerate that His creation should destroy peace and security on earth? If we hold these sentiments then a person who breaks the law and destroys the peace in our life, is punished for his deed. On the other hand, those who uphold the law are our true neighbours and are messengers of peace. Their friendship fosters sentiments of love and affection in us. If someone looks at them with a critical eye, we stand up in support of them.



Similarly, according to the attributes of God that have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, He dislikes those who violate peace. According to our belief, He metes out punishment to them, if not in this world then certainly in the next. And, he who spreads peace, security and love here, God will bless him in this world as well in the next.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community upholds this fundamental point of love and peace

and preaches it to others.

Peace can be established in this world if only everyone recognises God and understands this point that it is by loving the Creator alone that we can love His creation. This will eliminate the selfishness in us and we will rise above ourselves and thus be beneficial to others. This will increase our vision that we have to not only establish peace in our own surroundings, but also create peace and security in the

whole world. Only then can long lasting peace be established in the world.

Allah. Surely, Allah is Aware of what you do.
(Ch.5: V.9)

If for the sake of our personal gain or loss, or for the sake of our own rights, or for the rights of our dear ones, we do not hesitate to fight for our rights only and in that process usurp or snatch away the rights of other people, then we can never establish peace. In short, to establish true peace, we must understand the spirit of true justice. How can we establish true justice and what is its spirit? In this connection, God Almighty, Who calls Himself King of all Kings in the Holy Qur'an, tells us that this peace will only come about with justice and benevolence. And how can this justice be established? The Holy Qur'an says:

O ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community states in this respect (while explaining this verse):

'Allah the Almighty says about justice that it cannot be achieved without truthfulness, that your enmity towards enemy nations should not hinder you from dispensing justice. Remain just, because righteousness lies in it. Now, you know that those nations that unjustly harm and hurt and cause bloodshed, chase and murder women and children, like the unbelievers of Makkah, and do not desist from waging wars, how difficult it is to deal justly with such people. But the Holy Qur'an has not taken away the rights of even such mortal enemies and has enjoined justice and truthfulness. I say to you in truth that it is easy to deal with an enemy with hostility; but it is

very difficult to safeguard the rights of opponents and to deal justly with your enemy..... Often people show sympathy to their business rivals and talk to them sweetly but suppress their rights.’

Therefore, the foundation of justice will be laid in this world only when the lowest individual of the society, realises that he has to win the pleasure of his Creator and has to follow His commandments; and such individuals collectively try to create peace on a broad basis.

When such individuals elect their representatives for the government, their thinking will accordingly be that they do not have to exact a retribution for cruelties perpetrated against them because the thought of revenge deviates from true justice. However, cruelty can be punished; but the Almighty Allah says that the punishment that you want to give to a nation that has exceeded all limits can be in the form of a war. But such a war

should only last until that nation ceases its act of excessive cruelty. And when they have stopped, then do not attempt to find excuses to punish the whole nation and do not continue to take revenge for past excesses.

Although this commandment of God Almighty is addressed to Muslims, it holds a status of a charter for general peace in the whole world. The Holy Qur’an says:

And if two parties of believers fight against each other, make peace between them, then if after that one of them transgresses against the other, fight the party that transgresses until it returns to the command of Allah. Then if it returns, make peace between them with equity, and act justly. Verily, Allah loves the just.

(Ch. 49:V.10)

This great teaching can guarantee world peace today but we will have to rise above personal and political interest. Only then can

PEACE WILL REMAIN A DREAM AS LONG AS EVERY NATION CONSIDERS ITS POLITICAL AND NATIONAL INTERESTS ABOVE ALL OTHERS. AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, THIS WILL ONLY COME ABOUT WHEN THE WORLD BEGINS TO LOOK TOWARDS ITS CREATOR. EVEN NOW, THERE IS TIME TO CHANGE THIS DREAM OF WORLD PEACE INTO REALITY.

we act in this manner. When such thinking is established, then any country, even if it be a neighbouring country, starts a campaign of any sort against another neighbouring or far off country, all countries should get together and warn it that if you create a hostile situation or create a disturbance in the peace of another territory, we will all declare war against you.

If today, the United Nations adopts this principle for all countries, great or small, then the conspiracies to capture the resources of other countries or to subdue other countries, can be nipped in the bud.

If there are real issues between two countries that may escalate

into war, then the rest of the countries can get together and solve those issues using the highest standard of absolute justice and without any prejudice to either party. If these standards are used, the disputing countries will have to listen to such arbitration. If any one of those countries refuses to accept and creates a war-like situation, then all other countries can jointly declare war against that country. No one country can fight against the joint organisation of all the countries of the world. It will have to surrender. When the warring country agrees to peace, then the underlying problem should be resolved with total justice and equity in such a way that the country has no reason to hold any grievance against the others.

We will only have true peace in the world when the nations and countries try to establish peace in this way.

It is regrettable that the League of Nations did not follow these principles and failed as a consequence. Today, the United Nations Organisation also seems to be failing in dispensing the requirements of justice. There are different standards of justice for different countries and different Continents. Except for some very few decisions, most of the resolutions passed, in the past and even being adopted today, by the United Nations have been based on expediency and partisanship. Till such time that all countries are treated equally and at par, and the grudges and deep-seated sense of injustice are removed, no matter how many organisations are formed, they cannot bring peace to the world. It is also regrettable that Muslims, who have been given this teaching, are not acting on it themselves. They harbour enmities against each other and this is the case all over the world.

Peace will remain a dream as long as each nation considers its political and national interests above all others.

As I have said before, this will only come about when the world begins to look towards its Creator. Even now, there is time to change this dream of world peace into reality. Otherwise, the path that the world is following today is a perilous path.

Despite knowing the consequence, we are trying to turn a blind eye towards them. The problems do not get solved by turning blind eyes. Yes, we do get a false satisfaction by not realising the seriousness of the situation. However, as I have said before, the situation today is so visible to even a blind person and everyone is forced to admit that the peace of the world is being shattered and we must do something.

Although many of the world's large countries are trying to do something, yet their efforts ignore the dimension of their

Creator and their personal and political interests become paramount. When this happens, it often becomes difficult to fulfil the requirements of true justice and equity. In this respect Islam teaches:

Verily, Allah enjoins justice and the doing of good to others; and giving like kindred; and forbids indecency and manifest evil and transgression. He admonishes you that you may take heed. (Ch.16: V.91)

So, this is the way to establish peace. Do justice! And if you want to establish real peace, then not only do justice, but also the strong should treat the weaker with equity and treat them as one treats one's dear and beloved and ignores some things of theirs. Every problem cannot be solved with force but good and just treatment develops an attachment.

We can see such an example in Islamic history when Syria was conquered in the time of Hadhrat

Umar^(ra), the Second Successor of the Holy Prophet^(saw). A tax was levied on the Syrian Christians for their well-being. Even in this, Hadhrat Umar^(ra) had forbidden to levy any tax on the poor. However, when, after a while, there was a danger of war from the Roman Empire, Hadhrat Abu Ubaida^(ra), the Governor of Syria, returned all the tax to the Christians telling them that because he might not be able to provide them protection, he had no excuse to keep any tax. At this, the Christians were so impressed that they said, without hesitation, that they pray that Muslims may become victorious over the Romans and then become rulers of this country once again because the Muslims not only do justice but also do good to the Christians.

The urge for real peace comes from the heart and the voice that comes from the heart is only one that establishes real peace because it is based on love and warmth. There are many such instances that occurred during the time of the Holy Prophet^(saw)

and during the time of his Successors; and the real reason was that those people were standard bearers of justice and equity because they had real fear of God in their hearts.

Therefore, the impression that world peace was destroyed due to the concept of God and religion, is absolutely wrong. Indeed, if today, the world inclines toward God then the nations will try to establish peace in the world by rising above their personal and political interests.

Peace that is brought about by human efforts cannot be long-lasting. Similarly, the disorder and unrest that exists in some countries, can be sorted out by negotiations in due course if there is no outside interference.

On the other hand, if the poor countries want the help of the rich countries, they should improve their organisational infrastructure, make education easily available and help to eliminate poverty. Every country that is being aided should be

given a target to work according to a prescribed plan for a number of years and should be warned that if it does not meet those targets and achieve the goals set for it, its aid would be stopped. This will in itself create a sense of responsibility among the masses of those countries and this will be an act of goodness that will help to foster peace in those countries.

But we observe in today's world that there are insincere sweet words and hollow agreements to establish peace. A great deal of noise is made for development aid as well. All this is being done, not to help the poor people, but to gain political advantage; and it does not produce satisfactory results.

Above all, nowadays, there is a race for new inventions for mass destruction that has made the rich and developed countries so immersed in developing new weapons, missiles, nuclear bombs and research for the destruction of mankind that it seems as if their preference is not

to save humanity and create peace but to destroy the world.

Then, again, poverty and starvation is increasing in the developing countries; but whether they are victims of their own pride and ego or they suffer from insecurity, they are trying to join in this race. It appears that despite the worry that peace is disappearing from this world and the search for how it can be established, in practice more attention is being paid to develop weapon of mass destruction.

Therefore, those countries who want to be the standard-bearers of peace should sit down together and work out how the world can be saved from destruction. When thinking of that, they should remember their Creator and then think for the betterment of His creation. But remember that the path the world has chosen today, the effect of instability will not be confined to just one country but will spread all over the world. It is quite possible that we will witness many examples like Hiroshima and Nagasaki or even worse.

Therefore, my request to you is to search inside yourself and look at the Benevolent Creator. We must not leave our next generation handicapped and disabled because of our mistakes. Today, we must establish peace to save our future generation from a life of disability. We must not let our future generation sink into that pit of darkness from which our ancestors brought us out to where we are today. It will be a height of selfishness if for the sake of our false pride or for a temporary gain, we forget the future of our future generations.

It is my fervent prayer that Allah the Almighty makes the world understand this reality! Amin.

I thank you again for gracing this function and coming here. Thank you.

Defence of Islam by the Promised Messiah^(as) Against Attacks By Christian Missionaries

By Waleed Ahmad – UK

Any reasonable individual who makes a cursory study of the life of the Promised Messiah^(as) will be left in no doubt about his deep love of Islam and his relentless work to defend its blessed name from attacks from all sides.

In this respect there were few quarters that raised as serious and as concerted a series of attacks on Islam as did the Christian Missionaries of India of the time.

This Christian onslaught first took shape in 1799 with the establishment of the Church Missionary Society in India. Its aim, as revealed in a submission made to the Queen in 1858 and debated for about two years or so in Parliament, was to bring the entire population of India to the fold of Christianity. Assisted by tacit support of the ruling British,

it initially managed to make considerable progress but it was clear by the end of the century that its ultimate objective would remain unachieved. This was despite the fact that the number of Christian Missionary Societies increased during the period. In 1851, for instance, these societies numbered 19 and rose to 73 by 1901. This was in addition to many other Christian missionaries that remained unattached to any specific mission. The number of Christians in India during this period also rose from 91,092 at 1851 to 417,372 Christians in 1881. This number may be high, but with the population of Greater India (including modern Pakistan and Bangladesh) totalling several million it fell well short of total conversion of Indians to Christianity as planned by the

Church Missionary Society.

This number would have been a lot higher had it not been for the resolute stand that the Promised Messiah^(as) took in the defence of Islam.

In considering the attacks made by the Christian missionaries, it should be noted that the greatest attack made on Islam was one that struck at the very heart of Muslim belief and that was the unity of God. By ascribing Divinity to Jesus^(as) and promoting this belief, Christianity challenged this fundamental tenet of Islam.

Indeed it is this attack that distressed the Promised Messiah^(as) the most and he worked arduously to repel it. He demonstrated through his writings and debates how divinity could not be attributed to Jesus^(as) and how he had to be human, a prophet but no more. He explained these points by quoting from the Bible itself and was blessed with such knowledge and wisdom that it confounded many a highly

trained Christian missionary.

The Promised Messiah^(as) had grown up in dealing with the objections of Christians from a young age. As he once wrote, he had started encountering them from the age of 16 or 17.

Some encounters with Christian missionaries were of no big consequence but showed the competence of the Promised Messiah^(as) at a young age to deal with the attacks of Christians against Islam. For instance one Elisha Swift asserted that salvation could not be attained by following Islam because it could only be found through adopting Christianity. The Promised Messiah^(as) asked him to define the word 'salvation' and explain what he meant by it. The missionary stated that he had not studied logic and therefore could not answer the question.

Another encounter during his early years was with a more learned missionary by the name of Reverend Butler but even he proved to be no match for the

Promised Messiah^(as). He had numerous discussions with the Promised Messiah^(as). Once in an attempt to demonstrate the sinlessness of Christ,^(as) the Reverend asserted that since Jesus^(as) was born of a virgin, therefore he would not inherit sin from Adam^(as). The Promised Messiah^(as) pointed out that Mary had already inherited sin, if there was any. Moreover, since it was Eve who caused Adam^(as) to slip and be expelled from Paradise according to Christian teaching, Jesus^(as) should have been born without a mother as well to ensure he was sinless. The Reverend had no answer to this and conceded. It should be noted here that by all accounts Reverend Butler took this and other reverses at the hands of the Messiah^(as) with dignity. Despite religious differences, he would always treat the Promised Messiah^(as) with courtesy and respect. Sadly this was not always the case with many other missionaries as we shall see.

As the Promised Messiah's^(as) popularity grew and his

prophecies began to be fulfilled, unrest arose among the Christian missionaries. Some had already anticipated his threat and Rev. Imamud Din, Rev Thakar Das and Rev Abdullah Atham began warning people against the growing influence of the Promised Messiah^(as) through the pages of *Noor Afshan*, a Christian newspaper. Then during the first 4 months of 1887 they published a series of articles against the Promised Messiah^(as).

They asserted the supremacy of Christianity and challenged the Promised Messiah^(as) to prove the superiority of Islam (*Noor Afshan* 30th March 1882). The Promised Messiah^(as) had already demonstrated its superiority with the fulfilment of his prophecies. These proved that by following the teachings of Islam he had established a living link with God who would answer his prayers and inform him about the future.

At this Padre Fateh Masih also made a similar claim stating that his prayers were also answered

VERY OFTEN INFLAMMATORY MEASURES WERE USED TO DENIGRATE ISLAM. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY SO WHEN THE CHRISTIAN FRATERNITY INCLUDING THEIR MISSIONARIES INDULGED IN DEFAMATORY ATTACKS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM^(SAW) AND HIS WIVES. NO ONE LOVED THE HOLY PROPHET^(SAW) AS MUCH AS THE PROMISED MESSIAH^(AS) AND ANY ATTACK ON THIS BELOVED OF HIS, HURT HIM IMMENSELY.

by God and he also received the Word of God which contained prophecies about the future. He challenged the Promised Messiah^(as) to a duel and suggested that both should declare their prophecies on a set date - 21st May 1888 – and have them published in the '*Noor Afshan*'. The Promised Messiah^(as) accepted. However, when the public gathered to hear the prophecies, Fateh Masih started making excuses and failed to make a single prophecy. The Missionary was duly censured in public for making a false claim and humiliated.

Padre Fateh Masih did not stop there however. Sometime later he came up with another ruse to establish the superiority of Christianity by attacking the

truth of the Promised Messiah's^(as) claim of having a link with the Almighty. He and other missionaries stated that in order to prove the truth of Islam in this way, four questions should be written on a piece of paper in public, sealed and handed over to a person present there. The Promised Messiah^(as) should then be asked to reveal the contents of the envelope. The Promised Messiah^(as) with one or two minor modifications accepted this but insisted that if he succeeded the Christian missionary, Reverend Stanton¹ in particular, would either embrace Islam or pay Rs1,000 in damages to a Muslim organisation (Anjuman Hamayat Islam of Lahore). The challenge was no longer pursued by the Christian Missionaries.

This vigorous defence of Islam by the Promised Messiah^(as) produced a profound impression upon the Muslim intelligentsia. He was publicly recognised as a Champion of Faith. The *Riyaz Hind* of Amritsar stated the following in its issue, dated March 1st 1886

‘The excellent merits and high spiritual accomplishments of Mirza Sahib are too great for our humble observations in our journal. The cogent reasons and the brilliant arguments that he has brought forth in support of Islam and Truth in so beautiful a manner show beyond doubt that he has excelled the writings of the old and the new Ulema in eloquence and presentation.’

The same newspaper was to later describe him as the ‘Pride of Islam’ and ‘Chief of Qadian’ (*Riyaz Hind*, 28th May 1888).

As mentioned earlier, the attacks on Islam by Christian missionaries were not always

made in a dignified and reasoned manner. Very often inflammatory measures were used to denigrate Islam. This was particularly so when the Christian fraternity including their Missionaries indulged in defamatory attacks on the character of the Holy Prophet of Islam^(saw) and his wives. No one loved the Holy Prophet^(saw) as much as the Promised Messiah^(as) and any attack on this beloved of his, hurt him immensely. He stated:

‘So many books full of vile abuse and defamation of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, have been printed and published the perusal of which makes one’s body tremble. (There were also letters and pamphlets – one from Fateh Masih). Our heart is so much in tribulation that if these people were to slaughter our children before our eyes and were to cut to pieces our sincere and beloved friends and were to kill us with great humiliation and were to take possession

of our belongings, we call God to witness that even in such case we would not suffer so much grief and our heart would not be so severely wounded as we have suffered and endured under this abuse and defamation which has been directed against the Holy Prophet, peace and blessing of Allah be upon him.'

(Ayena Kamalat-e-Islam, p.51)

It was clear that this menace of simply hurling abuse as a means of attacking Islam had to be stopped. The Promised Messiah^(saw) resolved to do this by treating the Missionaries to a taste of their own medicine. Using the Bible and Christian scriptures as a basis, he showed what an ugly caricature these sources painted of one that they, the Christians, revere namely Jesus^(as). He subsequently made it clear that he himself had the greatest of respect for Jesus^(as) but the figure of Jesus^(as) in the Christian scripture was quite different. Such was the impact of

this line of defence that the writings debasing the Holy Prophet of Islam^(saw) simply declined or stopped altogether.

In acknowledging the emphatic defence of Islam shown by the Promised Messiah^(as), Christians became extremely wary of dealing with him. For instance the *Church Family* a paper of the Anglican Church wrote: '*We should make no attempt to refute the literature published under the auspices of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, for he will create such a volume of literature against Christianity as will destroy the authority of the Bible altogether.*' (*Ahmadiyyat Renaissance of Islam*, By Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan, p.178)

One of the tactics used by the Christian Missionaries in attacking Islam and drawing its followers to Christianity was simply this: Your prophet Muhammad^(saw) is buried yet Jesus^(as) according to your belief is alive in the heavens. So who is superior – one who has been elevated into the heavens

destined to return or one who has been relegated to the ground never to come back? In this respect the Promised Messiah^(as) demonstrated with powerful arguments based on the Bible as well as the Holy Qur'an how Jesus Christ^(as) had indeed died a natural death and how he (i.e. the Promised Messiah) had been sent in his spirit. In this way he restored dignity to the Holy Prophet^(saw) and stemmed the flow of ill-informed Muslims into the fold of Christianity.

The Promised Messiah^(as) also dealt with attacks on Islam by Christian Missionaries from abroad. One of these was John Alexander Dowie. Scottish by birth, he had founded a city in America and proclaimed to be the forerunner of the second coming of Christ^(as). His followers numbered more than 100,000. Full of hatred of Islam, he employed foul abuse against it. In 1902, he published a prophecy that unless Muslims of the world became Christian, they would meet with death and destruction. The Promised Messiah^(as) wrote a

leaflet in response in which he enumerated the beauties of Islam and said it was quite unnecessary for Dowie to predict and proclaim the destruction of Muslims in the world. He (Hadhrat Mirza Sahib) had been sent by God as the Promised Messiah. So, Dowie could enter into a prayer contest with him. The result of this contest would enable all people of the world to determine the Truth.

In December 1903, Dowie openly entered the contest. Within a few months he was struck with paralysis. His followers discovered his secret habit of drinking and he was found to have embezzled several hundred thousand dollars (\$1.5m) from the Church. His congregation eventually abandoned him. He became insane and died virtually alone on 8th March 1907 in '*great pain and misery*' just as the Promised Messiah^(as) had prophesied. This sign was well publicised all over the world. It demonstrated the truth of the Promised Messiah^(as) and the truth of Islam.

During this period, another Christian Reverend, by the name of John Hugh Piggot, rose to confront the Promised Messiah^(as). He was from the UK. Fate, it seems was kinder to him, than it was to Dowie. This is because he only claimed to be the second coming of Christ and did not display the kind of animosity to Islam shown by Dowie. Dowie it should be noted, prayed for the destruction of Islam viz,

‘I pray to God that Islam should soon disappear from the world. O God, accept this prayer of mine. O God, destroy Islam.’ (paper, issued 14th February 1903) and predicted *‘The black-spot on the mantle of man (Islam) will meet its end at the hands of Zion’* (paper issued, 5th August 1903).

Reverend Piggot did not make any such declarations. He did, as mentioned above, claim to be the second coming of Christ^(as).

When the Promised Messiah^(as) challenged him about his claim,

IT SHOULD BE NOTED HERE THAT WHEN WE MARVEL AT THE PITIFUL DESTRUCTION OF DOWIE OR PIGGOT IT IS BECAUSE IT DEMONSTRATES A SIGN FROM ALLAH SHOWING THE TRUTH OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^(AS) AND HIS SUPPORT FOR HIM.

the Reverend became quiet and retreated to his Somerset home. This did not allow him to escape altogether from the wrath of God. He was disowned by the Church accused of fathering an illegitimate child and died in disgrace in 1927.

It should be noted here that when we marvel at the pitiful destruction of Dowie or Piggot it is because it demonstrates a sign from Allah showing the truth of the Promised Messiah^(as) and His support for him. Otherwise there is no sense of rejoicing at the dwindling fortunes of Reverends Dowie and Piggott per se. As the Promised Messiah^(as) himself

stated that he loved all humanity and harboured enmity for no one – he was only the enemy of falsehood.

The Promised Messiah^(as) engaged in many debates defending the teachings of Islam. Among them was one with Abdullah Atham. Atham was not a formal qualified missionary but a retired civil servant. He had detailed knowledge of the scriptures and the Christian Mission of Amritsar put him up as their champion to defend Christianity and attack Islam. The debate took place in 1893 and lasted from 22 May to 5 June. It was convened at the residence of Dr Henry Martin Clarke. Rules were settled and written papers were exchanged. The proceedings were later published under the title of ‘Jang-e-Muqaddas’ or Holy War. The point at issue was the comparative worth of Christianity and Islam. The Messiah’s arguments were so conclusive and compelling that many people joined the ranks of the Jama’at in the course of the debate.

It was during the course of these proceedings that Dr Clarke and his cohorts tried to bring ridicule on the Promised Messiah^(as). They brought in three people, one of them lame, another blind and a third dumb. They said to the Promised Messiah that since he claimed to have come in the spirit of Jesus^(as), he should be able to perform the same miracles as he did and cure the deaf, dumb and blind. The Promised Messiah^(as) was extremely astute and sharp. He first stated that it was the Gospels that laid claim to these so-called miracles of Jesus. He never ascribed such miracles to Jesus^(as). Moreover, the Promised Messiah^(as) said – and this was the key point – these Gospels also stated that if any of his followers had faith as much as a grain of a mustard seed, then they too would be able to heal the sick with their touch and perform much greater miracles. The fact that these three individuals were here provided them ample opportunity to demonstrate their faith and this so-called truth in the Bible. The Missionaries were

totally taken aback by this response and quickly motioned to move on. The public had evidently taken note and no wonder several found themselves joining the fold of Islam afterwards.

As well as employing such debates and discussions to counter the attacks on Islam and demonstrate its superiority, the Promised Messiah^(as) wrote several pamphlets, leaflets and such books as *Izala-e-Auham; Fath-e-Islam, Masih Hindustan Mein, Aina Kamalat-e-Islam and Tauzi-e-Maram* – all promoting the truth of Islam and defending it against attacks by Christian missionaries.

Occasionally he would receive questionnaires for reply. The Anjuman-i-Hamayyat-i-Islam once circulated some objections raised by a Christian Abdulla James. These were responded to in great detail by the Promised Messiah^(as) and published.

In showing that Jesus^(as) was not Divine and had indeed died a

natural death the Promised Messiah^(as) succeeded in breaking the Cross but as the Promised Messiah^(as) was himself at pains to explain, the shattering of the Cross also meant that following his advent technological and scientific progress would rise to such a degree that this erroneous belief would soon be relegated to the pages of history. This has proved to be totally true as with the onset of the 20th and 21st Centuries, belief in the Divinity of Jesus^(as) is dwindling and the realisation of his death is increasingly being borne out by modern research. Just recently there have been four independent researches all pointing to Jesus^{'(as)} survival from the cross and some have even indicated his grave to be in Kashmir just as the Promised Messiah^(as) had proved many decades before.

It is recorded that in 1935 Dr. W R Mathews Dean of St Paul's declared at a conference of the Modern Christian Union in Cambridge: *'I do not believe that more than 20 percent of the people of this country are in any*

possible sense of the word Christians.'

If this was true then the numbers are a lot lower today. This is a far cry to the discussions all those years ago when the Church Missionary Society had resolved to spread Christianity to the whole of India and are now unable to consolidate its teachings among a fraction of its own people. What a transformation has come about with the advent of the Promised Messiah^(as)!

In examining the defence of Islam by the Promised Messiah^(as) against attacks by Christian missionaries there is much that we can learn. For someone who loved Islam and its founder as much as the Promised Messiah^(as), these attacks must have caused immense pain and anguish. But in dealing with them, he did not resort to the bullet or the sword. Neither did he take to the streets with placards and violent demonstrations. What he did was to take stock of the situation, use his intellect and wisdom, and then

counter these attacks through the pen with argument, reason and prayer.

Today we too have to face similar attacks on Islam from the likes of Pope Benedict and others, and like the Promised Messiah^(as), it is incumbent on us as his followers to do just what he did in such circumstances and resort to the pen and prayer. Only then will we be able to succeed in annihilating such onslaughts made against Islam and guarantee its ultimate success all over the world. May Allah help us do this.

Reference

1. Rev. Herbert Udney Weitberecht Stanton PhD, D.D. was District Missionary Batala 1884-1896. The Promised Messiah^(as) did not wish to deal with Fateh Masih on account of his previous untrustworthiness but invited Rev Stanton to step in as an arbitrator.

Islamic Concept of the State

The following address was delivered on 28th September, 1979, at the Zurich Mosque, Switzerland, by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan who was an eminent statesmen who served as a Foreign Minister of Pakistan, President of the General Assembly's seventeenth session of the United Nations and Judge and President of the International Court of Justice at the Hague, Holland. (This article was first published in *The Review of Religions* in February 1993)

In Islam, the basic concept is that sovereignty over the universe belongs to God, but that mankind, God's vicegerents, are vested with authority in certain spheres, as a trust, for which they are answerable and accountable to God. The Holy Prophet^(saw) has said: 'Everyone of you is a steward, and everyone of you is accountable for that which is committed to his care'.

As God's sovereignty extends over the universe, the ultimate ideal of a state in Islam is a universal federation, or confederation of autonomous states, associated together for upholding freedom of conscience, for the maintenance of peace, and for cooperation in

promoting human welfare throughout the world. In pursuit of this ideal, the Islamic State, established by the Holy Prophet^(saw) spread rapidly westward through Egypt and North Africa to Spain, and eastward through Iraq, Iran, and Central Asia to the confines of China. It instituted a single citizenship entailing overall allegiance to a single head of state, the Khalifa, who was guardian of the Pax Islamica and was responsible for the welfare of all sections of the vast populations united and inspired by common ideals. With the decline of moral and spiritual values, the ideal was neglected. The central authority weakened progressively until allegiance to

the Khalifa was reduced to a mere formality and local rulers became independent.

A study of the Holy Qur'an reveals that it contemplates two types of states, having the same ideals and objectives, but differing with regard to the scope of the authority of the state and the manner of its establishment. The ideal again is a state in which the head of state exercises authority in both secular and spiritual spheres. The Holy Qur'an says:

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

(Ch.24:V.56)

The office of Khalifa is elective. He may be elected directly or, as happened in the case of Umar^(ra), the Second Khalifa of the Holy Prophet^(saw), he may be nominated by his predecessor, the nomination being subject to approval by the people after the death of the nominating Khalifa.

The Khalifa holds office for life. He is not permitted to abdicate, and cannot be called upon to do so. He must devote his whole time, all his faculties, and his full capacity to the service of the people. He is bound by the ordinances of Divine law and by the principles on which they are based. He must carry them out both in the letter and in the spirit, and see that they are put into effect within the state in the most beneficent manner possible.

The Khalifa may decide questions of policy and all major questions of administration after consultation with the chosen representatives of the people, both for the purpose of informing himself, in arriving at a decision, with regard to the matter in hand, and also in order to train the representatives in the conduct of

public affairs (Ch.3:V.160). Indeed, the administration of public affairs through appropriate consultation of competent persons is mentioned as a characteristic of Muslims (Ch.42:V.39). On the part of the people, cooperation with, and obedience to, those set in authority and entrusted with the conduct of public affairs is a duty which is as obligatory as the duty of obedience owed to God and to His Messenger (Ch.4:V.60).

The institution of Khilafat thus partakes of both a secular and religious character. The Khalifa is the chosen representative of the people, and he has promise of Divine support so long as the institution maintains the character with which the Qur'an invests it, and does not merely bear the title, as has unfortunately so often happened in the history of the Muslim peoples.

The other type of state is that in which also the head of state is a representative of the people, with duties and responsibilities corresponding to that of the Khalifa; but with regard to his tenure of office, the scope of his

authority, and the limitations upon it, he is bound by the provisions of the Constitution in conformity with which he is elected to office and which he must uphold. In his case, also, the emphasis is upon his role as a representative of the people. The Holy Qur'an says:

Verily Allah commands you to make over the trusts to those entitled to them...
(Ch.4:V.59)

It is thus clear that sovereignty in this context is vested in the people. They are commanded to entrust it to those who are best fitted to discharge the responsibilities attached to it. The exercise of the franchise for the purpose of electing representatives for the discharge of the various responsibilities of the state is thus elevated to a sacred trust. The verse continues: *'And when you are called upon to judge between, or exercise authority over the people, you must do so equitably and with justice'*. (Ch.4:V.59)

These two obligations, the one laid upon the people to choose their representative wisely, and the

other laid upon those who are chosen to exercise their authority equitably and with justice, are the very essence of good administration. The verse concludes: ‘Surely, excellent is that with which Allah admonishes you. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.’

This implies that the Muslims might, from time to time, be tempted to depart from these two fundamental principles, and to try other experiments, but they are warned that what Allah has admonished them with is alone the most excellent and the most beneficent method by which these responsibilities might be discharged. Allah would watch the discharge of these responsibilities, and those upon whom they are laid would be accountable to Him.

The head of a Muslim state is immune against judicial action in respect of the discharge of his public duties, but in respect of obligations undertaken by him in his private capacity as a citizen, he enjoys no privilege, and is subject to the same judicial process that is applicable to all other citizens.

The duties of the Islamic State are

no different from those of any other enlightened state or ruler, but they must be conceived and discharged in the spirit which Islam seeks to infuse into all institutions. This is concisely expressed in the admonition of the Holy Prophet^(saw) ‘Everyone of you is a steward, and is responsible and accountable for that which is committed to his care. The sovereign is responsible and accountable for his people, every man is responsible and answerable for the members of his family, every woman is responsible and answerable for her home and children, and every servant is responsible and answerable for the property of his master that is in his charge.’

Islam regards the state as a shepherd put in charge of a flock, and as a shepherd is bound to protect and look after the flock and provide for all its needs - keeping the sheep from straying, guarding them from the prowling wolf, feeding and housing them, protecting them against pestilence and disease – so it is the duty of the Islamic State to safeguard the people against dissension,

disorder, disturbance, and oppression; to secure them from attacks from outside, and to make provision for all their intellectual and material needs. A principal duty of the Islamic State is to safeguard the security of the state, and to maintain its defence arrangements in proper condition (Ch.3:V.201).

Islam pioneered the first effective concept of the welfare state. The dignity of labour was emphasised. The Holy Prophet(saw) on one occasion, held the calloused hands of a labourer between his own soft palms, and massaging them gently, observed: 'These hands are very dear to God.' Islam laid down that it was the duty of the Muslim State to ensure the provision of the average necessities of life for all its citizens. This is regarded as the minimum requirement of a beneficent social organisation (Ch.20:Vs.119-120).

On one occasion, Umar^(ra), during his tenure of the office of Khalifa, discovered by chance that outside Madinah a woman and her three children had been left without proper provisions for two days,

because she lacked the means thereof. He returned immediately to Madinah where he collected flour, butter, meat, and dates in a large bag and summoned a servant for assistance in lifting the bag onto his back. The servant protested and offered to carry the bundle himself. Umar^(ra), declined his offer, observing: 'No doubt you can carry this bundle for me just now, but who will carry my burden on the Day of Judgment?' He then carried the provisions to the woman, who blessed him for his kindness, and exclaimed: You are far more fit to be Khalifa than Umar^(ra). He knows not how the people fare. 'Well, mother, perhaps Umar is not so bad', said the Khalifa, gently, smiling.

The duty of the Islamic State to make provision for the intellectual development of the people was early emphasised by the Holy Prophet(saw). He was himself so anxious concerning it that after the Battle of Badr he announced that any Makkan prisoner of war who was literate could earn his freedom by instructing ten Muslim children in the elements of reading and writing. This duty was so well

discharged by his immediate Successors that within a brief period the camel drivers of the desert, despised by Iran and Byzantium, became the teachers of the world and the torch-bearers of enlightenment.

Provision was made for the administration of justice at a very high level as soon as the Prophet^(saw) was entrusted with the duties of Chief Executive in Madinah. Umar^(ra) was appointed one of the judges, and the Prophet^(saw) himself often performed that function. The Qur'an lays down as a condition of belief in Islam that a Muslim must accept the obligation of judicial determination of disputes, find no demur in his heart against the final judgment that may be handed down, and carry it out fully (Ch.4:V.66). In addition to the safeguards inherent in the orderly process of the administration of justice, a very emphatic admonition was pronounced by the Prophet^(saw). He said that a party which obtained a judgment in its favour should not consider itself as having a valid right to the subject matter of the judgment if

in fact it was not entitled to such right. The mere fact of a judgment in its favour would not shield it against the consequences of the wrong that it would be guilty of in appropriating that to which in fact it was not entitled. He added that if such a party wrongly appropriated anything under the colour of the judgment, it only took home a quantity of fire.

Judges must carry out their duties with strict impartiality and justice. No party should attempt to corrupt the course of justice through bribery (Ch.2:V.189) or by presenting false evidence (Ch.25:V.73). A more emphatic and comprehensive injunction is:

O ye who believe! be strict in observing justice, being witnesses for the sake of Allah, even though it be against your own selves, or against parents and kindred. Whether he be rich or poor, Allah is more regardful of them both than you are. Therefore follow not low desires, so that you may be able to act equitably. And if you conceal the truth, or evade it, then remember that Allah is

well aware of what you do.
(Ch.4:V.136)

Hostility towards a people should not incite a Muslim, or the Muslim community, or the Muslim State, to act unjustly or inequitably towards them:

O ye who believe! be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity, and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah, Surely, Allah is aware of that which you do. (Ch.5:V9)

Within this broad framework, a Muslim State is free to make such regulations and adopt such measures as it may deem suitable and appropriate to its requirements and to the needs of the people. The Holy Qur'an discourages the tendency to seek regulation of everything by Divine command, pointing out that such regulation would be restrictive and prove burdensome (Ch.5:V.102).

As already mentioned, the subjects of a Muslim State are under

obligation to render full obedience to the authorities of the state; as is said:

O ye who believe, obey Allah and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority over you. (Ch.4:V.60)

The rights, duties and obligations of such non-Muslim subjects of an Islamic State who have submitted to the authority of the state by virtue of a treaty or covenant are regulated by the terms of the treaty or covenant, as the case may be. In other cases, so far as rights and duties in spheres other than religion are concerned, there should be no discrimination whatsoever. In the sphere of religion, in all cases, there is complete liberty and freedom of conscience and belief. This is emphatically affirmed by the Holy Qur'an, which says:

There should be no compulsion in matters of faith. Surely, right has become distinct from wrong...
(Ch.2:V.257)

Again:

And say 'It is the truth from your Lord; therefore let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve.

(Ch.18:V.30)

Further:

Proofs have indeed come to you from your Lord, so whoever sees it is for his own good; whoever becomes blind, it is to his own harm...

(Ch.6:V.105)

The Prophet^(saw) suffered keen anguish when his people appeared impervious to all reason and argument, to the various signs set before them, as to every method of explanation and illustration employed in the Holy Qur'an. So extreme was his anguish that God repeatedly comforted him:

So haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death for sorrow after them if they believe not in this discourse. (Ch.18:V.7)

So haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death for sorrow after them if they believe not in this discourse. (Ch.26:V.4)

...So let not thy soul waste away in sighing for them. Surely, Allah knows what they do. (Ch.35:V.9)

It is explained that complete freedom in the matter of conscience and belief is essential for the fulfilment of the Divine purpose. It would be easy for God to compel belief as much as He has power even over the consciences of people, but He leaves them free to decide for themselves, as is said:

If thy Lord had enforced His will, surely all who are on earth would have believed together. Wilt thou, then, force people to become believers? (Ch.10:V.100)

Clear directions have been given with regard to the manner in which the message of Islam is to be conveyed to mankind.

Say, 'This is my way: I call unto Allah on sure knowledge, I and those who follow me. (Ch.12:V.109)

It was the duty of the Prophet^(saw)

and of each one of his Companions, as indeed it is the duty of every Muslim all the time, to invite people to the acceptance of truth, both by precept and by example; but the precept and the example must be such as to preclude the remotest suspicion of any pressure or coercion, as is said:

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

In an Islamic State, all fundamental rights, including the profession, practice and propagation of their respective faiths, are guaranteed for Muslim and non-Muslim alike.

The very name of faith, Islam, derives from a root which means peace and submission, that is to say, the attainment of peace through submission to the will of God, by conformity to Divine law and guidance. In the Islamic

concept, Divine law includes all laws governing and regulating the universe.

Among the attributes of God, the Qur'an mentions that He is the Source of Peace and the Bestower of Security (Ch.59:V.24). The establishment of peace and the maintenance of security must, therefore, be the constant objectives of man. Peace and order are deemed essential for material, moral and spiritual progress.

Every pursuit and activity which has a tendency to disturb the peace is severely condemned. The Qur'an says:

And create not disorder in the earth after it has been set in order.
(Ch.7:V.57)

...commit not iniquity in the earth creating disorder.
(Ch.29:V.37)

...And they strive to create disorder in the earth and Allah loves not those who create disorder.
(Ch.5:V.65)

..seek not to make mischief in the earth, verily, Allah loves not those make mischief.

(Ch.28:V.78)

And of men there is he whose talk on this life would please thee, and he would call Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart, and yet he is the most contentious of quarrellers. And when he is in authority, he runs about in the land to create disorder in it and destroy the crops and the progeny of man; and Allah loves not disorder.

(Ch.2:Vs.205-206)

When the Prophet^(saw) announced his mission to the people of Makkah, who had known him as an honest, upright, and faithful comrade, the announcement was received with incredulity. His persistence in the assertion of his claim and in calling men to the worship of One God, and to a moral and spiritual revolution in their lives, at first drew only ridicule. When, here and there his call began to evoke a favourable response, the ridicule turned into harassment. During the ten long years, the Prophet^(saw) and his small

but slowly increasing band of Companions were subjected to cruel and merciless persecution. They bore it all with patience and dignity under the most difficult conditions. Neither abuse nor persecution could provoke them into conduct unbecoming orderly, law-abiding citizens. Except for a vehement repudiation of idol-worship and persistence in proclaiming and upholding the unity of God, neither the Prophet^(saw) himself nor any member of the small Muslim community in Makkah ever attempted to defy the authority of the Assembly of Elders, or the rules and conventions regulating the conduct and behaviour of the citizens of Makkah. When the persecution became unendurable, the Prophet^(saw) rather than risk a state of civil disorder in the town, counselled that such Muslims as could afford it should leave Makkah and seek asylum in the neighbouring state of Abyssinia, across the Red Sea. Later, other Muslims, including the Prophet^(saw) himself, migrated to Madinah. The Makkan period of the Prophet's^(saw) ministry is an outstanding example of the upholding of law and order

by a hard-pressed and sorely perse-cuted group, whose membership was constantly growing and whose strength was progressively increasing.

In the domain of international relations, religion and inter-religious relations occupy an important position. Unfortunately, comparatively little attention is paid today to this aspect of human relations. It is assumed that religion is a private matter for each individual and, therefore, should have no direct connection with the political, social, or economic aspects of life which affects the relations not only of individuals, but also of groups, communities, and nations with each other. This assumption is not justified. Religion is a vital factor in the field of human relations and there is good ground for hope that it might progressively become more effective in promoting unity and accord, rather than continue to be a source of friction and conflict. It is important, therefore, to ascertain what attitude Islam adopts towards other faiths and their followers.

The Qur'an teaches that God has sent His revelation to all peoples

from time to time and that no section of mankind has been left without Divine guidance (Ch.35:Vs.25-26). Several of the Prophets of the Old Testament are mentioned by name in the Holy Qur'an, and so also is Jesus^(as), who with other Prophets is honoured and revered by the Muslims (Ch.2:V.137). Indeed, the Qur'an requires belief in the truth and righteousness of all the Prophets and in the revelations that were vouchsafed to them by God. The Torah and the revelation that came to Jesus^(as) are repeatedly mentioned as sources of guidance and light. (Ch.5:Vs.45-47)

Thus Islam seeks to bring about reconciliation between the followers of different faiths and to establish a basis of respect and honour among them. It holds out to them the hand of cooperation and friendship on a basis of righteousness, as the Holy Qur'an says:

Surely, those who have believed, and the Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians, whoso believes in Allah and the Last Day, and does good

deeds, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve.

(Ch.5:V.70)

They are all invited to unite on the basic ecumenical principle which all of them profess to believe in:

Say: O People of the Book!, come to a word equal between us and you- that we worship none but Allah and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for lords beside Allah.

(Ch.3:V.65)

Islam draws attention to factors which tend to disturb or destroy peace and order, and deprecates them. Some of these may be briefly considered.

Domination of one group by another in the domestic sphere, or of one people by another in the international sphere, is a potent cause of disturbance of peace, and is strongly condemned. God does not approve of the division of His creatures into groups for the purpose of domination of some by others, and whenever such attempt

is made, God's purpose works for the uplift of those who are dominated or oppressed. In this connection, the Holy Qur'an cites the instance of Pharaoh and his treatment of the people of Israel as an example. It says:

Verily Pharaoh behaved arrogantly in the earth, and divided the people thereof into parties; he sought to weaken a party of them, slaying their sons, and sparing their women. Certainly, he was of the mischief makers. And We desired to show favour unto those who had been considered weak in the earth, and to make them leaders, and to make them inheritors of Our favours, and to establish them in the earth...

(Ch.28:Vs.5-7)

Pharaoh's end and that of his nobles and courtiers became a terrible lesson for all succeeding generations (Ch.10:Vs.91-93).

Economic exploitation of one people or country by another inevitably leads to domination by the exploiters and develops into a

threat to peace. The Qur'an prohibits such exploitation and points out that an economy based on the exploitation of other peoples and their resources cannot be beneficial in its consequences, nor can it endure. Only such economic development is beneficial and enduring as is based on the exploitation of a people's own resources and on equitable sharing with others of the bounties which God has provided for each people; as is said:

And strain not thy eyes after what We have bestowed on some classes of them to enjoy for a time –the splendour, of the present world – that We may try them thereby. And the provision bestowed by thy Lord is better and more lasting.
(Ch.20:V.132)

Even when a strong and powerful state avoids domination or exploitation of weaker states or peoples, its behaviour and attitude towards them, if they savour of arrogance or contempt, will cause irritation and resentment which could result in the disturbance of good relations and imperil the

maintenance of peace. The Qur'an admonishes against such behaviour, pointing out that the strength or weakness of a people is no indication or measure of its superiority or inferiority. It emphasises that, in the process of the rise and fall of nations, a people that is weak today may become strong tomorrow, and memories of conduct that occasioned resentment or engendered ill-will would rankle and would lead to disturbance of good relations (Ch.41:V.12).

Another source of international conflict is the divergence between proclaimed intentions and policies and actual practice and conduct, which is bound to cause irritation and distrust. Doubts concerning motives and designs are bound to be raised in respect of a state whose conduct is inconsistent with its undertakings and its proclaimed policies and aims. Such conduct could bring about a situation serious enough to endanger international relations. The Qur'an insists on complete conformity of conduct to declarations and professions of intent. It says:

O ye who believe!, why do you say what you do not do? Most hateful is it in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do.

(Ch.61:Vs.3-4)

On the other hand, it warns against indulgence in undue suspicion of other people's motives and against seeking to discover pretexts for differences and disarrangements, as this might result in much harm; as is said:

O ye who believe, avoid most of suspicion, for suspicion in some cases is a sin.

(Ch.49:V.13)

Experience has shown that too-ready credence of rumours, and their wide publicity, may cause grave repercussions in the sphere of international relations. These rumours may have their origin in deliberate mischief, or may be the products of a too active imagination, but the harm done might be serious. The Qur'an warns Muslims to be extremely careful in this respect. They are told to apply a rigorous test to everything that may emanate from

a source not completely dependable and trustworthy, for carelessness in this respect may not only give rise to tension but entail grave consequences. It says:

O ye who believe, if an unrighteous person brings you any news, ascertain the correctness of the report fully, lest you harm a people in ignorance, and then become repentant for what you have done.

(Ch.47:V.7)

The tendency to broadcast all manner of news, even such as might have the effect of disturbing people's minds and agitating public opinion, is deprecated. There is the warning:

When there comes to them a matter bearing upon security or causing fear, they publish it widely; whereas if they were to refer it to the Prophet and to those in authority among them, surely, those of them whose business it is to investigate such matters would ascertain the truth of it. Were it not for the grace of God upon you,

and His mercy, you would certainly have followed astray astray, but for a few.

(Ch.4:V.84)

The verse does not disapprove merely the publishing of an irresponsible rumour or a piece of false news. Rather, it emphasises that news which affects public security, or is likely to disturb the public mind, or agitate public opinion, should be referred to the proper authorities for them to determine whether immediate publication is or is not desirable in the public interest.

The Qur'an is very insistent upon the due observance and performance of treaty obligations (Ch.5:V.2; Ch.17:V.35). As everything that a Muslim does or undertakes is done and undertaken in the name of Allah, these obligations have, as it were, a sacred character. That is why it is said:

And fulfil the covenant of Allah when you have made; and break not the oaths after making them firm, while you have made Allah your surety.

Certainly, Allah knows that which you do.

(Ch.16:V.92)

One element that often leads to differences and disputes concerning the meaning and the carrying into effect of treaty obligations is the type of language that may be employed in expressing the obligations undertaken by the parties. Ambiguity of language, which, instead of settling differences and promoting accord, gives rise to dispute and controversy with regard to its meaning and construction, should be avoided. Such language in the end leads the parties to suspect each other's sincerity and integrity of purpose. The Qur'an, therefore, insists that plain words and straightforward language must always be employed for giving expression to agreements that may be arrived at. It is stated that if this course is followed, God will bless the conduct of the parties with beneficence and will eliminate the consequences of their defaults:

O ye who believe! fear Allah and say the right word. He will

*reform your conduct for you
and forgive you your sins.*

(Ch.33:Vs.71-72)

The emphasis is upon use of language which should not be open to conflicting interpretations and thus give rise to differences and disputes.

The objectives of Islam in the international sphere is an association of strong and stable states devoted to the maintenance of peace, freedom of conscience, and promotion of human welfare. The object of all treaties, therefore, should be to further these purposes, and a treaty should not be entered into with the intent of weakening or of taking advantage of the weakness of the other party. Subversive methods and exploitation of other peoples carried on under cover of treaties and covenants are, therefore, strongly condemned:

*And be not like unto her who,
after having made it strong,
breaks her yarn into pieces.
You make your oaths a means
of deceit between you, for fear
lest one people become more*

*powerful than anotherAnd
make not your oaths a means
of deceit between you; or your
foot will slip after it has been
firmly established, and you will
taste evil because you have
turned people away from the
path of Allah, and you will
have a severe punishment.*

(Ch.16:Vs.93-95)

Treaties should bind people together in beneficent cooperation and should make them stronger. If made a means of deceit, they would divide and disrupt peoples, and all effort and labour spent on them would be wasted, resulting only in loss.

There is a strong admonition that obligations undertaken by treaty or covenant should not be evaded or repudiated under the temptation of securing some ulterior advantage (Ch.16:V.96). The performance of obligations undertaken is a moral and spiritual duty which secures permanent benefit, whereas any advantage gained through evasion or default in the performance of an obligation will be only temporary and will in the end do harm. This is reinforced with the reminder:

That which you have shall pass away, but that which is with Allah is lasting. We will certainly give those who are steadfast their reward according to the best of their works.

(Ch.16:V.97)

Circumstances may arise, however, under which the conduct of one party to a treaty might make it difficult or impossible for the other party to continue its adherence to the terms of the treaty. If it should be clearly established that the other party to the treaty is determined upon repudiation or breach, a Muslim state may repudiate the treaty, but only after due notice and upon terms which would ensure that no prejudice or disadvantage would be occasioned to the other party by such a repudiation. In other words, so long as an actual breach of the treaty has not taken place, one party to a treaty is not permitted to enter upon military preparations against the other party – even when bad faith is suspected – except after due notice that from a specified date the one party will no longer be bound by the treaty on

account of the threatened or clearly intended contravention or breach by the other party. This would permit appropriate action for the removal of any misunderstanding that might have arisen, or for the renewal of the treaty, or for the conclusion of a new one if this should be found advisable and feasible. In any case, such notice would safeguard the other party against surprise and put it in a position to make the necessary adjustments consequent upon the abrogation of the treaty. (Ch.8:V.59)

It is a duty laid upon Muslims to bring about peaceful settlement and adjustment of difficulties and disputes (Ch.49:V.11). If two Muslim states fail to settle their differences and the situation becomes acute enough to constitute a threat to the maintenance of peace between them, it becomes the duty of other Muslim states to exercise their good offices to bring about a settlement on an equitable basis. Should one of the parties to the dispute be unwilling to avail itself of the good offices of the neutral states, or, having done so, be

unwilling to accept and carry out the terms of the settlement proposed, the neutral states must all combine to consider and adopt measures to compel the submission of the recalcitrant state. For this purpose, recourse may be had to the use of force if necessary. When proposing a settlement, the intervening states should keep in view only the original dispute or difference between the parties. Matters unconnected with the dispute should not be raised or discussed in the context of the settlement. When both parties are finally ready to accept the settlement, it should be carried into effect without delay. The intervening states should not raise extraneous matters, such as an indemnity or compensation for the trouble occasioned to them, or for the expenses incurred by them in connection with any action found necessary to procure acceptance or enforcement of the settlement; nor should the intervening states seek any advantage for themselves out of the settlement. An award made or a settlement proposed by the intervening states in such a case is described as the command of

Allah, and refusal to accept it or to carry it out is described as transgression (Ch.49:V.10).

The Holy Qur'an lays down the general principles:

The recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoso forgives and his act brings about reformation his reward is with Allah. Surely, He loves not the wrongdoers.
(Ch.42:V.41)

The Qur'an specifies very few offences, and for the rest leaves it to a Muslim state to define offences and prescribe penalties therefor. Murder is one of the offences specified; concerning which it is laid down:

O ye who believe, equitable retaliation in the matter of the slain is prescribed for you; the free man for the free man, the slave for the slave and the female for the female. But if one is granted any remission by one's brother, then pursuing the matter for the realisation of the blood-money shall be done with fairness and the murderer

shall pay him the blood-money in a handsome manner. This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy. And whoso transgresses thereafter, for him there shall be a grievous chastisement. And there is life for you in the law of retribution, O men of understanding, that you enjoy security.

(Ch.2:Vs.179-180)

Other offences specifically mentioned in the Holy Qur'an are adultery (Ch.24:V.3), calumination of chaste women (Ch.24:V.5), and theft (Ch.5:V.39). The penalty of adultery is a hundred stripes, and of calumination eighty stripes. Till these penalties were prescribed by the Qur'an, the Holy Prophet^(saw) followed the Torah and imposed the penalty of death by stoning in the case of adultery. One hundred stripes were substituted in accordance with the verse just mentioned.

The penalty for theft or robbery is cutting off the hand of the offender. In practice this penalty was imposed only in extreme

cases, in which there were no extenuating circumstances. It has been suggested that though the primary meaning of the expression employed by the Qur'an in this context is cutting off the hand, the secondary meaning, in accord with Arabic idiom, be restricting the activity of the offender, that is to say, imprisonment.

Some of these penalties may sound harsh, but when wisely administered, experience has demonstrated their beneficence.

Our last word is: *All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.*

An independant report (reproduced with prior permission) that destroys the myth that being a majority in their headquarter, Ahmadis may be able to obtain police protection. A chilling reminder of the ostracisation of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan, their continuing persecution and the absence of any protection by the authorities in Pakistan.

Rabwah:

A PLACE FOR MARTYRS?

Part three

Report of the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group mission to Pakistan into internal flight for Ahmadis. Foreword by Lord Avebury. Mission members: Frances Allen, Michael Ellman, Jonathan Ensor.

By Dr Jonathan Ensor – UK

Social and economic conditions in Rabwah

The Ahmadi Community Representatives explained to the mission that the town of Rabwah is located on 1043 acres of land which was purchased by the Ahmadi community for a nominal amount from the government in 1947. The town is not a commercial/industrial centre and has no manufacturing, distribution or service industries. We were advised by the Ahmadi Community Representatives that the situation in Rabwah was such that there was an exodus of

young people and that people coming to settle in Rabwah were older people who had retired. The only jobs are low skilled work such as farming and trades. However the number of jobs in these sectors are limited by the size of the town. The Representatives explained that there are no Ahmadis in public office in Rabwah. The post office, telephone office, railway station, police force and magistrates office have no Ahmadi employees and in some instances people are recruited from outside Rabwah. Mr.

Ibrahim reinforced many of the points made by the Ahmadi Community Representatives, noting that there are no jobs available in Rabwah and the few government jobs that exist are already filled. Beyond this, there is no industry in Rabwah. A small number of people go to other towns such as Faisalabad to work, and usually stay there during the week. The mission was informed by the Ahmadi Community Representatives that there is ‘negligible’ housing available to rent. The Representatives told the mission that a number of vacant plots are available in the Muslim Colony. The Colony is former Ahmadi land that has been requisitioned by the government. The plots have been put up for sale, but Ahmadi are specifically banned from bidding. The rules of the auction state that only those who believe in the end of prophethood are eligible to bid. Mr Ibrahim stated that there are very few houses to rent or buy and there is no Council or private building

planned. Private building does take place outside the town centre, particularly by Ahmadi who move to Rabwah from elsewhere.

The HRCP stated that a newcomer fleeing to Rabwah would have to be very rich and not pursued by their persecutor to survive. If they have a normal income (and not pursued), then they would face many difficulties, first amongst which is that there are no jobs in Rabwah. It is very unusual for someone to commute for work even to Chiniot or Faisalabad. Even if an Ahmadi were to do this it would create new problems: they would be a ‘sitting duck’ for anti-Ahmadi activists whilst they travelled. Moreover, an address in Rabwah is practically a bar to getting a job as a potential employer would suspect that a person is Ahmadi if they have a Rabwah address. They would only be able to get work from a fellow Ahmadi. The HRCP noted that

whilst Rabwah is majority Ahmadi, Muslims live in the area surrounding the town. There have been cases where housing officials have said that Ahmadis cannot purchase land and have forced the purchasers to undertake not to sell to Ahmadis. This sort of discrimination ‘begins at Rabwah’. Referring to life in Rabwah for those who have not fled persecution, the HRCP summarised the situation by describing Rabwah as a place for ‘hardcore Ahmadis who want to be martyred’: there is a mullah there who abuses Ahmadis ‘all day long’. Those Ahmadis who live in Rabwah are ‘very brave’. There are families where the men live in Rabwah and the women do not. Ultimately, it is a question of how much abuse – and occasional violence – an individual can stand. ‘Rabwah is a place for martyrs, cut off from their roots’, the mission was told.

The Ahmadi Community Representatives stressed that it is only in a position to provide

temporary shelter and food to a limited number for a few days or at most a few weeks. There is a Langar Khana (community kitchen) where displaced persons can obtain food and shelter. The community do receive people who had faced problems in other parts of Pakistan but Rabwah is seen as a temporary measure for a couple of months and not a long term solution. It was explained to the mission that the Ahmadi community would provide these displaced persons with accommodation in guest houses, which has separate accommodation for men and women, but that the town and community can only provide temporary refuge for displaced persons as there is no employment or permanent housing. For example, the Jhando Sahi community were able to stay for a month but then had to return to their village [*for more detail see Appendix B8: May 2007 edition of The Review of Religions, p.56*].

Voter registration

The Ahmadi Community Representatives informed the mission that in January 2002 the Pakistan government abolished the system of separate electorates under which different denominations, including Sunnis, Christians and Sikhs, were placed on different electoral roles. A 'joint electorate' was introduced in which all eligible citizens of Pakistan are placed on a single list of voters. However, an exception for Ahmadi was introduced by the President via Chief Executive's order No 15 (17 June 2002) which created a supplementary list of voters in which Ahmadi are categorised as non-Muslims. The HRCPC confirmed that the Ahmadi are the only religion to continue to be on a separate electoral list. The Ahmadi Community Representatives told the mission that it is a matter of principle that Ahmadi should not register rather than agree to being declared non-Muslim. They explained that the community

suffer as a result, as not voting means that the Mayor (Nazim) and Town Council are not accountable to the majority of Rabwah residents. Only 1,700-1,800 people are registered to vote in Rabwah out of a population of around 51,000. Mr. Ibrahim, Secretary to the Mayor of Rabwah, confirmed that there are about 2,000 electors, mainly Muslims and about 300 Christians. There are 11 elected members of the Council, none of whom are Ahmadi. Under legislation designed to protect the interests of minorities, the Ahmadi community are entitled to one reserved seat on the Council regardless of the electoral outcome. However, the Ahmadi had decided to give the reserved post to the Christian community rather than be involved in an unrepresentative Council.

The Ahmadi Community Representatives informed the mission that as a result of their lack of representation, conditions

in the town have deteriorated with even drinking water not being provided to some areas of the town. Roads are in poor condition, sewage systems are non-existent and there have been hepatitis and typhoid outbreaks.

Education

Mr. Ibrahim stated that there are three high schools, six primary schools and three degree colleges in Rabwah; they all at one time belonged to the Ahmadi community but were nationalised and are currently run by the Provincial Government. The Ahmadi Community Representatives explained that the college and boys' high school were constructed and established by the Ahmadi Community. Since they were nationalised the buildings have deteriorated due to lack of maintenance and the boys' college has now been deemed unsafe (see Appendix B5: The Nation 'College building declared dangerous', undated). The Pakistan authorities announced some years ago that nationalised

educational institutions would be returned to their original owners but in the case of Rabwah this has not occurred. The Government of Pakistan demanded 15,000,000 rupees (around £100,000) from the Ahmadi community for their return and this was paid. However, the educational institutions have not been returned and this money has not been refunded. The Ahmadi Community Representatives also informed the mission that in order to study in Pakistan it is necessary to pass an Islamic studies exam which is impossible for Ahmadis without being accused of committing blasphemy, effectively barring Ahmadis from higher education.

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