

From the Editor's Desk...

Islam is a religion which lays a lot of emphasis on knowledge and learning. Islam gives a detailed outline to its followers to live a peaceful, progressive and harmonious life in this world. For the life hereafter Islam gives detailed instructions to earn a place in heavens and to avoid punishment. Islam also wants Muslims to gain knowledge of worldly affairs and be good at them. One of the basic pillars to follow these guidelines is to seek knowledge and Islam has given guidelines for seeking knowledge as well.

Pure intention – Before the commencement of an act one must ensure that an analysis of one's intention is undertaken. We should be clear in our head that purpose of knowledge is to gain pleasure of Allah Almighty.

“Actions are (judged) by motives/ intention (niyyah), so each man will have what he intended. Thus, he whose migration (hijrah) was to Allah and His Messenger, his migration is to Allah and His Messenger; but he whose migration was for some worldly thing he might gain, or for a wife he might marry, his migration is to that for which he migrated.” [Al-Bukhari]

Be patient and have faith in Allah– Grand intentions require grand efforts. We must be patient and consistent and must strive to study to the best of our ability and aim for excellence, not perfection. Research shows that perfectionism triggers anxiety. While doing our best, we must rely upon Allah for the results. We must trust that He will make things easy for us and will grant us success. This is an essential etiquette for seeking knowledge and in every endeavor we undertake because we acknowledge that any success that comes our way is through

Allah alone and is not a result of our efforts.

Act upon the knowledge one gains – It is important that one acts upon what they know; only then is the knowledge that one has attained beneficial. If our knowledge is not reflected in our actions then it means that we are showing disrespect to the knowledge.

Utilize Time to the Best of One's Ability – Knowledge does not come with ease. Therefore, it is vital that one uses their time well. When given the opportunity to obtain knowledge, one should not reject it as one does not know when they shall taste death. One must understand the struggle our pious predecessors went through to gain knowledge and so one must not take the facilities for granted which is so easily accessible today.

Studying a variety of books – When one is confident in quite a few fields then one should study a variety of books on one topic to increase ones knowledge in a variety of ways on that particular topic.

Good company – Pious company and friends should be kept so that one can attain their good qualities. It is also good to keep company with those who have a great zeal for knowledge instead of those who do not. This is so that one can never be put off wanting to learn more. The Ulama state, that in order to gain good habits and to acquire beneficial knowledge, it is vital to stay in the presence of good and pious people. If one is not able to be in the company of the pious, then one should read the books written by these pious people.

(Continued on page #. 24)

Who Were the Founders of Sociology?

Dr. M. Basharat Ali

It is a common assertion that Comte was the first thinker, who introduced the modern sociology, but this point of view is not corroborated by the facts of the history. The European historians now openly admit their inferential mistakes. Heran Show, Toyanbee, Sorokin, the most modern authorities in historicism and the social philosophy, on one hand, and the orientalist with Khaldun as their field of inquiry, on the other, admit that about more than six hundred years ago from Comte, it was Khaldun who discovered some of the laws, principles and procedures of the modern sociology and he propounded some of the theories, which stand valid even today. Among them which are to be mentioned here, are the most modern theories of space-time causality, Linear trend and micro and macro sociological approaches. The one discovered by Khaldun—the sociology of eschatology or metaphysics, is still unknown to the modern sociologists.

Social thoughts are the common legacy of mankind. Their history is traceable since 400 B.C., but these thoughts were never systematized in terms of knowledge system. Inspired by the sociological thought patterns of the Qur'an, the Muslim thinkers took initiative to formulate them into definitive system of knowledge in fuller corroboration with the systems of knowledge, like humanities physical sciences and the sciences called by German thinkers as *Geistes Wissen Schafcten* of spiritual sciences. Under those circumstances it was not possible to bifurcate sociology with philosophy or theology. Kindi, Farabi, Ibn-e-Maskaoai and host of others are the

predecessors of Ibn Khaldun. He was the person who systematized and synthesized this useful science, giving it the shape of system of knowledge.

The processes of systematization and synthesization involves four things.

1. The depth and levels approach
2. Axiological existential base and the social determinants of thoughts.
3. The scientific procedure, i.e. including empiricism, critical vision and insight.
4. The unitary and totality concept of life.

In the first category the Qur'anic terms *Tafakkaraon*, *Yash'araon*, *Tanziraan* and *Ta'qilaon* which lead us to the constant reference of things created seen or unseen, are full of meanings. Their objectification is constantly referred to by the Qur'an under the term *Sabaha* with its derivatives. The object of man's superiority over all things created is determined by an axiom referring to this fact that he was created to worship God. One of the source of realization of this end is the constant struggle to subjugate the nature and to be always absorbed in the pursuit of knowledge—empirical, supra-empirical or spiritual etc. These form the basis of the meaning system of the society, institutions and culture.

If the very terms of *Yash'aron* and *Tanziruon* etc., lead to the depth and levels approach to the problem, they and the very exclusive terms *Sama*. *Basar* and *Fawad* lead us to the inference that they definitely refer to the empirical scientific methodology with its interdependent constituents of induction, deduction, experience, experimentalism and analysis etc. In the all-embracing term of

Tawheed, the very idea of the totality and unity of life is covered. Tawheed is the basis or more accurately, the source of all the value system. It is logicomeaningfully and causally related with the attributes of God, which are ninety-nine in number. These attributes to be designated as different types of values, are conglomerated into one composite-whole—the principle of Tawheed which forms the major premise of Islamic culture and the social order both horizontally and vertically on one hand and on the other structurally. These attributes of God, are involved in the very depth and levels of the society, personality, culture and nature. In one way or another one or more of them being demonstrated in the attitude, behaviour and action of both the persons and institutions.

Within the frame-work of these attributes, it is possible to determine the human typology. The constituent elements, necessarily found in every human type are the attributes of Aleem, Baseer and Raheem. With these attributes all possible human association and reciprocity are possible. The entire process in its minutest detail requires sufficient amount of cognizance and hence there is no escape from knowledge and experience. Those who fail to utilize these ingredients in the formation of their personality traits, they are condemned as simply ignorant and cruel (ظلوما جهولا). The acutest form of this sort of deviancy pattern, has been condemned in terms of sealing of the mind, hearing and seeing, the definitive form of the decay of the person.

In the modern times, it is said that the culture is the result of the meaningful orientation and combinations of the systems of religion and truth, knowledge and philosophy etc. The Qur'an does not believe in the system of

knowledge in its philosophical and simple frame-work of reference, except in terms of sociological and axiological orientations. Thus the Qur'anic theory of knowledge as analyzed in the story of Adam is the theory of the sociology of knowledge—a sociological discipline which came into being very recently. Adam was born in a social atmosphere and hence the endowed knowledge re—originates and develops in its right societal and socio-cultural surroundings. Knowledge thus developed fruitfully acts and reacts on the society and gives momentum for the further expansion of the society and the resultant culture in right direction.

The social determinants of knowledge in their elementals and composite whole are meaningful. Thus knowledge dislocated from its central theme is no knowledge at all.

The religion which forms one of the system of culture, is neither dichotomous, nor a simple spiritual entity, looking at the life as profane or negating the empirical and sensate realities. It is totality of life, leading towards unity, harmony and solidarity. It is very unfortunate that the principle of Tawheed is seen in its religious perspective, instead as a major premise of the human nature and Nature. The Qur'an constantly points out that everything refers to unity and harmony.

With the points of view of structural analysis and functionalism it is demanded that culture must necessarily have four ingredients, without them the origination and the configurationally growth of a culture is an impossibility. The four ingredients are as follows :

- (a) The system of meaning
- (b) The system of agency
- (c) The system of vehicle
- (d) The system of value orientation pattern.

These thoughts are fully in conformity with the Qur'anic sociological postulates and axioms. The Qur'an is the first to formulate them and will remain first in expounding them under the frame-work of meanings. As all names and attributes of God are ultimately combined into one category—the Principle of Tawheed, likewise the meanings are ultimately united into that category, as fully enunciated in the Sura Ikhlas. This Sura in its dimension is most important from the points view of axiomatic and axiological sociology.

The system of meaning is the Names and Attributes of God, and on them alone the society, personality and culture is to be evolved, and on them alone they are to be institutionalized to be socialized. It is incumbent duty of the social and political organizations to take persistent care for the preservation and transformation of values. Transformation involves the processes of constant provision for the individuals and groups of each subsequent generations to internalize them. On prophethood, the system of agency rests. In the system of vehicle, the Qur'an is totally involved. It is a value system to meet the changing space-time conditions of life which are typified into two categories—fundamental and allegorical. Both are applied value patterns. There is no change possible in the Fundamentals, but the allegorical are liable to change, under the strict proviso that they should be interpreted in strict conformity with the form, content and meanings of the Fundamental value system.

Society in its preservation and transformation of value and meaning system is inevitably in the constant need of patterns. The Qur'an definitely lays emphasis that all life should be constructed on the life pattern of Muhammad (ﷺ). The problems of pattern, action, space-time dimensions and spiritual values are the

focalized points on which the modern thinkers of sociology are concentrating their research attentions.

The Qur'anic sociology is the first to emphasize on Weltanschauung (world outlook) space-time realities and Zeitgeist (spirit of the age, the problems which are coming into lime light today). The entire socio-cultural system of Islam rests on action and the failure to action is simply condemned as Kufr. The inevitable corollary from such failure will lead to the personal and social disorganizations.

The Qur'an thus forms the source Book for the origination and development of social thought and sociology in Islam. Inspired by this source the philosophers, theologians and jurists etc., in their respective fields developed the social philosophy, sociology of religion and the sociology of law etc. These contributions which were developed along with the usual fields of their specialization, were overlooked by the following generations of scholars. It is also very unfortunate that the commentators of the Qur'an, who produced voluminous works comprising hundred's of volumes, never attempted to magnify the sociological implications of the Qur'an. It was Ibn Khaldun who on the basis of the Qur'an systematized and developed the sociology, which is the first and the last. Last because, he with his idealistic cultural mentality of Islam, laid down the first foundation of the integrated idealistic sociology, which will remain unique and unprecedented for ages to come. Because of the inherent dualistic cultural mentality of the West, the modern sociology is either sensate or ideational. The predominant element of sensatism in the modern sociology has made it a curse rather than at blessing.

The Qur'anic sociology developed as an interdependent science of different fields of scholarship by the different Muslim thinkers and given an exclusive shape by Ibn Khaldun later on, remained in a state of obliviousness for centuries together after Khaldun. It was revived after a long time by Imam Waliullah of Delhi. He added new disciplines to it. The pathological and theromaptic portions of his Hujjat are the most significant contributions. After him, once more the Qur'anic sociology went to stupor and a condition of forgetfulness. Neither the foreign nor the Muslims are fully in knowledge that the sociology was the field of activity of the Muslims. In terms of its typological orientations it was developed along two different but mutually reciprocal axiological lines as delineated by the Qur'an in the verse 3: 6, in terms of Muhkamats and Mutashabihat, one permanent and the other in form flexible to meet the recurring changes

of the space-time dimensions, but necessarily relevant in its axiological base to the non-flexible one the Muhkamats. This mutual reciprocity had its own causal relativity and axiological meaning, referring each in the depth and levels meanings involved in them. These problems are related to the Qur'anic micro-macro and etiological sociologies, which can be discussed in detail here. This cursory account of the Qur'anic sociology is simple to invite the best inquisitive minds both in the East and the West, to pay their research attention to the field which was previously discovered by the Muslims, and remains undiscovered and expanded through the lethargy of the Muslims. So long this atmosphere of darkness and incognizance will remain dominant, Comte will ever be called the first founder of the Science of Society.

(Continued from page #. 10)

which must live in harmony with the general laws of humanity, and the truth of this is well known, even to those who deity it.

The final and important question is that of interpreting the divine laws into action, and making provision for a principle of movement in the progressive ideology of Islamic democracy. This has been boldly faced by Iqbal in his theory of Ijtihad. Those interested would perhaps do well to read his illuminating lecture on 'The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam where he has dealt at length with the principle of Ijtihad. (Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, pp. 146-80.)

I have chosen these five pillars of Islamic democracy from the writings of Iqbal. He was hopeful that sometime it might perhaps be

possible to have a democracy of more or less unique individuals presided over by the most unique individual possible on the earth, and he refers to that day as the "Kingdom of God on Earth." Let us help each other to bring that day nearer.

Iqbal devoted his life to rediscovering the principles of Islam for humanity, and to interpreting them in such a way as to infuse the Muslims of the world with a fresh and vigorous faith, spirit and hope. A better homage cannot be paid to Iqbal than to interpret his concept of Islamic democracy in the land of his dreams—Pakistan—and to continue the great work of reconstruction of Islamic thought that was started by him in right earnest.

Iqbal's Concept of Democracy Based on Islamic Principles

Dr. H. H. Bilgrami

A lecture delivered by the author on Iqbal day at London, Presided over by the High Commissioner of Pakistan as early as April, 1953, which deserves the attention of the Nation even today. Ed.

I deal first with a general misunderstanding which prevails amongst young readers of Iqbal, and which is sometimes shared by some learned scholars. They have complained of some contradiction in Iqbal's writings. To a certain extent all writers are guilty of some contradiction, but the difficulty of these young students lies mostly in a lack of understanding of certain words commonly conveying certain connotations, but used by Iqbal in differing meanings in different contexts. Occasionally Iqbal has made clear his meaning by explaining the two aspects of the word used, but often he has left the imagination of his readers to grasp the pertinent meanings of the word used in its different contexts. Take, for instance, the word وطن (homeland) on which is based Iqbal's condemnation of the theory of nationalism. He points out the two aspects of وطنیت in a short poem—one natural, and therefore lovable; the other political, at the altar of which many a life has been sacrificed. He says:

اس دور میں مے اور ہے، جام اور ہے، جم اور
ساقی نے بنا کی روش لطف و کرم اور
مسلم نے بھی تعمیر کیا اپنا حرم اور
تہذیب کے آذر نے ترشوائے صنم اور
ان تازہ خداوں میں بڑا سب سے وطن ہے

جو پیراھن اس کا ہے وہ مذہب کا کفن ہے
گفتار سیاست میں وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے
ارشاد نبوت میں وطن اور ہے کچھ ہے
اقوام جہاں میں ہے رقابت تو اسی سے
سنجیدہ مقصود تجارت تو اسی سے
خالی ہے صداقت سے سیاست تو اسی سے
کمزور کا گھر ہوتا ہے غارت تو اسی سے
اقوام میں مخلوق خدا بنتی ہے اسی سے
قومیت اسلام کی جڑ کتنی ہے اسی سے

“This is an age of change, of new idols and new gods; and the greatest of these new gods is Watan or Fatherland, which heralds the death of religion, and lays waste the Prophet's teachings. Strengthen thy arm with the strength of Tauhid, thy country is Islam, thou belongest to the Prophet. Remember thy past glories and cast this new idol to the dust. It' thou be slave to place thou shalt perish; be as free of fatherland as the fish in the sea. Fatherland means one thing in political discussion, another in the bidding of the Prophet; it breeds rivalries and suppressions, it robs politics of truth, and it plunders the weaker nations. It divides God's world into nations, and cuts through the root of Islam.”

Presenting his view of democracy in his poetry and in his writings he has maintained this same dual approach, i.e., that of praising one aspect of a thing and condemning the other. He undoubtedly had an admiration and respect for democracy and the democratic way of life and wanted to see a true

democracy reigning over a united world, but he did not fail to remind the world in the strongest possible terms of the sad and unfortunate results of the often narrow concept of democracy when translated into practice. He had no patience for such democracies, and considered them as harmful to society as Fascism and Communism. Broadcasting on the occasion of New Year's Day in 1938. Iqbal said:

“The modern age prides itself on its progress in knowledge and its matchless scientific developments. No doubt, the pride is justified....but, in spite of all these developments, the tyranny of imperialism struts abroad, covering its face in the masks of Democracy, Nationalism, Communism, Fascism and heaven knows what else besides. Under these masks, in every corner of the earth, the spirit of freedom and the dignity of man are being trampled underfoot in a way of which not even the darkest period of human history presents a parallel. (Speeches and Statements of Iqbal, 1944. pp. 200.01.)

And, after presenting a fearful picture of greed and avarice, bloodshed and the economic exploitation of the weak nations by the strong, he concludes:

“So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialize. (Speeches and Statements of Iqbal, p. 201.)

In writing about democracy in his poems, he refers to Steindal when he says:

A European once revealed this secret,

Although wise men do not usually reveal it.
Democracy is a form of government in which

People are counted, but not appraised.

اس راز کو اک مرد فرنگی نے کیا فاش

ہر چند کہ دانا اسے کھولا نہیں کرتے

جمہوریت اک طرز حکومت ہے جس میں

بندوں کو گنا کرتے ہیں تو لا نہیں کرتے

Iqbal has criticized certain aspects of democracy, not because he was against it, but because he saw that the future of world peace, and the uplifting of humanity lay in accepting the truly democratic way of life. He was keen to reform the concept of democracy in such a way that it might purge humanity of all evils, and establish a social order that would be nearer to the concept of the “Kingdom of God on Earth”, and he saw the vision of this democracy in Islam, which does not ignore the masses, but develops in them a character that has a higher purpose in life. Thus Islam shifts the basis of democracy from economic exploitation to a spiritual purification and better economical adjustment.

Writing as early as 1916, and criticizing Nietzsche, Iqbal said:

“The democracy of Europe—overshadowed by socialist agitation and anarchical fear—originated mainly in the economic regeneration of European society. Nietzsche, however, abhors this ‘rule of herd’ and, hopeless of the plebeian, he bases all higher culture on the cultivation and growth of an Aristocracy of Supermen. But, is the plebeian so absolutely hopeless? The democracy of

Islam did not grow out of the extension of economic opportunity; it is a spiritual principle, based on the assumption that every human being is a centre of latent power. The possibilities of which can be developed by cultivating a certain type of character. Out of the plebeian material Islam has formed men of the noblest type of life and power. Is not, then, the democracy of early Islam an experimental refutation of the ideal of Nietzsche." (RA. Nicholson, Secrets of the Self, Intro. p. xxxix. footnote.)

The basis of this Islamic democracy has well been pointed out by Mr. Ameer Ali in his "Spirit of Islam," and by Mr. Farid Jafri in his "The Spirit of Pakistan." According to both of them, it lies in the words of the Prophet himself when he addressed the assembled multitude on the 8th of Zu'l Hijja, i.e., the 7th March 623 A.D., in words which should ever live in the heart of Muslims:-

"Ye people, listen to my words, your lives and your property are sacred and inviolable amongst one another until you appear before the Lord. . .Ye people, you have rights -over you.. keep always faithful to the trust reposed in you and avoid sin. .Usury is forbidden. .Ye people, listen to my words and understand the same. Know that all Muslim are brother unto one another. Ye are one brotherhood nothing which belongs to another is lawful unto his brother unless freely given out of his good will. Guard yourselves from committing injustice."

"The aristocracy of old time is trampled under my feet. The Arab has no superiority over the non-Arab. And a non-Arab has no superiority over the Arab. All are children of Adam, and Adam was made of the dust of the earth."

To this concept of equality and brotherhood, liberty and freedom, social justice and

humanitarianism, Iqbal looked when giving shape to a social order that can only be called Islamic democracy. He had dreamed of a homeland for the Muslims of India, not for the sake of a new country of which the people could be proud in being the largest Muslim state, but to use it as a means to realize the higher ideals of this Islamic democracy. Iqbal has well analyzed in his poetry and his essays the concept of this democracy. His great desire was that Muslims themselves should work it out and thus provide a light to the world. Nothing would be more unfortunate for Muslims than to be unfaithful to the trust reposed in them.

Let us analyze some of the fundamentals of Iqbal's concept of Islamic democracy:

I. The fundamental basis of Islamic democracy is Tauhid—the Oneness of God. "The supreme power and the final authority in Islamic democracy is that of God." Only His guidance is to be followed, and only He is to be obeyed. The head of the state and the government are only His representatives to carry on according to His wishes. Iqbal, in his usual philosophical style, puts it as follows:

"Islam, as a polity, is only a practical means of making this principle (of 'Tauhid') a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind. it demands loyalty to God, and not to thrones. And, since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to men's loyalty to his own ideal nature." (Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 147.)

A point which Iqbal has emphasized, and which is often overlooked, is that it is not sufficient to offer lip-service to God, or merely to have a faith in His existence, but, what is important, firmly believes in Him as a Creator, Lawgiver and Al-mighty, and acting

according to His laws and orders. It is in this obedience and submission to God, and to His will, that the salvation of the individual and of humanity lies.

The second point of importance in Iqbal's theory of Islamic democracy is the obedience to the Law as given from time to time to mankind by the prophets, and as completed by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). With him the age of revelation has come to an end and the age of realization has started. He is the completest Ego, the goal of humanity. "The more we advance in evolution; the nearer we get to him." It would be a solemn duty of any state wishing to follow Islamic democracy to preserve and obey these laws as illustrated in the teaching and noble actions of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Iqbal's poem on the Mysteries of Selflessness deals at length with this divine guidance as revealed in the extraordinary and remarkable personality of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). His love is not merely described as a great unifying force of the Muslim community, but Iqbal has also found in his teachings of freedom social equality and human brotherhood, the pillars of true Islamic democracy. Here none was to be deprived of his rights on the grounds of colour, sect or social and economic circumstances. Iqbal cried out:

از رسالت در جهان تکوین ما

از رسالت دین ما آئین ما

دامنش از دست دادن مردن است

چون گل از باد خزاں افسردن است

Our genesis on earth comes from the Prophethood.

From the Prophethood come our religion and our laws.

Leaving his side is but to perish

As the rose withers in the autumnal wind.

The third point which characterizes the spirit of Islamic democracy is that of tolerance. Iqbal does not believe in tolerance which is the result of weakness. Since his theory of Islamic democracy is based on the assumption that all human life is spiritual in origin, he could not ignore this important aspect of true humanity. Since humanity is spiritual in origin, it is essential that individuals try to understand and tolerate one another, and to further this tolerance and understanding is one of the important tasks of Tauhid (the Oneness of God). Iqbal says that, viewed psychologically, "Tauhid seeks to restore the torn and divided world to its integral unity and offers an intellectual impetus towards the resolution of those dualisms which have always tended to arrest the thought." Tolerance has been given the same importance in Iqbal's system of the development of self and of the social order as it should be. In Iqbal's Islamic democracy all persons would enjoy, as any Muslim would, the same security of life and property, honour, freedom of religion and beliefs, freedom of expression and freedom of movement, freedom of association and occupation, and equality of opportunity.

Only the head of the state would be a Muslim, but in return it would be the duty of all Muslims to see first to the needs of their non-Muslim brethren.

Iqbal's concept of Islamic democracy is not limited to any particular geographical, racial or linguistic boundary. We need not go into the details of his open condemnation of nationalism. The concept of a nation to him was nothing more than the concept of a small family (continued on page #. 6)

The General Approach of Muslim Missionaries for Preaching Islam in the Modern World

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Brelvi

This excellent article by a renowned scholar had, for the sake of brevity and cohesion, to be edited and considerably shortened. Despite this, the thoughts of the writer remains intact.—
Editor.

The first anti-religious human society was formed in ancient Greece, the criterion of whose art and civilization was the worship of human beauty in its naked and licentious forms of which the present international Olympic Games are a direct inheritance. This Godless culture was then taken up by the Roman Empire to the commencement of the European Renaissance and reached its zenith in the teachings of Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1532), founder of the theory of 'Nationalism'. Martin Luther then came with his Reformation and the Protestant Church was founded.

At this time also there appeared Francis Bacon (1561-1625)—the founder of the scientific spirit of the modern world—through his famous work. "The New Atlantis". Descartes (1596-1650) perfected the work of Francis Bacon and nullified the theories of Aristotle. In its wake and in the maelstrom of this so-called 'scientific spirit' came Newton. Voltaire, Hume, Rousseau, Darwin (who broke away completely from the religious ideal with his 'Biological Evolution'), William James, Pavlov, Sigmund Freud and so on and so forth. Bertrand Russell supported this materialistic philosophy of human life and Schopenhauer declared humanity and the universe meaningless and without purpose. This 'modernism' rejects the idea of life after death and is thus an anti-thesis to the teachings of Islam.

Imam Al-Ghazzali, Ibn Taimiyyah and Shah Waliullah (1703-1762) have been great exponents of the true and pristine Islam whose successor in later times was Syed Jamaluddin Afghani (1838-1897). After this we witness a veering away from the true Islamic spirit and "modernist" writers and preachers among the Muslim intelligentsia sprang up and began to imbibe the western 'scientific spirit' in their teachings. The westernization of Al-Azhar University in Cairo by late President Gemal Abdel Nasser was largely due to the influence of Taha Husain. In this climate Arab Nationalism was born.

There are over 900 million Muslims in the world (World Muslim Gazetteer, 1975), and their main concentrations are in China, India, Pakistan, Soviet Russia, Indonesia, the Middle-East, the Arab lands and north and West Africa. Out of these there are many different and differing sects covering all these vast lands where Muslims predominate and even in minority areas. With the dismemberment of the Caliphate and successive ruling dynasties many petty dynasties sprang up in the east and in the west each with its own ruling chief or, in the case of the bigger and more powerful dynasty, sultan. The history of these dynasties carries on right up to the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire in Turkey in 1924.

Throughout these turbulent, intervening

periods there were people who saw the great need for the forging of a strong cohesive element to retain the essential unity of the Ummat and the gradual weakening of their meagre resources. It was in 1954 that Dr. Syed Abdul Latif, President of the Council of the Academy of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad, Deccan (India) invited the attention of leading Muslim scholars of the world to a NOTE adopted by the Council, suggesting the need for a fresh approach, on scientific lines to the study of the Hadith literature and codification, by a body of competent scholars, representative of the entire Muslim world, of a single authorized corpus of authentic traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ), as an aid to the study of the Qur'anic Mukhkamat in the context of the present-day world. The primary aim, underlying the proposal, was stated to be "the clearing of the Qur'anic ideology of all accretions, and thereby paving the way to a restoration of Islamic thought on a basis agreeable to the entire Ummat, particularly in the domain of law". The replies received were classified into four sections, the majority being in favour of the proposition.

Firstly, there were those, who did not wish to disturb the status quo—the out and out traditionalists, who even prefer a return to a stricter form of traditional Islam.

Secondly, there was the group, which rejected the entire gamut of Hadith as of no consequence to Islam. The Qur'an was enough for them.

Thirdly, there was a school of thought, which was out to discard the entire framework of the traditional Islam as built in the course of history, by the interaction of the Qur'an and the Hadith, the rest content with the "spirit or essence" of Islam. This was by no means a negligible trend. It had already taken concrete

form in Turkey and Tunisia and begun to extend its influence in other parts of the Muslim world. It was a part of a wider intellectual movement, which aimed to separate law from religion, and secularize social life. Those under the second and third categories represented a powerful reaction to the Islam dominated by the Hadith, and stood poles apart from those coming under the first category.

Fourthly, there was a body of thought, which stood oscillated between its essential regard for the traditional Islam and its intellectual fascination for Westernism. Those who found themselves in this uncomfortable position, wish to "combine modernity with a maintenance of internal tradition."

The above analysis of trends was, to some extent, reinforced by the proceedings of the Colloquim of Islamic Culture, held in the USA, in September, 1953 under the joint auspices of the Princeton University and the Library of the Congress in Washington, as well as of the inter-faith international Bhamdoun Convocation, held near Beirut (Lebanon) in April, 1954, under the auspices of the American Friends of the Middle-East, New York.

Prominent among those who were satisfied with the status qua or were against instituting investigation into the Hadith literature were Dr. Omar A. Farrukh of Beirut, Prof. M.A. Ghamrawi of Cairo, and Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah of Paris. As against the above group, which favoured the preservation of every riwayat, whatever its quality, there was the group which rejected the entire gamut of rewayaat as untrustworthy and of no consequence to Islam. The Qur'an, they claim, was enough for them. Prominent among this group was the 'Nadwah Ansar al-

Qur'an of Cairo. It represented a reaction to the Islam of the *Riwayaat*, which was alleged to have thwarted progressive urges and created in earnest minds the sense of frustration and the impelling counter-urge to seek refuge in the Qur'an alone. Powerfully inclined to this view was also Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz al-Arousy of Cairo. The attitude of Cairo Nadwah was upheld, among others, by Maulana Muhammad Aslam Jairajpuri and Maulana Ataullah Palwi in India, and Mr. Ghulam Ahmad Pervez in Pakistan.

Standing aside from either of the two groups, referred to above—the out and out traditionalists and the out and out Qur'anists—there was a third group of scholars to whom the 'spirit' or essence of Islam 'alone mattered'. This group would be divided into two sets—one represented by Prof. A.A.A. Fyzee in India, and the other by Ahmad Amin Yalman. Editor of 'Vatan' in Istanbul—once a close associate of the late Ataturk. The two displayed two different facets of one and the same attitude. While Dr. Fyzee was keen on separating religion from law and subjecting the letters "the highest norms fixed by modern juristic thinking", and the former including its dogma to "the principles of higher criticism". Yalman was out to discard the entire framework of Islam in its relation both to law and religion, and rely on the "real spirit of Islam" for a "virtuous and honest life." While the main objective of the sponsoring Hyderabad Academy was to re-orientate Islamic thought for the world of today in the light of the Qur'anic ideology, the aim of both Dr. Fyzee and Mr. Yalman, in particular, was to re-fashion it in the light of western modernism. leaving Islam to be a matter of the spirit only. Dr. Fyzee seems to be influenced by the modernist movements of the Near East where, as pointed out by Dr.

Majid Khadduri of the John Hopkins University in the USA, in his paper, 'Secularization and Islamic Law', presented at the Princeton University Colloquim, "the introduction of western civil codes, operating side by side with Islamic law, has raised the problem of reconciling the two systems in order to avoid conflict." A movement already afoot to secularize the Islamic law, particularly through the contribution in the field of law made by Dr. Sannouri, who is known to have prepared a new civil code both for the UAR and Iraq. This is considered to be an advance on the late Muhammad Abduh's modernization movement, which aimed at "combining the best of Islam and modernism by his argument that there was no conflict in essentials between Islam and the Western civilization." It may be observed that neither Dr. Fyzee nor Mr. Yalman ever explained as to what actually was meant by the "essence of Islam" or the "real spirit of Islam", or showed how and out of what material could it be raised up for our view, or how it differed or was distinguished from what is nowadays comfortably termed 'natural morality'.

It is often heard in modernist circles that Islam needs to be harmonized with the changed conditions of life of the present scientifically progressive world. This sort of argument is absolutely incomprehensible to well-meaning, sincere Muslim circles, who are convinced of Islam being an all-pervasive way of life capable of being successfully practiced in all circumstances of human life. For them, the norm is not the modern libertinism and freedom from human decency and morality, but the principles of Islam that are thoroughly compatible with all conditions of life irrespective of time and place and practicable in every human society. These

detractors of Islam echo the voices of Christian missionaries and Western Orientalists, the sole aim of whose efforts is to create a modern version of Islam, which directly nullifies its fundamental principles and teachings and thus destroy Islam as an irresistible religious force, whose spread and popularity threatens the very existence of Judaism and Christianity.

The Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Cairo has published an English version of Muhammad Ibrahim Hamza's Arabic book, under the title of "Muslim Socialism and the Western Theories of Socialism" (Cairo, 1964) in its 'Studies in Islam Series', in which the un-Islamic socialistic theories have been sought to be justified. While the application of western modernism unselectively is injurious to Muslim society, equally harmful is the blind following of socialistic theories which run counter to the Islamic tenets.

It is a matter of deep regret that the Muslims, whose very aim of life was the propagation of Islam, are today found totally oblivious of this grave responsibility. They have forgotten that, with the closure of the door of prophethood, the responsibilities for fulfilling the mission of Islam now devolve on their shoulders. History bears witness to the fact, the Millat continued to pulsate with life for as long as their hearts were fired with the missionary zeal. But, when the Muslims, during the course of time, developed a false notion to be content to look after their own self and no more, the fire of faith began to lose its warmth. The inevitable result was that they could not sustain even their own faith as they were divorced from their corporate struggle with the consequence that the great Millat disintegrated into numerous weak schisms and sects to become powerless and voiceless in the comity of nations.

Those who have visited America and Europe, have noticed the apparent religiosity of the western society. However, it seems strange that from the same source emanate Christian missionaries of all denominations who preach the gospel to the peoples in Asia and Africa. These Christian missionaries invariably are highly educated and wield large funds to run missionary schools, hospitals and libraries, that have proved the most effective media in the field of religious propaganda. Besides, religious propaganda in the modern world has its commercial, cultural and political values too. For instance, a number of Muslim African regions previously after their conversion to Christianity, are now independent Christian States. Moreover, mere preaching is of little value, unless the preacher possesses personality, high education, piety, poise, wit and character. A Muslim *Muballigh* (missionary) will be an utter failure in foreign lands if he simply harps on his particular Islamic knowledge and appearance according to shari'ah, but fails to impress the people he preaches to by his tactfulness, behaviour, breadth of vision, understanding of foreign conditions and adaptability without losing his identity. Pakistani *Muballighin*, by spreading Islam in foreign countries, will, simultaneously, project Pakistan also to the world – an objective that was counseled by the Father of the Nation. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

In all fields of human activity, along with the religious knowledge and the proper practice of religious observances, it is also necessary that one should have ample common sense, better known as the sense of proportion, presentability, correct assessment of existing situations, wit and humour penetrating wisdom, and, above all, an unimpeachable character.

Those Who Do Not Pay Zakaat Will Not Enter Paradise

Goolam Rassool Hussain

It is incumbent on every Muslim who has managed to save 7.5 tola gold or 52.5 tola silver (or the currency equal to their price) or articles of trade, to give away at the expiration of a year a poor rate of 2 ½ % as a compulsory obligation to his brethren in a less fortunate position. Islam, as a natural religion, has a solution, a perfect one, for all social and spiritual problems.

I do not know what to think of and call those who, while zealously following the four other fundamental principles of Islam, e.g., Declaration of Faith, Prayer, Fasting and Pilgrimage, seem to be less careful in giving Zakaat and I am sorry for them, because poor rate Zakaat—is the third principle of Islam and really the most important socially, because all the other four pillars of Islam are for the improvement and benefit of one's own soul, whereas Zakaat benefits others at one's own expense and demands sacrifice of a part of one's wealth.

Every Muslim knows that the fundamental principles of Islam consist of five (and not four) and the real Islamic spirit of sacrifice and service to others is contained in the marvellous institution of Zakaat. How much longer can we Muslims be apathetic and avoid this most fundamental issue?

While others try newer and newer plans (which fall short of perfect success) should we Muslims not at once organize ourselves to put into practice a system proved to be of perfect success for ages? Follow Shariat for your social and spiritual uplift for thereby, and only thereby, success is possible.

The self-styled potentates had usurped the rights of God and Prophets, they started a mingled creed of their own that brought nothing but self-aggrandizement to them, and no help or consolidation for the masses. Man had forgotten to be man, as God made him, but had become a beast, all human consideration had vanished. Each for himself was the policy creed and practice.

The rich grew fat on the toil of the poor; men were made slaves to work, toil, live and die for those who had money, land and power. The oppressed were so much trod upon that they had come to believe that it was their rightful place in the world that they were born only to work, suffer and die for the few lucky ones who had money and power.

This treatment of man to man was the worst and most awful thing the world ever witnessed. There seemed to be absolutely no means whatever, of redress, no hopes of salvation, it was grinding, pulsating beastly work for one, and enjoyment of its fruits by the other.

God in His infinite mercy, after having given man plenty of time to reform and seeing no signs, took upon Himself the task of redressing the great wrong done by man to man, and also man to woman, for to outrage that which is best and purest in the world for the sake of one's passions is the last thing to be tolerated. So God decided that as man would not, He should end the mischief, the pain, suffering and misery in the world, and chose as His vicegerent on earth the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to cause to flourish His

word far and wide.

God desired that none should work in the world with any handicap, and for this purpose the brotherhood of Islam was created. Every religion preaches charity, but only here in Islam a method and regularity has been given to it, and made an institution; it makes Zakaat, i.e. poor rate, obligatory on all those who profess the faith. Thus it is a brotherhood in which a rich man cannot enter unless he gives a part of his wealth towards the support of the poor.

In Islam, hoarding of wealth has been made a great offence, because it leads one to be forgetful of the duties imposed by God:

“And as for those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend in Allah’s way, Allah announces to them a painful chastisement. On the day when it shall be heated with the fire of hell, then their foreheads, and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it” (Al-Tuba [9]: 34-35).

The payment of the poor-rate is an injunction next in importance to prayers. The Zakaat (poor-rate) in the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is a tax taken from the rich and given to the poor for their benefit and uplift. Literally, it means a sort of cleaning and purging and is obligatory on every free adult who possesses the minimum of possession. God in the Holy Qur’an says: “If they (the unbelievers) really repent and begin to say prayers and give poor-rate, they are your brothers.” (Al-Tuba [9]: 11).

At the end of every year, it is made necessary that each Muslim should give a certain percent of his wealth towards the care and uplift of the poor. Zakaat has been made one of the practical tests of Islam, the avoidance of which excommunicates one

from the fold of Islam. God did not make man that one should treat the other with cruelty, and use him as a beast of burden; He desired that they should live like so many brothers, helping one another in their need, and respecting one another, in short, to be kind and considerate to one and all by word and deed.

It was ordained that Zakaat should be spent on the following:

1. The poor;
2. The needy;
3. Those in debt;
4. For the ransom of captives;
5. The wayfarer;
6. The Zakaat office personnel;
7. The promulgation of Faith; and
8. The Way of Allah.

In short, everybody who owns a certain sum of money at the end of the year, has to give Zakaat. There are, I daresay, some Muslims who think that this yearly payment of Zakaat reduces their income; they are entirely wrong and should not think so, because God helps them in other ways, because they help the poor; in fact, giving Zakaat being the performance of divine duty, it helps to keep the fortunes of all poor-rate givers free from all vicissitudes. Depression there will be, hard times there will be, all this will tide over, and will be tided over sooner in the cases of those who are the regular observers of all the tenets of Islam.

Today the Muslims are a fallen people; they appear to be behind in education, wealth and everything. Poverty and ignorance are "increasing instead of decreasing. This is due to the non-observance of this fundamental principle of Zakaat. It is a crying shame, all this; because the Muslims today have forgotten their religious obligations and instead are highly neglectful of them. Self-aggrandizement, hypocrisy etc., seem to be their main motivation. Is it any wonder we

Muslims are backward? We are losing and will continue to lose, until we have lost all, and only then will we realize the greatness of our loss.

A great many are in a position to help but do not they seem ignorant of what is the 'result of their inactivity. Most of those who are well-off, think only of themselves; their money is spent on pleasure, luxury and frivolity. They are unmindful and do not seem to care what is happening to the rest of the

Muslim brotherhood.

I warn them to take heed now before it is too late. The warning has already come in the incidence of the earthquakes and who can say what other calamities there are in store for us. So repent sincerely while there is time and give Zakaat as ordained by God. If the Muslims do not give Zakaat as ordained, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has warned them that they will never smell the garden of Paradise, let alone entering there.

THE QUR'ANIC FOUNDATIONS
AND
STRUCTURE OF MUSLIM SOCIETY'

By'

Dr. Muhammed Fazl-ur-Rahman Ansari .

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Lailatul Bara'ah

15th Night of Sha'ban

The 15th Night of Sha'baan (Lailatul Bara'ah) has been regarded as an auspicious occasion by the Ummah since the earliest times. Since the time of Rasulullah (ﷺ) this Night has been considered a holy occasion to be spent in Ibaadat. Throughout the history of Islam, down to our present age, the 15th Night of Sha'baan has been accepted as an auspicious night. However, some persons in these times object to this Night being classified as among the Holy Nights of Islam. They brand as false the belief in the holiness of Lailatul Bara'ah.

In substantiation of their claim they present the views of some authorities of Islam while overlooking the authoritative views of other authorities as well as the general practice of the Ummah on this issue since the earliest times. By general practice of the Ummah we do not refer to the many bid'aat (innovation) and fabricated practices which have been introduced and coupled to Lailatul Bara'ah by people who have strayed from the Path of the Sunnah. The general practice of the Ummah in regard to the 15th Night of Sha'baan is:

- ❖ To visit the qabrustaan (Graveyard) individually on this Night, making dua for the dead as was done by Rasulullah (ﷺ).
- ❖ To spend part of the night in individual Ibaadat in the privacy of the home.
- ❖ To fast on the 15th Day of Sha'baan. Besides the above acts, all other practices, customs and festivals associated with this auspicious occasion are bid'aah and unlawful, having neither origin nor sanction in the Sunnah.

It is conceded that there does exist difference

of opinion among the authorities regarding the status and the significance of the 15th Night and Day of Sha'baan. However, in spite of the existence of such difference of opinion, it is erroneous to claim that the 15th Night of Sha'baan has no origin and no substantiation in Islam. Unlike the bid'ah practices which are unanimously condemned and prohibited by all authorities of Islam, the auspiciousness of the 15th Night of Sha'baan is upheld by numerous illustrious personalities of Islam.

Those who reject the validity of the holiness of this Night do so on the basis that the narrations concerning the 15th Night of Sha'baan are 'Weak', hence should be discounted. It should, however, be remembered that the designation 'Dhaeef' (Weak) in the terminology of the Muhadditheen is a word of technical import. It does not mean that a 'Dhaeef' narration is fabricated and should be rejected in entirety. A Hadith which is designated 'Dhaeef' attains strength when its subject-matter is narrated by different Chains of narrators. The abundance of Chains of Narrations of a 'Dhaeef' Hadith bestows to it the classification of 'Hasan li ghairihi'. Such a Hadith is thus acceptable and can be acted on.

Furthermore, a Dhaeef Hadith is accepted by all authorities in regard to Fadhaail (significance, virtues, excellences). In this regard Mulla Ali Qaari states: "But, in regard to the virtues of deeds of righteousness, Dhaeef Hadith is acceptable by the consensus of the Ulama." While a Dhaeef Hadith will not constitute a basis for establishing Aqaa'id (Beliefs) and specific

classes of Law (Ahkaam), nevertheless, such Ahadith may be acted on in regard to the Fadhaail (virtues) of Ibaadat.

On the basis of the aforementioned explanation, it is clear that in view of the Dhaeef category of the narrations, Lailatul Bara'at cannot be imposed on people nor can it be designated a Sunnat-e-Muakkadah. Nevertheless, it will be an act of merit and thawaab to spend this night in Ibaadat and fast on the 15th Day on account of the number of Hadith narrations making mention of the auspiciousness of this Night and of the acts of Ibaadat stated therein even though these Ahadith may be of the Dhaeef category.

The rejecters of the holiness of the 15th Night of Sha'baan further present their argument pertaining to the majority view on the Qur'anic verse No. 3 of Surah Dukhaan which reads:

“Verily, We have revealed it (Qur'an) in a gracious night.”

All books of Tafseer present two different views regarding the meaning of 'the gracious night'. One view, which is the Jamhoor (Majority) view and the most authentic one, is that the 'gracious night' mentioned here is Lailatul Qadr. The other view is that it is Lailatul Bara'at (15th Night of Sha'baan). Since the overwhelming majority of authorities have opined on the basis of clear and categoric proofs that the 'gracious night' mentioned in this aayat refers to Lialatul Qadr and not Lailatul Bara'at, the rejecters of the 15th Night of Sha'baan have confused two separate issues, viz., the meaning of 'gracious night' mentioned in the aayat and the validity of the auspiciousness of the 15th Night of Sha'baan. These are different issues and should not be confused. While it is

conceded that the view of the Jamhoor Ulama is that the 'gracious night' mentioned in aayat 3 of Surah Dulchaan is a reference to Lailatul Qadr, it does not follow therefrom that the 15th Night of Sha'baan is not an auspicious night. At most, it has to be accepted that the case of the Jamhoor regarding the tafseer of Al-lailatul Mubaarakah stated in this particular aayat, is stronger and has greater reliability than the view of those Ulama who claim that the 'gracious night' stated in this aayat is the 15th Night of Sha'baan.

It is incorrect to argue that because the 'gracious night' mentioned in aayat 3 of Surah Dukhaan refers to Lailatul Qadr, the 15th Night of Sha'baan has no validity or significance of holiness. The auspiciousness of Lailatul Bara'at is not based on this particular aayat. A number of other Hadith narrations collectively establish the significance of the 15th Night of Sha'baan. All authorities cite these narrations and only a few have rejected them outright. We shall now proceed to cite the various authoritative Tafseer Kitaabs which present the validity of the 15th Night of Sha'baan.

The aayat under discussion is No. 3 of Surah Dukhaan:

“Verily We revealed it in a gracious night.”

Tafseer Mazhari states:

“It is Lialatul Qadr... The hadith which has been narrated from Qasim Bin Muhammad who narrates from his father or his uncle who narrates from his grandfather who narrated on the authority of Rasulullah (ﷺ) that he said: “Allah descends to the worldly heaven on the Night of the middle of Sha'baan. He then forgives all people except him who has malice in his heart or a mushrik with Allah”, according to Baghawi, does not indicate the

revelation of the Qur'an during that night (i.e. 15th Night of Sha'baan)."

While the difference of interpretation cited in the above-mentioned Tafseer of the aayat pertains to the meaning of the 'gracious night', it does not negate the validity of the auspiciousness of Lailatul Bara'at. It merely states that while according to one opinion (viz. the most authentic and authoritative) the aayat refers to Lailatul Qadr, another opinion, also of Islamic authorities, assert it to be Lailatul Bara'at. Thus it is said quite clearly in Mazhari that according to Baghawi the narration regarding the 15th Night of Sha'baan does not indicate that the 'gracious night' stated in this specific aayat refers to Lailatul Bara'at .

Tafseerul Khaazin states:

"It is Lailatul Qadr...and it said it is the middle night of Sha'baan. It is narrated from Aishah (رضى الله عنها) that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: 'Verily, Allah descends to the Samaa-e-Dunya (the worldly heaven, i.e. the lowest heaven) during the middle night of Sha'baan. He then forgives more (people) than the number of hairs on the sheep of the tribe of Bani Kalb (Tirmidhi)."

Tafseerul Khaazin further states:

"Baghawi has narrated with his Chain of Narrators (Sanad) that verily, Nabi (ﷺ) said:

"The fates (of all things) are recorded from Sha'baan, even the marriage of a man and a child being born to him."

Tafseerul Khaazin also reports the following narration of Ibn Abbaas (رضى الله عنه):

'Verily Allah decrees Decisions in the middle night of Sha'baan and then assigns (the execution) of these to their respective agents (the Malaikah) during Lialatul Qadr."

Tafseerul Baghawi states the following in regard to the 15th Night of Sha'baan:

"Abdul Waahid Mulaihi informed us (the Chain of Narrators then proceeds through the following names: Abu Mansoor Somaani, Abu Ja'far Rayyani, Humaid bin Zan jorbih, Isbagh Ibnul Farj, Ibn Wahab, Amar Bin Haarith, Abdul Malik Bin Abdul Malik, Ibn Aqbi Thi'b, Qaasim Bin Muhammad from his father or his uncle that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Allah descends to the Samaa-e-Dunya in the middle night of Sha'baan and He then forgives everyone except a person who bears malice in his heart or one who commits shirk with Allah."

Commenting on the meaning of the 'gracious night' mentioned in Surah Dukhaan, Baghawi states in his Tafseer: "Hasan, Mujaahid and Qataadah said that during the Month of Ramadhaan in the Night of Qadr, every death, act, birth, sustenance and whatever will occur during that year are recorded. Ikramah said that it is the Middle Night of Sha'baan in which the affairs of the year are decided..."

In a pamphlet issued by the rejecters of Lailatul Bara'at, the following statement is made:

"Ibn Katheer writes that the night in which therein is decreed for every affair of Wisdom is the Lailatul Qadr. And whoever says it is in the month of Shabaan as said by Ekrama is a great lie."

In this atrociously phrased sentence, an attempt has been made to denigrate the illustrious Mufassir, Hadhrat Ikramah (رحمة الله عليه). The claim has been made that Ibn Katheer has branded Hadhrat Ikramah as a 'liar' on account of the latter's view and contention that the 'gracious night' is Lailatul

Bara'at. However, Ibn Katheer does not proclaim Hadhrat Ikramah to be a liar. On the contrary, he expresses surprise at the view of Ikramah and thus says:

“He who said that it is the middle night of Sha’baan as has been narrated from Ikramah, verily, he is far from the grazing field.”

By this, Ibn Katheer means that Ikramah’s view is ‘far-fetched’. He does not brand Ikramah a liar. Ikramah is among the great authorities of Islam. Difference of opinion and interpretation are natural and logical corollaries of Knowledge. Differences of opinion are to be found in numerous ilmi issues. The view of a reliable authority cannot be summarily dismissed and branded as a fabrication, especially by non-entities such as those who are responsible for the pamphlet denying the validity of Lailatul Bara’ah. Hadhrat Ikramah (رحمة الله عليه) was among the Taabieen. He was the Maula of Abdullah Ibn Abbaas (رضى الله عنه). Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbaas (رضى الله عنه) was his Ustaad (teacher). Ikramah was among the illustrious Fuqaha of Makkah Mukarramah. He acquired the Knowledge of Hadith from Ibn Abbaas and many other Sahabah of Rasulullah (ﷺ). He was thus in direct contact with the Knowledge of Rasulullah (ﷺ) through the solitary link of the Sahaabah whereas Ibn Katheer was nowhere on the scene when Ikramah was riding on the crest of the Wave of ilm. When the illustrious Saeed Bin Jubair was asked: “Is there anyone with more knowledge than you? he replied:

‘Ikramah, among the Sahaabah from whom Ikramah acquired Hadith are Aishah, Abu Hurairah, Abu Saeed (رضى الله عنهم) and others. It is, therefore, dangerous to brand

such a great authority of the Shariah as a ‘liar’ on account of some isolated claims.

Furthermore, Ibn Katheer, in the Tafseer of this ayat of Surah Dukhaan cites the following Hadith in favour of Lailatul Bara’at:

“Abdullah Bin Saalih narrates from Laith who narrates from Aqeel who narrates from Zuhri who narrates from Uthmaan Bin Muhammad Ibnul Mugheerah Ibnul Akhnas who said: ‘Verily, Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: All fate is decreed from Sha’baan to Sha’baan even to the extent that a man will marry and a child will be born to him.’”

Ibn Katheer classifies this Hadith as ‘mursal’ which is one of the classes of Hadith. While Ibn Katheer is quite correct in averting that a Mursal Hadith cannot be presented in opposition to a categorical Qur’anic statement, the fact here is that this Mursal Hadith as well as other Dhaeef Ahadith are not tendered in conflict with the verse of Surah Dukhaan, viz., about the ‘gracious night’. The combination of the various Mursal and Dhaeef Ahadith collectively elevate the narrations to the degree of acceptability on the bases of the Principles of the Muhadditheen. These narrations thus suffice to establish and substantiate the validity of the auspiciousness of the 15th Night of Sha’baan. The following ruling applies to Mursal Ahadith:

“According to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Maalik, the Mursal Hadith is accepted without any conditions. According to Imam Shaafi if the Mursal is supported in some other way (by another narration), even if it be Dhaeef (Weak), will be acceptable. Two versions have been attributed to Imam Ahmad.”

Thus the Mursal Ahadith on this issue cannot be described as fabrications not can they be

dismissed. Cognizance has all along been taken of such Ahadith, especially in the matter of Fadhaail and Ibaadat.

Tafseer Baidhaawi states in the tafseer of this aayat of Surah Dukhaan: "(The gracious night) is Lailatul Qadr or Lailatul Bara'at."

Tafseer Kabeer of Fakhruddin Razi says:

"They (the authorities) differ regarding the (meaning of) the gracious night. The majority say that it is Lailatul Qadr. Ikramah and another group say that it is Lailatul Bara'at and that is the middle night of Sha'baan."

While Fakhruddin Razi disagrees with the view of Ikramah, the difference is confined to the meaning of the 'gracious night' mentioned in aayat 3 of Surah Dukhaan. He does not take up the issue with the validity of the auspiciousness of Lailatul Bara'at. He merely aligns himself with the jamhoor view that the specific night mentioned in this aayat is Lailatul Qadr, not Lailatul Bara'at. In this, there is no support for those who out-rightly reject the greatness of the 15th Night of Sha'baan.

Tafseer Al-Kash-shaaf states:

"Lailatul Mubaarakah (the gracious night) is Lailatul Qadr. It has been said that it is the middle night of Sha'baan. For it (the 15th Night of Sha'baan), there are four names: Al-lailatul Mubaarakah, Lailatul Bara'at, Lailatus Sikk and Lailatur Rahmah...Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: 'Verily Allah Ta'ala forgives all Muslims during this Night excepting a fortune-teller, a magician, a habitual consumer of liquor, one disobedient to parents and a habitual perpetrator of fornication.'

In Al-Kash-shaaf several different Chains of Narrators are tendered for this narration.

Again the argument is confined to the

meaning of the specific night mentioned in aayat 3 of Surah Dukhaan. The dispute does not centre around the validity of the holiness of Lailatul Bara'at. While some—the majority—say that the 'gracious night' in this aayat is Lailatul Qadr, others (also reliable authorities) say it is Lailatul Bara'at. But this dispute does not deny the fact that the 15th Night of Sha'baan is an auspicious night.

Tafseer Roohul Ma'aani states:

"It is Lailatul Qadr on the authority of what has been narrated from Ibn Abbaas, Qa'aadah, Ibn Jubair, Mujaahid, Ibn Zaid and Hasan. This is the view of the majority of the Mufasssireen and the Zawaahir (which was a Math-hah at that time) are with them. Ikramah and a Jama'at said that it is the middle night of Sha'baan."

Among the Ahadith pertaining to the 15th Night of Sha'baan, Roohul Ma'aani mentions the following:

"Ibn Jareer, Ibnul Munthir and ibn Abi Haatim narrate from the Chain of Muhammad Ibn Sooqah who narrates on the authority of Ikramah who said in regard to this aayat: 'During the middle night of Sha'baan, the affairs of the year are decided... Ibn Jareer and Baihq in Shu'bil Iman narrate from Zuhri who narrates from Uthman Bin Muhammad Ibnul Mugheerah Ibnul Akhflash who said that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: 'Affairs are decreed from Sha'baan to Sha'baan even a man marrying and him having a child...'

Deenori narrates in Al-Majaalisah from Rashid Bin Sa'd that Nabi (ﷺ) said: 'During the middle night of Sha'baan, Allah reveals to Malaltul Maut all souls which have to be taken away during that year.' There are many similar narrations. It is said: 'Every affair of wisdom is recorded from Al-Loohul Mahfooz

during Lailatul Bara'at and this task is accomplished by Lailatul Qadr... It has been narrated from Ibn Abbaas that all affairs are decreed during the middle night of Sha'baan and they are assigned to their respective agents (for execution) on the 27th Night of Ramadhan."

Regarding the apparent conflict between the claim of Ikramah and the Qur'anic statement in aayat 3 of Surah Dukhaan, Tafseer Roohul Ma'aani says:

"It is necessary to interpret (in order to reconcile the apparent conflict) that which rejects this (majority view). Therefore, reflect!"

Again the dispute and conflict pertain to the meaning of the 'gracious night' referred to in the aayat. The dispute does not apply to the validity of the holiness of the 15th Night of Sha'baan.

In the tafseer of Surah Qadr, Roohul Ma'aani presents an elaborate reconciliation between the conflicting views. The view of Ikramah and the many narrations pertaining to Lailatul Bara'at are not summarily rejected and branded as false and fabrications. Rather, appropriate meanings are tendered so that one is saved from the calamity of wholesale dismissal of numerous Hadith narrations which the great and illustrious authorities have accepted in the sphere of Fadhaail and Ibadat notwithstanding the Mursal and Dhaeef Categories of the narrations. The technical arguments of the Muhadditheen cannot therefore be cited by non-entities and unqualified persons in refutation and negation of a practice which has existed in the Ummah from the earliest time. Again, we do not offer succour for the many bid'at which have attached themselves to the 15th Night of Sha'baan. Such unfounded and evil

practices are haram and do not form part of Lailatul Bara'at .

Tafseer Abis Saood states:

"It is the Night of Qadr, and it is said, the Night of Bara'at ... It has been said that the recording of affairs from Al-Loohul Mahfooz commences during Lailatul Bara'at and is completed during Lailatul Qadr. Then the record of sustenance (is handed to Meekaail; the record of wars is handed to Jibrael as well as the record of natural calamities; the record of deeds is handed to Ismael, the Angel in charge of Samaa-e-Dunya, and he is a mighty Angel; the record of hardships is handed to Malakul Maut)."

Undoubtedly, Ibnul Arabi in his Ahkaamul Qur'an outrightly rejects the claim that the 15th Night of Sha'baan has any significance. He dismisses the narrations and avers that the claim for the auspiciousness of Lailatul Bara'ah is baseless. In this regard it will suffice to say that the outright dismissal of the numerous narrations by Ibnul Arabi is not endorsed by the jamhoor Mufasssireen. While the Jamhoor hold the view that Al-Lailatul Mubarakah mentioned in Surah Dukhaan refers to Lailatul Qadr, they do not deny the auspiciousness of the 15th Night of Sha'baan. At most, it may be said that the authentic difference of opinion prevails on this question. But, it is wrong and baseless to brand the view of Ikramah as false and bid'ah and it is wrong to deny the validity of the holiness of Lailatul Bara'at on account of the Mursal and Dhaeef categories of Ahadith as explained earlier. These classes of Ahadith are governed by rules which make them acceptable and operable.

The same explanation given thus far applies to the question of fasting on the 15th Day of Sha'baan. It is permissible to fast on this Day

and it is an act of merit, the merit stemming from the fact that mention of this fast is made in certain narrations, albeit of the Dhaeef category. But these narrations are not fabricated. It is therefore erroneous to claim that it is bid'ah to fast on the 15th Day of Sha'baan. Yes, if in any place fasting on this day is regarded as compulsory and those who do not fast are reprimanded, then undoubtedly, it will be said that fasting on this day in that particular locality is bid'ah. But, the Bid'ah is on account of the erroneous belief of people, not because people fast on this Day because they consider it meritorious on the basis of certain Ahadith.

Visiting the Qabrustaan (Graveyard) on the 15th Night of Sha'baan is undoubtedly meritorious. But, if people in locality or in a country have elevated such ziyaarat to the degree of wujoob (compulsion), then the practice will be a bid'ah. Visiting the Qabrustaan (Graveyard) in this night or on any other day or night should be without innovated acts. People should not go in groups, i.e. special organized groups to recite faatihah' collectively. They should go individually and make a silent dua alone.

The gatherings or special gatherings at Musaajid and the delivery of wa'az (lecture) on this night are bid'ah. The serving of milk, sweetmeats, etc., are all bid'ah and baseless customs having absolutely no association with Lailatul Bara'ah. It is a Night of silent, sincere and individual Ibadat in the solitude of one's home. Those who do not uphold this

night as an occasion for Ibadat should not be reprimanded or vilified. In view of the difference of opinion among the authorities of Islam on this subject and in view of the lesser quality of the narrations on which the case for the 15th Night of Sha'baan is based, it cannot be said that this Night enjoys a similar status of proof as Lailatul Qadr nor can it be asserted that the bases for the fast of the 15th Day of Sha'baan is as strong as the basis for the fast of the Day of Aashuraa. All things should be held within the limits prescribed by the Shariah.

On the one extreme, we have those who outrightly deny the validity of the auspiciousness of Lailatul Bara'at and on the other extreme we have the perpetrators of bid'ah who have introduced many evil customs and practices for the occasion of Lailatul Bara'at.

CONCLUSION

Since bid'ah is evil and directed at the very foundations of Islam, different rulings regarding this Night will apply in different places. Where bid'ah has taken a firm grip on society, it may be necessary to brand the whole observance of this Night as a bid'ah. This will be necessary to extricate the masses from the evil of bid'ah. However, even then, sensible persons can gain the benefit of this Night by their acts of Ibadat rendered in the privacy of their homes. And, Allah knows best. We petition Him for Rectitude and Guidance. (Courtesy: "The Majlis")

(Continued from page #. 2)

Respect and have good conduct with the teacher – One should ensure that respect is always shown towards the teacher. One

cannot gain all knowledge from books without the guidance of a good teacher.

Is Westernization Inevitable?

Maryam Jameelah Begum

The opponents of those who are striving to build a genuinely Islamic society look down upon them with extreme cynicism. They argue that Islamic civilization has vanished for ever; that its era of creativity is past history and that it has nothing more to contribute to the world. They take greatest delight in relating how one Muslim country after another has succumbed to Western culture. The various stages of acculturation are described in considerable detail, all leading up to the conclusion that the utter disintegration of the Islamic way of life and the complete triumph of Westernization are inevitable. It is furthermore asserted that nothing can stop this process. Those who defend the cause of Islam are ridiculed as indulging in romanticism and pure wishful thinking. They are condemned for “refusing to face realities or come” to “terms with the twentieth century.” The assumption is that Western civilization is invincible.

No propaganda technique has proved so successful in demoralizing the Muslim youth than the adoption of these cliches. Although their world-wide acceptance might have been understandable fifty or sixty years ago, they have no basis on fact today.

Sixty years ago, “Britannica ruled the waves.” “The sun never sets on the British empire.” British sovereignty was supreme over the most important regions of Asia and Africa. Politically and economically England was unrivaled as a great power. France also controlled much of Africa and wielded a strong influence throughout the Middle East. Although Germany lacked an important empire overseas, her military might was feared by all.

The supremacy of Western imperialism had reached the height of its power by the close of the 19th century. The First World War enfeebled all these European powers with a crippling disease, while the second World War dealt the fatal blow. Within the brief span of fifteen years, England’s vast empire has vanished. Britannica no longer rules the waves as her world influence diminished day by day. France has been compelled to relinquish her hold on Africa and the Middle East and while Germany still retains economic vitality, politically and militarily she is weak and divided. Thus nearly all the Muslim countries formerly subjugated by European imperialism have recovered their political sovereignty.

“But,” argue the modernists, “the decline of European imperialism has not in the least weakened the influence of Western civilization and culture. On the contrary, the Westernization of Asia and Africa is progressing at an ever-increasing speed. The recovery of Asia and Africa’s political sovereignty, far from implying the repudiation of Western culture and ideals has instead resulted in an unquenchable thirst for their universal adoption.”

History teaches us that the cultural disintegration of a civilization inevitably follows its political decline. The reason why the influence of Western culture has not yet appeared to be adversely affected is because the former process takes much longer than the latter.

Our adversaries will now argue that since the decline of English, French, German, Italian and Dutch influence has been replaced by

that of America and the Soviet Union, Westernization will continue its onward march to ultimate triumph with no obstacles in its path.

The fact is that Western arts reached their height during the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance; its sciences from the 17th through the 19th centuries and its political and economic influence by the dawn of the 20th. World War I brought in its wake a moral decadence to which Europe and America have been progressively succumbing ever since. The aftermath of World War II has greatly accelerated this putrefaction. A civilization has surely gone when its great men are no more. One will search in vain among the generation born since World War I for any person ever remotely comparable to Louis Pasteur, Monsieur and Madame Curie or an Abraham Lincoln.

The country which a century ago produced an Abraham Lincoln now has nothing better to offer the world than Coca Cola, chewing gum, vulgar songs and filthy pictures. A people who a century ago strove all else for freedom and democratic ideals now prostrate themselves before the twin idols of luxury and pleasure. Indeed it is no exaggeration to claim that in America KUFRA has found its home.

Recently when the Russians were threatening to take control of Berlin, President Kennedy summoned the able-bodied young men to join the armed forces to deter the enemy. At that, there was an enormous hue and cry from millions who refused to abandon the comfort of their homes and "waste the prime of their lives." When a nation reaches the point where the youth are no longer willing to defend it, its future is hopeless indeed.

"Well," our adversaries will ask us, "what about the Soviet Union? Does not Communism demand of its adherents a rigorous and austere life under the strictest discipline? If the Americans have become soft and flabby, have not the Russian people remained tough, vigorous and eager to sacrifice their lives for the victory of Communism?"

This was true enough under Lenin and Stalin but since the ascendancy of Khrushchev, revolutionary enthusiasm considerably waned and the rigors of Communist discipline relaxed to an alarming extent. Then the Russian people were demanding the American standard of living and beginning to get a taste of it. Consequently the Russian youth were rapidly being transformed from tough soldiers and tireless workers into lawless hooligans who prowl the city streets like packs of wild beasts. The "Jet Set" is far more interested in the latest dance craze than Communist dialectics. In the last decade it has grown plain for all to see that Russia is travelling in the same direction as America. The only difference is that she has not yet gone as far.

However, if our opponents insist that what has been said thus far indicates no weakening of the hold of materialism over the world or a corresponding rise of Islam in world affairs, we will agree that this is true enough, but enough has been said to provide sufficient proof that Western civilization far from being invincible, is rapidly decaying and that as a result there will be an enormous spiritual hunger to satisfy. Therein lies the responsibility for all those who believe in the absolute superiority of the Islamic way of life. Whether the future lies with materialism or Islam entirely depends upon us.

Sufiism: The Uncovering of the Tenth Veil: Musamarat and Muhadathat, and the difference between them

These terms denote two states of the perfect Sufi. Muhadathat (conversation) is really spiritual talk conjoined with silence of the tongue, and musamarat (nocturnal discourse) is really continuance of unrestraint (inbisat) combined with concealment of the most secret thoughts (kitman-i sirr). The outward meaning of musamizrat is a spiritual state (waqti) existing between God and Man at night, and muhadathat is a similar state, existing by day, in which there is exoteric and esoteric conversation. Hence secret prayers (munajat) by night are called musamarat, while invocations made by day are called muhadathat. The daily state is based on revelation (kashf), and the nightly state on occultation (sazr). In love musamarat is more perfect than muhadathat, and is connected with the state of the Apostle, when God sent Gabriel to him with Buraq and conveyed him by night from Makkah to a space of two bow-

lengths from His presence. The Apostle conversed secretly with God, and when he reached the goal his tongue became dumb before the revelation of God's majesty, and his heart was amazed at His infinite greatness, and he said: "I cannot tell Thy praise." Muhadathat is connected with the state of Moses, who, seeking communion with God, after forty days came to Mount Sinai and heard the speech of God and asked for vision of Him, and failed of his desire. There is a plain difference between one who was conducted (Qur.xvii,1) and one who came (Qur.vii,139). Night is the time when lovers are alone with each other, and day is the time when servants wait upon their masters. When a servant transgresses he is reprimanded, but a lover has no law by the transgression of which he should incur blame, for lovers cannot do anything displeasing to each other.

Al-Fath Al-Rabbani

(An English Translation of 62 Sermons)

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DIVINE ORDERS

The Greatness of the Holy Prophet Muhammed (Blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)

O ye of Faith !
Say not (to the Apostle)
Words of ambiguous import,
But words of respect;
And hearken (to him):
To those without Faith
Is a grievous punishment.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا
وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا
وَاللَّكُفْرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

The Muslims are being directed to remain always conscious of the greatness of their Holy Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) and not only to listen to him attentively but with a will to act in accordance with his instructions in order to become deserving of the Knowledge of truth and enlightenment of mind. Those who listen not to admit but to ridicule are infidels.

As such, the very first verse which has been addressed to the faithful refers to the greatness of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) so that every instruction, every deed and every aspect of the personality of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) might overwhelm a Muslim's thoughts and actions in practical life, and so that he may refrain from doing anything that might prove abortive to all his acts.

Selection by:
Dr. H. H. BILGRAMI

جملہ معترضہ:

برسبیل تذکرہ اگر اس نعرہ کا سبب موجودہ مسلم (نہ کہ اسلامی) معاشرے میں (کم علمی، جہالت اور اسلام سے دوری کے سبب) خواتین پر پائی جانے والی بے جا پابندیاں یا سختیاں ہیں) ان پابندیوں، سختیوں اور مظالم کے سدباب کے لئے اگر میں (وہ باغی خاتون) ان مظالم کے خلاف علم بغاوت بلند کر رہی ہوں۔ اگر واقعی اس لئے یہ نعرہ بلند کیا گیا ہے تو کم از کم اس نعرہ کو شرافت کا لبادہ اوڑھا کر ان الفاظ میں ڈھالا جائے میرا ذہن میری مرضی۔ میری سوچ میری مرضی، میری فکر میری مرضی۔ ان الفاظ میں یہ نعرہ پیش کرنے سے اس نعرے کے مخالفین کی زبانوں پر اتنی تلخی اور کڑواہٹ محسوس نہ ہو گا۔ کیونکہ الفاظ کے چناؤ سے بھی بہت فرق پڑ جاتا ہے۔ مثلاً! اگر کوئی شخص کسی ضرورت سے آپ کے پاس آئے اور آپ اسے "محتاج" کے لقب سے نوازیں تو اس لفظ کو وہ کبھی قبول نہ کرے گا بلکہ اس کا برائے گا۔ حالانکہ ایک معنی میں محتاج ہی ہے۔ ہاں اس کی احتیاج کچھ بھی ہو سکتی ہے۔

لب لباب: جب یہ چیز مستحضر ہو گئی کہ میری مرضی تو کہیں بھی نہیں چلتی اگر چل بھی رہی ہے تو وہ صرف موافقت کے ساتھ، تو ایسی صورت میں ہم پر لازم ہے کہ ہم رسول اکرم ﷺ کے فرامین پر عمل کرتے ہوئے حیا پر عمل کریں جس میں ہمارے لئے دنیا و آخرت میں بھلائیاں ہی بھلائیاں نصیب ہوں۔ حضور ﷺ کا فرمان مبارک ہے: الحیاء لایاتی الا بخیر۔ (صحیح مسلم، ج 1، رقم 63) حیا صرف بھلائیاں ہی لاتی ہے۔ اس حدیث مبارکہ کو والد محترم جناب ابو علی محمد رمضان صاحب (مرحوم) نے منظوم انداز میں کچھ اس طرح پیش کیا ہے:

یہ طرز بے حیائی نہیں خوب میرے دوست
بن جا حیا پسند حیا اختیار کر
سچے نبی (ﷺ) کا قول ہے سچا ہے بالیقین
دیکھو حیا میں خیر ہی خیر آئے گا نظر
آخر میں حیا سے متعلق عرب شاعر جناب صالح العمری کے چند اشعار
کا مفہوم پیش خدمت ہے جنہوں بہت ہی بلیغ انداز میں حیا کے
مفہوم، فضائل اور فوائد کو بیان کیا ہے: "قلوب کو حیا سے آراستہ کر
لیں حیا کی خود اللہ رب العزت نے توصیف فرمائی۔ اور یہ اللہ کا وصف
ہے جیسا کہ حدیث کا مفہوم ہے کہ اللہ جب اپنے بندے کو گڑ گڑاتے
ہوئے دعا مانگتے ہوئے دیکھتا ہے تو اپنے بندے کو خالی بھیجتے ہوئے اسے
حیا آتی ہے۔ حیا معزز و مکرم فرشتوں کی خصلت اور انبیاء کی پہچان رہی
ہے۔ جیسا کہ حضور ﷺ کی حیا بارے میں روایات میں ملتا ہے کہ
حضور ﷺ عفت پسند باپردہ کنواری دوشیزہ کی طرح شرمیلے اور باحیا
تھے۔ حیا مردوں کی بہترین خوبی اور عورتوں کا عمدہ ترین وصف ہے۔
حیا انسانی نسلوں کے لئے راہ نجات، بھلائیوں کی رغبت اور نیکیوں پر
آبادہ کرتی ہے۔ حیا شخصیت کو بدکاری و بدبختی سے محفوظ رکھتی ہے۔
حیا دنیا میں مثل شمس روشنی بکھیرتی اور پانی اور ہوا کی مانند زندگی بخشی
ہے۔ حیا جسم میں روح کی مانند ہے، اس لئے حیا کے بغیر زندگی بے
معنی ہے۔ انسان اگر بے حیا ہو جائے تو وہ جو چاہے کرتا پھرے رب کو
اس کی کوئی پرواہ نہیں۔ جیسا کہ حدیث مبارکہ ہے اذالم تستسعی
فاصنع ما شئت۔ اگر تجھ میں حیا نہیں تو جو چاہے کرتا پھر۔"
اللہ رب العزت سے دعا گو ہوں وہ ہمیں اور ہمارے معاشرے کو
باحیا اسلامی حدود و قیود کا خیال رکھنے والا بنائے جن کے مردوزن کی
نظروں میں حیا اور عورتوں کے ملبوسات باحجاب ہوں۔ آمین

رہے تو عورت اور اس کے گھر والے تحقیق و تفتیش شروع کر دیتے ہیں پھر یہ نعرہ لگانے والیاں یہ کیوں نہیں سوچتی! ان کی حالت تو اس شخص کی مانند ہے جس نے انعام کے لالچ میں حاکم کی خوشامد کے لئے ایک شعر پڑھا اور کوڑے کھا کر واپس آگیا۔

حکایت کچھ یوں ہے کہ ایک شخص نے حاکم وقت (جو بہت سے اشعار کا حافظ اور سیاق و سباق سے آگاہ تھا) کی توصیف میں ایک شعر اس امید پر پڑھا کہ وہ انعام کا مستحق قرار پائے گا لیکن حاکم نے اسے کوڑے لگوا دیئے اور کہا تم جانتے ہو اس شعر کا پس منظر کیا ہے۔ اس نے کہا نہیں۔ حاکم نے کہا یہ فلاں شاعر نے اپنے کتے کی تعریف میں کہا تھا اب اگر تم کتے کی تعریف مجھ پر چسپاں کرو گے تو میں تم پر کوڑے ہی برسائوں گا۔ خوشامد کرنے سے پہلے تول لیا کرو۔ کسی کی بات کو پھیلانے سے پہلے یہ جان لو کہ ان کے مقاصد کیا ہیں۔

میری ناچیز رائے میں اس نعرے کے پس منظر میں بھیڑیوں کی اپنی شکار گاہوں میں نئے شکار کو مدعو کرنا ہے۔ میرے مخاطب وہ شکاری نہیں جو گھاک، مستعد، تند، مکار اور ابلیس کے آلہ کار ہیں بلکہ میرے مخاطب وہ بے شعور افراد ہیں جو اس نعرہ کے بھید سے آگاہ ہوئے بغیر ان کی ہاں میں ہاں ملارہے ہیں، یا پھر ان باتوں کو شیر کر رہے ہیں اور دیگر افراد تک ان کے ابلیس نعرے کو پہنچا کر انہیں فریب دام میں لانے اور ان کے شکار کا بندوبست کرنے کا سبب بن سکتے ہیں۔

اگر غور کیا جائے اس نعرہ "میری مرضی" کی آڑ میں بے حیائی کی ترغیب دلائی جا رہی ہے جو معاشروں کو تباہ و برباد اور قوموں کو نیست و نابود کر دیتی ہے۔ اس تباہی بربادی کے آنے سے پہلے انسان اس ظاہری دنیا میں غور و فکر کرے، وہ کیا عوامل ہیں جو انسانوں کو بے حیائی کی جانب لے جاتے ہیں تو شاید اس کے دو اہم اسباب ہیں۔ اول نفسانی خواہشات (باطنی اسباب) اور دوسرا حسن و جمال (ظاہری

اسباب)۔ حسن و جمال کی بابت عرض یہ ہے کہ جس شخص کا حسن و جمال اسے آج فریفتہ کئے ہوئے ہے دیوانہ بنائے ہوئے اور اسے برائیوں کی طرف مائل کر رہا ہے اس کے حسن و خوبصورتی کی حقیقت و انجام سے بھی آگاہ ہو جائیں تو شاید اس سے براءت کا اظہار کر دیں۔ ایک حکایت پڑھی تھی وہ یہاں پیش خدمت ہے:

ایک بزرگ سے ان کی خادمہ نے شکایت کی ان کا ایک مرید اس کی محبت میں گرفتار ہے اور بد نظری میں مبتلا ہے، انہوں نے اس کے علاج کی یہ تدبیر کی کہ خادمہ کی مرضی سے اسے سخت مسہل دوادی اور ہدایت کی کہ وہ فضلہ کو جمع کر لے، مسہل دوانے جلد اپنا کام دکھایا اور چند روز میں اس خوبرونوجوان حسینہ کو مر جھا کر کھلا دیا اور اس کو بہت زیادہ بد ہیئت کر دیا۔

اس صورت میں بزرگ نے مرید کو اس مقام پر بلایا جہاں وہ خادمہ مدقوق زدہ انتہائی کمزوری کے عالم میں لیٹی تھی۔ جب مرید نے اس کے چہرہ کو دیکھا تو ایک دم نظر پھیر لی۔ اس کی آنکھوں میں بیگانگی، بیزاریت کے آثار نمایاں تھے۔ بزرگ نے فرمایا بیٹا یہ وہی ہے جس کے تم عشق میں مبتلا تھے۔ پھر اس کا جمع شدہ فضلہ منگو کر کہا شاید اس میں کچھ کمی واقعی ہوگئی ہو، یہ وہ فاضل مادہ ہے جو اس عورت کے جسم سے خارج ہوا اور تم اس سے بیزار ہو گے۔ تمہاری محبت، الفت، کشش، جاذبیت ساری کی ساری یعنی اس فضلہ میں موجود ہے۔ یہ سننا تھا کہ وہ شخص دھاڑے مار کر رونے لگا اور توبہ تائب ہوا۔

اب گزارش ہے کہ اس نعرہ والوں سے اگر انہیں اپنے حسن پر غرور ہے تو وہ اس واقعہ میں بیان ہو چکا! کچھ مزید کہنا عیس، فاعتبر وایا اولی الابصار میں ہوں بندہ اور تو مالک میرا جسم اور تیری مرضی

دوم:

فادر ڈے، دو مین ڈے منا کر پورا سال ان کا استیصال کیا جاتا ہے۔
یہ لمحہ فکریہ ہے کہ اس مملکت خداداد میں دین حنیف کے ماننے والوں کو جن کا دین عورت کو مکمل عزت، وقار، حیثیت اور پہچان دیتا ہو اس میں یہ اخلاقی پستی آگئی ہے کہ یہ دن منانے کی ضرورت پیش آئی۔ حالانکہ اس دین کی تعلیمات کے مطابق صنف نازک کو جو مقام حاصل ہے اس کی رو سے یہ نوبت آئی نہ چاہئے تھی۔ عورت اپنے چاروں روپ میں ہمارے لئے محترم، مقدس اور باعزت ہے۔ ماں کی صورت میں ٹھنڈی چھاؤں ہے، بیٹی کی صورت میں آنکھوں کی ٹھنڈک اور رحمت خداوندی ہے، بیوی کی صورت میں لباس و بہترین تحفہ ہے اور بہن کی صورت میں عزت و آبرو ہے۔ اس دنیا کی زینت، ملکوں کی آبادیاں اور قوموں کی عزت ان ہی سے ہے۔ بقول الطاف حسین حالی

اے ماؤں! بہنوں! بیٹیوں! دنیا کی زینت تم سے ہے

ملکوں کی بستی ہو تمہیں، قوموں کی عزت تم سے ہے

کوئی نعرہ لینے سے پہلے اس کے پس منظر اور معروضی حقائق کو دیکھ لینا چاہئے۔ اب یہ نعرہ اس معاشرے کی عورتوں کا ہے ہی نہیں کہ انہیں اسقاط حمل کی اجازت یا دیگر چند اجازتیں (۔۔۔) درکار ہوں۔ الامان الحفیظ۔ یہ مغربی اقوام کی ان خواتین کا نعرہ ہے جہاں قرضوں میں بال بال جکڑی 18 سالہ محنت کش لڑکی جو پہلے ہی زیر بار ہو، وہ اولاد کی صورت میں مزید کسی بوجھ کی متحمل نہیں ہو سکتی اگر وہ اسقاط حمل کے لئے میرا جسم میری مرضی کا نعرہ بلند کرتی ہے یہ ان کی تہذیب و ثقافت، معاشرتی اقدار و فکر و فلسفہ ہے۔ لیکن ہماری عورتوں کو کیا ہو گیا وہ اس نعرہ کا پس منظر، عواقب اور نتائج سے بے خبر ہو کر یہ نعرہ بلند کرنے لگیں اور یہ بھی نہ سوچا کہ ہمارے معاشرے میں اگر شادی کے کچھ عرصہ بعد تک گھر سونا

جس مرضی کی بات کی جا رہی ہے وہ عموماً انسانوں میں 30، 35 برس اور بس۔ بڑھاپے میں ان افراد سے ان کی مرضی کی بابت دریافت کیا جائے تو یہ لوگ حسرت و تاسف اور ندامت کے سوا اور کیا کہیں گے۔ اب ان سے سوال کیا جائے اب کہاں گئی آپ کی مرضی، اب ان کو نہ ان کے اپنے پوچھتے ہیں اور نہ ہی غیر۔ اور اگر بندہ رب کی مرضی پر چلنے والا ہو تو پھر جس قدر اس کی عمر ڈھلتی ہے لوگ ان کی طرف رجوع کرنے لگتے ہیں اور یہ مرجع خلایق بن جاتے ہیں۔

سوم: انسان کی مرضی چلتی کب ہے؟

پیدا ہوتا ہے نرسوں کے ہاتھ میں، پھر ماں باپ کی مرضی، استاد کی مرضی، بیمار ہو تو ڈاکٹر کی مرضی، عدالت میں پیش ہو تو جج کی مرضی، جہاز میں پائلٹ کی مرضی، دریا میں گرا پانی کی مرضی، آگ میں گھرا آگ کی مرضی، ہوائیں اڑا ہوا کی مرضی، خاک میں دبا خاک کی مرضی، ہندو، مسلمان، سکھ، عیسائی مرجانے کے باوجود بھی اپنی رسومات کے مطابق اس کی آخری رسومات ادا کریں گے؟ الغرض اوپر سے نیچے آنے میں دوسروں کے محتاج، نیچے سے اوپر جانے میں بھی دوسروں کے محتاج ان کے رحم و کرم پر، پھر اس کو اپنی مرضی چلانے کا موقع ملا ہی کب؟ اگر دین اسلام کو موضوع بحث بنائے بغیر بھی ہم دیکھیں تو ہم اس بات کو تسلیم کریں گے۔

ان سطور میں عورتوں کے عالمی دن منانے کے خلاف بات نہیں کی جا رہی۔ لیکن یہ یاد رکھا جائے کسی دن کو منانے کی حاجت و ضرورت تب پیش آتی ہے جب اس امر سے متعلق اجتماعی طور پر معاشرے میں استیصال کیا جا رہا ہو، جہاں کسی معاملے کو اہمیت نہ دی جا رہی ہو، جہاں اقدار کی پامالی ہو رہی ہو پھر ماننا پڑے گا مغرب میں عورتوں کا استیصال کیا جا رہا ہے، وہاں سال میں ایک بار مدر ڈے،

--- میری مرضی ---

ابوعبدالقدوس محمد یحییٰ

ہے۔ اب اس جسم پر حکم و فرمان بھی اس ہی کا چلے گا۔ بظاہر اگر یہ بدن ہمیں ساٹھ پیسٹھ برس کے لئے امانتاً دیا گیا ہے تو اس پر اپنی مرضی کا نعرہ بلند کرنے سے کوئی فائدہ نہیں۔ جیسا کہ اوپر ذکر کیا گیا مرضی چل بھی نہیں سکتی لیکن پھر بھی اپنی مرضی کا راگ الاپنے سے مرضی لاگو نہیں ہو جائے گی۔ مثلاً جیسے کوئی مکان لیز پر خرید لے۔ اور کہے اب تو میں یہاں جو چاہوں کر سکتا ہوں، حکومت سے لیز لے چکا ہوں لیکن اسے معلوم ہونا چاہئے اس لیز کی چند شرائط ہیں، کچھ حدود و قیود ہیں، وہاں سے غیر قانونی کام، تجارت، کاروبار اور سرگرمیاں جاری نہیں رکھی جاسکتی۔ انسان کسی ملک کی کرنسی کو حاصل کر سکتا ہے اس سے فائدہ اٹھا سکتا ہے لیکن اس کی تحقیر، تذلیل یا اسے اہانتاً جلا نہیں سکتا، علی الاعلان کرنسی جلانے والوں کو بغاوت کے مقدمہ کا سامنا کرنا پڑے گا۔ میرا جسم ہے میں ہیروئن یا منشیات استعمال کروں گا۔ تو یقیناً سرکار ایسا کرنے سے اسے روکے گی، بعض ملکوں میں ہیروئن ہاتھ میں ہونے کی سزا موت ہے۔

اسی طرح انسان بولے میرا جسم ہے میں خودکشی کروں گا، تو دنیا کے ایک آدھ ملک کے سوا سب اس کے عمل کو جرم تسلیم کریں گے اور اسے اس سے روکا جائے گا! لہذا جہاں جہاں بھی مرضی کے نام پر ملکی حدود کی خلاف ورزی ہوگی تو بغاوت شمار ہوگی، سیاسی حدود کو پھلانگنے پر سزائیں ملیں گی، معاشرتی و سماجی حدود کو عبور کرنے پر سماجی بائیکاٹ کا خطرہ ہے، جسمانی حدود سے گزرنے والے کو بیماریوں کی صورت میں سنگین نتائج کا سامنا کرنا پڑ سکتا ہے۔

گزشتہ چند دنوں سے کورونا اور۔۔۔ میری مرضی کے موضوعات زباں زد عام ہیں۔ ان موضوعات میں سے۔۔۔ میری مرضی والا موضوع اتنا واہیات، لغو، فحش، لچر، بکو اس اور بیہودہ ہے کہ کوئی بھی سلیم الفطرت انسان اس کے متعلق سوچنا، کلام کرنا، کچھ لکھنا بھی گوارا نہ کرے گا۔ یہ صرف گند کریدنے، اچھالنے اور ایک دوسرے پر پھینکنے کے مترادف ہے۔ گندگی کو جتنا کریدو، اکھاڑو اور کھرچو نیچے سے گندگی اور متعفن، بدبودار غلاظت ہی نکلے گی لہذا الامان والحفیظ۔ لیکن! جب ہمارے میڈیا نے کمال مہارت، ہوشیاری اور عیاری سے پیالی میں سونامی برپا کر ہی دیا اور ایسا محسوس ہونے لگا کہ آج کا اہم ترین موضوع یہی ہے تو میں بھی اس موضوع پر گندگی کو زیر بحث لائے بغیر چند گزارشات پیش کرنا چاہوں گا۔

اس سلسلے میں پہلا نکتہ میری مرضی سے متعلق ہے۔ کوئی انسان یہ دعویٰ نہیں کر سکتا کہ اس دنیا میں اس کی مکمل مرضی چلتی ہے حتیٰ کہ اس کے اپنے جسم پر بھی نہیں چلتی۔ انسان سماجی، معاشرتی، سیاسی، اخلاقی، مذہبی اور روحانی طور پر بہت سے بندھنوں میں جکڑا ہوا ہوتا ہے جس سے باہر آتے ہوئے اس کو کئی دفعہ سوچنا پڑتا ہے۔ کیونکہ اس سے باہر آنے کے لئے اسے سماج سے بغاوت کرنا پڑے گی جس کا نہ ہر ایک میں دم خم ہے اور نہ ہی ہر بغاوت انقلاب پر منتج ہوتی ہے بلکہ اکثر اپنے بانگیوں کے ساتھ آس پاس کہیں دفن کر دی جاتی ہیں۔

جہاں تک ہماری مرضی کی بات ہے تو ہمارا بدن ہمارے رب کی عطا