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ISLAM: The Religion of Unity and Progress

His Eminence Dr. M. Fazl-ur-Rahman Al-Ansari Al-Qadri

What is the character of the universe which we inhabit and how are we related to it? These are the two fundamental questions which have confronted all religions and philosophies of the world, and each religious and philosophical system has tried to answer them in its own way.

Closely connected with these questions the problem of the nature of relationship between mind and matter---between the spiritual and the physical aspects of life and a solution of this problem alone can form the basis of our world-view and our life-programme.

There are three distinct answers offered to our enquiry in this connection, namely: (i) by the pre-Islamic religions; (ii) by the post-Islamic empirical thought of the West; (iii) by Islam.

I

The Pre-Islamic Religions were deeply impressed by the notion of an acute conflict between man's moral and physical existence, or, in other words, between 'the biological within' and 'the mathematical without'. This dualistic idea led them ultimately to find a way for the affirmation of the spiritual self in man in the rejection of the physical reality as either meaningless or dangerous.

Hinduism regarded the world of matter as maya, namely illusion, and prescribed a life of renunciation for the spiritual development of its devotees. Buddhism considered the physical world an obstruction in the onward march of the soul

and pointed to the annihilation of the individual self and the severance of its emotional links with the physical world as the way to achieve nirvana.

Similarly, Christianity recognized the antagonism between the physical and spiritual aspects of life and conceived the world of matter, or to use a more Christian term, the world of the flesh, as essentially the play ground of Satan. Consequently, it standardized human perfection in the type of the ascetic Saint.

Such a despising attitude towards the material aspect of life affects humanity in two ways. Firstly, it shuts the door to all material progress, not to speak of scientific advancement, because our indulgence in material pursuits is considered detrimental to the ideal of spiritual self-realization. Secondly, it gives rise to a perpetual conflict within us, because on one side is the religious call to shun the world, while on the other side exists the natural urge to enjoy it. Such a state of affairs can only culminate in creating a continuous feeling of bad conscience and thus defeat the very purpose of our idealistic attitude.

A high Christian dignitary, the Ven. J. M. Wilson D.D., admits the evil effects of the Christian attitude, in his book: "What it is to be a Christian", in the following words:

"If we mechanically applied, as rules of conduct; Christ's ideals of temper, we are certain, from commonsense, that universal pauperism, lawlessness and national extinction would follow."

In his famous Life of Jesus, Renan revolts against the Christian conception of perfection and observes in a rather irreverent tone:

"In these fits of severity Jesus went so far as to abolish all natural ties. His requirements (for the Kingdom of Heaven) had no longer any bounds. Despising the healthy limits of man's nature, he demanded that he should exist only for him and should love him alone. The harsh and gloomy feeling of distaste for the world and excessive self-abnegation, which characterizes Christian perfection, was originated not by the refined and cheerful moralist of earlier days, but by a somber giant whom a kind of presentiment was drawing more and more out of the pale of humanity, We should almost say that, in the moments of conflict with the most legitimate cravings of the heart, Jesus had forgotten the pleasures of loving, of seeing, and of feeling."

II

The post-Islamic empirical thought of the West adopts a path which is radically different from the pre-Islamic idealism. It asserts that the world of matter alone is real and worthy of our attention and that the realization of human destiny lies in the conquest of Nature with the ultimate aim of achieving the highest amount of physical pleasure.

It ignores all transcendental values and spiritual considerations simply because they do not fall within the scope of empirical sciences. There is only one criterion of ethics which it recognizes and that is the criterion of practical utility for the enhancement of the earthly or 'carnal' pleasures of man.

Now, the physical world being essentially a battlefield of conflicting appearances, an exclusively materialistic interpretation of Reality, even though it may be concealed behind the otherwise fascinating mask of scientific spirit, is bound to unbalance human life.

This is what the West is experiencing today. Nations are running at the throats of each other and individuals are indulging in the pleasures of the flesh in a way which precludes all possibilities of life's spiritual expression. Peace and piety both have been left far behind.

III

What, then, is the message of Islam which stands between the ancient world that stressed the exclusive validity of the spiritual aspect of life and the modern world which interprets all reality in terms of matter? Has it any solution to offer to reconcile this sharp antagonism; has it any teaching to give in the light of which we may develop all our faculties evenly and work out our destiny without prejudice against either our natural surroundings and the physical conditions of our life or our idealistic yearnings which are certainly not an illusion but a positive reality and are ingrained in our very nature?

To start with: Islam does not consider the universe as composed of two self-existing and conflicting entities. It conceives all life as a unity because it proceeds from the Divine Oneness, and Reality, according to it, is neither material nor mental but "a realm in which thought and thing, fact and value, are inseparable, neither having any existence apart from its correlative," the real world being a coherent organic unity, spaceless and timeless, but including all

happenings in space and time in their proper relations to itself. "

In addition to this principle of harmony, Islam emphasizes the purposive nature of all existence, whether spiritual or physical. Thus says God in the Holy Qur'an:

"We have not created the Heavens and the earth and whatever is between them in sport; We have not created them but for a serious end: but the greater part of them understand not." (XLIV: 38, 39).

Thus our earthly surroundings are not a meaningless projection of the play of blind forces a mere empty shell with no content. Nay, the tiniest particle of sand, the smallest drop of water, the frailest roseleaf, is full of meaning and music and functions under a definite and well-planned Divine scheme.

This being the character of the universe, what is the nature of man? Should we conceive him as a being who is originally born low and who cannot attain the pinnacle of purity and perfection except through the tragedy of renouncing worldly pleasures or of passing through a continuous ordeal of transmigration? This is the way Hinduism, Buddhism and some other religions go. Or, should we believe him to have been born in sin and therefore incapable of working out his destiny except through a mysterious Divine sacrifice? This is the doctrine of Christianity. To these questions Islam replies in the negative. It is emphatic in its assertion that man is born sinless and is the chosen of God, as we read in the Holy Qur'an:

"Of the goodliest fibre We created man." (XCV: 4).

"Afterwards his Lord chose him (Adam) for

Himself and was turned towards him and guided him." (XX: 114).

"And it is He Who hath made you His vicegerent _on the earth." (VI: 165).

Starting his life with a sinless birth, man is entitled, or we might say, destined, as an evolutionary being, to scale the loftiest heights of perfection and to surpass God's all creation, including the angels, in his uniqueness and purity. Thus we read in the Holy Qur'an:

"It needs not that I swear by the sunset redness and by the night and its gatherings and by the moon when at her full, that from state to state shall ye be surely carried onwards." (LXXIV: 17-20).

What then should be our attitude towards our material environment? Should it consist in renouncing the world and repressing our physical desires? No—Islam says nothing of the kind. Instead of recognizing a conflict between the moral and physical existence of man, it emphasizes the co-existence of these two aspects as the natural basis of life.

It maintains that our earthly sojourn is a "positive factor in the Divine scheme of creation and a necessary stage in the evolution of our soul-life. Consequently, it seeks the affirmation of the spiritual self in man, not in renouncing the world of matter, but in the active endeavour to master it with a view to discover the basis for a realistic regulation of life. "The life of the ideal", says Sir Muhammad Iqbal, "consists not in a total breach with the real which would tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavour of the appropriate with the real view eventually to absorb it, to convert it into itself and to

illuminate its whole being". It is, therefore, impossible for Islam to despise our earthly existence and activities, and here it differs radically with other religions of the world.

This realistic attitude of Islam may not, however, be identified with that of the modern West. The latter ignores our spiritual existence altogether and regards our earthly career as an end-in-itself, and that in a way which amounts to worship, Islam, on the other hand, conceives it, not as an end, but as a means to a higher spiritual end.

And what is the higher end? It is submission to the will of Allah and seeking His pleasure, as the Qur'an says:

"Say: Verily, my worship and my sacrifice and my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the Worlds, Who hath no partner." (VI: 163).

Viewed in this light, all our worldly actions, including the most insignificant ones, are transformed into religious acts, the moment we give them a spiritual orientation, namely, the moment we perform them with the consciousness that we are acting in the light of Allah's commands. In fact, Islam conceives the whole life of a Muslim as a life of continuous worship, for says God in the Qur'an:

"I have not created the Jinn and human kind but that they shall worship Me." (LI: 56).

Thus the notion of worship in Islam is also radically different from that of other religions. In Islam there is no such distinction as 'religious' and 'secular'. Every act of a true Muslim is a religious act because he has to perform all his works in obedience and conformity to Divine

injunctions and has to dedicate all his faculties, spiritual or physical, to the cause of God's eternal scheme. Devotion and submission to God in this sense constitute the very meaning of our life in Islam.

Here Islam gives us the highest and the purest ethical standard, "The highest form of religious ethic", says Sir Richard Gregory (Religion in Science and Civilization, p. 65), "is that in which the aim of conduct is complete and implicit obedience to what is conceived to be the will of God. . . (this obedience) may become a joyous and spontaneous acceptance of a mode of life, such as it is conceived would be consonant with the nature of God, subject to such limitations of the desire for uprightness as an end-in-itself, either with a view to reward, if not in this world, in the next, or pursued selflessly for its own sake. This concept of religious ethic has led to the highest idealism in human conduct."

The notion of worship in Islam being what it is, it was absolutely necessary that Islam should not confine itself to the explanation of the metaphysical relations between man and his Creator but should also define exactly the relations between the individual and the society. And this Islam has accomplished to its eternal glory by giving us an exhaustive guidance which does not leave even the most trivial actions of our life untouched.

From what has been said above, the essential nature of the Islamic view of life must have become amply clear. But it is only the principle of 'unity in life' that has been emphasized so far. There is another fundamental principle, namely, 'movement in life' or progress, which requires elucidation. The discussion in this

connection may be confined to an examination of Islam's attitude towards the empirical sciences which is, however, the direct outcome of its realistic conception of Nature and Man.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) stands alone in the religious annals of the world as the advocate of scientific enquiry. The pages of the Qur'an abound with passages which invite our attention to an empirical study of the natural phenomena and emphasize the conquest of nature by man. In fact, the Inductive Method of enquiry, which is the basis of modern scientific and philosophical thought, is one of the most valuable gifts of the Qur'an to the world. Here are just a few Qur'anic verses in support of this statement:-

"Assuredly in the creation of the Heavens and of the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, and in the ships which pass through the sea with what is useful to man, and in the rain which God sendeth down from Heaven, giving life to the earth after its death, and scattering over it all kinds of cattle, and in the change of winds and in the clouds that are made to do service between the Heavens and the earth are signs for those who understand." (II: 159).

Can they not look up to the clouds, how they are created; and to the heavens how it is upraised, and to the mountains how they are rooted"? (LXXVIII:17).

"And among his signs are the creation of the Heavens and of the earth, and your variety of Languages and colour. Herein truly are signs for all men." (XXX:21).

"And He it is Who hath made subservient to you whatever is in the Heavens and on the earth."

it is no wonder therefore that during: the ages of Islam's glory, its followers became the pioneers of civilization and the inaugurators of the modern scientific era. It might sound strange to those who are accustomed to hear and read that Islam obstructs the way to progress and is an enemy of scientific learning. The truth lies just the opposite way and it can be honestly said that but for Islam there would have been no modern scientific progress. No less a person than Briffault, the noted historian of civilization, has admitted this fact in his reputed work, **The Making of Humanity:**

"Neither Roger Bacon nor his later namesake has any title to be credited with having introduced the experimental method. Roger Bacon was no more than one of the apostles of Muslim science and method to Christian Europe . . . Science is the momentous contribution of Arab civilization to the modern world, (though) it was not science alone which brought Europe back to life. Other and manifold influence from the civilization of Islam communicated its first glow to European life." (p. 202).

"The debt of our science to that of the Arabs does not consist in discoveries or revolutionary theories. Science owes a great deal more to Arab culture: It owes its existence. The ancient world was, as, as we saw, pre-scientific. The astronomy and Mathematics of the Greeks were a foreign importation never thoroughly acclimatized in Greek culture. The Greeks systematized, generalized and theorized. But the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation and experimental inquiry were

altogether alien to Greek temperament . . . What we call science arose in Europe as a result of a new spirit of inquiry, of new methods of investigation, of the method of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of Mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. The spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs." (p.190).

A vital point of difference between the spirit of modern West and the spirit of Islam may, however, be emphasized again. While the modern West has employed science mostly for the satisfaction of its unjust craving for ill-used power and ill gotten pleasure and for the cruel purposes of human destruction, Islam seeks in the scientific enquiry a means to the service of humanity and spiritual elevation. How beautifully the Qur'an has inculcated the latter idea in the following verse:

"Verily, in the creation of the Heavens and of the earth, and in the succession of night and day, are signs for people of understanding, who standing, sitting and reclining bear God in mind and reflect on the creation of the Heavens and of the earth and say: 'Oh, our Lord! Thou hast not created all this in vain; Glory be to Thee!" (III: 188).

Islam, it may be emphasized, is not merely a faith, a "religion", a creed. It is a way of life, a life to be lived. It does not only respond to man's religious yearnings, but to human life as a whole. It does not only give us an infallible metaphysics, but also a comprehensive and sublime code of individual and social ethics, a sound economic system, a just political ideology, and many other things besides. It is not a solitary star, but a whole solar system, encompassing the whole and illuminating the whole.

It should, therefore, be evident that the foregoing very brief discussion of a few Islamic verities forms only an introduction to the study and fuller understanding of Islam. It is meant to stimulate thought, to bring out the fundamental distinction of Islam from non-Islam, and to show that the notion of religion in Islam is infinitely richer and more sound than any other to which humanity subscribes.

The present writer is confident that those who undertake an impartial and detailed study of Islam will come to the same conclusion and will join him in saying:

God's choicest blessings be on Muhammad (ﷺ) for the Light and Guidance he brought to humanity!

ATTENTION TO OUR READERS

It is our earnest request to the readers and subscribers "THE MINARET Monthly International" to extend their help and co-operation for increasing its circulation, convincing friends for advertisement, sending goods articles and giving precious suggestions for the improvement of the magazine.

Purpose of Man's Creation

Dr Abdul Karim

Allah is the Wise and no action of His can be frivolous or without purpose. He Says, "And We have created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between the two in play. If We

had wished to find a pastime, We would surely have found it in what is with Us, if at all We were to do such a thing". (21:16-17) **"And We have not created the heaven and the earth and all that is between them in vain. That is the view of those who disbelieve."**

Man is the acme of Allah's creation. This is underlined in the Quran: **"Indeed, We have honoured the children of Adam, and carried them by land and sea, and given them of good things and exalted them far above many of those whom We have created."** (17:70). The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, "In the Eyes of Allah, true believers are better than some of the angels. (Ibn Maja). Man's exalted position is also further recognized in the Quran: **"And He has subjected to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth; all this is from Him. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect."** (45:13)

The purpose of creation of man has often agitated human mind. In the beginning, even angels were at a loss to comprehend it and the interesting dialogue between Allah and them on this subject is documented in the Quran: **"And when thy Lord said to the angels: 'I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth. They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein such as will cause disorder in it, and shed blood? and we glorify thee with Thy praise and extol Thy holiness.' He answered: 'I Know what you know not'.**

And He taught Adam all the names, then He put the objects of these names before the angels and said: "Tell Me the name of these, if you are right" they said: Holy art Thou; No knowledge have we except what Thou hast taught us; Surely Thou at the All-Knowing, the Wise.' He said: 'O Adam, tell them their names. And when he had told them their names; He said: "Did I not Say to you, I Know the secrets of the heavens and of the earth, and I Know what you reveal and what you conceal?" (2:30-33) **"He it is Who made you vicegerents in the earth."** (35:39)

The Qur'an also indicates another purpose of creation of man; **"And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship me."** (51:51). This is the most often quoted purpose. Worship in the sense of glorification was, however, already being done before the creation of man. There must, therefore, be something more. The Arabic word "*abada*" stand for worshipping or adoring or rendering humble obedience to Allah alone, and a constantly trodden way susceptible to the travelers' footprints. With reference to God it means, "Receiving the impress of His attributes." Thus the basic significance of the word is that man should subject himself to a rigorous spiritual discipline with utmost effort in conformity with and in obedience to Allah's design as well as His command, so as to be able to receive the Divine impress and be able to manifest in himself

Allah's attributes.

The Qur'an does not mention the things whose names were taught to man by Allah and he mentioned them to the angels at Allah's command. It can be conjectured that these names may have been the attributes of Allah which were to be demonstrated through Adam. It is very significant that in the Quran the word "abada" worship has been used for human beings, whereas for other creation of Allah, including the angels, the word "tasbih" praise or glorification has been used. **"All that is in the heaven and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."** (59:24)

The role of vicegerency of Allah on earth could not be performed by man without acquiring His attributes, as if dyed in His colour or being His "abd". It is in the Quran: **"Allah's colour, who is better than Allah in colour, and Him alone do we worship."** (2:138) The vicegerency of Allah on earth bestowed on man, along with the requirement of his worshipping Him, provides the real clue to the purpose of creation of man. It is through man in general and his perfect model in the person of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in particular, that many of Allah's attributes have been manifested.

To cite a few instances of Allah's attributes manifested only through man, it is hard to imagine His attributes of forgiveness without there being a creation capable of making mistake. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, "By Him in whose hands is my life, if you had not sinned, Allah would have you sinned and then asked for forgiveness, so that He would have forgiven them." (Muslim)

What is the proof that Allah has perfect

knowledge of the future as much as of the present? This can be only in Allah revealing happenings in future to His chosen ones and then they do take place against all odds. The Quran is full of prophesies which were fulfilled in the past, are proving true today after fourteen centuries and there are many still waiting in the womb of future, near as well as distant.

What is the proof that Allah actually Knows what bosoms conceal? Allah would inform the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) about the inner thoughts, plans and covert actions of some of his visitors beforehand. When he would confront them with these, they would, in surprise, ask: **"Who told you this? "His simple answer would be: "The All-Knowing, the All aware God has informed me."** (66:3) This would make many of them embrace Islam there and then.

Allah is the Mighty but how is His Might demonstrated in the worldly life? The telling proof lies in the emphatic assertion: **"Allah has decreed; Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers. "Verily, Allah is Powerful Mighty."** (58:21). The long history of religion bears eloquent testimony to the fact that no Prophet has ever failed in his mission, despite the utmost effort of the mightiest of their times to wipe them out. The case of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is most pertinent and outstanding. His glorious unprecedented triumph in a very short span of two decades was in the face of worse persecution in history.

The classic example of Allah showing His Might by helping the extremely weak against the very strong was in the Muslim triumph at Badr. By plain human logic, Muslims should have been annihilated in (Continued on page #. 11)

Islamic Polygamy

An Allowance for Mankind from the Creator, Most Wise

Whenever Islam or Muslim affairs are discussed by those not so sympathetic to Islam, the question of polygamy inevitably crops up. This is because some people see the issue of polygamy as a 'weak-point' in Islam and thus it is highlighted.

We aim here to give some reasons for permissibility of polygamy and its relation to modern life. Other equally important aspects shall, if Allah Wills, be dealt with in future articles.

Polygamy or the condition of man having several wives did not originate with the advent of Islam. It existed long before that time. The practice was prevalent in both Vedic and non-Vedic periods of Hindu society. A warrior here had several wives including a dahishi queen. In Hebrew culture, the Israelite patriarchs are definitely polygamous. Yacob and Moses are said to have had three to four wives each; David had some ninety-nine wives; and Soloman, seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. And, in western culture, polygamy was popular to the Romans before entering the fold of Christendom, to the sermons up to the 16th century; and to the indulgent Persians, Greeks, Babylonians and Austrians.

Islam allows polygamy rather than enjoins it. If a well-to-do man is content with one wife, then nothing is held against him. Neither is it intolerable, for a woman does not wish to become a second wife. Forcible marriage is forbidden in Islam, since matrimony constitutes a contract and the consent of the woman must be obtained. Polygamy was sanctioned by Islamic Law

primarily as a means of preserving the moral fabric of society by saving people from the abominations of unfettered sex.

Islam safely sails a middle course between unlimited polygamy and absolute monogamy. Both extremes are bad and create more problems than they solve. Fifty-one or more percent of the world population are female, and many of them have difficulty finding suitable partners. Many are left destitute and forsaken, some turn to prostitution as a last hope of survival. Many resort to an 'unofficial' polygamous relationship in which the man has one 'official' wife and a number of 'unofficial wives' — ('deputies' — in local parlance), the latter not enjoying any legal guarantee of support, for self or child, from the 'husband'. In many cases the man just uses then discards the unfortunate woman.

The allowance for polygamy is extremely useful in many cases. A man may marry a second wife because his first may be sterile or in ill health, or who becomes physically handicapped. In western societies men sometimes divorce such women. By taking another wife in such a case he may save himself from the evil of fornication and adultery. Serious wars usually decrease the male population drastically and the terrible consequences of this, for women, can well be borne out by women of Post World War II Germany.

Allah is the Most Wise

The most important thing we have to consider in examining Islamic polygamy is that it is sanctioned by the Creator and Owner and Lawgiver of mankind and

whatever He gives us is good for us.
Should we question His Wisdom and

Authority?
(Courtesy: The Muslim Standard)

(Continued from page #. 9)

the battle of Badr, as they were extremely outnumbered and so ill-armed to be practically unarmed. However, the result was quite the opposite. The Persian King, too, hurriedly fell back leaving behind his luxurious palaces and countless booty into Sa'ad's hands. The fall of Madain led to the submission of the entire country lying west of the Tigris to Muslims. Thanksgiving prayer, led by Sa'ad, was held in the palace of Chosroes.

Sa'ad, the civil and military governor of Iraq, made Madain his headquarters. He administered the conquered country very

ably. The Persian king made one more effort to recapture Madain. He sent a large force but it was also defeated with terrible losses.

During the govern-ship of Sa'ad, the foundation of the Arab settlement of Kufa was laid, which soon grew to be an important and prosperous city and a centre of learning.

Sa'ad ibn Waqqas retired to Akik during the Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (RDA) and passed a retired and peaceful life till his death in 50 A.H. (670 A.C.) at a ripe age of 70. He was buried at Madina.

(Continued from page #. 14)

to remove the sacred body of Rasool-e-Arbi to be taken away to Rome.”

Like lightning, the news spread over the town. The whole population flocked to the Tomb. One reciter sang out the following verse from the Holy Qur'an:

“Why don't you fight with those who have set aside their oaths and have planned to take away the Prophet himself? They are the aggressors. Are you afraid of them? Yet if you have faith, God deserves to be feared more.”

The Sultan's eyes flamed with anger and this verse added fuel to the fire. He

sentenced them to be beheaded near the sacred Hujra, which order was promptly carried out beneath the latticed wall adjoining the sacred Chamber.

The Sultan for a long time continued to shed tears for this choice blessing of Allah in that His Prophet selected him for this special service. The Sultan raised large sums of money, dug out the wall of the sacred Chamber below and filled it up with lead so that nobody could dare attempt such a sacrilege.

The wall filled up with lead till to-day bears testimony to this historical incident.



Sultan Nuruddin's Dream Comes True

In the sixth century A.H. there was bloody warfare in Syria between Muslims and Christians. On one side were the trained armies of Europe and on the other side Sultan Nuruddin, the Muslim warrior of Damascus, alone with his few thousand patriots, was ready to stop the tide of infidelity.

He implored in the name of God, Caliphs of Egypt and Baghdad to send help, but none paid heed to his request. At last he alone depending upon the Almighty, decided to stop the avalanche of Christianity.

There were a few engagements at Yafa, Mecca and Beirut and Allah's army "emerged victorious everywhere.

The Christians said to themselves:

"If we can take away the sacred body of the Founder of Islam from Medina, then the staunch faith of Muslims in their religion would be shattered and their imaginary belief in their Prophet's survival after death, would vanish, and they would not be able to fight with the same arduous vigour as now."

They accordingly, dispatched two Christians, fully equipped, to Medina. These Europeans disguised as Western pilgrims, came to Medina. They distributed a lot of money to the poor and the needy and made great offerings to the Shaikh and servants of the sacred precincts of the Prophet, and began to pass their days in the Prophet's Mosque with ostensibly profound faith and intense devotion.

When they had won the confidence of the people of Medina by their prayer and piety, they turned to their task. On the northern

side of the Prophet's Chamber, the houses of Mothers of Muslims, were included in the mosque area, and only the one on the southern side seemed to be close to the wall.

They took on rent the nearest house to the wall of Kibla. This solved all their difficulties.

They then began to dig a tunnel to the Tomb to take away the sacred body from the grave. They used to dig at night and in the early morning threw away in the *Baqee* the diggings filled in the water-bags, which during the day, they utilized to fill water to serve to the thirsty people in *Jannat-ul-Baqee* and *Keba*.

If any questioned them, in utmost humility they would reply: "We have left our homes and have come here for the sole purpose of passing our days in devotion and prayer to Allah in the vicinity of the Prophet (ﷺ)."

When the people of Medina saw their prayer and devotion, alms and charity and observed them supplying water assiduously, they were enamoured of them, and every street and house began to sing their praises and none had a shadow of doubt that under the guise of piety and devotion Satan was accomplishing his object with might and main.

And these two so-called lovers of the Prophet were in reality evil-hearted Franks who passed their days and nights in digging a tunnel to carry away the sacred body of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

As time rolled on, the fame of their piety and devotion spread far and wide, and they approached the Holy Chamber.

During one night Sultan Nuruddin had a dream in which he beheld the Prophet pointing to two Europeans, saying:

“O Nuruddin, these two are worrying me and you are sleeping the sleep of unconsciousness.”

In the morning, Sultan called the learned men and asked for their interpretation of the dream, but none could reveal the mystery. Sultan gave out a large amount of money in charity and passed the whole night in prayer invoking blessings on the soul of the Prophet (ﷺ).

The next night he again beheld the Prophet (ﷺ) pointing to the two Europeans, saying:

“O Nuruddin, don’t you see these two are troubling me?”

The Sultan gave out a yell. He got up from his bed, made ablutions and facing the sacred city of Medina said:

“O Cause of the creation of the Universe, Your slave is unable to understand the significance of your command. Pray, speak out plainly what you desire your slave to do.”

There was a hue and cry in the Royal Palace. Queens and attendants were anxious and the religious Shaikhs were in distress. All were non-plussed.

Sultan again called the learned men and religious Shaikhs and asked the Wazir of the situation at Medina – Tayabba. With one voice they replied: “Pilgrims and visitors who have come down here recently say that the city is prosperous and full of glamour. Crowds of pilgrims are always present in the Mosque and at the Prophet’s Mausoleum, and that nothing untoward has happened.”

Sultan again opened the gates of the treasury and enriched the poor of the town and suburbs. Mosques were illuminated and there were gatherings of Darood recital all over.

The Sultan was engrossed late into the night in recitation and meditation; he did not go to bed and spent the whole night in prayer. But no sooner did sleep overcome him than he dreamt the same dream once again and beheld the Prophet saying:

“Look, look, Nuruddin, these are the two troubling me.”

Nuruddin was startled and replied, “Possibly there is some mishap in Medina.” He struck the gong with the hammer whereupon the servants came running. He ordered one of the chamberlains to inform his Wazir, Jamaluddin Mosuli, to be ready in the morning to leave for Medina with 20 men of the cavalry.

The morning came. Sultan offered prayer in the mosque and started on his way to Medina with his entourage.

From Damascus to Jerusalem, from Jerusalem to Tabuk and from Tabuk to Khaiber, Sultan raced along on a galloping horse. Though Wazir Allarna Jamaluddin was a splendid horseman, he could not keep pace with the Sultan. Heroic riders and warriors were enveloped in dust in the long rear. Horses were relayed in the way, but the riders continued to rush headlong.

Covering the distance of months in days and that of days in hours, making the earth shrink under their horses’ hooves, they arrived unexpectedly at the shrine of the Prophet after 16 days.

Their beards were covered with dust and their faces were besmirched and there

were layers of dirt on their clothes. Etiquette demanded that they should have a bath and a wash before entering the sacred precincts, but the heart restless and eyes eager, did not permit him to waste a single moment.

Leaving the horses at the thresh-old of Nafs-Zaqi, near Sala Hill, Sultan flung himself on the floor of the sacred Mausoleum in the same disheveled condition and thanked Almighty Allah at the sight of the sacred Chamber, safe and sound. All the same, anxiety possessed his soul.

He called the Shaikh of Haram and inquired about the city and Roz-e-Mubarak. The latter consoled him but how could the heart who had heard the angry commands for three consecutive nights, be comforted?

The news of his arrival spread like wild-fire in the town. The Governor inquired the reason of his sudden visit. The Sultan took him alone and narrated the whole story.

The Amir inquired: "Could your Majesty identify the two faces that were shown to you in the dream?"

Sultan replied: "How can I forget the faces which I saw for three consecutive nights?"

The Amir said: "The easiest way to detect them would be for Your Majesty to hold a levy in the sacred Mosque and I will have all the persons of Medina to pass before you under an excuse of obeisance and homage.

The Sultan approved and accordingly had a bath in haste, donned the royal robes and took his seat in the mosque.

The people of Medina were welcomed by Sultan according to their rank and position.

Thousands of rupees were lavished in charity and alms. This concourse continued till midday, but the Sultan did not spot the particular two persons.

He asked, "Is there no one left out?"

The Amir replied, "All have appeared, but only two Western Europeans are not seen. I think they must be busy giving water to the thirsty. Should Your Majesty desire, they may be called?"

The Sultan replied in the affirmative, and the Amir sent a man to call for them.

Before their arrival the people of Medina praised them to the seventh heaven. When they were presented, the Sultan, who had heard much about their piety, devotion, fidelity and fear of God, was dumbfounded. His gaze became a fixed stare.

The Amir asked, "Is there anything peculiar about them?"

The Sultan replied, "True is God and true is his Prophet (ﷺ). O my friend, these are the same two persons who were shown to me in my dreams by the true Prophet (ﷺ) of the true Allah."

Despite this, the Sultan treated them with respect, shook hands and began conversing. The Sultan accompanied them to their place of residence, but could find nothing suspicious.

While coming out disappointed, he observed the floor shaky and on removing the wooden plank discovered a tunnel which had gone far up to the wall of the sacred Chamber.

The culprits were immediately arrested, and when questioned they replied, "We were sent by our Government with instructions (Continued on page #. 11)

The Islamic welfare state

Samson Simon Sharaf

In the study and commentary of Arthashastra written by Vishnugupta Kautilya Chanakya, I learned that the subcontinent had a formative influence on the Arab World of antiquity in arts, governance and sciences.

Later, through trade and warfare, this knowledge fused with the Persian and Chinese schools of thought transferred to Europe in the times of Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (RA), the Muslim ruler of Spain and the Abbasside Khilafat. The Asian Civilization Episodes and their effect on renaissance by the Discovery Channel have refocused this obscure development. Imran Khan's referral to Omar's Law is an indirect reference to this transitional fact.

From antiquity to middle ages, the Arabian Peninsula remained the commercial and educational hub of the world. Caravans used the traditional silk routes to debouch from as far as Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Subcontinent and China transferring goods and with it politics and knowledge. The Arab sailors dominated all sea fares in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean till the arrival of the Portuguese. Philosophy with its diverse schools ultimately became the common language. Though the world assumes that it were the Greek philosophers, like Aristotle and Plato, who provided the framework for modern philosophy, it ignores history!

There were two landmark developments prior and during the Arab influence and Muslim rule of Europe. First, the Arab monks of Christian denominations began

the translation of Greek scripts into Arabic and Hebrew. When Abbasids established the House of Wisdom in Baghdad, they ordered all philosophies to be translated into Arabic. While Europe fought wars and plummeted into darkness, the Arabs, Persians and Nestorian Christians were busy in preserving and documenting these great works with accuracy

Writing in his well known book, entitled *The Making of Humanity*, Robert Briffault admits: "The incorruptible treasures and delights of intellectual culture were accounted by the princes of Baghdad, Shiraz and Cordova, the truest and proudest pomp of their courts.....Caravans laden with manuscripts and botanical specimens plied from Bukhara to Tigris, from Egypt to Andalusia; embassies were sent to Constantinople and to India for the purpose of obtaining books and teachers; a collection of Greek authors or a distinguished mathematician was as eagerly demanded as the ransom of an Empire."

Later, when the search for origins and authenticity of Greek scripts began, the Baghdad translations assumed cardinal importance. Thus, began a discourse between the Islamic and European worlds that included Al-Kindi (Alkindus), Al-Farabi (Abu Nasr), Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Ibn Bajjah (Avenpace), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), and Ibn Khaldun. Their works and commentaries influenced middle age European and Catholic scholars and helped them retranslate the treatises into European languages.

Modern western philosophy considers Ibn

Rushd as the greatest commentator and exponent of Aristotelian philosophy, surpassing Ibn Sina by correcting his misconceptions on rational philosophy. He and Ghazali represented two diverse schools in which he prevailed. Many of his invaluable works were lost when the Christian conquerors set fire to the intellectual treasures of the Moors (Spanish Muslims). His treatises had a permanent impact on Christian Europe and he still continues to be the most popular Muslim philosopher in the West. He was also an astronomer and wrote a treatise dealing with the motion of the sphere and credited with the discovery of sunspots. He also summarised the "Almagest" of Ptolemy, which was translated into Hebrew by Jacob Anatoli in 1231.

According to George Sarton, "He (Ibn Rushd) deeply influenced Jewish philosophy" and "Jewish Averroism reached its zenith under Levi ben Gershon in the fourteenth century, and continued to prosper until the end of the fifteenth century."

Alfred Guillaume in his article, titled Legacy of Islam, writes: "Ibn Rushd belongs to Europe and European thought, rather than to the East..... Averroism continued to be a living factor in European thought until the birth of modern experimental science." He goes on to write: "We may be sure that those who accuse the Muslim scholars of lack of originality and of intellectual decadence have never read Averroes or looked into Algazel, but have adopted second hand judgements. The presence of doctrines of Islamic origin in the very citadel of Western Christianity, the 'Summa' of Aquinas, is a sufficient refutation of the charge of lack of originality

and sterility." According to Phillip K. Hitti, "The last of the great Arabic writing philosophers, Ibn Rushd belonged more to Christian Europe than to Muslim Asia or Africa."

In a painting placed in Vatican (circled in red), Ibn Rushd appears to be the only Muslim scholar in the historic 'School of Athens'.

In statecraft, Ibn Rushd, himself of Maliki tradition, considered the Pious Caliphate as the model republic in which the dreams of Plato's Republic were realised. The later revival of the Caliphate tradition under Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (RA) (also acclaimed as the fifth Pious Caliph) and the relentless pursuit with which the concept of a welfare state took shape also influenced his writings. So, what was this realisation of Plato's Republic?

The Caliphate of Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA) was the consolidation of a model republic with a philosopher head. The state was built around virtues such as honesty, truthfulness, integrity, fairness, equality, compliance and observance. He assisted the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in stamping the Treaty of St Catherine, giving equal rights to Christians and refused to pray in churches and synagogues lest someone may make it a precedence to convert them to mosques.

The Caliph lived a simple life as a servant of the people. He established the Diwan with a central treasury called Bait-ul-mal whose main responsibility was distribution, rather than accumulation of wealth, insurance and pensions. He abolished landed aristocracies. He declared that every man including him were equal before the law. His regimentation of the army into

different arms and services made it the most agile, hard-hitting and logistically self-contained fighting machine. These monumental developments were eclipsed and abused during the Umayyad rule.

His great grandson Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Al-Khalifat-us-Saleh) emerged as the first revivalist in Islamic history. This philosopher and scholar Caliph sacrificed his lavish lifestyle as Governor of Madina for an ascetic and humble life of abstinence and poverty. He reformed the entire political, social and cultural landscape to Hazrat Umar's Model State.

In his historic address to the people, he said: "Brothers! I have been burdened with the responsibilities of the Caliphate against my will. You are at liberty to elect anyone whom you like." He allowed them to break their allegiance to him, if he wavered from the path of God. Islam's democratic spirit was the outstanding feature of his rule.

As a welfare state, he abolished slavery, undertook extensive public reforms and works in Persia, Khorasan and North Africa removing the distinctions of Arab and non-Arab Muslims. Dignity and honour were restored to minorities. He was the first Caliph to commission a translation of the Holy Quran from Arabic into the ancient

Sindhi language and order the compilation of Hadith.

He was the Caliph who began a serious reconciliation of political and religious differences amongst Muslims, i.e. Bani Hashims, Shias and Kharijites. To sustain prolonged peace for development, he recalled his armies from the borders of France, India and the outskirts of Constantinople.

These reforms were not taken well by the Umayyad, who got him murdered; the dynasty crumbled. Abbasids and the rulers of Spain continued the traditions of the model republic with greater focus on development and education. The rise of Muslim philosophers, scientists and inventors were their link with Europe.

If dignity, respect for life, tolerance, good governance, justice and austerity are a measure of a welfare state led by a philosopher, the states established by Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA) and persevered by Umar bin Abdul Aziz, fit the definition of Plato's Philosopher Kings and that of a modern welfare state, Ibn Rushd establishes an intrinsic link between the two that precipitated into the European welfare states post-Industrial Revolution.

(Continued from page #. 20)

"indecenty", and we have been warned against it. But if this injury affects others, it amounts to a denial, on our part, of their rights, and has, therefore, been prohibited. Those others, too, are entitled to protection as regards their own life, property, and fame, and these we must respect. Anything that affects the whole of the society, by violating its laws, is treated as rebellion in the Holy

Qur'an. The Friday sermon gives its hearers the noblest of inspiration for acting as good citizens and doing their duty to society. We have to observe equity and justice in our dealings, to be charitable to others, to do no wrong to ourselves, to our fellowmen or the community. By obeying these injunctions we sublimate desire and anger to their most excellent forms and banish evil.

The Holy Qur'an on Moral Building, Anger and Desire

Khwaja Nazir Ahmad

Anger and desire are the treble and bass of the whole gamut of morality. They are also the root passions, and act as life-tendencies, branching off in various directions. In their original form they are bestial in character. They must be polished otherwise they would harm irreparably the superstructure of social order. If anger, for example, assumes the form of murder, physical hurt, libel, slander, and the rest and desire, in its naked form engenders theft, larceny, cheating, misappropriation, adultery and many other evils. Their combination also creates a variety of new vices, jealousy being one of them. But the said two passions, rightly blended, produce a high morality, if anger assumed the form of bravery and justice and desire becomes sublimated into mercy, sympathy, and charity. Real morality depends upon training these passions rightly, and this ought to be the first concern of human society. The culture and civilization of a nation do not lie in its ability to use brute force, but rather in the wise display of moral force. The aim and end of legislation is to check the distorted form of anger and desire, but numerous things that arise there from on the moral plane remain beyond its jurisdiction. It is therefore, the duty of a religion from God to deal rightly with the matter. Well nigh all Books of Revelation inculcate good morals and deprecate vices. But the Qur'anic treatment of the subject is both systematic and scientific. Without doubt, it denounces these passions in their lower aspects, but it does not teach us to crush them. Rather

does it treat them as the bedrock of the moral edifice. It lays down rules and regulations whereby we may control them and bring them to their proper use.

It should not be forgotten that all the achievements of which the best of civilization can boast, together with their protection, are indebted to those crude passions. They set our actions in motion, desire, at the outset, creates craving. To satisfy our cravings or appetites, we search for the means to do so. Thus appetitive passions call forth cognitive passions. We try to acquire knowledge of things that will satisfy our appetites, and the knowledge thus gained is the instigatour of our actions.

The whole industrial world owes its existence to Desire. But there must be some passion in us that urges us to protect what we have, and this passion is Anger. If Desire prompts us to acquisition, Anger prompts us to secure the safety of that which we have acquired. Thus the two passions are not only life-tendencies but instruments of human perfection. We cannot, therefore afford to kill them; we have to balance them and discover, if we can, their proper use.

Herein lies the superiority of the Qur'an. Not only does it condemn the worst form of evil passion as other Scripture do, but it lays down a code of life which makes those same passions the most valuable assets of human society.

The opening chapter of the Qur'an divides

the human race into three classes.

- (a) Those who are on the right path and are the recipients of God's blessings.
- (b) Those who are anger-ridden people and in peril of Divine wrath.
- (c) Those who have been misled and go astray.

"Dali" is the word used in the Qur'anic text for "misled". It primarily means one strongly tempted by evil desire. Such a one loses all good judgment and prudence. He cannot but go astray.

The blessed of God, as depicted by the Qur'an, are those who clothe themselves with Divine morals. These morals are no other than the same two passions in their most excellent form. Thus Anger and Desire become the dividing principles of the whole human race. We are warned in this chapter to shun the ways of those who are overtaken by Anger and Desire, and we are urged to follow in the footsteps of those who tread the right path in pursuit of the highest of morality. In other words, those who have controlled their evil passions and have converted them into their desirable forms are the chosen people of God, while the others are under His curse. If the Holy Qur'an is devoted chiefly to training these two passions in their different forms, it could not do better, seeing that on them hinges the whole machinery of a health society.

Anger, in its highest form, is a real blessing of God. It secures peace and safety. It seeks to establish immunity in the world against and misdeeds. But it may also become God's curse when wrongly used. The Holy Qur'an deals with it scientifically and on a psychological basis, converting

the cause of enmity into a means for reconciliation and friendship. It says: "*And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo; he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend*" (41:34).

Anger has been implanted in our nature for the suppression of evil, but the reform of the wrongdoer is like a part of our duty. This problem has faced humanity from the very beginning. Different civilizations have adopted different ways to achieve this end. The Mosaic Dispensation taught the Law of Retribution, Jesus preached submission to evil. Both measures were timely, but not of general application. The former creates the spirit of revenge and anger, the latter is enough to emasculate all manliness from us. But both dispensations were necessary when they were given. The Israelites were a race of slaves before the Exodus. The Lawgiver sought to make a martial race of the Children of Bondage and had therefore, to promulgate the Law of Retribution but in the course of time the followers of Moses came to forget mercy. They knew nothing but vengeance and anger at the time of Jesus. It was to reform them in this respect that he went to other extreme.

"To return evil with good is, no doubt, a beautiful maxim, but its universal application would, as things are at present, be harmful to the social fabric. It is putting a premium on evil. It encourages offence. It may produce reform in some cases but it may also engender stubbornness and wickedness. But the law given in the Holy Qur'an meets all emergencies, "Repay evil with the best," is the Qur'anic injunction. To amend wrong is the main object. If this can be obtained by forgiveness or by doing good, it is desirable, but if some coercive

measures are needed it should be resorted to. We have to choose the best that suits the occasion. In chapter 42 the Holy Book speaks thus of the believers: *“And those who shun the great sins and indecencies, and whenever they are angry they forgive”* (42:37). *“And their rule is to take counsel among themselves”* (42:38). *“And those who, when great wrong afflicts them, defend themselves”* (42:39). *“And the recompense of evil is punishment like it, but whoever forgives and amends, he shall have his reward from Allah; surely He does not love the unjust”* (42:40).

What beautiful and comprehensive teaching. Not only does it absorb into itself the Laws of Moses and of Jesus, but it also indicates the occasions proper for their application. It views the problem as a whole and lays down right principles for the suppression of evil on one hand and its reform on the other. Evil must be repelled at any cost, but we must not give way to anger; the best course is not to rely on our own judgment when angry, but to take counsel with others. Forgiveness and punishment are both suggested. If amendments can be achieved through forgiveness, that is the best way, but nothing must be done at the expense of justice.

Anger is most readily aroused against a weaker class for if such persons happen to commit a wrong it is easy enough to punish them. Here, then, is an occasion for controlling the passions and the Book advises us in the following words: *“(They hasten to forgiveness) who spend (benevolently) and restrain anger and pardon men, and Allah loves the doers of good”* (3: 133).

In the case of the weak ones we have not

only to suppress our anger, but to forgive them their transgressions and then to be kind to them. This will make them attached to us, and they will not only have become reformed, but will also be our friends.

There is another verse which co-ordinates the proper use of desire and anger. It furnishes us ideal code of life and secures peace and well-being. It is read to Muslim congregations every Friday from the pulpit, and surpasses every teaching given elsewhere in Law or Religion:

“Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency, the denial of other’s rights and rebellion” (16:90)

If the first part of the verse speaks of the three stages of goodness which the passion of desire in us, i.e. doing good to others, assumes, the other part deals with three forms of anger, which, in a way, comprise every form of evil. The verse begins with justice. We must respect individual rights and pay to others their dues; that is the first form of goodness, without which no society can continue to exist. We must be charitable to others, as we are in the case of our kindred and pay them more than they deserve. We must do good to them spontaneously out of our own accord. Not only must we reward others according to their merits, but we must be benevolent to them, without regard to their merits. This kind of benevolence partakes of God’s Beneficence, Whose blessings come to us without our deserving them.

The last part of the verse comprehends in three words the greater part of crime. Anything that harms life, property, and name is styled (Continued on page 17)

Efficient Hospitals

Muslim's Contribution to Modern Medicine

Ibrahim B. Syed

The development of efficient hospitals was an outstanding contribution of Islamic medicine. The hospitals served all citizens free and without any regard to their color, religion, sex, age or social status. Hospitals had separate wards for male and female patients and were staffed with nursing and other ancillary staff of the same sex. Only qualified and licensed physicians were allowed to practice medicine.

“Hospital” is derived from the Latin “hospitium”- a guest, because the institutions were first designed for the reception of pilgrims, wayfarers, and the infirm. In the West almost all were established by the Church. In the Muslim world they are known as “bimaristans.” Many great hospitals were built by rulers or by private individuals throughout the Islamic World. Hospitals were either constructed for a particular physician, or later put under the direction of a particularly eminent doctor.

The development of efficient hospitals was an outstanding contribution of Islamic medicine. The hospitals served all citizens free and without any regard to their color, religion, sex, age or social status. Hospitals had separate wards for male and female patients and were staffed with nursing and other ancillary staff of the same sex. Patients with different diseases were allocated different wards. Hospitals provided patients with unlimited water supply and bathing facilities. Only qualified and licensed physicians were allowed to practice medicine. The hospitals were teaching hospitals to educate and train medical students. They had housing for students and house-staff, and contained pharmacies dispensing free drugs to patients. All hospitals had their own

conference rooms and extensive and expensive libraries containing the most up-to-date books. Universities, cities and hospitals acquired large libraries, physicians had their own extensive personal book collections, at a time when printing was unknown and book editing was done by skilled and specialized scribes putting in long hours of labor. These hospitals kept records of all their patients and their medical care, something done for the first time in medical history. The hospital was divided into two main departments, outpatient and in-patient departments. The in-patient department differed only slightly from any modern in-patient department. On admission the patients were given special apparel while their clothes, money, and valuables were stored away, and returned to them at the time of their discharge. On discharge, they also received five gold pieces each to tide them over until they could support themselves. The hospital also provided facilities for performing prayers. Medical officers regularly visited the prisons. At a time when Paris and London were mud streets and hovels, Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordova had hospitals, which incorporated innovations, which sound amazingly modern. It was chiefly in the humaneness of patient caring that the Muslim hospitals excelled. Near the wards of those afflicted

with fever, fountains cooled the air; the insane were treated with gentleness; and at night music and storytelling soothed the patients.

Efficient Hospitals:

During the Islamic civilization, hospitals had developed and attained specific characteristics:

1. **Secular:** Hospitals served all peoples irrespective of color, religion, or background. They were run by the government rather than by the church, and their directors were commonly physicians assisted by persons who had no special religious color. In hospital, physicians of all faiths worked together with one aim in common: the well-being of patients.
2. **Separate wards:** Patients of different sexes occupied separate wards. Also different diseases especially infectious ones, were allocated different wards. There were different wards for fever, wounds, mania, eye conditions, cold diseases, and diarrhea. Convalescents had separate sections within them.
3. **Separate nurses:** Male nurses were to take care of male patients, and vice-versa.
4. **Baths and water supplies:** Five times a day praying is an important pillar of Islam. Before praying one has to perform ablution (وضو). For certain conditions full bath is obligatory. Therefore the Muslim hospitals had to provide the patients and employees with unlimited supply of water and adequate bathing facilities.
5. **Physicians:** Only qualified physicians were allowed to practice medicine by

law. In 931 CE, the chief court physician Sinan Ibn-Sabit was ordered by Caliph A-Muqtadir to grant licenses to practice medicine to only qualified physicians out of the 860 physicians in Baghdad. His counterpart Abu-Osman Sai'id Ibn-Yaqub was ordered to do the same thing in Damascus, Mecca and Medina. The latter two cities were very important because of hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visiting them every year for Umra and Hajj.

6. **Medical Schools:** The hospital served as a medical school to educate and train medical students, imparting medical knowledge and advancing medical knowledge. Extensive libraries were attached to the hospitals, containing most up-to-date books. Tulum Hospital in Cairo in 872 CE had 100,000 books. (Mustansiriyya University in Baghdad had 80,000 volumes. Cordova library had 600,000 volumes; Cairo had 2,000,000 and Tripoli 3,000,000). Physicians had their own extensive personal book collections, at a time when printing was unknown and book editing was done by skilled and specialized scribes putting in long hours of manual labor. There were conference halls for lectures and meetings. There were housing facilities for both students and staff of the hospital.
7. **Medical records:** The Muslim hospitals were the first in history to keep regular records of patients and their medical treatment.
8. **Pharmacy:** The hospital pharmacy of the Muslim hospitals was highly developed and performed an outstanding service to the patients.

Chemistry became an advanced science and pharmacy developed into a specialized subject.

The caliphs of the Islamic Empire built magnificent hospitals, because of Islam's emphasis on charity, to attain everlasting name, and to show to the public that they really cared for their welfare.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, hospitals in Syria and Egypt had achieved such high levels of performance that travelers and historians regarded them as one of the treasures of Muslim civilization. They attracted gifted students and best medical educators and enjoyed rich endowments and generous patronage. They were elegant, spacious buildings, equipped with comfortable lecture halls, extensive libraries, well-stocked pharmacy shops, and efficient laboratories, where medications could be freshly prepared and dispensed.

Famous Hospitals:

Al-Nuri Hospital: the Umayyad Caliph, Al-Walid, built the first hospital in Islam in Damascus in 706 CE. Al-Nuri hospital named after King Nur Al-Din Zangi was built in 1156 CE during the crusades. It was a first class hospital and medical school. The hospital initiated medical record keeping the first in the world. Eminent physicians, like Ibn Al-Nafis (discoverer of pulmonary circulation), graduated from the medical school. The hospital served the public for over seven centuries.

Al-Salahani Hospital: It was built in Jerusalem in 1055 CE by the Crusaders as Saint John Hospital. It was renamed Al-Salahani Hospital in 1187 CE. Salah Al-Din expanded the hospital and it served the

people until 1458 CE when it was destroyed by an earthquake.

Al-Muqtadiri Hospital: Built in Baghdad in 918 CE by Caliph Al-Muqtadir.

Al-Adudi Hospital: It was built in 981 CE and named after King Adud Al-Dawlah. It was the most magnificent hospital built in Baghdad before modern times. It was fitted with the best equipment and supplies available at that time. It had residents, interns, and twenty-four consultants to care and look after the patients. Haly Abbas was a staff physician. It was destroyed by Hulaku, the grandson of Chengiz Khan in 1258.

Al-Fustat Hospital: It was built in 872 CE by Ahmed Ibn-Tulum in the city of Al-Fustat (part of old Cairo). It had separate wards. On admission the patients were given special garments while their personal belongings were stored away and returned to them at the time of discharge. It served the population of Cairo for six centuries.

Al-Mansuri Hospital: Built in 1248 CE by King Al-Mansur Qalawun in Cairo. While fighting the Crusaders, general Qalawun became sick and was treated in Al-Nuri hospital. On recovery, he vowed that if he ever became the ruler of Egypt, he would build a larger and magnificent hospital in Cairo for the sick, poor and rich alike. Music therapy was used as a line of treatment for psychiatric patients. It served four thousands patients daily. Hospital stay was free and upon discharge the patient was given food and money as a compensation for the wages he lost during his stay in the hospital. It has served for the past seven centuries. Today it is used for ophthalmology and is called Mustashfa Qalawun.

Al-Qayrawan Hospital: In 830 CE Prince Ziyadat Allah I, built this hospital in the district of the Qayrawan city called Al-Dimnah. Subsequently all hospitals in Tunisia were called Dimnah instead of Bimaristan. It had spacious wards, waiting rooms for visitors and patients, and female nurses from Sudan; the first use of nursing in Arabic history. The hospital had a mosque for prayers.

Marakesh Hospital: In 1190 CE, King Al-Mansur Ya'qub Ibn-Yusuf, built this hospital in the capital city of Morocco (Marakesh). It was beautifully landscaped with fruit trees and flowers. Aqueducts carried water to all sections. Patients were provided with special attire: one for winter and another for summer. Specialists called Sayadlah ran the pharmacy. There was an expensive private room where patients were charged today's equivalent of \$150.00 per day. This fee was quite expensive thousand years ago.

Granada Hospital: In Spain in 1366 CE, Prince Muhammad Ibn Yusuf Ibn Nasr built this hospital in the city of Granada which had a population of half million. This hospital had the beauty of the Arabic architecture and served the people until the fall of Granada in 1492 CE.

Delhi Hospitals: In the fourteenth century in Delhi, India, there were one thousand schools and colleges (madrasas) and seven hundred hospitals, two thousand Sufi lodges and hospices in and around Delhi.

Technique of Therapy in Islamic Medicine

The patients were treated according to a well-defined treatment plan. Initially the treatment began with physiotherapy and

diet. If this treatment failed, then the patients were treated with drugs. Only as a last resort surgery was employed. The physiotherapy included exercises and water baths. The Muslim physicians were aware of food deficiencies and hence developed a detailed system of diet therapy. Drugs were divided into two groups: simple and compound drugs. The Muslim physicians were aware of interaction between drugs. First they used the simple drugs. If these drugs did not work then they used two or more compounds. When all these traditional measures failed, surgery was performed.

Ahadith on Medical Care

1. The Muslims are exhorted to visit the sick and give them hope and comfort.
2. Hadith Qudsi # 18: *"O son of Adam, I fell ill and you visited Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that My servant So-and-so had fallen ill and you visited him not? Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me with him?"*
3. When the Prophet visited a sick person (after 3 days of illness) he would say *"Do not fear, it (illness) is a Catharsis (purification), God willing."*
4. People visiting the sick are asked to say such things to them as would make them happy.
5. God also visits the sick and says, *"O my servant! Health unites you with yourself, but sickness unites you to Me."*

The Umayyad caliph al-Waleed (ruled 705-715 CE) is said to have been the first to set

up institutions for lepers and the blind where servants and guides were employed to help the inmates. The hospitals proper did not begin until the Abbasid caliphate (750-1257). Caliph Harun al-Rashid ordered the establishment of the first hospital at Baghdad. This hospital was set up by the Christian Jibra'IL ibn Makhtishu, a doctor at Gundaishapur. A Persian Christian, Yuhanna ibn Masawaih, eventually became the head of this hospital. The Persian term bimaristan, "the place for the sick" was used for hospital by both the Arabs and later the Turks. After Harun's hospital, at the end of the ninth century a number of new hospital foundations were followed in quick succession. The first of these was established by the caliph al-Mutadid (d.902) and named for the caliph. Ali ibn Isa, the "good vizier", founded a bimaristan in 914 and appointed Abu Uthman al-Dimashqi, a Christian who also made translations from the Greek, as the director of this hospital as well as those in Mecca and Medina. Sinan ibn Sabit, a Christian succeeded him as the superintendent of these hospitals. He himself set up a new hospital in 914.

Many larger hospitals had quarters for mental patients. Still several hospitals were specifically established for them. The same vizier, Ali ibn Isa ordered Sinan ibn Sabit to organize a team to visit the sick in jails. Again the same vizier ordered mobile dispensaries to be established to look after the health needs of the countryside, particularly surrounding the towns where no doctors were available.

Many doctors are mentioned in the history of Islamic medicine that, from their income from medicine, set up their own hospitals

and charitable clinics. The governments (called musadara) confiscated the wealth of politicians, viziers, governors and military generals, the wealth of professionals like doctors were immune from this danger.

Besides the hospitals and asylums, there were other types of health establishments. Special health centers were located near Jamia Masajids (جامع مسجد).

There were Army hospitals, with their own doctors and services. They were mobile hospitals and they followed the movements of the army. It is reported that the army of the Ghaznavi sultan Mahmud (d.1030) was accompanied by a special medical caravan consisting of forty camels.

The Adudi hospital set up in Baghdad in 982 by the Buyid Adud al-Da'ula (d.983) became the most famous of the early hospitals. Abu-Bakr al-Razi was the administrator who was chosen out of one hundred applicants. He selected the hospital site at the banks of the river Tigris after hanging a piece of meat in several places for a few days and deciding in favor of the place where meat was found to be least infected. This hospital had 24 doctors with different specializations. A doctor who did his duty two days and two nights a week is said to have been paid 300 dirhams per month.

Thirteenth Century Hospitals in Paris

The hospital in Paris was called Hotel-Dieu (House of God) and it was a house of refuge for the poor, sick, and infirm, as well as a shelter for travelers and pilgrims.

There were four main wards and several annexes. The ceilings were high, the average being 18 to 25 feet high. A system

of pulleys and cords provided excellent ventilation, and assisted in the regulation of temperature. Heat was provided in each ward by means of charcoal stoves with chimneys.

Administration and work of the hospital was conducted by thirty lay brothers, four clerical brothers, four priests, and twenty-five sisters.

The hospital was controlled by an administrative board. The prior was in charge of six departments: household, kitchen, chapel, cellar, baths, and charity-box.

Diet: Meat was served on Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and on certain religious holidays, including Christmas. Food was served twice a day. The patients were served before the staff. Each patient had his own dishes, including a wooden plate and a spoon. Beef was the most common meat. Fowl, soup, eggs, fish, and fruits such as figs, raisins, apples, and pears appeared regularly. They had wine with each meal, and each ward received three pints of milk weekly.

Classification of patients: (1) the aged, (2) the sick (3) the poor and (4) the pensioners. The pensioners were not patients but lived on the estates of the hospital by paying money for boarding and lodging. Admission criteria: The patient presents himself at the door, where he was received by a sister. He confessed his sins, took communion, and was then placed in a ward according to the apparent seriousness of his condition. Men and women were admitted to all wards, but there was one ward exclusively for women with eighty beds. They placed several persons in one bed. At Hotel Dieu there

were not more than two in one bed.

Visitors were admitted at any time, but came most frequently to spend the afternoon.

Medical Treatment:

Hotel Dieu had medical and surgical staff. The members were licensed. Obstetrics was left entirely in the hands of midwives. Victims of plague, leprosy and other widely feared contagious diseases were isolated. Emphasis was laid on natural treatments rather than on the extensive use of herbs and drugs. Purgatives were freely prescribed, both medicines and fruits being used for that purpose. Baths and exercise were usually prescribed to follow. Since Hotel Dieu was run by the church, great attention was paid to the religious needs of the sick. Priests and clerical brothers performed regular services for them. They visited the sick, confessed them, administered sacraments to the dying, conducted funerals, made and executed the wills.

Music Therapy:

The Qur'an does not say anything about music directly one way or the other, however it looks upon melodious voice with favor.

Says al-Dhahabi author of Prophetic Medicine, (famous traditionalist and historian, d.1348 CE), "Singing is the soul's pleasure, the heart's delight and food for the spirit; it constitutes part of the most exalted spiritual medicine. It is pleasurable even to some animals. Its moderate enjoyment kindles natural warmth, strengthens the activity of the various faculties, slows down aging, and repels many diseases." Abu Nu'aim (d. 1038), the

theologian and man of piety who was among the first to write a work on the Prophetic Medicine, reports from the Prophet that "music beautifies and refreshes the body just as excessive worry ails it." The best part of singing is, of course, the melodious recital of the Qur'an because, apart from the beauty of its words, the soul benefits from its lofty idea. The Prophet said, "embellish the Qur'an with your beautiful voices."

Ibn Qutaiba (d.889), a famous ninth century man of letters, a profound defender of Hadith, and a secretary of state in the Abbasid caliphate was heavily in favor of music and its healthy effects, both spiritual and physical. Al-Dhahabi tells us that music can be unlawful, reprehensible,

permissible, recommended, and even religiously obligatory (that is Qur'an-recital with tajweed, when accompanied by an understanding of its meaning). The only unlawful and reprehensible forms of music are found where the singers are low class ruffians performing with beautiful young girls who excite the people's desires.

It was chiefly in the humaneness of patient caring that the Muslim hospitals excelled. Near the wards of those afflicted with fever, fountains cooled the air; the insane were treated with gentleness; and at night music and storytelling soothed the patients.

Islamic medicine is one of the most amazing and best known facets of Islamic civilization, and is an area in which the Muslims excelled most.

**THE QUR'ANIC FOUNDATIONS
AND
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By

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Islam and the Class System

Before we discuss Islam's attitude regarding the concept of classes it may be useful to try to understand what is generally meant by a "class system."

In medieval Europe, for instance, there were three distinct classes: the nobility, the clergy and the common people.

The clergy had their own distinctive clothes. In those ages the power of the church was equal and at times opposed to that of kings and emperors. The Pope claimed that it was he who conferred power on kings but they strove to get rid of his influence in order to rule independently. Owing to the property donated by the religious and the exactions imposed on people, the church became so rich that at times it could have armies of its own. On the other hand the nobility inherited nobleness from their forefathers and passed it on to their descendents. A man belonged to the nobility by birth and remained as such until his death regardless of whatever noble or mean actions he might have done in his lifetime.

In the feudal age the nobility exercised absolute powers over the common people who lived in their estates. All the legislative, judicial and executive powers were in their hands. Their whims and fancies were the laws by which they ruled over people. Since representative councils were composed of members belonging to this class, it was only natural that the legislations they made would aim at protecting themselves, safeguarding their own privileges and interests which they surrounded by an air of inviolability.

As for the common people they had no

privileges or rights. They inherited poverty, slavery and humiliation and passed them on to their descendents.

The significant economic developments which took place afterwards led to the emergence of the bourgeoisie: the new class which aspired to displace the nobility and to assume their privileges and prestige. It was under the leadership of this emerging class that the common people launched the French Revolution which seemingly abolished the class system and declared in theory the principles of liberty, fraternity and equality.

In modern times the capitalist classes have replaced the old nobility. It will be noticed that such replacement took place in a disguised manner and was accompanied by certain changes necessitated by economic development. But the basic principle has never changed. The fact is that the capitalist class still has the property the power and the ability to steer the government's machinery into the direction they desire. Despite the appearances of freedom manifested in democratic elections, capitalism knows how to sneak into parliaments and government office in order to achieve its shady ends by crooked means and under various names.

It is to be remembered that a country like Britain – the patron of democracy as we were often told still has a House of Lords or the Upper house as they call it. Moreover, Britain still applies an ancient feudal law by virtue of which all the property of a dead man passes to his eldest son alone. It is quite clear that such a law aims at keeping estates and properties in the hands of a

limited number of people. In this way families fortunes will not be distributed and such families will retain the old prestige and influence which the feudal classes had in the middle ages.

The class system is based on the wrong assumption that property means power and that the class which owns property has the power as well. Such a class will exercise an influence over the legislative power. Consequently such a class will, by direct or indirect means, make the legislations which protect itself and subject the common people to its own authority, thus depriving them of their legal rights.

In the light of the above mentioned definition of classes it may be truly said that there has never been a class system in Islam. This can be clearly seen from the following facts:

There are no laws in Islam which aim at keeping the property in the hands of particular persons. The Holy Quran plainly says "In order that it may not merely make a circuit between the wealthy among you" Therefore, Islam made laws that ensured continual fragmentation and redistribution of wealth. According to the Islamic law of inheritance the inherited property should be distributed among a large number of persons.

An inheritance is never passed on to a single person except in the very rare case where such a person has no brothers, sisters or any other kindred. Even in such rare cases, Islam took the necessary precautions by prescribing that a portion of the inheritance should go to the deprived people who are not related to the dead man. This provision may be regarded as a predecessor of modern inheritance tax.

The Holy Quran prescribed that "*if at the time of division (of inheritance) other relatives or orphans or poor are present, feed them out of the (property) and speak to them words of kindness and justice.*" It was in this way that Islam solved the problem resulting from the accumulation of property. Property goes to individuals as such and not as members of a particular class, because when they die the property will be redistributed according to new proportions. History bears witness that property in the Islamic society was constantly exchanging hands without being confined to a particular faction of the nation.

This leads to an important conclusion: Legislation in Islam is not the prerogative of a particular class. In the Islamic state no one is allowed to make the legislations he desires because all people are treated according to the same Islamic laws which were revealed by God and which hold no distinctions among people.

It follows that the Islamic society is a classless society. It will be understood that existence of classes is closely connected with the existence of a legislative prerogative. Where such a privilege is non-existent, and no one can make legislations which safeguard his own interests at the expense of others, there will be no classes.

Now let us explain how two relevant verses which, if read carelessly, might lead to some doubts.

"God has bestowed his gifts of sustenance more freely on some of you than on others".

"We raised some of them above others in ranks".

Do such verses mean that Islam recognizes the class system?

These two verses merely describe what is actually taking place on earth be it under Islamic rule or otherwise. They state that people differ in rank and livelihood. Let us take Russia for example. Do all people get the same wages or are some people more privileged than others in livelihood? Are all the conscripted people made officers or soldiers or are some of them raised above others in rank? The existence of differences among people is an inevitable fact. The two verses do not give a particular reason for such differences. They do not even state that such preference is based on capitalist, communist or even Islamic considerations. They do not say that such preference may be just or unjust by our standards. The two verses merely say that such preference exists everywhere on earth. But of course, all that takes place on earth falls within the sphere of God's will.

It must have become clear by now that the Islamic society is a society without classes or legislative privileges. It will be noticed that the existence of differences in wealth

and property should not be confused with the question of classes unless such property and wealth conferred upon their owners any legislative and individual privileges. Differences in wealth will not lead to the emergence of classes so long as all people are — actually not in theory only equal before the law.

It should be pointed out that the ownership of land under Islam did not confer upon land owners any special privileges or rights by which they might enslave or exploit others. The same thing would have happened if capitalism had existed in a truly Islamic society, especially because the ruler does not derive his power from the propertied class but he is elected by the nation and is carrying out the law of God.

In addition to the above mentioned, there can be no community wherein wealth will be equally distributed among all individuals; surely not in the communist society which, truly or not, claims to have abolished the class system though in fact it has left one ruling class which suppresses all other classes.

(Courtesy: Hadyul-Islam)

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کہو کہ) یہ سب صبر کرنے والے تھے۔“ (سورۃ الانبیاء)

خاتم النبیین رحمت مجسم ﷺ کی سیرت طیبہ پر نظر ڈالتے تو معلوم ہوگا کہ آپ ﷺ کی حیات مبارکہ جہاں دیگر محاسن اخلاق کا مجموعہ ہے، وہاں آپ ﷺ کی ذات اقدس میں صبر بھی عظیم صفت بھی بدعتاً موجود تھی۔ دشمنان اسلام کے تمام مظالم و مصائب پر رب کریم نے اپنے محبوب کریم ﷺ کو صبر و استقامت ہی کی تلقین کی۔ ارشاد ہوتا ہے:

”اے محمد (ﷺ) آپ بھی صبر کیجئے جس طرح دیگر اولوالعزم پیغمبر صبر کرتے رہے اور ان کے لئے عذاب میں جلدی نہ کیجئے۔“

(سورۃ الاحقاف)

علاوہ ازیں کلام اللہ میں متعدد مقامات پر اہل ایمان کو اللہ تعالیٰ سے صبر و استقامت، استتعال و مضبوطی، استحکام و ثابت قدمی کی دعائیں مانگنے کا حکم دیا ہے، ارشاد رب العزت ہے:

”مے ہمارے رب ہم پر صبر کا فیضان کر۔ ہمارے قدم جما دے، اور اس کا گروہ پر ہمیں فتح نصیب فرما۔“ (سورۃ البقرۃ)

قرآن وحدیث میں جہاں صبر کے بیشمار فضائل بیان کیے گئے ہیں، وہاں اس پر بے حد و حساب انعامات کا ذکر بھی کیا گیا ہے۔

صبر کا بدلہ، اس کی مزدوری کیا ہوگی؟ قرآن بتاتا ہے کہ صبر کی جزا حدو شام سے باہر ہوگی۔ ارشاد باری تعالیٰ ہے:

”اور صبر کرنے والوں ہی کو ان کا پورا پورا بے شمار اجر عطا کیا جاتا ہے۔“ (سورۃ الزمر)

یعنی صابرین کو ان کے صبر کے بدلے اس طرح پورا پورا اجر دیا جائے گا کہ اسے حساب کے پیمانوں سے ناپنا ممکن ہی نہ ہوگا۔ کیونکہ ان کا اجر غیر متناہی ہوگا۔ کیونکہ جس چیز کا حساب ممکن ہو اس کی تو ایک حد ہوتی ہے اور جس کی کوئی حد انتہا نہ ہو وہی ہوتی ہے، جس کو شمار کرنا ممکن نہ ہو۔ صبر کی یہ وہ عظیم فضیلت ہے جو ہر مسلمان کو حاصل کرنے کی کوشش کرنی چاہئے۔

سورۃ الفرقان میں ایک مقام پر فرمیں کے اطاعت شعائر بندوں کی متعدد صفات بیان کرنے کے بعد بتایا ہے، ”عباد الرحمن“ کی ان صفات کا تعلق صبر ہی سے ہے اور صبر کی جزا اور اس کا انعام یہ ہے کہ جنت کے بالائے خانوں میں اللہ کے اطاعت شعائر بندوں کا استقبال دعا اور سلام کے الفاظ سے کیا جائے گا۔ ارشاد باری تعالیٰ ہے:

”یہی وہ لوگ ہیں کہ جنہیں ان کے صبر کے بدلے جنت کے بلند بالا خانے دیے جائیں گے۔ جہاں ان کو دعا و سلام پہنچایا جائے گا۔

اس میں یہ ہمیشہ رہیں گے وہ بہت ہی اچھی جگہ اور عمدہ مقام ہے۔“ (سورۃ الفرقان)

صبر کی عظمت و عظمت سے تعلق رحمت عالم ﷺ کے ارشادات حسب ذیل ہیں:

☆ رسول اللہ ﷺ نے فرمایا: ”جو شخص صبر کرنے کی کوشش کرے گا، اللہ اس کو صبر دے گا اور صبر سے زیادہ بہتر اور بہت سی بھلائیوں کو سمیٹنے والی بخشش اور کوئی نہیں۔“ (بخاری و مسلم)

☆ آپ ﷺ نے ارشاد فرمایا: ”جس کسی مسلمان کو کوئی قلبی تکلیف کوئی جسمانی بیماری، کوئی دکھ اور غم پہنچتا ہے اور وہ اس پر صبر کرتا ہے تو اس کے نتیجے میں اللہ تعالیٰ اس کی خطاؤں کو معاف کرتا ہے یہاں تک کہ اگر اسے ایک کانٹا چبھ جاتا ہے تو وہ بھی اس کے گناہوں کی معافی کا سبب بنتا ہے۔“

☆ رسول اللہ ﷺ نے ارشاد فرمایا: ”آزمائش جتنی سخت ہوگی، اتنا ہی بڑا انعام ملے گا بشرط یہ کہ آدمی مصیبت سے گھبرا کر راجح سے بھاگ نہ کھڑا ہو اور اللہ تعالیٰ جب کسی گروہ سے محبت کرتا ہے، تو ان کو مزید نکھارنے (اور صاف کرنے) کیلئے آزمائشوں میں ڈالتا ہے۔ پس جو لوگ اللہ کے فیصلے پر راضی رہیں اور صبر کریں تو اللہ تعالیٰ ان سے خوش ہوتا ہے۔ (ترمذی)

اللہ تعالیٰ ہمیں ان احکام و ارشادات پر صدق دل سے عمل کی توفیق عطا فرمائے۔

مصائب و مشکلات میں صبر کی اہمیت

حافظ حسن عامر

صبر کا ایک مفہوم یہ بھی ہے کہ برائی کرنے والوں کو نظر انداز کر دیا جائے اور ان کے قصور معاف کر دئے جائیں۔ صبر کا یہ مفہوم کلام اللہ کی متعدد آیات میں بیان کیا گیا ہے، ارشادِ ربّانی ہے:

”اور اگر آپ سزا دیں تو اس قدر جس قدر آپ کو تکلیف پہنچائی گئی ہے اور اہلّت اگر برداشت سے کام لیں تو صبر کرنے والوں کے لئے یہ بہتر ہے اور آپ صبر کیجئے کہ آپ کا صبر کرنا اللہ کی توفیق ہی سے ہے اور ان کا غم نہ کیجئے اور ان کی سازشوں سے ٹھگ دل نہ ہوں۔“ (سورۃ النحل)

غرض رنج و غم، اضطراب و بے چینی، تکلیف و بیماری، یا کسی بھی آفت و پریشانی میں صبر کا دامن تھامے رہنا قرآن کی بنیاد پر تعلیم اور انبیاء کی سنت ہے۔ صبر اللہ کو بے حد پسند محبوب ہے، یہ بہترین نیکی، گناہوں کا کفارہ اور قرب خداوندی کا ذریعہ ہے۔ صبر اللہ کی وہ نعمت ہے جو انسان کو کمزور اور مشکل حالات میں جینے کا حوصلہ دیتا ہے۔ یہ دراصل نام ہے نفس کو خوف و گھبراہٹ سے روکنے اور مصائب و مشکلات میں ضبط و برداشت سے کام لینے، کرب و اذیت میں تحمل و بردباری کا مظاہرہ کرنے، ابتلا و آزمائش میں استحکام و مضبوطی سے جھے رہنے کا۔ یہ دل کی مضبوطی، اخلاقی بندگی اور ثابت قدمی سے عبارت ہے۔ قرآن انبیائے سابقین کے صبر و استقامت، تسلیم و رضا پر شاہد ہے۔ خصوصاً حضرت ایوب، حضرت اسمعیل، حضرت ادریس اور حضرت ذوالکفل کے بارے میں ارشاد ہوتا ہے:

”اور ہمارے بندے ایوب کو (یاد کرو) جب انہوں نے اپنے پروردگار سے دعا کی کہ مجھے تکلیف ہو رہی ہے اور تو سب سے بڑھ کر رحم کرنے والا ہے۔ پس ہم نے ان کی دعا قبول کرنی اور جو ان کی تکلیف تھی وہ دور کر دی۔ اور (اسی طرح) اسمعیل، ادریس اور ذوالکفل (کو بھی یاد

اسلام میں صبر کو دنیاوی اہمیت حاصل ہے۔ صبر سبب اتھیا ہے، یہ نصرتِ خداوندی کا وسیلہ اور حصولِ جنت کا راستہ ہے۔ یہ نئے دلوں کا سہارا اور مایوسیوں کا بہترین علاج ہے۔ ارشادِ ربّ العزت ہے:

”پس صبر ہی بہتر ہے اور اللہ ہی سے مدد مانگی جاسکتی ہے۔“ (سورۃ یوسف)

”صبر“ کا لفظ اپنے اندری وسعت رکھتا ہے۔ کلام اللہ کے مطالعے سے معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ نتائج کی پرواہ کئے بغیر اعمالِ صالحہ کی انجام دہی، نیک مقاصد میں جھے رہنا، ثابت قدمی کا مظاہرہ کرنا شیوہ انبیاء اور صبر کا اعلیٰ ترین درجہ ہے۔ ارشادِ ربّانی ہے:

”پس اے محمد ﷺ آپ صبر کیجئے جیسے عالی ہمت رسولوں نے صبر کیا اور ان کے لئے جلدی نہ کیجئے۔“ (سورۃ الاحقاف)

اسی طرح مصائب و مشکلات میں ضبط و برداشت سے کام لینا صبر ہی کے ضمن میں آتا ہے۔ حضرت ایوب (رضی اللہ عنہ) شدید جسمانی تکلیف اور مانی معیبت میں مبتلا ہونے کے باوجود مکیک تسلیم و رضا جھے رہے۔ حق تعالیٰ ان کے صبر و شجاعت کی مدح فرماتا ہے:

”سچ تو یہ ہے کہ ہم نے ایوب کو بڑا صابر پایا۔ وہ ہی نیک بندے اور بڑی رغبت رکھنے والے تھے۔“ (سورۃ ص)

ایک جگہ صبر کی قوت کے حصول کا طریقہ بتاتے ہوئے فرمایا گیا کہ آپ اپنے رب سے لو لگائے رکھیے اور اس کی طاقت پر بھروسہ کیجئے۔ ارشادِ باری تعالیٰ ہے:

”پس آپ ﷺ ان کے کہنے پر ان کی باتوں پر صبر کیجئے اور صبح و شام اپنے رب کی تسبیح تعریف کے ساتھ بیان کرتے رہیے۔“ (سورۃ ط)