

Charity and Inheritance Right in Islam

Muhammad Abdus Samad

Allah the Almighty has created the humankind and sent down the divine law through His last Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for their guidance and success (falah) in both the worlds and bestowed upon them what they need to live in this world. The Holy Qur'an announces: "Allah has placed you with authority on earth and appointed for you therein a livelihood" (7:10). "And He giveth you of all that ye ask for but it ye count the favours of Allah, never will ye be able to number them" (14:34).

Thus our survival and existence on earth has been possible only because of Allah's favours spreading throughout the universe. The favours are nothing but the natural resources granted to humankind as the trust from Allah. Hence we are obliged to manage and enjoy them in accordance with the divine law as revealed. One of the important favours granted to man by Allah is wealth and property.

Islam permits individuals to own and possess wealth and property (ma'l) through lawful means so as to satisfy their needs. It gives them interest and incentive to work resulting in the increase of production in society. If they are denied the right to property and required to work for salary and dividend under the plan and policy adopted by the state, it would not give them interest and incentive to work resulting in the decrease of production. The right to property as granted in Islam makes a Muslim obliged towards society with regard to two duties: (i) Payment of charity on property, and (ii) Inheritance right to property.

First, Islamic system of charity consists of Zakat, Sadaqah and Fitrah. Most important among them is Zakat. It is considered next to prayer (Salaat) in Islam. Allah has said 82 times about the prayer and Zakat in the Holy Qur'an: "Establish prayer (Salaat) and pay Zakat." It is one of the five pillars of Islam. As such a Muslim refusing to pay it is called; Fasiq and one who denies its legitimacy in Islam is considered a Kafir. It is so important in Islam that the first Caliph Abu Bakr (RDA) once decided to declare war against a tribe in Arabia who established prayer (Salaat) and did not pay Zakat. Later the tribe used to pay Zakat regularly. In fact, prayer (Salaat) and Zakat is a means by which a Muslim individually submits himself to Allah on one hand and contributes to socio-economic development on the other. So it means that prayer (Salaat) and Zakat must go hand in hand in society. But it is "a pity to note here that we have not yet given importance to Zakat whereas equal importance has been given to both in the Holy Qur'an.

Zakat means purification and development. When a man pays Zakat on his wealth (ma'l). It purities his wealth besides developing his society. Non-payment of Zakat makes one's property prohibited and impure. Prayer having consumed the same property is not accepted by Allah. Zakat is a certain share on the wealth due to the poor and needy by the rich. When the rich pay Zakat and charity, he cannot expect any favour or consideration from its beneficiaries but he discharges his obligatory duty towards the poor and needy. The wealth (ma'l) equal to the value

of 7.5 tola gold or 52.5 tola silver is called Nisab (the qualifying limit) and a Muslim possessing the same quantity of wealth (after deduction of cost of production) at the end of a financial year is considered a rich and solvent person (Sahib-e-Nisab) in Islam. And, he is obligated to pay Zakat on his wealth at the rate of 2.5 per cent of surplus wealth.

Apart from Zakat, a Muslim is also required to pay voluntarily other charities such as Sadaqah, Fitrah etc. The Holy Qur'an states: "Allah will deprive usury of all blessings but will give increase for the deeds of charity" (2:276). "Whatever you give in charity seeking Allah's pleasure, it is these who will get a recompense multiplied"(30:39). "By no means shall you attain righteousness till you voluntarily spend what you love" (3:92). Besides the Prophet (ﷺ) has also encouraged the charity as saying: "*The generous one is near to Allah, near to Paradise, near to the people, and far from the Hellfire. The miserly one is far from Allah, far from Paradise, far from the people, and near to the Hellfire.*" (Tirmizi). The charity should be given on the wealth earned lawfully; otherwise that will not be accepted by Allah. Allah does not blot out evil with evil but evil with good." Besides the ever-recurring charity known as Sadaqah-e-Jariyah is also highly encouraged in Islam as it yields the blessing for a man even after his death.

How to procure and distribute the charity meant for the poor and needy aims to provide social security in society. In order to attain the objective, the charity is to be procured and distributed through a Trust known as Baitul Ma'l to be constituted by some Muslims as the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions did. Generally the Islamic

state is responsible to constitute and manage the Baitul Ma'ls part of its economic affairs. But where Muslims from minority, they would lead an "organized life" (Jamaal) and constitute and manage Baitul Ma'l for collection and distribution of charity and thus try to develop their socioeconomic condition.

The Baitul Ma'l Trust will at first take up a survey on the economic condition of Muslims living under its jurisdiction and prepare two lists:

- i) Rich and solvent-Muslims and
- ii) Poor and needy Muslims.

Thereafter, the Trust will procure Zakat and other charities from the rich and solvent Muslims and subsequently distribute them to the poor and needy with a view to getting them economically established. The process should continue as a regular activity of the Trust. The Trust should note that the basic aim of charity distribution is to get the poor and needy economically established and thereby bringing about a change of socio-economic condition in society.

Secondly, the inheritance law in Islam (Ilmul Faraiz) is laid down in the Holy Qur'an granting the right to heirs and sharers, both male and female, to inherit the property left by their parents and other relatives. The law equally applies to all Muslims whether he is king or subject, rich or poor resulting in the distribution of one's property in society. The Holy Qur'an states: "And unto each I (Allah) have appointed sharers and heirs to property left by parents and relatives" (4:33). For details we may refer to the Qur'anic verses 4:11-12, 176. Besides, Islam has also encouraged a Muslim to bequeath his one-third property

for various welfare activities such as maintenance of orphans, the weak and destitute, etc. To deprive the heir and relatives of their due shares is a great sin. The Holy Qur'an states: "Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully, they do but swallow fire unto their bellies" (4:10). "And who so disobeyth Allah and His prophets and transgresseth His limits (regarding distribution of property), He will make them enter the fire" (4:14). Conversely the Prophet (ﷺ) has also warned us: "If a man and his wife establish Ibadah for sixty years but bequeath their property unlawfully before death depriving their heirs and relatives, they will certainly enter the fire" (Tirmizi). "Allah will keep the Paradise far off from a person who deprives the heirs and relatives of the property" (Ibn-e-Maja). So Islamic state or Muslim society, as the case may be, should essentially be aware of inheritance right to property as laid down in Islamic law.

Thus it appears that Islam permits a man to acquire wealth and property so as to meet his needs provided he pays Zakat and other charities on them regularly and allows his heirs and relatives to share in his wealth and property as per Shari'ah. It helps to increase production due to his individual right and interest to property and

work on one hand to abolish the concentration of wealth in a few hands on the other.

However socio-economic development through the proper distribution of charity and wealth and property as-directed in Islamic law will be possible only when Muslims lead an organized tile (Jamaat) having selected a competent Ameer (leader) from among themselves. Caliph Umar (RDA), having stressed on the need of Jamaat and Ameer said: "There is no Islam without Jamaat and no Jamaat without an Ameer and the Ameer has no meaning without obedience." The Ameer in consultation with Shura constituted by some Muslims elected will manage the Muslim society and solve all its social problems including Islamic charity and inheritance right to property according to Shari'ah. The people must obey and abide by what decisions he takes. The Holy Qur'an states: O believers! Obey Allah and His Prophet and those of you who is in the authority i.e., Ameer (4:59).

We should discuss the importance of Islamic charity and inheritance right to property as social security technique while taking up study and research work on Islamic economics.

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Islamic economy is like a double-edged sword. It cuts the roots of accumulated wealth which is poisonous and curbs unnecessary spending which breeds danger within it. Extravagance and luxury are strictly forbidden in Islam. Islam has set the rules of income and expenditure side by side. It has put everything under check

and balance. Neither do the poor fade away there, nor can the rich swell much. These are the principles of the balanced economy of Islam which "aims at a world that is morally clean, socially just, economically productive and aesthetically symmetrical."

Spiritual Benefits of “Siyam” - Fasting

Dr. Ebrahim Kazim

Fasting is an institution for the improvement of the moral and spiritual character of man. The purpose of the fast is to help develop self-restraint, self-purification, God-consciousness (Taqwa), compassion, the spirit of caring and sharing, to love humanity and to love Allah. As soon as the fasting programme is over, some Muslims throw to the wind whatever good and hard-earned qualities they might have gained as a result of that exercise, and sooner or later return to their vicious habits and practices of their pre-Ramadan days, be they of thoughts, words or deeds. Ramadan is not meant to be a 30 – day fast ending on Eid with a feast to beat all feasts. Some of the greatest achievements in Islam were made during Ramadan, e.g. the Battle of Badr.

In Islam, fasting is obligatory in the lunar month of Ramadan, a lunar month being 29.53 days during which there is complete abstinence from food, drink, smoke, marital relationship, and any evil thought, word or deed.

Ramadan is derived from (رمض) Ramd, which means “to burn away”. In this month, all sins are burnt away and annulled. In fact, this is the month in which Allah grants amnesty to all the believers, to all fasting Muslim men and women. (33:35). But for us to be eligible for that mercy and that forgiveness, we must also look upon our fellow human beings and show them forgiveness and compassion. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), said: “Allah will not be merciful to those who are not merciful to mankind”.

The month of Ramadan suffuses the whole environment with a spirit of righteousness, virtue and piety. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to become unusually kind and generous during Ramadan. No beggar in this month left empty-handed from his door and as many slaves as possible were set free. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) defined the good and felicitous man as one whose career adds to the total value of the universe and who leaves the world a better place than in which he was born. The only permanent thing in this world is change.

Fasting has been prescribed by Allah as a form of worship, and also as a training period to develop Taqwa and piety, as well as to show gratitude for the great favour of the Revelation of the Holy Qur'an during Ramadan in Lailatul Qadr. And the best way to show gratitude for a favour is to fulfill His Commandments (2:183-185)

Fasting is the most rigorous of all spiritual disciplines imposed on every adult Muslim man and woman. Fasting frees oneself from egoism, replacing it with an indescribable peace within the person which makes the person accept human differences. The aim of the spiritual exercise is to enable man to achieve proximity to Allah and obtain His pleasure. The Holy Qur'an, says in (2: 181)

“O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may guard against evil.” This is also translated by others as “... you may learn self-restraint” or “... you may develop Taqwa (God-consciousness)”

Note the word “may”. There is NO

guarantee that a fasting person would definitely develop God-consciousness and piety or enough will-power that he could guard against evil. In fact, the fasting person cannot develop Taqwa if he continues to backbite, slander, tell lies, harm others, deceive people and show malice, anger and hatred towards fellow beings. It is easy for any belittler, slanderer, tyrant or businessman who gives short measure or a miser who does not disburse Zakat money which in reality does not belong to him but belongs to the poor and the destitute, to starve himself for the day. How can such a person develop God-consciousness and divine qualities? Such persons, besides committing sins of commission and omission may be wasting their time by fasting. Shall we spend a month every year in which we starve and become thirsty, fast and eat, while our condition does not change? Our rich will remain rich and our poor will remain poor. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), warned that poverty may lead to unbelief. This is why a person who steals food while facing starvation is not to be punished according to the Shari'ah.

Please note that Allah says that fasting has been prescribed for you. It is a divine prescription which is different to a medical doctor's prescription. If a person fasts for temporal motives only e.g. slimming according to a doctor's prescription, he will be far from performing his religious duty or achieving nearness to Allah or obtaining His pleasure. Besides hunger, thirst and carnal desires, we must be in full control of the tongue, of the mind and of the rest of the body. Hence, Muslims call Ramadan a blessed month, a month of compassion and mercy, a month of self-purification and re-dedication, a month of commiseration

with the poor and the hungry, the majority of mankind. It is a unique month of self-analysis, of taking stock of one's moral and spiritual assets and liabilities and of examining critically one's spiritual portrait.

Fasting is a duty and an 'Ibadah (worship) which is free from hypocrisy and show. Fasting, unlike prayers, Zakat and Hajj, is strictly private since no one can know about it unless the fasting person mentions it. The mere fact that fasting has been made compulsory in Islam, goes to show that it must be having multiple and colossal benefits to the body and to the soul, both in this life and in the Hereafter. Allah says (2:t84): "it is better for you to fast, if you only knew".

Why is it that we fast in the daytime and not, for our own convenience, at night? This is because the human personality ONLY develops when a person is exposed to maximum social conditions. Hence, Islam puts stress on family life and community life, a community called the Muslim Ummah. Islam does not advocate monasticism i.e. to become a monk, or leave the family and retire in a desert with all the solitude and the solitary confinement. Islam does not advocate running away from society and committing suicide.

Fasting is an institution by which an individual and by extension a community, may benefit physically and morally. The Islamic fast strengthens the disposition of the individual to obedience to laws and respect for social order. Islam lays stress on submission to Allah and consequently, lays stress on submission to authority beginning with example in the home.

Ramadan is considered to be the most holy

month for all Muslims. During this month during a night called Lailatul Qadr, the Holy Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The spiritual exaltation that takes place, whether the fasting person is alone or in congregation, gives him that sensation of nearness to Allah, that feeling of close attachment to the Almighty. On such occasions, the realization takes place that every man has a better man within himself and he becomes conscious of a higher life, a life different to eating and drinking, a life called the spiritual life, where the person can easily overcome any new temptation that he encounters in his everyday life.

During this month each year, we celebrate the most important anniversary to mankind, viz, the Revelation of the Holy Qur'an in

Lailatul Oadr, the night of Power and Glory, which is equal to 1000 months or more than 83 years. If Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), had laboured for over 83 years without having received the revelations of the Holy Qur'an he could not have achieved the desired result. The Holy Quran leads us into the Straight Path and guides mankind from ignorance to knowledge. Allah's blessings are showered down in this night through the angels. What should we ask Allah on this night of Lailatul Qadr? This was the question asked by 'Ayesha (RDA) and Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), replied: "Say. 'Oh Allah. You are the Most Forgiving and the Most Merciful. You love to forgive. So forgive my errors and sins'."

(Courtesy: "Qur'anul Huda")

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What a great calamity it would be!

Islam intends to form a community, fraternal, love-bound, and cooperating in order to put justice and righteousness to effect; a community in which everyone is contented with what he got, hopeful about what he has not yet attained to; not going to extremes in seeking a worldly end; not deviating from the straight path; spending of his wealth and energy for the sake of his brethren, consoling them heartily in whatever misfortune they meet, sharing with them their hardships and joys. We mean the kind of community typified by the following verse of the Qur'an:

"Verily, Allah bids you to do justice and benevolence and fulfill the needs of

relations, and forbids indecent and disapproved acts and transgressions." (16:90)

The rule of conduct of this community is:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

"None of you is a true believer unless he likes for his brother what he likes for himself." (Bukhari, Book of Faith [Eman])

In short, materialism dominates this modern civilization and objects of sense surround it and unseemly desires confine it. Lusts have enslaved it so that it is almost imprisoned by what man can perceive by physical senses, what he can take pleasure in, and what he blindly desires and earns. What a sad spectacle!

Sufism As A Way Of Life

Dr. S. Vahidudin

“Withersover ye turn, Allah faces you” (The Qur’an). “In the name of One Who has no name. Call Him with any name you will, He will answer.” (Sa’di).

Religion cannot be considered in isolation from the mystical experience that makes it possible. On the basis of this authentic experience it grows and, blending in the course of history with experiences of beauty and the moral good, it absorbs in its life heterogeneous moments. Hence no wonder that religion is sometimes reduced into a contemplation akin to that of art or into a consciousness of obligations and imperatives which is characteristic of morality. It is even asserted that religion is knowledge; for some, the knowledge of the highest order, a super-conceptual knowledge; for others, an incipient knowledge which is pre-logical and pre-conceptual. But it is forgotten that religion has its own field of experience. It is unique and autonomous. No doubt, experiences of values in our everyday life do not stand isolated. The experience of beauty may have a religious accent and the experience of holiness may have an aesthetic note. But religion has a colouring or a nuance which is all its own. And the peculiar nuance which makes religion what it is may be called mystical and by mysticism we mean not so much a doctrine but the peculiarity of an experience. But when this mystical element which is an a priori foundation and the sine qua non of all religious consciousness asserts in history, dictates the pattern of social life and moulds political ideology, it is apt to lose itself in the humdrum of everyday routine

and is prone to transform itself into formal code of moral conduct leading ultimately to wholesale regimentation of life. But the experience which made possible the great religions of history has not yet exhausted itself. It lives in the saints and seers who have inherited the experience of the source, who hold aloft the light and communicate it to others who follow them in the wake of history.

Now we can understand Sufism as a movement that has sustained a contact with the original experiences of the Prophet and has prevented religion from becoming only a secular culture without any relation to the metaphysical basis of its life. Islam was not possible without the experiences of the Prophet and these experiences, like all true religious experiences, were not foreseen but came with a shock and a surprise. It took time for the Prophet to recover from the initial shock and understand fully the implications of what he was passing through. The Qur’anic revelation is just the outward manifestation of the Prophet’s experience of an ‘encounter’ with God, of the spirit of God coming upon him and inspiring him with a message. If we study the Qur’anic situations with their shifting accents and varying notes we will find them strikingly rich in mystical moments.

The original pledge of the soul in God’s presence, the vision of God as the ‘light’ of the heavens and the earth, the experience of a ‘Journey’ through sensible and extra-sensible realms of being, the apprehension of Man as One in whom God has breathed of His own breath are some of the mystic

strains in the Qur'an that have gone to the making of Sufism. It has been hotly debated how far Sufism is Islamic in character and how far an alien content has been imported from without into an Islamic context. But a little reflection shows unmistakably that Islam has been subject to the working of the same forces as other great religions of history. When a religion gains in worldly culture it is in danger of losing it as a religion. Materialism, which is supposed to be the antithesis of religion, establishes itself within the hallowed precincts of religion, forces it to shift its accents, from the perennial values to the vagaries of day-to-day existence and becomes a centre of political intrigues and an outlet for suppressed passions. It is here that Sufism raises its voice and reminds religion of what it is as the loving consciousness of God's abiding presence.

Sufism may be assessed in its dual aspect, as a doctrine and as a way of life. As a doctrine it is only a variety of Kalam. But Sufism is essentially a way of life and has felt more at home in the realm of art and poetry than in scholastic disputations about the immanence and the transcendence of God or about the freedom and determinism of man. Even its disputes about Wahdat al-wujud and Walidat al-shuhud are intelligible only when they are referred back to genuine experience and without any access to them it is difficult to see what it is all about. Imam Al-Ghazzali (R.A.) was sober enough to eschew all forms of jejune speculation and to assert unmistakably that Sufi experience is one thing and its interpretation in language of reason is another. The interpretation is of course determined by historical factors, by the milieu of the mystic and by the spirit of the times. His experience has not only that

tone of intimacy and ultimacy which Webb thought characteristic of religious experience but also that feeling of uncanny otherness which is called by R. Otto the numinous element par excellence.

Sufism is then more a way of life based on authentic and genuine experience than a doctrine about the nature of reality or an eschatology which appeals more to imagination than to reason or a kind of metatheology which argues out about the relation of the one and the many and essays to solve the enigma of creation. It attempts to sustain a rapport with the prophetic experience and borrows its light from the prophetic illumination for, as al-Ghazzali categorically asserts, beside the light of the prophetic revelation there is no other light on earth which can impart illumination.

Modern existentialists, especially Martin Heidegger, complain of the fact that in our days man has become "One" (Man), an impersonal someone and has lost the authenticity of his being. This socialization and depersonalization of man at the expense of his 'truth' is really the bane of modern times. But unfortunately for the existentialist, Man is a captive of time. Being for him means being in time, being here and now, anxious and care-worn. He cannot see beyond now, beyond the moment. But it is characteristic of the Sufi consciousness that it cannot only go beyond time to the supreme Oneness (ahdiyati) that brooks no duality but sees also time in all its fullness. The Sufi experience is dialectical in its swing from one extreme to the other, from the elation which comes of fulfillment in love to the anguish which is born of frustration. This dialectical moment is at work in the mystic

poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi or of Hafiz of Shiraz. The great Mathnavi of Rumi begins with a tale of woe. But Rumi, as Hegel observes in his Encyclopedia of Philosophic Sciences, aims at higher, at the unity of the Soul with the External One. This unity which is characterized as love stands above the externality and the transitoriness of the empirical and the natural. Likewise, Hafiz is carried by the vision of all-embracing unity and he sees in the wine-cup the reflection of the cup-bearer. But this feeling of intimacy and Oneness soon gives way to a consciousness of distance and the anguish of separation. But through all the stations of its life Sufism retains a constant reference to a divine presence that steals through our life and the wayfarer on the Sufi path is moved by a transcendental 'elan'. Says the Qur'an: "When the two seek counsels in secret I am the third, when they are three, I am the fourth, when they are four, I am the fifth." And again: "He is with you, wherever ye may be." When the Sufi thus consciously lives in God's presence he

curses not God's creation, bears ill-will against none, grumbles not at the course of events in Time and allows the Divine Providence to work in him with goodwill. The great saint Shaikh Abd al-Qader Jilani (R.A.) instructs us to pray God for aught else but to reconcile us with His providential decrees. They who are thus reconciled and tuned-in with His will are, to quote Shaikh Abd al-Qader, (R.A.) like the People of the Cave whom God moves now in one direction, now in another, and who once they have attained to such close proximity now see with His eyes and hear with His ears. When man is thus lost in God and moves in Him, he is unaffected by the march of years and death passes him by.

Sufism then awakens religion to its own essentials and by establishing a rapport with the experience that has made Islam possible it purifies from within, reminds us of the unbroken continuity of religious experience down the ages and works for a view that sees the life of every moment quickened with life divine.

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Balanced Economy of Islam

A. K. Abdul Mannan

We are passing through the days of great conflicts of different ideologies. This is apparent in every field. When we look to the politics of today we find our world divided into two blocs—Anglo—American and Soviet. Each has got its own ideology. So is the case with economic thought and practice of our time. Main among them are Capitalism and Socialism. Each of them follows a different course. Their advocates claim their completeness and success. But the truth is otherwise. None has been able to solve the manifold economic problems of ours. The hopes of their advocates are going to be shattered into pieces. What is the cause thereof? How should we solve the problem? Is it that both of them go to the extreme and bring their failure? Yes, it is so and the salvation lies in a balanced economy. Now, what is that balanced economy?

Islam delved deep into the problem. Its economy is a balanced one. Its doctrine is sublime and glorious. It has solved many problems of humanity and has passed through the phases of trial and test. The economy which Islam advocates does neither jeopardize the sources of income of the individual nor is thereby one section enslaved by the other. Communism or Socialism destroys the family and crushes the individual liberty. The sources of the individual income are jeopardized there. Individual enthusiasm and enterprise are wiped out. Man is turned into a complete machine. His case is more discouraging under Capitalism. There, one section is enslaved by the other. The Capitalists concentrate wealth. The other section is

deprived and put under the shackles of poverty. So are the two ideologies. This is why one of the great leaders of our time sounded a caution against them. It is Mr. Churchill who says, "Capitalism is unequal sharing of blessings. Socialism is the unequal sharing of the misery. Let us have a system which ensures the greatest good of the greatest number." This is what Islam advocates.

The Muslims are called in the Qur'an the "Nation of the Middle Path" that chooses the "Golden Mean." They have their own way. They are not to cast their lot with any of the conflicting ideologies. In the field of economy they have got their distinctive mode of life. Islam has synthesized both the ideologies without the evils of either. It steers clear the difficulties of both and combines the good points of either. Its principles of economic organization and reorientation of human problems can stand the test of any time and place. Addressed to humanity at large as they are, they offer the best solution.

Like Communism, Islam aims at establishing a universal brotherhood based on equality and justice. But there is difference between the two. Islam, unlike Communism, does not take recourse to brutal force in effecting the revolution and bringing worldwide fraternity, equality, peace and justice. Islam brings revolution first within the heart and soul of man. For the social justice, it rouses the voluntary desire and fellow-feeling within the heart of man. Its most effective mundane weapon is the system of finance. Tinged with the religious colour as it is, it can become the

most successful leveler. The system of taxation, which Islam advocates, is free from many defects of the man-devised taxes. There is no alloy of ill-will and vindictiveness. Where the modern taxes fail there it is crowned with success. The spiritual character which adorns the finance in Islam makes it admissible to every nook and corner of the idle wealth of the nation. Distribution of wealth becomes easy. Poverty can be exterminated without difficulties. The latter is another aim of Islam. Here again we find a parallel between Islam and Communism. But, again, the methods of realization are poles apart, though the end is the same. Communism proposes to attain the end by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus it exalts the interest of one class and summarily eliminates that of the other. Islam wants to remove social barriers, no doubt, but it does not recognize brutal force as a weapon. It whips the idle wealth into action through its taxation. It is the vital force against hoarding and the most effective weapon in action. Hoarding and profiteering are the enemies of Islam and they find no place there. No process of exploitation can stand before the mighty force of Islamic finance.

Communism recognizes no private property. But it is different with Islam. Here private property finds a sanction and is tolerated with the tinge of moderation. It cannot become harmful there. For Islam encourages the institution of private property with some refining institution of taxation. The healthy doses of Zakat and Sadaqat cure private property of all its evils.

In fact, the institution of private property cannot be kept aside from human society.

It is based on the very nature of human beings. Men are gifted by the Creator with a variety of talents. Differences in the social status of men are inevitable. Rich and poor must be present there. But without any restriction there would be an ever-widening gap between the two. Islam does not ignore the phenomenon. It admits of private property, but its accumulation in the hands of the few is effectively checked. Besides taxation, Islam drives a moral and spiritual bias against wealth into the heart of every Muslim. To bring a perfect balance in the society, Islam withdraws its sanction from private property when it is not maintained with the performance of obligations. And when they are performed and strictly followed, private property becomes a boon for the society instead of evils. It is pre-eminently established that Zakat, the corner-stone of Islamic finance, purges private property of all its evils for the society. So, Islam sanctions private property so long as it does no harm in the society. It curbs wealth as tyrannical. Or, to speak in the terms of Ruskin, Islam abhors "Wealth Reflective" and sanctions "Wealth Radiant." The first results in hoarding and the second radiates and flows to the places where it is needed most.

Private property is both good and bad. Islam takes it to be good so far as it promotes efficiency and enterprise. It is bad from the point of view of Capitalism and exploitation. So private property should be retained as well as abolished. How can this be done? This can be done by conceiving it to be mine and not mine in the same breath. Though it is contradictory, Islam has solved it by giving the concept of private property two different groundings. In the first place it gives the grounding of facts and actuality. In the second place, that of

reason and ideality. So it takes property to be mine as in reality it is my own possession. Consequently I, cannot but take interest in it. But rationally and ideally it does not belong to me. I am only a trustee and the property belongs to God. The Qur'an declares it clearly that all that is within the Earth and the Heaven belongs to Him. So I should not have any objection to use it as it is desired by God Almighty.

Again, private property and social welfare are vitally interrelated. Only the two should be maintained in a perfect state of harmony. The individual who is engaged in an independent economic activity finds a great incentive in every increase in his income. This encourages him to improve his efficiency and invest more and more. With increasing investments there will be more employment on the one side and the increase of national wealth on the other. With the increasing returns a man becomes more subject to Zakat and other taxation, and more wealth evaporates from his purse for the social relief so as to increase the efficiency of many in society. Thus, private enterprise is not a taboo under Islamic economic system. It is only when it assumes a dangerous role and stands as a handicap against livelihood of others that Islam disfavors it completely. Private property together with the increased efficiency and enterprise, which it results in, on the one hand, and no opportunity for exploitation on the other, caters for a balanced economy in the Islamic society. Increase in the individual wealth means increased obligations to society. When there is lack of the observance of those obligations and duties, Islam draws a line there and then and any transgression of this limit comes under the Qur'anic prohibitions. Islam condemns profiteering

proclivities and unsocial accumulation of wealth. Profiteering indeed has become a great curse for our national life. The black-marketers are amassing much wealth through evil means. Had the society been alert of the principles of Islam, there could have been lesser and lesser exploitations and lesser evils of private wealth.

The Islamic economy applied to its fullest sense becomes a golden mean between Capitalism and Communism. Surplus Wealth is the seed-bed of troubles in society. It brings with it the inevitable differences in it as in Capitalism, which result in the exploitation and conflicts between the two sections. But Islam, in its attitude towards the right of private property, eschews the excess and atrocities of both Capitalism and Communism and thus brings a balance between the classes. Islam does not allow the impoverishment of the many due to the tyranny of the few as is found under Capitalism. On the other hand, it does never recognize the violent expropriation of the property-owners as is ordained in the gospel of Marx. Under Capitalism, as is maintained by Laski, some live by owning and others live by obeying. One class of people have what they like and the others like what they have. This is nothing but inhuman and repugnant to the very spirit of Islam. Property is considered by Islam as a trust from Allah. Thus it cuts away all the grounds from under the feet of the Capitalists. The honest application of the principles, which Islam propagates, can dispel 'all the evils which Capitalism brings. Private property under Islam is a boon and not a danger for the society.

The fact that the danger of private property cannot overcome the society, organized

under the principles of Islamic economy, becomes more evident the deeper we go into it. Islam imposes its limitation not only on the acquisition of excessive wealth but it also restricts the freedom of spending and consumption. There is no absolute freedom of spending, as one enjoys under Capitalism and Communism. The method of spending one's wealth, under Islam, caters for the elimination of various evils of private property. To curb unnecessary spending by an individual, Islam strictly prohibits extravagance and luxury. Extravagance in various forms such as drinking, dancing, gambling, womanizing, which go deep into the very vitals of the society, finds no sanction in Islam.

For the distribution of wealth and bringing equilibrium, the law of inheritance in Islam goes a long way. The bad effect of private property is minimized, because accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few is impossible. The law of inheritance provides shares to all the inheritors whether immediate or distant. This can help the increase of the purchasing power of the masses. They can buy more goods and necessities of life and thus increase the demand. A stimulus is given to production and the ultimate benefit for the masses is gained.

Again, the vicious institution of usury and interest is strictly prohibited under Islam. Usury eats into the very vitals of society. It increases the wealth of a few at the cost of many and strikes at the very root of social stability. The Muslims look upon the usurer with indignation and despise. A true Muslim will not even accept an invitation from him. A usurer is certainly a curse for the society. Usury and interest increase individual wealth and multiply the dangers of private

property. In its absence private property becomes harmless, when the obligations imposed by Islam upon the rich, are perfectly carried out. Abolition of interest in Islam is praiseworthy. But that does not hamper the progress of modern economy and banking. Instead of interest Islam has provided us with the principles of shirkat or co-sharing, which is more effective and reasonable.

Our contention will remain incomplete if we do not mention something about Zakat specifically. This is the greatest weapon, ever devised, to curb the evils of private property. The institution of Zakat and Sadaqa helps for the best circulation of wealth in society. This institution, incumbent upon the rich helps the society from sliding away into the blazing furnace of social tyranny and savagery. It taps wealth in static hoard and proceeds for the amelioration of the condition of the poor. Islam does not rely on the laissez-faire theory of the West. Instead, it takes active part for the amelioration of the condition of the poor. Zakat and Sadaqat prescribed by Islam tap the accumulated wealth of the rich. Zakat goes deep into the society to root out all the evils of poverty. Besides this obligatory and voluntary taxation, Islam imparts to its followers a fellow-feeling which is high and noble. As all Muslims are brothers in the Islamic society, one must not die of starvation while others have anything to support. If the taxes, voluntary and compulsory, are not sufficient, help should be extended to the neighbours by way of Qarz-i-Hasana. For it is made clear that the rich shall be accountable to God for not looking into the distress of the poor and the have-nots. This religious colour does not fade away in the society of the Muslims. (Continued on page #. 4)

The Challenge of Modern Ideas and Social Values to Muslim Society

Late Dr. Abdul Wahhab Azzam

The vanguards of modern civilization, with their sciences, crafts and philosophy, first appeared three centuries ago, its guiding-posts continued to become more distinct and its ways clearer, so that they attained their highest summit in the last hundred years.

It spread in the world to the pleasure or dismay of its recipients. The people of the East and the West mingled with each other in this country or that. This civilization entered the Muslim countries by compulsion or free choice of people.

What the Muslims saw of the subordination of their countries by the people of this civilization, has left them awe-stricken. The opinions and the persuasions of the latter are flowing into the Muslim society in one way after another incessantly, so that there is little room here to speak of them at length.

The Muslims have, in this new civilization, seen power, knowledge and industry, and have seen therein order and discipline. They have found in it idle joy, sport and enjoyment. They have become familiar with many means of pleasure and various ways of sensual joys.

They have found religion that is opposed to their own and is upheld by peoples who for centuries have been on hostile terms with the Muslims, and they have observed the summoners to this faith, spying inside Muslim countries and calling Muslims to their faith, using various seductive methods in their call.

The Muslims have wondered as to how they should confront this civilization, they are doubtful regarding the majority of matters, and they are uncertain about the ways and means. Their opinions have differed, so that they fall into three main groups:

- (i) One section had an eye on the hostility of the people of this civilization, on their domination, and on beliefs, opinions and ways of conduct, brought by these aliens, which either in reality or in their belief stood opposed to Islam. This section saw the corruptions which the Muslims have introduced in their faith, morals and manners. So this section was completely scared by the civilization of Europe and kept away from it, and summoned others to do the same.
- (ii) Another section looked at what Europe has brought into Muslim countries: power, dominion, science, arts and crafts, political and social order, welfare, entertainment and sport, the alleviation of certain burdens and obligations. These people approved of this civilization totally; this attitude gave rise to whatever corruption there could be. They were amazed, and looked down upon whatever heritage they had of their own, and annulled their own existence and adopted the European civilization. Whatever it brings is good. Whatever is opposed to it is unworthy. According to these people, there is nothing good in our possession which we may preserve,

nor any nice idea to stick to. They believe that Whatever the Europeans say is good. They now admire these things through sheer imitation and following. This is like certain manufactures of the Arabs which the Europeans admired and adopted in their domestic furniture and ornaments calling them "Arabisca." Only then did the Orientals—the Arabs being among them—decide to admire them, calling them Arabisca as well. Had these things been called by their native Arabic names and had they been kept remote from the Western people, those among us who now admire them would not have done so, nor would they like to decorate their houses with them.

- (iii) The third section of the Muslims, who were moderate, saw, thought, and deliberated, and were of the opinion that distinction was to be made between the two aspects of Western civilization. There is the industrial civilization and there is the moral civilization. The first of these is founded on natural laws that do not vary in the East or the West; and they are not peculiar to the Muslims or the non-Muslims. We mean Medicine, Engineering and Mechanical sciences. These sciences should, of course, be acquired from those who have them. The Muslims simply must reach the farthest ends in Science and the application of it. Our reason and good sense have established for us the superiority of the West on this score and the production of miraculous things there. There can be no two opinions in the matter of acquisition of Science from its masters.

Let us now consider the second aspect of this civilization, i.e., the moral side — and if you wish, you may call it human. This side is based on history, religion, customs and discipline.

The Europeans have in them virtues and vices, guidance and misguidance. Their good has been made turbid by plenty of evil, and their beauty has been marred by visible ugliness. This is not to be considered at par with the industrial civilization, and it is not permissible that we adopt this side as well. Maybe, in this matter the Muslims are on a more straight path and a clearer way and possess a more stable opinion. It is not permissible that we follow the West in this kind of civilization. Rather, it is our duty to maintain our efforts for the preservation of what we have inherited, and to value it at its true worth.

These people say to their Muslim brethren; "Let this civilization not dazzle you by its outward glitter and its adornments. Let it not deceive you by its falsities and untruths, let it not beguile you by its sensual delights and pleasures, and let not your sights be snatched by its shine. Do not lose your way by its calls. Do not be in the illusion that he who is gifted with science, industry, ornament and wealth, offers a commendable example in his beliefs and persuasions, or a virtuous model as regards morals and conduct.

Recognize yourselves, and have esteem for human merits and moral virtues you have inherited.

Then these moderate thinkers say:

The Muslims have struggled for their political freedom. Greater as an idea and of more far-reaching influence for them will be

to struggle for freedom of thought, and to discipline themselves and control their rational faculties and adopt the virtues of Western civilization and abandon their vices, to discriminate thus between evil and good of what they have inherited from their history with the judgment of a free, self-determining, honourable and self-respecting man, who chooses and abandons, approves and disapproves by his own thought, and not by the thought of others, and declares lawful and unlawful by his own code and not by the code of others.

We do not deny that the modern civilization has brought good for people, and benefits in sciences and industrial manufactures; nor do we contend that even outside sciences and industry, I mean political and social matters, this civilization has brought much good with it and general benefits; but one should not deny that on its religious and moral sides there is a lot of fault, weakness, corruption and disorder, and that human advancement in scientific learning does not keep its pace with morals.

It grieves us much to see that evil makes the good of the civilization bad and its vices turn its beauties into unseemliness. We regret to observe that its heart does not keep company with its head, and its faith does not follow its ideas. On this account we are stricken by a constant grief, and a continued anxiety, which testifies the truth of the noble verse of the Qur'an:

“Say: He is able to send upon you a torture from above or from beneath your feet, or to confuse you into sects, and some of you may then taste the harm from others.”

It does not concern us here to enumerate

the merits of the contemporary civilization, and to explain what benefits it has bestowed upon human beings. We shall rather limit our discourses to the persuasions and creeds of this civilization and its views which the Muslim people are afraid of. To be brief, we are giving here the following fundamental questions:

No one can deny the fact that the modern civilization is a civilization dominated by atheism, over-ridden by materialism, and subjugated by lust.

I fear this civilization, as Muslims do, on account of the heterodoxy that goes hand in hand with it, and the materialism that governs it. The Muslim community as a whole is a religious-minded community which believes in Allah and its heart is in search of His nearness. He is their Supreme Ideal; the beginning of everything is from Him, and to Him is the return. The beliefs and actions of the community turn to this basic point where they both join hands, and by dint of which they are organized. The conflicts of individuals are subjected to the discipline of law, and are resolved by a system of Shar'. This Shar' is aided by a faith (iman) which is limited neither by time nor by space, nor by any circumstance or shape of affairs.

(A) The Muslim Individual

The Muslim individual believes in Allah, and seeks His nearness without any intermediary. He is the Highest Ideal for him, and he endeavours to acquire His character.

The world of matter is small for him. He struggles to conquer it for the profits it can yield. He disengages himself from it after having dealt with it and then out-passes it towards the spiritual world which is infinite.

His beliefs, concerns and hopes are not limited by or dependent on the world of senses. Thus this mundane existence and its knowledge are not his greatest anxiety. He is the master of it and not vice versa. It is in his hands, and does not rule 'over his mind; he avails himself of it and gets delights without being overpowered by it. He does not make himself its slave. Rather, he dominates it and conquers it by his faith and strength of morals. He does not care about it save in the matters allowed by his faith and his morals. His acts are always abiding by the Code (Shar'). He walks through the guided path. His law is determined by what is lawful and by what is unlawful, and by what is worthy or unworthy of the dignity and nobility of man.

He regards himself to be the viceregent (Khalifa) of Allah on the earth, upholding justice among His servants. He inhabits the earth and reforms it and maintains equity in it. He is munificent by self-sacrifice, and benevolent at his own cost. He strives after truth and endeavours in support of goodness as if he himself is answerable for the entire humanity. He is abstemious in the world, keeping away from the disapproved things, refusing favours, self-respecting, tender-hearted and merciful by the help of God. He can dispense with most things, having God with him, and never despairs. None has lost hopes about the mercy of his Lord save the misguided ones. The Muslim does not lose hope, for those who lose hope about the benevolence of Allah are the misbelieving ones. He makes effort, and if he fails, he still has hopes of success. He is patient and knows that hardship and comfort are going side by side, and that after this hardship must come comfort. If worldly calamities gather round him, he does not

commit suicide overpowered by grief, for his faith rises above the vicissitudes of life, and his self is greater than its sweet-nesses and bitter-nesses and his determination is too spacious to be affected by its hardships and comforts.

The community of Muslims which abides by this faith and these merits is afraid of what is flowing towards its individuals, of evil incitements of the heterodox, material civilization. It finds that the individual brought up in the atmosphere of this civilization is utterly selfish; he does not care for anything save his own mean lusts; his concerns and hopes are all given to the worldly desires and he cannot release himself from them. He has neither aim nor goal beyond it. The man of this civilization makes his best effort to enjoy this material life fully. He creates means for the fulfillment of his desires in it. He is very keen in achieving this goal and if he finds some obstacles in his way, he tries his best to make every effort, lawful or unlawful, noble or vile, and every pursuit, mean or virtuous, to get his outlet and if he still cannot manage, he commits suicide. For his life is Matter; if he misses this matter, there is no charm for him to live in this world.

Riches are his goal and deity. He commits every base sin to get rich, and is ready for every meanness to amass wealth. Every dishonest trade, every mean walk of life, the incitements toward forbidden things, the tricky devices to satisfy lusts, and pursuits of profit by mean devices, are nothing but forms of rship of wealth and lusts, and scorn of religion and morals.

(B) The Muslim Woman

The Muslim woman is the mistress of the

house, a virtuous wife, the mother of her children, pure and chaste, disliking base things refusing disgracefulness, one whom Islam protects and whose nobility it preserves, and upon whom it bestows her rights and protects the affairs of herself and her household.

The Muslims fear the evils brought by the modern civilization for her, its misguidedness and its deceptions. This civilization is resolved to drag woman out of her domestic sphere of work. It makes her impertinent to her husband and makes her desert her children and gives her up totally to streets, factories, gatherings and assemblies. She forgets children, and cuts off the family ties. The Modern civilization misleads a woman by the name of freedom and equality, and brings disgrace and troubles to her by overwhelming cares and responsibilities for which she is not created and which do not suit her delicate life. How wide a difference lies between a woman earning the family's livelihood and a mistress of a house!

The idle play of the onlookers pursues her.

Muslims wish for Women chastity, honour and nobility, and that she should stay at home for the happiness of the husband and should bring up virtuous children. They are anxious for her on account of this misfortune and are frightened by this epidemic.

(C) The Muslim Family

The Muslim family is made of love, self-sacrifice, obedience and filial piety. We do not know any religion or system of law or creed which dignifies parents as much as Islam does. The Qur'an has given great respect to them, so much so that regard for parents comes next in importance to the

regard for belief in Allah's unity and His service. Islam has regard for them in all the circumstances of life. If they believe in other gods and order their child to follow them in their belief, the child should not obey them, but in this state also his obligations are to maintain their reverence in all other matters. Islam has placed mother above father in the matter of respect, dignity and regard, in view of the pangs she suffered on bearing the child and for the pains to feed and bring up the child. Islam has placed Paradise under the feet of mothers.

Islam has emphasized great respect and regard for blood-relations, and preservation of this relationship with tenderness. One is to be conscious in this matter almost as much as in guarding oneself against the wrath of God:

“Guard yourselves against (the wrath of) Allah. To Him you are answerable and to your blood-relations.”

This is the nature of the pure, affectionate, cooperative Muslim family, in which the parents are sanctified, and regard for blood-relationship is shown, and also for brethren, in which the younger ones obey the elders, and the elder ones have affection for the younger. The modern ideas make them disobedient, rebellious and agitators, and aim at breaking up the ties of the family, and blow away its unity. So the home is getting emptied of its residents who begin to inhabit streets and places of vulgar sport. No authority remains for the fathers and the mothers, no regard for elders and no affection for the younger.

I see much corruption, crimes, griefs and anxieties, which We observe today among

Muslim communities, have been growing day by' day and become stronger and stronger and spreading all over the world in consequence of the blows of disruption that befell the families. The superiority of the parents has disappeared, and so the cooperation of the brothers, and the noble themes of morality are gone and also the tender feelings which grow under the shelter of mothers and fathers.

(D) The Muslims stand fast by Justice

The Muslim community is founded on righteousness and stands fast by justice and is eager to fulfill promises. The Qur'an ordains it to stand fast by justice and to seek the pleasure of Allah and not to let the desires go astray from justice.

The Muslim is forbidden to seek what is not right or to belittle it just as he is forbidden to utter falsehoods against people or to talk slanderously against them. For anyone who accuses women without clear evidence, it has prescribed punishment so that no evidence is ever accepted from him.

The modern ideas have come forth with minimizing the gravity of lies and false statements. It has brought commendation of men's wearing decorations which they do not deserve, or their getting praise for deeds they have not done. The codes have declared lawful that one community may struggle for victory for itself by righteous or unrighteous means. The slogans among various nations have proclaimed lawful all sorts of strategies of untruth, misguidedness and false statement. Nations bring slander to others unjustly so that the matters of truth and falsehood have become confused. Misguidance has been carried out in all walks of life nobly

and boldly.

This is the confused bustle that universally overshadows the world today. These are the self-belying claims and self-contradicting proclamations and misleading opinions which result from people's disregard of righteousness, truth and justice, and from their so-called lawful misstatement, false slanders and blames for the welfare of governments, communities, sects or individuals.

Every nation has been blaming the other nations. Some of them are afraid of others. Every party says that it aims at justice, truth, peace and welfare of humanity. Remember, this is not true. Every party has its own cry: "We do not mean war or any evil coming to others." But remember, they are not true in their saying.

These are the calamities and what shoots from them and what attaches to them. They contrive to corrupt Muslim communities and beautify for them the modes of conduct as practiced by civilized nations, and as the highest that modern society has achieved. Alas a hundred times to the Muslims! for such a view has deceived them and such false desires have misled them and these false glittering have blinded them.

The aim of a Muslim should be to lead people to justice and righteousness and not to do wrong, not to follow un-prescribed desires, nor to tell lies, nor to deceive. For these merits Islam brought him up. They are his ideal even if he falls short of them. They are his goal, even if he could not reach it fully. They should be emphasized in his life and be his principal anxiety and the final end of his efforts.

(E) The Muslim Community

It is the intention of Islam to bind the Muslim community together on the foundations of love, affection and cooperation, and that justice and benevolence should shine in it. Everyone endeavour for his livelihood with righteousness and justice, having full regard for the Code. Whoever is of affluent circumstances has obligations towards him who has not. The wealth from Allah comes and goes. May be, the destitute of today becomes the rich of tomorrow, and may be the rich of today becomes the poor of tomorrow. Let there be no miserliness from the rich, nor callousness, nor jealousy from the poor. The Code (Shar') is comprehensive and guarantees the right to everyone, and puts on everyone obligations. It draws dues from the riches of the rich for the destitute. It brings up people together upon fraternity, mutual regard and cooperation.

The Muslim community binds individuals by blood-relationship and Islam has stressed what is due in this matter and has made regard for it necessary. Next comes regard for neighbourhood. Neighbourhood is next to relationship whose honour Islam has preserved and whose obligations it has emphasized. Then comes the relationship of the fraternity of Islam which is comprehensive and unifying all round. This is what Islam ordains and prescribes and urges us to, and induces us into, and what we are to do for it. This should be the aim of every Muslim and his intention as defence against what has befallen the Muslim community, of weaknesses and disruptions through ignorance of the codes of its faith and deviations from its fundamental ways.

The modern ideas and contemporary

creeds have come without this aim. People vie among themselves for riches and they cling to the world as if it were the final goal of their existence and the end of their efforts. If one does not get wealth by lawful means, one tries to obtain it by unlawful means and is jealous of anyone who has wealth and misesteems him, finds faults with him and quarrels with him on all occasions. Thus hostilities among strata of the community and its sects have become strong and the other most important things above riches and wealth, i.e., spiritual ideologies, human objectives, etc., have become things of little importance. The chaos of people and their mutual strifes have assumed magnitude as is apparent in these incessant human earthquakes and never-ending evils and as we hear of the activity professing to aim at equality in the matters of food and drink accompanied by demolition of their honour and depravity from freedom, so that it has made their faculties mutilated, leaving them no freedom of will or opinion nor any choice of concerns. It does equalise individuals in the matters of water and pasture and prolongs the affliction of men and their distress, while they never get to what they are promised and never find what they are led to.

This is the enmity and rancour and this is the misfortune and unpleasant compulsion. This is depravity from human merits. All these calamities we fear for the sake of the Muslim community as well, and we see against our approval that this community is being led to them by delusion and these misfortunes have begun to work in it. We fear that their activity will persist and we shall fall short of our lofty ideals and shall be led astray from our noble aims and shall fall into blind evil. (Continued on page #. 7)

Qur'anic Code for Trade

Khalid Durrani

Islam is a complete code of life that provides guidance to the humankind in every walk of life. Although trade and commerce is vital for the survival and progress of human society, it can only be carried out according to a code of ethics, to ensure justice and fair play. It is also essential to abide by the principles of good management, and indeed no human activity is complete without the element of benevolence and charity.

Fastly, there has to be a strong legal machinery to monitor observance of the prescribed code of conduct and impose sanctions on those who violate it. The principles of trade mentioned in the holy Qur'an, encompass all the essential aspects of human conduct.

'Woe to those that deal in fraud. Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due.' (83: 1-3). The word 'fraud' here, does not apply only to the practice of resorting to short measure or short weight but in fact it is the spirit of injustice that has been condemned.

In domestic and social matters it refers to an individual or group that may ask for honour or respect or services which they are not willing to give to others in similar circumstances. With what face can a man ask for mercy or love from Allah when he is unwilling to give it to his fellow beings? The spirit of the Ayaat is that we must give in full what is due from us, whether we expect to receive full consideration from the other side or not. Ayat 35 of Surah Al-Asra reiterates that giving just measure and

weight is not only right in itself, but is ultimately, to the best spiritual and material advantage of the person who gives it. "Give full measure when you measure and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the most advantageous in the final determination.

The holy Quran further enjoins men not to indulge in mischief by withholding things from people unjustly. Surah Al Shuara, Ayaat 181- to 183 state, "give just measure and cause no loss (to others by fraud). And weigh with scales true and upright. And withhold not things justly due to men, nor do evil in the land, working mischief."

Allah Almighty has guided men to be honest, just and fair in all their dealings. This includes not only weighing things that one is selling, but justice and honesty in conduct. In fact the scope of this Ayat also encompasses justice with one's own self and obedience of divine laws. The importance of 'balance' in trade and other worldly affairs has been further reiterated in Ayaat 7-9 of Surah Rahman, 'And the firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the balance (of justice) In order that you may not transgress (due balance). So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance.'

It is unfortunate that many of us today, do not realize the hazards of accumulating wealth-through unjust and unfair means. Amassing wealth by unfair means is in fact a clear and willful disobedience of our Creator. "Give measure and weight with full justice, no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear." (6: 152).

‘Now has come to you a clear (sign) from your Lord! Give just measure and weight, nor withhold from the people the things that are their due, and do no mischief on the earth after it has been set in order: that will be best for you, if you have faith.’ (7: 85).

Almighty Allah has urged men to earn by means of free and fair trade. We have also been warned against the hazards of greed and jealousy because Allah has promised to reward each individual, according to the effort he puts in.

“O you people who believe! Do not devour each other's property by deceit (or unlawful)”. (4: 29). “Do not desire (in greed) of His Grace which, Allah gives more to some than the others Men's portion is according to what they earn and women's portion is according to what they earn. And keep asking Him of His bounty. (4: 32)

Human mind is not like a computer where data may be stored permanently. Man is likely to forget things. Similarly, oral communication is likely to be misheard and misunderstood. Miscommunication is often the cause of disputes and misunderstandings between human beings. it destroys the otherwise affectionate and cordial relationship between dear friends and relatives. This is precisely the reason why Islam has ordained men to reduce their business contracts to writing. “You who believe! When you deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing. Let a scribe write down faithfully as between the parties: let not the scribe, refuse to write as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him, who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear his Lord Allah.

“There should be no (word or item) left out or reduced. If the party liable, is mentally deficient, or weak, or unable himself to dictate, let his guardian dictate faithfully. And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as you choose for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her. The witnesses should not refuse when they are called on (for evidence). Disdain not to reduce to writing (your contract) for a future period, whether it be small or big, also fix (and enter) term agreed, There is justice in this for you, in the sight of Allah, more suitable as evidence and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves.” (2: 282).

The first part of Ayat 282 deals with transactions involving future payment or future consideration. In order to understand the above part of the Ayat more realistically, it may be prudent to note the following points:

- The words, “There is justice in this for you, in the sight of Allah, more suitable as evidence and more convenient to prevent doubts among Yourselves”, indicate that a written document is recommended in case of future transactions, but it is not obligatory in law.
- it is desirable that the men or women chosen as witness should be from the circle to which the parties belong, as they would best be able to understand the transaction, and will be more easily available, if their evidence is required in future.

The second part of Ayat 282, deals with transactions in which payment and delivery are made on the spot. Such transactions

require no contract or evidence in writing, but apparently oral witnesses to such transactions are recommended.

“But if it be a transaction which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, there is no blame on you if you reduce it not to writing. But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract, and let neither scribe nor witness suffer harm, if you do (such harm) it would be wickedness in you. So fear Allah; for it is Allah that teaches you. And Allah is well acquainted with all things.” (2: 282).

Commercial morality in the above part of the Ayat has been taught in the most practical manner, both in regard to the bargains to be made, the evidence to be provided, the doubts to be avoided and the duties and rights of scribes and witnesses.

Ayat 283 of Surah Al Baqarah explains the principles of pledge as a means of commercial transactions “If you are on a journey, and cannot find a scribe, a pledge with possession (may serve the purpose). And if one of you deposits a thing on trust with another, let the trustee (faithfully) discharge his trust, and let him fear Allah, his Rabb. Conceal not evidence: for whoever conceals it, his heart is tainted with sin. And Allah Knows all that you do.”

A pledge or security stands on its own independent footing, though it is a very convenient form of closing the bargain where the parties cannot trust each other and cannot get a written Agreement with proper witnesses. The law of deposit implies great trust in the depositary on the part of the depositor. The depositary becomes a trustee whose duty is to guard the interests of the person on whose behalf he holds the trust and to render back the

property and accounts when required, according to the terms of the trust. It is at times possible to gain a material advantage by destroying or concealing an inconvenient piece of evidence. We have been warned not to yield to such temptation. Concealment of evidence has a serious effect on our own moral and spiritual life. Our heart is the seat of all our affections and false dealings taint all our affections.

Allah Almighty has forbidden excessive profit faking and exploitation of the needy. We have been strictly restrained from multiplying our wealth through unjust, exploitative and excessive profit taking. “O you people who believe! Do not eat (earnings) doubled and multiplied through Riba, but fear Allah that you may really prosper.” (3: 130).

According to the explanation of the above Ayat by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, it is highly incumbent on us to refrain from oppressing our fellow beings in need. Usury or Riba is the opposite extreme of charity, unselfishness, striving and giving ourselves in the service of Allah and of our fellow beings. Real prosperity consists not in greed but in giving ourselves and our wealth in the cause of Allah, and in the service of Allah’s creatures. Al-mighty Allah has warned us that those who are only engrossed in the vanities of this world, and wish to accumulate wealth in this temporary and transitory life, are disregarding the direction and advice of Allah, Such people may become materialistically rich in this world, but they would be paupers in the eternal life hereafter.

“Whoever intends to harvest his crop in the hereafter, We increase the yield of his crop.

And If one intends to harvest his crop in this world, We give It to him in this (life), then he has no share of it in the hereafter” (Surah Al Shura, Ayat 20). Ayaat 15 and 16 of Surah Hud (11), explain the above concept in greater depth. “One who desires the life of this world and its glitters, We will satisfy him in full (according to) his deeds, in this life, there will be no deduction from it. For all such people there is nothing in the hereafter, except fire. What they had built (in this world) will be rendered futile, and all their deeds will be ineffective.”

It is by no means enough to give guidance to people, frame rules and regulations, but leave people free to violate the law if they choose to do so. Justice and fair play must be enforced with iron hand in order to ensure a just, equitable and peaceful co-existence in the society (Surah Al Hadeed, Ayat 25 says, “When We sent our apostles with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of right and wrong), that men may stand forth in justice.”

And We sent down Iron in which is

(material for) mighty war, as well as many benefits for mankind that Allah may test, who it is that will help, unseen, Him and His apostles: For Allah is full of strength, exalted in Might (And able to enforce His will).

In the above Ayat, three things are mentioned as gifts of Allah. In concrete terms they are ‘The Book’, The Balance, and ‘Iron’ which stand as emblems of the three things which hold the society together. These are:

- The Revelation: which commands good and forbids evil
- Justice’ which gives to each person his due
- The strong arm of law which imposes sanctions on evil doers and handles them with an iron hand. Iron in the above Ayat stands as the symbol of strength, power, and enforcement of law.

The writer is a retired commander of Pakistan Navy;

(Courtesy: “DAWN”)

Al-Fath Al-Rabbani

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Pearls of Prophetic Wisdom

“Fasting”

Fasting is Obligatory:

Salman of Persia narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) gave a sermon on the fast day of Shaban in which he said:

“O men! there has come to you the month of great splendour and bounty; it is the month which contains a night which is preferable to a thousand months. God has prescribed fasting as obligatory during this month and one may stand (in prayers) at night during it to gain merit. Whoever performs in it a deed of virtue voluntarily shall be regarded as if he has performed something which is obligatory and whoever performs something obligatory shall be regarded as if he has performed seventy obligatory deeds. This is the month of patience and Heaven is the reward for patience. This is the month for adopting sympathetic and cooperative attitude; this is the month during which the provision of the believer is increased. Whoever feeds a person who fasts at the time of breaking the fast will have his sins pardoned and will be emancipated from Fire. He shall get equal merit with the person who fasted without any decrease in the merit of the latter.”

Salman says that people asked the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) what should one do who has nothing to feed the person who fasts, whereupon he replied:

“Even he will gain merit who provides the person who fasts with a mouthful of milk or water or a single date. The one who feeds the person who fasts to his contentment shall have a drink from my Lake (Kauthar) and shall never after feel thirsty until he

enters Heaven. The first part of this month is the Mercy of God, the middle of it is God's Pardon and the fast of it is emancipation from Fire. Whoever reduces the pressure of work on his servant during this month shall have pardon for his sins and be emancipated from the Hell.”

Kaab bin Ajrah narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked people to assemble around the pulpit, and when they had assembled, he ascended the pulpit. When he stepped on the first step he said “Amin” ; when he stepped on the second step he again said “Amin” and when he stepped on the third step he said “Amin” for the third time.

People who had assembled there, said; “O Messenger of God! we had never before heard such thing from you.”

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

“Gabriel has visited me and said: cursed be he who lived through the month of Ramadan and did not obtain God's pardon for their sins, whereupon I said Amin. When I stepped on the second step, Gabriel said — cursed be he before whom you (the Holy Prophet) are mentioned and he did not bless you — and I said Amin. When I stepped on the third step he said— —cursed be he who lived so long that his parents, or one of them, grew old and he denied himself the passage into Heaven by refusing to serve them—whereupon I said Amin again.”

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said: .

"If a person neglects to fast even one single day during Ramadan without proper excuse or illness, it cannot be atoned for even if he continues to fast throughout his life".

The Merit of Fasting

Abu Masood Ghifari narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

"If only people knew what Ramadan is (the merit of fasting during Ramadan) they should wish that the whole year were Ramadan.

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

"When the night of Eid-al-Fitr sets in the angels indulge in rejoicing and the Almighty God unveils His Light. He asks the angels: "O angels! what is the reward of a labourer who did all the work which was allotted to him"?

The angels reply:

"His reward is that he should be given full wages". God then says:

"Be you all witness, I have pardoned them all (the people who fasted during the month).

Amr bin Aaas narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

"The prayers of the person who fasts are not rejected."

Atonement for breaking Fast:

Abu Hurairah narrates that while he was in the company of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and some of his friends, a man came to them and said:

"I am lost! O Messenger of God."

"What is wrong with you?" asked the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

"I had intercourse with my wife while I was fasting," he replied.

"Do you have a slave whom you can set free?" he asked.

"No."

"Can you fast for two months in succession?", asked the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

"No", he replied.

"Do you have enough food to feed sixty destitute?" the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked again.

"No," the man replied.

The Holy Prophet remained silent for some time. In the meanwhile a bag of dates was brought to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), whereupon he asked: "Where is the questioner?"

"Here am I," said the man.

"Take this and give it in charity", said the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

"O Messenger of God," said the man. Should I give it in charity to a person poorer than I am....? By God, there is none between these fields who needs it more than my family."

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) laughed until his teeth appeared and then he said:

"Feed your family with it."

Deferment of Fasting:

Ayesha, the Mother of the Believers, narrates:

"Hamzah bin Amr Aslami asked the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) whether he should fast while

on a journey — he was accustomed to fast frequently — whereupon the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said that he had the choice either to fast or defer the fasting during the journey.

Jabir bin Abdullah narrates that while the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was on a journey he saw at a certain spot a large crowd of people gathered around a person who was being protected from the sun.

“What is the matter?” asked the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

“He is fasting,” they replied.

“It is nothing meritorious to fast while on a journey,” said the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

Sighting the Moon:

Ibn Omar narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

“Do not begin to fast until you have seen the moon and do not cease to fast until you have seen the moon. If it is clouded, count the full number of days (thirty days).”

Ibn Abbas narrates that a Bedoin came to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and said that he had seen the moon.

The latter asked him:

“Do you bear testimony that none is worthy of worship except God?”

“Yes,” said the Bedoin.

“Do you witness that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of God”? asked the Holy

Prophet (ﷺ).

“Yes”, he replied.

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) then turned to Bilal and said:

“Proclaim among men that they should begin to fast from tomorrow.”

Training in self-Discipline:

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

“One who does not abandon falsehood both in speech and action (should know that) God does not need his abandoning of food or drink.”

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

“There are a number of persons who observe fasting but they get nothing (in return) except thirst. There are a number of persons who stand (saying prayers at night) but they get nothing (in return) except wakefulness.”

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

“Fasting is a shield as long as it is not cleft.”

“How is it cleft?” asked those who were present.

“By telling a lie or back-biting,” replied the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).



Ethics of Iqbal

Dr. I. H. Enver

Ethics for Iqbal, like every art or science or system of philosophy, is a means to an end and not an end in itself. Value, whether religious or aesthetical or moral, is pragmatic and not static as conceived by the old idealistic schools of thought. So ethics, in the very first instance, is not a code of static and petrified moral laws, but a search after vital principles which of necessity, due to their inherent vitality, promote the best interests of life and existence as such, and may eventually, after trial and error process, be regarded as uniform and universal principles in so far as they admit of a uniform potentiality of furthering life as a whole.

All life, however, aims at absolute freedom as such, attainable through power and incessant struggle. As the ideal of absolute freedom which, to Iqbal, is the corner-stone of the ideal of human perfection is only approximately realizable, the necessary yearnings and the attending effort to realize it completely should, therefore, be never extinguished and it is this alone which is a thing of beauty in our life. Life, when divested of enthusiasm to seek absolute realization in absolute freedom, is synonymous with death and dreadful oblivion of nonentity. It is the will to freedom that counts and this supersedes the will to existence.

Freedom itself, for Iqbal, is synonymous with self-realization. To be absolutely free is to be truly one's own self. This, however, does not mean, as was conceived by Kant, that to be free is to act according to Reason. To Iqbal, to be truly free, is, as opposed to Kant, to transcend reason and

to act, as was also affirmed by Kant, according to will, which, to Iqbal, is the essential core of human personality. Reason for Iqbal is an excrescence which hinders the progress of life and in its anxiety to emphasize general maxims, it misses the essential core of human personality which, being voluntaristic, is best revealed in will rather than in reason. It is thus the will to freedom that counts and this supersedes reason on the one hand and the will to existence on the other.

So viewed, every action is a new action and is creative to the extent it is expressive of the will to freedom which is grounded in all individuation and truly existent existence.

Freedom, if realized, will reveal the dynamic centre of human self which is that of ego-hood. It is this essential centre of existence and will that attempts through all its multiple efforts in arts, literature, science and philosophy eventually to emphasize through them its search for freedom and perfection. Ethics, likewise, is an effort of the self eventually to find itself.

Thus, it does not merely maintain life understood in a purely biological sense, but aspires to do more. It does, of course, imply the survival of the fittest. Yet it, thereby, of necessity, demands the further vindication of its claim to help the individual to perfect himself. Moral value is thus not exhausted by the biological value of mere survival. The former is the crowning value for which the latter serves as an important and, in all probability, an inevitable base. It is indeed true to say, as maintained by Spencer directly, and by Nietzsche

indirectly, that ethics should be a means to the promotion of life. But while for Spencer and Darwin it aims at mere survival and for Nietzsche at “will to power”, for Iqbal, as for any other idealistic theory, its ideal is self-realization and unparagoned perfection.

The evolutionary ethicists are not fully justified in maintaining the Darwinian doctrine of the “Survival of the fittest” as the end-all and be-all of all codes of ethics. On the biological assumption that mere existence is the highest value, there could be made, as Iqbal emphasizes, no claim on the individual to sacrifice one’s own existence and life on certain occasions which, at times, in the best interests of life and existence as such, rightly demand such sacrifices.

Even accepting for arguments’ sake that mere existence is to be treated as a moral value, it may, on the antecedents of the ethical evolutionists’ thought, be pertinently asked whether the mere prolongation of existence is, at all, to be coveted as a desired end. Both Iqbal and the biological ethicists of the West would answer it in the negative, but for different reasons. To the evolutionists of the type of Spencer, life cannot be worth living if divested of the opportunities of enjoyment and pleasure for, to them, pleasure alone supports existence. The Western evolutionists, having taken mere material existence as the final end, are, of necessity, further driven to suppose that pleasure, which can support material existence, is alone a moral

value. The ethical evolutionist thus eventually turns a staunch hedonist.

To Iqbal, however, life, even if absolutely divested of all opportunities or possibilities of pleasure, understood in a purely hedonistic sense, is yet worth living and worth struggling for greater life and fuller life, which end, by virtue of the ceaselessly aspirant nature of human self, recedes from us in proportion to the progress that we make towards it.

To the evolutionary ethicists of the West, as, for instance, is the case with Spencer, the moral law, to be really moral, must be the generator of pleasure which, in its turn, preserves life and helps the survival of the fittest. To Iqbal, however, moral laws to be really moral, of necessity must promote life without the intermediary of pleasure and support the emergence of the fittest, the latter being those who are so morally.

The fittest, thus, are those who have a moral and not a mere biological qualification to survive. The ‘fittest,’ when he emerges as the fittest, is not merely the man in a state of nature but a man of morals also. It is these which have helped him to survive, and, so judged, these morals are always being made and never fully made, for life problems are too complex to have a general formula for their solution. Ethics must cognize that life is changing, as are all problems allied with it.

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اس سے ان کو نکلوا دیا۔“ (البقرہ آیات ۳۰ تا ۳۶)

سورۃ البقرہ کی ان آیات کریمہ میں انسان کا مقام واضح طور پر متعین ہو جاتا ہے۔ حق یہ ہے کہ اسلام کی تعلیمات انسان کے لئے سراپا رحمت ہیں اور اس دین کی تعلیم کا مقصد یہ ہے کہ انسان کو اللہ تعالیٰ نے کائنات کے اندر جو بلند مقام عطا فرمایا ہے وہ اسے معلوم ہوتا کہ دنیا میں عزت و فلاح کی زندگی بسر کرے اور مرنے کے بعد ابدی زندگی میں اللہ تعالیٰ کی نعمتوں کا مستحق ٹھہرے۔

حضرت ابراہیم علیہ السلام نے جب نمرود سے کہا کہ میرا رب وہ ہے جو مارتا ہے اور جلاتا ہے تو نمرود کی عقل انسانی اس حد تک مجنم ہو چکی تھی کہ وہ کہنے لگا کہ یہ کام تو میں بھی کر سکتا ہوں۔ اس پس منظر میں رسول اللہ ﷺ تشریف لائے اور اللہ تعالیٰ نے اعلان فرمایا کہ ہم نے بنی آدم کو عزت بخشی۔ یہ ایک انقلابی اعلان تھا جس نے انسانوں کو پہلی بار بتایا کہ انسان ہی عزت و شرف کا مستحق ہے اور کائنات کی تمام مخلوقات اس کے تابع ہیں، اس کی خدمت کے لئے ہیں، اسے فائدہ پہنچانے کے لئے ہیں، اس لئے کہ خالق کائنات اللہ جل جلالہ نے انسان کو اس کرۂ ارض پر اپنا خلیفہ اور نائب مقرر کیا ہے۔ اب دنیا میں انسان ہی کا حکم چلے گا۔ انسان اللہ تعالیٰ کی اطاعت کرے گا اور کائنات کی تمام دوسری مخلوقات کو تصرف میں لائے گا۔ شرف انسانی کے تخیل کو عام کرنے کے لئے مزید تشریح یہ فرمائی کہ اس شرف میں تمام انسان برابر کے حقدار ہیں۔ نسل اور رنگ اور وطن یہ سب محض پہچان اور تفریق کے لئے ہیں۔ گورے کو کالے پر یا عربی کو عجمی پر اور عجمی کو عربی پر کوئی فوقیت اور کسی قسم کا امتیاز حاصل نہیں ہے۔ کیوں؟ اس لئے کہ دنیا کے تمام انسان ایک ہی ماں باپ کی اولاد ہیں، ایک خاندان کے افراد ہیں، لہذا انسان اور انسان کے درمیان فرق و امتیاز محض جہالت و کم نظری کی پیداوار ہے۔ شرف انسانی عام ہے۔ ہاں اس

میں درجہ درجہ کا فرق ہو سکتا ہے۔ مثلاً جو لوگ متقی ہیں، اللہ کے حکم کی پابندی کرتے ہیں اور رسول اللہ ﷺ کے اسوۂ حسنہ کو اپنی ہدایت کا سرچشمہ سمجھتے ہیں وہ یقینی طور پر ان بھائیوں سے زیادہ مستحق شرف ہیں جنہوں نے اللہ تعالیٰ کی نافرمانی کر کے اپنی زندگی کو عام شرف انسانی سے بڑی حد تک محروم کر رکھا ہے۔

اب یہاں ایک نکتے پر غور فرمائیے۔ انسان اس کرۂ ارض پر اللہ تعالیٰ کا خلیفہ ہے اور نائب ہے۔ یہی اس کا مقام شرف ہے۔ اس شرف کا سب سے بڑا اور سب سے اہم لازمی تقاضا یہ ہے کہ انسان کو اپنے فعل و عمل میں اور اپنے کردار میں اور اپنے فکر و نظر میں اللہ تعالیٰ کے تابع فرمان و عمل ہونا چاہئے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ منبع اخلاق ہے، انسان کو بھی صاحب اخلاق ہونا چاہئے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ رحیم و کریم ہے، انسان کو بھی انسان کے ساتھ ایسا ہی سلوک کرنا چاہئے وغیرہ۔

حضرت عائشہ رضی اللہ عنہا نے ایک سوال پر جواب عطا فرمایا کہ حیات رسول ﷺ عمل برقرآن ہے۔ قرآن حکیم فرمان و ارشاد الہی ہے۔ سرور کائنات، فخر موجودات، نور مجسم ﷺ نے قرآن پر عمل کر کے زندگی کا وہ نمونہ پیش کیا کہ جو اللہ تعالیٰ چاہتا تھا۔ وہ اللہ کے رسول تھے، انسان تھے اور مرتبہ شرف انسانی پر فائز۔ ثابت ہوا کہ اس کرۂ ارض اور اس دنیا کے ہر انسان کو وہی زندگی گزارنی چاہئے جس کا نمونہ ذات رسول اکرم ﷺ ہے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ ہر انسان سے ایسی ہی زندگی کا مطالبہ کرتا ہے۔

شرف انسانی کا نظریہ سب سے پہلے اسلام نے پیش کیا، اور انسان کو دوسری مخلوقات کی ذہنی غلامی سے نجات دلائی، اور اسے شرف کیا۔ اللہ سبحانہ و تعالیٰ ہمیں توفیق عطا فرمائیں کہ ہم انسانی شرف کو قائم رکھیں اور اپنی زندگیاں قرآن و سنت کے مطابق بسر کریں۔

شرفِ انسانی

حکیم محمد سعید

ذخنی و تری میں سواریاں دیں، پاک چیزوں سے رزق عطا کیا اور بہت سی چیزوں پر جن کو ہم نے پیدا کیا، ان کو ایک طرح کی فضیلت عطا کی ہے۔“ (الاسرار، ۷۰)

انسان کی یہ دونوں حیثیتیں جب سامنے آتی ہیں تو ذہن میں یہ سوال پیدا ہوتا ہے کہ آخر اس دنیا میں انسان کا صحیح مرتبہ و مقام کیا ہے؟ اس کا جواب قرآن حکیم نے یہ دیا ہے:

”اور جب کہ تیرے پروردگار نے فرشتوں سے کہا کہ میں زمین پر ایک خلیفہ (نائب) بنانے والا ہوں تو انہوں نے عرض کیا کہ کیا تو زمین میں اس کو نائب بناتا ہے جو وہاں فساد پھیلانے گا اور خوں ریزیاں کرے گا؟ حال آنکہ ہم تیری حمد کے ساتھ تیری تسبیح اور تیری تقدیس کرتے ہیں۔ اللہ نے فرمایا: میں وہ باتیں جانتا ہوں جو تم نہیں جانتے اور اس نے آدم کو نام سکھادے۔ پھر ان فرشتوں کے سامنے پیش کیا اور کہا اگر تم سچے ہو تو ان چیزوں کے نام بتاؤ۔ انہوں نے کہا:

پاک ذات ہے تیری ہم اس کے سوا کچھ نہیں جانتے جو تو نے ہم کو سکھادیا ہے۔ تو ہی علم رکھنے والا ہے اور تو ہی حکمت کا مالک ہے۔

خدا نے کہا: اے آدم! ان فرشتوں کو ان چیزوں کے نام بتا۔ پس جب آدم نے ان کو ان اشیاء کے نام بتائے تو خدا نے کہا: کیا میں نے تم سے نہ کہا تھا کہ میں آسمانوں اور زمین کی سب مخفی باتیں جانتا ہوں اور جو کچھ تم ظاہر کرتے ہو اور چھپاتے ہو اس کا سب علم رکھتا ہوں۔ اور جب ہم نے ملائکہ سے کہا کہ آدم کو سجدہ کرو تو ان سب نے سجدہ کیا۔

جز ابلیس کہ اس نے انکار کیا اور تکبر کیا اور نافرمانوں میں سے ہو گیا اور ہم نے آدم سے کہا کہ تو اور تیری بیوی دونوں جنت میں رہو مگر اس درخت کے پاس بھی نہ پھلکو کہ تم ظالموں میں سے ہو جاؤ گے۔ مگر شیطان نے ان کو جنت سے اکھاڑ دیا اور وہ جس خوش حالی میں تھے

اس صفحہ ارض پر انسان اپنی حقیقت سے قطعی ناواقف تھا اور اپنے حقیقی مقام سے نا آشنا تھا۔ طلوع اسلام سے قبل اس کا حال یہ تھا کہ وہ اپنے ہاتھوں سے بت بناتا تھا اور ان بتوں کے آگے اپنی مرادوں کے لئے سر جھکاتا تھا۔ ورود اسلام سے قبل انسان کا حال یہ تھا کہ وہ درختوں، دریاؤں، سمندروں اور چاند سورج کو اپنے سے زیادہ محترم سمجھتا تھا۔ اپنے سے ہر قوی کے سامنے سر تسلیم خم کرنا اس کا مزاج تھا اور اپنے سے توانا کے آگے جھک جانا اور اس کی پرستش کرنا اس کی عادت تھی، حتیٰ کہ ایسے حالات میں ایسے انسان بھی ہوئے کہ انہوں نے اپنی معبودیت کا رنگ رچایا اور انسان نے انسان کو مجبور کیا کہ وہ اسے اپنا معبود مانے۔

یہ سارا دور انسان کی تاریکی کا دور ہے۔ یہ وہ دور اور زمانہ ہے کہ انسان کو اپنی حقیقت کا پتہ نہ تھا اور اپنے مقام کا اسے احساس نہ تھا۔ اور اک۔ وہ ایک شدید غلط فہمی میں مبتلا تھا۔ وہ افراط پر اترتا تو اس نے خود کو دنیا کی سب سے بلند شے سمجھا۔ غرور و تکبر، جبر و قہر، ظلم و جور اور شر و فساد اس کا مزاج بنا۔ مگر یہی انسان جب تفریط پر اترتا تو اس نے خود کو دنیا کی ذلیل ترین ہستی سمجھا اور جس شے سے اس کو فائدہ کی توقع ہوئی اور مضرت کا خوف، اس نے اس کو معبود تسلیم کر لیا۔

اسلام نے ان دو انتہائی تصورات کو باطل کر کے انسان کے سامنے اس کی اصل حقیقت رکھ دی۔ ایک طرف اسلام نے انسان کے غرور و تکبر کو پاش پاش کر دیا، یہ بتا کر کہ وہ ایک گندے قطرہ آب سے پیدا ہوا اور پھر مٹی کے نچوڑ سے کہ جو ایک حقیر پانی ہے، اس کی نسل چلائی گئی۔ اس تکبر شکنی کے بعد اسلام نوع بشر کو بتاتا ہے کہ وہ اتنا بھی ذلیل نہیں کہ جتنا وہ خود کو سمجھتا ہے۔

قرآن نے کہا ”اور ہم نے بنی آدم کو عزت بخشی اور ان کو