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Eid-UI-Fitr

His Eminence (Late) Dr. Muhammad Fazlur Rahman Ansari Al-Qadri (RA.)

NEARLY fourteen centuries have elapsed since the occurrence of the greatest event in the history of mankind, — the event, namely, of the commencement of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an in the month of Ramadan. The Holy book came carrying in its pages the writ of the greatest and the noblest resolution of human history and the inauguration of the new era wherein the progeny of Adam was to realize all the potentialities of its greatness. Fed and nourished by continuous Guidance from its Maker and having completed a long preparatory march through the stormy stretch of time mankind had reached its stage of maturity, and consequently, enveloped although it was in the darkness of a mighty crisis, its soul was crying for a perfect and final Divine Dispensation to guide it in its onward journey..... That Dispensation, and that Guidance came in the form of the Holy Qur'an and in the sacred month of Ramadan, as we find clearly stated in God's clearly stated in God's Word:

“The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong), So everyone of you who is present during the month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill or on a journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later, Allah intends every facility for you. He does not want to put you to difficulties. He wants you to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you and perchance ye shall be grateful" (*Al-Baqarah: 185*).

Thus Ramadan comes every year to

every Muslim living throughout the world as the commemoration of the new era of Blessings which the Holy Quran ushered and this commemoration consists in a two-fold activity according to the above verse, viz: (1) Self-Discipline, and (2) Offering Thanks to God.

As regards Self-Discipline, Islam believes in and aims at all disciplines of the self, i.e. physical mental, moral, aesthetic and spiritual, and consequently, it blends them with perfect harmony and equilibrium in its scheme of fasting and prayer which operates throughout the month of Ramadan. Glorification of God and seeking Divine Blessings through it are also comprehended by that scheme. They, however, form the special feature of a day especially set aside for that purpose—the day of 'Id-ul-Fitr.

The 'Id-ul-Fitr is thus a purely spiritual festival. Physical rejoicing does of course form part of it, and that solely because Islam does not believe in the separation of the physical and the spiritual. But the all-important fact should not be lost sight of that the key-note of this festival is piety. Coming in the wake of a month of rigorous discipline which is meant to re-equip the human soul, the day of Id-ul-Fitr can only be the day of the formation of fresh determination for the conquest of vice and the establishment of the reign of virtue within one's own self and in the world-at-large a goal and an idea for the achievement of which the Holy Qur'an was revealed,— thus becoming, in the final analysis, the first important day of what might be called the Qur'anic Year.

Islamic contribution to culture

Prof. T. B. living (Late)

Islam had three key philosophers: **Kindi**, the Arab, who came from ancient Kinda in Southern Iraq and was interested in the Greeks; **Farabi**, the Turk from distant Central Asia, who studied politics, optics and musical theory; and **Ibn-Sina** or 'Avicenna', to the barbarians, the Persian who synthesized both philosophy and medicine triumphantly. These thinkers all worked over both Greek and Indian material, and incorporated these into their own worldview while western Europe still maintained a medieval attitude. They had many pupils, and Ibn-Sina's great compendium or Canon of medicine was used in Latin translation in some western universities even as late as the past [19th] century.

The most interesting Islamic thinker was perhaps **Ibn-Khaldun**, who studied the philosophy of culture and history and published his findings as his great Introduction to the Science of History. This illustrious graduate from the Zaytuna University, which still exists in the city of Tunis, observed how civilization can rise and then decay, long before Edward Gibbon wrote on *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

His cyclic theory of human culture resembles Spengler's and Toynbee's in our [20th] century. While he was engaged in this important research, Ibn-Khaldun met famous rulers on three continents, from King Peter the Cruel of Castile in the city of Seville, where the Khaldun family had lived for five centuries, to Tamerlane, the Central Asian conqueror whom he met and talked with in Damascus.

Islamic geographical knowledge was not medieval either, but based, long before Columbus, on Ptolemy's concept of a round earth, and on the practical knowledge that was gained through wide ranging international trade and the annual meeting of pilgrims in Mecca [Makkah al-Mukarramah], who were always eager to exchange notes with one another in that still amazingly cosmopolitan city.

However, the Arabs, like their contemporaries the Mayas in Central America who were likewise excellent astronomers during the same period in history, had to observe the naked sky without a telescope. **Idrisi** was a Moroccan geographer who studied during the 12th century in Norman Sicily, where he compiled several maps of the then known world. Although he lived by the Mediterranean, his knowledge of the Indian Ocean, for instance, was extraordinary. He also told of several Muslim boys from Lisbon in what is now Portugal, who sailed to some 'Sheep Islands' far out in the Atlantic, which might have been either the Canaries or the Antilles.

This voyage describes navigation on the Atlantic three centuries before Columbus' discovery of America. Paintings at Chichen-Itza in the Yucatan peninsula tell us that light-skinned, green-eyed sailors reached that part of Mexico before the 11th century; and even Chinese sources tell us of sailings to the West of Spain and North Africa. However, Morocco has poor harbours on either its Atlantic or Mediterranean coasts, and it was not until Casablanca was built as a heavy port in the 20th century that Moroccan trade

began to go abroad in ocean-going vessels. incidentally the words 'admiral' and 'arsenal' are Arab sea terms. 'Magazine' come from the word makhzan which means a 'storehouse' in Arabic, although our most common magazine today generally stores up articles for reading (while the Spanish derivative *almacen* means 'a 'shop' or 'store').

Botany was cultivated, especially for pharmacology, and the Freer Gallery in Washington has some exquisite samples of Arab and Persian botanical drawings. Optics, which is tied up with mathematics, fascinated **Kindi**, the Arab thinker. Astronomy, as we have said, studied the naked sky before the Dutch invention of the telescope, which was based on the Arab studies of optics.

Because of Islamic restraint against representation of the human being or animals, based on [Prophet] Muhammad's (ﷺ), caution that people might worship images again, Islamic art tends to be based on geometric forms. These lead the eye and the mind on and on through abstractions, rather than to stop and observe graven images, as in other religions, which may hinder the free human spirit from worshipping God Alone, in all His purity and simplicity. Calligraphy formed a basis for this style in decoration too, since it also leads the mind on and on in contemplating the Divine Word.

Thus Islamic buildings from Morocco eastward to India display infinitude of tiles on their walls and floors; and so do Spanish ones, even across the Atlantic, all through Latin America. Latin American styles in architecture and decoration have reached North America too, just as scientific agriculture did, through California. Texas and Florida. This is how the so-called 'California'

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style has misplaced the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern patio from the centre of the house like the ancient Roman atrium, to a concrete slab in our backyards, where in fact, it functions more as the azotea or roof garden (*as-sutayha* in Arabic), to catch the evening breezes.

In Arab buildings, the patio centered on life, where simple things like water became precious, so that the central fountain and the breezes it encouraged brought air conditioning to a hot climate long before the days of heavy machinery, chemistry and electronics made them possible for us.

This open outlook on life forms part of the Mediterranean and Islamic capacity for living life to its fullest. It reflects the romantic attraction which Andalusia and the Middle East, that gave it its flare, has exerted on Westerners: it still is a good life that involves a search for the inner consciousness which we touched upon in our mention of the Islamic concern for *al-Ghayb* and its tendency to abstraction. In architecture this started when the mosque began to serve as a centre for more than the weekly prayer, and became a school and then a college.

Technology gave Spain water wheels for irrigation; their name of *noria* derives ultimately from a Persian word through Arabic, and has remained in Spanish for that useful machine, while *acequia* from *as-saqiyya* is still the irrigation ditch into which the water that it raises is poured. The crops that the Arabs brought from the East were eminently useful, like sugarcane cotton, spices (especially cloves and pepper), lemons and oranges, dates, many types of melon and apricots.

[Now] In' 1976, Mudejer craftsmanship style

(which was spread by Spanish Muslim artisans is called correctly, from the word mudajjan or 'tamed one' in Arabic, since they had to live as serfs under Christian rule), inspired the names for three new cars named from three Spanish Arab cities; the Seville by-Cadillac, the Granada by Ford; and the Cordoba by Chrysler. Thus even contemporary engineering unwittingly pays its homage to three charming cities of Islamic Spain where workmen lived and worked as artists.

Rugs repeat the same patterns in textiles, as do ironwork, brass and copper in metal crafts, carpentry in fine woods, and also in the art of tooled leather. All of these trades display intricate geometric designs drawn in clean, straight lines whose patterns remained traditionally in families for generations; and they were brought to Spanish and Portuguese America by these simple workmen. They were not allowed to bring their wives, however, in order to break up their family tradition; so they married local women and within a few generations their descendants were Mestizo workmen. That is the genesis of Mexican, Guatemalan and Brazilian craftsmanship.

Other Islamic contributions to human culture can be found in our lexicon. Coffee, that drink of moderation, like tea and chocolate, came to Europe in an interesting way: originally this was a berry from a small shrub growing in Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, where it was known as qahwa; it passed through the Lebanese dialect which unvoiced the final - a to an a - or - e, that the Turks heard as kahve, since like the Germans and Persians, they do not say a w. The Austrians in Vienna picked this word and drink up in the 17th century as their Kaffee, dropping the - h - and

unvoicing the -v-; from here the English received it as 'coffee' before the French shifted the accent to the last syllable, as they are wont to do.

That is how the Spaniards picked it up as cafe in the 18th century and sent the seeds on to be planted as a tropical crop in Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala. This borrowing did not come directly from the Spanish Muslims when they still lived in the Iberian peninsula, however, since they were expelled for the final time in 1610, several decades before the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1693, and nine centuries exactly after their arrival there in 711.

Some Muslim slaves kidnapped from Africa must have brought the first pair of maracas - Arabic maraqis or 'instruments to dance with' - with them from West Africa along with the name, and possibly the Central American marimba or xylophone which was also made originally from gourds.

The Southern writer Joel Chandler Harris' Character of Br'er Rabbit fostered animal species which had been imported by another such unwilling trans-Atlantic passenger. The rabbit gives us distant animal tales like the Dog and his Shadow, the Lion as King of the Beasts etc., whose prototypes must be sought amidst latent African and Asian jungle creatures. These were also known in the Arab world as the fables of Kalila and Dimna, who were two sly jackals that may have been later transformed into the wily rabbit found in Uncle Remus.

These stories based on a central character form a special class of spoken literature, which was called the 'boxed story', where the main figure predominated in a string of episodic tales somewhat like our comic

strips. The Arabian Nights or more correctly The Thousand and One Nights are an Arabian form of these same cyclic stories, and their heroes like Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp, Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, or Sindbad the Sailor fostered what are called the Maqamat or 'Sessions' in Arabic, and then the picturesque tale in Spanish.

All of this occurred centuries before the printing press brought a need for written stories and eventually transformed the episodic folk narrative of ancient times into the modern novel where the interest lies in the change that the central hero undergoes. The modern hero of fiction does not remain the same, but he evolves; although television may change his style back and stereotype him again.

Words and ideas thus exert their fascination. Our word 'traffic' comes from the Arabic verbal noun tafriq with the middle consonants switched or metathesised; it means the 'separation' or 'sorting out' of streams of vehicles such as we see happening on a highway cloverleaf.

Similarly, 'tariff' comes from ta'rif, or a 'notice' or piece of 'information' such as is posted in customs houses for public knowledge. These two words occur in the Arabic infinitival or verbal noun form.

California or Qila' al-Furun means 'the

Castles of the Ovens' (or 'furnaces'); it is first mentioned as 'Califerne' in the French epic called The Song of Roland. There it referred to an overseas country from where warriors came to help the Spanish Arabs or Saracens against Charlemagne. At that time this land would have been in North Africa, but during the 16th century when Hernan Cortes conquered Mexico, it was transplanted to the long peninsula west of Mexico across the Gulf of California, and later to the mainland area further north of it.

This is a rather disparate collection of Islamic contributions to human culture, especially as the West received them. It applies to all branches of man's activity, and most of them helped make life on this earth easier to live. In fact, the Islamic world never lived in the same middle ages as western Europe, and it is an injustice to call Islam 'medieval' or backward as some orientalists have done.

For 14 long centuries the Islamic world has formed a vast cultural enterprise which gathered up and prolonged the legacy of antiquity, and transmitted this into the European middle ages and renaissance for use in modern times. Without this, much of our classical heritage would have been lost, while the agriculture, learning and mechanics of India and China were likewise passed on to Europe and America through the incredibly active Islamic world.

(Courtesy: Impact International)



View of Religious Quest

Dr. Maulana Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahman Al-Ansari Al-Qaderi (R.A.)

(i) Nature of Religious Quest:

The Religious Quest proceeds in terms of 'religious experience'. The Holy Qur'an centralizes it in the 'Quest for God' (Jihad fi-Allah) and tells us that it establishes in the pursuer's consciousness the experience of 'Divine Presence': "As for those who pursue most earnestly the Quest in (or, for) Us (Allah), We surely guide them in Our Paths: And certainly Allah is with (i.e., in dynamic reciprocal relationship with) those who practice *Ihsan*." (XXIX: 69). That living and dynamic contact with God, the All-Holy (LIX: 23; Etc.) and the All-Wise (II:32; Etc.), brings to the pursuer of the Quest, in proportion to the intensity of striving built up by him, on the one hand, holiness adequate to human nature — even as a valley or a territory on which the blessings of the All-Holy descend becomes holy (XX: 12; V: 21; Etc.)—, and on the other, experience culminating in *basirah* (i.e., evidence clear as seeing with one's eyes) spoken of in the Qur'an thus: "Say thou (O Muhammad!): This is my Way: I do invite unto Allah, — on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes, — I and whosoever follows me (practically). Glory to Allah! and I am not of those who join gods with Allah". (XII: 108). The Religious Quest is thus basically different from the quests of Philosophy and Science, which relate to the acquisition of formal discursive knowledge.

In Islamic terminology, the term that emerges for the Religious Quest is *al-Ihsan*, as laid down explicitly in Bukhari's Sahih: "... he (the enquirer) asked: 'What is *al-Ihsan*?' (To that) he (the Holy Prophet) replied: 'It is to pursue the System of Obedience to Allah as

if thou art seeing Him (i.e., with the inner vision of 'Divine Presence'); but if it is not possible for thee to see Him (inside thy consciousness), then (this reality should remain thoroughly established in thy mind that) He is seeing thee' ..." In the Holy Qur'an we find the command: "Verily, Allah enjoins *al-'Adl* and *al-Ihsan*..." (XVI: 9), — *al-Ihsan* having been related elsewhere in the holy book not only to acts of well-doing to others but also to attitudes and acts that bear direct reference to the practice of self-negation for the sake of God and the attendant purity of the heart and godliness (III: 134; V; 13; Etc.); and we repeatedly come across the theme that "Allah loves those who are *Muhsin* (i.e., pursuers of *Ihsan*)" (II: 195; Etc.). Then, the important fact is to be noted that the root from which *Ihsan* and *Muhsin* emerge is *HSN*, which enshrines the concept of 'beauty'. Hence *al-Ihsan* as Imam Raghīb al-Isfahani explains, stands in one of its two connotations for "the creation of beauty in one's conduct, which is achieved through beauty in knowledge and beauty in action" (Mufradat al-Qur'an, section HSN), — thus denoting, as a religious term, the beautification of *Iman*, (Faith) and Islam (Exercise in Submission to God); or, as Lane states it on the basis of the findings of other eminent authorities, it relates to the basic Qur'anic virtue of *al-Ikhlās* (undivided loyalty and purity of devotion to Allah — VII: 29; XCVIII: 5; Etc.) and "watchfulness and good obedience" (Lexicon, Section *HSN*). All that involves a perpetual conscientious struggle (*jihad, mujahada*) on the path of 'Devotion to God' for the sake of establishing purer and purer and more and more living relation with

Him, — in one word, the Religious Quest, —
- the struggle being grounded in the
fundamental norm of 'Love for God' (*hubb
Allah*) (II: 165) and pursued with utmost
regard (*tadarru*) for God's infinite Greatness
and Glory (VII: 55; Etc.)

It is necessary to emphasize here with all the
force at the present writer's command that it
is the actualization and the Fulfillment of the
Quest for God alone which equips a Muslim,
according to the Qur'an (XXII: 78), for
becoming capable of bearing witness of the
Truth of Islam to humanity' — which is his
mission (II:143) — and thus it is an
unavoidably necessary qualification, together
with the requisite intellectual achievement,
for an Islamic religious leader.

(ii) Standpoint for Religious Quest:

The Qur'anic standpoint is ethico-religious,
as opposed to magical, mystical, ritualistic
and legalistic standpoints given by other
systems. Subjectively, it relates to spiritual
and moral transformation of the individual
(XCI: 9); objectively, it is grounded in love for
.God manifesting itself in love for fellow-
beings (II: 177; Etc.).

**(iii) Source of Guidance for Religious
Quest:**

. Religious Quest is to be pursued on the
basis of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (i.e., the
dynamics of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's
(ﷺ) Personality), together with an ever
deepening understanding of Nature and
History as repositories of the Signs of God
(III: 189,190; XIV: 5; Etc).

**(iv) Instruments employed for Religious
Quest:**

The Holy Qur'an projects two instruments in
that behalf, namely, Faith and Reason (LVIII:

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11).

Vision of Faith guided by Reason leads to the
deepening of Conviction (XXXV: 28; Etc.),
which, in its turn, leads to confident progress
in the Quest.

**(iv) Standard of Behaviour relating to
Religious Quest:**

Faith begets Love; Reason begets Law. Love
and Law have, however, been considered as
antithetical in the pre-Qur'anic religious
thought. But, according to the Holy Qur'an,
they are complimentary and should therefore
be reconciled (XCVI: 1; Etc.) in order that a
'sound heart' is built up, which is the demand
of Religion (XXVI: 89; Etc.).

That is so, because: Love relates to
motivation; while Law relates to discipline,
which is vitally necessary for human success.
But, discipline cannot be consequentially
imposed from without; rather, it should grow
from within. Hence Love should form the
basis of following the Law.

Also: the ethico-religious (spiritual plus
moral) approach to life is grounded in Love,
while the juristic approach is grounded 'in
Law. Hence, because Love forms the basis
of following the Law, the primary emphasis in
an ideal religious life should be on the
spiritual and moral aspects of human conduct
rather than on juristic formalism. It means
that emphasis on Law should be subordinate
to the emphasis on Love, — not that Law
should be discarded. That will ensure healthy
development of human personality: Because
the spiritual and the moral dimensions of
conduct belong to the realm of freedom',
which renders initiative possible and ensures
the flowering of human personality; while the
formal, or the juristic, dimension is grounded
in 'compulsion', which gives rise to inertia

and stultifies the personality.

Hence it is that a much greater portion of the Holy Qur'an is devoted to spiritual and moral guidance than to juristics (al-fiqh) and the emphasis through and through is on the primacy of the spirit, which alone makes the pursuit of the Law fruitful (II:177; II:263; XXII:37;Etc.); while legalistic hairsplitting, which is born of formalistic and externalistic approach to Religion, has been vehemently denounced (II: 67-71; Etc).

(vi) Fundamental Ethical Guide Lights for Religious Quest:

Besides the practice of the entire Qur'anic ethico-religious system to the best of opportunity and ability, the pursuer of Religious Quest has to fix up some fundamental ethical guide-lights on his spiritual Path. These lights are enshrined in the concepts of : Piety, Love, Truth, Justice, Beauty, Wisdom and Selflessness.

Piety:

Religious Quest is the quest focused in the direction of the All-Holy. This fact bestows extra-ordinary importance on Piety (taqwa). But Piety has been conceived in the religious practice of mankind in two ways, viz., as formal piety and as practical piety. The Holy Qur'an rejects the former and prescribes the latter (II: 177; Etc.).

Practical Piety originates in the consciousness of the tremendous seriousness of human life and brings forth unflagging moral earnestness; and it reflects itself in three dimensions, namely:

- (a) An ever-deepening Awareness of the Perpetual Presence of God (LVII: 4),

Who, besides His other Attributes, is the 'Lord of the worlds' (I:1) and the Judge to Whom account will have to be rendered on the Day of Judgment (I:3), — an awareness which is cultivated through constant and meaningful remembrance of God (III:190-192; Etc.) and which compels the pursuer of Religious Quest to act as if he is under constant judgment of the Divine Judge, Whom he can neither evade nor deceive.

The motto that emerges in this respect is: "Act always as if thou art standing before the Divine Judge and witnessing Him; or, at least, that He is witnessing thee." (Cf. Bukhari: Sahih, vol. 1, p. 12-Kitab-al-Iman).

- (b) Unswerving attitude of Goodwill towards all Fellow-beings, because ' the Holy Will of God is in harmony only with the good will (II:195; III: 76; Etc.).

The motto that emerges in this respect is: "Always so act that thine action is guided only by good-will". In other words, the guiding-light is: "Goodwill towards all and ill-will towards none".

- (c) Constant vigilance in respect of making and maintaining one's self immune from spiritual and moral evil (LIX:18); because then alone the human 'self' can function as a receptacle for the Blessings coming from the All-Holy. (Cf. ". . . and He loves those who practice purity". (II: 222).

The motto that emerges in this respect is: "Always act with the consciousness that thine goal is God". (LIII: 42; Etc). That, it may be emphasized, demands utmost spiritual and moral refinement.



Why is Fasting Necessary

Maulana Dr. Waffie Muhammad

Fasting is an institution in Islam, prescribed for Muslims during the month of Ramadan. It is designed to develop a unique type of culture among Muslims. It strengthens the bond of their relationship as believing brothers and sisters.

Because the basic components of every individual are common and similar, the institution of fasting has been universally prescribed. Allah says to Muslims that: Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed to those before you. Proper observance of it will have a special cultural impact.

When Islam came and fasting was ordained as a pillar of the Faith, Allah explained in the Holy Qur'an that it is meant to develop "Taqwa". He says:

In order that you may (develop) taqwa. The term taqwa is normally translated as piety. But according to the Arabic /English Lexicon, this term has the following meaning:

be on guard against committing sins,

be cautious, so as to tread on the correct path,

prepare to resist the temptations of sins; have a reverential and pious fear of Allah,

try to avoid those things which can be the cause of punishment,

become righteous, virtuous, just and honest

It is not easy to cultivate good, righteous and pious qualities; likewise, it is very difficult to break off bad habits. Perhaps this is one reason why fasting is for one whole lunar month, i.e. either twenty nine or thirty days.

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As during this long period of time a person can overcome some of the undesirable habits, like smoking, as it is not permissible to smoke while one is fasting.

Islam teaches that Satan took a vow to mislead the progeny of Adam away from the Straight Path. He searches continuously for a person's weak point and attacks him from it. Ramadan because of the restrictions connected to it, helps those who fast, to stay on guard against the tricks of Satan's evil calling. In this way a more religious attitude will be cultivated as the fasting person will be required to establish restraints, when tempted. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is reported to have said that, during the month of Ramadan, Satan is chained.

Ramadan teaches the believers to be very cautious when saying anything, as some things said may reduce the benefits of the fast; or may even render it null and void. For example, backbiting breaks the fast.

Human beings are not animals, they are a special species in creation, and as a result while our bodies may have animalistic desires and tendencies, each person is required to cultivate the "higher ideals and values of life", identified in religion. This, when developed will enable the individual to find, on one hand, closeness to Allah, and on the other, make him a better unit in society; as he learns to love for his brother what he would like for himself. This is because fasting would have taught him what it is to feel hungry and thirsty.

(Continued on page #. 18)

Women in the Light of History

M. W. Gazder

It is an established fact that women have been meted out an unsympathetic treatment from time immemorial at the hands of man.

It appears that the unwise act of Eve who persuaded Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, resulting in the banishment of both from Paradise, has been responsible for many of her daughters being treated with scant respect.

When we turn our attention to early Greece, we find that even there the position of woman was miserable. Apart from the glorious pictures painted by Homer and perpetuated by the tragedians the custom of selling daughters in marriage was general. The husband appears to have indulged largely, and with little or no censure, in concubines. The superiority of men over women was vehemently asserted on all sides. Lecky says that after the age of Plutarch the position of the virtuous Greek woman was a very low one. She, like her Roman sister, was under a perpetual tutelage, first of all, to her parents who disposed of her hands then to her husband, and in the days of her widowhood to her sons. In case of inheritance, her male relatives were preferred to her. According to Westermarck, there also existed a general notion that she was naturally more vicious, more addicted to envy, discontent, evil-speaking and wanton than the man. Even Plato classed woman together with children and servants, and states generally that in all the pursuit of mankind the female sex is inferior to the male. Euripides, the great dramatist, puts into the mouth of his Medea the remark that "Women are impotent for good, but clever contrivers of all evil."

The climax was reached when Mazdak, in the beginning of the sixth century of the Christian era, bade all men to be partners in riches and women, just as they are in fire, water, grass; private property was not to exist, each man was to enjoy or endure the good and bad lots of this world. The lawfulness of marriage with sisters and other blood relations had already been recognized by Mago-Zoroastrianism. The Proclamation of the frightful communism revolted some of the nobler minds, even among the Persians. The successor of Zoroaster, as Mazdak styled himself, was put to death, but his doctrines had taken root, and from Persia they spread over the West.

To gauge the effects of Christianity and the west we must consider the Roman Empire. It was under that Empire that Christianity came into power and there it could have effected any improvement in the position of woman.

Christian writers often represent woman under the Romans as a toy at the mercy of man's passion; a slave when married without any legal or social status. As an unmarried girl, she was under the perpetual tutelage of her father during his life, and after his death, of her agnates by blood or adoption. When married she and her whole property passed into the possession of her husband. In fact she herself was treated as a property by her husband, and had no more right than a purchased slave.

In the Western part of Europe, the tremendous upheavals of the barbarians, the inter-mingling of their moral ideas with those

of the people among whom they settled tended to degrade the relations between man and wife. Some of the barbaric codes attempted to deal with polygamy but example is stronger than precept, and the monarchs, setting the fashion of plurality of wives, were quickly imitated. by the people. Even the clergy, in spite of recommendation to perpetual celibacy held out to them by the church availed themselves of the custom of keeping several left-handed wives by a simple licence obtained from the bishop or the head of their diocese.

A critical study of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries' literature of Greece and Rome, of Germany, France and England and of many other countries corroborates this statement. The attitude of Rousseau, the great pioneer of the freedom of man, of John Knox of Scotland, a great reformer, of Schopenhauer and Neitche, the great philosopher, of Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden and most of other poets and writers must be well known that till recent times in all the countries of Europe the women had no legal existence, and in the most of them she was not allowed a liberal education and the doors of the universities were completely closed to her.

In modern society of Europe women are of three types. One is to work at hotels and restaurants whose job is to entertain and satisfy the lust of the customers. The second one works in movies and studios as actress. Their lives are very licentious and corrupt. The third works in offices and industries for earning their livelihood. Some people have deplored the employment of women. They asserted that it destroyed home and displaced men. Where the factory operatives are married the home did suffer if there are young children, the effects are doubtlessly

disastrous.

Today we observe a lot of wild gaiety of unmarried persons in a European civilization, which may be mistaken as happiness. There is the echoing sound of laughter a demonstration of pleasure by cheerful hopping and leaping of human beings. There are never-ending kisses and embraces and flirting and dancings between members of the two sexes and the overflowing cups of wine. But all this is not happiness. It is simply satisfying the lust in man. The wild animal pleasure is but the outcome of overstrained nerves of mechanized human beings. But where is the man as distinct and separate from machine and the animal.

The renowned philosopher poet, T. S. Eliot, has also painted the portrait of modern woman in a decent way in his well-known poem entitled "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock:

"In the room the women come and go Talking of Michealangelo."

The famous poet of the East, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, rightly describes the modern girl in 'Javid Nama'. One Farzumurz stole a girl from Europe and took her to the planet Mars in order to incite the women there to copy her mode of life. She is seen in an open field lecturing at a public meeting where men and women have gathered. Her face is bright but she has not the light of the soul in her body. Her words are unimpressive, eyes dry, that is to say, she is totally devoid of desire and love. Her breast lacks passions and her mirror is blind'. She is after fashion and freedom and is little acquainted with love. She avoids the society of man and abhors matrimonial alliance. Mark her speech:

O women! mothers and sisters!

How long to live like sweet hearts?
To be a sweet heart is to undergo tyranny
It is subjection and destitution
We comb our two locks
We know man as our victim
Man hunts by falling a victim
He goes round thee to claim thee
To be his companion is a curse of life
His meeting is poison and his separation is sugar
The mothers' face pale owing to motherhood!

How pleasant is the freedom of those who have no husbands. A young woman is eager for many lovers. She rates her beauty beyond what the mirror shows; and is proud. She knows neither virtue nor intelligence, always in the wind. Such a mentality of the modern woman is highly dangerous for modern society.

It is surprising that Western writers have left no stone unturned in pouring out this tirade of vituperation on Islam in connection with the position of woman in Islam; even some scholars of great repute have succumbed to black mail.

Mr. R. B. Smith says that Islam, as a social system, has been a total failure, because it has misunderstood the relations of sexes "and by degrading woman, has degraded each successive generation of their children 'down to an increasing scale of infancy and corruption, until it seems almost impossible to reach a lower depth of vice."

This is of course a very strong remark. It is therefore most regrettable that misconception, should have arisen about the status of woman in Islam a point on which the attitude of Islam is clear and unmistakable. I am afraid, many in Europe

and in America form such strange opinions from a study of the tales of romance or books of travelling written by professional globe trotters. They see in the "harem", which is by the way a name in the East for the ladies apartment, a home of gross sensuality and voluptuous pleasures. Such ideas have unfortunately prevailed in the West for a very long time, and supported by the wrong interpretations that have been put from time to time, on certain verses of the Qur'an and certain sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islam, they have firm hold on the imagination of the critics of the West.

One of the verses of exquisite beauty has been subject to misconception in certain quarters, is: "They (the wives) are a garment for you and you are a garment for them."

It is garment that hides one's nakedness; so do husband and wife, by entering into marriage relations, secure each others' chastity. The garment gives comfort to the body; so does the husband find comfort in his wife's company, as she in his. The garment is the grace, the beauty, the embellishment of the body, so too are wives to their husbands, as the husbands to them.

Another verse of the Qur'an, which has been similarly misconstrued, is the verse which the Rev. Rodwell translates thus: "Men are superior to women on account of the qualities, with which God hath gifted the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they make from their substance for them. Virtuous women are obedient, careful during the husband's absence, because God hath of them been careful."

From this verse of the Holy Qur'an, several critics have drawn the erroneous inference that woman in Islam holds a very subordinate

position and that she has been placed under man's tyrannical sway having no choice but to submit to his arbitrary dictates and self-willed decrees. Even accepting the Rev. Rodwell's translation of the verse as correct, the sense of the verse appears to be nothing more than this: that man should treat his wife with love and affection and provide for her from his abundance, while woman should preserve her honour, attend the domestic duties and look up to him as her friend, philosopher and guide. Understood thus, the verse has nothing revolting to our feelings, and describes the relationship between husband and wife as it naturally ought to be. There is nothing in the verse to imply that the wife's judgement is in any way fettered, that she is simply the slave of her husband's desires, or that she is at best an ornamental article of furniture. Neither, according to respectable commentators, the Holy Qur'an, does the verse admit of the meaning which superficial critics have willfully put upon it.

The superiority of man over woman rests on certain innate qualities which men generally possess in greater proportion, in regard to knowledge and power. In power of endurance, in audacity of courage man has a decided advantage over his fair sister. Prophet, Apostles, distinguished philosophers and commanders of armies have all been men not women.

One of the main objections made by Christian writers against Islam is concerning the position of women in the religion—the permission for polygamy, and the so-called suppression of women. Prof. R.B.O Smith said polygamy is indeed, next to castes, the most blighting institution, to which a nation can become prey. It pollutes society at the fountain-head, for the family is the source of

all political virtues and all social virtues. (R.B. Smith, Muhammad and Muhammadanism. p.174.176.)

Before I say anything in defence of polygamy in Islam, let me point out that actually in Islam polygamy has been a very rare phenomenon, monogamy being the prevailing custom in Muslim countries. Some Muslims even read an actual prohibition of polygamy in the Holy Qur'an where it says: "If you fear that you cannot do justice between them (your wives) then marry only one." (Al-Qur'an: 4 : 3)

Coming to the actual defence of polygamy, I think that the Muslim woman makes the better wife because she knows that her husband may take another wife. (*The conditions under which a Muslim can take a second wife are rather hard. They are two kinds: social and private. The social condition lies in this, that a given time the number of woman in a state should exceed the number of men. The private condition briefly stated, consists of a serious disparity between the parties in the matter of physical and mental health.*)

In West today, the modern girl seems to enter into marriage with the idea that it will be a rather 'nice change', and that her husband will merely be a kind of household ornament. A Muslim woman knows, on the contrary, that she cannot afford to fool about and that unless she makes a good job of her marriage, her husband will take another wife who will pay more attention to him. And the fact that polygamy is so rare in the Muslim community seems to prove that Muslim women do make a success of their marriage.

Everyone knows how common is the practice on the continent, particularly among the Latin

racers, of keeping a mistress. But what is the position of such a woman? She has no social standing, and, if she has a child, it inherits the stigma of their unenviable position. Meanwhile, the man's wife selfishly if naturally, feels no pity for the woman who has thus suffered because of her husband's lust, and is only concerned with maintaining her own position as the sole mistress of his household. This is undoubtedly a selfish outlook and the woman who is consecutively able to share her household with another represents surely the most advanced state of broadmindedness. Thus if a Muslim is so incautious as to entangle himself with another woman, that woman need not become a social pariah, but may be his legal partner. Yet, among the Muslim community the second woman or wife is very seldom met with surely a great tribute to the Muslim wife.

Polygamy has also its legitimate uses in individual cases as well. Propagation of one's species is the most important of all the purposes of marriage, and if all hopes of any issue through the first wife come to an end, there seems to be only three ways open to a man; either to divorce his wife, to deny himself the pleasure of having an issue, the desire of nearly every married man; or to wait till the death of the wife and spoil his whole life. Is not then a second contemporaneous marriage to be preferred to any of the above alternatives? A man may do it and save heart burnings, if he is strongly attached to his first wife. The case of Napoleon Bonaparte presents a good illustration. He had to divorce his well beloved wife, Josephine, a lady possessing virtuous qualities of a very high order. There were the warmest attachment between the two, but Napoleon could not have an issue from her

and the country therefore insisted upon her divorce. The account of her divorce as related by historians and biographers, is extremely pathetic. Napoleon married another wife, he reigned splendidly, and enjoyed the benefits of a prosperous kingdom; then came calamities upon him, which continued until his death. Josephine had been divorced but their love for each other underwent no change. She remembered him with ardent love and sympathy in his troubles and calamities as in the days of happiness. But the strong cord which bound them together had snapped asunder. If polygamy had been allowed, Napoleon and his widow would not have suffered this extreme affliction.

Muslim ladies have often allowed their husbands in such cases to take another wife and have an issue.

In the religious laws of antiquity, there is no restriction to the number of wives a man may have. All the Biblical Prophets were polygamous. Even in Christianity which has become synonymous with monogamy, Jesus Christ himself never uttered a word against polygamy, on the other hand there are eminent Christian theologians, like Luther, Malancton, Bucer, etc. who would not hesitate to deduce the legality of polygamy from the parable of the ten virgins, spoken of in the Gospel of Mathew (25 :1-12) for Jesus Christ envisages the possibility of the marriage of one man with as many as ten girls simultaneously. If the Christians do not want to profit by the permission which Jesus Christ seems to have given the law is not changed for all that. The celebrated philosopher playwright, George Bernard Shaw, exhorts his people to adopt polygamy because it will save the Western Civilization

from the inundation of adultery.

Annie Besant writes: "There is pretended monogamy in the West, but there is really polygamy without responsibility; the mistress is cast off when the man is weary of her and sinks gradually to be the woman of the street for the first lover has no responsibility for her future and she is a hundred times worse off than the sheltered wife and mother in the polygamous home. When we see thousands of miserable women who crowd the streets of Western towns during the night, we must surely feel that it does not lie in Western mouths to reproach Islam for its polygamy. It is better for a woman, more respectable for a woman to live in Islamic polygamy invited to one man only, with the legitimate child in her arms surrounded with respect than to be reduced cast-out on the streets perhaps with an illegitimate child outside the pale of law-unsheltered and uncared for, to become a victim of any passer-by night after night, rendered incapable of motherhood, despised by all.

H H. Nawab Sultan Jehan Begum has rightly remarked: "Polygamy in a word, in Islam, is a remedy. It has its uses and abuses. Islam guards against the latter, and allowed the former under restriction and within stringent limits. More knowledge of human needs and exigencies would enlighten the world and enable it to see the necessity of allowing an institution like Polygamy.

Muslim Women in Battlefield:

Joan of Arc was a brave woman of Europe, who fought in the siege of Orleans (1428 A. C.), dressed in a man's attire. She discomfited the English in the battle of Pietz, and seated Charles the Seventh on the throne.

In 1431 she was burnt alive for it was said about her that her supernatural prowess must be due to sorcery. But she has been invested with a halo of glory and her great deeds are taught in schools as examples of supreme heroism; and in the 20th century she has come to be recognized, that is, acclaimed officially as a saint.

Islamic history abounds in scores of such gallant actions on the part of Muslim women.

Always in the Jihad women followed the men. In the battle of Uhud, Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) carried a leather bag, full of water, and quenched the thirst of wounded Muslim warriors. She was assisted in this task by Umm-i-Salim and Umm-i-Sabit (may Allah be pleased with them). The traditionist Abu Nayeem narrates that in the battle of Khaiber, half a dozen women of Madinah followed the marching army, The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) did not know of this, and when he was informed thereof, he angrily asked the woman why they had come at all. They reverently answered that they had medicines with them, and they would nurse and dress the wounded, take out arrows from the bodies of the soldiers, and arrange for their rations. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) allowed them to accompany the army, and when Khaibar was conquered, he gave a share to these women from Ghanimah, the booty. (Abu Daud, Fateh Khaiber, Vol 1)

Tabari writes of one occasion, when the corpses of the Muslim soldiers lay in great numbers in the Van and the body of men especially devoted to the funeral ceremonies of the slain commissioned women to look after the wounded and the martyrs were thus duly buried by these women. In the battles of Aghvas and Armas, which were fought in connection with that of Kadesia, women and

children dug graves. (Tabari)

Empress Razia Sultana of slave dynasty was one of the rulers of India.

The exalted personality of Her Highness Nawab Sultan Jehan Begum Saheba, the Ruler of Bhopal, was even in this 20th century a standing tribute to all Western tale-mongers.

At the helm of one of the foremost Indian State, Her Highness had guided the destinies of her subjects with exquisite skill of statecraft and with true motherly affection. Her reign has spelt bliss and prosperity to hundreds of thousands. But what exalts her head and shoulders above others lies in some other direction. It is as a patron of learning that she, the only woman ruler in India, stands alone among her brother rulers. Her interest in this sphere is not confined to her own state. There is perhaps no part of India where her munificence to encourage learning does not exist. She has to her credit a considerable share in the educational upliftment of Muslim India as a whole.

Contribution of Islam Towards Emancipation of Women:

The Holy Qur'an said: "The women have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable." —(Al-Qur'an, 11 :228.)

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said: "All of you are shepherds and all of you will be asked about their subjects. The chief (husband) is a shepherd of the people of his house, and the woman is a shepherdess in the house of her husband and child. So, all of you are shepherds and all of you are responsible for the subject—(Bukhari : Kitab Nikah).

No doubt, under the principle of distribution
Minaret

of labour, work should be divided between the pair. The women have naturally to take care of their off-springs until they grow up. They have to engage themselves in bringing them up and so are not in a position to pay attention to secure their means of livelihood. The men, therefore, have been made responsible for maintaining the family, including wife and have been given the duty of securing all the requirements of the home. Thus we might say that in a Muslim house, the husband is supposed to work as the minister for foreign affairs and the wife as the minister of the interior.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Woman is the queen of her house". The Holy Qur'an describes the position of the wife in a beautiful verse: "He created for you mates from among yourselves that you might find solace in them and He ordained between you love and mercy (Al-Qur'an, 30: 21).

Below are reproduced a few Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to which every Muslim worth the name attaches great importance:

1. O my people! you have certain rights over your wives and so have your wives over you. They are Allah's trust in your hands. See that you treat them with all kindness.
2. The best of you is he who behaves best with his wife.
3. The most valuable of all things in the world is a virtuous wife.
4. He is not one of my followers who teaches a woman to go astray. God enjoins upon you to treat women well for they are your mothers, daughters and aunts.
5. The rights of women are sacred.
6. The virtuous wife is a man's best treasure.

7. Paradise lies at the feet of the mother.

Now we arrive at the conclusion that woman occupies a lofty place in Islamic society. That is why Pierre Crabbites writes in his article entitled "Things Mohammad did for Woman: The Muslim woman is a driving force which was fashioned by Muhammad's master mind. Muhammad, thirteen hundred years ago, assured to the mothers, wives and daughters of Islam a rank and dignity not yet generally assured to women by the laws of the West."

Lady Evelyn Cobbold in her famous book entitled Pilgrimage to Mecca, writes; "Muhammad enforced as one of the essential

teachings of his creed "respect for women"; he secured to them rights which they had no possessed, and he placed them on a footing of perfect equality with men in the exercise of all legal powers and functions. Women in the early days of Islam expounded law and Jurisprudence, founded colleges for their poorer sisters in which to study, and even led armies in the field of battle. It was Islam that removed the bondage in which women were held from the very dawn of human history and gave them social standing and legal rights ...and is false calumny to assert that the Islamic system lowers the status of women and denies them a soul (p. 193).

(Continued from page #. 10)

Every person knows that physical actions do have consequences; unacceptable ones can even result in punishment. The month of Ramadan is beneficial to those who observe it as it help them to avoid committing the things that can have negative consequences to themselves as well as to others.

Many people look upon Muslim fast as a scary thing. There is no doubt of the fact that it is a challenge for a lot of people, especially those who have to do difficult jobs, or those who reside in hot climate or where the days are much longer than the nights. Allah in His Wisdom knew about this when He was ordaining Ramadan to be a Pillar of the Final Religion. Yet He says that, if you fast it is better for you.

It is perhaps because fasting is unique and challenging that Allah told the Prophet (ﷺ) that Ramadan is My month, and I shall

reward the fasting person as I deem fit. There is a special gate in Paradise reserved for the persons who kept the fast solely for the sake of Allah.

Fasting to the human body is like the thermostat to the engine, it regulates ones temperature and helps him to cultivate patience. It helps him to stay calm and avoid abusive words. It helps him to avoid being aggressive and prevents him from seeking revenge. It gives a person an opportunity to reflect upon the negative actions of others, as if and when attacked, he is supposed to let the attacker know that he is fasting.

If every unit in a society should cultivate the ideals prescribed in the institution of fasting this world will definitely be a better place in which to live. May Allah bless all those who fast this month.



The Concept of Festivals in Islam

Dr. Mahmood A. Ghazi

Festivals and celebrations are common to all peoples and civilizations. Every nation, ancient and modern, has occasions of happiness and joy which are celebrated by all and sundry. In some civilizations we find a host of such celebrations providing frequent opportunities to people to express their joy and happiness. If we examine these festivals, we find that these are commemorations of events having a limited interest and relevance.

There are festivals celebrated to commemorate birth of a leader or a ruler who may be a great personality in his own right and may have contributed to the service of his people; but, looking from a global and pan-human perspective, the relevance of his work to mankind in general is very limited and that, too, in the areas adjoining the country of the leader or the ruler. There are festivals celebrated to commemorate victories in wars and battles. There have been millions of wars in the history of mankind. In every such war one of the parties must have come out victorious. If the victory in a war is considered to be a justification for the celebration of festivals then in each country and nation there will be so many festivals and celebrations that perhaps all 365 days of calendar will not be sufficient to provide room to celebrate such victories.

In some nations, the establishment of states and empires is taken to be an event worth celebration. Such celebrations will again be limited to that particular people or nation and will hardly attract the attention of those outside the borders of that empire or state.

Islam has not accepted these considerations to be the basis of Muslim festivals. It has given two important festivals to the Muslims, which are being celebrated from the days of the Prophet (ﷺ). These two festivals, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha, represent two really international occasions for the children of Adam and daughters of Eve to get together on a common platform and express not only their solidarity to each other but also their joy and happiness coupled with a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty. These two festival do not seek to commemorate the transient and limited considerations like other civilizations. Rather, these two Islamic festivals commemorate two great event in the history of mankind which have changed the course of history round the globe, have given a new meaning to culture and civilization, and provided basis for a universal brotherhood, sacrifices and spiritual purification.

Eid ul Fitr:

Eid ul Fitr is, thus, a unique festival both in its appearance and spirit. On one hand, it represents the universal brotherhood and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah which transcends all racial, colour, linguistic and parochial prejudices. On other hand, it is permeated with a spirit of gratitude and thankfulness to the Almighty on the greatest bounty He has showered on the Muslim Ummah in the form of the Quran - the last revealed Divine guidance.

The Qur'an being the living miracle of the Prophet (ﷺ) of Islam, constitutes a perennial source of guidance for the Muslims to revive

their attachment to the Divine Book and to re-invigorate their inner self by reintegrating themselves with the Divine message.

Eid-ul-Fitr is also a thanksgiving occasion on the successful completion of one month spiritual, moral and academic training programme every Muslim undergoes during the month of Ramadan. The fasting exercise provides a spiritual uplift which brings the believers nearer to the angelic world and helps them in shedding the corporeal and carnal desires so strongly at work in every human being. This conscious and volunteer self-control provides a moral dimension to the personality of the believers. The practice of collective prayers of Tarawih and special sessions of the Qur'anic reading give sufficient insight to a Muslim in the message of the Qur'an—that insight which keeps the candle burning throughout the year, to be relit and recharged next year. Eid-ul-Fitr is an expression of thanks to the Almighty for providing this unique opportunity to the believers.

Eid ul Azha:

Eid-ul-Azha, commonly known as Eid-e-Qurbani, is celebrated with great religious fervour throughout the world by Muslims on the 10th of Zilhajj i.e. the day following Hajj. On this auspicious day, special thanksgiving prayers are offered in large mosques in cities, towns and villages where Muslims gather to exchange greetings and also to get acquainted with the well-being of others. Those who are not under the burden of any debt and can afford to sacrifice animals to commemorate the great tradition set by Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS) who, abiding by a Divine Command, prepared himself to sacrifice his son, Ismail (AS), in the way of Allah. When Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS) revealed

the Divine Command to his son, Hadhrat Ismail (AS), he unhesitatingly offered himself for sacrifice as ordained to his father, thus setting the supreme example of obedience and total surrender to the Will of Allah.

The tradition set by Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS) and his son Hadhrat Ismail (AS) epitomizes man's readiness to surrender his entire self before his Creator by giving away his most precious worldly possession in the name of Allah, an act which does not go unrewarded in His scheme of things. The Holy Qur'an recounts the event:

"When they (Ibrahim and Ismail) submitted before the Will of Allah and (Ibrahim) laid. (his son) prostrate, we called out: O Ibrahim, you have confirmed your dream. Thus do we reward the good. That was indeed a trying test, so we ransomed him for a great sacrifice, and left (his hallowed memory) for posterity." As-Saffat: 103-108.

Eid-ul-Azha is also the occasion of thanksgiving for the performing of Hajj (pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Makkah), which is one of the five pillars on which the edifice of our great religion stands. The obligatory pilgrimage crowns the religious performance of one's life. Since making this pilgrimage requires financial means and the ability to provide for one's family in advance, those who perform the Hajj are identified with a certain amount of economic well-being.

Under injunction from Allah the Almighty, Muslims from all over the world carry forward the great tradition of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS) by sacrificing animals in the name of Allah to commemorate the great example of total submission and complete obedience to Allah. They sacrifice goats, sheep or other animals on three days after the pilgrimage.

Those who cannot proceed to the Holy Land to perform Hajj but have the means to purchase sacrificial animals follow the tradition at home, and thus remain spiritually linked to the Islamic teachings of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS) and other prophets, which were ultimately completed and incorporated through the Last of the prophets, Muhammad (ﷺ)

A Universal Religion:

Islam is a universal, eternal religion based on reason which encompasses the religious experiences of other prophets. Not only does it embody all the basic tenets of other religions and Shariah of other Prophets, but also has refined several of those to bring them in complete harmony with nature. That is why it is called Deen-e-Fitrat. Islam does not demand anything of its followers that is beyond their capacity. From the recital of the Kalima to the offering of prayers, fasting,

giving of alms and the performance of the Hajj (which also includes adherence to the Ibrahim (AS) tradition of sacrifice) there is nothing that a person cannot do to remain within the fold of Islam.

The commemoration of the tradition of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS) does not restrict its practice to participation in Eid festivities only, but also expects of the Muslims to be ever prepared to give away the most valuable possessions in the way of Allah whenever the need arises. It implies coming to the aid of the poor and the needy and also seeks to mellow the temperament and social behaviour of the faithful towards their fellow Muslims and humanity at large. Eid-ul-Azha teaches self-denial and submission to Allah's Command as also steadfastness in times of trials and tribulations, purification of soul and, above all, the unity of Muslim Ummah.

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Al-Baraa ibn Malik al-Ansari

His hair looked disheveled and his whole appearance was unkempt. He was thin and wiry with so little flesh on his bones that it was painful to look at him. Yet in single handed combat he defeated and killed many opponents and in the thick of battle he was an outstanding fighter against the mushrikeen. He was so courageous and daring that Umar once wrote to his governors throughout the Islamic state that they should not appoint him to lead any army out of fear that he would have them all killed by his daring exploits. This man was al-Baraa ibn Malik al-Ansari, the brother of Anas ibn Malik, the personal aide of the Prophet (ﷺ).

If the tales of Baraa's heroism were to be told in detail pages and pages could be written. But let one example suffice.

This particular story begins only hours after the death of the noble Prophet (ﷺ) when many Arabian tribes took to leaving the religion of God in large numbers, just as they had entered it in large numbers.

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, the successor to the Prophet (ﷺ), stood firm against them. He mobilized eleven armies each under a separate commander and dispatched them to various parts of the peninsula. Their purpose was to make the apostates return to the path of guidance and truth and to confront the leaders of the rebellion.

The strongest group of apostates and the greatest in number were the Banu Hanifah among whom Musaylimah the Imposter arose, claiming that he was a prophet. Musaylimah managed to mobilize forty thousand of the best fighters among his people. Most of these however followed him

for the sake of tribal loyalty and not because they believed in him.

Musaylimah routed the first army sent against him under the leadership of Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl. Abu Bakr dispatched another army against him led by Khalid bin Walid. This army included the cream of the Sahabah from both the Ansar and the Muhajireen. In the front ranks of this army was Baraa ibn Malik and a group of the most valiant Muslims.

The two armies met in the territory of the Banu Hanifah at Yamamah in Najd. Before long, the scale of battle tilted in favor of Musaylimah and his men. The Muslim armies began to retreat from their positions. Musaylimah's forces even stormed the tent of Khalid bin Walid and drove him from his position.

At that point, the Muslims realized what a perilous situation they were in. Khalid mustered his forces once more and began reorganizing them. He separated the Muhajireen and the Ansar and kept men from different tribes apart. Each was put under the leadership of one of its own members.

The battle raged. There was much destruction and deaths. The Muslims had not experienced anything like this in all the wars they had fought before. Musaylimah's men remained firm as immovable mountains although many of them had fallen.

The Muslims displayed tremendous feats of heroism. Thabit ibn Qays, the standard bearer of the Ansar, dug a pit and planted himself in it and fought until he was killed. Zayd ibn al-Khattab, brother of Umar ibn al-Khattab, charged against the enemy and

continued fighting until he was killed. Salim, the mawla of Abu Hudhaifah, and standard bearer of the Muhajireen displayed unexpected valor. He valiantly plunged into the enemy ranks and eventually fell as a martyr.

The bravery of all these, however, wanes in front of the heroism of al-Baraa ibn Malik, may God be pleased with him and with them all.

As the battle grew fiercer and fiercer, Khalid turned to al-Baraa and said, "Charge, young man of the Ansar." Al-Baraa turned to his men and said, "O Ansar, let not anyone of you think of returning to Madinah. There is no Madinah for you after this day. There is only Allah, then Paradise."

He and the Ansar then launched their attack against the mushrikeen, breaking their ranks and dealing telling blows against them until eventually they began to withdraw. They sought refuge in a garden which later became known in history as The Garden of Death because of the many men killed there on the day. The garden was surrounded by high walls. Musaylimah and thousands of his men entered the garden and closed the gates behind them and fortified themselves.

From their new positions they began to rain down arrows on the Muslims. The valiant Baraa went forward and addressed his company, "Put me on a shield. Raise the shield on spears and hurl me into the garden near the gate. Either I shall die a martyr or I shall open the gate for you."

The thin and wiry al-Baraa was soon sitting on a shield. A number of spears raised the

shield and he was thrown into the Garden of Death amongst the multitude of Musaylimah's men. He descended on them like a thunderbolt and continued to fight them in front of the gate. Many fell to his sword and he himself sustained numerous wounds before he could open the gate.

The Muslims charged into the Garden of Death through the gates and over the walls. Fighting was bitter and at close quarters and hundreds were killed. Finally the Muslims came upon Musaylimah and he was killed.

In spite of recovering from his wounds, al-Baraa continued to long for the martyrdom which had eluded him at the Garden of Death. He went on fighting in battle after battle hoping to attain his aim. This came at the battle for Tustar in Persia.

At Tustar the Persians were besieged in one of their defiant fortresses the siege was long and when its effects became quite unbearable, they adopted a new tactic. From the walls of the fortress, they began to throw down iron chains at the ends of which were fastened iron hooks which were red hot. Muslims were caught by these hooks and were pulled up either dead or in the agony of death.

One of these hooks got hold of Anas ibn Malik, the brother of al-Baraa. As soon as al-Baraa saw this, he leapt up the wall of the fortress and grabbed the chain which bore his brother and began undoing the hook from his body. His hand began to burn but he did not let go before his brother was released.

Baraa himself died during this battle. God granted him his wish for martyrdom.



Lost Leaves of Islamic History

M. Karimghani

ISLAM came to this world 14 centuries ago not only as a State but also as a movement, as a Cultural Revolution, as a New Social Order and as a Global Faith. It was something meant for the whole of humanity for all times. Yet few people know how it spread to China, where even today 12 percent of population is Muslim or to Indonesia where Muslims are in a majority or to parts of India like Malabar, Tamilnad or to Ceylon.

The existing histories of Islam, usually comprising Arab chronicles, have unfortunately failed to mention some vital facts of Islamic history that could throw light on these aspects and give a casual reader the erroneous impression that the mission of the Prophet of Islam was confined to Arabia.

The great missionaries, many of them amongst the companions of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself, crossed oceans to spread the teachings of Islam abroad. But barring Bilal of Abyssinia, Salman of Persia and Suhail of Italy, few outsiders find their mention in Arab chronicles. This has naturally caused a lot of misunderstanding in the minds of the Westerners, some of whom got so much prejudiced against Islam that they began to circulate the myth (which has since been exploded by the objective analysis of orientalist like Thomas Arnold) that Islam was spread to the various corners of the world at the point of sword.

Within a few decades Islam had successfully clash with the then world powers and had itself become the supreme world power of the time. The early historians were, therefore,

more interested in recording the chronicles of the various dynasties. And because the Prophet's (ﷺ) Sunnah (Precept and Practice) was vital, stress was laid on collection of the relevant Ahadith which have been preserved.

While going through Arab chronicles, one reads how the Prophet (ﷺ) in the later Medinite period sent envoys with epistles to the Emperors of Byzantium and Persia, and to the Rulers of the copts and the Negus of Abyssinia.

Mosque in China

According to the history of the Chinese a companion of the Prophet (ﷺ), Sa'ad by name, had come with an epistle to the King of Canton, and that Sa'ad was allowed to build a mosque and preach Islam. The tomb of this great companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) is still in existence at Canton and so is the mosque built by him, as enlarged in the subsequent centuries.

Some still doubt the truthfulness of this fact of history simply because Sa'ad finds no mention in the ASMAUR RIJAL (اسماء الرجال) (a book containing the names of persons mentioned in Hadith literature or the early narratives). But the ASMAUR RIJAL itself is not complete, and the fact that in China, where neither the Omayyads or the Abbasides or Osmaniis ever reached, there are still 12 percent Muslims living, confirms that Sa'ad was a historical entity.

Another tendency of the early writers was to over emphasize certain points and to use poetic imagination to portray the backward

condition of the pre-Islamic Arabs, The pre-Islamic Arabs had, no doubt, drifted away from the monotheistic teachings of Patriarch Abraham but still they had a civilization of their own. Moreover, Makkah and Madinah in those days were on the high road. Centuries before Islam, there was sea trade going on between the Far East and Arabia Felix (South Arabia) and goods from the Far East used to reach Yemen and then go by caravan to Syria via Makkah and Madinah. From Syria they would go to Egypt and Europe. It was because of its importance to the then world trade that Rome had in 24 B.C. sent a military expedition, led by Aelius Galius, to conquer Yemen. The expedition had failed.

And so when we look back to form a correct historical perspective, we are convinced that the place chosen by God for sending the Prophet with a World Mission was the right one because it was in the limelight. After establishing his community at Madinah, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had not only continued preaching to his Arab countrymen but had sent his missionaries to all parts of the world then known.

Muhammad bin Qasim had come to the shores of Sindh because of the piracy of the then king of Sindh who had seized Muslim coming from Ceylon to Hedjaz to perform Hajj. That shows that a community of Muslims did exist in Ceylon long before Muhammad bin Qasim came to Sindh.

The history of Malabar also tells us that the king of Malabar had gone to Arabia and that he had accepted Islam at the hands of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). There are tombs in Malabar of two companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) who are still held in reverence by the

Muslims in Malabar. All the same the Arabic chronicles make no mention of the Malabar king or the companions of the Prophet who are buried in Malabar.

The present writer as a journalist and writer in Tamil country during the pre-partition days had occasion to study ancient Tamil literature. Tamil, the oldest of the existing Dravidian languages, has a well preserved rich lore.

There are eighteen Rishis (sages) respected by the Tamilians. Ramadeva whose poems are printed and published by non-Muslims in Tamil country, is one of them. His poems, are, regarded the basic books of the Tamil systems of indigenous medicine and have been preserved.

Ramadeva Rishi, in his book of poems says he has heard about the appearance of the Prophet (ﷺ) and that he himself had gone to Madinah and had embraced Islam. According to his statement the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had given him the name of Yaqub .

Writing in his long poem as to how he met the Prophet, the Tamilian sage says that he wanted to test whether the source of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) knowledge was his own intellect or something superhuman. In those days, he says, the Rishis in India were busy with certain alchemic experiments to produce a radiant substance out of mercury which could increase the vitality of man. The experiment had failed. Yaqub says he asked the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for light and got the hints from him through whose help the experiment became successful. Yaqub was thus convinced that the Prophet was really a Messenger of God and embraced Islam.

Another contemporary Rishi, Boga Rishi,

whose travelogue in seven thousand stanzas exists in Tamil country, did visit Madinah but did not embrace Islam. His travelogue is an interesting classic that conjures up pictures of the countries he had visited 13 centuries ago. He visited Madinah at a time when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had died and did not therefore have the honour of meeting him. He, however, met Ramadeva Rishi at Madinah and heard about the Prophet (ﷺ) from him. The above facts of history prove that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had not only established a state but also a World Mission. The existing Arab chronicles were written in a subsequent century. A number of facts about the way the Prophet (ﷺ) himself had striven to fulfill his Mission, and about the sons of Islam who eschewed politics but quietly went abroad to spread Islam had by that time been forgotten. In the chronicles of Karbela Martyrdom, have been mentioned three alternatives given by Imam Husain; either permission to face Yezid, or to go back to Makkah or to go abroad to preach the faith. The third alternative itself indicates that during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and thereafter the sons of Islam had gone abroad as missionaries of the Faith even though no record is left about them or their religious activities.

It was indeed a great omission by historians of that time that helped many westerners to misunderstand Islam or its mission. Thomas Arnold, an orientalist has nevertheless shown in his "Preachings of Islam" that Islam spread not by force but by the missionaries who are

now revered as saints.

Now take the case of Indonesia. It is generally believed that Islam had reached Indonesia in the 13th century A.D. but according to the Chinese chronicle, about the Tang dynasty, there was a queen who ruled Java in 674 A.D. and an Arab prince had reportedly visited Java during her regime.

Coin Unearthed

Sometime ago a coin was unearthed in Britain with the Kalima in Arabic on one side and the name of a King in English on the other. The coin is still available in the British Museum and its picture has appeared in Edwin Arnold's "Legacy of Islam." British history, no doubt, makes no mention of such a king but some son of Islam had probably reached England and under his guidance some king embraced Islam. His dynasty did not perhaps survive long enough to find a place in history. Sa'ad had probably reached China in the East in a similar way.

Again it is said that 144,000 men were present at the Farewell Pilgrimage (Hajjatul-Widaa)" of the Prophet (ﷺ) when he asked them if he had not fulfilled his mission and all had replied in the affirmative. People general believe that it was an All-Arab audience except for Salman, Bilal and Suhaib. But it is highly probable that Muslims from other parts of the world were also present even though historical evidence is lacking for want of facts that could not be recorded by chronologists under the stress of circumstances enumerated above.



Extract from Ahadith-i-Mubarakah on Fasting

Abu Hurairah reported the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“Fasting is an armour with which one protects oneself; so let not him (who fasts) utter immodest (or foul) speech, nor let him act in an ignorant manner; and if a man quarrels with him or abuses him, he should say twice, I am fasting. And by Him in Whose hand is my soul, the odour of the mouth of one fasting is sweeter in the estimation of Allah than the odour of *musk*—he gives up his food and drink and his (sexual) desire for My sake; fasting is for Me and I will grant its reward; and a virtue brings reward ten times like it.”

Abu Hurairah said, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “He who does not utter falsehood and act according to it, Allah has no need of his giving up his food and his drink.

Ibn Abbas said: “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was the most generous of all people, and he was most generous in Ramadan, when Gabriel met him, and he met him in every night of Ramadan and read with him the Qur’an; so the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was more generous in the doing of good than the wind which is sent forth (on everybody).

Anas said the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Have the meal before dawn, for there is blessing in the meal before dawn”.

Anas said, We used to be on a journey with

the Prophet (ﷺ), and he who kept fast did not find fault with him who broke it, nor did he who broke the fast find fault with him who kept it.

Jabir said the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), was on a journey, and he saw a crowd and a man who was placed under a shade. He said, “What is this?” They said, “He is one fasting,” He said: “There is no great virtue in fasting when on a Journey.

Abu ‘Ubaid said, I was present at ‘Id with ‘Umar and he said, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade fasting on these two days, the (‘Id) day of your breaking the fast and the other (‘Id) day on which you eat of your sacrifices.”

Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When one forgets and eats and drinks, he should complete his fast, for Allah made him eat and drink.”

‘Aisha said the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to confine himself (to the mosque) in the last ten days of Ramadan, and he would say: “Seek the *Lailat al-Qadr* in the last ten days of Ramadan.”

‘Aisha said the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would cause his head to get to me while he was in the mosque, and I would comb his hair; and he did not enter the house when performing *i’tikaf* except for a need.



نعت رسول مقبول ﷺ

حضرت امیر مینائی

تم پر میں لاکھ جان سے قربان یا رسول ﷺ
بر آئیں میرے دل کے بھی ارمان یا رسول ﷺ

کیوں دل سے میں فدا نہ کروں جان یا رسول ﷺ
رہتے ہیں اس میں آپ کے ارمان یا رسول ﷺ

کشتہ ہوں روئے پاک کا نکلوں جو قبر سے
جاری مری زباں پہ ہو قرآن یا رسول ﷺ

دنیا سے اور کچھ نہیں مطلوب ہے مجھے
لے جاؤں اپنے ساتھ میں ایمان یا رسول ﷺ

اس شوق میں کے آپ کے دامن سے جا ملے
میں چاک کر رہا ہوں گریبان یا رسول ﷺ

مشکل کشا ہیں آپ امیر آپ کا غلام

اب اس کی مشکلیں بھی ہوں آساں یا رسول ﷺ

ادائیگی میں بہت ذمہ داری کا مظاہرہ کرتا ہے، مگر معاملات میں اس کا رویہ غیر ذمہ داری کا ہے تو وہ شخص دین کی نظر میں اچھا مسلمان نہیں، اسی طرح وہ لوگ جو معاملات میں بہت خوش اسلوبی کا رویہ اپناتے ہیں، مگر حقوق اللہ میں کوتاہی برتتے ہیں، وہ بھی دین کی رائے میں اچھے مسلمان نہیں سمجھے جاتے ہیں۔

اسلام کا فلسفہ حیات پوری زندگی کو احکام الہی کے تابع بنانے کا تقاضہ کرتا ہے، دین کی جزوی تعمیل اس بات کی نفی ہے کہ اسلام ایک فلسفہ حیات ہے اور حیات انسانی میں وہ تمام معاملات داخل ہیں جو ایک انسان کو اپنی پوری زندگی میں درپیش ہوتے ہیں۔ خواہ وہ سیاسی ہوں، سماجی ہوں یا معاشرتی، فرد کے معاملات ہوں یا اداروں کے معاملات، انفرادی ہوں یا اجتماعی، تمام کے تمام حیات انسانی کے تصور میں داخل ہیں اور دین اسلام کے احکام، اصول و ضوابط کے دائرہ اطلاق میں آتے ہیں۔

انسانی کو بالکل بے دخل کرتا ہے۔ ایک نہایت متوازن راستہ اپناتے ہوئے کچھ اصول و ضوابط متعین کر دیتا ہے اور انسانوں کو ان اصولوں کے تحت مستقبل میں آنے والے معاملات کے بارے میں اپنی عقل کے استعمال کی ترغیب دیتا ہے۔

اس تفصیل سے یہ بات واضح ہو کر سامنے آتی ہے کہ معاشی معاملات کو دین کی تعلیمات سے الگ رکھنے کا خیال ایک باطل خیال ہے، جو لوگ ”تجارت تو تجارت ہے، اس کا دین سے کیا تعلق؟“ کے فلسفے کو راہ عمل بناتے ہیں وہ درحقیقت اسلام کے ایک مکمل ضابطہ حیات ہونے کی نفی کر رہے ہوتے ہیں۔ اسلام کا تصور مسلمان معاشرے کے فرد کے بارے میں یہ ہے کہ وہ حقوق اللہ یعنی عبادات اور حقوق العباد یعنی معاشرے کے دیگر افراد کے ساتھ کئے جانے والے سماجی، سیاسی اور معاشی معاملات میں اللہ تعالیٰ کے حکم کی رعایت کرنے والا ہو۔ اگر ایک شخص حقوق اللہ کی



کھانے کمانے کے باطل اور ناحق طریقوں سے اجتناب اور سود سے بچنے کے احکام دیئے گئے ہیں۔ ایسی تمام آیات اس بات کی واضح اور کھلی دلیل ہیں کہ مسلمانوں کے معاشی معاملات خالصتاً عقل کے سپرد نہیں کئے گئے بلکہ وحی الہی نے ان کے بارے میں واضح ہدایات دی ہیں۔ قرآن کریم کے بعد جب ہم دین کے احکامات کی دوسری بنیاد یعنی سنت پر نظر ڈالتے ہیں تو پھر اس بات میں ذرہ برابر بھی شبہ نہیں رہ جاتا کہ دین اسلام مسلمانوں کے معاشی امور کے بارے میں فیصلہ کرنے کا کُلّی اختیار صرف معاشرے کو نہیں دیتا بلکہ ایک مکمل رہنما نظام فراہم کرتا ہے، جس کے تحت مسلمان اپنی معاشی سرگرمیاں سرانجام دینے کا پابند ہوتا ہے۔ یہ بات البتہ یہاں واضح دُنی چاہئے کہ اسلام نے معاشی، سیاسی اور معاشرتی تمام معاملات کے بارے میں اصولی احکامات دیئے ہیں۔ جزوی تفصیلات، فروعی احکامات اور زمانے کے تغیر کے ساتھ ساتھ ہونے والی سماجی، سیاسی اور معاشی تبدیلیوں کے بارے میں عموماً قرآن و سنت میں خاموشی اختیار کی گئی ہے اور اس حد کے بعد عقلِ انسانی کو بھی فیصلہ کرنے کا اختیار دیا ہے بشرط کہ وہ ان اصولوں اور ضوابط کی روشنی میں ہو جو قرآن و سنت میں طے کر دیئے گئے ہیں۔ یعنی بالفاظ دیگر اسلام نہ تو عقلِ انسانی کو کُلّی اختیارات دیتا ہے اور نہ عقل

اور میری زندگی اور میرا سبب اللہ کے لئے ہے۔“ یہ آیت بڑے واضح طور پر دین اسلام کو ایک ایسا دین قرار دیتی ہے جس کا ماننے والا اپنی عبادات اور جینا مرنا سب اللہ کی خوشنودی کے حصول کے لئے کرتا ہے۔ اس جامع آیت میں اللہ تعالیٰ نے حقوق اللہ (عبادات وغیرہ) اور حقوق العباد وغیرہ، سب ایک حکم میں سمو دیئے۔ اگر ایک انسان کا جینا اللہ کی خوشنودی کے لئے ہے تو اس کا مطلب یہ ہوا کہ وہ اس فانی دنیا کی فانی زندگی میں جو کچھ بھی اپنے جینے کے لئے کرے گا وہ سب اللہ کی رضا اور اس کی خوشنودی کے تحت کرے گا۔ گویا دین اسلام کا پیروکار ایسی تمام باتوں سے بچنے کا پابند ہوا جو اللہ کی خوشنودی کا ذریعہ نہیں ہیں، بلکہ اس کی ناخوشی کا سبب ہیں۔ یہیں سے وہ تقسیم شروع ہوتی ہے، جس کو ہم 'حلال' اور 'حرام' کہتے ہیں۔ اگر کوئی معاملہ، عمل، طریقہ یا نظام کا کوئی حصہ اللہ کی خوشنودی کا سبب بنتا ہے یا کم از کم اس کی ناخوشی اور ناراضگی کا پیش خیمہ نہ ہو تو وہ حلال کے دائرے میں آتا ہے اور اگر اس کے برعکس کوئی اللہ کی خوشنودی اور رضا مندی کے بجائے ناخوشی اور ناراضگی کا سبب بنتا ہے تو وہ حرام کے دائرے میں داخل ہو جاتا ہے۔

سورۃ الانعام کی اس آیت کے علاوہ قرآن کریم کی وہ متعدد آیات جن میں تجارت کی ترغیب، اکل بالباطل یعنی

کی طرف سے ہمیشہ معاشی سرگرمیوں کو اسلام کی تعلیمات پر پرکھنے کی ہر کوشش پر سخت تنقید ہوتی رہی ہے۔ ان حضرات کے خیال میں معاشی معاملات کو اسلام کے اصولوں پر پرکھنے کی ایسی تمام کوششیں درحقیقت اہل مذہب کے پورے معاشرے پر قابض ہونے کی ایک کوشش ہے جس کے لئے وہ مذہب کا سہارا لیتے ہیں۔ لہذا ان حضرات کے بقول معاشی سرگرمیوں کو دین کی چھلنی میں چھاننے کی تمام کوششیں نہ صرف غلط ہیں بلکہ معاشرے کے لئے مضر بھی ہیں اور معاشرے کو غیر ضروری بندشوں میں باندھے رکھنے کا ایک بڑا ذریعہ بھی ہیں۔ یہ نظریہ بہ ظاہر بڑا خوش گن، جدت کا حامل، زمانے کے تقاضوں کے عین مطابق نظر آنے کے باوجود ایک کھوکھلا اور بے بنیاد نظریہ ہے۔ جن حضرات کی دین اور دین کی اجتماعی تعلیمات پر نظر ہے وہ اس نظریہ کے باطل ہونے میں ذرہ برابر بھی شک نہیں کر سکتے۔ اسلام کا ایک ایسا دین ہونا سب پر واضح ہے کہ جو دین نہ صرف اس فانی دنیا میں انسانی سرگرمیوں کو ایک جامع اور منضبط نظام کے تحت مربوط کرتا ہے، بلکہ اس دنیا کے بعد ایک اور دائمی دنیا کا تصور بھی دیتا ہے اور اسی دنیا کو اصل اور مقصود قرار دیتا ہے۔ سورۃ الانعام آیت ۱۶۲ میں ارشاد باری تعالیٰ ہے کہ: ”آپ ﷺ کہہ دیجئے کہ میری نماز اور میری قربانی

کردار دینے کا نتیجہ ہمیشہ ناہموار، غیر منصفانہ اور استحصالی نظام معیشت کی شکل میں نکلا۔ جو افراد اور ادارے طاقتور ہوتے تھے، انہوں نے نظام کا توازن ہمیشہ اپنی جانب رکھا، جس کی وجہ سے محروم اور پسماندہ طبقات کے لوگ ہمیشہ محروم و پسماندہ ہی رہے۔

یہ سوال کہ معاشی ضروریات کے لئے تشکیل دیا جانے والا نظام عقل انسانی کے علاوہ بھی کسی ضابطے اور ہدایت کا پابند ہونا چاہئے، ہمیشہ مختلف پیرایوں میں دہرایا جاتا رہا ہے اور آج تک دہرایا جاتا ہے۔

مسلمان ہونے کی حیثیت سے جب یہ بات ہمارے سامنے آتی ہے تو ہم سے درحقیقت سوال یہ ہوتا ہے کہ کیا ایک مسلمان معاشرہ اپنے معاشی نظام کی تشکیل میں عقل انسانی کے علاوہ وحی خدا سے ملنے والے کسی اور ضابطے کا بھی پابند ہے یا نہیں؟ جو لوگ مذہب کی تعلیمات کو صرف عبادات اور بعض سماجی معاملات تک محدود کرتے ہیں اور ان کے خیال میں جیسے دیگر طبقاتی سائنسی علوم کا مذہب سے کوئی تعلق نہیں، اسی طرح معاشی معاملات کا بھی مذہب سے کوئی لینا دینا نہیں ہے۔ انسان اپنی معاشی ترقی کیلئے اسی طرح آزاد ہے جیسے وہ سائنسی ایجادات اور طبیعیاتی علوم میں آگے بڑھنے میں آزاد ہے۔ چنانچہ اس فکر کے نمائندہ افراد

اسلام اور معیشت

معاشی ضروریات اور اسلامی فلسفہ حیات

مفتی ارشاد احمد اعجاز

معیشت یعنی معاشی ضروریات کی تکمیل کا نظم و نسق کے تحت انجام دیا جانا اور ایک مربوط اور مستحکم نام کے تحت ان کو چلایا جانا، انسانی معاشرت کی خصوصیت ہے۔ انسان کو دیگر مخلوقات سے ممتاز رکھنے والی خصوصیات میں انسان کا اپنی بقا کی جدوجہد کو ایک مربوط انداز میں کرنا شامل ہے۔ معاشی ضروریات کا ادراک اور معاشی مسائل کا حل دنیا کے ہر معاشرے میں ہمیشہ سے رہا اور ہمیشہ رہے گا۔ مختلف اقوام اور انسانی تہذیبیں اپنے اپنے انداز و اطوار کے تحت مختلف نظام ہائے معیشت کو اپنے ہاں رائج کرتی رہیں اور ان کے فوائد اور نقصانات کا سامنا بھی کرتی رہیں۔ ہر قوم اور تہذیب ہر دور میں اپنے اپنے نظام ہائے معیشت کو زیادہ بہتر طریقے سے چلانے اور زیادہ سے زیادہ نافع بنانے کیلئے کوشاں رہی۔ انسانی تہذیبوں کی ان کوششوں کے مختلف نتائج بھی تاریخ ہم تک منتقل کرتی رہی ہے۔ بہ حیثیت مجموعی تمام تہذیبیں اس نتیجے پر متفق نظر آتی ہیں کہ معاشی استحکام اور معاشی آزادی بھی اس قدر ضروری ہے جس قدر سیاسی اور

معاشرتی، معاشی استحکام اور ہموار معاشی نظام کے بغیر معاشرے کے لئے سکون اور سلامتی بے معنی الفاظ بن جاتے ہیں اور معاشرے میں ایک ایسی طبقاتی کشمکش شروع ہو جاتی ہے جس کا نتیجہ صرف بے سکونی، اضطراب اور بے چینی کی شکل میں نکلتا ہے۔

دنیا میں ایک تصور بڑا معروف ہے، جو ماضی میں بھی رہا اور آج کے زمانے میں اس تصور کے پرچارک ہمیں مل جاتے ہیں کہ معاشی زندگی اور معاشی جدوجہد کا معاملہ خالصتاً عقل انسانی کا معاملہ ہے، جس کو انسان کی صوابدید پر چھوڑ دیا گیا ہے۔ انسان اپنے معاشی فیصلے کرنے میں ہر طرح آزاد ہے اور ضروری نہیں کہ ایک بات اگر کسی معاشرے میں ایک ہی وقت میں ناپسندیدہ تھی تو وہی بات بعد میں بھی ناپسندیدہ ہی رہے۔ گویا ہر نظریہ اور ہر معاشی اصول اضافیت پر مشتمل ایک نظریہ ہے جس کو آنے والا وقت اور افراد تبدیل کر سکتے ہیں۔

عقل انسانی کو معاشی نظام کی تشکیل میں اتنا بڑا