

*“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,
and argue with people in the best manner.” (Holy Quran, 16:125)*

The Light **AND** **ISLAMIC REVIEW**

**Exponent of Islam and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement
for over ninety years**

January – March 2016

In the spirit of the above-cited verse, this periodical attempts to dispel misunderstandings about the religion of Islam and endeavors to facilitate inter-faith dialogue based on reason and rationality.

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احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام لاہور

◆ *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A.* ◆

The Light was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. **The Islamic Review** was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the worldwide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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The main objective of the A.A.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

Islam seeks to attract the **hearts and minds** of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning and the natural beauty of its principles.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

International: It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

Peaceful: Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

Tolerant: Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

Rational: In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

Inspiring: Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a Living God, Who answers prayers and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

Non-sectarian: Every person professing Islam by the words **La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah** (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that **no** prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, **Mujaddids** will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

About ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in many countries including:

U.S.A.	Australia
U.K.	Canada
Holland	Fiji
Indonesia	Germany
Suriname	India
Trinidad	South Africa
Guyana	Philippines

Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic. The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world, including the first ever in Western Europe.

History:

1889: **Hazrat** Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founds the Ahmadiyya Movement.

1901: Movement given name **Ahmadiyya** after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name **Ahmad**.

1905: Hazrat Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

1908: Death of Hazrat Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

1914: Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

1951: Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

1981–1996: Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

1996–2002: Prof. Dr Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, served as Head.

2002: Prof. Dr Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha elected Head.

Introduction to Special Cairo Conference Issue

By the Editor

This issue of *The Light and Islamic Review* is dedicated to a first of its kind conference held by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society (the U.S. branch of the international Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement) in Cairo, Egypt on January 9, 2016 titled *The True Portrait of Prophet Muhammad*. The conference was held at the headquarters of the Azayemi Sufi Order and was attended by 250 people, many of whom were leading Sufi sheikhs or academics from Al Azhar University and the American University of Cairo. The conference was a product of years of work to introduce the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement's teachings to the Arabic-speaking world in a collaborative manner with local organizations and leading personalities. Many of the Movement's primary texts have already been translated into Arabic and received certifications of authenticity from Al Azhar. The conference was an opportunity to present the results of this work on a personal level.

The program for the conference was designed to address the important issue of how to offer the true narrative of the life and status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to the world at a time when such distorted views about him are so common. Fazeel S. Khan first discussed the real significance of Prophet Muhammad being the "last" prophet, namely that Prophet Muhammad was the most excellent exemplar and role model for humanity. This laid the foundation for the other two presentations by representatives of LAIS, which then focused on both the internal and external aspects of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's guiding example. Dr. Mohammed Ahmad discussed how the Holy Prophet is a perfect model for individual spiritual development, and Dr. Noman Malik discussed how the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a perfect guide for establishing universal peace among all people. In addition to these presentations, insightful talks were given by Sheikh Azayem (Head of the Azayemi Sufi Order and President of the World Organization of Sufi Orders), Sheikh Bastawesy (Past Head of the Office of the Grand Imam of Al Azhar and Vice-President of the World Organization of Sufi Orders) and Sheikh Al-Nagar (a prominent and influential Sheikh of Al Azhar). And, in a concluding address, Fazeel S. Khan spoke about the significance of the name "Ahmadiyya", being based on the Holy Prophet's name "Ahmad" and serving as a call to defend the Holy Prophet through peaceful means against the attacks made against his character.

In this special issue, we reproduce the presentations delivered at the conference by Fazeel S. Khan, Dr. Muhammad Ahmad and Dr. Noman Malik. ■

Muhammad, the Final Prophet

By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

For Muslims, upon hearing the name "Muhammad" the emotions of admiration, praise, gratitude and allegiance are instinctively generated. Contrary to this, the name "Muhammad" creates in the western mind images of war, oppression, exploitation of women and, in recent times, the inspiration for terrorism. Comparing these drastically disparate views of the fictitious Muhammad being instilled in the psyche of the West with the factual Muhammad as evidenced by history can aptly be characterized as contrasting a sinner with a savior.

Keeping this in mind, how is one to present the truth about the Prophet Muhammad to those who have been presented with such a distorted view about him? Obviously, the misunderstood facts upon which the false notions about him are based need to be addressed. But what is also imperative is explaining what Muslims actually believe about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and why. This requires an amplification of the significance of the term "khatam-an-nabiyeen". And this is what I will be discussing in this short introductory presentation.

Deliverer of Universal Message

The term "*khatam-an-nabiyeen*", as we all know, means the "seal" or "last" of the prophets. And it signifies that Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet, to whom was revealed the final prophetic message for mankind. And this message, unlike previous revelations, is a universal message for *all* people and *all* times. As the Holy Quran states:

"Say: O Mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all." (7:158)

"And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind." (34:28)

Herein lies the difference between the Holy Prophet Muhammad and all prophets appearing before him – the difference is in the scope of their respective missions. The Holy Prophet's mission was not for a specific people under particular conditions nor was he sent for a certain, limited period in history. Rather, as the Holy Quran states:

"... and We have not sent thee (Muhammad) but as a mercy to all nations" (21:107)

Comprehensive Role Model

There is also a secondary significance to the term *khatam an nabiyyin*. And this secondary significance

provides deep insights into the real meaning and implication of Prophet Muhammad being the “seal” of the prophets.

It is well known that Prophets are commissioned with two functions: 1) to deliver a divine message to the people to whom they were sent, and 2) to serve as a role model as to how to live a life in accordance with that divine message. Just as the Holy Prophet Muhammad delivered a universal message for all mankind, he also served as a perfect role model for all of humanity. And this was due to the diversity of his life experiences and his comprehensive practical life examples. As the Holy Quran states:

“*Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah (i.e. Muhammad) an excellent exemplar*” (33:21)

This is the distinguishing characteristic of Prophet Muhammad. Unlike any other prophet, he was able to show by his practical example how to live a righteous life in all types of circumstances. From an orphan to a king of a great empire, Prophet Muhammad passed through all phases of life. And his life was so multifaceted, that he was able to provide a model for people in all types of positions and roles.

If he had not been a **laborer**, he could not have revealed the value and integrity in working with one’s own hands and earning an honest living;

If he had not in his youth organized grass-roots campaigns to serve the poor and protect the weaker members of society, he could not have been an inspiration to **socially conscious community organizers**.

If he had not **married**, he would have left people unguided in practically half of their daily interactions, and could not have shown how to be a kind and affectionate spouse and a loving parent;

If he had not served among the ranks of a military, he could not have been an exemplar for a **soldier** laying down his (or her) life in the cause of truth, justice and freedom;

If he had not been the head of an armed force, he could not have served as an example for a **responsible general** or an **accountable commander in chief**;

If he had not formed rules and regulations for his community, he could not have been regarded as an example for a **conscientious legislator**;

If he had not been in the position to decide disputes among people, he could not have served as a model for an **impartial judge** or **effective mediator**;

If he had not had life-long friends, he could not have shown the beauty in **true and trusted companionship**;

And if he had not been persecuted by tyrants, and then overcome his persecuting enemies, and forgiven them without enforcing any punishment against them, he could not have *practically illustrated* the lessons on compassion, mercy and forgiveness that are contained in all revealed scriptures.

See, it is due to the diversity of Prophet Muhammad’s life experiences that Muslims understand why he is the final prophet and, accordingly, an excellent exemplar for all mankind. It is not through his sermons and teachings only that we can estimate his character, but rather by learning how he actually lived out those principles throughout his life.

The True Intercessor for Humanity

The Holy Quran presents a beautiful analogy of this unique function served by the Holy Prophet Muhammad; it states:

“*One Mighty in Power has taught him, the Lord of Strength. So he (Muhammad) attained to perfection, And he (Muhammad) is in the highest part of the horizon. Then he (Muhammad) drew near, drew nearer yet, So he (Muhammad) became as a chord between two bows or closer still*” (53:5-9)

What is meant here is that the Holy Prophet spiritually ascended towards Allah (swt) and became so close to Him (in the spiritual sense) that he acquired all the perfect divine attributes, all the while being firmly rooted in the earthly station displaying those divine attributes of love and sympathy for mankind in all situations that life has to offer, and thereby occupied the central point between the Divine and humanity, like a chord between two bows. In essence, we are told that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the true “intercessor” (*shafi*) for humanity, the intermediary link between man and Allah, and that through following his perfect example one is provided the complete practical guide to achieving closeness to the Divine.

Physical Sons versus Spiritual Heirs

Understanding this secondary significance allows one to fully appreciate the import of the verse in which the term “khatam-an-nabiyeen” is found. Verse 40 of Chapter 3 states:

“*Muhammad is not the father of any of your men*” (meaning he does not have any sons or heirs as such to pass on his qualities, like a father does to a son).

“*but*” (the verse continues)

“*he is the Messenger of Allah and the khatam-an-nabiyeen*” (that is, the last and most perfect of the prophets).

The latter part of the verse reveals, by the grammatical use of the word “but”, which necessitates some sort of rebuttal or alternative, that even though the Holy Prophet does not have any *physical sons*, he will be granted innumerable *spiritual heirs* for it is through him that man can appreciate the complete religion of God and reach one’s spiritual potential. The verse indicates that Prophet Muhammad is the “savior” from whom one can truly know God in the complete sense; from whom one can see God’s true reflection; from whom one can observe the complete manifestation of the Divine attributes; and, from whom one can establish the perfect spiritual closeness to the Divine.

The True Portrait

This is the portrait of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) that needs to be presented to the West. It is not a portrait based simply on emotion, but rather on tangible, objective criteria. It is not a portrait based only on religious conviction, but rather is supported by history.

Historians admit that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was able to produce the greatest spiritual reformation the world has ever known. No other reformer can be named whose advent was at a time of such great need, whose departing was after the victorious fulfillment of that need, and whose opponents eventually bore witness to their own disobedience and misconduct. Hundreds of thousands of people had abandoned paganism and idol worship for the belief in the Unity of God and the straight path during his very lifetime. Unlike any other religious personality, he lived to see the results of his reformative undertaking and witnessed his opponents and persecutors transform their hatred and vengeance for him into love and admiration. Indeed, far from anything sinful, such historical testimony evidences the Holy Prophet Muhammad being the divinely guided savior of humanity.

What Others Say

And those who have had an opportunity to objectively study the Holy Prophet Muhammad as a historical figure, including many renowned and respected Westerners, have come to fascinating conclusions. For instance:

Sir George Bernard Shaw, well-known Irish dramatist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient for Literature wrote (in 1925):

“I have studied him (Muhammad) - the wonderful man ... He was by far the most remarkable man that ever set foot on this earth. He preached a religion, founded a state, built a nation, laid down a moral code, initiated numerous social and political reforms, established a powerful and dynamic

society to practice and represent his teachings and completely revolutionized the worlds of human thought and behavior for all times to come.”

Thomas Carlyle, famous Scottish philosopher, writer and historian, considered one of the most important social commentators of his time, who produced the famed work “*On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*”, after studying the life of Prophet Muhammad wrote:

“The lies (from western critics), which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammad) are disgraceful to ourselves only ... How one man single-handedly could weld warring tribes and Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades ... A silent great soul, one of that cannot but be earnest. He was to kindle the world; the world’s Maker had ordered so.”

More recently, **Dr. Michael Hart**, a scientist by profession, studied important historical figures and ranked the top 100 most influential persons in history. He published his rankings in a book titled: “*The 100*”, and number one on his list was “Prophet Muhammad”. He writes:

“He [Muhammad] was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the secular and religious level ... It is this unparalleled combination of the secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered to be the most influential single figure in human history.”

Similarly, the **Encyclopedia Britannica**, after exhaustive research and study concluded:

“Of all religious personalities of the world, Muhammad was the most successful.”

Conclusion

And the next two presentations will provide information about this “most successful” religious personality, in terms of both internal and external reformation. Dr. Mohammad Ahmad will first discuss how the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a perfect model for individual spiritual development, then Dr. Noman Malik will discuss how the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a perfect guide for establishing universal peace among all people.

Which brings me to an end of my presentation. I thank you for your kind attention. ■

Prophet Muhammad – A Mercy to All Mankind

By Dr. Mohammad Ahmad

I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.
(1:1)

This verse of the Holy Quran tell us that the nurturing unto perfection (*Rabbubiyat*) of Allah is meant for all nations. For our spiritual nurturing the Beneficent (*Al-Rahman*) has given us knowledge of the Holy Quran (55:1-2) to nurture our souls and carry its message to the rest of the world. This nurturing of Allah, the Most High has reached its perfection in the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and no old or new prophet can come after him. There will, however, be righteous followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad who genuinely appreciate, in word and deed, the nurturing of their *Rabb*. They strive and carry on the mission of the Holy Prophet as slaves of Allah. It is to be done by sharing the message of the Holy Quran with the rest of the world through goodly exhortation, gentle persuasion and personal example. The Holy Quran states:

Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner. Surely thy Lord knows best him who strays from His path, and He knows best those who go aright. (16:125)

The Great Need of the Time

There is an urgent need to convey the message of the Holy Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet to the world and our humble effort today is part of it. The Holy Quran explains this in the following verses:

He brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after its death. And thus will you be brought forth. (30:19)

Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the Latter day, and remembers Allah much” (33:21).

And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to the nations” (21:107).

Say: It is only revealed to me that your God is One God: will you then submit? (21:108)

Allah, the Most High informs us in these verses of the Holy Quran that He is the One Who will revive the dead earth of our souls. This will be accomplished if we follow the excellent example of the Holy Prophet who is also the mercy to all nations. He then draws our attention as to how we can benefit from this excellent example. It is by accepting that none deserves to be worshipped besides Allah, remembering Allah much and submission to His will. Allah’s pleasure becomes the sole purpose, desire and objective of our existence. We submit completely to His Will and magnify Him through our deeds. We develop genuine appreciation of His attributes mentioned in *Al-Fatihah*. In other words in dealing with human beings, we are nurturing, give selflessly, are merciful, just and forgiving. Our moral example will serve to attract the rest of the world towards us and our religion, Islam.

Distinctive Characteristics of Prophet Muhammad

What are these distinctive excellences of the Holy Prophet? Not only was he a prophet of great moral excellences in his own person, but the purpose of his mission was to inculcate those values in others. His striving was to save others from evil and make them a shining example for the rest of humanity. The Holy Prophet’s example is such that others can mold their lives to follow him. Human beings have the capability to follow their role model. If the Holy Quran is comprised of truths and facts, the Holy Prophet’s character is a practical manifestation of these. This is so well described by his noble wife Aisha. When someone asked her about the conduct and character of the Holy Prophet, her reply was, “His character was the Holy Quran”. If you want to know about his character, study the Holy Quran. I would say that if someone really wants to see what is written in the Holy Quran, he should study the life and character of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, was an orphan, and as a young man was given the title of *Al-Amin* by his compatriots because of his honest dealings. His first wife, Khadijah, provided this testimony to his noble character:

“Nay by Allah, Allah will never bring you to grief; surely you are good to your relatives, and bear the burden of the weak, and earn for others that which they do not have, and are hospitable to guests and give help when there is distress” (Bu. 1:1).

He was also a trader, a judge, soldier, statesman, who along with his companions went through the worst

forms of persecution. He was raised in a society that was corrupt to the core, where women and orphans had no rights, drinking and debauchery were rampant. Flames of war were frequently ignited and loose sexual relations were the norm. We observe that the world today has once again reverted to the dark ages. The “Light Giving Sun” (*Siraj um Muneera*), mentioned in the Holy Quran in reference to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, has to shine all over the world. In other words, the true portrait of the Holy Prophet Muhammad has to be presented to the West and the East. Please allow me to illustrate this by sharing with you some examples from the life of the Holy Prophet and his companions. I hope to show how relevant this is today and how we can fulfill our moral obligation to make the world aware.

Intoxicants and Gambling

For example, the command for prohibition of intoxicants and games of chance is stated in this verse of the Holy Quran:

O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil’s work; so shun it that you may succeed (5:90).

It is related that when this verse was revealed, a crier proclaimed in the streets of Madinah that wine was prohibited, and in response to this every jar of wine in a Muslim house was emptied, so that wine flowed in the streets (Bu. 46:20).

Never in the history of the world was such a deep-rooted evil as alcohol, so suddenly yet so completely eradicated. The actions of the Holy Prophet’s companions demonstrate that this miracle was accomplished because his companions followed the commandments of Allah and followed his example diligently. They kept up prayer by putting their prayers into their daily practice. By doing so they were able to overcome the scourge of the use of intoxicants and games of chance. If Muslims and non Muslims follow this formula they can get rid of one of the greatest problems the world is facing today. In fact one of the most successful programs to rehabilitate people from alcoholism and drug abuse and other forms of addiction employs this principle in its twelve steps program, that is, recognition of the Higher Power and seeking His assistance through prayer and practice.

Protecting Rights of Marginalized Persons in Society

The world has also followed the example of the Holy Prophet in gradually accepting the rights of women, the

rights of orphans and widows, divorce laws etc. Fifteen hundred years ago the Holy Quran declared to all people:

O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you. (4:1).

And give to the orphans their property, and substitute not worthless (things) for (their) good (ones), and devour not their property (adding) to your own property. This is surely a great sin (4:2).

And if you fear that you cannot do justice to orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, or three, or four; but if you fear that you will not do justice, then (marry) only one or that which your right hands possess. This is more proper that you may not do injustice (4:3).

Let us see what was the Holy Prophet’s example in this matter? After leading an absolutely clean and spotless life up to the age of twenty five he married Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her), a widow of forty, who was twice married before. Although polygamy was the rule in the Arabian society, he did not take a wife for three years after Khadijah passed away though he had two young daughters to take care of. He took more than one wife from 2 A.H. to 7 A.H. the reasons for that were again entirely unselfish.

Firstly, these were the years of the wars imposed upon him and his followers by their enemy. Hundreds of his followers fell as martyrs. Because they died for him, he felt an obligation to take care of their widows. Therefore he and his surviving followers married them. After the death of Khadijah, may Allah be pleased with her, he married Saudah, a widow of advanced age.

He also married Aishah his only virgin wife while still at Makkah, but her marriage was consummated five years later, in the second year of the Hijrah. Four of his marriages during this period were for reasons of the state, of which he was now becoming the head. The wives he thus married were Safiyya (daughter of the Jewish chief of Khaibar, after it fell to the Muslims, to establish good relations with the Jews after their defeat), Juwairiya (daughter of the chieftain of the huge tribe of Banu Mustaliq, after the tribe’s revolt and defeat, again to placate a fallen foe), Maymuna bint Harith and Mary the Copt (who was bestowed upon the Holy Prophet by Maquus, the King of Egypt, as gesture of goodwill and friendship).

Mention has been made of those “whom your right hands possess”. This refers to the wives of the Holy Prophet who had come as prisoners of war, and were freed and then married. There is clear *hadith* on the point that the Holy Prophet did not on his death leave behind any slave, whether male or female (Bu. 55:1). Now, Mary the Copt, may Allah be pleased with her, survived the Holy Prophet for years. Had she been a female slave she would have been mentioned as such. Maquqis, King of Egypt wrote a letter to the Holy Prophet, in reply to the written invitation from the latter to accept Islam. In that letter, the King, after saying that he was expecting such a prophet to appear etc., goes on to say: “I have given due honor to your emissary, and I send you as a gift two girls who are held in high esteem and honor among the Copts”.

Regarding education of the orphans under one’s care the Holy Quran states:

And make not over your property, which Allah has made a (means of) support for you, to the weak of understanding, and maintain them out of it, and clothe them and give them a good education (4:5).

After speaking of the maintenance and clothing of the orphans in a befitting manner, the Holy Qur’an now calls attention to another great need of theirs, which is education. From the first revelation, Islam laid stress on knowledge, “read and write” (96:1–5) being its very first message, and the Prophet spoke of the acquisition of knowledge as being as great a need of humanity as the acquisition of wealth:

There shall be no envy but in two: the person whom Allah has given wealth and the power to spend it in the service of truth and the person whom Allah has granted knowledge and he judges by it and teaches it. (Bu. 3:75)

Holy Prophet Muhammad laid stress, even on the education of slave-girls. He said:

The man shall have a double reward who has a slave-girl and he trains her in the best manner and he gives her the best education, then he sets her free and marries her. (Bu. 3:31)

The Holy Prophet thus gave guidance to free us from all forms of slavery. He abolished all the different forms of slavery excepting war captivity, and laid down laws to ameliorate the condition of those in war bondage. He laid down principles to ameliorate the condition of those in war bondage, and laid down principles of treatment to be meted out to them on such equal terms that it nearly banished slavery in his own time.

It is stated that on the day of Eid the Holy Prophet noticed a small boy in tattered clothes who was standing

all alone under a palm tree and was looking sadly at the children going to the fair. The Holy Prophet then knew him to be an orphan. He went up to him with a smile on his face and said: “Let me be your father for the day”; and then with a gentle jerk lifted him and put him astride his shoulder and talking and joking with the boy, soon brought a smile to the boy’s face, as they both headed for the fair-ground.

A poor old woman used to sweep the mosque in Madinah where the Holy Prophet used to say his prayers. She used to sleep in one corner of the compound of the mosque and was fed out of charity by members of the congregation. One day the Holy Prophet noticed her absence and asked about her. He was informed that she had died the night before and had been buried. The people did not think it worthwhile to inform the Holy Prophet about it. On this he rebuked them and forthwith asked to be taken to her grave, where he in company with other people recited the funeral prayers for the salvation of her soul.

Abu Amama relates that the Holy Prophet said: “Whoever treats an orphan well and brings him (or her) up like his own child, then he and I would be together like this (and he showed his two fingers together) in paradise”.

We see the fire of war raging in the Muslim world today. As far as the message of the Holy Quran is concerned, the only type of *Qital* (war) that is allowed is in self-defense and to stop religious persecution. This is proven by the fact that all the major battles that the Holy Prophet and his companions fought against the Makkan disbelievers were within a few miles radius of Madinah. The Holy Quran clearly states:

Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah’s name is much remembered, would have been pulled down. And surely Allah will help him who helps Him. Surely Allah is Strong, Mighty. (22:40)

And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but be not aggressive. Surely Allah loves not the aggressors. (2:190)

What was the solution offered by the companions of the Holy Prophet in the Battle of Siffin to stop three days of relentless bloodshed (April 657-36 A. H.)? At the advice of Amr ibn As, Muawwiyah had copies of the Quran tied to spears and raised aloft, accompanied by the proclamation through the ranks that the Book of Allah was still there and must be accepted as arbiter. No sooner did this proclamation go forth, than there rose the same cry from

the army of Ali as well. The miraculous power of the Quran forthwith brought the battle to an end.

We have to show the miraculous power of the divinely revealed message to the Holy Prophet Muhammad to the whole world, to once more extinguish the flames of the fire of war and put an end to the bloodshed of millions of innocent people. The sword and the spear have to be buried in order to do this.

The Moral Attribute of “Forgiveness” as an Example

Forgiveness was another most radiant gem in the Holy Prophet’s character. For example, forgiveness requires given conditions for its exhibition, in the absence of which no one can fairly claim to have fulfilled it.

First a person has to face ruthless persecution.

He has to prevail over his enemies and they are placed at his mercy.

He possesses the power to give them the punishment they rightly deserve.

Mercy, like forgiveness, can be shown only by him who finds others at his mercy. The mere preaching of mercy is no proof, or even any indication, that the person so preaching really possesses that quality, unless he is in a position to show mercy. Moreover, a persecutor and a tormentor would regard forgiveness as an insult to himself if it came from his helpless victim. In sacred history there is only one noble example which has these three conditions fulfilled before the manifestation of forgiveness. It is the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It found its perfect manifestation in him.

The Holy Quran states:

Take to forgiveness and enjoin good and turn away from the ignorant. (7:199)

This was explained to him by Allah thus:

Whosoever should cut you off draw him to yourself, whosoever should deprive you, give him. Whosoever should do you wrong, pardon him.

He lived up to these tenets under the most trying circumstances. At the Battle of Uhud when the Holy Prophet was wounded and fell down, a comrade asked him to invoke Divine wrath on the enemy. To which the Holy Prophet responded “I have not been sent as a curse to mankind, but as an inviter to good and as a mercy. O Lord! Grant guidance to my people; for surely they know not”.

It is related that the Holy Prophet took hold of the two sides of the gate of the Kabah on the day of the conquest of Makkah and said to the Quraish, “How do you

think I should treat you?” They said, “We hope for good, a noble brother and the son of a noble brother. Then he said, “I say as my brother Joseph said: “No reproof be against you this day” (Imam Razi).

The forgiveness shown at the conquest of Makkah is indeed unparalleled in the history of the world. Among those forgiven, was Hinda, the daughter of the Arab Chief Utbah, the principal instrument of the cruel persecution to which the Holy Prophet and his friends had been subjected for a full thirteen years. Her enmity for the Holy Prophet was not less than that of her father. She went so far as to chew the liver of Hamza, the Uncle of the Holy Prophet, when the former fell in battle with the Makkans. Now, being afraid to face the Holy Prophet, she came before him with a veil on her face to avoid identification. The Holy Prophet recognized her at once, but did not even hint at the painful incident (Bukhari).

What could be a better proof of a forgiving and forgetting nature cultivated in the companions of the Holy Prophet, by his precept and example than the fact that this same lady afterwards became the mother of the first ruling Muslim Dynasty? I refer to the Ommayad.

Another arch-enemy of the Holy Prophet was Abu Sufyan, who took a leading part in all the expeditions against him. He was afraid to come before the Holy Prophet without someone to intercede for him. Abbas came with him, but the Holy Prophet needed no intercession. Abu Sufyan was not only granted an unconditional pardon, but it was also proclaimed that whosoever would take refuge in the house of Abu Sufyan should consider himself safe.

Habbar-bin-Al-Aswad, another enemy of the Holy Prophet, who, in a way, was responsible for the death of Zainib, the Holy Prophet’s daughter, thought of fleeing to Persia for his life at the conquest of Mecca; instead, he came to the Holy Prophet and addressed him thus: “O Prophet of God, I wanted to flee away to Persia, but your mercy and compassionate nature have kept me back; whatsoever thou hast heard of me is true. I know what I have done. I come to thee now to confess my wrongs.” He received his pardon. Search the pages of history and the archives of every civilization, old and new, and you would find no other example of one who through his own actions could give such practical illustration of the morality to others.

Before proceeding to the pilgrimage, the Quraish used to stay in a place called Muzdalafa, which they had reserved for their own use. They did not like to mix with the common people. The Holy Prophet never liked or encouraged this practice. The pilgrimage itself provides living testimony to the universal brotherhood of Islam.

Advice from Maulana Muhammad Ali

For organizations that want to paint the true portrait of the Holy Prophet Muhammad before the world, Maulana Muhammad Ali, may Allah's mercy be upon him – who was the first President of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat – provided the following advice in one of his Jummah Khutba's:

The first task is for Muslims. There is the need is to convey to them the correct teachings of Islam.

The second task is to spread the Holy Quran amongst the non-Muslims and make them appreciative of the Holy Prophet's character.

You cannot attract people towards your religion by calling other Muslims as disbelievers. This malady of heresy calling (takfir) becomes an iron curtain. It becomes an impediment for an organization that invites others towards the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It was after all the Holy Prophet who said: "The one who says prayer like us, faces in the same direction as we face and consumes what we slaughter, is a Muslim". Khalid (may Allah be pleased with him) killed someone in the heat of battle and gave this excuse to the Holy Prophet that the individual was only professing Islam to save himself. To this the Holy Prophet replied, "Did you open up his heart and look inside?" So this was the standard set up by the Holy Prophet and this is what your organization has adopted.

Now I am asking you to come and demonstrate the example of the Holy Prophet in your daily practice so that you can propagate your religion in a more productive manner. Your mind set should be such that whenever you come across an excellence of the Holy Prophet you should make an attempt to immediately assimilate it in your practice.

The relationship between God and man should be that of a Master and a slave. In order to evolve the moral characteristics of the Holy Prophet you have to establish the relationship with God which he did. What is this relationship between man and God? In order to understand it, first you have to understand the relationship that exists between God and man. There is a prayer that is recited before the Al-Fatihah and is mentioned in some hadith:

O Allah! Thou art the King, none is to be served but Thee; Thou art my Lord and I am Thy servant (abd); I have been unjust to myself and I confess my shortcomings, so forgive Thou all my shortcomings, for none forgives the shortcomings but Thou.

I want to draw your attention to the words in the middle of this prayer, 'Thou art my Lord and I am Thy servant'. Ordinarily the word abd is translated as servant, but it really means a slave. A true relationship with God is established when man appreciates that he is the slave of Allah. What is the characteristic of a slave? Whatever a slave earns belongs to his master. He perceives the slightest hint of a command from his master and tries to immediately comply with it. This should be the relationship of man with God. Remember that being a slave of God is the highest level of spiritual development for man. God has given us freedom from many kinds of slaveries. The ultimate form of slavery is mentioned in the Holy Quran in these words:

Hast thou seen him who takes his low desires for his god? (25:43)

Some people become slaves of their low desires after gaining freedom from other forms of slavery. When man overcomes the bondage of his desires, he enters into the bondage of God.

This is the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and I tell my friends to study his life history. Try to develop his morals within you and cast yourself in his mold so that people see his true picture by observing you. God sees you but in this way people will also recognize you as an example of true Islamic character.

May we heed this important advice by Maulana Muhammad Ali, and may Almighty Allah help us all in this journey to follow in the footsteps of our beloved prophet – may people appreciate his true character through the righteous conduct of his followers. Ameen. Thank you very much. ■

Prophet Muhammad – A Guide for Universal Peace

By Dr. Noman Malik

The present period that we are passing through is a very critical time for humanity. The frequency and ferocity of wars and genocidal conflicts from the late nineteenth century to the present time with concomitant loss of life, destruction of property and untold suffering have been unparalleled in human history. At present there exist at least half a dozen flash points for future large scale conflicts with some of them having the potential of becoming nuclear holocausts which would kill hundreds of millions of people in a matter of minutes and end civilization as we know it.

Without doubt, technological progress has brought many benefits to mankind, but the initial premise held out in the late nineteenth century, that the abundance produced by technology would end poverty and conflicts over resources, has been an unmitigated failure. In fact, the very technology which was supposed to be a panacea is responsible for the extreme severity of these conflicts, and the material abundance produced by technology, instead of generating a spirit of generosity and sharing, has spawned a culture of greed and violence.

The questions which need to be answered are: 1) Why do nations fight with each other? and 2) Is there a solution which will end this recurring conflict and violence? For the answer we have to harken back fourteen hundred years to seventh century Arabia where a situation similar to our times existed in the Arabian Peninsula.

Arabia at the Time of the Holy Prophet

In spite of a common language, the tribes in Arabia at the time of the Holy Prophet were locked in a deadly cycle of blood feuds which had been on-going for generations. The weaker tribes were at the mercy of the larger and stronger tribes. Survival strategies necessitated the formations of pacts and alliances, which as a matter of expediency, were broken at the first opportunity, if that afforded some advantage to one party or other. In the settled areas and towns like Mecca, trade with the Roman Empire in commodities such as myrrh and frankincense had produced a rich oligarchy fond of pomp and show. As a consequence, the old tribal customs which previously had provided protection to the lesser members of the tribe were breaking down with resulting class differences and increasing mistreatment of the poor and the slaves. There was no central authority to dispense justice, and unless the under privileged such as women, children, slaves and the poor were under the protection of some powerful individual or clan, their rights and properties could be usurped at will.

The Holy Quran, the written record of that time, aptly portrays this situation:

“... And remember Allah’s favour to you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so by His favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it...” (3:103)

Yet within a space of twenty three years a single man would end this deadly cycle of decades of violence and mutual hatred and replace it with brotherly relations which would transcend family ties, social status and ethnic origins as J. H. Dennison states in his book *Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia* :

“A more disunited people it would be hard to find, till, suddenly, the miracle took place. A man arose who, by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible namely the union of all these warring factions.”

Never in history has such a complete transformation of a society been achieved under such adverse circumstances, on so large a scale and in so short a time. This transformation was achieved not by governmental decree or armed force but rather by something far more effective and long lasting; it was achieved by changing the character of men for the better. Today we again stand at a brink of a pit of fire of conflicts, hatred, fanaticism and war.

The Great Spiritual Reformation

All religions and ideologies these days preach peaceful coexistence; but, it is the singular practical success of Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad in bringing about peace among implacable enemies which makes it imperative for us to examine the means by which this change was achieved and their potential in promoting peace among nations in today’s dangerous world.

Human beings share with animals the competitive urge for territory and dominance which is necessary for physical survival. In animals these urges are controlled by instinct, but man has been granted free will, and unless these animal urges are brought under control and channeled in the right direction, nations will fight each other for wealth and resources with a barbarity which will exceed that of animals.

This great change for the good was brought about by developing the divine attributes which all human beings possess by virtue of their souls being the spirit of Allah which He has breathed into them. The key factor in this development was an unshakable conviction of an infinitely Merciful and Powerful, Living God who actively intervenes in the affairs of men. This faith in Allah was produced by the deep impression made on them by the truth of the Quranic message and the high morals and spiritual excellence of the holy Prophet Muhammad who exemplified these the Quranic teachings. The Holy prophet’s crucial role as an exemplar in this regard is aptly stated in Hazrat Ayesha’s succinct reply to a question about the Holy Prophet morals: “His morals are the Quran”

Practically, the institution of the five daily prayers (*salaat*) is the most effective means of establish the awareness of a Living God. The *salaat* accomplishes this objective by its regularity, physical form and the sublime message of the *Sura Fatihah*. It is the message of the *Sura Fatihah* which makes people realize that the

true reason of their creation is not to amass worldly wealth and power, but rather to attain to an eternal life with Allah the most High, by following the path of His messengers and chosen ones.

This mentality created in individuals ultimately becomes the mentality of the entire society or nation. With the foundations for universal peace and friendship thus firmly established on the basis of these high spiritual values – which practically manifests itself as having love for all people and selfless service to humanity – the Holy Quran emphasizes the establishment of certain guiding principles which are essential for humanity to co-exist peacefully. These principles are: 1) Appreciating the Unity of Mankind, 2) Maintaining Justice in all Dealings, 3) Being Faithful to Treaties and Promises, 4) Seeking Conflict Resolution, 5) Establishment of Responsible Governments, and 6) Upholding Religious Tolerance.

Unity of Mankind

The most important and basic of these principles is perhaps appreciating the unity of the human race. This unity is based on the Unity of God. The Quranic statements that the souls of all human beings are God's own spirit which He has blown into them, means, firstly that the souls of all human beings, regardless of their race or religion, are equally endowed with the Divine attributes and are closely related and equal in their very essence. No person or nation is intrinsically superior or inferior because of their ethnic origin or religious affiliation. Secondly, as all human beings possess the same divine attributes within themselves, they should all command our respect.

The Holy Prophet's life is replete with examples of his love for his love and respect for all people, regardless of tribe, race or religion. One example is when he stood up for the funeral bier of a Jew. Some people objected saying "It is a bier of a Jew" to which the prophet replied "Isn't he also a human being?" This basic dignity and worth of human beings provides a strong and enduring foundation for peaceful coexistence and friendship among peoples. In order to emphasize the unity of humanity, the Holy Quran specifically addresses this subject directly in the following verses:

"All people are a single nation." (2:213)

"O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with God is the most dutiful of you. Surely God is Knowing, Aware." (49:13)

The Islamic conception of humanity, therefore, is that of one family, with Allah as *Rabb* of all. Members of one

family may quarrel with one another now and then, but they cannot hate one another forever. In fact this broad conception of humanity is the only safeguard against national, racial or color prejudices, and only on this basis can peace be established on earth. And, the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the *khatam-an-nabiyeen* (seal of the prophets) further establishes this unity; rather than different people having allegiance to separate prophets who were sent to specific nations, belief in one universal prophet sent for all mankind brings people together instead of dividing them.

Maintenance of Justice

Justice among nations is also absolutely essential for peaceful co-existence. The Holy Quran strictly enjoins just dealings among individuals, societies and nations. Even if there is enmity between nations, justice must be maintained. A few representative Quran verses are quoted:

"O you who believe, be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for, Allah's sake even though it be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives- whether he be rich or poor, Allah has a better right over them both. So follow not (your) low desires, lest you deviate. And if you distort or turn away from (truth), surely God ever Aware of what you do." (4:135)

"O you who believe, be upright for God, bearers of witness with justice; and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably. Be just; that is nearer to observance of duty. And keep your duty to God. Surely God is Aware of what you do." (5:8)

One instance, out of many, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad provided an example of upholding the cause of justice without regard to the consequences of his decision, was an incident in Medina in which a Muslim stole a saddle, and just before he was apprehended, he threw it into the compound of a Jewish person, and accused the Jew of the theft. On investigation of the case by the Holy Prophet, the Jew was found to be innocent and he was exonerated, and the thief was duly punished for the crime. This was a tribal society where any action taken against an individual was considered an action against the whole tribe. The thief belonged to an important tribe in Medina, and the danger existed that if he was punished, the whole tribe would be alienated. The Muslims at that time were numerically weak and hemmed in by powerful enemies; the loss of support from the tribe would have placed them in a very precarious situation. The Prophet, however, did not hesitate to do the right thing, and the tribe accepted his judgment without demurring. This not only

showed the Holy Prophet's love for justice, but also demonstrated the change produced by Islam among the people, so that now they regarded justice as more important than tribal affiliation.

Faithfulness to Treaties and Promises

Faithfulness to treaties, covenants, pacts, truces and promises is a part of maintaining justice and necessary for continued good relations. Great stress is laid on fulfilling one's promises in the Holy Quran as is demonstrated by the following representative verses:

"And those who are keepers of their trusts and their covenant..." (23:8)

"And fulfil the promise, for every promise shall be called in question" (17:34)

"O you who believe! Fulfill the obligations" (5:1)

"And fulfill the covenant of Allah, when you have made a covenant, and break not the oaths after making them fast, and you have indeed made Allah your surety, Surely Allah knows what you do" (16:91)

"And be not like her who unravels her yarn, disintegrating it into pieces after she has spun it strongly. You make your oaths to be means of deceit between you because one nation is more numerous than another nation?" (16:92)

True to the spirit of these teachings, the Prophet and his followers stood firmly by their agreements, under the most trying circumstances. There is not a single instance on record in which they broke their agreement with any opponent. A couple of examples will suffice to illustrate this point:

A critical situation arose at the conclusion of the Truce of Hudaibiya. The agreement had just been signed, when Abu Jandal, a refugee from Mecca and a convert to Islam who had, on this account, been severely persecuted at Mecca threw himself before the Holy Prophet and the Muslims, and showed them the festering wounds of the tortures inflicted on him by the Meccans and asked for asylum. Under the conditions of the newly concluded agreement, the Muslims could not give him shelter. The Prophet was moved by Abu Jandal's plight, but since the prophet had given his word, he could not accept Abu Jandal's pleas, and Abu Jandal was sent back to his persecutors to be dealt with as they liked. Abu Jandal subsequently escaped on the way back to Mecca and became a thorn in the side of the Meccans by independently attacking the trade routes of the Meccans.

Similarly, in the Battle of Badr, the Muslims were

outnumbered three to one – one thousand against three hundred and thirteen. Two individuals, who sympathized with the Muslims, decided to help them and proceeded to the battlefield. They were apprehended on their way by the Quraish, who let them go on the condition that they would not join the Muslims. However, the two took another route and approached the Holy Prophet offering to help him. Upon learning that these men had promised the Quraish not to help the Muslims, the Holy Prophet asked them to leave, as helping the Muslims would mean breaking their promise to the Quraish. Not only was the Muslim army badly outnumbered, but it included youths as young as 14 and aged men. Two fully equipped fighting men would have been a welcome addition to the small force, but the Prophet considered being faithful to one's promise more important.

Conflict Resolution

As among individuals, disagreements may occur among nations. When these disagreements occur, control of anger, patience, forgiveness and civil discourse are essential requirements for resolving differences. The Holy Quran lays great stress on acquiring these attributes:

"Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allah loves the doers of good (to others)." (3:134).

"And those who shun the great indecencies, and whenever they are angry they forgive." (42:37)

"And the recompense of evil is punishment like it; but whoever forgives and amends, his reward is with God." (42:40)

"And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! He between whom and thee is enmity would be as if he were a warm friend." (41:34).

"And you shall certainly hear from those who have been given the Book before you and from the polytheists much abuse, and if you are patient and guard against evil, this is one of the affairs which should be determined upon." (3:186)

"Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner. Surely thy Lord knows best him who strays from His path, and He knows best those who go aright." (16: 125)

Perhaps the best example of anger control, patience and forgiveness to achieve peace among men is the conduct

of the Holy Prophet Muhammad after the conquest of Mecca. The enemy who had mercilessly persecuted the Holy Prophet and killed his family members and dear friends, many of them in extremely barbaric ways, stood helpless and penitent before him. For an ordinary person the urge to take revenge would have been irresistible. Killing one's enemy and enslaving the conquered was the norm among nations in situations like this. However, Prophet Muhammad, quoting the Holy Quran, forgave them in the words of the Prophet Joseph:

“... No reproof be against you this day...” (12:92)

Both Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, and her slave Wahishi who had stalked and killed the Prophet's beloved Uncle Hazrat Hamza on her orders in the battle of Uhud, so she could rip out and chew his liver to spite the Muslims, were forgiven. The man who had thrust the blunt end of his spear into the belly of the Holy prophet's pregnant daughter, causing a miscarriage which killed both the mother and the child, was forgiven and so on. The Holy Prophet forgave them all. Most of all the Prophet by forgiving the murder of a relative of his on the day of the last Pilgrimage, and foregoing retaliation, wiped out the curse of blood feuds from Arabia forever.

Not only did Prophet Muhammad forgive his former enemies, but his companions forgave them as well. They too could identify the men who had persecuted and killed their own dear ones. They were a purely volunteer army, and if they wished to take revenge, the Holy Prophet would not have been able to stop them. But they forgave their enemies because prayer, the Quranic teachings, and the example of the Holy Prophet, had made God a living reality for them. This helped them control their lower desires for revenge and plunder and replace them with love and forgiveness for their now penitent former enemies. The effect of this merciful and gracious treatment was such that the Meccans willingly converted to Islam and abandoned their previous cruel and wicked ways. The same remedy of the awareness of God as a living reality in our own strife-ridden times can also bring about the same love and peace among nations as it did at the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

Responsible Government

Another essential requirement for peace among all people is the establishment of responsible governments. International policies are set by governmental leaders. Therefore, for these policies and actions to be based on the above mentioned principles of unity of mankind, maintenance of justice, faithfulness to treaties and promises, conflict resolution, and religious tolerance, the persons in charge must be people with high morals

who reflect these spiritual values. And that is why the Holy Quran states:

“God commands you to make over trusts to those worthy of them, and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice.” (4:58)

And the affairs of the State are to be based on the principle of “consultation”, as the Holy Quran states:

“Those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer and their government is by counsel among themselves.” (42:38).

The Holy Prophet gave an excellent demonstrative of consultative governance when he accepted the decision of the majority to face the Quraish at Uhud, rather than defend from Madina, as he was inclined to do. Disobedience of the Prophet's orders by the archers, resulted in substantial Muslim casualties, but the Holy Prophet not only refrained from chiding them, but rather he continued to consult them in future affairs of State as he was commanded by Allah Almighty in the Holy Quran.

Religious Tolerance

Religion arouses very strong emotions in people, and people are willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of religion. Unfortunately, they are also quick to kill and persecute people who hold beliefs different than theirs. Changing or stopping this second type of behavior is difficult, in that divine sanction is claimed for the most heinous acts. The underlying basis for this atrocious behavior is the belief of people that only their religion and its founder are from Allah, and other religions and their founders are false. So it almost becomes a duty for them to oppress and eliminate faiths other than their own.

Islam has done a great favor to humanity in that it has removed all these differences by declaring in the Holy Quran that all religions, their founders and scriptures from God, and that they preach essentially the same message, i.e. to worship and obey the One true God, and to do good to humanity. The holy Quran says:

“... And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.” (35:24).

Furthermore, these messengers are not limited only to those mentioned by name in the Holy Quran:

“And (We sent) messengers We have mentioned to thee before and messengers We have not mentioned to thee [in the Holy Quran].” (4:164)

Respect for all revealed scriptures is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

“And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee (the Holy Quran) and that which was

revealed before thee (the previous scriptures).” (2:4)

Likewise, the basic teachings of all religions are the same:

“Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they have their reward with their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.” (2:62).

Respect for all prophets and religious scriptures is therefore a fundamental requirement of Islam. The only difference between the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the Holy Quran and the previous prophets and scriptures is that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the last in this long line of Prophets and has been sent for all mankind, in contrast to the previous prophets who were sent to a particular nation or tribe. As a supra-national prophet, therefore, he brings prophethood to perfection and unites all mankind under a single banner.

To further the cause of peace and tolerance among religions, the Quran prohibits abusive speech in religious discussions:

“And abuse not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest, exceeding the limits, they abuse Allah through ignorance.” Quran (6:108).

“Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner.” (16:125).

Additionally, it specifically prohibits religious intolerance in very clear words:

“There is no compulsion in religion— the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error...” (18:29).

“And say: The Truth is from your Lord; so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve” Quran (2:256).

A great example of interfaith amity and toleration was set by the Holy Prophet Muhammad when the deputation from the Najran Christians visited Madinah. Although they had rejected the Holy Prophet, He did not berate them and even allowed them to hold their service in the Prophet’s Mosque. If all religions would agree and act upon the principles stated above – based on belief in a single, loving God, Who is the Author of all religions - then the current inter-religious hostility would be replaced by mutual respect, and friendship.

Principles of War in Islam

Now, despite one’s best efforts to establish peace with others, sometimes war becomes necessary. We again

have to look at the teachings of the Holy Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet about the initiation and conduct of war. The Holy Quran lays down very stringent rules regarding justification for war, conduct during war, and treatment of prisoners. The importance of making peace during the prosecution of hostilities is given great importance in the Holy Quran.

It cannot be overemphasized that only defensive war is permitted in Islam as is evident from the following Quran verses:

“Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made, because they have been wronged – and God is well able to help them.

Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly, only for saying, ‘Allah is our Lord’. And if God had not allowed one group of people to repel another, then there would have been pulled down cloisters and synagogues and churches and mosques, in which God’s name is much remembered.” (22:39, 40)

This shows the extent of religious toleration commended by Islam that Muslims should fight not only for the defense of mosques, but also for protecting the worship places of other religions as well.

“And fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but be not aggressive. Surely God loves not the aggressors.” (2:190)

“And what reason have you not to fight in the way of Allah, and(in the way) of the weak among the men and the women and the children, who say: Our Lord, take us out of this town, whose people are oppressors, and grant us from Thee a friend, and grant us from Thee a helper!” (4:75)

In the above verses “fighting in the way of Allah” is defined as fighting in self-defense and in the defense of the weak and helpless suffering.

Respect and Kindness Towards Peaceful Non-Muslims

The Quran positively commands that peaceful non-Muslims be treated with kindness and justice and positively prohibits fighting peaceful non-Muslims.

“Allah forbids you not respecting those who fight you not for religion, nor drive you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly. Allah forbids you only respecting those who fight you for religion, and drive you forth from your homes and help (others) in your expulsion, that you make friends of them; and whoever makes friends of them, these are the wrong-doers” (60:9)

An examination of the Holy Prophets wars will show that he faithfully observed these commandments of the Holy Quran and fought only in self-defense or in defense of the oppressed.

Three major battles were fought with the Meccans: the battle of *Badr*, the battle of *Uhud*, and the battle of the *Azhab*. In each of these battles it were the Meccans who attacked Madinah and not the other way around. In fact in the last of these battles, the battle of the *Azhab* a large force of Meccans and their allies numbering twenty five thousand battle hardened veterans surrounded Madina defended by only a beleaguered force of two thousand Muslims. Only Allah's help and a trench dug around the city which prevented the enemy's cavalry from storming Madinah, saved the city. The enemy forces finally withdrew after a long siege.

The Object of the Holy Prophet's Wars

The object of the Holy Prophets wars was self-defense and to end persecution on account of one's religion. It was not to compel people to accept Islam, as it clearly states in the holy Quran:

"There is no compulsion in religion— the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error..." (2:252)

"and thou(O prophet) art not one to compel them. So remind by means of the Qur'an him who fears My threat." (50:45)

"And fight them until there is no persecution, and religion is only for Allah. But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors." (2:191-193)

Both expressions, "religion should be only for Allah" and "all religions are for Allah" in the Holy Quran carry one and the same significance, namely that religion is treated as a matter between man and his God, a matter of conscience, in which nobody has a right to interfere. It may be added that if the words had the meaning which it is sought to give them that it means forced conversion to Islam then the Holy Prophet would have been the first person to act on it. There is not a single instance of the Holy Prophet forcing a person to accept Islam by force.

Conquest of Mecca

The conquest of Mecca itself was a defensive move necessitated by the atrocious behavior of the Meccans. Two years after the truce of *Hudaibiya*, the Meccans and an ally of theirs launched a barbaric attack on a small tribe, the *Khuza*, an ally of the Muslims killing many of their men. The Prophet asked the Meccans to pay compensation to the *Khuza*, but they arrogantly refused, and the Holy Prophet had no choice but to

move against Mecca. But this time ten thousand Muslim soldiers surrounded Mecca. A scant two years ago the Muslims numbered about 2000. Where did the additional 8000 men come from? They came by peaceful conversion to Islam after the truce of *Hudaibiya*.

After the fall of Mecca, the Kaaba was cleared of idols, but the idols in the houses of the Meccans were left untouched, and no attempt was made to force the Meccans to accept Islam. Their properties were not confiscated and, their most heinous crimes committed against the Holy Prophet and the Muslims were forgiven. No attempt was made to force them to convert to Islam.

Tabuk Expedition

Another incident that proves that the Holy Prophet had no intention of waging aggressive war was the *Tabuk Expedition*. This expedition was undertaken in the last year of the Prophet's life when he received intelligence that the Roman Ceaser was massing troops for an attack on Arabia. The Holy Prophet in response collected a volunteer force of thirty thousand men and marched to Tabuk at the border of Arabia and the Roman Empire. But on finding no sign of the Romans he returned to Medina. This would have been an excellent opportunity to attack the undefended Roman Empire, but the Holy Prophet followed the edict of the Holy Quran and refrained from attacking the Roman Empire. This action of the Holy Prophet again refutes the idea of aggressive war against Darul Harb or non-Muslim nations.

Peace Favored

Not only does the Quran prohibit aggressive warfare but it actually encourages the making of peace. The object of peace is to remove misunderstanding and create friendship between adversaries. Peace making is recommended even if the sincerity of the adversary is in doubt.

"And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it, and trust in God. Surely He is the Hearer, the Knower. And if they intend to deceive thee, then surely God is sufficient for thee..." (8:61, 62)

The command to make peace with the Non-Muslim enemy clearly refutes the idea of unrelenting war against non-Muslim nations according to the idea of *Darul Harb* which developed later in Islam. The example of peace-making was set by the Holy Prophet himself when he concluded the peace treaty of *Hudaibiya* with the Meccans a year after the battle of the Allies (*Azhab*). The terms of this truce were very humiliating to the Muslims, but the Holy Prophet signed the truce because it called for a ten year moratorium on war between the Muslims and the Meccans. With the cessation of hostilities after the truce of *Hudaibiya*, preachers could be sent to the Arabian tribes, and tribal delega-

tions could come to Medina to inquire about Islam and see for themselves the change produced in the Muslims by the teachings of the Holy Quran and the sterling character of the Holy prophet.

Impressed by this change, they accepted Islam in large numbers. Thus the Islamization of Arabia was brought about not by the sword, but by preaching the spiritually inspiring and uplifting teachings of Islam and the spiritual greatness of the Holy Prophet during this period of peace.

Conclusion

The world today faces a catastrophe of nuclear war as conflicts mount, and powerful nuclear armed nations find themselves on opposite sides in these conflicts. Even a small misstep may lead to direct a confrontation between them with disastrous results. Concerted efforts to achieve this goal of international peace have been attempted, but have been unsuccessful so far. The reason is that this current modern civilization considers material success as the goal of man's existence. The result is that nations will employ any means whether fair or foul to further their selfish interests to achieve this goal. Lasting peace and harmony among nations can only exist if nations can control the lower desires of the love of wealth and power which are the source of ruthless strife among them, and develop feelings of mutual love, friendship and respect towards each other on the basis of their common origin from the Spirit of God. This goal was achieved in Arabia fifteen hundred years ago by the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the teachings of the Holy Quran, by producing in the hearts of warring tribes the conviction of a living God whose very essence is that of Love, Goodness and justice.

For this the Holy Prophet has been called a "Mercy to the Nations" by Almighty Allah. Emulating the example of the "the best of the creation" of Allah is the only way that humanity can find peace. ■

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True Significance of "Ahmadiyya"

By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

In this closing address, I would like to discuss the significance of the name "Ahmadiyya". As we are all aware, our beloved Prophet was known by two names, "Muhammad" and "Ahmad". Even the Holy Quran uses both names in reference to him. These two names represent two different characteristics found in the Holy Prophet – "Ahmad" representing inner beauty (the aspect of "*jamal*") and "Muhammad" representing outward glory (the aspect of "*jalal*"). Some prophets are known for their beautiful teachings and others for their grandeur – for instance, Isa (as) is known for the wonderful lessons of peace, perseverance and tolerance found in the Gospels, and Musa (as) is known for being the dispenser of the detailed law of the Torah and attaining the ruling status of a king. With regard to the Holy Prophet, though, both these elements of inner beauty and outward glory are found in him – not only did he preach a spiritual faith based on peace and tolerance, but he was also the recipient of a comprehensive code of laws and was raised to the exalted status of leader of the entire nation.

And these two qualities of the Holy Prophet are reflected in two different phases of his life. The name "Ahmad", which symbolizes the inner beauty of Islam, was displayed in the early days while in Makkah, when the Holy Prophet was devoid of any power or material support, but notwithstanding, gained followers simply by the preaching of the spiritual lessons of the faith. And the name "Muhammad", which symbolizes the outward glory of Islam, was displayed in Madinah, when the Holy Prophet overcame attacks by opponents, was raised to status of being head of the citizenry, and institutionalized the just and equitable teachings of the religion in the governance of the society.

Today, the condition of the Muslims corresponds with the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah. Muslim nations do not possess the glory of being a ruling people on earth, so that it can contribute to the advancement of civilization as it once did. And because the Muslim world is regarded by others in the contemporary era as being weak, disunited and conflict-ridden, the religion of Islam and the character of the Holy Prophet are being impugned as the cause for its deleterious condition. This state of affairs necessitates Muslims today demonstrating the qualities of "Ahmad", which signifies being patient and showing perseverance in times of trials, just as the Holy Prophet and his blessed companions did at Makkah.

It was based on this understanding of the condition of the Muslim world and the needs of the time that the “Ahmadiyya Movement” was created in the year 1889. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the great reformer (*mujaddid*) of the age, formed the Ahmadiyya Movement after the Holy Prophet’s name “Ahmad” for the purpose of defending the religion of Islam and the honor of the Holy Prophet through gentle preaching of the beautiful, peaceful teachings of the faith. And those who joined this Movement pledged to revive this example of the Holy Prophet’s character and promote the spiritual basis of the Islamic faith to others. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad explained:

“Those who join my army, I order them to give up these ideas [of war], and rather to purify their hearts, develop and nurture their feelings of mercy towards all mankind and be helpers of those in distress and suffering. They should spread peace on earth, as this is how their religion will spread.”

And the person who played the role like that of a “General” of this spiritual army, devoting his life to furthering this cause, was Maulana Muhammad Ali. He served as a faithful student at the feet of the *mujaddid* of the age, and after Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s death, along with other senior companions of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, separated from the Qadian faction of the Movement and founded the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat in the year 1914 to continue the practical missionary work envisioned by the founder. This was necessary due to the son of the founder, who usurped control over the Movement, began making outlandish claims. He claimed that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a “prophet” and that everyone who does not accept him as a prophet is an unbeliever (“*kafir*”). These were not the views of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. To the contrary, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad vehemently denied any claim to prophethood and firmly believed that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the final prophet after whom no prophet may appear. The erroneous beliefs advanced by the Qadian faction of the Movement were not only theologically baseless but were also practically detrimental to serving the real purpose for which the Movement was created.

The Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat went on to establish the first ever Islamic missions in Europe, in England in 1913 and in Germany in 1922. These missions were the educational centers of Islam in the West and also aided Muslims around the world in defending Islam from western critics. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat also produced a library of scholarly publications, mostly authored by Maulana Muhammad Ali, which received

glowing reviews from the time of its first publication and continues to do so even now.

Today, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society – that is, the U.S. branch of the international Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement – continues this great legacy of educating the masses about Islam and the Holy Prophet through its publications. All of the major bookstores in the U.S. (and many now in the U.K as well) carry our books and many universities use them as text books in Islamic studies classes. We also have this literature translated into a host of different languages and distributed for free to local populations around the world. Recently we shipped 70,000 copies of our Russian translation and commentary of the Holy Quran to Russia and Central Asian countries. And many of our works have been translated into Arabic. Your respected and influential Al Azhar University has also provided certifications of authenticity for many of our publications and the late Grand Imam, Sheikh Muhammad Sayid Tantawi (may Allah be pleased with him), wrote a personal Foreword for Maulana Muhammad Ali’s premiere treatise “The Religion of Islam”.

And all of this work is done on a voluntary basis, because those who join this Jamaat take a pledge (*bay’at*) which they understand to be the same pledge that early Muslims took to defend the Holy Prophet. Although the Holy Prophet (saw) has left this earthly abode, the attacks on him have not ceased; they are now focused on his character as opposed to his life.

My dear brothers and sisters, we end by inviting you to join this noble cause of defending the Holy Prophet by showing his True Portrait to the world. We ask for your help by sharing information about our literature and the work we do to others. And let us also unite as an *ummah* in helping one another develop and display the true character of the Holy Prophet in our daily lives, so that we will be worthy of being his spiritual heirs, which is the greatest testament of him being *khatam-an-nabiyeen*.

I would like to thank our dear friends Sheikh Azayem and Sheikh Bastiwisi for their support, and to the honorable Sheikh Al Nagar for his participation today. And I would like to thank our friend Dr. Hussein Aly for all of his assistance and for conducting this program. And finally I would like to once again thank each one of you who have attended today. We hope you were comfortable and that you found the information presented beneficial. May Almighty Allah keep us all under His protection and may He bless all of us with many opportunities to sacrifice in His way. Ameen. Thank you very much. ■

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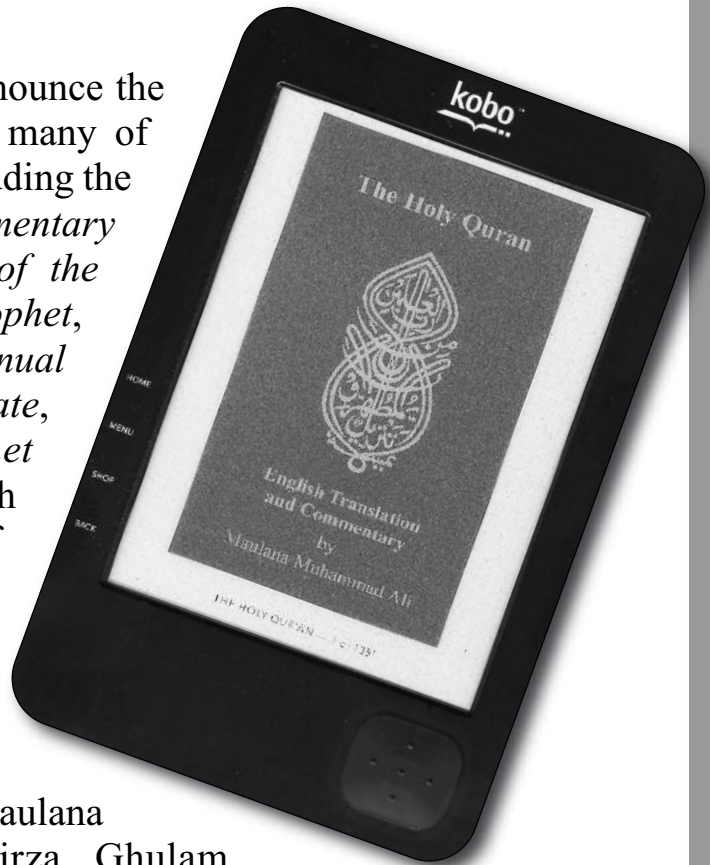
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