

“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

April – June 2014

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.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
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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.

The “Science vs. Religion” Debate

An Introduction, from an Islamic Perspective

By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

[This article was presented by the Editor at the symposium titled “The Story of Adam: A Discussion on Evolution and Revelation”, held in conjunction with the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society’s annual convention in Columbus Ohio on June 29, 2013. A two-part Keynote address was presented at the symposium by Dr. Noman Malik, the first dealing with the origins of life and evolution of man, and the second regarding spiritual development being the true essence of man’s superiority. This article served as an introduction to the keynote presentations by outlining key features of the “science vs. religion” debate and advancing principal characteristics from an Islamic perspective that rebut the notion that science and religion are inherently incompatible.]

In recent times, the notion of a “science versus religion” debate has become quite prevalent. The rise of religious fundamentalism seems to be running parallel with a rise of scientific fundamentalism, where religion is discounted in its entirety based on the view that religion is inherently incompatible with science. And we see these two extreme positions coming into conflict in discussions pertaining to a host of social issues. Whether it is over the content of school text books, or the implications of stem cell research, or laws pertaining to contraception and abortion, each one of these topics becomes a battlefield of sorts for proponents of either side. This controversy leaves many wondering whether science and religion can in fact be reconciled, or whether the two are inherently incompatible. And this is what we will be addressing today, from an Islamic perspective.

In this debate, there appear to be three categories of arguments that are advanced in support of the view that science and religion *cannot* coexist.

The **first category of arguments** claims that science is based on logic and reason, and the search for proof, whereas religion is based on mere belief or even “blind” faith. Richard Dawkins, a popular proponent of atheism articulated this argument by saying: “I am against religion because it teaches us to be satisfied with not understanding the world.” Now, from an Islamic perspective, and I’m sure from many others, this argument does not resonate well.

In Islam, the study of nature is understood as an integral part of one’s faith. The Quran is replete with directives to “ponder” and “reflect”, not to simply accept a

notion or believe blindly. The Quran further repeatedly questions the readers as to whether they “understand” and whether they are using their “senses”. Moreover, the study of the natural world is explained in the Quran as evidencing “signs” of the truth of God’s existence, not something that detracts from it. Whether it is the diversity among mankind and the different species of animals spread throughout the earth, the creation of geographical structures such as mountains and rivers, the formation of clouds and the patterns of wind streams, the design of the earth and the orbit of the planets of our solar system, the variation in languages spoken and the spectrum of colors, the Quran encourages the reader to acquire knowledge of each these phenomena because therein lies proofs of the true nature (unity) of God. These Quranic lessons in fact suggest a *sacred aspect* to the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

And it was with this understanding that science was studied and advanced in Islamic civilizations. According to most historians today, the modern “scientific method” was first developed by Muslim scientists, pioneered by Ibn Al-Haytham (known in the west as “Alhazen”). In his book “*The Making of Humanity*”, Robert Briffault asserts that the very notion of science as it is understood in the modern sense (based on the experimental method) is rooted in scientific thought and knowledge that emerged in Islamic civilizations during the eighth and sixteenth centuries. So, the point is, historically, the acquisition of knowledge, in general, and scientific pursuit, in particular, were certainly not in discord with Islamic thought and religious belief.

The **second category of arguments** contends that science is based on progress whereas religion is an impediment to advancement and modernity. Again, from an Islamic perspective, this argument is specious. History shows that from every area of *science* (including medicine, chemistry, biology, astronomy, physics and mathematics), to every aspect of *civil society* (including, politics, commerce, economics, and education), to all spheres of the arts (including, architecture, painting, poetry, and music), Muslims, either through invention or by building upon earlier knowledge, set a trajectory for the development of the civilized world we find ourselves in today. And this is why Muslims of the early Islamic empires are commonly referred to as being *preservers of the past* and *providers for the future*.

Now, I would like to read to you a passage from a speech that I believe very eloquently describes the legacy of Islamic contributions to modern civilization. The author of the speech is Carly Fiorina. As I’m sure many of you know, Ms. Fiorina is the former CEO of the technology giant Hewlett-Packard, and in recent times has

become a popular political figure as well. While speaking at a conference during her tenure at Hewlett Packard, Ms. Fiorina stated the following:

There was once a civilization that was the greatest in the world. It was able to create a continental super-state that stretched from ocean to ocean, and from northern climes to tropics and deserts. Within its dominion lived hundreds of millions of people, of different creeds and ethnic origins.

One of its languages became the universal language of much of the world, the bridge between the peoples of a hundred lands. Its armies were made up of people of many nationalities, and its military protection allowed a degree of peace and prosperity that had never been known. The reach of this civilization's commerce extended from Latin America to China, and everywhere in between.

And this civilization was driven more than anything, by invention. Its architects designed buildings that defied gravity. Its mathematicians created the algebra and algorithms that would enable the building of computers, and the creation of encryption. Its doctors examined the human body, and found new cures for disease. Its astronomers looked into the heavens, named the stars, and paved the way for space travel and exploration.

Its writers created thousands of stories. Stories of courage, romance and magic. Its poets wrote of love, when others before them were too steeped in fear to think of such things.

When other nations were afraid of ideas, this civilization thrived on them, and kept them alive. When censors threatened to wipe out knowledge from past civilizations, this civilization kept the knowledge alive, and passed it on to others.

While modern Western civilization shares many of these traits, the civilization I'm talking about was the Islamic world from the year 800 to 1600, which included the Ottoman Empire and the courts of Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo, and enlightened rulers like Suleiman the Magnificent. ...

This kind of enlightened leadership — leadership that nurtured culture, sustainability, diversity and courage — led to 800 years of invention and prosperity.

What is most fascinating is that this legacy of discoveries being pursued and advancements being attained were not in spite of religion but rather based on the Muslims' holistic view of religion.

The **third category of arguments** asserts that scien-

tific knowledge disproves ideas about the world as contained in religious scriptures, thereby nullifying the premise that the source of these texts is divine. And the "theory of evolution" is the primary example presented in support of this assertion. Now, the first keynote presentation will be discussing issues that address this line of argument. But, briefly, the unsuitability of this claim is quite apparently due to a misunderstanding of how religious scripture is to be interpreted as well as an unawareness of the full, deeper meanings and underlying significances of terms that are used in religious scripture.

For instance, quite contrary to the idea that scripture is to be interpreted "literally", the Quran warns its readers:

He (God) it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive – they are the basis of the book – and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation ... (3:7).

So, from an Islamic perspective, adopting the literal meaning of all verses of scripture is not only deemed an incorrect method of interpretation, it is actually condemned as a wrongdoing.

And as for "evolution", well, Mr. Dawkins explains the concept in the following way; he states it is:

"... a gradual, incremental improvement starting from very simple beginnings and working up step by tiny incremental step to more complexity, more elegance, more adaptive perfection. [Time, "God vs. Science", by David Van Beima, Sunday, November 6, 2006]

Obviously unknown to Mr. Dawkins, and unfortunately many others as well, is that this concept that he describes is embedded in the first very first attribute of God presented in the very first verse of the Holy Quran. It is stated in the very first verse of the Quran:

All praise is due to God, the Lord of the worlds (1:1)

The word translated as "Lord" is derived from the Arabic word "Rabb". And this word "Rabb" conveys the idea of fostering or nourishing *and* regulating, completing and accomplishing. As a classical dictionary of the Quran by Al Raghīb explains, "Rabb" signifies the "fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion". So, "Rabb" is the Author of all existence, Who has ordained for all of creation a sphere of capacity and within that sphere provided the means by which it continues to gradually progress until it attains to its goal of perfection. By the use of the word "Rabb",

the Holy Quran provides insight into the law of evolution which is working in the universe.

And this understanding is clearly supported by other decisive verses in the Quran. For instance, in 71:14 it states:

And indeed He (God) has created you in various stages” (71:14).

And later in the Quran, in chapter 87, it is stated:

Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High!
Who creates, then makes complete,
And Who measures, then guides (87:1-3)

So although there is no incongruity from an Islamic standpoint regarding creation being developed in various stages, progressing from one phase or period to the next, we are told in the Quran that this evolution is not by chance or random events, but rather entails carefully guided measurements.

This notion of “guided” evolution also implies some higher “purpose” to our lives, something that science cannot explain. And the story of Adam in the Quran provides the answer for the question of what is the purpose of our creation. The lessons from that story, which will be discussed in detail in the second part of the keynote presentation, indicate that just as guidance is provided in man’s physical evolution, so too is guidance provided for man’s spiritual evolution. That although man is a ruler on earth, having the capability to control the material world in which he lives, without spiritual guidance man is unable to master the low desires within him. The moral of the story is that man is powerful against all, but weak against himself. And it was to make man “perfect” in the complete sense that guidance was provided by God to man, and this guidance came in the form of divine revelation. So the distinguishing characteristic of man is not in the material substance from which he is created, but rather in his spiritual essence – man’s superiority lies in his moral conscience and pursuit of higher ideals.

Which brings to an end my Introduction to this Symposium. I thank you for your kind attention. ■

Miraculous Truths in the Holy Quran

Truths Unknown in 7th Century Arabia

Compiled by Ebrahim Muhamed

[This article – originally published in the ‘Good News’, a local publication by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat in

South Africa – is compiled by Ebrahim Muhamed. In this article, Ebrahim Muhamed (President of the South African Jamaat) presents various examples of knowledge and information contained in the Holy Quran that are understood today but could not have been known to anyone at the time of its revelation. The examples presented are significant, calling any truth-seeker to question as to how it was possible for such knowledge to have been known to Prophet Muhammad if not by means of divine revelation. Thus, the article is in essence an argument in favor of the veracity of the Holy Quran as a divinely revealed scripture and evidence in support of the Holy Prophet Muhammad being a divinely appointed messenger.]

It is an accepted fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad had not read a single book, nor of course written one, as he could not read nor write. This is substantiated in the Holy Quran chapter 7 verses 157 and 158 where the Prophet is referred to as the *Ummi Prophet*. “*Ummi*” means one who is illiterate, signifying “one who neither writes nor reads a writing”, according to the *al Mufradat fi Gharib al Quran* (dictionary of the Quran by Shaikh Abul Qasim al Husain al Raghbi al Isfahani). This confirms that the Holy Quran, a treasure chest of knowledge, was revealed by an unimaginably Super Being Whom we refer to as Almighty Allah (the All Knower, the Supreme, Whose knowledge has no boundaries), and was not the making of the ‘*Ummi*’ Prophet, a mortal being who lived in 7th Century Arabia.

Take, for example, the teaching of the Quran that Divine revelation had previously come to *all nations*. This had never been taught or recognized by any religion or by any man before the Holy Prophet. It is remarkable that such a broad truth should have been preached by one who had never read the scriptures of any religion and who lived in a country which was almost cut off from all communication with other countries.

It is also a striking fact that the very first word revealed to the Holy Prophet was the command to “*Iqra*” (or “*Read*”) (96:1), and this revelation went on to describe God as One “*Who taught by the pen*” (96:4). This could only be revelation from a Divine source, emphasizing the importance of reading and writing to the entire world through this message. The words are prophetic, serving as a guide for all times to come, for we know today that the very foundation of human civilization and progress comes from the acquisition of knowledge which entail reading and writing. ‘*Education*’, we all know, is high on the agendas of just about every nation on earth; and where it is not, the consequences such nations face are dire, bordering on social disaster.

The Holy Quran refers to ‘*signs*’ that will manifest the truth of the Quran:

“We will soon show them Our signs in the farthest regions and among their own people, until it is quite clear to them that it is the Truth. Is it not enough that thy Lord is a Witness over all things?” (41:53)

The ‘signs’ referred to, we will show, are unfolding before our very eyes daily and will continue to unfold far into the future.

First, it is very important that we take cognizance of the historical context of the revelation of the Holy Quran (i.e. 7th Century Arabia), then ask ourselves how was it possible for the Holy Prophet to have known such subtle and profound truths when most of the knowledge of science as we know it today was in its primitive form or completely non-existent.

There were no telescopes, microscopes or anything even close to the technology we have today. People believed that the sun orbited the earth and that the sky was held up by big pillars at the corners of a flat world. Within this backdrop the Quran was revealed, and it contains many scientific facts on topics ranging from astronomy to biology, geology, embryology to sociology. Some skeptics claim that the Quran was changed as new scientific facts were discovered but this is based on shallow ignorance because as we will show much of the scientific verifications of the truths recorded in the Quran were manifested by discoveries made many, many years after the Prophet’s demise. Also, the Holy Quran was revealed over a relatively short period of twenty three years still within the 7th century, historically alluded to as the ‘Dark Ages’ of humankind.

The Holy Quran, it is a well-known fact, is preserved in its original language exactly as it was revealed over the twenty three years to the Holy Prophet 1400 years ago. Not only was it written down but also memorized by people during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). One of the copies of the Quran which was compiled in book form a few years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is preserved to this day in a museum in Uzbekistan.

This copy is over 1400 years old and is exactly the same as the Arabic Quran that we have today – to the letter – and memorized by hundreds of thousand ‘hufaz’, (those who have committed the entire Quran to memory) spread all over the world. This phenomenon is unique to Islam as no other religion establishes this claim of authenticity of their scriptures.

Many fairly recent discoveries made by scientists, philosophers and others verify similar facts stated in the Holy Quran 1400 years ago, which proves the Divine origin of the Holy Book. Below are but some scientific facts and prophecies found in the Holy Quran which, as

we will see, go far beyond the knowledge of someone who lived in 7th century Arabia.

Splitting of the Atom

The following is recorded in the Holy Quran:

...And not the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heaven is hidden from thy Lord, nor anything less than that nor greater; but is (all) in a clear book (10:61)

In 460 B.C., a Greek philosopher, Democritus, developed the idea of atoms but nothing came of it. The Democritean atom was said to be motionless which we know from current advanced research in quantum physics is not the case. It was only in the 1800’s that an English chemist, John Dalton, performed experiments with various chemicals that showed that matter, indeed, seem to consist of elementary lumpy particles (atoms). Although he did not know about their structure, he knew that the evidence pointed to something fundamental. It was only in 1917 that a physics and chemistry scientist, Lord Rutherford of New Zealand is said to have successfully performed an experiment ‘splitting the atom’. It is said of him:

“He is widely credited with first “splitting the atom” in 1917 in a nuclear reaction between nitrogen and alpha particles, in which he also discovered (and named) the proton”¹

This no doubt confirms what the Holy Quran said 1400 years ago of the atom - “nor anything less than that”, meaning there are particles smaller than the atom such as the sub-atomic proton discovered by Rutherford in 1917.

Water – the origin of Life

Science now confirms that water is vital for all forms of life. It corroborates what the Quran said 1400 years ago:

We made from water everything living. Will they not believe? (21:30)

It is common knowledge that all living things are made up of cells. Science now confirms that all cells are mostly made up of water. For example, 80% of the cytoplasm (basic cell material) of a standard animal cell is described as water in biology textbooks. The fact that living things consist mostly of water was discovered only after the invention of the microscope, around the 14th and 15th century AD. In today’s extra-terrestrial search for life, scientists are looking for any sign of water on other planets or its satellites as it would serve, they say, as a definite indication of life. In the deserts of 7th century Arabia, the last thing someone would have guessed is that all life came from water.

Iron

The Holy Quran states:

We sent down iron wherein is great violence and advantages to men ... (57:25)

Scientific studies show that iron is not natural to the earth. It did not form on the earth but came down to earth from outer space. Scientists have found that billions of years ago the earth was struck by meteorites. These meteorites were carrying iron from distant stars which had exploded. The following is a quote from the Online Encyclopedia, Wikipedia;

*“Most of the **native iron** on earth is actually **not in fact “native”**, in the traditional sense, to earth. It mainly comes **from iron-nickel meteorites** that formed millions of years ago but were preserved from chemical attack by the vacuum of space, **and fell to the earth a relatively short time ago...**”²*

These are discoveries made by recent research, the knowledge of which did not exist during the time of the prophet in the 7th century.

Sky’s Protection

And We made the heaven a guarded canopy; yet they turn away from its signs! (21:32)

The Quran points to the sky’s protection as ‘a sign’ of God. The protective properties of the sky were discovered by scientific research conducted in the 20th century. Scientists refer to a vital part of it that is invisible to the naked eye, as the ozone layer. The ozone layer refers to a region of the Earth’s stratosphere that absorbs most of the Sun’s harmful **UV radiation**. The ozone layer was discovered in 1913 by the French physicists Charles Fabry and Henri Buisson.³

The atmosphere (of which the ozone layer is a part) in the heaven or sky plays a crucial role in protecting the earth. The sky protects the earth from the lethal rays of the sun. If the sky did not exist then the sun’s radiation would have killed off all life on earth. It also acts like a blanket wrapped around the earth, to protect it from the freezing cold of space. The temperature just above the sky is approximately minus 270 degrees Celsius. If this temperature was to reach earth then the planet would freeze over instantly. The sky also protects life on earth by warming the surface through heat retention (greenhouse effect), and reducing temperature extremes between day and night. These are some of the many protective functions we find in the atmosphere. The obvious question is: if this knowledge only came to western scientists in the 20th century, who revealed it to the Prophet Muhammad in the 7th century?

Mountains have roots like pegs

The Quran draws our attention to a very important characteristic of mountains:

*Have We not made the earth an expanse
And the mountains as pegs? (78:6-7)*

The Quran indicates that mountains have deep roots by using the word pegs or stakes to describe them. In fact mountains do have deep roots, and the word pegs or stakes is an accurate description for them. A book titled ‘Earth’ by Geophysicist Frank Press explains that mountains are like stakes, and are buried deep under the surface of the earth. Mount Everest, the height of which is approximately 9 km above ground, has a root deeper than 125 km. Again, the fact that mountains have deep roots was not known, until after the development of the theory of plate tectonics in the beginning of the 20th century.

Expansion of the Universe

At a time when the sciences of Cosmology and Astronomy were still in its very primitive stages, the Holy Quran mentions the expansion of the universe:

And it is We Who have built the universe with Our creative power; and verily, it is We Who are steadily expanding it. (51:47)⁴

The fact that the universe is expanding was discovered in the last century. The physicist Stephen Hawking in his book ‘A Brief History of Time’ writes, “The discovery that the universe is expanding was one of *the great intellectual revolutions of the 20th century*”. What Hawking might not have known was that the Quran mentioned the expansion of the universe even before the invention of the telescope! So what does it tell us about the Holy Prophet who revealed this truth 1400 years ago? How can we doubt the Holy Quran as being pure words from Allah alone without any human intervention?

The Sun’s orbit

The Quran mentions the orbit of the Sun:

And He it is Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon. All float in orbits (21:33)

In 1512 the astronomer Nicholas Copernicus put forward his theory that the Sun is motionless at the center of the solar system, and that the planets revolve around it. The belief that the Sun is stationary was widespread amongst astronomers until the 20th century. Even Newton’s law of gravity in the 17th century, assumed the motion of planets but not that of the sun. It has only very recently become a well-established scientific fact that the Sun is not stationary, but is moving in an orbit

around the center of our Milky Way galaxy. The following statement is taken from a NASA(National Aeronautics and Space Administration, USA) website:

“the Sun - in fact, our whole solar system - orbits around the center of the Milky Way Galaxy. We are moving at an average velocity of 828,000 km/hr. But even at that high rate, it still takes us about 230 million years to make one complete orbit around the Milky Way!”

Again, we ask the question – how did the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) come to know of this in the 7th century?

Waves and darkness beneath the ocean

The Quran uses imagery to convey its deep meanings; here it describes the state of the unbelievers as:

“... like darkness in the deep sea – there covers him a wave, above which is a wave above which is a cloud – (layers of) darkness, one upon the other. When he holds out his hand, he is almost unable to see it...” (24:40)

It was commonly thought that waves only occur on the surface of the ocean. However oceanographers have discovered that there are internal waves that take place below the surface of the ocean. These waves are invisible to the human eye, and can only be detected by specialist equipment. The Quran mentions darkness in a deep ocean above which are waves, above which are waves, then clouds above that. This description is not only remarkable because it describes the internal waves in the ocean, but also because it describes darkness deep down in the ocean. A human being can dive no more than 70 meters without breathing equipment. Light is present at that depth, but if we go down 1000 meters it is completely dark. 1400 years ago there were no submarines or specialist equipment to discover internal waves or the darkness deep inside the oceans.

The function of the brain with regard to lying and movement

There was a cruel oppressive tribal leader named Abu Jahl who lived during the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). God revealed a verse of the Quran to warn him:

“No Indeed! If he does not stop, We will seize him by the forelock⁵, his lying, sinful forelock (also forehead).” (96:15-16)

God does not call this person a liar, but calls his forelock (which also signifies his ‘forehead’ and sometimes translated as such) as ‘lying’ and ‘sinful’ in a metaphorical sense. The area of the forelocks or forehead is known as the frontal lobe area of the brain (the front part of the brain).

This verse is significant for two reasons. The first is that the front part of our brain is responsible for voluntary movement. A book entitled *Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology* which includes the results of research on the functions of the frontal lobe area of the brain states: *The motivation and the foresight to plan and initiate movements occur in the anterior portion of the frontal lobes, the prefrontal area.* This part of the brain is said to have seized if through some malfunctioning, movement is retarded.

Secondly, numerous studies have shown that this same region (frontal lobe) is responsible for the ‘lying’ function of the brain. One such study at the University of Pennsylvania in which volunteers were asked questions during a computerized interrogation, it was found that when the volunteers were lying there was significantly increased activity in the prefrontal and pre-motor cortices (frontal lobe region).

The front part of the brain is therefore responsible for movement and lying. The Quran links movement and lying to this area. These functions of the frontal lobe were discovered with medical imaging equipment which was developed in the 20th century, knowledge that could not have been available to the Holy Prophet in the 7th century.

Human embryonic development

We create man from an extract of clay,

Then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting place.

Then We make the life-germ into a clot (an alaqah – a leech like thing), then We make the clot a lump of flesh, then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators! (23:12-14)

Literally, the Arabic word *alaqah* has three meanings: (1) leech, (2) suspended thing, and (3) blood clot. In comparing a leech to an embryo in the *alaqah* stage, we find similarity between the two. Also, the embryo at this stage obtains nourishment from the blood of the mother, similar to the leech, which feeds on the blood of others. Below is a summary of scientific opinions concerning what happens in the womb, from embryo to fetus:

The first stage:

“...Meanwhile the uterus is forming a spongy lining within which the embryo will implant. To achieve this, the embryo burrows into the wall of the womb and is covered over by the lining of the womb. This begins 6 days after fertilisation and is completed within the next 7 days.”

Compare the Holy Quran: “*Then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting place. Then We make the life-germ into a clot (an alaqah – a leech like thing).*”

The second stage:

“By 30 days, just two weeks past mother’s first missed period, the baby - one quarter of an inch long - has a brain of unmistakable human proportions, eyes, ears, mouth, kidneys, liver, an umbilical cord and a heart pumping blood he has made himself.”

Compare the Holy Quran: “*...then We make the clot a lump of flesh*”

The third stage:

“By 45 days, about the time of the mother’s second missed period, **the baby’s skeleton is complete in cartilage, not bone...** Around eight weeks the baby’s **cartilage skeleton begins to turn into bone.** The body is essentially complete. By the end of the twelfth week the baby measures almost 90mm and weighs 45g. The baby’s face, at first broad, now becomes narrower; the eyes are closed for protection from about 10 weeks until the sixth month. Boyhood or girlhood is now obvious.

Compare the Holy Quran: “*then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation.*”

The science of embryology - a fairly recent science - improved during the 19th century with advanced microscopy. Biologists could see that embryos took shape in a series of progressive steps.⁶

The obvious question is just how did the Holy Prophet, who was illiterate, did not read nor write nor study under some great professor, know all this in such detail in the 7th century? All of this point to the Divine origin of the Holy Quran.

Prophecies in the Holy Quran fulfilled in our Age.

The Rise and spread of European Colonialism⁷ and Imperialism⁸ throughout the world

“*Even when Gog and Magog are let loose and they sally forth from every elevated place.*”(21:96)

Gog and Magog are the names of those European nations made up on the one hand of the *British (English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh), French, Germans, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Swedes, Norwegians, Austrians, etc.*, historically referred to as the Teutonic races and as “Gog” in religious scripture.

The nations made up of the *Russians, Ukrainians, Yugoslavians, etc.*, are historically referred to as the

Slavonic races and as “Magog” in religious scripture.

The Holy Quran refers to a time when these nations will dominate the world “*Sally forth from every elevated place*”. This no doubt refers to the age of Colonialism and Imperialism by Europe which started in the 15th century, approximately 800 years after this verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The following are extracts from Wikipedia:

Gog:

“*European colonialism, or imperialism, began in the 15th century with the “Age of Discovery”, led by Portuguese and Spanish exploration of the Americas, and the coasts of Africa, the Middle East, India, and East Asia. During the 16th and 17th centuries, England, France and the Dutch Republic established their own overseas empires*”⁹

Magog:

“*The Russian Empire was a state that existed from 1721 until overthrown by a liberal February Revolution in 1917. One of the largest empires in world history, stretching over three continents, the Russian Empire was surpassed in landmass only by the British and Mongol empires. It played a major role in 1812-14 in defeating Napoleon’s ambitions to control Europe, and expanded to the west and south...*”¹⁰

The domination referred to by these nations are more pronounced today with world powers such as America, Europe including Russia languishing material and military power on such a large scale that it aptly fits the description given in the Holy Quran “*from every elevated place*”

What is starkly noticeable even to the casual observer is that their dominance is on the worldly plane only where it is beset by materialism and devoid of any spirituality. This tendency harbours their potential ultimate ruin, as they set about to destroy each other in the mad race for wealth and power. The first and second world wars and the ongoing ‘war talk’ are examples of this.

Other prophecies, which speak for itself, are as follows:

“*And when the camels are abandoned*”(81:4)

It was only by the 18th – 19th century that the introduction of automobiles and trains systematically replaced camels as modes of transport.

“*And when the wild animals are gathered together*” (81:5)

Zoos, parks, controlled nature reserves are features of modern society non-existent in the 7th century.

“And when the cities are made to swell” (81:6)

The Industrial Revolution (18th/19th Century), led to mass migration of people to the major cities of the world in search of job opportunities. This is a continuing trend today. The United Nations projected that half of the world’s population would live in urban areas at the end of 2008¹¹.

“And when men are united” (81:7)

It was only by the 20th and 21st century when advanced modes of air-travelling and advanced technology such as the internet, email, radio and television etc., united the entire world as in no other age. Organizations such as the United Nations, European Union, African Union, sports federations and various business cartels etc. are features of modern civilization undreamed of in 7th century Arabia.

“And when the books are spread”(81:10)

It was only by the year 1500 CE approximately 800 years after the revelation of this prophecy, that books were spread on a large scale in Western Europe with the introduction of the printing press a few years before. It is in the 21st century, however, that the spread of books with the aid of advanced transportation and technology such as electronic media that, has accelerated at mind-boggling speed. This indeed is the age referred to in the Holy Quran.

Conclusion

These are just some of the many scientific facts and prophecies found in the Holy Quran – the tip of the iceberg – so to say. The question is how was it possible for the Holy Prophet to have known these things in the 7th century when this knowledge was unknown to the existing world at the time and only became manifest hundreds of years later.

It is important, however, to note that the Quran is not a book of science per se, but to claim that scientific facts and prophecies in the Quran confirmed by subsequent discoveries are due to coincidence would be irrational. The best explanation is that Almighty Allah revealed this knowledge to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Just like the Quran contains knowledge about the natural world; it also contains information about the inner dimensions of our souls that relates to our emotions, wants and needs. The Quran informs us that we have a purpose in life, and that Allah’s guidance will lead us to success. So with ample proofs of the truth of the Quran, will we still doubt the guidance contained therein?

I, Allah, am the best Knower.

This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who keep their duty,

Who believe in the Unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them,

And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee, and of the Hereafter they are sure.

These are on a right course from their Lord and these it is that are successful. (2:1-5) ■

Footnotes:

1. Wikipedia, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Rutherford
2. Wikipedia, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_metal (See: *Iron, nickel and cobalt*)
3. Wikipedia, at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ozone_layer
4. M.Asad translation
5. A lock of hair growing just above **the forehead**.
6. Wikipedia, at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embryology> (History of embryology)
7. Full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.
8. Extending a country’s power and influence through colonization, use of military force, or other means.
9. Wikipedia, at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_colonialism
10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Empire
11. International Herald Tribune. Associated Press. February 26, 2008.

Lessons on the Quran

Surah Al-An’am, Section 2

By Lubna Ahmad

[Lahore Ahmadiyya Members in various locations gather each week for a Quran study group via skype. The study group commenced with lessons from Sura Fatimah and continued with a subsequent section of the Quran every week. Members take turns presenting on a particular section, and discussion from all participants follow. This article is based on a lesson presented to the study group by Mrs. Lubna Ahmad. It deals with Section 2 of Sura A-An’am.]

Chapter 6, titled, *Al-An’am*, The Cattle, was revealed in one entire portion to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, at Makkah. The very name of the chapter refers to the need to discard the practices of worship of animals, idols and other false gods, in order to establish the purity of the doctrine of Divine Unity. For a Muslim, the very basis of the formula of faith, *La-ilaha-il-Allah*, entails both acknowl-

edgement of Allah, as the One Supreme God, and practically demonstrating submission to Him alone. It requires giving up of allegiance to illogical religious practices, blind following of doctors of law, and misleading spiritual leaders, and undue attachment to the pursuit of *nafs-e-ammara* (12:53), or the basic human desires of possessions, pro-creation and power.

Ch. 6, Section One, begins with the statement, “Praise is due to Allah!” Allah, being the Proper name of the One Supreme God Who exists necessarily by Himself, and is Possessor of all attributes of perfection. Praising or *hamd* of Allah signifies that He is free of faults and is the Most High in His person, attributes and works. Being impressed by His attributes requires action on our part. We try to follow His guidance and exert to develop attributes of nurturing, giving kindness, justice, forgiveness within ourselves.

Our attention is drawn from Allah’s creation of the heavens and the earth to the creation of man from the very basic elements from earth. His laws of creating and causing death are universal and there is no incongruity in it (67:3, 4). Man’s creation from clay by Allah reminds him of his dependency on the building blocks of nature, for his physical upkeep. However, unlike other animals, Allah created man for a higher purpose, to pursue his heavenly existence by following the spiritual guidance provided to him through divine revelation. History bears testimony to the downfall of the individuals and nations who did not benefit from the spiritual guidance brought to them by the prophets of God. The Quran foretold them that they would perish and Allah would bring others in place of them. The section ends with assurance and promise to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Allah gives him hope that despite the opposition and ridicule from his opponents, truth will prevail through the Quranic message of peace. The truth of the prophecy in the Quranic verse, “Mankind is a single nation” (2:213) will ultimately be established through acceptance of the Unity of God.

Section two of Chapter 6, further continues with emphasis on the Unity of God and His attributes of Mercy.

Chapter 6, verse 11

Say: Travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejectors.

Fate of the rejectors of Truth

The Arabic word *qul*, meaning ‘say’, requires both belief and action. Islam teaches its followers that faith is a two-step commitment. Faith in a set of principles requires proper action on the part of the believer. Mere lip profession is not enough. It requires having conviction, and conveying it to others, through gentle words

and moral deeds. Thus, the simple, yet forceful word, ‘say’, generates the spirit of moral growth and facilitates other seekers of truth to accept and follow the path of righteousness.

Verse 11 commands to undertake a journey through different parts of the world, either physically, or through the study of books of history and the historical events narrated in the Holy Quran. It will bring to light the aftermath of the oppressors and power hungry individuals and nations, when they met their accountability in this world. Traveling to Egypt and visiting the colossal pyramids leaves one in more admiration of the Eternal Power of the One Supreme God. The display of the mummy of Ramses the II, who belonged to the time period of the Mosaic dispensation, and riches of King Tut are enough to highlight the inevitable human mortality and the insignificance of material and political fame. The luxurious palaces and thrones embedded with rubies and emeralds are just an eye opener to the greed and lust of the once thriving Turkish Empires. Such historical evidence and more makes the message clearer in other verses of the Holy Quran.¹

Chapter 6, verse 12

Say: To whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth? Say: To Allah. He has ordained mercy on Himself. He will certainly gather you on the Resurrection day — there is no doubt about it. Those who have lost their souls will not believe.

Allah, is Al-Rahman, the Beneficent and Al-Rahim, the Merciful

Allah, as mentioned earlier, is the proper name of the One Supreme God, Who has all the attributes of perfection, and is capable of dispensing those attributes to His creation. There are four main attributes of Allah, that are mentioned in the Holy Quran. The first is *Rabb*, meaning Lord or Nourisher from the lowest state to the highest state of perfection. He is the Nurturer, Sustainer, Regulator, Completer of all His creation. The other three attributes, are *Al-Rahman* (the Beneficent), *Al-Rahim* (the Merciful) and *Malik-i-yaum-i- deen* (Master of the Day of Judgment).

Verse 12 begins with the command, “say” and re-confirms the truth about the Creator. Our attention is drawn to everything in the heavens and the earth belonging to Allah, their Creator. He is the One Who is in total control of what goes on in the whole universe. No one else has the power to change the laws of nature. There are approximately 34 verses in the Holy Quran that emphasize Allah being the “Possessor of Power over all things.”² Everything in the universe glorifies Allah, by following His Universal Laws.³

Verse 12 informs us that although Allah is Possessor of Power over all things, He has made binding the attribute of ‘Mercy’ on Himself. The Arabic word used in this verse for mercy is *rahma*, which is a root word for both *Rahman* and *Rahim*. Allah is *Al-Rahman*, or the Beneficent God, Whose love and mercy are manifested in this world. Allah created, without man’s asking, all that is required for his means of subsistence, both physical and spiritual. Allah is *Al-Rahim*, or the Merciful God, Whose love and mercy are manifested in the state that comes after. Both the words *Al-Rahman* and *Al-Rahim* are mentioned over 560 times, as opposed to Allah’s attribute of Retribution mentioned only 4 times. His Mercy predominates, and by being Master and not Judge, Allah has more control over His creation. In 7:156, Allah, states, “My mercy encompasses all things.”

Three types of Resurrection

The Holy Quran mentions three types of resurrection. The minor resurrection, or *sughra*, coincides with the death of an individual. The middle resurrection, or *wusta*, is the passing away of one generation. The greater resurrection, or *kubra*, stands for the rising of the people for reckoning. On the Day of Judgment, *yaum-il-qiyamah*, Allah will bring back to life the dead and hold them accountable for their good and bad deeds in this worldly existence. It will be up to Him as to how He showers His Mercy on those who deviated from the right path. It is only men of understanding of the teachings of the Holy Quran who are fully aware of this message. They believe in Allah and recognize Him through His works. They have no doubt about it and they acknowledge Him to be rightfully entitled to complete allegiance. By not having any connection with the One Supreme God, Who is the Source of all goodness, disbelievers are at a loss. Their souls fail to grow. For them it is hard to understand the reality of the day when they will be gathered for accountability. Yet there is hope and mercy for the rejectors of truth.⁴

Chapter 6, verse 13

*And to Him belongs whatever dwells in the night and the day. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.*⁵

Allah has complete knowledge of what is hidden in the hearts, or night, and what is manifested openly, or in daylight. Those who benefit from the bright sunlight of the Quranic teachings are considered to be in daylight. Those who reject the spiritual guidance are veiled in darkness. Allah, is fully Aware of both the weaknesses and strengths of humans. He is All Hearing and All Knowing, and out of His Divine Mercy He listens to both.

Chapter 6, verse 14

Say: Shall I take for a friend other than Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, and He feeds and is not fed? Say: I am commanded to be the first of those who submit. And be thou not of the polytheists.

Holy Prophet Muhammad’s submission to Allah

In Verse 14, the Holy Prophet is asked to let others know as to why he prefers friendship with Allah over friendship with others. The reason is very simple. Allah is not only the Creator, but also the Sustainer. He does not need food like humans, but He is the One Who provides food to others out of His Mercy. He also provides spiritual food through divine revelation.⁶ Allah’s mercy is boundless, and therefore the Prophet listens to the command of His Creator, and is the first one to submit. He asks others to give up associating partners with Allah, as He is the One God (*ilaha*) and only worthy of being worshipped. Polytheism of all sorts is rejected here.

Chapter 6, verse 15

Say: Surely I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the chastisement of a grievous day.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad was a perfect role model for his followers. Such a humble and righteous servant of Allah fears of becoming distant from the Love of the Creator. Incredibly, even he is fearful of the accountability of his actions on the Day of Judgment.

Chapter 6, verse 16

He from whom it is averted on that day, Allah indeed has had mercy on him. And this is a manifest achievement.

Verse 16 states the fact that if Allah turns away punishment of a person, it becomes very clear that He has indeed showered His blessings of Mercy on that person. This would mean that the person accepts the divine guidance given to him and changes his ways to prevent punishment on the Day of Judgment. The punishment is remedial in nature to cleanse the soul and help in its development.

Chapter 6, verse 17

And if Allah touch thee with affliction, there is none to remove it but He. And if He touch thee with good, He is Possessor of power over all things.

In verse 17, the Arabic word *kashif* means to remove cloth from the face. In this case it would mean the removal of *zur*, or hardship, from someone. If a person is a victim of sorrow from Allah, then Allah alone can remove it from him and change his condition. No one

else has the authority to be able to do it. If a person is provided with *khair*, or goodness from Allah, then no one has the power to remove it. Indeed Allah is All-Powerful!

Chapter 6, verse18

And He is the Supreme, above His servants. And He is the Wise, the Aware.

This verse states Allah is the Highest, and above all else. Allah has the attributes of complete Wisdom and Complete Knowledge of the known and unknown. He gave instincts to animals and birds to look around for food and find a home which is safe and secure. He created the means of physical sustenance for man, before creating him. Then, He provided man with the physical and mental faculties to help him prepare his ground work for the Life Hereafter. Allah helped man develop his mental capability to enable him to harness nature for his physical survival. Man was also given the seed of goodness at time of birth to perpetuate its growth through the message of the Holy Quran. It is up to each individual to follow the right path and nurture the growth of the seed, or stray away from the right course of action with a stunted soul, distant from the Love of Allah.

Chapter 6, verse19

Say: What thing is the weightiest in testimony? Say: Allah is witness between you and me. And this Quran has been revealed to me that with it I may warn you and whomsoever it reaches. Do you really bear witness that there are other gods with Allah? Say: I bear not witness. Say: He is only One God, and surely I am innocent of that which you set up (with Him).

Allah's testimony about the Truth

Three main things are pointed out in Verse 19. First, Allah's testimony is more powerful than anyone else's. Second, Allah, makes the declaration that He is the *Shahid*, or witness between the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the opponents of Truth. Allah testifies to the truth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad being the sole recipient of Divine Revelation of the Holy Quran. In the verse under discussion, the Holy Prophet has been called a warner. The Holy Quran presents many verses to support this statement. The Holy Prophet has been called both a *nazeer*, or warner for the rejectors of Truth, and *basheer*, or bearer of good news for the acceptors of Truth.⁷

The Arab nation and all other nations from different times and ages received the promise of the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, as the World Prophet, in

their scriptures, including the Torah and the Bible. This good news is also given in the Holy Quran.⁸

Though the message of the Holy Quran is for the whole world, there are two groups mentioned here in verse 19. One group is that which received the teachings of the Holy Quran, but did not act upon it. The other group is that which did not receive the message of the Quran, but acted against the basic norms of human nature. Both groups will be held accountable, not for their disbelief in Allah, but because of their injustice and wrong doing.⁹

Third, the Holy Prophet bears witness to the message of Truth of the Unity of God. He questions the opponents if they really believed in associating partners with Allah? He reaffirms his testimony as a believer in Allah, as the only One God. The Arabic word used here is *ilaha*, or the loved one worthy of worship. Reference here is to Allah, the only One God. He is One and none is like Him. Chapter 112, *Al-Ikhlās* (The Unity), summarizes these unique attributes of Allah.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Mujadid (divinely appointed Reformer of the age) and Promised Messiah, has mentioned in his writings¹⁰ that the word, 'love' is to be used only in the case of Allah. The Holy Quran uses the terms justice (doing good for good), kindness (doing good without any expectations) and instinctive goodness to others (equivalent to service to the kindred) to describe merciful dealings between humans.¹¹ It encourages to "exhort one another to truth" (103:3) and "exhort one another to mercy" (90:17). Man's actions of kindness towards others should be because of his/her love for Allah.¹² The Quran cautions man against excessive love of others and wealth to the extent it challenges the very basis of his faith in Divine Unity. Only Allah, is to be one's *ilaha*, the One worthy to be the pinnacle of love and adoration.¹³ The word, 'love' is only used for man's love of God, or God's Love for His creation. His expression of love is only for the doers of good.¹⁴ Allah's Love for His creation is manifested through His Mercy.

Verse 19 continues with the Holy Prophet denying belief in polytheism, and states that he is not guilty of the position that the opponents of Truth have adopted. In other words, he is not responsible for their belief and actions. His duty is only to convey the message of God. They, as are all human beings, are responsible for their beliefs and action. Several verses of the Holy Quran give assurance to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace of Allah be upon him.¹⁵

Chapter 6, verse20

Those whom We have given the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons. Those who have lost their souls — they will not believe.

Verse 20 describes those people who believe and follow the correct teachings of their scriptures, and acknowledge the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the Promised Prophet. Their recognition of the Messenger of Allah is as strong as their recognition of their own Israelite prophets, referred to as 'sons' in this verse. Such people will be more blessed because of their actions of righteousness. On the other hand, amongst such people are also those who received and rejected the message and their souls are devoid of light because of their own disbelief.

The following Hadith illustrates that accountability is inevitable and the Mercy of Allah is unquestionable:

*Hazrat Huzaifah reported the saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, "A man disappointed in life, advised his sons to burn his body upon his death, to the extent that all flesh was gone and the fire destroyed his bones, then to crush the bones, and wait. His ashes were then to be spread in a lake, on a day when a gust of wind was blowing. His sons followed their Father's wishes. Allah gathered the ashes and asked the man as to why he had done this. The person replied, "Due to Thy Fear". Allah forgave this person."*¹⁶

To summarize section two of Chapter 6, it proclaims the blessings of Divine Mercy on those who follow the right course in life. The example is given of the Jews at the time who had religious knowledge but who had become distant from God by giving up the substance of the teachings and only following ritualistic practices. Muslims are warned of such behavior as it could also make them distant from God. They are reminded of this and asked to form a bond with their Creator by complete submission to Him.

Our devotion should be directed to Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth. We should continue to follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and pray to Allah for His Mercy in this life and the Hereafter.

Our Lord, and make us both submissive to Thee, and (raise) from our offspring, a nation submissive to Thee, and show us our ways of devotion and turn to us (mercifully); surely Thou art the Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful. (2:128) ■

Footnotes:

1. "And certainly We raised in every nation a messenger, saying: Serve Allah and shun the devil. Then of them was he whom Allah guided, and of them was he whose remaining in error was justly due. So travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejectors." (16:36)

"So We exacted retribution from them, then see what was the end of the rejectors!" (43:25)

2. "His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes death; and He is Possessor of power over all things." (57:2)
3. "Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah. His is the kingdom, and His is the praise; and He is Possessor of power over all things." (64:1)
4. "He specially chooses for His mercy whom He pleases. And Allah is the Lord of mighty grace." (3:74)
"Look then at the signs of Allah's mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death. Surely He is the Quickener of the dead; and He is Possessor of power over all things." (30:50)
5. "In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which profits men, and the water that Allah sends down from the sky, then gives life therewith to the earth after its death and spreads in it all (kinds of) animals, and the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between heaven and earth, there are surely signs for a people who understand." (2:164)
6. "Allah, (there is) no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting, by Whom all subsist." **Ch. 3:2**
7. "Surely We have sent thee with the Truth as a bearer of good news and a warner. And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them." (35:24); "I am only a plain warner." (26:115); "And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind, but most men know not." (34:28), (48:8)
8. "Say: O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him, Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He; He gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the *Ummi* Prophet who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided aright." (7:158)
9. "Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you — He knows what is in the heavens and the earth. And those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allah, these it is that are the losers." (29:52)
10. See, *The Four Questions Answered* by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Mujaddid and Promised Messiah.
11. For instance: "Surely Allah enjoins justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion. He admonishes you that you may be mindful" (16:90); "And We have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents. His mother bears him with trouble and she brings him forth in pain. And the bearing of him and the weaning of him is thirty months. Till, when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years, he says: My Lord, grant me that I may give thanks for Thy favour, which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good which pleases Thee; and be good to me in respect of my offspring. Truly I turn to Thee, and truly I am of those who submit" (46:15).
12. And they give food, out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive. **Ch.76:8**

13. Fair-seeming to men is made the love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and well-bred horses and cattle and tilth. This is the provision of the life of this world. And Allah — with Him is the good goal (of life). (3:14)
14. “Surely Allah loves not the aggressors” (2:190); “And Allah loves not any ungrateful sinner” (2:276); “And as to those who believe and do good deeds, He will pay them fully their rewards. And Allah loves not the unjust” (3:57).
15. “Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you — He knows what is in the heavens and the earth. And those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allah, these it is that are the losers.” (29:52)
- “Surely We have sent thee with the Truth as a bearer of good news and as a warner, and thou wilt not be called upon to answer for the companions of the flaming Fire.” (2:119)
16. *Faz lul Bari*, Commentary of *Sahih Bukhari* in Urdu, by Maulana Muhammad Ali, page 1459, hadith # 3452

Treatment of Divorced and Widowed Women

Khutba (Sermon) delivered on April 9th 1915

By Maulana Muhammad Ali
(Translated by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad)

[This article (translated from the original Urdu to English by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad) comprises a Jummah Khutba (Friday Sermon) by Maulana Muhammad Ali from April 9, 1915. The primary subject discussed in this khutba concerns the exemplary treatment Islam requires its followers to afford divorced and widowed women. It is explained that family relations serves the basis for all societies, and when marital relations fail, it is incumbent upon society to ensure the good treatment of divorced women (or widows) and the children in order for it to progress. These khutbas by Maulana Muhammad Ali also serve as an excellent historical account of issues relevant to the Ahmadiyya Movement in its early history. For instance, as an aside, Maulana Muhammad Ali goes on in this khutba to address the “divorce” in the community itself (between the Qadian and Lahore factions) and the need for members to stand on the side of principle. Today, the “principle” of not engaging in takfir (calling Muslims “disbelievers”), which was the root cause for the split in the Movement, has stood the test of time by the Qadian section formally adopting it and retracting its previous position.]

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

And when you divorce women and they end their term, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves in a lawful manner. With this is admonished he among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day. This is more profitable for you and purer. And Allah knows while you know not.

And mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling. And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage. No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child; and a similar duty (devolves) on the (father’s) heir. But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them. And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to Allah and know that Allah is Seer of what you do.

And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner. And Allah is Aware of what you do.

And there is no blame on you respecting that which you speak indirectly in the asking of (such) women in marriage or keep (the proposal) concealed within your minds. Allah knows that you will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret unless you speak in a lawful manner. And confirm not the marriage tie until the prescribed period reaches its end. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him; and know that Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing. (2: 232-235)

Extreme Views Concerning Marriage and Divorce

This is the third section of the Holy Quran which discusses the subject of divorce. There is one more section after this one and there are also further injunctions in another section. There is also a small chapter of the Holy Quran dealing with the subject and to some extent it has been discussed in the chapter “The Women.” Allah the Most High has given special importance to this subject because marital relationship between man and woman is fundamental to the wellbeing of the society. Basic lessons for social intercourse begin at this

point. Social intercourse means the ability to live together with other human beings, and the relationship between a husband and wife is the first step in this direction. In pre-Islamic Arabia, before the advent of the Holy Prophet there was prevalence of extreme behaviors in the matter of divorce. There were those who took the position that the marriage contract was unbreakable while others were ready to divorce upon the slightest provocation.

The Well-being of Society is Dependent upon Good Relations between Husband and Wife

All worldly relations have their foundation based on the relationship between husband and wife, this being the reason why it has been given such importance. The Holy Prophet said: ‘the best of you is he who treats his wife well,’ and this relationship serves as an example for other relations. Those who cannot treat members of their household in a good manner are not capable of treating those outside the family circle equitably. Islam has thus laid down the basic principles from which many lessons can be learned. For example, it is enjoined not to serve anyone besides Allah. With this however obedience to parents is made mandatory, because parents are responsible for nurturing their children to a large extent. As I have mentioned it is essential to serve any person to the extent they provide for us. This is why a man’s treatment of his wife has been set up as the standard for his dealings with outsiders. Besides other moral deficiencies, a very prevalent one amongst Muslim men is being short-tempered in dealing with their spouses. Those who cannot control their temper at home have difficulty in their dealings outside. Domestic relations thus serve as a standard for outside behavior. Many practical moral lessons are learned in one’s dealings with their wives. If you want to manifest goodness in character then be a good example at home. You can serve as a good example for your children also in this manner. Islam aimed at social uplift by enjoining excellence in one’s domestic relationship and this is the key to the success or detriment of a civil society.

Islam considers Temporary Marriage (*halalah*) an Immoral and Abhorrent Custom

It is stated: “*And when you divorce women and they end their term, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves in a lawful manner.*”

Amongst the pre Islamic Arabs, it was considered dishonorable to marry divorced women while other religions have declared it altogether illegal. The Holy Quran rejected this old custom. A person reacting in anger may say something and afterwards regret it and change his opinion. Under such circumstances he should be given the benefit of doubt and if both parties

are agreeable be allowed to remarry. Muslims, however, have come up with the notion of ‘temporary marriage’ which is an accursed and abhorrent custom. The Holy Quran does not enjoin any form of temporary marriage.

Divorce and the Infant child

It is then stated: “*This is more profitable for you and purer. And Allah knows while you know not.*”

Another difficulty is encountered when a divorce is given and there is an infant child. What should be done with him? The Holy Quran tells us: “*And mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling.*” This is for those who want to complete the period of suckling, but the mother should be compensated for her services, as the Quran states: “*And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage.*” “Usage” is according to the means of the father. If he is a rich person, food and clothing should be in accordance with his level of income and if his means are limited he should provide support accordingly. This is to ensure that: “*No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child.*” The mother should not be held back and mistreated on account of her child nor should the father be burdened beyond his means. “*And a similar duty (devolves) on the (father’s) heir;*” in other words, if the father of the child dies then his heir has to fulfill the maintenance commitment. The verses go on to state:

“But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them.”

“And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to Allah and know that Allah is Seer of what you do.”

The Purpose of the waiting period

A waiting period is recommended after divorce and also in case of women who become widowed. In the latter case, it is stated:

“And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner. And Allah is Aware of what you do.”

“And there is no blame on you respecting that which you speak indirectly in the asking of (such) women in marriage or keep (the proposal) concealed within your minds. Allah knows that you

will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret unless you speak in a lawful manner. And confirm not the marriage tie until the prescribed period reaches its end. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him; and know that Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.”

Why is there a waiting period? The reason for this is that if the woman is pregnant, her pregnancy should become manifest. In early stages of pregnancy such a determination cannot be made readily and if the woman gets married at this stage, the paternity of the child would become doubtful. This is the reason why a waiting period of four months and ten days has been recommended. If the pregnancy becomes certain at this stage then the waiting period can be extended till the child is born, otherwise she can marry another person.

A Few Rules for resolving the Differences within the Ahmadiyya Movement

I have briefly mentioned to you issues related to divorced and widowed women and the solution provided by the Holy Quran in these matters so that by firmly standing upon these principles you can benefit in your worldly affairs. I am also drawing your attention to the need for having an understanding and firm grasp of certain basic principles. At this juncture there is matter of great dissension amongst the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement, and seeing all this debate people get so perplexed that they say we do not know who is truthful. I will tell you the principle by which you can gauge the truth. If you say that the length of arguments is the standard by which to judge the truth, you should look at the philosophy of trinity. You will observe that large volumes of books have been written in this matter and many brilliant minds have wasted their time and monetary resources in this quest. Differences will always remain, as the Holy Quran tells us: “*And if thy Lord had pleased, he would have made people a single nation. And they cease not to differ.*” (11:118).

It usually happens that the true beliefs are endangered and errant beliefs initially attain great popularity. Remember a belief cannot be accepted as correct just because the majority of people are accepting it. If this is valid then presently those who believe in trinity are in the majority and many are still accepting this philosophy. Every time a census is carried out in India we find their numbers to have increased substantially. Superiority in numbers therefore does not count for anything. In order to decide between truth and falsehood, the main principle should be understood and accepted, the rest of the differences then will be decided manifestly. I am saying this also because at this time Islam needs your services. If you spend all your ener-

gies in internal strife, your defenses will become weaker against outside attacks. It is essential that you first stand firm on a principle. Do not consume your energies in extremely complicated matters for you will not have any strength left to stand up to other religions. The greatest internal difference we have is the matter of “belief and disbelief” of those who do not belong to the Ahmadiyya Movement. This also settles the issue of prophethood of the Promised Messiah. I will relate to you an incident which is easy to understand and will help you to decide in this matter. Somebody sought Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s opinion as to whether it was appropriate to say the funeral prayer for a person who is not a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement. If he had given the reply that since he was a prophet and one who does not accept a prophet becomes a disbeliever, hence those who do not believe in him are disbelievers and it is not permissible to participate in their funeral, we would not have had any objection to accept this. His reply however has been documented in the publication, “Edicts of Ahmadiyya”. In this he clearly states: “*If the deceased did not call us kafir (disbeliever) and a liar, his funeral prayers may be said. There is nothing wrong with that, for only God knows hidden matters.*”¹ It is a great inequity to put such a clear statement in the realm of the allegorical. What may I ask then is a decisive statement?

A Disclosure which was not even made to the Promised Messiah

Mir Hamid Shah Sahib (a follower of Mirza Mehmood Ahmad) has written a lengthy discourse on this subject in which he states: “*If after reading what has been disclosed in the book Truth about Prophethood², which proves the prophethood of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, who has returned to Allah, someone’s heart still does not accept it, it is indeed shameful.*” Unfortunately this disclosure was not made to the Promised Messiah during his lifetime nor to Mir Hamid Shah Sahib up to now. Moreover he boldly asserts, “father misses, son completes,” in other words, what the Promised Messiah (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) could not do, was accomplished by the son (Mian Mehmood Ahmad). And what is that accomplishment? It is the complete contradiction of the *fatwa* given by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states clearly that it is permissible to say the funeral prayer for the deceased who is not a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement “*If the deceased did not call us kafir (disbeliever) and a liar.*” According to Mian Mehmood Ahmad Sahib, however, it is not permissible to say the funeral prayer for anybody who is not an Ahmadi. The following conversation attributed to him is worth noting. A certain individual asked him what do you command in the case

where the wife of an Ahmadi passes away, and the concern is that non-Ahmadi's won't say her funeral prayer; all members of the household are Ahmadis but the deceased wife has not taken the pledge. He replied: "The one whose faith has not reached completion, what can be the command for her funeral prayer?" (*Al-Fazl* 24th. April 1915).

The Dangerous Precept of Calling Those who are not Ahmadis Disbelievers

Thus, according to Mian Mehmood Ahmad Sahib the faith of this lady has not yet reached completion and, therefore, funeral prayer for her is not permissible. This is his verdict about the funeral prayer. It has not yet been decided if burial rites should be performed in the Islamic tradition. Why not then just dig a hole and bury her, facing the grave in the direction of the Kaabah. Another issue also arises, for a believer cannot inherit from a disbeliever. There is a generally accepted Hadith: "A believer cannot be the inheritor of a disbeliever, nor a disbeliever of a believer." Therefore, if a father is an Ahmadi and the son a non-Ahmadi, the latter cannot inherit from the former. Similarly, a son who is an Ahmadi cannot inherit from a father who is a non-Ahmadi. Those Ahmadi children who have inherited from their non-Ahmadi parents have taken that inheritance against the Sharia. Those who have taken these prohibited funds should then return them and abstain from spending their illegal gains for the benefit of their children. They are disobeying the principles of the Sharia by consuming the property of the disbelievers. Is it not the duty of those who issue such edicts that they should make arrangements for returning all the property of the non-Ahmadis that has been inherited by their Ahmadi children? Is it not an essential component of faith to consume only what is lawful and good?

This is indeed a very dangerous precept. It is said that without following these precepts relationship within the community is affected. I do understand that close ties of kinship are essential for national progress. If however your ties of relationship are strengthened by calling others as disbelievers then the basis of this is laid upon commission of a great wrong. Remember the words of the Holy Quran: "And help one another in righteousness and piety, and help not one another in sin and aggression." (5:2). Lay the foundation of your kinship on the basis of truth, for the foundation laid on falsehood cannot sustain for long.

Do not term what is Decisive as Allegorical

I have given you a brief explanation. If anyone has any proof to the contrary they should present it. If you relegate the clear statements and edicts of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to the realm of allegory, and what has no proof behind it you term as a decisive opinion, then

no tranquility and peace will remain. A Christian can very well say that all the arguments you present fall in the category of allegorical statements and the decisive position is three is one and one is three. This is of course an invalid argument, so for God's sake abstain from such baseless issues. A person should not commit the same mistakes over and over again. Do the idolaters not present numerous arguments in a philosophical manner in support of idol worship? They will say that they do not worship idols and in fact worship the One Supreme God, and the idols are merely visible symbols to enhance this concept. Their argument is not valid because it goes against the established principle of the Person and Attributes of God. Do not abandon principle in this matter also. You cannot come to a decision by relegating your claim to the realm of allegory. By doing so, you are abandoning the very principle which is the foundation for all the rest. I am also telling you that by following an individual who is clearly going down the wrong path, you are intentionally doing something which goes against your intelligence and belief. This is also a form of idol worship and association with Allah that one starts following someone due to fear of malediction by that individual. Fear of such imprecations is cowardice and a form of association with Allah. You should abandon such thoughts, use your minds and intellect, take a stand on principles and not falter in this matter. ■

Footnotes:

1. *Fatawa-e-Ahmadiyya*, vol.i, p.118, Statement made on 18th April 1902 and printed in *Al-Hakm* newspaper on 30th April 1902.
2. Book written by Mian Mehmood Ahmad (son of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

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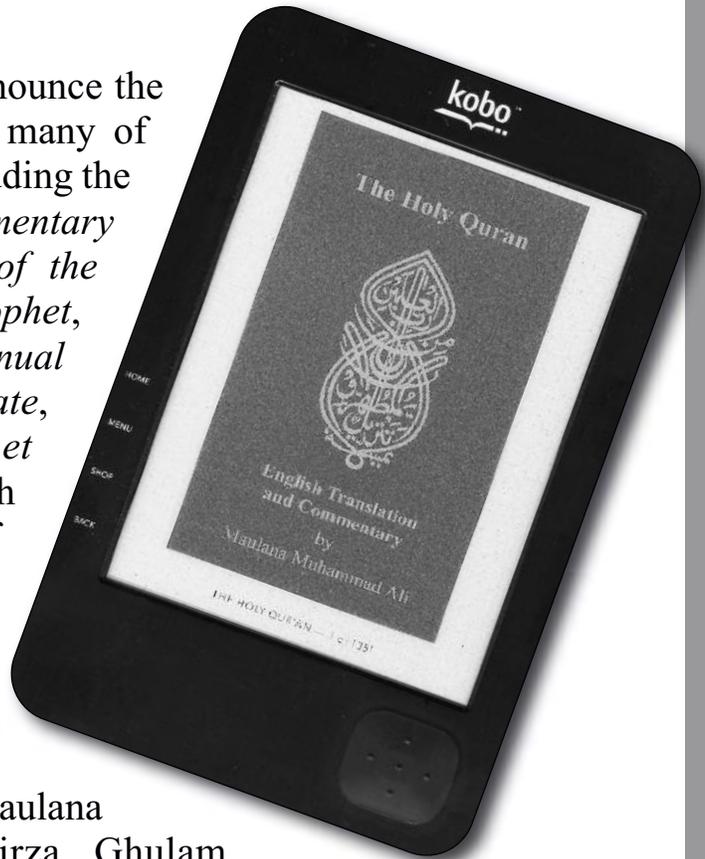
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