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Directions For Youths Needed

"Over 30% of the nation's secondary school pupils have at one time or another experimented with drugs. There is also a marked increase in drug taking among youths in the affluent sectors of the society".

These facts were highlighted by Dr. Edward Moses, psychiatrist attached to the Port-of-Spain Hospital. What is quite strange about this situation is that these facts were revealed in Parliament over six years ago. Reports were submitted by the Task Force which was set up to look into the problems of youth in this country after the Black Power demonstrations in 1970. This is a very, very disturbing situation.

And what is even more disturbing is that the problem is not being viewed with any degree of proportionate concern. This can be seen from government's laissez-faire attitude to these reports.

One is aware that in this materialistic society emphasis is placed only on today. But, let's look a little into the future of our nation and ask ourselves: What will be the mental state of our citizens be like if this trend continues unabated? With already crowded mental institutions, there can only be one answer -CRAZY! Need we ask if similar demonstrations like those of 1970 are needed to get some action?

Dr. Moses suggested many reasons for this critical trend among the youths. The double standards in moral and ethics displayed by elders, the socio-economic position of the country and the orientation of the education system towards "Ordinary level certificates

and academic achievements." He added that unless a system was adopted to take care of the individual abilities of children frustrations and personality mal-functioning would develop. He noted that many youths tended to identify with Rastas and other groups which protest against the establishment.

We are at a stage where we cannot continue to blame conditions or government and carry on with mindless ease destroying individual minds and the mental fabric of our society. A breakdown in the mental fabric will only lead, as evident to some extent today, to a degeneration in the intellectual, moral, social, economical and political climate of our nation.

We need to reverse this disastrous trend and nothing short of a revolution in the life style of the nation would do the trick. The recommendation of the Task Force is that there should be "the launching of a drug addiction programme aimed at the young population particularly in schools" could only be an initial step, never the solution. Similarly, efforts to increase punishment for drug "pushers" and rehabilitation programmes for those addicted only skirts the core of the problem.

The core of the problem lies with the frustration and the attitude of being with the "in-thing" exhibited by the youths and others of the society. All of which stems from a lack of purpose, direction and commitment to life. Where the urge to get up and change our condition should be foremost in our minds, we are contented to be a spoke in the wheel, a nut in the machine. The most important thing being to maintain the status-quo at all cost — for the benefit of a few privileged individuals. Some of the things we need to do are:

place greater emphasis on family life. The basis of the society is the family unit and the basis of the family unit is an understanding of the role and responsibility of each partner for the inculcation of proper values and a sense of direction into our children.

revolutionize our entertainment, habits and condemn all activities and pastimes which create a sense of passivity away from the reality and challenges of life — from the type of music and songs we compose and listen to and the drinking sessions are all too common.

re-organise our social and educational institutions to minimise personality — mal-functioning based on principles of responsibility to the Creator, to your fellow human being and to maintaining a high quality of life.

create (and this most important of all) an awareness of life as a trust and a responsibility in which we would resolve to do no injustice to our own souls and to others, including the generations as yet unborn.

IS
OUR NATION
GOING
CRAZY?

THE MIDDLE EAST **BEGIN: PROVING ZIONIST HISTORY**

'We returned to Eretz Yisrael. We did not dispossess anyone of his land. We returned to our land by right and we had to build it. That is true. We had to make its barrenness fertile, as it is written. By right we returned to it and built it and we have fought for it. This is the real history of Zionism'. The holy intransigence of Begin was obvious as he addressed the Knesset on 23rd January. From such words one would hardly imagine that peace negotiations with Egypt were about to resume, peace negotiations moreover in which Israel is expected to make major concessions to the Arabs.

Far from wishing to yield anything, Israel has gone ahead with strengthening its hold on the territories occupied since June 1967. It has shown scant regard for the blunt protests of President Carter over the issue of new settlements. The latest statement by Gen Moshe Dayan, Israeli Foreign Minister that Israeli governments will continue to build settlements on the occupied West Bank must emphasize not only to President Carter and American Middle East peace negotiators but also to President Sadat, King Hussain and others the defiance and even contempt with which the Israeli government look at attempts to make them change their policy.

The Dayan statement came in the wake of the announcement that three military outposts which are to be turned into civilian settlements have recently been set up on the occupied West Bank. The outposts were approved by the Begin government and bring the number of Israeli settlements on the West Bank to 39. The settlements designed not merely to increase Israel's bargaining position but to give substance to Begin's claim that Israel has a right of sovereignty over the West Bank, a claim which was almost casually thrown into Clause 24 of Begin's plans for peace which said: 'Israel stands by its right and its claim of sovereignty to Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district...' Israel, far from making any concessions then has taken the opportunity of the peace negotiations to enlarge its claims considerably.

In the light of these facts, Israel's approach to peace can be seen as fundamentally different from that of Egypt. 'Israel's peace proposals (according to Noah Lucas, *The Times*, 1 February 1978) are closely patterned on the status quo because to the present leaders of Israel the status quo resembles their idea of peace. If this peace can be amplified by Arab recognition and reciprocal relations, peacefully attained, then so much

the better. Mr Begin sees peace as being the existing state of affairs plus some new fringe benefits, rather than as a radical departure from the status quo of the past decade'.

This approach would most likely lead to protracted peace negotiations. Such a process of attrition could be readily seen as being more advantageous to the Israelis than the Egyptians. The rationale is that the Israeli government 'hopes and expects that in the next few years the tide of swelling Arab influence and power will turn as the West rearranges its energy procurement. Mr Begin therefore does not want to assist large changes,

but rather to hold on until pressures will ease with the turning of the adverse tide in world politics. The status quo is an approximate outline of peace as he understands it and he fully expects that others will also come to see it in this way in the fullness of time. This may help to explain why Israel attaches so much premature emphasis to the concrete elements of peaceful relations — such as diplomatic exchange, trade, travel and so forth, while showing less sensitivity to the political foundations of peace which must still be laid'.

As it is, the Israeli position offers no inducements to Sadat or

any other Arab leader to make peace. In all the recent outpourings on peace there have been virtually no encouraging remarks coming from the present Israeli government. There was though a curious statement by Begin (in an interview on radio Luxembourg) in which he spoke of the 'moral value' of the problem of autonomy for the Palestinians 'residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district'. In the context of what has gone on so far, the mere reference to morality may seem astonishing. In any case before it can be translated into any form of concrete action Begin would be found looking all too closely at all the fine print. □

Sadat keeps the door open

Now that the Egyptian-Israeli military talks have resumed in Cairo, the political talks are expected to get underway again soon. Efforts are being made however, especially on the Israeli side, to dampen expectations of quick results. Negotiations are expected to be tough and protracted extending over several months — even years according to one time-scale. But the longer they continue, the more uncomfortable would be Sadat's position in particular. He has to show some quick, positive results to justify his unilateral initiative.

Since Israel has been particularly niggardly in its approach so far, Egypt has to rely increasingly on the good offices and power of the United States to make Israel adopt a more accommodating stand. The Egyptians' biggest weapon is on the diplomatic front where they are showing themselves to be very energetic. Egyptian delegations have been to other Arab and African countries to explain their position. The visit of Sadat accompanied by his foreign minister, Muhammad Kamil, to Washington and his tour of west and east European capitals — London, Paris, Bonn, Vienna and Bucharest — are designed to impress upon some of Israel's traditional and powerful friends that they need to persuade Israel to make some meaningful concessions towards peace in the area.

Up to now, and in spite of

the professed disappointment with the Israeli response and his bitterness at their aggressive approach to 'peace', Sadat has managed to keep the door open. He managed to make what was on balance a very conciliatory speech to the Egyptian National Assembly where his central message was that the peace initiative will continue and that the October war was the last.

So far Sadat has failed to get unequivocal support from the Americans. At this juncture a source of additional strength for Sadat must be the backing he is now receiving from the Saudis. President Carter on his visit to Riyadh was reported to have pressed the Saudis to extend all possible support for the Sadat initiative and was told that 'the greatest support possible for the Sadat initiative would be to convince Israel to make this initiative successful by conceding the demands made by Sadat in the Knesset'. The US president is being called upon to make an unambiguous stand.

In addition to securing American support, Saudi Arabia is trying to persuade other Arab countries to at least stop their condemnation of Sadat's initiative and so help to rebuild some measure of Arab solidarity. Saudi Arabia's role is thus crucial especially in relation to the activities of the 'steadfast-front of Algeria, Libya, Syria, South Yemen and the PLO. To win their approval, Egypt

would have to pull off a rare, even miraculous, diplomatic triumph. For despite the talk of pressure being brought on Israel, there are indications that it is the Egyptians who would have to yield on some of their positions.

In some respects, Egypt has as good as accepted aspects of the Israeli interpretation of UN resolution 242. Hitherto the Arabs had insisted on Israeli withdrawal from all of the territories occupied since 5th June 1967. Now something less than total withdrawal might be deemed acceptable. On the issue of settlements, for example, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan has optimistically stated, 'We'll find a solution to these problems without removing the settlements'. The implication is that some formula could be devised that would be acceptable to both sides (including the stationing of UN observer forces etc.) without significantly affecting the situation on the ground. On other fronts, Jerusalem in particular would undoubtedly prove to be the most thorny problem and some formula might even be found to skirt it. On the question of Palestinian rights, Egypt may be prepared to accept a Saudi position which 'does not oppose a settlement returning the West Bank and Gaza to

*Courtesy: Impact International
(London)*

Arab sovereignty even if that was under Jordanian administration, provided such a settlement did not deprive the Palestinians of their right to self-determination and the eventual formation of an independent state. This would have to be couched in a formula acceptable to the Israelis.

The ability of Sadat to yield on Arab demands so far accepted as conditions for a peace is predicated on some concessions from Israel. But if, as less sanguine observers feel, the Israelis remain intransigent, the question being asked is whether Sadat is in a position 'to take a new stand'

— as urged by the Egyptian daily *Al Ahram*? 'Taking a new stand' is largely interpreted as adopting the war option. Egyptian vice-president, Husni Mubarak in Kuwait last week spoke of war as a distinct possibility if negotiations do not move beyond their present stalemate position. Sadat's appeal for American fighter bombers — whatever its intended effect on the course of diplomacy — does indicate a desire to maintain some effective military capability. In the wake of the cessation of Soviet military supplies, it could as well betray a position of vulnerability. □

INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

to elevate His religion and bestow honour on His *ummah*. There is no benefit for the Muslims in following any other path. Legally it is clear that Palestine in its entirety is Islamic land which has been occupied; *Jihad* is obligatory as *fard ayn* on all Muslims to secure its full restoration, whether it was occupied in 1967 or before that'.

The statement goes on to say that the position of the Arab rejectionist front is not a real alternative to the Egyptian peace in-

itiative because it is only a superficial rejection which would end up in a progressive dilution of the struggle in as much as the rejectionists are all agreed on attending the Geneva peace conference.

The real alternative, in the Ikhwan's view, lies in improving the climate of ideological and political freedom in the Muslim world and a commitment to Islam as a faith, as a basis for behaviour and as a system of law. . . □

Voices on the Muslim front

If they had not at the outset taken the 'rejectionist' stand, individuals and bodies recognised as 'Islamic' have until recently adopted a low key response to the Sadat initiative. Even if some might have felt that a negotiated settlement with Israel might have its advantages, few have felt strong enough to take up the responsibility of declaring so in public. Prudence at least dictated a policy of silence. There may have been other reasons (including in Egypt the need to avoid suppression) for maintaining a low profile at the beginning. Now however the time is obviously considered more appropriate to state positions more openly.

In this context, two statements are of interest. The first is from the Mu'tamar al-Islami which had its headquarters in Jerusalem and now operates from Amman. Because of its relatively minor political significance it could make its statement not long after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. The statement emphasized that the problem of Palestine can only be solved in an Islamic context and that Jerusalem can only be liberated by 'the pure hands of the believers'. Victory against the enemy can only be achieved fighting under the banner of Islam; fighting under the banner of spurious and imported ideologies can only bring defeat and destruction. 'Islam alone can return the Palestinian problem to its rightful context — a struggle between truth represented by Islam and Muslims on the one hand and falsehood represented by *kufr* as a whole — Zionism, Crusading forces and atheism. For this to take place, the statement declares, there must be a genuine and sincere return on the part of Muslim to Islam.

More significant is the state-

ment which has been issued by the Ikhwan al-Muslimun (it is not clear by which national group) which has been intimately concerned with the Palestinian problem from its beginnings. In fact the Ikhwan maintains that the Rhodes armistice agreement which brought an end to the first Arab-Israeli war in 1949 literally could only have been achieved over the dead body of Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the movement. He was assassinated on 12th February 1949, twelve days before the Rhodes agreement.

The Ikhwan statement says. 'The Ikhwan al Muslimun believe that the Palestine problem is not a 'problem of the Palestinians alone nor of the Arabs but a problem of the whole Muslim world. The Ikhwan see the necessity of returning the Palestine problem from its narrow regional limits to its broad Islamic scope'.

The statement asserts that the Jews themselves see the problem in the light of their beliefs and train their youth accordingly. Arab regimes in the past have conveniently played upon feelings for the liberation of Palestine merely to justify their despotic rule, oppressing the people and destroying their moral and religious resistance. The present capitulationist moves, the statement says, is the natural result of the long downhill path which the *ummah* has had to tread under tyrannical rulers who obstructed the Islamic *shari'ah* and disavowed the obligation of *jihad*.

The statement calls for the return of true freedom to the *ummah* the training of the masses in Islam and their preparation for the decisive battle at the appropriate time. It goes on: 'If this road is long and difficult it is the path which God the Almighty has chosen for us —

Muslim school proposed for New York

The Federation of Islamic Associations in the United States and Canada proposes to set up a full-time elementary school in the metropolitan area of New York which is estimated to have a population of 60,000 Muslims. It is hoped that the school will be a prototype for other Islamic schools in the US and Canada where Muslims are concentrated. A resolution adopted by the Association stated that 'in order to promote Islam in the proper manner at the level of the advanced contemporary public and private schools systems in the US and Canada, the proposed Islamic educational project shall have to be at the same level, or better, and therefore sufficient funds have to be duly provided and adequate sources of maintenance and upkeep must be found'. One of the reasons given by FIA president, Daud Assad, a Jerusalem-born Muslim, for the urgency of the project was the lack of ethics and morality in teaching in American schools.

Brussels Centre to open in March

The Islamic Centre in Brussels, the capital of Belgium as well as the headquarters of the European Economic Community is to be formally opened next March. The project which cost nearly 7 million dollars has received support from many Muslim countries though the main donation has come from Saudi Arabia. The inauguration ceremony is expected to be attended by several leading personalities from the Muslim world as well as community leaders in Europe.

There are around 20,000 Muslims in Belgium, mainly immigrant workers from Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, West Africa, Turkey and Albania. The Belgian Government recently agreed to give facilities of religious education to Muslim children as well in the schools.

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Reflections On The Oneness Of God

I would like to talk to you about a statement which we repeat several times every day- "*La ilaha illallah*" - "There is no other deity but One God." In order to talk on this subject, our best reference would be the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him). If we look into the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophets that God has sent, we find that the main issue they stressed was '*Tawheed*' i.e., to worship the Almighty God only, and in the Qur'an, we see that the prophets always drew the attention of their people to this:"

"And God alone you should worship. You have no other Lord but He." (23:32).

God Himself reminds people by saying to them:

"And Me alone should you worship. This is indeed the straight path." (36:61).

Every Muslim, in his daily prayers, says:

"You alone we worship and from You alone we seek help." (1:5).

This is indeed a pledge and an affirmation from the individual to his Lord that he is worshipping the Almighty Allah alone, without joining any partner or companion to Him.

You may remember the story of how the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him started his message. He called the attention of his people and gathered them at Mount Safa, near the Ka'ba, and asked them: "If I tell you that there is an army behind this mountain coming to invade you, would you believe me? They said, "Yes. We did not find you lying previously." He said to them: "There is only one God and I am His Messenger." Then he said to them, "If you believe in the Oneness of God you will rule the world." To us it seems simple to say:

"*la ilaha illallah*"

but why did the Prophet have to stress this idea among his people, and why was it necessary to stay in Mecca for thirteen years to teach them the meaning of "*La ilaha illallah*" and how to practise it in their daily lives? This is a matter that deserves looking into.

Our religion, Islam, is called the religion of Oneness, that is, *Tawheed*. Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, once said:

"Faith is some seventy branches, the highest of which is upholding that there is no other deity save One God, and the lowest of which is removing the harmful things from the road."

With all this in mind, what are some reflections of *Tawheed*?

(1) The word or term (*Tawheed*) itself signifies His Oneness; that He is the only One to be worshipped and that His advice and commandments must be followed.

(2) To worship Him alone means to nullify any other false deity whether he be human, such as a King, or a non-living thing such as money, or an acquired possession such as fame or influence.

(3) To worship God means: "To worship God as if you see Him, for though, indeed, you can't see Him, He does see you."

(4) To worship God means to submit one's whole spirit, mind and heart, his or her wishes, deeds, actions, motives, and everything else that has been bestowed on him or her to God alone.

(5) To worship God alone is always to give priority to His commandments over anything else, regardless of one's own interest or any other's interest. In this respect, Allah says:

"O you who believe, don't put forth your decisions and deeds before Allah and His Messenger; and keep your duty to Allah." (49:1)

(6) Even though a Muslim might be responsible to a government, a group, an association, or any other body, it is his duty as a Muslim, who has submitted his whole self to God alone, to point out the right from the wrong according to the standard which is set by the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him said:

"Anyone who sees a wrong, has to change it with the full power of his hands; if he can't, with his tongue (and argument); and if he can't, with his heart, and this is indeed the weakest faith that one could possess."

The best striving in the way of God is to say the truth, even in front of a tyrant and wicked ruler, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"The best struggle (*jihad*) is a truthful statement given to a transgressed ruler."

Let us, therefore, try to reflect the concept of *Tawheed* in our daily lives and believe that we are, indeed, Muslims first, Muslims last, and Muslims forever; and

that we submit our entire will, motives, intentions, deeds and actions to Allah; and that we should try to apply Islam in our daily lives because it is a complete way of life, no matter what the obstacles and hindrances are and no matter their sources. Let us try our best and find out what "*La ilaha illallah*" really implies and let us try our utmost to live and practise its meaning in our daily lives. It is really astonishing to read how, in early history, a small number of Muslims were able to govern the whole world and how today over 800 million Muslims cannot govern their own selves. The only explanation is that our early ancestors really understood the significance and implications of "*la ilaha illallah*"

They lived according to it and they realised the significance of the saying of the Prophet when he told them, "If you believe in "*La ilaha illallah*" you will govern the whole world," while we, the present generation are seeing the results of the Hadith, which the Prophet Muhammad had predicted:

"The world will attack you from every direction and in every form, just as a group of hungry eaters close in on their plates". His companions said: "O Messenger of Allah! will we be a minority then?" He said: "To the contrary, you will be too many, but you will resemble the froth of the running water."

Dear Muslims:

Let us revive the meaning of: "*La ilaha illallah*" in our minds and hearts and let us act accordingly. Let us ask God's forgiveness

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men;
The King of men;
The God of Men;
From the evil of the whispering of the slinking (devil),
Who whispers into the breasts of men,
From among the jinn and the men.
Qur'an 114:1-6.

The above article was reprinted from the book "*Al-Khutab*" by Dr. Ahmad Sakr, Director and U.N. representative of the Muslim World League. The book gives a variety of topics that may be used to delivering *Khutbahs*; (*Islamic addresses*).

This book may be consulted at the Islamic Trust Reference Library.

One of the most troublesome areas of human existence is the problem of sin or evil in the world. It is commonly believed that sin started with Adam and Eve during their life in the Garden of Eden. That event led to the Fall and has ever since branded the human race with guilt, stigma, and bewilderment.

Islam has taken a unique position on the whole issue, a position which is not shared by any other religion we know. The Qur'an states that Adam and Eve were directed by God to reside in the Garden of Eden and enjoy its produce as they pleased, assured of bountiful supplies and comfort. But they were warned not to approach a particular tree so that they would not run into harm and injustice. Then Satan intrigued them to temptation and caused them to lose their joyful state. They were expelled from the Garden and brought down to earth to live, die, and be taken out again at last for the Final Judgement. Having realized what they had done, they felt shame, guilt, and remorse. They prayed for God's mercy and were forgiven.

This symbolic event is significantly revealing. It tells that the human being is imperfect and ever wanting even if he were to live in paradise. But committing a sin or making a mistake, as Adam and Eve did, does not necessarily deaden the human heart, prevent spiritual reform or stop moral growth. On the contrary, the human being has enough sensibility to recognize his sins and shortcomings. More importantly, he is capable of knowing where to turn and to whom he should turn for guidance. Much more important is the fact that God is ever prepared to respond to the sincere calls of those who seek His aid. He is so Gracious and Compassionate that His Forgiveness is Encompassing and His Mercy all-Inclusive. One last revealing reading of the event is that discrimination on the basis of sex and hereditary guilt or sin are alien to the spirit of Islam.

The idea of Original Sin or hereditary criminality has no room in the teachings of Islam. Man, according to the Qur'an and to the Prophet, is born in a natural state of purity or *fitrah*, that is, of man after birth is the result of external influence and intruding factors. To put the matter in terms of modern thought, human nature is malleable; it is the socialization process, particularly the home environment, that is crucial. It plays a decisive role in the formation of human personality and the development of moral character. This does not deny to the individual the freedom of choice or exempt him from responsibility. Rather, it is a relief from that heavy burden of hereditary criminality or instinctual sin.

Were We Born With Original Sin?

God, by definition, is Just, Wise, Merciful, Compassionate, and Perfect. He has created man by breathing into him of His own Spirit. Since God is the absolute infinite good and His Spirit the absolute perfect one; since man, through creation, received of the Spirit of God, then man was bound to retain at least some portion of this good Spirit of the Creator. This may account for the good dispositions of man and his spiritual longings. But, on the other hand, God created man to worship Him, not to be His equal, rival, the perfect incarnation or absolute embodiment of His goodness. This means that no matter how much good and perfect man may be, by the grace of creation, he is still far short of qualities, to be sure. But they are limited and proportionate to man's finite nature, capacity, and responsibility. This may explain the imperfection and fallibility of man.

However, imperfection and fallibility are not the equivalent of sin or synonymous with criminality — at least not in Islam. If man is imperfect he is not left helpless or deserted by God to fall victim of his shortcomings. He is em-

powered by revelations, supported by reason, fortified by the freedom of choice and guided by various social and psychological dispositions to seek and achieve relative perfection. The constant gravitation between the forces of good and evil is the struggle of life. It gives man something to look forward to, ideals to seek, work to do, and roles to play. It makes his life interesting and meaningful, not monotonous and stagnant. On the other hand, it pleases God to see His servants in a state of spiritual and moral victory.

According to the moral scale of Islam, it is not a sin that man is imperfect or fallible. This is part of his nature as a finite limited creature. But it is a sin if he has the ways and means of relative perfection and chooses not to seek it. A sin is any act, thought, or will that (1) is deliberate, (2) defies the unequivocal law of God, (3) violates the right of God or the right of man, (4) is harmful to the soul or body, (5) is committed repeatedly, and (6) is normally avoidable. These are the components of sin which is not innate or hereditary.

It is true, however, that man has the potential capacity of sin latent in him; but this is not greater than his capacity of piety and goodness. If he chooses to actualize the potential of sin instead of the potential of goodness, he will be adding a new external element to his pure nature. For this added external element man alone is responsible.

In Islam, there are major and minor sins as there are sins against God and sins against both God and man. All sins against God, except one, are forgivable if the sinner sincerely seeks forgiveness. The Qur'an has stated that truly God does not forgive the sin of shirk (polytheism, pantheism, trinity, etc.). But He forgives sins other than this and pardons whom He wills. Yet if the polytheist or atheist comes back to God, his sin will be forgiven. Sins against men are forgivable only if the offended pardon the offender or if the proper compensations and/or punishments are applied.

In conclusion, sin is acquired not inborn, emergent not built-in, avoidable not inevitable. It is a deliberate conscious violation of the unequivocal law of God. If man does something that is truly caused by natural instincts or absolutely irresistible drives and uncontrollable urges, then such an act is not a sin in Islam. Otherwise, God's purpose will be pointless and man's responsibility will be in vain. God demands of man what lies within the human possibilities and reaches.

The Myth Of The Crucified Saviour

"The story of crucifixion and resurrection is so confusing that the Gospels not only contradict each other but they also contradict themselves"

The orthodox Christian belief is that when Jesus was 33 years' old he was crucified by the Romans. After three days he got out of his grave and preached to his disciples. The Qur'an on the other hand says 'They did not slay nor crucify him, only a likeness of that was shown to them'. (4:155) If crucifixion is denied the question of resurrection does not arise. Some of the early Christian fathers did not believe in the crucifixion of Jesus. The Cerinthians and later the Basilidians were among the first Christians who denied that Jesus was crucified but believed that in reality it was Simon of Cyrene who was crucified. It will be of interest to note that Cerinthus was contemporary of Peter, Paul and John. The Carpocratians, another early Christian sect, believed that it was not Jesus who was crucified but one of his followers who very closely resembled him. Plotinus who lived in the fourth century tells us that he had read a book called the Journeys of the Apostles which related the acts of Peter, John, Andrew, Thomas and Paul. Among other things it stated that Jesus was not crucified, but another in his place; and therefore he laughed at those who believed that they had crucified him ('The Nazarenes' by John Toland, Page 18). It is very difficult to unravel the tangled skein of historical facts of ancient period. Modern research has laid bare some facts that were so far hidden from earlier scholars of Christian history.

Any study of the life of Jesus has to take note of the importance of Judaea in the eyes of a Jew. It was the home of Jesus. The Jews thought it to be an act of irreverence to utter the word 'God'. So they called him by a pronoun Yahoweh which means 'O, Thou'. He was regarded true owner of Judaea, a part of Palestine. The Temple of Jerusalem was regarded as the sacred place of His residence on earth. Hence any non-Jewish government over Judaea was regarded as an abiding challenge to Yahoweh's sovereignty. After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, Judaea was successively conquered by Persians, Greeks, and Romans. The history of this period is relevant for the study of the life of Jesus.

Alexander the great died in 323 BC. His generals divided the empire between themselves. Ptolemy became the king of Egypt and Judaea, became a province of Egypt. There was perpetual conflict between the Greek kings. Judaea was once more a pawn in the struggle between its powerful neighbours. In 198 BC Judaea was taken over by the Seleucid rulers. The new masters of Judaea were keen to Hellenise the newly

conquered country. They forced cultural conformity which was resented by the Jews. When a statue of Zeus was installed in the Temple of Solomon, the Jews revolted. In 129 BC Judaea became independent. The Jewish ruler was now both the high priest of the Temple and the King of Judaea.

The new orthodox rulers being very strict in the observation of Torah, the people began to pine for the liberal and unorthodox administration of the non-Jewish rulers. So the Jews began to intrigue against their own rulers leading eventually to the conquest of Judaea by the Romans. The new rulers did not impose direct Roman rule over Judaea but appointed Herod who was a Jew to be the king of the newly conquered country though power was wielded by the Romans. It was at this time that Jesus was born*.

As soon as Herod died trouble broke out in Judaea. Herodian Palace was sacked and all arms and property stored there was seized. The Romans ruthlessly suppressed the revolt and about 2,000 people were crucified. The leaders were burnt alive.

The Jews who took part in the rebellion are called by Josephus as Zealots. Josephus was a Jew but had renounced Judaism, accepted the Roman religion and settled in Rome. He wrote a history of this period to please the Roman Emperors. In this history he mentions the Essenes because he had himself been an Essene. The sword arm of this organisation was called Zealots. The Essenes were the cave dwellers who had taken refuge in caves in mountains near the bank of the Dead Sea. Pliny another historian describes them as a race by themselves more remarkable than any other in the world inasmuch as they have no women, they abjure sexual love — their number is steadily increasing through the large number of people who are attracted to their way of life. In this way their race has lasted for thousands of years though no one is born within it. These cave dwellers continued to lead the life of austerity unaffected by the waves of conquests. There were always some Jews who made peace with every foreign ruler and tried to make the best of the bad bargain. While there were others who refused to obey or accept the invaders. They took refuge in these caves. This was not an escape from life but an attempt to lead life according to Torah and prepare for a fight to rid the holy land from the invaders. The Essenes remained a mystery until with dramatic suddenness their 600 or so caves were discovered. The parchments found in the

caves are known as Dead Sea Scrolls. We now know with certainty that the Essenes were a very organised secret society, and intimately connected with Jesus.

Jesus was born around 8 BC. At this time Judaea was ruled by the Romans who had put up a Jewish King Herod as a frontman. In 6 AD the Romans felt strong enough to bring Judaea under their direct rule, while maintaining Herod as the titular king. It is during this period that Jesus' mother took him to Egypt in order to escape the Roman order to kill all the babies in Bethlehem, apparently with the help of the Essenes, who had a colony in Egypt. Later Jesus was brought to the Temple of Solomon, as its high priest Zachariah was the guardian of Mary and Zachariah's wife Elizabeth was her elder cousin. Elizabeth had given birth to a son, John, six months before Jesus. John later came to be known as John the Baptist. (In the Qur'an he is called Yahya). John was brought up by the Essenes. Later when he raised the banner of revolt against the Romans, Jesus, his young cousin, was one of the first to join him. But the Roman intelligence infiltrated his movement with the result that he was caught and beheaded. He was succeeded in his mission by Jesus who went about with extreme caution. He selected a leader from each of the twelve tribes and later increased the number of disciples to seventy. He slowly enlisted between two to four thousand men under his command.* Each disciple was asked to arm himself. Orders were issued that 'he that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one' (Luke 22:36). All the preparations were made in great secrecy.

Once when Jesus was alone 'they that were about him questioned him about the parables and he said unto them: Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God but unto them that are without all things come in parables that seeing they may see and not perceive and hearing they may hear and not understand'. When all these preparations were complete 'Jesus moved toward Jerusalem and when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem Jesus sent two disciples saying unto them go into the village... ye shall find an ass tied and a colt with her; loosen them and bring them unto me... and all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet saying... 'Behold thy king cometh unto thee, Meek and sitting on an ass and the colt the foal of an ass'. (Mathews 21: 1-5).

Here, reference is to a vision of Isaiah (21:7-8) in which a prophet is

seen riding an ass followed by a prophet riding a camel. Jesus fulfilled the prophecy and was accepted as the long awaited Messiah. He was expected to free the Jews and destroy the Roman power like Moses, through a miracle. In this way Jesus reached Jerusalem at the head of his army. He won the initial success but the Romans brought up reinforcements and Jesus was defeated. He fled and went into hiding but his place of refuge was discovered and two Roman soldiers were sent to arrest him. The disciples of Jesus resisted the arrest and during the fight that ensued the underground organisation of Essenes succeeded in helping Jesus to escape. The soldiers arrested another man resembling Jesus.

After the arrest the question arose who was going to try the prisoner. There were three courts. Herod was the legal ruler but he refused to accept the responsibility of trying the case. The Jewish court refused because according to them it was a revolt against the Roman government. This left Pilate, the Roman magistrate with no option but to hear the case. The Jewish Court could only order the stoning of a culprit. The Roman Court could only order crucifixion. The fact that the order for crucifixion was issued by the Roman Court proves that the Roman magistrate had accepted the crime to be of a political nature. It was written on the cross that the crucified person claimed to be the King of Israel.

The story of crucifixion and resurrection is so confusing that the Gospels not only contradict each other but they also contradict themselves. If we consider the character of Pilate, the Roman magistrate, as described in the Gospels we get an impression of a person who is very different from the Pilate of history. We are asked to believe that his judgement was not based on the Roman Law but on the votes of the Jews. The proceedings of the Court were without precedent. To crown all, the magistrate who ordered the crucifixion is worshipped as a saint in many churches. We are told he was reluctant to order the crucifixion yet he himself whipped the prisoner mercilessly. Then again there is a tradition that Pilate was heavily bribed. But all this could make sense if we believe that Pilate deliberately allowed Jesus to escape and knowingly crucified a wrong person to satisfy the Roman rulers.

The picture of Jesus as painted in the Gospels before and after crucifixion cannot be that of God or a divine person. In Luke 22:45 we are told that before arrest Jesus was so frightened that drops of his sweat began to fall on the ground as if these were drops of blood. In Hebrew 5:7 we are

told that he was so terrified that he offered prayers and supplication so that God may save him. In Psalm 22 Jesus is supposed to say that he cried during the day and night yet God did not hear and help him. Then since he cried and cried God finally 'heard' him. So either Jesus is not correctly quoted here or God heard and saved him from crucifixion.

The last words of the crucified person were: 'Eli Eli Lama Sabakhtani'. In English it is translated as MY GOD MY GOD WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME. These words could NOT be from Jesus as it would show that he had lost faith in God before his 'death', which obviously cannot be true. If however He was God Himself who said this then the sentence would mean Myself Myself why have you forsaken Myself. In either case these could not be the words spoken by Jesus and it clearly shows that it was not Jesus who was crucified.

* An error has crept in the calculation of the Gregorian calendar. According to modern research the year of the birth of Jesus comes to about 6 to 8 BC as he was born during the reign of Herod, who died in 4 BC.

* The death of Jesus' by Joel Car-Michael, Page 141.

Adapted from the book "Jesus, Prophet of Islam" by Muhammad 'Ata ur-Rahman. Published by Diwan Press (U.K.)

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ISLAMIC TRUST BOOKSHOP

THE PERSONALITY OF THE BELIEVERS

"Successful indeed are the Believers who are humble and devoted in their prayers. And who always keep away from vanity. And who always purify their hearts and belongings. And who restrain their sexual desires, save for their wives or whom their right hand possess. For them surely they are not blameworthy. But whoever seeks to go beyond that, such are the transgressors. And who are the shepherds of their pledge and their covenant, and those who always keep their prayers in time. These are the heirs, who inherit Paradise. There they will abide forever."

Qur'an 23: 1-11.

In these verses of surah Al-Mu'minun Allah gives the promise of the sure success of the Believers, a promise which can never be broken - the promise of success here and in the Hereafter, - the success of the individual Believer and the community of the Believers.

But who are those Believers to whom Allah gives such a covenant and declares their sure success? Their description is very clear and simple. The description reveals the Islamic personality in its widest horizons, the horizons of Muhammad (peace be upon him) the Messenger of Allah and His best Creation, who He had educated and raised to a high level of character, and to whom Allah said, "Surely you are on the highest level of character." (68:4) And Aisha was asked about the character of the Prophet. She answered, "His character was the Qur'an." And then she recited the above verses and said, "Those show the character of the Prophet."

Let us study the value of these descriptions in the life of the individual

and in the life of the community.

The first description of the Believers is that they are humble and devoted in their prayers, such that their hearts feel humble and secured and calm in the presence of Allah. They try to forget and to cast aside from their minds all their daily affairs and problems and concentrate on the words which they utter in the presence of Allah. Everything around them is forgotten except for the holy presence of Allah. and those who can accomplish this are surely worthy of success.

The second description of the Believers is that they keep themselves away from Vanity, from vain words and vain deeds and even vain thoughts, because their hearts and minds are dedicated and occupied by the remembrance of Allah. At the same time, their duties among themselves and their duties of defending and guiding their communities away from vanity and the temptations of this life, will keep them occupied too. And such a group and such a community is surely a successful one.

The third description of the Believers is that they purify their hearts and belongings. They purify their hearts from greediness and love of wealth and make it immune from the fear of poverty. They trust in Allah that they will be generously compensated for their sacrifice here and in the Hereafter. At the same time, they can secure their community against need and against mendicancy, keeping a balance between poverty and misery on one side and wealth and luxury on the other side. And a community like this community is the successful one.

The forth description of the Believers is that they restrain their sexual desires, which is a purification of the soul, both at home and in the community, and protect the community from falling down to the level of animals. And the community which controls its desires and regulates them in the above prescribed manner is surely a successful community.

The fifth description of the Believers is that they always keep their trusts and promises to Allah and to His servants. They keep their trusts and promises through their belief in the Unity of Allah, the belief upon which other trusts and promises depend. Therefore, they fulfil their promises and trusts because they do not have any worry, or any fear of anything except Allah. A community that fulfils its promises and trusts is surely a successful one.

The last description of the Believers is that they keep their time of prayers and never leave off prayers because of laziness or negligence, but offer their prayers at their due time, and complete with Fard and Sunnah. If they cannot offer their time for Allah, then how could they offer their time for their community? And a community that keeps steadfast its time with Allah and among themselves is surely a successful one. And as the description of the Believers starts with the offering of prayer, it ends with the offering of prayer to show how important is prayer for the Believers.

These are the description of the personality of the Believers for whom success has been guaranteed not only here but in the Hereafter. Such are they who will inherit paradise and there they will abide forever.

*Adapted from Fi Zilal Al Qur'an
by Sayyid Qutb.*

THE FIVE MUSLIM PRAYERS

O ya Allah to You I pray
To You I pray alone
To You I pray five times a day
Starting at Fajr at dawn

And when my second prayer comes at Zuhr
midday; noon
I stop my work and wash myself
For my prayer so soon.

And when my third prayer comes at Asr
mid-afternoon or so
I stop playing and go to pray.
And line up in the row.

And when my fourth prayer comes at
Maghrib or after sunset
I run to pray and will not miss
My prayer and never forget.

And when the fifth prayer comes 'Isha
prayer at night
I pray to God who filled my heart
With faith and love and light.

Hisham Badran
from Muslim Children Album.

GOD IS THE GREATEST

Shout like a thunder	Allahu Akbar
Louder and louder	Allahu Akbar
Shout all Together	Allahu Akbar
It makes you stronger	Allahu Akbar

God is the One	Allahu Akbar
And only One	Allahu Akbar
He has no son	Allahu Akbar
Nor has a father	Allahu Akbar

God is the One	Allahu Akbar
And only One	Allahu Akbar
What ever is done	Allahu Akbar
By Him no partner	Allahu Akbar

You see me how	Allahu Akbar
I don't allow	Allahu Akbar
Myself to bow	Allahu Akbar
Except in prayer	Allahu Akbar

I bow to Him	Allahu Akbar
Prostrate to Him	Allahu Akbar
And only Him	Allahu Akbar
He's the Creator	Allahu Akbar

O Help me God	Allahu Akbar
To make Jihad	Allahu Akbar
I will be glad	Allahu Akbar
To follow Your Order	Allahu Akbar.

MOTHERS: THE BUILDERS OF NATIONS

Once a man came to Prophet Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) and complained: O Prophet, My Mother is very hot tempered. The Prophet (u.w.b.p.): Were she hot tempered when she kept you in her womb for nine months?

The man: But truly my mother is very hot tempered. The Prophet: (u.w.b.p.) Did you complain of her hot temper when you suckled her breast for a duration of two years? The man: But O Messenger of Allah, I am speaking the truth. The Prophet (u.w.b.p.): Did you complain of her hot tempered when she stayed awake the whole night for your sake and gave you her milk to drink. The man: I have repaid her for all troubles. The Prophet (u.w.b.p.): What did you do to repay her? The man: She performed Hajj on my shoulder. The Prophet (u.w.b.p.): Can you repay her for the excessive pain she patiently bore at your birth? The man could not answer, for he knew that it was impossible to repay her for the pain she bore in bringing him in this world.

We can note from this that Mothers are given greatest respect and honour as a teacher and builder of the nation whose responsibility and duty are to raise the child to grow up to be a respected citizen and a worthy Muslim.

The Prophet (S.A.) gave mothers a very outstanding position and raise them as creatures of great praise and honour. He said that Paradise lies at the feet of the mother, so that one can receive such high reward for obeying, serving and honouring mothers. He has recommended her as the ideal person for our company in the path of goodness. Abu Huraira (RA) reported: 'A man came to the messenger of Allah and said: O Messenger of Allah, who is the most proper person I should associate with for my benefit? The Prophet replied: "Thy Mother". Then he asked "Who comes next," "Thy Mother" was the reply. He again asked "Who is next", the Prophet again replied "Thy Mother." He put this question the fourth time and the reply was: "The Father." This repetition of the answer three times shows the importance, respect, honour and love Mothers are entitled to.

Referring to a mother's in bearing children, Al Qur'an states "And we have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents. With trouble did his mother bear him, and with trouble did she bring him up, and the bearing of him and weaning of him was thirty months." And in another verse, the Holy Qur'an states:

"And we have enjoined man in respect of his parents. His Mother bears him with faintings upon faintings. Be grateful to Me and to both your parents."

Once during the early struggle with the Meccans, the Holy Prophet (SA) had to battle with the tribe of Bani Saad.

They were defeated and many of them were taken prisoners and among them was the daughter of his nurse Halima. After hearing her story, the Prophet (SA) stood in tears, and reflecting on the past, and in tender gratitude to his nurse Halima and her daughter, he freed her and gave her many gifts. Whenever Halima used to come and pay him visit, he used to prepare a special seat for her and treat her with respect and honour.

His kindness, generosity, love, respect and honour for Mothers and woman-hood as a whole is a wonderful example that each and everyone of us can follow in order to build a better society for us, our friends, families and the coming generation.

REFUTING ALL DOUBTS

The Life of Muhammad by Muhammad Husayn Haykal, America Trust Publications — pp: 639, 31 Chapters with a conclusion in Two Essays.

The book reflects a great deal of painstaking research on this important subject. Its presentation, organisation and convincing style testifies to the ability of the author.

It was written out of a deep concern by the author for the centuries of propaganda and ridicule promulgated by Christian missionaries and Western orientalis against Muhammad and his message; together with a deep concern for the present plight of the Muslim World, as he states "What greater damage could befall humanity than to have its greater half, the half which has throughout history been the carrier of civilization, to wallow in sterility and conservation?"

The merit of the work lies primarily in two factors unique to the former works of non-Muslim biographers. The first lies in adopting the most reliable source of information of the life of Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) — The Qur'an — as the standard norm and guiding light in the preparation of this research. The other is what the author refers to as "a scientific study, developed on the western modern method, and written for the sake of truth alone". It was this same method that was introduced in the "dark ages" by "early" Muslim scholars who excelled in all branches of knowledge. It was originally the method in which the Qur'an was revealed and which inspired the Muslims to become the forerunners of civilization.

A redeeming feature in this work is the emphasis placed on Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) as simply a human being. Many works on the life of Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) by Muslims have tended to super-humanise or even deify him. Such works caused the Muslims to drift towards superstitious practices and empty rituals devoid of any Islamic substance. So that, the theme of Muhammad as the best of exemplars (Auswatu-l Hasanah) which has been mentioned throughout the book is an important consideration.

Also, the writer's ability to knit all the activities of the Prophet's life to a central idea must be noted. The mission of Muhammad revolved around the objective of calling mankind to submit and obey the laws of his Creator. It was a result of this objective that institutions such as prayer, fasting, zakah (poor-tax),

pilgrimage, Jihad (struggling against oppression), war, peace treaties, public treasury, and the whole apparatus of a state and its functioning were evolved. These were all means to an end; the end being to strive solely for the pleasure of Allah.

The worth by the book on Western readers can be found in the deliberate and straight-forward manner in which the author refuted the claims, allegations and biases of Christian orientalist. Who, with the use of devious propaganda painted the blackest picture possible of the character of Muhammad and spared no means in distorting and falsifying God's message to him. The writer's insistence that the Qur'an was the only miracle of Muhammad lays the foundation for dispersing these doubts and removing the baseless defensive attitude and inferiority complexes of Muslims in practicing and propagating God's system of life.

One aspect that needs to be pointed out is that in the past many Muslim scholars became so involved in dispelling the propaganda of orientalist that time and effort better spent in preparing a generation of Muslims along the pattern set by Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) were wasted. It is in this regard that perhaps more elucidation could have been attempted on various aspects and interpretations of the Prophet's life. Today, there is a need for Muslims to study in the light of present circumstances the original source, the methodology and the techniques adopted by the Messenger of Allah. As such the book contains many references to subjects not directly related to the biography of the Prophet. But such references became necessary due to the approach adopted by the author.

There are also a few statements that have been made that do need some clarification. For example, it was inferred that the call of Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) in Mecca was not of a political nature until the migration to Medina where the Islamic state was established. This is at variance to the view expressed by Br. Sayyid Qutb in "Milestones" that the call of Islam started with the question of sovereignty and to whom does man owe his allegiance. Also, it is cited twice that the Prophet like all great men are above the law. This statement was made explaining certain allegations against the Prophet which needed no answer. Since, these situations were what Allah had dictated for His prophet.

A delightful addition to this

biography of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) is the conclusion in Two Essays on the message expounded by Muhammad. It is in this, the latter section of the book, that an attempt is made to explain the basic principles of Islam and the Islamic Civilization with its superior and eternal vitality to illumine the life of Mankind.

Finally, mention must be made of the clear, precise and forceful translation that Professor Isma'il al-Faruqi has presented to us from the original Arabic. It was a tremendous task undertaken and ably completed.

ESSAY COMPETITION

The Trinidad and Tobago Muslim Youth Organisation are holding an Islandwide Essay Writing Competition for all Muslims. Interested persons may obtain registration forms from Br. Zainool Ali (sec. general) at 128 Caroni Savannah Road or from members and groups of T. & T. M. Y. O.

All essays should not be less than 2,500 words, and should be submitted not later than 31st May, 1978. Each participant shall attempt only one topic.

The Topics are:-

1. Discuss the importance of Da'wah. Suggest methods for its effective presentation in a cosmopolitan society.
2. Expound fully the Islamic concept of Charity.
3. Explain fully the meaning and implications of the Shahada. (La ilaha illallah, Muhammadur rasool-ullah).
4. The relevance of the Seera (Life of the Prophet) to present day Muslims.
5. How can the Islamic code of ethics help to solve the social ills of modern society.
6. Discuss the Islamic concept of family life. How does this contribute towards the development of a stable community?
7. Crime and punishment in Islam.
8. Birth Control as viewed by Islam.

9. Scientific knowledge and research should be allowed to continue regardless of their effect on human life. Is this statement justified by Islam?
10. Youths today are seeking more personal and individualistic relations with God, and as such turning away from the major religions which offer no such avenues. Do you think that this statement applies to Islam?
11. Euthanasea (Mercy Killing)! Does Islam justify or condemn this?
12. Illustrate the ways in which the Islamic economic system can be applied to solve the economic problems of the Third World Countries.
13. How far can the application of the rulings of the Shariah aid in the curbing of promiscuity in modern society?
14. Can an Islamic Government be truly called 'a government of the people, for the people and elected by the people'?
15. The rights of women have been upheld by Islam. How far do you agree with this statement?
16. Give an account of the Islamic concept of Human Rights.
17. Outline the dangers of drug abuse. How can Islamic principles be applied to solve this problem?
18. Do you think that Muslims throughout the World should present a unified front to deal with the Palestine problems or it should be left as an exclusively Arab problem?
19. What are the qualities of a Muslim Leader? Outline the role and responsibilities of such Leaders in communities where Muslims are in a minority.
20. Give an analysis of the Muslim community in Trinidad and Tobago and suggest guidelines for its improvement.
21. Historical evidence shows that whenever Muslims adhered to Islamic tenets they led the World in all areas of human endeavour. Discuss.

There will be three main prizes of \$100.00; \$75.00; and \$50.00 respectively

SUGGESTED MUSLIM NAMES

The following are some Muslim Names recommended for children. As highlighted in the article "Check-out your name" (see Issue No. 27/ January, 1978), a name reflects the ideals, life style and cultural outlook of any particular community. And, as Muslims we follow a definite system of life with a unique cultural heritage, distinct from any other — whether based on race, nationality or man-made ideologies.

NAMES FOR BOYS

ABDULLAH

ABDUR-RAHAM

Some names containing the attributes of Allah.

ABDUT-TAWAAB	ABDUL-HAKAM	ABDUL-MAALIK
ABDUR-RAHEEM	ABDUL-HAKEEM	ABDUL-MAAJID
ABDUR-RA'OOOF	ABDUL-HAMEED	ABDUL-MO'MIN
ABDUR-RAB	ABDUL-HAYY	ABDUL-MATEEN
ABDUR-RAZZAAK	ABDUL-KHABEER	ABDUL-MUJEEB
ABDUR-RASHEED	ABDUL-KHALIQ	ABDUL-MAJEED
ABDUS-SALAAM	ABDUL-AZEEZ	ABDUL-MUKSIT
ABDUS-SAMEE	ABDUL-GHAFFAAR	ABDUL-MALIK
ABDUS-SHAKOOR	ABDUL-GHAFOOR	ABDUL-MON'IM
ABDUS-SAMAD	ABDUL-GHANI	ABDUN-NOOR
ABDUL-BAASIT	ABDUL-FATTAAH	ABDUL-HAADI
ABDUL-BAAKI	ABDUL-KADER	ABDUL-WAAJID
ABDUL-JABBAR	ABDUL-KUDDOOS	ABDUL-WAAHID
ABDUL-JALEEL	ABDUL-KAYYOOM	ABDUL-WADOOD
ABDUL-HAFEEZ	ABDUL-KAREEM	ABDUL-WAHHAAB
ABDUL-HAQQ	ABDUL-LATEEF	ABDUL-WALI

NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF RASULULLAH (P.B.U.H.)

AHMAD	SHAFEE	MATEEN	MUKHTAR
AMEEN	AADIL	MUJTABA	MUSTAFA
BASHEER	KASIM	MUHAMMAD	MAHDI
HAAMID	MUBEEN	MAHMOOD	NAZEER

The name Muhammad is often used as a prefix. e.g. MUHAMMAD AMEEN.

The name Ahmad is used as a prefix or suffix with Rasulallah's (p.b.u.h.) names and attributes e.g. AHMAD AMEEN. — Basheer Ahmad.

NAMES OF THE LADIES OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF RASULULLAH (p.b.u.h.)

AAMINA	SAFIYYA	ZAYNAB	KHADIJA
HALIMA	SAUDA	UMME-SALMA	JOWAIRIYYA
SA'DIYYA	MAARYA	MAYMOONA	UMME-KULSOOM
AAYESHA	FAATIMA	UMME-HABIBAH	HAFA
RUQAYYA			

NAMES OF THE WIVES OF AMBIYA ALAYHIMUS-SALAAM.

HAWWA	ZULAYKHA	SAFEERA	SAARA
MARYAM	AASIYA	HAAJIRA	KULSOOM
BILKEES	LEYA	SAFOORA	HANNA
RAHEEL			

You, Films & Sex Crimes

Since, the lowering of the voting age from 21 years to 18 years a larger percentage of the population are being exposed to "Blue" or pornographic films. It was therefore shocking to know that a cinema owner was charged with exhibiting uncensored films. Not being content with the filth already propagated, he has shown utter disregard for our society by going to this extreme. Why? Yes Why did he do this? Was it for a little monetary gain?

One wonders how much concern do we have for our fellow human beings, especially our women folk. Increasing daily are reports of sexual assaults and sexually perverted pastimes at all levels of our society.

Three old women raped to death in South! 80 year old woman mugged and raped! 3 year old, assaulted! Pregnant woman with a 12 foot piece of iron placed inside her and pleading "I want to die"! The list goes on and on. One does not know what to expect next.

Meanwhile, our "sick" society laments and strives to believe that such things cannot be happening. But why lament at all. We are the ones creating

the viruses that infect our society. Why should we mourn when we help to make and nurture these "sick" minds. Haven't we realised that there is a direct relationship between these sex films and these ungodly crimes? (A contributing factor as well is the advertisements and semi-and demi-nude photos of our mothers, sisters and daughters featured in the nation's newspaper).

Don't censor these films for 18 years and over. Ban them! What guarantee is there that these adults can control their desires? It is not true that the sexual drive increases from about 18 years? Not only is the cinema owner guilty of a crime against society but every member of the censor board, every cinema owner and every patron who view such shows.

It is time we cease worshipping sex as God and strive for ideals that will create a better quality of life for our people. Let us take the initial step by placing sex in its correct God-given perspective and function for human existence. If we are not concern with our Creator, would we show concern for our fellow human beings?

For how long and to what extent will the people allow themselves to be manipulated?

Where does the freedom begin and the domination end? Or is subtle oppression the basis of national development?

MANIPULATION?

Recently it was disclosed that Abortion clinics are being considered as plans are being studied by Government to liberalise Trinidad and Tobago's abortion laws. The Health Minister, Kamaluddin Mohammed admitted that "in updating our present abortion laws we have to tread carefully because 75% of our population belong to religions which are against abortion. But there is clearly need to update the present laws into a more liberal form". He further stated that if we decide to accept them, they will come with new legislation.

These disclosures poses many questions for the future welfare of our nation.

Will the government consider the beliefs and values of the majority of the people?

Is the government tackling the roots of our problems or creating more?

How far is the government fulfilling its role of guiding the nation?

How effective have they been in enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong?

TRADITIONALISTS

As traditional in Trinidad, the birthday of Muhammad, the final messenger of God, was celebrated by a series of lectures throughout the country. Since I became a Muslim, I have heard many of these lectures on the exemplary life and character of Muhammad. But the most amazing thing is that most people who attended: listened, commented on the veracity of the speeches but made little or no effort to implement and practice the lessons contained therein. The mission of Muhammad calling mankind to submit to the Creator was lost to them.

There also appears to be an over-emotional attachment to this occasion judging from the zeal and fervour exhibited in singing songs about Muhammad (peace be upon him). Many of these songs

praise him in the most ambiguous way. On two occasions recently I heard it stated that if it were not for the birth of Muhammad the sun; the moon the tearth; and the entire universe would not have been created. I sincerely need some clarification on this issue. Where in the Qur'an or Hadith is this authenticated?

Finally, if we have to celebrate the birth of the Prophet let us put into practice the things he did and the things he told us to do. We need to ponder on the following verse of the Qur'an—

"Those who follow the messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel (which are) with them. He will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul; and he will relieve them of their burden and the fetter they used to wear. Then those who believe in him, and honour him, and help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him; they are the successful. (7:157).

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