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THE PATH TO SOCIAL CHANGE

Before dealing with the subject proper, it is necessary to explain what is the nature and objectives of Social Change in the Islamic context.

The phrase 'social change' normally implies a process through which a given set of social objectives are to be attained.

Most theories of social change have 'Man' as the object of change or as the object to which change is directed. However, they attempt to effect such change in an indirect manner. They set out to change the social structure of the society and expect 'Man' to respond and change to suit the new structure. This process is the very opposite to that which Islam uses to achieve social change.

According to Islam, 'Man' is the object and end of social change and the society changes as a result of the change in 'Man'. This is based on the following verse of the Qur'an:-

"Allah does not change the condition of a people until they first change that which is within themselves". (13:11).

In this verse, two basic points are apparent:-

- (1) Social change starts with 'Man' and this can be either bad or good change.
- (2) The society changes in consequence of the change in the 'inner state' of man.

It is the nature of Islam to be concerned with change. It takes 'Man' from a state of impurity to a state of purity, i.e. to his original state (Al Fitrah).

Islam also looks at the society in which 'Man' dwells, accepts from it what is pure, wholesome and beneficial, modifies others to make them beneficial and rejects what is evil, vile and reprehensible. This process takes place in

accordance with Islam's clear-cut and eternal criterion for right and wrong, vice and virtue.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was commissioned to effect this process of 'salahah' (purification) which means 'to set aright or to restore to order'. He had this objective before him at all times. In one of his sayings, the entire process of social change was summarised as follows:-

"I was sent to bring out what is best in mankind."

BROAD OBJECTIVE

The objective of Islamic social change is to establish a society termed the 'Islamic society'. This is based on the following verses of the Qur'an:-

"He it is Who has sent His messengers with the guidance and the religion of truth so that He may make it conqueror of all other religions however much the disbelievers may be averse" (61:9).

"And fight with them until persecution is no more and religion is all for Allah. But if they cease, then lo! Allah is Seer of what they do." (8:39).

The essential features of the Islamic Society are:-

- (1) This society is an ideological society. It is not based on allegiance to any particular race, language, nationality, territory or culture, but allegiance to Allah and submission to His Will (Islam).

Anyone who pledges allegiance to Allah can become a member of this society regardless of his status or any other consideration. Anyone who rejects the creed is not considered a member.

- (2) In this society, Allah, the Creator

of all existence is the Sovereign — in the metaphysical, political and legal sense of the word. All decisions go to Him ultimately for consideration.

"Lo! Sovereignty belongs to Allah. He has commanded that you worship none save Him".
(Qur'an 12:40).

The function of the government is solely to enforce the commands of the Creator and His messenger.

"O ye who believe obey Allah and obey His messenger and those in authority over you. If you have a dispute concerning any matter, then refer it to Allah and His messenger, if you are in truth believers in Allah and the Last Day".
(Qur'an 4:59).

"Whoso judgeth not by what Allah has revealed; Such are disbelievers".
(5:44).

In this society loyalty to the government is only in so far as when it is loyal to Allah and His messenger.

- (3) In this society, justice and order are established. This is called 'islah'

In referring to this aspect of justice the Qur'an states:-

"Indeed We sent Our messengers with clear signs and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance so that they might uphold justice."
(57:25).

In this verse is stated the purpose for which Allah sent Prophets with Divine Guidance. It is to present and establish a system of life where justice will prevail in every aspect of the society.

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The Islamic Society is therefore the epitome of justice in every sphere of life i.e. in relationships between individuals, between members of a family, between ruler and ruled, the majority and minority, employer and employee, nation and nation, etc.

In the Qur'an, the concept of justice is stated in different forms e.g.

(1) 'Man' is told how he should relate with all things in the universe, including 'Man' himself. That is why sin in Islam means doing injustice not only to Allah but also to oneself.

(2) Allah through the Qur'an tells the believers to be witnesses for justice and fairplay even though it may be against themselves, their kith or kin.

The various aspects of justice appearing in the Qur'an serve to emphasize how wide and deep justice is expected in an Islamic Society.

THE METHOD AND TECHNIQUES

Before discussing the method and techniques, it is necessary to establish a common understanding of the nature of prophethood.

Prophets were sent not only to convey the message of Allah to Mankind but also to bring about social change by applying Allah's guidance to the issues of the day.

The Prophet Lot had to contend with the problems of sexual perversion — homosexuality, lesbianism and brigandry.

Abraham was faced with the problems of idolatry, superstition and fear.

Moses faced the problems of dictatorship, idolatry, oppression, racism and uneven distribution of wealth.

Salih, a prophet sent to the Arab tribe of Thamud, faced the problems of materialism, governmental extravagance and inflation.

Shuaib, a prophet sent to Madyan (an Arab tribe) faced the problems of economic injustice and corruption.

Prophet Muhammad faced a number of social problems e.g. prostitution, idolatry, high crime rate, high infant mortality, illiteracy, drug abuse.

What was the approach of the prophets to these problems?

They first invited mankind to accept (1) the Sovereignty of Allah over their lives and belongings, and (2) their accountability to Allah. Once this was achieved, they prescribed Allah's solutions to the problems of the society.

Their call to Islam therefore, was at the same time a call to social change. Why did the call to social change begin in this manner? The answer to this

question is in two parts:-

(1) The call to Islam meant that the problems affecting the society had a singular cause viz., the sovereignty of man over man and man's ignorance or denial of his accountability to Allah.

(2) The call to Islam meant a comprehensive solution to all the problems the society was facing.

Thus, the prophets treated the cause of the problem first and then the symptoms after. This method is in direct contrast to that used in present day societies for attempting to solve social

problems. Too often these societies seek solutions merely to the symptoms rather than the root cause of the problems.

One Hadith of 'Aishah, wife of Prophet Muhammad shows clearly, the wisdom of the approach used by the Prophets. She said that if Muhammad had come to the Arabs telling them to give up this and that vice or of the evil of this and that habit, they would never have listened to him. Instead, he called them to worship (in the broadest sense) God. Once they accepted, he told them to give up vices, and they complied.

Take as an example, the problem of Alcoholism (symbolising drug abuse in its wider connotations) and see what method and techniques Prophet Muhammad used to solve this problem, remembering that the broad principles are the same for every social problem.

For this, it is necessary to refer to the 'Islamic State' of Madinah in the 7th century of the Christian Era.

A group of some members of the Islamic community gathered together in a house drinking a specially prepared strong drink of fermented dates. As the effects of the drink began to show on their faces, one of them heard the proclamation "Surely Al-Khamr (intoxicants) has been prohibited". Without waiting to verify the truth of the statement the drinking party threw away the remaining contents of their cups and broke the earthen liquor containers. They then cleansed themselves by ablution and went to the Prophet's mosque for further instructions.

As the news spread from house to house large clay pots and skins containing the fermented liquor were broken and their contents emptied in the streets of Madinah. It is said, that on that day, the streets of Madinah ran 'red' with wine, bearing testimony to the greatest anti-Alcoholism campaign humanity has ever witnessed.

In the mosque at Madinah, a large audience of believers listened to the

verses that were revealed concerning the matter:-

"O ye who believe strong drink and games of chance and idols and divination by arrows are an infamy of Satan's handiwork. Leave them alone if you are to succeed. Satan only seeks to cast enmity and hatred amongst you by means of strong drink and games of chance, and turn you from remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. Will you then desist?"

Qur'an 5: 90-91).

After the Prophet finished reciting the Qur'anic verses prohibiting Alcohol (Intoxicants) the group of faithful believers replied, with determination and in unison, "We have desisted O Allah. We have desisted O our God".

It is important to note here, the response of the believers to the law. They declared in public their obedience to the law and approved of this social change. Compare this with the attempts of modern governments to effect social change and public response to the law and social change. When the state issues the law on any matter there is hardly any positive response, much less stated obedience to the law.

The law in these countries sometimes can control what is done publicly but in most cases succeeds in just driving the problem underground waiting to show its head again at the opportune moment.

After the prophets recital of the Divine law of prohibition, he and some of his companions went to a pre-designated area in Madinah summoning the people to bring out their stocks of intoxicants. After this was done, he verified from the people that this was in fact their remaining stocks of the prohibited liquor. Then he issued a further edict, this time stifling all other outlets of the problem.

"Surely Allah has cursed AlKhamr (Intoxicants) and cursed the one who brews it; the one for whom it is brewed; the one who drinks it; the one who serves it; the one who carries it; the one for whom it is carried; the one who buys it and the one who profits from its sale."

In this Hadith, manufacture, production and distribution were also prohibited. This is the nature of law in Islam. It cuts not only at the root of the problem but also at its branches.

THE PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

It is wishful thinking to believe that

the attitude of mind which leads to the effect described above — i.e. the positive response to the law, was created overnight. This came as a result of carrying the believers through different stages of a planned programme of Islamic Education, orientation and training.

Here it is necessary to examine the basic steps that the prophet utilised under Divine Guidance, to reach the stage of development of the believers at which he got the kind of response that he did get to the law on intoxicants.

First, the prophet explained to the people the fundamental creed of Islam. This included an understanding of the nature of Allah and His attributes; the purpose of Revelation; Man's origin and his position in the universe; his relationship with his Creator; the nature of Prophethood and Man's relationship with the prophets, in particular, Muhammad; his relationship with the believers and non-believers; his relationship with the universe and those things under his command; the nature of the 'Hereafter' and the consequences of good and bad deeds.

The people were told that Allah is the Creator, Sustainer Nourisher and Sovereign of all existence. Allah created Man from clay and created the things of the universe for his service. Since his creation he was appointed Allah's Khalifah (trustee) whose function it is to acknowledge Allah as his Sovereign and the laws of the Sovereign as the only criteria to be followed. Furthermore, they were told that in order for Man to administer the duties of trusteeship effectively, Divine Guidance has been provided for him. The prophets, the bearers of Divine Guidance, are to be obeyed and followed scrupulously and without the slightest dissatisfaction. Then they were told of the brotherhood of all believers having issued from a common source. To crown it all, the nature of the Hereafter was explained to them. They were told that entry into Heaven and Hell was based solely on belief and deeds.

Secondly the Prophet dealt with the practical programme. This was instituted as a means of establishing and reinforcing the creed of Islam in the believer's life until it became part of his personality.

This practical programme included Salah (a minimum of 5 daily prayers at stated times) fasting during the month of Ramadan (29 - 30 days) the payment of Zakah (a tax on those who are not needy to be used by the Poor members of the Community), Hajj (Pilgrimage to the homeland of the Prophet, Makkah) Tawbah and Istighfar (i.e.

realising one's wrong and asking sincere forgiveness from Allah pledging in the process not to return to the wrong deed again), Dhikr - (remembrances of Allah) so as to inculcate the awareness of the Creator etc.

This practical programme showed that the Prophet was not only concerned with what the believers thought and said but also with their training i.e. what they did and how they behaved.

The third phase of preparing the believers, was provided by the environment itself. Islam grew up in an arena of hostility designed to resist The Islamic Movement and stifle its influences. However, persecution succeeded only in causing the believers to hold more firmly to the Islamic Message and to become its champions.

PRINCIPLE OF GRADUAL PROHIBITION

Even though the believers were prepared, still Allah in His wisdom decided that the best way to erase a social evil is to remove it gradually. Thus was instituted the slow erosion of the evil of indulging in intoxicants (Drug Abuse).

The first Qur'anic verse mentioning alcoholic intoxication was revealed late in Makkah, before the Prophet migrated to Madinah. It only touched on the problem slightly.

"And from the fruits of the date palm, and grapes, whence you drink strong drink and also good nourishment. Lo! there is indeed a sign for those who have sense." 16:67.

After this revelation a few perceptive Muslims went out of their way to question the Prophet regarding the consumption of alcohol. A few of them must have reduced their drinking or even abstained.

The second revelation treated the issue in a more direct, but still in a cautious manner. The relevant verse came as an answer to the questions raised after the first revelation.

"They question you about strong drink and games of chance. Say: In both is a great sin, and some utility for man but the sin of them is greater than their usefulness."

Qur'an 2: 219.

A few more believers may have joined those who already abstained even though the order of prohibition had not come as yet.

"O ye who believe do not pray when you are drunk until you know what you are saying."

Qur'an 4:43.

After this revelation the caller to

prayer (muadhdhin) added after summoning the believers, 'no drunken one should come to prayer.'

If a Muslim missed the prayer in congregation his friends investigated whether he was ill or not.

A man who absented himself from prayer in the mosque because of drunkenness felt so guilty that he made a determined effort to overcome the habit. Here we have social problems. Also, with the effects of the withdrawal symptoms being visible, the desire to overcome the problem was further reinforced.

Then came the final stage. After three years of gradual erosion, following thirteen years of persistent efforts in preparing the believers, the prohibition of alcohol was issued in the revelation quoted earlier.

Qur'an 5:90-91. Compliance was so perfect that there were only seven cases of relapses recorded during the time of the Prophet.

The same basic methods which the Prophet used in solving the problem of alcoholism in the society were also used in solving other social problems.

THE PHASE TO POLITICAL POWER

In order to sustain social changes, it is necessary for the believers to possess political power so that the total social framework can be structured to make it compatible with the changes.

Throughout the Prophet's entire mission, he showed concern for political power. Not power for power's sake, or for personal ends, or to establish his tribe in a position of authority in Arabia, or to establish the superiority of the Arab race over the rest of the world, but power to establish the Sovereignty of Allah and to make social change a reality. In the words of the Qur'an, power "to enjoin right and to forbid wrong". During the Hajj season he would go to different Arab tribes to ask their assistance for the cause of Allah.

Even when migrating from Makkah to Madinah his concern for political power was captured and eternalised by Allah.

"O Allah let my entry be by the gate of honour and let my exit be also by the gate of honour and grant me a ruling authority to aid me".

These are basically, the techniques that Prophet Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) used in solving the problems of his day and these methods, are basically what he has entrusted to the Muslims to implement in whatever societies they may be living.

Alyasa Abdullah

FACED WITH TEMPTATION

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stayed in Makkah thirteen years teaching his people the meaning of "La ilaha illallah" and helping them to practise it in their daily lives. I would like to talk about some of the circumstances which may result from practising the meaning "La ilaha illallah"; that there is no other deity but Allah.

When one proclaims "I believe" and tries to practise his religion accordingly, he is faced with temptations, and he is tested. Concerning this, Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Alif, Lam, Mim. Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say, we believe, and will not be tested with affliction? Lo! We tested those who were before you. Thus Allah knows those who are sincere, and knows those who feign."

(29: 1-3).

When studying the Qur'an and the Sunnah, one learns about two types of temptation: (a) with what you like; (b) with what you dislike or hate. When we believe in God, we will be tested whether in what we love or in what we dislike and hate, or in both. In either case, anyone who is a Muslim and who wants to live as a Muslim has to act and react as a Muslim. For he, as a Muslim, submits his will, his feelings, his thinking, his deeds and actions to God, i.e., he behaves as a Muslim.

Concerning temptation through what is hateful: it is well understood that people dislike death, poverty, and sickness; they hate wars, destruction and natural catastrophes; they hate failure, distress, accidents, and so on. But let those people understand that these happenings are not necessarily to be hated since they might be of benefit to them and serve their own interests be it directly or indirectly, in the near or far future. Allah says in the Qur'an concerning these types of happenings that would tempt one to despise and hate:

"And surely we shall test you with some fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast, who say, when a misfortune strikes them: Lo! we are Allah's and Lo! unto Him we are returning."

(2: 155-156).

Also Allah says in the Qur'an about wars:

"Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that you love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows and you know not."

(2:216)

We find verses and stories in the Qur'an repeatedly about patience and perseverance which have to be acquired whenever a believer faces hateful things. The best story to be mentioned here is that of Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him). He was tempted and tested with every possible means: his wealth, property, family, and himself; but fortunately, he was patient and thankful to God. He said: "All that have been bestowed unto me are for Allah, and what is coming to me is from Allah, and all that is taken from me by Allah is His." For this reason, God acknowledged his perseverance and praised him by saying:

"... Lo! We found him steadfast, how excellent a servant! Lo! He was ever turning in repentance to his Lord."

(38:44)

The utmost temptation through which God may test his people is to try them in their faith and belief. When one believes in the statement "La ilaha illallah," and tries to practise it, that is the time for him to be tested. Is he really a true believer? The best example that one may mention here is that of the early followers of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). Bilal the Ethiopian, was among those who were tested severely because he was a believer in Allah. The only answer from him during punishment and persecution was to say, "Ahad" "One! One!"

Similarly was the case of Shu'aib, the Roman, the family of Yasir, and many others if not all. As Muslims, we are asked only to follow truth in any circumstances. We are not supposed to follow our parents if they order us to go astray; we are not to follow our leaders and those who are in authority among us if they direct us towards and even oblige us to go astray.

Concerning the temptation for what we love: it is well understood that people love this life with all its blessings. They

love wealth, wives and children; they love position, promotion and the easy life. But let those people understand that even this type of love is a matter of temptation, whether we use it in the proper way, and whether we praise Allah for His gifts and offerings. To have all you love does not necessarily mean that God loves you and hence He is offering you all those things; it may mean that he is testing you and you have been put into temptation.

By reading the Qur'an one may quote numerous incidents and stories about the temptations from God to His people in what they love. We may see that some have made use of the blessings of God properly, while others could not resist temptation and went astray. The best example is that of Sulaiman who used the gifts of God properly. Although he was given some superhuman powers he still praised God and used them properly and hence God was pleased with him and said about him:

"To Daoud we gave Sulaiman (for a son), — How excellent in our service! Ever did he return (to us)!"

(38:30)

The other example is a person who was proud of what God has blessed him and he nullified the decision of God. He claimed that he was a scientist and it was through his personal knowledge that he was able to become a wealthy person. It was Qaroon, and about himself he said:

"This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge which I possess."

(28:78)

His fate was:

"So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling-place. Then he had no host to help him against Allah, nor was he of those who can save themselves."

(28:81)

Another good example of temptation which is good for us as young Muslims is that of Prophet Yussuf (peace be upon him) who was tempted by a lady who was in power, but his answer was:

"I seek refuge in Allah! Lo! He is my Lord, who has treated me honourably. Wrongdoers never prosper."

(12:23).

Not only did he refuse the temptation, but he preferred prison, which was dearer to him than the evil thing to which he was invited and pushed.

When a Muslim reads these stories, he will derive inspiration and they will serve as a preventive measure against

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Is it true that Muslims are forbidden to have sexual relations outside marriage?

It is strictly forbidden for Muslims —boys or girls, men or women— to have sexual relations outside marriage and before marriage. Such conduct is hateful in the eyes of God and harmful to the community, and God has ordered it punishable in the Qur'an:

"The adulterer and the adulteress, flog each of them (with) a hundred strokes, and let not pity for them detain you from obedience to God, if you believe in God and the Last Day, and let a party of believers witness their chastisement."

(Qur'an: 24-2).

Thereafter:

"The adulterer cannot marry any but an adulteress or an idolatress, and the adulteress cannot marry any but an adulterer or an idolater; and it is forbidden to believers."

(Qur'an: 24-3).

According to most Islamic legal authorities, the punishment of flogging applies only to people who have not yet been married. For a person who has already had sexual relations in marriage the punishment of death by stoning is prescribed. However, this punishment has seldom been used, due to the strict

doing wrong. There are also many sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) concerning temptation and how we should act, some of which are: (a) the degree of reward depends upon the degree of temptation; and (b) temptation continues to be fallen with the believer male and female in themselves, in their children and in their wealth, till they meet their Lord without having any sin.

To conclude, we are to be tested and treated in every aspect of our daily lives: with what is *Halal* or *Haram*. Everyone is to be tested. Is he going to eat pork, drink alcohol, dance, date and follow the vices of society, leaving the Islamic teachings and culture behind him?

We are to resist such type of temptations and try our best to establish an Islamic community and Islamic culture wherever we are. This is indeed a challenge to each and every one of us

Dr. Ahmad Sakr

conditions on which a person can be convicted of adultery. The guilty parties must have been seen in the act by four (reliable) witnesses. A person who accuses another of adultery without bringing four witnesses can himself be accused of slander and punished with eighty strokes of a whip.

Whichever punishment is carried out, neither is lenient at all, and shows how strongly adultery and fornication are hated in Islam.

Why does Islamic Law provide legal punishments for these offences?

God hates these offences and they are harmful to us. They are social crimes in the same way as stealing or murder are social crimes. If they are allowed to happen, without any legal check, their bad effects will gradually spread through the community.

Sexual relations before marriage may lead to the birth of illegitimate children, who grow up, often unwanted, with no father and no proper family life. It also brings shame on the girl and her family and child.

Promiscuous sexual relations both before and after marriage may also bring the spread of venereal diseases. A husband who goes with prostitutes may pass the disease to his wife. A wife who contracts venereal disease may give birth to babies who are born deformed or blind, and thus become the source of unhappiness to the whole family.

Moreover, unfaithfulness in marriage usually leads to hatred, divorce and the end of the marriage. Again it is not only the husband and wife who suffer, but their children as well. Suddenly their safe home breaks up and either the mother or father disappears. (They may soon find that they have a step-mother or step-father who dislikes them or does not care for them). It destroys a child's feeling of security, and it is often from such broken homes that children grow up as juvenile delinquents, who are a serious problem not only to the parents but also to the community.

In a society where promiscuous sexual relations are common, people are constantly looking out for new girlfriends and boyfriends, and will become involved in lying, deceit and other bad practices in order to gain their desires. Sex in such societies takes much

more of people's time, thinking and energy than it should or would if it were confined to marriage.

Does this mean that schoolboys and schoolgirls should not have girlfriends and boyfriends?

Of course you are likely to know boys and girls of your own age, and may be on friendly terms with them. Yet having intimate girlfriends and boyfriends before marriage in the manner of modern Europeans and Americans, and pre-Islamic Arabs, is not permitted in Islam. A Muslim girl should never go out alone with a boy to whom she is not married. It is up to Muslim parents to see that their daughters are sufficiently protected against bad company up till the time they are married. It is up to the Muslim girls and boys to use their sense and judgement.

For the same reason Muslim girls and women should always dress decently and modestly, so as not to encourage illegal relations with men. A Muslim girl's dress should cover her body properly, neither should it be tight or transparent. Mini-skirts should not be worn by Muslim girls; they should wear a dress which covers their legs completely.

Can a Muslim marry a non-Muslim?

The general principle in such matters is towards encouragement of Islam. It is permissible for a Muslim man to marry a fellow-Muslim, or a Christian or Jewish girl (People of the Book —followers of earlier revelations) but not a pagan girl or idol-worshipper unless she first accepts Islam. (See Qur'an Ch. 5:5; Ch. 2:221). The reason, according to some Muslim scholars, is that it is more likely for a wife to change eventually to the religion of her husband than the other way round.

A Muslim girl must not marry a non-muslim. One of the reasons for this is that the children in a marriage are usually brought up in their father's religion. Also, because a husband usually makes the final decision in the house, the wife will face difficulties in carrying out her religious duties.

A hypocrite is a person who lies by his or her deeds. The vice of hypocrisy has always existed in human society and has contributed greatly to the instability and strife in the world.

An individual who merely conceals his sin, even if this results in his being mistakenly regarded as good, is not on that account a hypocrite. Islam does not teach that one's sins should be confessed to any person, but that forgiveness is to be sought only from God.

To do good deeds not for the sake of God, but merely for others to see and praise, is referred to in Islam as *Al-riya*, (lit:the show-business.) *Al-riya* is a kind of deception but not hypocrisy.

A Hadith clarifies the sin of *al-riya* in the following words:

"Out of those who will be dealt with first on the Day of Resurrection will be a martyr — who will first be called by Allah and will be shown the bounties bestowed upon him. He will recognise them. Then he will be asked what use he made of those bounties. He will reply: 'I fought for your sake (Jihad) until I was killed.' It will be said (by Allah): 'You are telling a lie: you fought so that you may be called brave.' Then it will be ordered and he will be taken headlong and thrown into the fire. The other person (will be brought) who acquired knowledge and taught it and learnt the Qur'an. He will recognise the bounties (of Allah on him). Then he will be asked: 'What use did you make of this?' He will reply: 'I acquired knowledge and taught it and read the Qur'an.' It will be said (by Allah): 'You are telling a lie. You acquired knowledge so that people may say that you are a learned man and recited the Qur'an so that you may be called a Qari (reciter).' Then it will be ordered and he will be taken headlong and thrown into the fire."

Another person (will be brought) who was given wealth by Allah and was given different kinds of properties. He will also recognise the bounties and will be asked: 'What use did you make of these bounties?' He will reply: 'There is no charitable cause in which you want that one should spend and I did not spend in it.' Allah will say: 'You are lying. You did so, so that you may be called generous.' Then it will be ordered and he will be taken headlong and thrown into the fire."

With this explanation of the sin of *al-riya*, it will be easier for us to proceed to discuss the Qur'anic teachings concerning the sin of hypocrisy, the categories of hypocrites and their menace in the formative years of Islamic Umma (nation of

Islam).

In the Qur'an the act of hypocrisy is referred to as *Nifaq*, while one who is guilty of hypocrisy is called *Munafiq*. The earliest reference to the hypocrites comes right at the beginning of Chapter 2 — *Al Baqara* — with mystic doctrines as to the three categories of people and how they receive God's message:

1. *Those who fear God (Muttaqeen)*
2. *Those who reject faith (Kafirun)*
3. *The hypocrites (Munafiqun)*

We shall deal with the third category of people only, the hypocrites, a sub-variety of the disbelieving class of people who, at the time of Prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him, abounded in Madinah

This singular class of people professed Islam with their lips and pretended to be good and faithful Muslims, yet were not only infidels at heart but inveterate enemies of the Messenger of God and the Message he had brought. The forceful Qur'anic narration of the hypocrites goes as follows:

"Of the people there are some who say: 'We believe in God and the Last Day,' But they do not really believe. Fain would they deceive God and those who believe, But they deceive not except themselves. And realize it not! In their hearts is a disease; And grievous is the penalty they incur. Because they are false (to themselves). Qur'an 2'8-10."

As the above verse of the Qur'an point out, the hypocrites have developed a disease in their heart and hence their principles of action are perverted. It is not a physical disease but a spiritual one which comes in the way of a believer's spiritual upliftment. A grievous penalty would be accorded to them as a retribution and deceit. Hypocrisy is itself a disease. The meaning of God's increasing the disease is that the hypocrites are not punished immediately but God gives them more time. As a result the hypocrites feel that they are becoming successful in their tricks and thus continue their mischief and become perfect hypocrites and thus go out of the pale of Islam.

When Prophet Muhammad and his Companions said to the hypocrites of Madinah in the early days of Islam not to act corruptly on earth, they used to reply that they were not the trouble makers but the reconcilers thus meeting both the enemies and friends of Islam deceitfully.

They had reversed the true order of things, mistaking their vice for virtue and calling corruption by the name of righteousness.

Their insincerity was actually their duplicity and they had willingly purchased error for guidance. They considered true believers as mere fools since after accepting faith they had to undergo a great deal of hardship. In their view this was not the right thing to do. They felt that the real sign of intelligence was to look at one's own personal gains rather than entering into the debate of right and wrong,

EVIL HYPOCRITES

It should be remembered at this juncture that the majority of the Madinan hypocrites was rich and elderly. They had large properties in Madinah and were running thriving business. These expert businessmen were extremely money-minded and their extraordinary care to look after their material welfare had made them first-class opportunists and hypocrites.

The Qur'an's Categories of the Hypocrites

Surah al-Tauba gives four categories of the mischievous hypocrites. Their general characteristics are as follows and applicable not only during the time of the Prophet but for all time, even today:

1. The deep-eyed hypocrites, who, when found out, make excuses because otherwise they will suffer ignominy. They are unregenerate and obstinate; and there is no hope for them. They are confirmed hypocrites.
2. There are those hypocrites who have lapsed into evil, but are not altogether evil as yet. They later repent and amend, and by the Grace of God accepted.

3. There are those cases which are yet doubtful, and only God knows of them and He alone will judge them.
4. The fourth category of the hypocrites belongs to a class of insidious evil-doers. As the Qur'an says: "There are those who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity to disunite the believers."

OF CRISIS

The fourth category can be fully understood from the incident of 'the mosque of mischief (*Masjidan Diraran*), a mosque built by the hypocrites of the tribe of Bani Ghanam in opposition of the sacred mosque of Quba, (about three miles from Madinah).

The Quba Mosque was the very first mosque in Islam. This Mosque is called "house of piety" and is a land mark in the spiritual history of Islam.

The hypocrites built another mosque in opposition to the Mosque of Quba and pretended they had done so for the advancement of Islam and Muslims, but in fact, they had built it (at the instigation of a monk called Abu Amir, a sworn enemy of Islam), as a meeting place for mischief-mongers who wanted to disunite Muslims and create an ill-feeling in their rank and file and minimize the importance of the Quba Mosque.

THE ROLE OF HYPOCRITES IN THE BATTLE OF UHUD

In the beginning of the third year of the "Hijrah", these Makkan Quraishite disbelievers attacked Madinah with nearly 3,000 people, well-equipped under the

leadership of Abu Sufyan. In reality they wanted to avenge their crushing defeat at the hands of a few Muslims in the battle of Badr.

The Muslim force of 1,000 people went out to defend themselves under the leadership of the Prophet. But soon after, the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullah bin-Ubay, deceived the Muslims and left the battlefield with 300 other hypocrites.

This sudden and unexpected move of the hypocrites caused an alarm among the Muslims and some weak-minded Muslims thought of deserting the Muslim forces - causing confusion among the Muslims.

The battle of Uhud was a great test for the Muslims and hypocrites. The latter were paying only lip service to Islam, and were out to destroy the unity and brotherhood in the young Muslim community. In the beginning, the battle went well for the Muslims, but the Muslim archers, in disobedience to their orders to remain firm in all circumstances left their posts in pursuit of the enemy. The enemy took advantage of this opening left by the archers. As a result the Muslims suffered heavy losses. The Prophet himself (peace be upon him) was injured in his head and face and a rumour was spread by the enemy and the hypocrites that he was killed. Those Muslims who were still fighting firmly lost heart on hearing this, and the hypocrites began to persuade them to switch loyalties and go over to Abdullah bin-Ubay who will plead for a peace treaty with Abu Sufyan, the enemy leader.

But the Prophet was alive and called to those who were running away: "*Ilayya Ibad-Allah; Ilayya Ibad-Allah.*" - "Come towards me O servants of Allah, Come towards me O servants of Allah". Soon the Muslims realised the Prophet, (peace be upon him) was alive and they rallied around him. But the enemy disengaged and returned to Makkah.

The enemy had every opportunity to completely crush the Muslims who had already lost much ground and committed blunders. It is a living miracle that the enemy decided to disengage and go back to Makkah - no explanation has yet been found.

The battle of Uhud gives a clear picture of the mischief of the hypocrites. It also taught the Muslims a lesson in faith, constancy, obedience, firmness and steadfastness to Allah and His Prophet.

Condensed from the article:
by Dr. A.R.I Doi.
In the Journal of
Rabitat Al-'Alam Al-Islam.

Words Of Wisdom

"O, Mankind: worship your Lord, Who created you and those before you, so that you may ward off evil; Who has made the earth a resting place for you, the sky a canopy and Who causes water to pour down from the Heavens, thereby producing fruits as food for you, so do not set up rivals to God, when you know better."

Qur'an 2:21-22.

"Act in your worldly affairs as if you are going to live forever, and act for the life hereafter as if you were going to die tomorrow."

(Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him).

"Fear God, wherever you are. Let a bad deed be followed by a good one, in order to obliterate the bad one and behave with people in a good manner."

(*ibid*).

"When Doomsday is near the following signs will be apparent:

1. Only the distinguished people and one's acquaintances will be saluted.
2. Business of every kind will be common so much so that a wife will be an assistant to her husband in his business.
3. People will lack the noble feeling of mercy co-operation and relationship.
4. People will not act according to what they write and say.
5. False witnesses will be very common.
6. They will try to conceal the true witnesses."

(*ibid*).

"I learned good manners from the bad-mannered. I learned wisdom from the blind who do not put their feet forward without feeling the ground. There can never be a spoken or written word from which the wise cannot derive benefit. But even a hundred books of wisdom cannot make a fool wiser, if he is not ready to benefit from them."

Luqman.

Drunken with the pride of riches, wealthy men neglect God's due: the communion of Islam lives on, because the poor are true.

(*Iqbal*).

Nothing, unless done in the right way, can have full value in this world.

Hazrat Omar).

The speaker must speak at the proper time and should finish at the right time.

(*Ibn Al-Arabi*).

Free From The Bonds Of Slavery

The root-cause of all evil and mischief in the world is the domination of man over man, be it direct or indirect. This was the origin of all the troubles of mankind and even to this day it remains the main cause of all the misfortunes and vices which have brought untold misery on humanity. God, of course, knows all the secrets of human nature. But the truth of this observation has also been confirmed and brought home to humanity by the experiences of thousands of years that man cannot help setting up someone or other as his 'god', 'ilah' and 'rabb', and looking up to him for help and guidance in the complex and baffling affairs of his life and obeying his commands. This fact has been established beyond question by the historical experience of mankind that if you do not believe in God, some artificial god will take His place in your thinking and behaviour. It is even possible that instead of one real God, a number of false gods, 'ilahs' and 'rabbs' may impose themselves upon you.

Even today man is chained in the slavery of many a false god. May he be in Russia or America, Italy or Yugoslavia, England or Trinidad, he is generally under the spell of some party, some ruler, some leader or group, some money-magnate or the like in such a manner that man's control over man, man's worship of man, man's surveillance of man continue unabated.

Wherever you turn your eyes, you will find that one nation dominates another, one class holds another in subjection, or a political party having gained complete ascendancy, constitutes itself as the arbiter of men's destiny; or again in some places a dictator concentrates in his hands all power and influence setting himself up as the lord and master of the people. Nowhere has man been able to do without a 'god' 'ilah' or 'rabb'.

What are the consequences of this domination of man by man, of this attempt by man to play the role of divinity? The same that would follow from a mean and incompetent person being appointed a police commissioner or some ignorant and narrow-minded politician being exalted to the rank of a minister or prime minister. For one thing, the effect of godhood is so intoxicating that one who tastes this

powerful drink can never keep himself under control. Even assuming that such self-control is possible the vast knowledge, the keen insight, the unquestioned impartiality and perfect disinterestedness which are required for carrying out the duties of godhood, will always remain out of the reach of man. That is why tyranny, despotism, intemperance, unlawful exploitation, and inequality reign supreme, whenever man's overlordship and domination over man are established. The human soul is inevitably deprived of its natural freedom and man's mind and heart and his inborn faculties and aptitudes are subjected to such vexatious restrictions that the proper development of his personality is arrested. How truly did Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) observe:

"God, the Almighty says: 'I created men with a pliable nature; then the devil came and contrived to lead them astray from their faith and prohibited for them what I had made lawful for them.'"

This is the sole cause of all the miseries and conflicts from which man has suffered during the long course of human history. So it was in the remote past and so it is today. The only remedy for this dreadful malady lies in the repudiation and renunciation by man of all masters and in the explicit recognition by him of God Almighty as his sole master and lord (ilah and rabb). There is no way to his salvation except this; for even if he were to become an atheist and heretic he would not be able to shake himself free of all these masters (ilahs and rabbs).

This was the radical reformation effected from time to time by the prophets in the life of humanity. They aimed at the demolition of man's supremacy over man. Their real mission was to deliver man from this injustice, this slavery of false gods, this tyranny of man over man, and this exploitation of the weak by the strong. Their object was to trust back into their proper limits those who had over-stepped them and to raise to the proper level those who had been forced down from it. They endeavoured to evolve a social organisation based on human equality in which man should be neither the slave nor the master of his fellow-beings and in which all men should become the servants of one real

Lord. The message of all the Prophets that came into the world was the same, namely:

"O my people, worship Allah. There is no ilah whatever for you except He."

Qur'an 7:59; 65; 73; 86.

Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *"I am only a warner, and there is no God save Allah, the One, the Absolute Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them."*

Qur'an 38:65-66.

"Lo! Your Lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then mounted He the Throne. He covers the night with the day, which is in haste to follow and has made the sun and the moon and the stars subservient by His command. His verily is all creation and (His verily is the commandment.)" *Qur'an 7:54*

"Such is Allah, your Lord. There is no God save Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He takes care of all things."

Qur'an 6:102;

"And they are not enjoined anything except that they should serve Allah, keeping religion pure for Him, as men by nature upright."

Qur'an 98:5.

"Come to a word common between us and between you, that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allah."

Qur'an 3:64

This was the proclamation that released the human soul from its fetters and set men's intellectual and material powers free from the bonds of slavery that held them in subjection. It relieved them of the burden that weighed heavily upon them and was breaking their backs. It gave them a real charter of liberty and freedom. The Qur'an refers to this marvellous achievement of Muhammad (peace be upon him), when it says:

"And he (the Prophet) relieves them of their burden and the chains that were around them."

Qur'an 7:157.

WITH CHILDREN IN MIND

STORY OF NOAH

Since the time of Adam, a good, many, many people were born. Many of those people began to forget about being good and doing good things. Many of them had become bad and they would lie and steal, and many did cheat and hurt others, and some were mean and greedy. Many of those people began to make idols, made from stones or wood. They began to worship and pray to those ugly stones, and they forgot about praying to Almighty Allah instead. They also forgot about the beautiful teachings of Prophet Adam about God's religion.

When people became evil doers, and when they prayed to stones and other things rather than to Allah Himself Allah would choose a new prophet, because Allah is so merciful and He wants the people to be good again.

At that time, many people were praying to those ugly idols. The priests became powerful and they made people miserable, because they were so unfair and so greedy. The poor people suffered because they really did not know better.

SO GOD CHOSE NOOH (NOAH)

Yes, God did choose a very, very good man and his name was Nooh (Noah). Like other prophets, Noah was a sincere man, very patient, trustworthy, and strong in his will and determination. Angel Gabriel gave him the teachings from God many, many, times and Nooh was ordered to teach and lead the people around who had become bad. Nooh kept going from one city to another and from one small village to another, teaching and preaching. He asked the people to pray to God, and not to the idols and to do good deeds and be good. He asked them to be fair and loving, to be trustworthy and helpful.

But alas, most of the people wouldn't believe in him. Many of them made fun of him and they laughed at him and some hurt him and even tortured him. Being a great prophet of God, Nooh would not quit just because of that. He knew his job was not easy. So he kept preaching and teaching for many, many years though most people kept making fun of him so often. Many of those people if not most were rotten and bad, they had nothing to do with Prophet Nooh.

WHAT HAPPENED THEN?

Prophet Nooh tried hard for many, many years, yet only a few people did

believe. Most other people didn't believe in him and they made fun of him and ridiculed him. Finally Prophet Nooh prayed in desperation; "Oh my Lord," he said "leave not upon the land anyone from the disbelievers."

Qur'an (LXXI:26)

Almighty God answered Nooh's prayer by asking him to build an ark, a very big boat. Prophet Nooh was in a town far away from the sea and building a boat was no easy matter, especially a very large one. Prophet Nooh knew then that Almighty God planned to drown those terrible people who had hurt him and the believers and who disbelieved in him and made fun of him.

Nooh the Prophet, started to work right away, working day and night, and those who believed were helping him with all they had got. The work was hard and it went on and on and on.

Slowly, the big boat began to take shape and Prophet Nooh and his helpers were busy nailing and using their hammers constantly. The people who didn't believe in the message of Prophet Nooh began to make even more fun of him and his followers, thinking that Prophet Nooh was not making sense at all, building such a huge boat so far away from the sea. They thought that they were becoming crazy and that they were losing their minds.

It took a number of years until the boat was completed, since it was to be made so big. God wanted Prophet Nooh to build such a huge boat (called an ark) so that it would hold Nooh and his family and all his followers, and a couple of each animal, a male and a female. The job was truly big, tiresome and a tough one. After all, not every one is able to put a couple of each kind of animals in one boat.

Now that the very big ark was completed, the skies became cloudy and angry looking. It started to rain and the rain began to pour and pour. Water was everywhere, streams became bulging with water, valleys began to fill with water and water began to pour in streams through the houses. The lightning was frightening and the thunder made the hearts pound fast. Everyone was so scared and worried, except for Prophet Nooh and his followers.

WHAT ELSE HAPPENED?

Prophet Nooh called on his family and followers to go to the ark. The animals, a male and a female of each, came rushing to the boat and the boat

began to become quite full. There was a special place in the boat for storing the food for all the animals and all the people.

Back to the villages and towns, the streams of water were rising fast and filling many houses with water through the windows and the doors, and so were the shops and other buildings. Many houses fell and collapsed on the people and many people tried to swim but they could hardly do it for long enough. They were in a pathetic, sorry condition, but they deserved it.

The water began to rise higher and higher as the skies kept pouring rain and more rain. Finally the whole area was drowned and all the disbelievers were destroyed. Prophet Nooh and his followers were safe and sound in the ark which was floating so nicely in the water not minding the huge waves around or the strong wind that kept blowing hard.

Finally, the skies began to clear, the rain stopped and the water began to drain. Prophet Nooh and his believers came to safety and so did the animals.

WHAT DID THEY DO AFTERWARDS?

Prophet Nooh lived to a very old age. The believers who were saved built new houses and they worked hard in the fields. They were good people and they prayed to God and believed in His message and religion, and they did good deeds. They taught their children and their grandchildren about the religion of God, and they taught them how to be good and not to hurt others. Gradually they became bigger and bigger in number, and they built many new towns and villages and they lived nicely and happily.

It is said that the law of Prophet Nooh continued for 950 years. As time passed, the number of people became very big and many of them began to be loose in their actions and started to become bad and do a lot of evil. Many had forgotten about the teachings of Nooh, and they became corrupt and evil doers.

When evil did spread, God through His mercy, chose another Prophet and his name was Ibrahim (Abraham).

Next issue, we shall continue with the story of Prophet Ibrahim, Insha Allah.

Source:

Stories of some of the Prophets,
Vol. 1.

By A.S. Hashim, M.D.

IN THE SHADE OF THE QUR'AN

When the Earth is shaken with her (final) earthquake, And the earth yields up her burdens, And man cries: 'What is the matter with her?' On that day she will relate her news, For that your Lord will have inspired her, On that Day mankind will issue forth in scattered groups to be shown their deeds, And whosoever does good an atom's weight will see it then. And whosoever does ill an atom's weight will see it then. Qur'an 99:1-8.

The surah is a violent shake to the drowsy hearts; a shake in which the participants are the subject, the image and the rhythm altogether. It is a powerful blast that quakes the Earth and all those who are on it. They hardly recover their senses when they find themselves confronted with the reckoning, weighing and recompense. All this is expressed in a few short phrases. This is characteristic of this thirtieth part of the Qur'an as a whole and is forcefully portrayed in this surah.

"When the earth is shaken with her (final) earthquake. And the earth yields up her burdens. And man cries, 'What is the matter with her?' On that day she will relate her news, for that your Lord will have inspired her."

It is the day of Judgement when the firm Earth trembles and quakes violently, ejects what she carries within her, yields up her long-carried loads of bodies and metals and other matters which have weighed heavily on her. She does this as if relieving herself of long standing burdens.

It is a scene that makes firm and solid objects under the feet of the listeners shake and totter. They think themselves to be staggering and toddling and the Earth beneath them shuddering and quaking. It is a scene which cuts the heart off everything on earth it clings to thinking it to be firm and everlasting. This is the first impression created by these scenes which the Qur'an portrays. The Qur'an imparts to them a kind of movement which is transmitted almost to the very sinews of the listener as soon as he hears these unique expressions of the Qur'an. This impact is made all the clearer by portraying man as confronting the scene described and revealing his reaction and reflexes while beholding it: "AND MAN CRIES, 'WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH HER?'"

It is the question advanced by the bewildered, astonished, surprised and

The Final Earthquake

puzzled who is seeing something unfamiliar to him, confronting what is imperceptible to his senses and beholding what makes him impatient and unable to keep calm. So he bursts out, "What is the matter with her? What is quaking and shaking her so violently? What is the matter with her?" He cries while he reels and staggers, trying to hold on to anything which may support him or keep him upright. But all around him waver and totter violently.

Man has experienced earthquakes and volcanoes which have filled him with awe and terror and have brought to him ruin and destruction. But when man witnesses the quake of the Day of Resurrection he sees no similarity between it and the earthquakes and volcanoes of this world. What will be happening then is something unfamiliar to man. He neither knows its secrets, nor does he remember anything similar to it. It is something august and dreadful, taking place for the first time ever. "ON THAT DAY" when this quake occurs, leaving man entirely shaken, "SHE (THE EARTH) WILL RELATE HER NEWS, FOR THAT YOUR LORD WILL HAVE INSPIRED HER." This earth will then tell its news, describe its condition and what will have happened to her. It all will have been brought about simply because, "YOUR LORD WILL HAVE INSPIRED HER", ordered her to shake and quake so fiercely and to yield up her burdens. She only obeys the Lord's orders and submits herself to her Lord as she must do. She will relate her news because what will be taking place is a simple and clear account of what lies behind it of Allah's orders and inspiration to the Earth.

At this point when man is astonished and puzzled, and as he gasps with dread and terror, with surprise and wonder, tottering and shuddering — at this point when man can hardly keep his breath, crying 'what is the matter?' 'what has happened to her?' — at this point he encounters the scene of resurrection, reckoning, weighing and recompense. "ON THAT DAY MANKIND WILL ISSUE FORTH IN SCATTERED GROUPS TO BE SHOWN THEIR DEEDS AND WHOSOEVER DOES GOOD AN ATOM'S WEIGHT WILL SEE IT THEN AND WHOSOEVER DOES AN ATOM'S WEIGHT WILL SEE IT THEN".

In the twinkling of an eye we

behold the scene of people coming out of their graves; "ON THAT DAY MANKIND WILL ISSUE FORTH IN SCATTERED GROUPS". We behold them scattered issuing forth, from all over the globe. "As if they were locusts spread all over the place". This is also a scene unknown to man; it is the scene of all mankind, all human generations issuing forth here and there. "On that Day, the Earth will split as from under them, hastening out as they come."

Wherever you look you behold a ghost coming up, then he hurries away, caring for nothing and never looking back nor turning his face either left or right. They all are 'hastening towards the Summoner' with their heads hanged forth and their eyes staring forward, 'everyone of them, that Day, will have enough concern (of his own) to make him indifferent to the other.' (80:37).

It is a scene indescribable by human terminology. It is frightful, dreadful; it is horrifying and ghastly; it is also astonishing. All these and all that is in the dictionary of synonymous and analogous terms cannot describe this scene, while it would be better conceived with a stretch of imagination and contemplation within the limits and capacity of the human mind.

"ON THAT DAY MANKIND WILL ISSUE FORTH IN SCATTERED GROUPS TO BE SHOWN THEIR DEEDS." This is far more terrible and dreadful. They go to where they will be shown their deeds. They have to face their deeds and their rewards or penalties. Encountering one's deeds may be, sometimes, far more severe than any punishment. Man sometimes does things which he avoids facing even when he is alone and by himself.

In a spell of repentance and remorse, man would even turn his face from some of his deeds because they are horrible and ghastly. Then, in what condition will he be in on that Day when he faces his deeds in front of all mankind and in the presence of Allah, the Great, the Almighty, the All-Powerful? It is a terrible and frightful punishment although it is only that they are shown their deeds and have to confront their actions. But following this confrontation (between men and their deeds) comes the accurate reckoning which does not leave an atom's weight of good or evil unassessed or without reward. "AND WHOSOEVER DOES GOOD AN

LETTERS

Fulfilling a Need

The Editor,

I have been reading your newspaper for the past few months and I felt that I must write this note to show how inspired I have been with your articles on Islam and the current problems facing us all.

I was truly delighted to observe that you highlighted the opening of the Islamic Centre here in Barbados together with an interview with Br. Da'ud Abdul-Haqq the director.

I have been selling copies of this newspaper here and the response of the people is encouraging. But, we need much more copies than you have been sending us.

As regards the newspaper, I see it as fulfilling a need in the Caribbean as a whole and more effort is needed to harness the opinions of Muslims in the Caribbean. It is time the Muslims play a dominant role in eradicating the problems in the region.

May Allah reward you and grant you the sincerity, perseverance and dynamism necessary for the fulfilment of this task.

Your brother in Islam,
Ahmad Omar.
Barbados.

THE FINAL EARTHQUAKE

ATOM'S WEIGHT WILL SEE IT THEN
AND WHOSEVER DOES AN
ATOM'S WEIGHT WILL SEE IT THEN."

'An atom's weight'. Commentators of the Qur'an explain this phrase as 'a mosquito' or 'a particle of dust which could be seen only when exposed to the light of the sun'. These were the smallest thing they could think of, and which may be referred to as an 'atom'. But now we know that the word 'atom' refers to a definite thing which is much smaller than that 'particle of dust' seen in the sunlight. For, the particle of dust can be seen by the human eye, while it is impossible to see the atom, not even with the help of the most powerful microscopes in laboratories. It is only conceived by the scientists. None of them has seen it neither with his eyes nor with his microscope. All that they have seen is its effects. This atom, or what is similar to it in weight, whether good or evil, will be brought forth, shown to its

doer who will then receive its reward. At that time man does not undervalue any of his actions and deeds, whether good or bad. He does not say, 'Oh, this is a trivial thing which has no weight or consideration'. On the contrary, his conscience will be as sensitive to everything he has done as an accurate scale registering even the weight of an atom favourably or unfavourably. There is nothing parallel or similar to this measure in this world, except the believing heart. For the believing heart is sensitive to

even an atom's weight of either good or evil. But there are some hearts in this world which are unmoved even by mountains of sins and crimes. They remain unaffected while suppressing fountains of good which are far firmer than the mountains. These hearts are concealed in this earth, but on the Day of Judgement they are crushed under their own burdens

(Adapted from *Fi Zilal al Qur'an*)

by Sayyid Qutb.

Correct Spelling of Names

The Editor,

In the last issue (No. 28/February/March, 1978) of the Muslim Standard a list of names was published under the title "Suggested Muslim Names." I found that the spelling of the names was inconsistent with that of the article "Check Out Your Name" (Issue No. 27/January, 1978). The list presented below is more in keeping with the latter article.

NAMES FOR BOYS

ABDULLAH

ABDUR-RAHMAN

Some names containing the attributes of Allah

ABDUT-TAWWĀB
ABDUR-RAḤĪM
ABDUR-RA'ŪF
ABDUR-RABB
ABDUR-RAZZĀQ
ABDUR-RASHĪD
ABDUS-SALĀM
ABDUS-SAMĪ
ABDUS-SHAKŪR
ABDUS-SĀMAD
ABDUL-BĀSIT
ABDUL-BĀQĪ
ABDUL-JABBĀR
ABDUL-JALĪL
ABDUL-HAFĪZ
ABDUL-HAQQ

ABDUL-HAKAM
ABDUL-HAKĪM
ABDUL-ḤAMĪD
ABDUL-ḤAYY
ABDUL-KHABĪR
ABDUL-KHĀLIQ
ABDUL-'AZĪZ
ABDUL-GHAFFĀR
ABDUL-GHANĪ
ABDUL-GHAFFŪR
ABDUL-QĀDIR
ABDUL-FATTĀH
ABDUL-QUDDŪS
ABDUL-QAYYŪM
ABDUL-KARĪM
ABDUL-LATĪF

ABDUL-MĀLĪK
ABDUL-MAJĪD
ABDUL-MU'MIN
ABDUL-MATĪN
ABDUL-MUJĪB
ABDUL-MĀJID
ABDUL-MUQSIṬ
ABDUL-MALIK
ABDUZ-ZĀHIR
ABDUN-NŪR
ABDUL-WĀJID
ABDUL-HĀDĪ
ABDUL-WĀḤID
ABDUL-WADŪD
ABDUL-WAHHĀB
ABDUL-WĀLĪ

In the previous article the name ABDUL-MON'IM appears but we have not been able to confirm that AL-MON'IM is an attribute of Allah.

Names and attributes of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him)

AḤMAD
AMĪN
BASHĪR
HĀMID

SHĀFI'
ĀDIL
QĀSIM
MUBĪN

MATĪN
MUJTABA
MUḤAMMAD
MAHMŪD

MUKHTĀR
MUṢṬAFĀ
MAHDĪ
NADHĪR

Names of the ladies of the household of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him)

ĀMINA(H)*
HALĪMA(H)
'Ā'ISHA(H)
RUQAYYA(H)

SAFIYYA(H)
SAUDA(H)
FĀTIMA(H)
MĀRYA

ZAYNAB
UMM-SALMA(H)
MAYMŪNA(H)
UMM-ḤABĪBA(H)

KHADĪJA(H)
JUWAYRIYYA(H)
UMM-KULTHUM
ḤAFṢA(H)

*Some authors transliterate these names to end with an "H"

At the time of writing we have not been able to check on the spelling in the last section.

Hydar Ali
Trmcity.

BOOKS AVAILABLE

ISLAM AND THE WORLD

Author: Hasan Ali Nadwi

This book undertakes a study of the impact of Islam on history: the role Islam played in the story of human progress and the loss humanity has suffered by its decline.

Price : \$9.50

WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Author: Hasan Ali Nadwi

It deals with the conflict of ideas and ideals that is going on today in the entire world of Islam and indicates the attitude which the Muslims can and should adopt for meeting the challenge posed by the Western Civilization.

Price : \$12.50

ISLAM AN INTRODUCTION

This book attempts to present the true picture of Islam on the one hand, and the impressions of non-Muslims about Islam on the other.

Published by Begum Aisha Bawany Wakf

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