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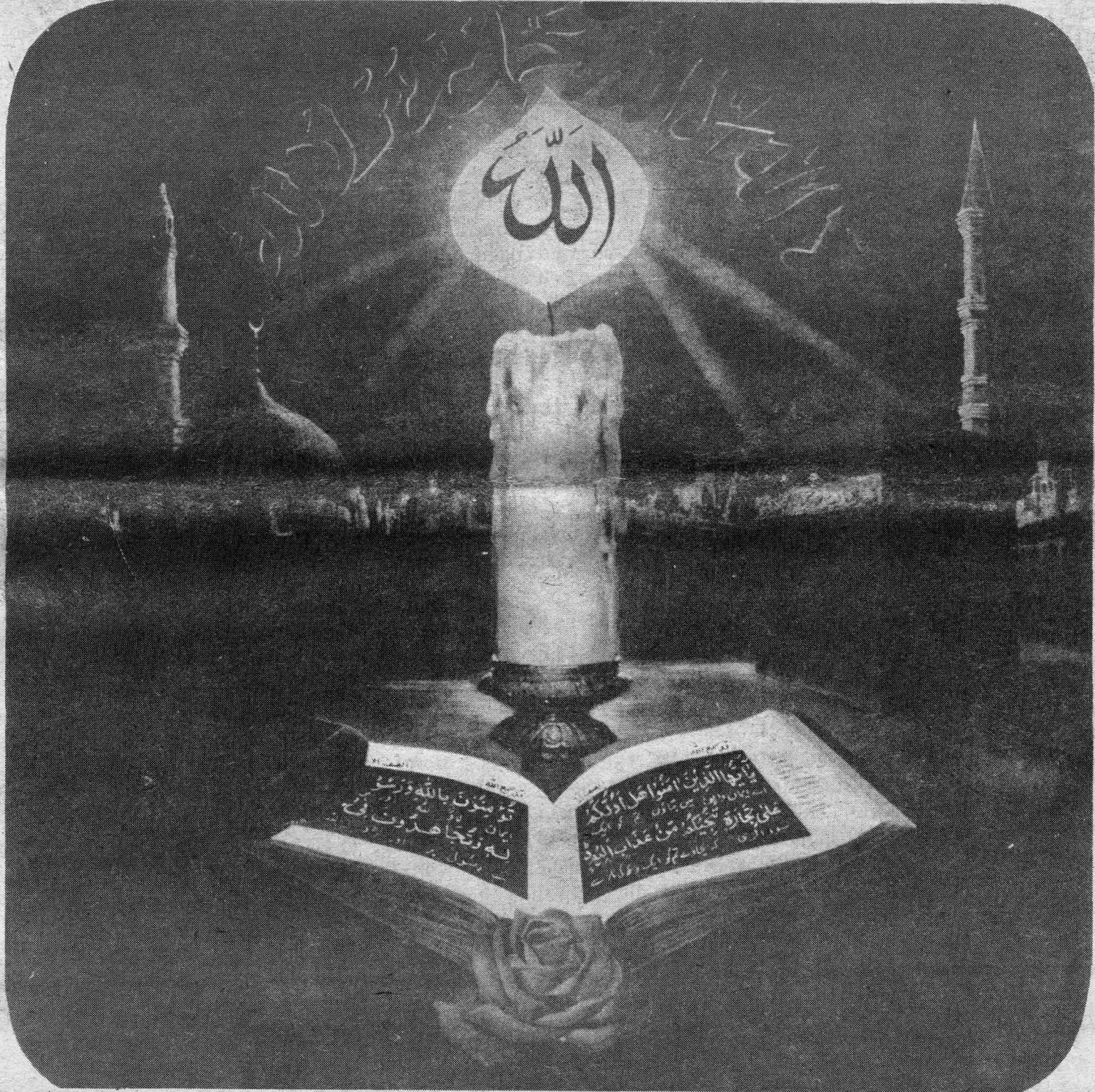
THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT JOURNAL

THERE IS NO GOD BUT ALLAH
MUHAMMAD IS HIS MESSENGER

Ramadan - Shawwal 1395

Vol. 4 - No. 5

Sept - Oct 1975



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editorial

The Kind of Men Needed for a Movement

Unlike other movements, the target of the Islamic movement is the entire configuration of human life. Such a movement calls for the implementation of the Law of Allah (God), and since Law relates both to the personal and social life of man, the movement has to work simultaneously for changes in the individual and society. For the reform of the individual, it has to select from a basically corrupt social system only such persons who will accept the new way of life and implement it in all their practical affairs. It is extremely important for the movement to establish a distinction between those who accept the call and those who do not, so that the movement may be represented by the right kind of people, and so that an example and model of the society it is struggling to create may be seen in its group life.

When an individual joins the struggle and accepts the Islamic call, he has to fight against the influences of his race, family, and society; he has to prove his sincerity through the spirit of sacrifice, total commitment, and courage. The greatest form of striving in the service of Allah is proclaiming the message of Islam in the face of opposition and adversaries, maintaining resoluteness and firmness of belief, and patiently persevering in the face of hardships. Thus, the movement wants to acquire an excellent worker who will accept physically, mentally, and financially all that the movement demands, one who is prepared to abandon his most profitable interests and pass through the most severe tests for the sake of the movement.

With the help and organization of these individuals the movement strives for the reform of society, and the rate of change in society is directly related to the possibilities of reform in the government. Whether victory is accomplished in this life or not, every worker must understand that working for Islam is itself an obligation and an act of worship which brings them closer to Allah. A Muslim is obliged to work and strive, and is not obliged to succeed and achieve total victory. Allah will not ask the people on the Day of Resurrection why they did not succeed, but He will ask them why they did not struggle.

The Believer's Pledge

FOR ME THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IS THE VERY PURPOSE OF MY LIFE. MY LIFE IS DEDICATED TO IT AND MY DEATH SHOULD ALSO BE IN PURSUIT OF THIS PURPOSE. OTHERS MAY FOLLOW IT OR MAY NOT. IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES THIS SHALL BE MY COURSE AND I WILL GIVE MY LIFE FOR IT. EVEN IF NOT A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL STEPS FORWARD, I WILL YET DO SO AND IF NONE ACCOMPANIES ME I WILL WALK ALONE. IF THE ENTIRE WORLD UNITES TO OPPOSE ME, I WILL CONTEND WITH IT SINGLE-HANDED, UNDAUNTED.

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AL-ISLAM

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The Rights of Women:

A

Rational Approach

"We are witnessing great shifts in the concepts of marriage, of family, and of sexual role. Marriage patterns are changing and new forms of family structure are emerging. Work roles, formerly based upon sex, have become increasing interchangeable between men and women, while education and socialization of young children is no longer assigned exclusively to the biologic parent. Under these circumstances, the self-concept of men and women must alter."

The above quotation is extracted from THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT: SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES, a book that calls itself "a clear responsible examination of some of the emerging trends in the Women's Movement which flared into being in the 1960's in the United States." The statement is quite typical of the contemporary liberal attitude that accepts any changes in social patterns as inevitable and wishes to make adjustments accordingly regardless of eventual consequences.

Modern women's liberation movements say that society makes the woman a second-class citizen, and they demand that women be treated equally in everything with men. Their idea of "liberation" distorts the facts about human nature and ignore God-given differences between men and women--differences which do not confer inferiority upon women. Such differences exist to complement each other and make for balance within the man-woman relationship. There is no doubt that women have been misused and treated unjustly by men, but any efforts to remedy this situation must also act to enhance, develop, and protect the intuitional makeup of the feminine psyche. A practical system of life should recognize equality between men and women where natural grounds exist for such equality; however, it must be wise and mature enough to allow for differences and distinctions demanded by nature.

The question of the relationship between men and women and their respective rights and duties is really a part of the larger socio-economic problem of man. Its solution depends on the way in which this larger problem is dealt with by a society. It is wrong, therefore, to study the question of woman's rights and her place in society in isolation from the total context of human relationships in all their aspects. Before any judgement is passed on the particular way in which a civilization deals with the problem of sex roles, consideration must be given to its total approach to human existence so that solutions can be viewed in their total setting.

Islam does not judge civilization by its mechanical efficiency, technical progress, or productive capacity. A society may achieve phenomenal success in any or all of these areas and still remain spiritually bankrupt if it displays an insufficient regard for social justice and human equality. The primary value of civilization, according to this attitude, lies in the moral conduct of its individuals as reflected in their beliefs, institutions, and relations between classes and sexes.

In passing judgment on Islamic teachings with regard to relations between the sexes and the ideal of equality, it is necessary to keep in mind this aspect of the matter: Islam puts primary emphasis on those qualities of the soul which lead to greater social harmony and prevent class conflicts. Material wealth and the human qualities which tend to increase it are allowed only a rank of secondary importance and are subordinated to moral and spiritual values.

There is a sense in which all human beings are equal, but in actual life, we find that no two human beings are really equal in all respects. There are differences of tastes, temperaments, faculties, powers, and outlook all of which cannot be traced to differences of environment or upbringing. In spite of the fundamental and essential unity of all human beings, it is impossible in practice to level down all differences and inequalities, because some of them are the outcome of natural differences. Inequality leads to injustice and oppression only where artificial impediments, whether in the shape of laws or customs and traditions, are superimposed on natural inequalities so as to prevent men and women from developing their inborn capacities to the fullest extent.

The ideal of sex equality should also be viewed from the same angle. If by sex equality is meant that artificial customs, traditions, and laws which prevent the female sex from playing its full part in collective life and developing its inherent capacities to the maximum extent should be removed out of the way, there is no sane person who would disagree. But if sex equality means that the

(RIGHTS OF WOMEN)

type of mental and bodily faculties, psychological make-up, and temperamental equipment possessed by the two sexes are identically the same, and that men and women exist not as complements to each other but as competitors and rivals in a common sphere of activity, then it is an ideal about which most people would disagree.

When Islam appeared in Arabia, women held a very low position in society. They were treated not only as social inferiors but like slaves and chattel. When a man having many wives died, the latter were inherited by his sons like movable property. It was a mark of dishonor for any man to have a daughter and many preferred to bury their female children alive rather than loose face. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) constantly reminded his followers that female children should be treated exactly in the same manner as sons. According to Abdullah ibn Masud, the Prophet is reported to have said: "If a daughter is born to a person and he brings her up, gives her a good education, and trains her in the arts of life, I shall stand between him and hell fire."

The Holy Quran has in many places stated that in regard to moral and spiritual development men and women stand on a level of perfect equality. But no where does the book of Allah ignore the natural differences and special aptitudes peculiar to each sex:

And in no wise covet those things in which Allah hath bestowed His gifts more freely on some of you than on others: to men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn. (IV:32)

And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts. (XXX: 21)

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more strength than the other, and because they support them from their means. (IV: 34)

And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree of advantage over them. (II: 228)

The main points to be noted here are, firstly, that the female sex must be a source of comfort and peace of mind to its male counterpart; secondly, that men and women excel each other or are superior to each other in some respects; and lastly, that in the general affairs of life men are partially, but not absolutely, superior to women. These statements involve certain indirect conclusions which are of great importance to social happiness. The Quran, it seems, first sets forth a general doctrine of sex equality and then qualifies and defines it with the assertion that this is not an undifferentiated equality but one involving special rights and

duties both for men and women. Within the framework of their special responsibilities, both sexes are absolutely equal to each other.

If the female sex is a source of comfort and quietness of mind to the male sex, this can happen only if men and women are united in a more or less permanent bond of interests which finds expression in a life planned and based on some idea of the future. This bond must require them to cooperate and not to compete, and must integrate them as complements in an ordered whole. These considerations involve a pattern of life of which marriage, family, and children are the most important factors because there can be no other abiding interests to hold together two individuals of different sexes. A mere community of intellectual interests or identity of special aptitudes is an insufficient bond even for that microscopic minority to whom these things matter most.

Equality of rights in Islam means an equality which is adjusted to and qualified by the special duties and responsibilities of each sex. About the special position of men, the Quran, as quoted above, makes these statements: "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women," and relative to women "men have a degree of advantage over them." This implies no natural superiority on the part of men, nor any inherent inferiority of women, because it is an arrangement dictated by natural necessities. A "degree" does not signify any great amount of difference. The different economic position between the sexes makes man's rights and liabilities a little greater than the woman's. Islamically, the man is solely responsible for the complete maintenance and physical well-being of his wife, family, and often other relatives, whereas a woman has no financial obligations except her personal ones. It is in this context that man has a certain degree of "advantage." Note, however, that verse (II: 228) says that man's advantage is tempered by the call for doing "what is equitable" in regard to a woman's rights. Rather than infringe on woman's rights, the Quran acknowledges, defends, and protects them.

The Islamic system of life separates men and women and employs them respectively for the purposes nature has created them for, affording them equal opportunities of attaining success, honor, and progress in their own natural spheres. It regards both womanhood and manhood as two equally necessary components of humanity; both are equally important for the development of civilization. The services rendered by both in their respective spheres are equally useful and valuable. Just as a man will attain respect and progress if he remains the man and performs the duties of the man, so a woman will attain respect and progress if she remains the woman and performs the duties of the woman.

Use of Reason

The place and function of reason in relation to Divine revelation has been a problem in most religions. Reason and revelation appear at first sight to be, by their very natures, in conflict. To settle the conflict, men have attempted to delineate the respective spheres of reason and revelation as guides to human conduct. The problem, then, has been to assess the competence of human reason, and to determine how far Divine guidance is necessary and whether it supplants the function of reason. For many religions too, another aspect of the problem has been the decision on how far sacred texts are capable of rational interpretation and comprehension.

On superficial examination, Islam also appears to exhibit a contradiction between reason and revelation, since Islam in essence means submission to the will of God, whereas the use of reason implies unaided human striving. From the Islamic point of view, however, the two are not contradictory but are, in fact, complementary. A correct and valid use of the human intellect depends on human submission to the Divine Will, while this submission will only be genuine and valuable if performed consciously and with understanding. Reason has a role in both the perception and application of the truths of the Divine Message, and by defining this role Islam has assigned reason its proper place in the harmonious unity of human capacities.

In the same way that Islam as a historical force has not regarded compulsion as a valid means for obtaining conversion, so too does the Holy Quran seek to persuade man rather than impose on him a simple demand for submission. The Holy Quran is addressed to man as a rational being, and attempts to convince him of the truth. This aspect of the Quran is also an aspect of Divine benevolence to man, for Allah clearly stands in no need of man's belief; rather, having created man and endowed him with the faculty of reason, wishes to guide him in making use of that faculty.

Allah says in the Holy Quran: "Say: Are those who know and those who do not know equal?" (XXXIX: 9) While Islam does not recognize any distinction or privilege based on lineage, birth, wealth, tribal, racial, or national affiliation, it does differentiate between those endowed with knowledge of Allah and His revelations, attained in part by the use of the reasoning faculty, and those whose powers of thought and understanding lie dormant and unused. It is evident that mental talents are various, yet Allah in His mercy

and grace has endowed man with at least enough reason to perceive His existence and follow His guidance.

The Holy Quran appeals to man's understanding in different ways. It summons mankind to examine the nature of his own environment and the miraculous nature of the universe. It invites him to ponder over the orderly and regular patterns of the heavens and the earth. It implores him to examine the creation of the human race, and his progress and evolution as an individual from a drop of sperm to a mature human being. "We have created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, then from a leech-like clot, then from a lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, so that We may manifest Our power to you. And We cause what We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed time, and afterwards We bring you forth as infants, then give you growth so that you attain your full strength. (XXII: 5)

After considering the general and eternal nature of the universe, man's attention is directed to particular instances of Divine grace and human reaction--in other words, to history. An appeal is made for man to consider the history of previous communities to whom Prophets have been sent, and who rejected Divine guidance. "They denied the revelations of their Lord, flouted His messengers, and followed the commands of every obstinate tyrant." (XI: 59) The tyrant that dominates those who have flouted Divine guidance may not be in the shape of an individual oppressor; the fancies, passions, and desires of men act with the same disastrous results. Those who do not act righteously will eventually be brought down. This summons to contemplate the destiny of nations is not a threat: rather, a reference to a law of cause and effect, a law whose operation is subject to and is an expression of Divine Will.

It is with reason that man is enabled to distinguish between right and wrong. Muslims follow the ethical precepts, commands, and prohibitions of the Holy Quran because as Muslims we believe the Holy Quran to be the word of God and following the guidance contained therein as incumbent upon us. There is, however, behind every single prescription a wisdom (*hikma*) consisting of the harm which will accrue to man from disregarding it and the benefit that will come from following it. Perception of this wisdom through exercise of the reasoning faculty will clearly result in greater persistence in following Divine guidance.

RAMADAN

History & Meaning

Ramadan is the month in which the Quran was revealed, a guide to mankind, containing clear signs that will lead men to the right path, and a criterion between right and wrong. (II:185)

Like all other Prophets of Allah, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) had a natural aversion to all the evil and pagan practices that were popular during his day. He led a quiet and peaceful life with his devoted wife, Khadija, but his heart was perturbed by the sad condition of the human race. As the years passed, the future Prophet devoted an increasing amount of time to meditation. He would often retire to the bare mountain slopes just on the outskirts of Mecca. Here he would take refuge in the cave of Hira, where he could contemplate without worldly interruptions and distractions.

At the age of 40, one day during the month of Ramadan, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was in the cave of Hira fast asleep. He was awakened by the sudden appearance of an angel who called his name out aloud, "Muhammad." The angel then squeezed him tightly and said: "Read." Explaining that he could not read, he was pressed even firmer by the angel, but he gave the same reply. On the third time Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was squeezed so strongly that feeling of exhaustion came over his body, and he asked: "What shall I read?" The angel said: "Read in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created--created man out of a mere clot of congealed blood. Read! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful--He Who taught the use of the Pen, taught man that which he knew not."

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) felt as though these words had been engraved in his mind. Frightened and dazzled by this overwhelming experience, he rushed home in the early morning hours, pale and trembling. In his haste he heard a voice exclaim: "I am Gabriel, the angel who brings messages from Allah to His Prophets. You are the Messenger of Allah to guide humanity to the right path, the path of Truth."

It was in this manner that the mission of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) had its beginnings, a mission which the fasting of Ramadan trains the obedient servants of Allah to fulfill. Thus, Ramadan is not only the anniversary of the first revelation of the Quran, but it is also a reminder to all Muslims of their mission to establish the rule of the Almighty on earth.

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for the followers of the Prophets before you, that haply you may be able to guard yourselves against evil. (II: 183)

The institution of fasting has been practiced in all the revealed religions of the world in various forms and with various motives. Though present day Christianity does not attach much importance to this kind of devotion to God, Jesus (peace be upon him) kept a fast of forty days like a true Jew following the example of Moses who fasted forty days before receiving the Divine commandments. Jesus also recommended fasting to his disciples in these words: "When you fast, be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance.... But thou, when thou fastest, annoint thy head and wash thy face." (Matt. 6: 16-17)

Prophet David fasted for seven days during the illness of his infant son. (II Samuel 12: 16-18) And fasting is mentioned as a sign of mourning in Samuel 31: 15. The day of atonement was observed as a day of fasting by the Jews. (Leviticus 15: 29) Various other days were also observed as fasting days in sorrowful commemoration of the various sad events which occurred in the downfall of the kingdom of Judah. Many indications show that fasting in all nations was resorted to in times of mourning, sorrow, and affliction.

But in Islam there is no such idea of appeasing the Divine wrath or exciting Divine compassion through fasting. Islam introduced regular fasting as a means to develop the inner faculties of man. Though the Quran speaks of expiatory or compensatory fasts in certain cases of violation of Divine injunctions, these are quite distinct from the obligatory fasting in the month of Ramadan. These expiatory fasts are mentioned only as an alternative to an act of charity such as the feeding of a poor person.

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RULES OF FASTING

The principles of the Ramadan fast require that every adult Muslim abstain from food, drink, and sexual intercourse from dawn until sunset. Exempted from this regimen are the insane, old persons, the sick, travelers, pregnant and menstruating women, and suckling mothers. In some of these cases, however, the missed days must be made up later as well as feeding a hungry person during the missed period. One is also expected to remain from idle talk, arguments, and unclean thoughts.

The reason given by the Quran for fasting is simply this: "So that you may acquire taqwa." The word taqwa is often translated as piety, as fear of God, or as self-restraint. But it may be better understood as a self-correcting factor within a person that warns him before he goes off course and helps him come back if he happens to stray. If a man keeps the fast with an understanding of its objective and strives in the direction of devotion to God and submission to His Will, he may develop the quality of taqwa. Without understanding the spirit of fasting, if one only follows the outward regulations that govern fasting, he cannot obtain anything out of it except the distress of hunger and thirst. That is why the Prophet said: "If you do not abstain from lying and dishonest living, Allah is not in need of your abstaining from food and drink."

Taqwa is a dynamic force in building up a Muslim's character and consists of the following traits: (1) Believing in the omnipresence and omniscience of God to live such a life that on the day of judgement one may be able to get acquitted honorably; (2) Considering the gains and pleasures of this life as temporary and to order one's life on permanent values that will bear fruit in the life to come; (3) Attaching greater value to spiritual gains than to material gains; (4) Following a moral code of lasting value which is not subjected to alterations and amendments to suit selfish ends. In the regulations of fasting there is full scope for developing and strengthening these qualities.

Someone who fulfills all the requirements of fasting experiences the following: (1) Submission of one's will to the Divine Will and implicit obedience to the Divine Law; (2) Willingness to conform to the Divine Law outwardly as well as inwardly without any external pressure, but impelled by the belief that all deeds are accountable in the Hereafter; (3) Refusal to accept and serve any other authority except Allah's; (4) Adherence to the path of Allah by freeing one's self from the slavery of materialistic tendencies and worldly temptations; (5) Exercising control over all the faculties of the body and mind, and employing them with the knowledge and insight given by Allah for such ends that may produce the qualities of patience, steadfastness, endurance, and trust in Allah.

A person who fasts conscientiously will begin to imbibe the above characteristics, and when he repeats this practice for a continuous period of thirty days these become stabilized. Hence, if a person fasts year after year, these noble qualities become so deeply rooted that they become part of one's nature and the ingredients of his character. One's life becomes secure from all the elements of transgression and takes to the path of taqwa--the path of righteousness and piety.



FEED THE HUNGRY MONTH

SEPT 7 - OCT 5

The Islamic Party in North America for the fourth year declares the month of Ramadan (annual month of fasting and almsgiving for Muslims worldwide), FEED THE HUNGRY MONTH. In the past three years, we have distributed bags of groceries and served hot meals to needy persons throughout the District of Columbia. Among the hundreds of recipients were disabled veterans, invalids, elderly couples on fixed incomes, people temporarily out of work, and families on welfare and food-stamps whose allotments were insufficient. This year our theme will again be "Feed the Elderly." In this society where undue emphasis is placed on youth, the aged are often neglected and forgotten. During this sacred month, bags of groceries will be delivered to as many elderly, indigent, and hungry people as possible.

Our goal this year is to raise \$5,000 for the funding of this most worthy project. We hope and pray that other groups and individuals will join with the Party in its effort to demonstrate Islamic concern for the plight of the poor. Anyone interested in donating food or money to buy food for this project should contact the Islamic Party.

The Party has also made arrangements for the collection and proper distribution of Zakat-ul-Fitr (Muslim obligatory fasting tax for the poor to be paid at the end of Ramadan by all adult Muslims and by parents for their children). Ibn Abbas said that Allah's Messenger prescribed the charity, relating to the breaking of the fast, as a purification of the fast from empty and obscene talk and as food for the poor. Please mark all checks payable to The Islamic Party, and indicate either 'Feed the Hungry' or 'Zakat-ul-Fitr' or both. Donations should be sent to:

ISLAMIC CHARITY FUND
IPNA
770 PARK ROAD N.W.
WASHINGTON D.C. 20010

TELEPHONE: 291-2300, 862-9804

THE PARTY STRESSES THAT ALL POOR PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF RELIGION WILL RECEIVE ATTENTION FROM THIS PROJECT.

Raising Our Children (pt. 3)

The following article is the third in a series of messages by the late Prof. Hassan Eshmawi of Egypt on the proper training and education of children. The author was a lawyer and member of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. When the Egyptian government severely persecuted the Brotherhood in 1954, Prof. Eshmawi had to go into exile. During this period he wrote to his wife on how to properly raise their children. These writings have been translated for AL-ISLAM from the Arabic bi-monthly, ASH-SHIHAB (Beirut, Lebanon), by Dr. H. Muhammad Najm, an associate of Islamic Party Publications.

ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE

Now let us direct our attention to the important question: How can our children acquire knowledge? The answer in brief is through three channels: institutionalized education, extracurricular reading, and observation through practical experience.

Institutionalized education has become a necessity in modern societies. Since regular schooling is obligatory, we are all obliged to make our children love school and feel anxious to go. However, we should make up for any deficiency we may find in the system or the curriculum of the school. It is also useful to make the child set a vocational or professional goal for himself (e.g., to become a lawyer, or a physician, or an engineer, etc.), and to encourage him to achieve that goal. However, we should understand that regular schooling does not create talent. It only develops talent and makes the society recognize it.

Once regular schooling provides the boy or girl with the keys to knowledge, he should utilize these keys in opening for himself the door of extracurricular reading, which is the widest door to knowledge. We now live in the age of the press, or the age of the book, the journal, and the magazine. From these sources the youth can obtain all the information they want outside the limits of the school room. To infuse love of free reading into children we can bring them amusing story books. Then once they develop the tendency to read, they will hasten to read all that they like and all that teaches them the good and bad sides of life.

It is important that we as parents instill in the children's minds the respect for the book. Children should learn how to take care of a book, keep it clean, and protect it from loss or being toyed with by others. A child must be encouraged to form his own library. Naturally it will be small in the beginning, maybe in a drawer or an empty cardboard box, but it will develop the child's interest in reading and will teach him how to collect books and make a good library for himself. So do not underestimate the value of the child's little library, or think of it as an additional burden to the budget or a thing that crowds the house.

If extracurricular reading is a means of receiving and acquisition, then verily leisure writing is a means of expression and giving. Why cannot the child have his own private notebook to jot down his feelings, observations, and whatever he wants to record? We should respect the child's privacy if he elects not to show his notebook to us. But because of his feeling of freedom, he will eventually show it to us. In this case, we should read the child's writings carefully to know his feelings, desires, and inclinations, and find out his talents too. His private writings may be poor or foolish in the beginning, but keeping a notebook will teach him companionship of the pen, which is of extreme value in every man's life.

Although reading is the basic medium of acquisition of knowledge, it is not enough to provide the child with everything he needs. Reading alone creates what you may call a "bookworm" or "library mouse," who eats the pages of books and then does nothing. And we certainly do not wish our children to be worms or mice. We want them to be educated persons with sound understanding and model conduct. From this we realize the importance of observation through practical experience in childhood education. Only by action can one make use of his knowledge and direct it in the right direction. The Messenger of Allah always sought refuge with Allah from useless knowledge.

In fact, all our lives are an experiment, or several experiments, for the attainment of a better condition. The history of mankind is nothing but a series of great experiments towards universal happiness. However, a child cannot go through serious experiences, or even the less serious technical experiments, before he goes through easy and safe experiences that suit his age and ability. For instance, a short excursion is a useful experience. It increases his knowledge of history, geography, and nature, and develops his imagination and artistry. Growing little plants and raising pet animals are very useful experiences that augment the child's knowledge of botany and zoology. Drawing up a budget for a trip, a project, or even for the house is an experience which turns math into useful facts rather than obscure numbers and symbols that are imposed on the child's mind.

Fasting in the month of Ramadan and participating in the happy occasions of Islamic feasts are unique experiences that teach the child the meaning of deprivation, help him become aware of social and economical differences, and develop his sense of reciprocal responsibility. Watching certain television programs, seeing certain plays and movies, and walking through markets and business establishments are rich experiences which teach him a lot about the realities and problems of life.

Performing household duties, shopping, drawing, playing a musical instrument--all of these are meaningful experiences for the child. His relationships with relatives and friends are helpful in building his character. In short, whenever the child goes through any simple experience and observes or lives its developments and results, his knowledge is increased on a practical level.

Since the result of any experiment is either success or failure, going through the above experiences will make the child taste failure, learn how to accept it, realize its causes, and avoid them in his future experiences. We should also help the child to find in failure an incentive to try again rather than a reason for despair.

We agreed in a previous message that mutual understanding, conviction, and participation are the correct means of guiding the child. Therefore, we should take that into consideration as the child makes his observations through the various experiences of life. I am against leaving the child alone while going through all these experiences. I do not agree with those who say that we should let our children make mistakes in order that they may learn from their own errors.

No, we cannot let our children set fire to themselves and say: let them learn that fire burns! Such an attitude, in addition to being impractical, is too dangerous. It may result in some physical, psychological, or moral damage to the child. Furthermore, such a method of education does not recognize the results of human development or the value of past human experience. It brings us back thousands of years and demands of children to learn everything by themselves from the very beginning.

I believe that practical experience is a good means of acquiring knowledge and building an independent personality for children, provided we supervise them, at least in their new experiences with mutual understanding, conviction, and participation. However, we should carry out our mutual understanding as helpers and equals, not as tyrant overseers, and try to convince them as co-seekers for the right way, not as repugnant lecturers.

I did not mean to impose a certain course of study upon the children when I talked to you about the subjects which they need and the ways through which they can learn them. I only wanted to point out the fundamental things which must not be missed by any educated person, regardless of his profession or views of life. I also did not oblige any individual to follow a certain opinion, for the final decision has to be taken by him as he pursues his studies and research. I firmly believe that "there is no compulsion in knowledge" exactly as "there is no compulsion in religion."

If the things I said about acquisition of knowledge are lacking in some aspects, the nature of the child will detect it. The child will find himself compelled to ask questions about whatever he reads, hears, or observes in his practical experiences. These questions are very important because, in addition to pointing out the aspects of deficiency in the knowledge supplied to him at school or by us, they indicate to us the talents and inclinations of the child. Therefore we should receive these questions with their due share of care and appreciation. And as long as genuine mutual understanding is the basis of intellectual and psychological intercourse between us and our children, we can always be sure that they will hasten to ask us, before anyone else, about all they want to know.

If fanaticism against religions of others is hateful, then indeed fanaticism against the knowledge of others is more hateful. Knowledge has no homeland. Whenever we find useful knowledge we should not hesitate to step ahead and take it. We should be broad-minded in acquiring that knowledge and not be influenced by our enmity to its people. The Messenger of Allah was reported to have said: "Seek knowledge even in China." The more I pondered over this saying, the more I was enthralled by its wisdom and many implications. Why did the Hadith mention China in particular?

One reason is its remoteness, and thereby the Hadith urges Muslims to seek knowledge anywhere and endure hardships in its pursuit. But is this the only reason? The answer is no. The Prophet chose China in particular because of its connection with bad things in the minds of the Muslims at that time. It was known to the Arab Muslims to be the land of intense unbelief. But because of the civilization and advancement of science in China, the Messenger of Allah pointed out that Muslims could benefit from that advancement in spite of the vast difference between Islam and the Chinese ideology. Therefore, we should not let our hatred to a certain ideology or a certain people close our eyes to any useful knowledge they may have.



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Birth Control: It's Social, Political, Economic, Moral, and Religious Aspects,
Abul A'la Maudoodi (Islamic Publications
Limited, Lahore, Pakistan (11th Edition,
1974))

"Every age has its slogan and cliches. 'Birth control' is one of those to which the modern age is addicted. There may be, and we believe there are, many who honestly and sincerely believe in it. We disagree with them strongly, but respect their opinion unhesitatingly. But there are many who are simply victims of a propaganda war that is being waged in favor of this concept. It seems that certain forces are bent upon thrusting this idea on the people, particularly on the emerging nations of the East. All the vehicles of propaganda and persuasion, in certain cases even of pressure and persecution, are being employed to make the people conform to this heresy of our times. The other viewpoint is not being allowed to articulate itself. Arguments are not being met with arguments; they are being contested with ridicules, allegations, snubs, and even force and violence..."

from the Editors' FOREWORD

"Although in this study I have primarily been concerned with the question of birth control and a refutation of its basic concept and purpose, I have also dealt with the socio-cultural and philosophical issues in their widest context which, if considered in an unbiased way, might be helpful in opening new vistas of thought and action and carve out a course of life that may be different from the beaten track of which the West has been treading."

from the Author's PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The Myth of the Cross, Alhaj A.D. Ajijole
(Islamic Publications Ltd., Lahore, Pakistan
(March 1973))

(Dedicated to the Nigerian Muslim youth who attended Christian missionary schools and was subjected to vigorous propaganda by the Christian missionaries.)

The author is a Nigerian Muslim who practices Law in Ikare (western state of Nigeria). He received his education in Christian schools and universities, and lived in close contact with clergymen. The Christian attacks on Islam forced Alhaj Ajijole to undertake a special study of the Bible in order "to fully understand the doctrines of Christianity as preached and practiced by Jesus." The

(NEXT PAGE)

Publisher's Note explains: "In this book, Alhaj A.D. Ajijole offers a clear restatement of fundamental beliefs of the Christians and a forceful criticism of Christianity. He describes the difficulties which the Christian doctrine raises for us today and he clearly shows that these difficulties arise from the fact that Modern Christianity is neither based on the teachings and practices of the Gospels nor on the teachings of the older Prophets, but it is based mainly on the superstitious structure propounded by St. Paul, who never met Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) alive. The author thus exposes the myth of modern Christian doctrines."

Islam--Its Meaning and Message, Kurshid Ahmad, Editor (Islamic Council of Europe, London, 1975)

The need for a better and more sympathetic understanding of Islam in the West was never as great as it is today. The presence of significant Muslim populations in every country of Europe, in almost every city and region, has made it necessary for the local communities to understand the beliefs and life-patterns of their Muslim neighbors. The western world is coming into close contact economically, politically and culturally with the world of Islam. As the world shrinks under the impact of technology, the interdependence of nations, cultures, and economies is increasing. This development demands greater mutual understanding of ideas, values, and life-styles of the different peoples of the world. The Muslims in the West are not only in need of obtaining a better understanding of the values, ideals, and practices of Western culture but also of refreshing their understanding of their own religion and culture so that they may continue to strengthen their roots in the Islamic tradition.

In view of all these considerations, the Islamic Council of Europe proposed to produce, in English and other European languages, a number of books on different aspects of Islam. First in the series is the present book, Islam: Its Meaning and Message, edited by Professor Khurshid Ahmad, Director General, The Islamic Foundation, England. This book has been specially compiled to serve the needs we have mentioned above and is drawn from the writings of leading Islamic scholars of our age. It not only provides a comprehensive introduction to Islamic religion and ideology, it also captures the essential spirit of Muslim thought in the second half of the twentieth century. For many readers, this book will act as a window on the contemporary Muslim mind.

"A day will come..."

... when this meek earth shall look upon the works of man that adorn its face, and find them polluted by the absence of worship of God and of gratitude to God. Deeming them ugly, it will cleanse and purify its face with a vast earthquake, by the command of the Creator. By God's command, it will empty into hellfire those who worship gods other than God and invite to paradise those who worship Him with thanks. ۞

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AL-QURAN

MAIDA: 4

You are forbidden carrion, blood, the flesh of swine and of that animal which has been slaughtered in any other name than that of Allah, and of the strangled animal, and of that beaten to death or killed by a fall or gored to death or mangled by a beast of prey (save of that you duly slaughtered while it was still alive), and of that which is slaughtered at ungodly shrines....* Therefore observe the limits prescribed by the Law; if, however, one dying of hunger eats of any of these forbidden things, provided that he is not inclined towards sin, he will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate.

بِالَّذِينَ ذُكِرْتُمْ فَسَوْءَ مَا يُصِفُونَ
يَسِئَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ
فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ
نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ
دِينًا فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ
غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمِهِ فَلَانَ اللَّهُ
عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

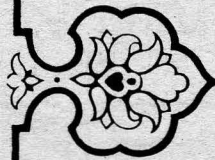
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
•
حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ
وَالْحُمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أَهَلَ لِغَيْرِ
اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيغَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ
السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ
عَلَى النَّصَبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا

*In this connection it should be clearly understood that the limits prescribed by the Law for making edibles lawful or unlawful are not laid down from the point of view of physical health, but from the moral and spiritual point of view. As regards the matters concerning physical health, these have been left to man's own judgement and discretion. It is his own business to find out what things are useful or harmful for his physical health and nourishment, and the Law does not take any responsibility for his guidance in this respect. Had it done so, poison would have been the first thing to be made unlawful, but there is absolutely no mention of this or other deadly things in the Quran or the Traditions of the Prophet.

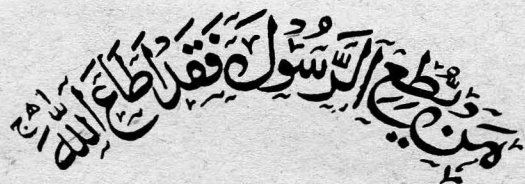
The Law is only concerned with what is morally or spiritually harmful or beneficial, and also with the right or wrong means for obtaining lawful things. It is obvious that man has no means of finding out these things by himself and is consequently liable to commit errors in this matter without the guidance of the Law. For, whatever has been prohibited has been forbidden because it is harmful from the point of view of cleanliness or morality or belief. On the other hand, whatever has been made lawful has been made so because it is free from all these evils.

One might ask why Allah has not explained the philosophy underlying the prohibition of certain things for the clear understanding of the people. This is because it is not possible for mankind to comprehend this. For instance, it is not possible for us to make a research into the nature of moral evils that are produced by eating carrion, blood, or the flesh of swine; nor is it easy to find out how they are produced and to what extent, because we have no means of measuring or weighing morality. It is, therefore, obvious that even if their evil effects had been explained the position of the sceptic would have remained the same as before because of the lack of means to test their veracity.

This is why Allah has declared the observance of the limits prescribed for the lawful and the unlawful as a matter of belief. One who believes in Allah as All-Knowing and All-Wise, who believes in the Holy Prophet as His Messenger, and who believes in the Quran as the book of Allah will observe the prescribed limits whether he understands their philosophy or not. On the other hand, if one does not believe in this basic creed, he will avoid only those things which are harmful according to human knowledge, and will go on suffering from the consequences of those things which man has not learned to be harmful.



AL-SUNNAH



*"He who obeys the Apostle assuredly
obeys Allah" (al-Qur'an)*

Abdur-Rahman bin Samura reported that the Messenger of Allah said to him: "Abdur-Rahman, do not ask for a position of authority; for if you are granted this position as a result of your asking for it, you will be left alone (without God's help to discharge the responsibilities attendant thereon), and if you are granted it without making any request for it, you will be helped (by God in the discharge of your duties).

Abu Musa related that he and two of his cousins went to the Holy Prophet. One of the cousins requested: "Messenger of Allah, appoint us as rulers of some lands that the Almighty and Glorious God has entrusted to your care." The other also said something similar. The Prophet responded: "We do not appoint to this position one who asks for it nor anyone who is covetous for the same.

(SAHIH MUSLIM)

These statements of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) illustrate the wisdom of Islamic Law in selecting people to positions of leadership and authority. Contemporary governments could certainly learn a lesson from the principle enunciated here, and acquire a needed mechanism to prevent corruption and misuse of power.

Any person desiring to be elected or appointed to an administrative post (including that of Head of State) or a representative assembly would automatically disqualify himself. Presently, any candidate possessing enough influence or wealth--regardless of his real worth and qualifications--can win an election by exercising a certain amount of 'persuasion' on the electorate, especially with modern marketing and advertising techniques; but with the Islamic arrangement any such attempt at persuasion or canvassing for votes would result in immediate disqualification.

Holding public office is a trust that carries weighty responsibilities. Thus, a man who covets this job is a self-seeker who is anxious to make some personal benefit out of his official position. If he is not a self-seeker, then he is probably the puppet of some special interest group that does not have the public welfare at heart.

WAR IN ISLAM

Series XXI

THE SECRET OF GUIDANCE

The Quran brings out this fine point: that if Allah (God) wished He could force His creatures to believe in Him, but He does not want forced faith to be part of man's nature just as his desires and emotions are. Allah already has beings in His Creation who believe in Him, worship Him, and obey Him, beings for whom "doing nothing but what He commands" is natural. For the real enjoyment of Godhood, Allah needs created beings who are not forced by any power to know Him, to accept Him, or to obey Him, but beings who recognize Him with their own intelligence, find Him through their own searching, worship and obey Him because of their free will, and accept His guidance in spite of the ability to reject His commands (though not His overall plan). For this purpose Allah created man, and for a fixed period with an ordained end left him free with the light of reason, and gave him a choice: "whoever so wishes may believe, and whoever wishes may disbelieve."

Human guides were sent, one after the other, to clearly show their fellow-beings the difference between truth and falsehood so that no one would be able to complain that men were abandoned and left in darkness. Then Allah appointed a day of accounting for man, so that He may shower incalculable blessings and bounties on those who have used their intelligence to recognize Him and who have of their own wills, not out of helplessness, followed the way pointed out by Him after realizing that it was a duty and an accompanying condition of their position as beings created by Allah. Also on the day of accounting, Allah will give dire punishment to those who followed false guidance in spite of His clear guidance, who refused to accept His message, and who disobeyed His command by turning away from their duty as created beings. Note the words of wisdom in which this secret is revealed:

And if your Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they will cease not differing except those on whom your Lord has mercy; and for that he did create them. And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled: verily I shall fill hell with the jinn and mankind together. (XI: 118-119)

At other points in the Quran, this secret has been revealed in different ways. Allah says the same thing in different verses of the Quran in different contexts:

And if your Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together. (X: 99)

Had Allah willed, they would not have been idolatrous. (VI: 107)

If We willed, We could have sent down on them from the sky a portent so that their necks would have been forced to bow down before it. (XXVI: 4)

It is not for any soul to believe except by the permission of Allah; and He sets the abomination of doubt on those alone who do not use their mine. (X: 100)

Lo! thou (O Muhammad) guidest not whom thou lovest, but Allah guides whom He will. And He is best aware of those ready to accept guidance. (XXVIII: 56)

Translated from the Urdu of Sayyid Maudoodi's AL-JIHAD FIL ISLAM by Kaukab Siddique

Thus, when the All-Powerful Creator and Nourisher of the Universe does not force human beings to obey Him, and in fact, loves to obtain their free acceptance and worship, how can any human being have the right to force obedience to Allah on creatures like himself? Of what value would a coerced and helpless faith be to Allah? That is why Allah Almighty, again and again, taught His Messenger that there is no compulsion and coercion in Allah's way and it is enough for the Messenger to convey Allah's message:

You are in no way a compeller (to force guidance) over them. Whoever fears my warning, continue to remind him with the Quran. (L: 45)

Remind them, for you are but a remembrancer, you are not at all a warder over them. (LXXXVIII: 21-22)

Would you (Muhammad) compel people until they are believers? (although it is not your work to compel). (X: 99)

The guiding of them is not your duty. (O Muhammad), but Allah guides whom He will. (II: 272)

You are only responsible for conveying the message and We will reckon the account. (XIII: 40)

THE ROLE OF THE SWORD

This discussion has clarified the fact that Islam forces no one to believe in its Truth. With arguments and clear signs it distinguishes between true guidance and delusion, and leaves every individual to enjoy success and eternal salvation by following the Straight path, or to go the wrong way and fall into the pit of Hell. Before concluding this discussion, however, it is necessary to point out that the spread of Islam does have some relationship to the use of the sword. No doubt the preaching of the way of Allah has nothing to do with the sword, but apart from preaching (tabligh), there are some things which help the spread of Islam that cannot totally be disassociated from use of the sword.

When a person becomes addicted to a licentious way of life, he follows his desires to such an extent that he recognizes no moral limits. Addiction to this distorted lifestyle makes it impossible for him to leave it of his own free will. Regardless of how much one may use the power of teaching, preaching, argument, and example to impress upon him the meaning of moral limits--the distinction between lawful (halal) and unlawful (haram), good and bad--he refuses to budge. The sensibility of such a person is so overlaid with layers of wrong-doing and corruption that moral education leaves him untouched. Even if some life is left in his conscience, it does not have enough influence to persuade him to accept the Truth joyfully and freely just because it is the Truth. It no longer remains possible for him to withdraw from the pleasures of his irresponsible way of life. These facts can be verified by general observation.

By contrast, when moral education is accompanied not only by homilectics and exhortations, but is also

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backed by law and a political entity which has the power not only to differentiate between right and wrong but also to interdict wrong, corrupted personalities gradually acquire the ability to become good. Respect for certain limits and distinctions between right and wrong slowly gain strength. And finally the same person who was lost in the morass of a licentious life, and could not tolerate even the mention of morality, begins to give a definite place in his thinking to the teachings of morality.

For a moment let us conceptualize a society in which no law can be implemented. Every individual in this society ignores the bounds of morality; each mugs whomever he can, kills anyone he hates, obtains whatever he needs by theft or coercion, and fulfills his desires in whatever way he chooses. None of these individuals make any distinctions between 'permitted' and 'prohibited', and none are aware of the difference between 'legal' and 'illegal.' There is no place in the minds of these people for 'rights' and 'duties.' Each one only surveys his own desires and determines which resources can satisfy them.

In such a situation, if a reformer goes forth from among the people to teach the distinction between legal and illegal, the boundary between the permitted and the forbidden, the difference between good and bad; lays down the law against theft, corruption, murder, adultery, immorality; establishes rights and duties with a complete chart of moral regulations, but has no force at his command other than sermons and argumentation; is it to be expected that this nation will happily accept these restrictions on its freedom? Would such a nation's heart be so touched by homilies as to voluntarily give up the pleasure of its licentious way of life? Anyone who knows human nature would reply in the negative.

There are very few people in this world who accept good because it is good and give up wrong-doing because the wrong of it is apparent to them. However, if a reformer is not merely a preacher but also has political power at his command to establish a proper government strong enough to eradicate the evils of an animalistic freedom, surely it will be difficult to deny the power of his teachings to produce the intended results.

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM CAN BE UNDERSTOOD WITH THE HELP OF THE EXAMPLE CITED ABOVE. IF ISLAM HAD MERELY BEEN A COLLECTION OF BELIEFS WHICH DEMANDED ONLY THAT PEOPLE SHOULD SAY 'GOD IS ONE,' BELIEVE THAT THE PROPHETHOOD IS TRUE, BELIEVE THAT THERE WILL BE A DAY OF JUDGEMENT, AND BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE ANGELS, THEN SATANIC POWERS WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE QUARRELED WITH IT SO MUCH. HOWEVER, IT IS A FACT THAT ISLAM IS NOT ONLY A BELIEF BUT ALSO A LAW--A LAW WHICH AIMS AT ENCOMPASSING LIFE IN ITS ENTIRETY WITH RESTRICTIONS OF DO'S AND DON'TS. THE PURPOSE OF ISLAM CANNOT BE SERVED BY PREACHING AND TEACHING ALONE. THE CLARITY OF ITS WORDS MUST SOMETIMES BE COMBINED WITH THE SHARPNESS OF ITS SWORD.

The unjust man does not mind the beliefs of Islam; it is the Law he refuses to accept. He wishes to commit theft, but Islam warns him that his hand will be cut off. He desires fornication, but Islam demands that he be whipped for indulging. He calculates obtaining interest on his money, but Islam challenges him to be prepared for "war from Allah and His Messenger." He wishes to cross the bound of legal (halal) and illegal (haram) to fulfill the desires of the self, but Islam does not permit any fulfillment outside the prescribed limits. Hence a person who follows the dictates of the self hates Islam, and his heart is stained with so much sin that he loses the capacity to be touched by the light of Islam and the truth it presents.

In view of this, we find that for thirteen long years the Messenger of Allah called Arabia to Islam. He followed the most effective style of preaching and teaching; he presented irrefutable evidence; his orations, parables, and illustrations were the finest. He brought amazing and unique truths from Allah in the most lucid form. Through his own actions and pure life he established the finest example of goodness. He did not ignore any method which could be useful to verify and affirm the Truth. But his nation refused to accept the message. The Truth was made crystal-clear to them. With their own eyes they could see that the way towards which their guide was calling them was the right way. In spite of all the preaching and teaching, they refused to follow the right way because they could not bear to give up the pleasures of their undisciplined life as unbelievers.

THE GUIDE (DA'I) OF ISLAM THEN TOOK THE SWORD IN HIS HAND AND DECLARED: "ALL INHERITED DISTINCTIONS, ALL BLOOD FEUDS, ALL UNJUST CLAIMS TO GOODS AND PROPERTIES ARE SUPPRESSED HERE UNDER MY FEET TODAY." HE SMASHED ALL THE ESTABLISHED IDOLS OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER. HE ESTABLISHED AN ORGANIZED AND REGULATED GOVERNMENT. MORAL LAWS WERE ENFORCED, AND THE FREEDOM TO INDULGE IN WRONG-DOING AND IMMORAL BEHAVIOR WHICH HAD LULLED THE ARABS INTO THE HALF-SLEEP OF GENERAL DECADENCE, COLLAPSED.

Thus a peaceful atmosphere prevailed in which moral qualities and human excellence could develop. Gradually the accumulated dirt of wrong-doing and transgression was washed away; inclinations were slowly cleansed of bad habits; the spirit was purified of the sickness it had bred. Eyes accustomed to the gloom of sin learned to accept the light of Truth. Most important of all, the necks which refused to bow owing to pride of position and privilege, although they had recognized the light, finally lost their stiff posture.

Within one century after Arabia was converted, a fourth of the world accepted Islam. The speed with which this happened can be understood if one realizes how the sword of Islam cut the chains which enslaved the hearts and souls of men. Islam cleared the way for the possible development of moral education. It overthrew the governments which were the enemies of Truth and Justice, governments which backed the forces of evil. Islam implemented the moral law which helped man to emerge from his animality and become a human being. By presenting a living example, Islam taught the world that there is no better way for the moral, material, and spiritual progress of humanity.

So, just as it is wrong to say that Islam makes people Muslims by force of the sword, it is also wrong to say that the sword has no place in the spread of Islam. The reality lies between these two positions; both preaching (tabligh) and the sword have a part in the spread of Islam. The work of preaching is to sow the seeds. The work of the sword is to till the soil and make it capable of sustaining the seeds. Preaching plants the seed and waters it so that the desired fruit may finally emerge; the sword must be taken up to protect the right to do so.

There is no civilization in the world which was formed without the use of both forces. In fact, the very basis of civilization in general is not possible if both tilling and sowing do not play their respective roles. A person who is familiar with human nature cannot deny that in the process of mental and moral reform of social groups a time comes when the physical being of man must be addressed before the soul can be touched.

Party Line

The Islamic Party often receives requests about its membership fee. Since there is no membership fee, at least not in the monetary sense, there must be a misunderstanding about the nature of our movement. Membership is based on a full-time commitment to the Islamic struggle under the leadership of the Party's Amir and within the discipline of the Party's constitution. In addition to membership, however, there are also other categories of association and support.

The following excerpts from the constitution of the Islamic Party should explain both the nature of our movement and the requirements for membership.

Belief

Clause 3. "The Islamic Party's basic belief will be "La ilaha illallah, Muhammadur Rasulallah," i.e., There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah.

Interpretation: The first part of this belief, that there is no god but Allah, means that Allah alone (without partners or associates) is the Creator, Sustainer, Lord, and Lawgiver (both in the juridical and ultimate sense) of the heavens and earth. In no sense does anyone share in His Godhead or right to rule and govern the universe. Knowledge and acceptance of this fact makes it imperative that man must:

1. consider none except Allah as his Lord, guardian, hearer of prayers, or patron in difficulties, because none except Allah has all power.
2. consider none except Allah as the granter of profit and loss; fear, rely, or base hopes upon none, except Allah, because He alone has all authority.
3. pray to, seek refuge in, or call upon for help, none except Allah, and consider none so forceful that his command would override Divine commandments.
4. bow before none, worship none, or accept none as king, ruler, or final authority, except Allah, because Allah alone is to be worshipped and obeyed.
5. consider none the absolute master of anything except Allah, but must regard all things (even his own life) as the property of Allah and a trust from Him.
6. consider himself responsible to Allah and answerable to Him for his actions and behavior, and must always remember that on the Day of Judgement he will have to account for all these things before Allah.
7. make the pleasure and displeasure of Allah the criterion of his own likes and dislikes.
8. consider acceptance by Allah and nearness to Him the purpose of all his efforts and struggles, and the pivot of his entire life.
9. accept the guidance of Allah as the only true guidance in every sphere of life; and reject every belief, habit, lifestyle, mode of behavior, or law which goes against the Law of Allah.

The second part of this belief, that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah, means that the last Prophet sent to humanity by the Ruler of the universe with the final valid guidebook (Holy Qur'an) and code of Law, and the final instructions for establishing a perfect system of life according to that Law, is Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). Knowledge and acceptance of this fact makes it imperative that man must:

1. accept without reservations all those teachings which are identifiable as those of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him).
2. obey any command or refuse to commit any act if any such command or prohibition is from the Messenger of Allah.
3. accept no human being as leader, except within the limits of Allah's Book (Holy Qur'an) and the established example (sunnah) of Allah's Prophet.

4. take as the validating argument and final testimony in every matter of life, the Book of Allah and the way (sunnah) of His Messenger. Any opinion, belief, or method which is in accord with Allah's Book and the way (sunnah) of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) should be accepted; one which is against them should be rejected.
5. cleanse the mind of all narrow loyalties — personal, family, racial, national, territorial, or sectarian. No love or attachment should be so strong that it overcomes or conflicts with the Truth brought by the Messenger of Allah.
6. make no human being, except the Messenger of Allah, the standard of Truth. Consider no one above criticism, and evaluate everyone according to the perfect criterion provided by Allah.
7. recognize no person after Prophet Muhammad to whom allegiance determines one's belief or unbelief in Islam.

Objective

Clause 4. The objective of The Islamic Party in North America, and the purpose of all its efforts and struggle, is to practically establish the Deen, i.e. the Government of Allah, or the Islamic System of Life, and in fact to achieve the Pleasure of Allah and final salvation in the Hereafter.

Interpretation: "Deen," "the Government of Allah," and "the Islamic System of Life," are synonymous in the terminology of The Islamic Party. The Party uses the phrases "the Government of Allah" and "the Islamic System of Life" to convey the meanings contained in the respective Qur'anic terms, "Hukmullah" (Surah 60:10) and "Deenullah" (Surah 3:83). For the Islamic Party the three terms, "Deen," "the Government of Allah," and "the Islamic System of Life" mean the same thing and that is: In the sphere of life in which man has been granted authority he should of his own will and desire accept the jurisdiction of Allah in the same way that every single particle of matter in the universe is bound to accept the natural laws of Allah. The system which emerges when the jurisdiction of Allah is willingly accepted is "Al-Deen," "the Government of Allah," or "the Islamic System of Life." When we say we want to establish the system of Islam we do not refer to any one aspect of this system, but to the system in its entirety. This applies to both individual and social life — to prayers, fasting, the pilgrimage and the purifying tax, as well as to the economy and the society, the culture and the politics. No aspect of Islam is unimportant. The whole of Islam is essential. It is the work of the true believer to struggle for the establishment of Islam in its entirety without any divisions or deletions. Those areas of Islam which are related to the individual's personal life should become a part of the true believer's existence, and those which cannot be established without collective effort should be striven for by the believers through group organization and effort. Although the true believer's real purpose in life is to attain acceptance by Allah and salvation in the Hereafter, this purpose

cannot be attained without making an effort to establish the way shown by Allah in this world. Hence, the true believer's objective in practical terms is the establishment of the Deen (Islamic system of life) and his real objective in ultimate terms is that acceptance by Allah which results from the effort to establish the Deen.

Methodology

Clause 5. The permanent methodology of The Islamic Party will be that:

1. Before coming to any decision or taking any step we will first find out the guidance of Allah and His Messenger in that matter. All other factors will be of secondary importance and will be considered only to the extent of their place in Islam.
2. In the attainment of its objective The Islamic Party will never use means which violate the principles of truthfulness, honesty, and morality.
3. In order to bring about the revolution and change it desires, The Islamic Party will use the methods of preaching, teaching, and disseminating correct Islamic ideas, and molding public opinion. Through these vehicles The Islamic Party will bring about the desired reform in character, thinking and behavior.
4. The Islamic Party will struggle for the attainment of its objective in an open and forthright manner, and will not adopt the style of secret and clandestine movements.

Conditions of Membership

Clause 6. Every sane adult (man or woman), regardless of race, socio-economic position, or education, can become a full-member of The Islamic Party provided he or she:

1. After understanding the belief of The Islamic Party with its interpretation bears witness that this is his or her same belief.
2. After understanding the objective of The Islamic Party with its interpretation affirms that this is his or her same objective.
3. After studying and reflecting upon this Constitution pledges that he or she will accept and abide by the discipline of The Islamic Party according to this Constitution.
4. Observes the obligatory commands of the Islamic Law (Shariah) and abstains from major vices.
5. Does not have any means of earning a livelihood which may be described as immoral, e.g., passively or actively engaged in the following: sale or manufacture of intoxicants, promotion of fornication, trafficking of drugs, bribery, embezzlement, stealing, or gambling, etc.
6. If there is any property or wealth under his or her control which has been acquired by forbidden ways or contains the usurped rights of rightful owners, then he or she must give up such goods and return them to those who have legitimate rights over them.
7. Does not belong to any party, group, institution, or organization whose principles are opposed to the belief, objective and working style of The Islamic Party.
8. The Islamic Party's administrative machinery must be satisfied that he or she has the capacity for full-membership in the Party.

Admission

Clause 7. In accordance with the above given provision the method of admission to The Islamic Party will be that a candidate for membership affirms before the Amir of The Islamic Party, or before a person appointed by the Amir that:

Firstly, he has properly understood the belief of The Islamic Party along with its interpretation and after having understood it with a full sense of responsibility, bears witness that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah.

Secondly, he has properly understood the objective of The Islamic Party along with its interpretation and after having understood it he affirms that the establishment of Allah's Deen is the objective of his life and for the achievement of this objective, purely for Allah's sake, he is joining The Islamic Party in North America, and in this effort his only purpose is attainment of Allah's pleasure and salvation in the Hereafter.

Thirdly, he has also properly understood The Constitution of The Islamic Party and he pledges himself to accept and abide by the discipline of The Islamic Party according to this Constitution.

Duties of Members

Clause 8. After being admitted to the Party every member must actively begin to bring about the following changes in his life.

1. One must at least know the difference between Islam and non-Islam and be familiar with the limits ordained by Allah, i.e., those things that are permissible (halal) and those things that are forbidden (haram). To acquire this knowledge members will attend mandatory ideological training sessions.
2. In all matters one's point of view, should be molded in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qu'ran and established practice (sunnah) of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). The purpose of one's life, one's likes and dislikes, and the pivot of one's loyalties should be the pleasure of Allah. The idol of self-worship should be smashed so that one may accept the commands of Allah in their entirety.
3. Purify one's life of all those customs and habits of the ways of ignorance (non-Islam) which are against the Book of Allah and the way of the Messenger of Allah, and try to build one's internal and external life according to the Law of Islam.
4. Purify one's thinking of those narrow prejudices and interests which arise from selfishness or love of this world and which have no importance in Islam.
5. Association and intimacy with persons who are flagrantly immoral, criminal in character, and unmindful of Allah should be terminated, and connection sought with persons who are God-fearing, righteous, and good in conduct.
6. One's routine affairs of personal life should be established on the principles of honesty, justice, fear of Allah, and uncompromising support for right and truth.
7. One's efforts, toil, and labor should be focused on the basic objective - establishment of the Islamic Way of Life, and except for one's real needs one should withdraw from all those activities which do not help towards that objective.

Clarification: It is not necessary that in all persons these changes should appear perfectly and completely, but everyone should try to develop himself according to these guidelines, because it is with reference to deficiency or completeness in these changes that everyone's position and status in the Party will be determined.

Qualities of Workers

Clause 12. In this Party a person's rank and position will not be determined by his social status, lineage, academic qualifications, or material conditions, but will be relative to his correlation with the teachings of Allah and His Messenger. The Party will obtain evidence of this correlation from the sacrifices which he will make in Allah's Way.

Clarification: The purpose of this clause is to state a principle by which the members of the Party may examine individuals in the Party to decide which kind of persons should hold positions of responsibility and those who should not. As far as the rights of membership are concerned all full-members of the Party are equal. But in the matter of right to hold posts of leadership, guidance, and responsibility the decisive factors will not be anyone's popularity, wealth, social status, or academic achievement. Rather, the decisive factors will be these: the extent to which one lives within the teachings of Allah and His Messenger, one's understanding of Allah's Way and ability to translate it into action, one's ability to organize the work of the Islamic Movement, and one's sacrifice of time, effort, ability, and possessions for the sake of the Party's objective.

M.S.A. CONVENTION

The Islamic Party was well represented at the 13th Annual Convention of The Muslim Students' Association of the United States and Canada which was held from August 29 - September 1 at the University of Toledo in Toledo, Ohio. The theme of the convention, "The Islamization Process: Its Challenges and Promises," was analyzed and discussed in lectures, question and answer sessions, and informal talks. Several well-known Islamic movement personalities were guests on the program. Although much of the interchange related primarily to the process of Islamic social change in Muslim countries, many of the concepts and ideas also had applicability to Islamic efforts in non-Muslim societies like the United States. The convention gave the Islamic Party an opportunity to get acquainted with many Muslims, both indigenous and immigrant, and to tell them about the Party's activities and viewpoints. Many false impressions were dispelled, and as a result many Muslim brothers became interested in closer association and greater support.

RAMADAN VISITORS

Prof. Abdul Ghafur Ahmad, member of the National Assembly of Pakistan and a leader in Jamaat-e-Islami (the Islamic Party) Pakistan, was a guest of The Islamic Party in North America on September 8. He spent the entire day at the Party's headquarters where he was given a detailed report on both the internal and external programs of the movement. Prof. Ahmad had an opportunity to talk informally with Party members and to observe the function of each department of work. The Guidance Council discussed in-depth the jamaat's system of education and ideological training, family and domestic life, publications and methods of propagation, finances and economic projects, and problems facing the movement in the American social setting. Prof. Ahmad was able to experience and observe a typical day in the life of the Islamic movement in the United States.

Sheikh Muhammad Amin al-Misri, a well-known Islamic scholar and educator who is presently on the faculty of King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, was a guest of The Islamic Party for four days from September 8-11. He led Tarawih Prayers nightly and delivered Quranic commentaries using the history of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) to illustrate salient and instructive points for Islamic Party workers. He also conducted a special session for the sisterhood. Sheikh al-Misri's warm personality and seasoned wisdom was an added source of inspiration.

HADITH SEMINAR

From July 11-13, representatives of the Islamic Party attended the "Seminar on Hadith" at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, Illinois. The seminar was sponsored by the Muslim Students' Association of the U.S. and Canada in celebration of the 1200th anniversary of Imam Bukhari, the reknown collector of Hadith. In addition to participating in the seminar and making new friends, members of the Islamic Party successfully distributed AL-ISLAM journals in downtown Chicago to the non-Muslim residents.

INDIAN REPRESSION

The Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (Islamic Party of India), an ideological and socio-cultural movement, was banned by Indira Ghandi on July 3. In a pre-dawn swoop, over 1000 leaders and workers of the Jamaat were rounded-up and imprisoned by the police leaving hundreds of families without support. The Jamaat-e-Islami Hind is not a political party, but is an Islamic organization working to bring about a moral transformation of the individual and society by presenting Islam as a complete code of guidance through peaceful and constitutional means. In this hour of need, although members of the Islamic Party in North America are themselves facing economic hardships, they were willing to make financial sacrifices to assist the families of other workers in Allah's cause. This is another example of the international feelings of love, brotherhood, and sympathy between those who devote their lives to the Islamic mission.

SOUTHEAST CENTER

The Community Mosque Southeast Center will complete its six-month summer program at the end of October. Opened this past spring, the Center was conceived as a summer project to give the people of southeast Washington, D.C. a concentrated exposure to Islam and to demonstrate on a small scale Islamic concern for social problems. In addition to distribution of literature, film presentations, and casual discussions on Islam, the Center's program included a community information service, a basic education tutorial service, and a domestic and social counseling service.

point of clarification**'Black Muslims' Still Unbelievers**

The following article is reprinted from the last edition of AL-ISLAM. We received many compliments thanking us for clarifying the differences between true (orthodox) Muslims and the 'Black Muslims.' Consequently, we felt that many other people would also appreciate reading this point of clarification.

Our stance against "The Nation of Islam" (Black Muslims) is because of their misrepresentation of Islam. If their organization was called something else, and if the religion they teach had some other name, we would find the 'Black Muslims' of negligible interest. However, as Muslims sincere to our faith and mission, we are obliged to speak up and defend our religion and way of life from mockery and distortion.



Since the death of Elijah (Poole) Muhammad, his followers (popularly known as 'Black Muslims') have made some surprising changes in their organization and program. Whites are no longer called "devils" and will be allowed to become members. More Arabic terminology and verses from the Holy Quran are appearing in Muhammad Speaks newspaper. The speeches of Wallace Muhammad, son and successor of Elijah, and the speeches of his ministers are now oriented toward "spiritual" themes. In fact, one could say that the group is beginning to look and sound a bit more like Orthodox Muslims.

No one, however, should be fooled by these changes. They are tricks to further deceive and mislead people. None of these changes have any significance as far as what determines who is a true Muslim and who is not. Until the 'Black Muslims' openly renounce Elijah Muhammad and the lies he taught regarding the nature of Allah (God), the finality of Prophethood, and the Resurrection and life after death, they can never enter the fold of Islam. According to the criteria of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah (established practice) of Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah (peace and blessings be upon him), they are not Muslims and their organization does not represent Islam.

The 'Black Muslim' belief about Allah (God) is pure ignorance. Elijah says in his book, Message to the Blackman: "God is a man and we just cannot make Him other than man," (p.6) and "the great archdeceivers (the white race) were taught by their father... how to teach that God is a spirit (spook) and not a man." (p.9) According to the 'Black Muslims', God "appeared in the person of Master W. Fard Muhammad, July 1930, (Muhammad Speaks, March 14, 1975, back page) and "was persecuted, sent to jail in 1932, and ordered out of Detroit...." (Message to the Blackman, p.24)

In contrast, the Islamic conception of Allah (God)--a unique, non-material, limitless, all-powerful, eternal being--is the same belief that has been taught by all the Pro-

phets of God from the time of Adam on down to Muhammad ibn Abdullah (peace and blessings be upon him) of Arabia. Allah describes Himself in the Holy Quran: "Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute. He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable to Him, (CXII: 1-4) and "No vision can grasp Him...." (VI: 103) In reference to the true nature of Allah and the belief of Orthodox Muslims, Elijah Muhammad declared: "I would not give two cents for that kind of God in which they believe." (Muhammad Speaks, Nov. 24, 1972)

Elijah Muhammad also claimed that he was a "Messenger of Allah," and his followers addressed him by that title. But the last Messenger of Allah was Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah (peace and blessings be upon him) over 1300 years ago. Allah (God) announces in the Holy Quran: "Muhammad (ibn Abdullah) is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets...." (XXXIII:40) Furthermore, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), explaining his relationship to the Prophets of the past, said that the institution of Prophethood was like a building whose construction was complete except for one brick. He then said that he was that final brick and that no Prophet or Messenger was to come after him. (Muslim and Bukhari)

On numerous other occasions Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) proclaimed that he was the last Messenger and Prophet. For example, Jaber reported that the Holy Prophet said: "I am the leader of the Messengers and this is no boast, and I am the last of the Messengers and this is no boast...." (Darimi); Abu Hurairah reported that the Apostle of Allah said: "...I have been sent to the entire creation and the Prophets came to an end with me." (Muslim); and, Jubair bin Mutem reported that the Holy Prophet said: "...I am al-Aqib (the one who comes last) after whom will be no Prophet." (Muslim and Bukhari)

As far as the Resurrection and life after death are concerned, the followers of Elijah Muhammad believe "not in physical resurrection--but in mental resurrection." (Muhammad Speaks, March 14, 1975, back page) In (Message to the Blackman, Elijah insists:

"There is no such thing as dying and coming up out of the earth...When you are dead, you are DEAD," (p.168) and, "No physically dead person will be in the hereafter; that is slavery belief, taught to slaves to keep them under control. (p.304)

Belief in physical resurrection and life after death, however, is the cornerstone of Islamic ideology. Allah, throughout the Holy Quran, reminds man of the reality of the Hereafter: "They swear their strongest oaths...that Allah will not raise up those who die; nay, it is a promise binding on Him in truth, but most among mankind realize it not. They must be raised up in order...that the rejectors of Truth may realize that they had indeed surrendered to falsehood." (XVI: 38-39)

At another place Allah says: "O mankind! If you have a doubt about the Resurrection, consider that We created you out of dust.... There is no doubt about it...that Allah will raise up all who are in the graves." (XXII: 5-7) And also: "They say: 'What! When we are reduced to bones and dust, should we really be raised up to be a new creation?' Say: Whether you are stone or iron...yet shall you be raised up." (XVII:49-51)

The 'Black Muslims' are trying to reshape their public image to gain wider respect and acceptance. Additionally, they are bidding for the Arab "petro-dollars" by soliciting the sympathy of misguided Orthodox Muslims whose support would give their organization a semblance of authenticity. But garbage by any name smells just as foul. If they sincerely want to change, let them make a clean break with the counterfeit teachings of Elijah. Allah (God) has promised forgiveness to those who desist from unbelief. But for those who refuse and hinder men from the Right Path, He has promised the fire of Hell.

Finality of Prophethood

The real death of a Prophet consists not in physical demise but in the mitigation of his teachings and the interpolation of his guidance. Judging the facts on this criterion no one can deny that Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) and his teachings are alive. Furthermore, there are three things which necessitate the advent of a new Prophet; it is not just the replacement of a deceased Prophet. These may be summed up as follows:

1. That the teachings of the earlier Prophets have been interpolated or corrupted or they have died and their revival is needed. In such a case a new Prophet is raised so that he may purge the impurities from the lives of the people and restore religion to its pristine form and purity;
2. That the teachings of the Prophet who has passed away were incomplete and it is necessary to amend them, improve upon them, or add something to them. And a new Prophet is sent to effect these improvements;
3. That the earlier Prophet was raised particularly for a certain nation or territory and a Prophet for another nation, people, or country is required.

These are the three fundamental conditions which necessitate the raising of a new Prophet. A careful perusal of the facts shows that none of these conditions exists today. The teachings of the last Prophet, Muhammad

ibn Abdullah (peace and blessings be upon him), are alive and have been fully preserved. The guidance he showed mankind is complete and flawless, and is enshrined in the Holy Quran. All the sources of Islam are fully intact and every instruction or action of the Holy Prophet can be ascertained without doubt. Thus, as his teachings are totally intact, there is no need of any new Prophet on this account.

Secondly, Allah has completed His revealed guidance through Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and Islam is a complete religion for mankind. Allah said: "Today I have perfected your religion for you and have completed My bounty upon you." A thorough study of Islam as a complete way of life proves the truth of these Quranic words. Islam gives guidance for life in this world and in the Hereafter, and nothing essential for human guidance has been left out. The religion has been perfected and there is no ground for new prophethood on the plea of imperfection.

Lastly, the message of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was not meant for any particular people, place, or period. He was raised as the World Prophet--the messenger of truth for the entire human race. The Quran commanded him to declare: "O mankind, I am Allah's Messenger to all of you." That is why after him there remains no need for new prophethood and he has been described by the Quran as Khatam-un-Nabiyyin (the last of the chain of prophets).

letter to the editor

"On Monasticism"

Dear Sir,

I would like this letter to reach the author of the article entitled "Religion: A New View" on page seven of AL-ISLAM, Summer Two, Volume Three. I was given a copy of AL-ISLAM on a recent trip to Washington, D.C. and have been reading it with interest. I was especially struck by how similar Islam and my own church are on many attitudes and ideas.

I am a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, or viewed more widely, the Anglican Communion. Since Anglicans make up one branch of the Holy Catholic Church, sharing origins with but not derived from the other two branches, the Roman and Eastern Communions, I believe my attitudes reflect those of the Church. There is one point mentioned in the article "Religion: A New View" on which I would like to comment.

The practice of monasticism has served an important and possibly essential role in the evolution of the Church. During the Dark Ages, when the world was perhaps more corrupt than usual, small numbers of men retired from the world to lead a more reflective and contemplative life. They carried the faith and traditions of the Church through this period of history. The revival of learning and theology of the Renaissance found the Church not only intact, but spiritually deepened as a result of the efforts of these few dedicated men. Monastic orders have continued to be a source of spiritual revival for the Church.

The monastic life is by no means advocated for all or even most of the members of the Church. As personalities differ, so does one's means of relating to God. Monastic orders are one means. Today they continue to be centers for reflection, spiritual growth, and scholarship for small numbers of men and women who find themselves suited to that life. These people are important members of the body of the Church, but are not representative of the whole body.

If you are inclined to reading and want more factual information about the influence of monasticism on Church development, I recommend to you Bonnell Spencer's Ye Are the

Body: A People's History of the Church, Holy Cross Publications, West Park, N.Y., 1965. Once again, I enjoyed reading AL-ISLAM and wish you continued success in your work.

Sincerely,
Robert E. Rhoads
Lexington, Kentucky

Dear Mr. Rhoads,

I was pleased to receive your letter of April 17 expressing your views about AL-ISLAM JOURNAL and the article "Religion: A New View" in particular. Your comments were quite earnest, and I read them with interest since I was an Episcopalian (Church of the Epiphany, Spartanburg, S.C.) prior to becoming a Muslim, and contemplated becoming a monk.

I agree that monasticism played an important role in the evolution and preservation of Church tradition during the Middle Ages, and as you stated "the monastic life is by no means advocated for all or even most of the members of the Church." The first question, however, that must be answered is whether the "traditions" of the Church were truly representative of the message and mission of Jesus (peace be upon him), or were they innovations that distorted the original objective of his teachings?

Of course, that question demands more attention than we could possibly give it here, and since it relates indirectly rather than directly to our subject, we will address it at another time. Two other points, however, must be discussed, as they determine the Islamic viewpoint on monasticism and were the theme of the article "Religion: A New View." These are: (1) Allah (God) did not ordain the practice of monasticism, and (2) Monasticism encourages a false criterion for virtue and piety.

According to your letter, one of the arguments in favor of monasticism is: "As personalities differ, so does one's means of relating to God." This is a false concept, and has been responsible for much of the corruption and excesses in religious practices. God sent special men, the Prophets, to guide mankind (whose nature never changes) and to show him how to develop the proper relationship with his Creator. When men decide to relate to God in the ways they prefer rather than in the way chosen by the Almighty, they ultimately compromise with wrong-doing and institute false modes of worship. Note these verses from the Holy Quran:

We sent after them Jesus the son of Mary, and bestowed on him The Gospel; and We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy. But the monasticism which

they invented for themselves, We did not pre-
scribe for them. We commanded only the seek-
ing for the Good Pleasure of God; but that
they did not foster as they should have done.
(LVII: 28)

In light of the above words, and from historical evidences, we see that monastic orders grew as a reaction to corruption, strife, and the iniquities that had become prevalent in the affairs of the society. Some men withdrew themselves from societal life to devote their time to devotion and scholarship. Compared to the decadence and immorality around, this appeared to be the more meritorious choice. Islam, on the one hand, recognizes that men of faith have an inclination to renounce the world in order to engage in spiritual pursuits, and even concedes that there is some positive value in the humility and unselfishness fostered by monasticism as expressed in the verse: "And nearest among them (mankind) in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, 'We are Christians,' because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant."

On the other hand, Islam has forbidden men to deny those things that God has made lawful for him: "O ye who believe! Make not unlawful the good things which God hath made lawful for you, but commit no excesses, for God loveth not those given to excess." There is no merit merely in self-denial and abstinence as nurtured by monasticism. God certainly requires that men should refrain from the idle and vain pursuits of this world, but the maintenance of truth and justice demands courage, firmness, and authority. God's service is done through pure lives struggling in the turmoil of this world. It requires men to mingle with other men, so that they can uphold the standard of righteousness. This spirit--the spirit of struggle--was lost, or at least not fostered by monastic institutions.

Islam wants men to partake of God's bounties and fulfill both physical and spiritual needs in order to develop a balanced and harmonious life. From the Islamic perspective, the truly virtuous and pious man is he who marries and raises a family, is involved in community life, confines himself to what God has made lawful without transgressing limits, enjoins the good and forbids the evil, does not succumb to the satanic temptations around him, and struggles against all forms of tyranny and injustice. Such a person's soul is surely purified, and he rightfully deserves the reward of paradise.

I hope you will be able to find some time to respond to my comments. May God grant you peace, and may His Will be established in the earth.

Yours in faith and sincerity,
Ibrahim Hanif, Editor

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Wage Labor & Islamic Social Justice

Islam recognizes several lawful methods for acquiring personal wealth or property. One of these is what is commonly referred to as wage labor. The Quran advocates such work, making it a source of honor in the eyes of all who see it, and a matter for regard and esteem. The Messenger of Allah also went far to give religious sanction to this type of labor, when he accepted a hand swollen with constant toil, saying: "This is a hand which is beloved of Allah and His Messenger." Many other sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) have come down to us which reiterate this religious sanction. "He who in the evening is weary from manual labor shall receive pardon for his sins that very same evening." "Verily Allah loves the servant who practices a trade." "Whatever food anyone of you eats, let it be nothing but the fruit of his hands."

On the basis of this principle which attaches a religious significance to work, Islam gives a religious sanction also to the claim of the worker to his wage. It demands first of all that he be paid in full; it warns any employer who acts unjustly towards his men that he is earning for himself the enmity and the hatred of Allah: "Woe to the cheaters, those who when they take their due measure from men, take it fully. But if they measure out to others or weigh out for them, they give less than is due." The Messenger of Allah once stated that there were three men that Allah will hate on the Day of Resurrection--a man to whom Allah was generous but who betrayed that generosity, a man who sells a free man into slavery and lives off the price, and a man who hires another at a stipulated wage, and then will not give him his due.

In the second place Islam demands that the payment of wages be punctual. It is not enough that they should be paid in full; they must also be paid on time. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Pay your hired worker his wages before his sweat dries." Islam here seeks to meet both a spiritual and material need in the life of the laborer. The spiritual need is that he must know that he is an object of care and concern; speed in the payment of wages conveys this knowledge, and makes him realize that his labor is valuable and his place in society assured. The material need is that the worker generally requires his wage from day to day in order to provide the physical necessities for himself, his wife, and his children. Late payment harms him by denying him the fruits of his labor at the most necessary time, and it lessens his zeal and willingness to work.

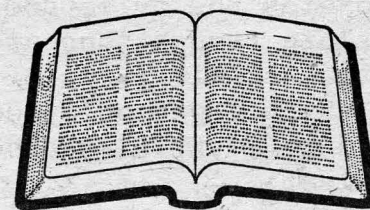
Islam prohibits any worker from allocating any part of his earnings to anyone such as an overseer who does not work himself, but who demands a share of the wages of every worker. The Prophet said to be aware of allocations. That is, beware of the man who controls a party among the people and exacts a due from them. This is contrary to one of the principles of Islam, that there must be no pay without work. Otherwise, such a system contains the possibility of oppression and exploitation of the worker.

In return for the protection of his rights, Islam requires that the laborer performs his work thoroughly and faithfully; for every right carries a corresponding responsibility in Islam. This is but a natural consequence of the equality between effort and reward. For dishonesty and careless work indicate a corruption of man's spirit and a deadness of his conscience. And beyond that, the welfare of society as a whole is disturbed and menaced by poor work.

"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

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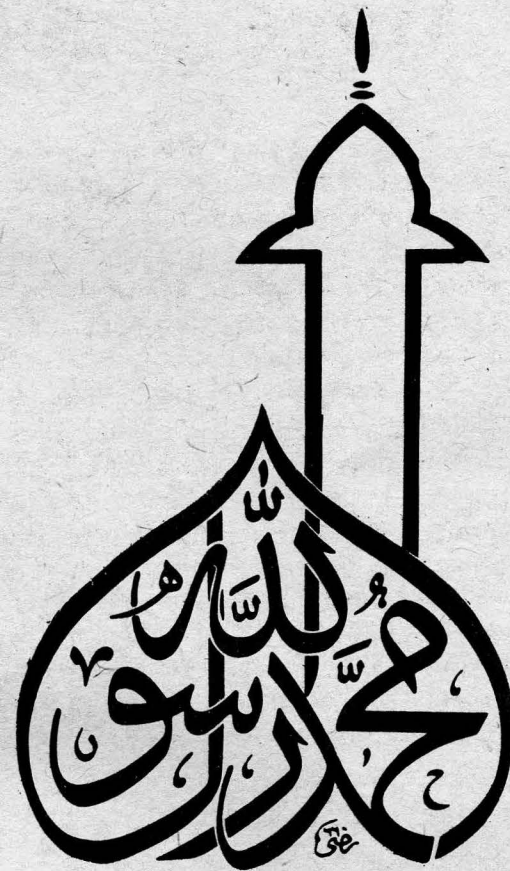
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Special Program - Sundays at 2p.m.

**ISLAM CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE
AND THIS WORLD!**



FOR TRANSPORTATION:

phone 291-2300 or 882-9804

ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE – The word "Islam" literally means: (1) peace; (2) submission. The word signifies complete submission to the Will of Allah, The One True God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION – Islam provides its followers with a perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH – The Muslims worship One God, Allah – the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the worlds, the Friend, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM – Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last of the Prophets. Muslims, i.e., the followers of Islam, accept all such prophets of the world, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed by the Will of Allah for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR'AN – The Scripture of the Muslims is the Qur'an. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book. Inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur'an, the last Book of Allah came as a recapitulation of the former scriptures.

FEATURES OF ISLAM

- *Only complete way of life for the betterment of mankind*
- *Only total unifying force man has ever known*
- *A proven system of social justice for all people and societies*
- *Only system implementing purity, cleanliness, justice, and excellence in moral, spiritual, social, economical, and political affairs on an equitable basis*
- *The only Revolutionary Doctrine that is based on the soundest sources and has withstood the centuries of failure and obsolescence*

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM – These are seven in number: Belief in (1) Allah; (2) Angels; (3) Books from Allah; (4) Messengers from Allah; (5) the Hereafter; (6) the Pre-measurement of good and evil; (7) Resurrection after death.

PILLARS OF ISLAM – These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of Allah, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Alms-giving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'aba at Mecca.

FAITH AND ACTION – Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and the Hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM – The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the best fibre, is capable of unlimited progress and development.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM – Islam is the religion of the Unity of Allah and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honors are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are matters of real merit. Distinctions of color, race and creed are unknown in the Principles of Islam.

KNOWLEDGE – The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior even to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOR – Every labor which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY – All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from Allah for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to Allah. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.



In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

THE NATURE OF OUR MOVEMENT

The Islamic Party in North America is an ideological party in the widest sense and not a mere political party, religious, or social reform organization. It is based on the firm conviction that ISLAM is an all-pervading, comprehensive "Order of Life" which it intends to teach and translate into action in all spheres of human life. The Party believes that the root of all man's troubles is his forgetfulness of Allah (God) Almighty, his disregard of Divine Guidance as revealed through the Prophets, and his unconcern for being accountable for his deeds in the Hereafter. No scheme of reform in human affairs can bear fruit unless and until Obedience to Allah, is sincerely and actually made the basis of the entire edifice of human life. Without this fundamental change, every attempt to reform society by materialistic concepts of justice (Racism, Nationalism, Capitalism, Communist-Marxism, etc.) will only result in other injustices.

AN EIGHT POINT MESSAGE

1. Our Call is: La ilaha illallah — There is no god but Allah. Nothing deserves praise besides Him. He is the Creator, Owner, and Master of the Universe. To Him belongs all power, sovereignty, and authority. He alone can legitimately rule and govern the life of man. This is the most revolutionary doctrine on earth. It snatches from the hands of worldly powers their illegitimate authority to govern society, and restores dignity to mankind by making it submissive to nothing but the Law of Allah; requiring him to struggle against every practice and belief contrary to that Law.

2. We invite the people to ISLAM: a practical system of belief, behavior, and a movement that brings human beings into submission to Allah, freeing them from servitude to others so that they may devote themselves to the service of the One True God, Allah.

3. Accept and apply the sources of ISLAM: These are Al-Quran (the Last Book of Allah) and the Sunnah (established practice) of the Last Messenger, Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullah. The previous Scriptures from Allah have been corrupted and adulterated, (Torah and the New Testament etc.), they were not intended as universal messages for all generations. Therefore, we have no need to search them to ascertain Allah's will. Further, the Islamic Party represents no sect, division, or school of thought in Islam.

4. The Islamic Nation can only be established by a group of Believers working with the methodology of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) only. They must be totally free from desire for worldly gain, possessing the program and power to establish good and remove evil. Its leadership must be able to accurately apply the Prophet's established example (sunnah) of social change to today's situations.

5. We make a clear distinction between an Islamic Society and the Eastern Muslim countries. These so-called Muslim countries are neither Islamic states, nor are their governments legal according to the Quran, "Those who do not judge according to what Allah has revealed are unbelievers" V:47. The people have relegated the legislative authority of Allah to men, and have submitted to this illegitimate authority.

These societies are filled with the same evils as other atheistic and materialistic societies: dictatorships, political corruption, economic exploitation, social irresponsibility and moral degeneration. The Islamic Revolution is needed in the East as well as in the West.

6. The Muslim phenomena must be distinguished from the deceivers who seek to misuse the noble name of Islam for personal aggrandizement, or confuse the people about Islam's true nature. Characterized by racial exclusiveness, the introduction of a false prophet, belief in Allah as a man, and/or the use of Scriptures other than the Quran, these groups neither represent Islam, nor are their members Muslims.

7. Muslim organizations and individuals must go directly to the Quran and Sunnah to find the real purpose of Islam and how to establish it in its entirety. They must not mix the Islamic ideology with other ideas and practices; nor must they become a complacent minority in the corrupt American society.

8. Islam seeks to free the world from oppression and injustice by forging mankind into one brotherhood built on ideological principles that transcend the barriers of race, class, and nation. Historically, the first respondents to the call of Islam have primarily been the poor and oppressed. This phenomena has continued in this country, and must be addressed accordingly.

THE ISLAMIC PARTY IN NORTH AMERICA
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