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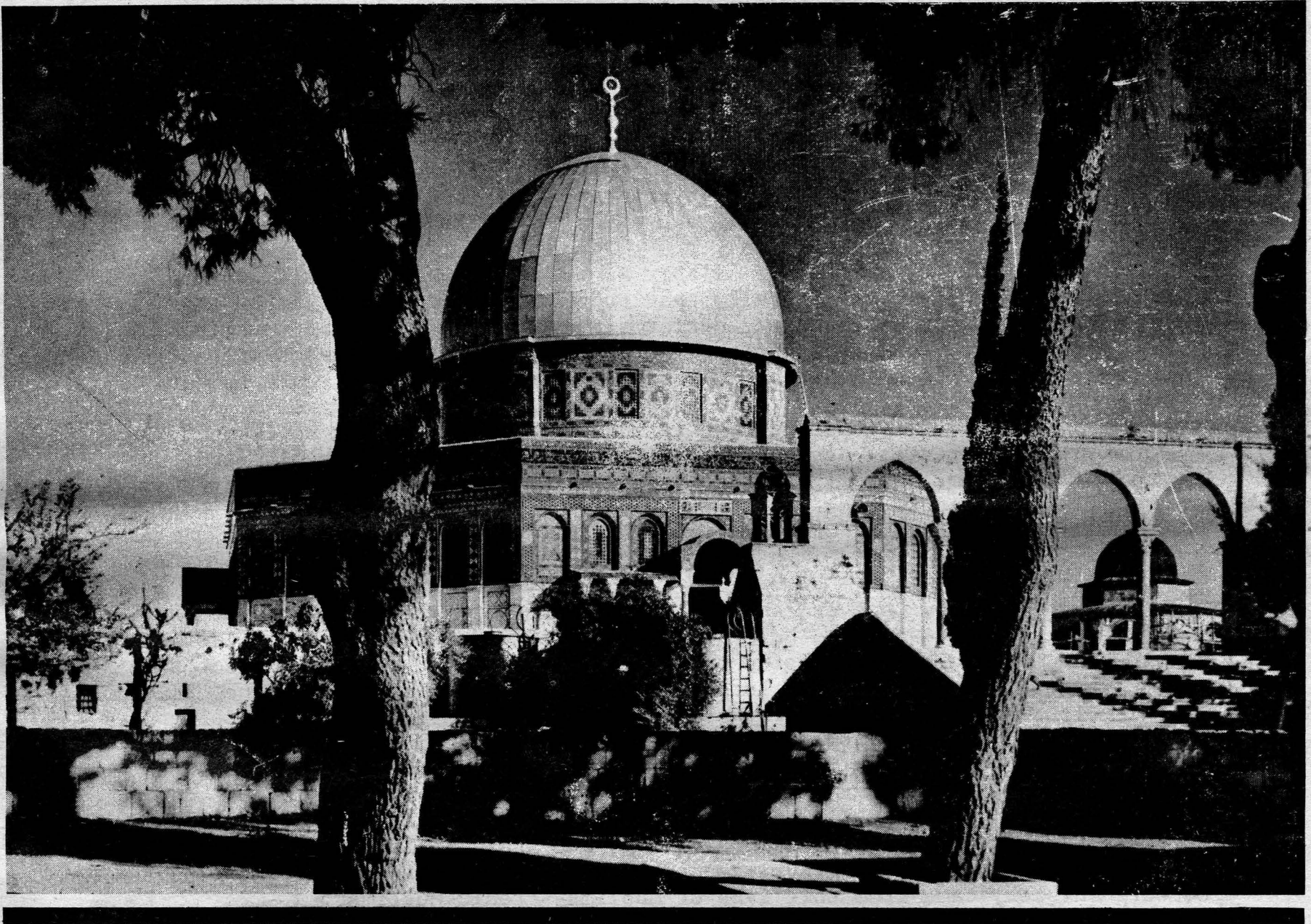
THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT JOURNAL

THERE IS NO GOD BUT ALLAH
MUHAMMAD IS HIS MESSENGER

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Dome of the Rock in Al-Aqsa Mosque at Jerusalem (site of the Miraj, see story p.16)

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THIS IS NOT A COMMERCIAL PUBLICATION. IT CONTAINS THE DIVINE WORDS OF ALLAH AND SHOULD NOT BE DESTROYED OR LEFT IN INDECENT PLACES.

Charity: profit or loss ?

One of the greatest problems facing humanity is undoubtedly the problem of the distribution of wealth, or economic justice. The system of capitalism, which we are confronted with in this society, has led to the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. To Islam is due the credit of not only solving the wealth problem, but at the same time, developing the higher sentiments on which alone the foundations of a lasting civilization can be laid. This has been done through the institution of charity.

Islam attaches special importance to charity, for two reasons: firstly, charity is a means to establish an inner control of the conscience; and secondly, it fosters a belief in the inherent solidarity of mankind. Islam has made charity a pure and humane institution, not limited by the bounds of religion, race, class or language. That charity in Islam is pure and universal is brought out in the saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), "You will never be Believers until you show charity." His companions said, "O Messenger of Allah, all of us are charitable." The Prophet replied: "It is not a question of your charity to your neighbor, but of your charity to men in general." The Prophet even took charity a step further and included in its scope all living things. His companions questioned him: "O Messenger of Allah, is there a reward for giving charity in the case of animals?" He replied: "There is a reward in case of every living creature."

Charity of this nature is one of the characteristic signs of Islam; it indicates one's sincerity and it testifies to the existence of that humane spirit without which, in the Islamic view, there can be no religion. It cultivates true humility, and fear and love of Allah. A few verses from the Quran verify this point. "And give good news to the humble whose hearts are filled with fear when Allah is mentioned, who are patient in their afflictions, who observe prayers, and who spend in charity freely of what We have given them." (II: 35) "But it is righteousness...to give away wealth out of love for Him (Allah) to the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer..." (II: 177)

The Holy Quran describes charity as a loan to Allah: "Who will loan to Allah a beautiful loan? He will double it for him. For

such a one there is a noble reward." "Verily men and women who give charity, and loan to Allah a beautiful loan, He will double it for them. For such there is a noble reward." (LI: 11,17) This noble reward for charity is spoken of in the form of a parable: "The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain of corn growing seven ears with a hundred grains in every ear; and Allah multiplies it for whom He pleases." (II: 261) When charity is looked at from this perspective it has to be regarded as profitable. "That which you spend in charity of your possessions is to your own advantage, even though you spend it only for the love of Allah; what you spend in charity of your possessions will be repaid to you in full measure, and you will suffer no injury." (II: 274)

The giving of charity in both prosperity and in adversity is a sign of true piety and is a means of purification of one's character. The Messenger of Allah commanded that a portion of their property should be taken from people who have sinned and have acknowledged their sins, and this property should be given in charity. Thus such people would be purified and cleansed of that sin. This is an important aspect of repentance, which is brought out further in the following verse from the Quran: "Others have acknowledged their sins; they have done both deeds that are good and deeds that are evil; perhaps Allah will turn to them in mercy, for Allah is forgiving and compassionate. Take of their property alms (charity) which will purify and cleanse them, and pray over them; verily your prayers are a source of security for them, for Allah hears and knows. Have they not learned that it is Allah who receives repentance from His servants and accepts their gifts of charity? Have they not learned that it is Allah who is relenting and compassionate?" (IX: 103-104)

The giving of charity in this manner indicates wisdom and understanding, because it demonstrates a reverence of Allah and a fear of placing an evil record before Him on the Day of Judgement. People who have this reverence and fear are mentioned in these words: "They reverence their Lord, and they fear an evil record. They endure with patience out of regard for the love of Allah; they observe the prayers, and they spend in charity out of what We have given them, both secretly and openly; they drive away the evil by means of the good." (XIII: 21-22)

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) made charity a duty for every Muslim, even though he may have nothing. The explanation of that is this saying of his; "The giving of charity is a duty for every Muslim. They asked him: 'O Prophet of Allah, what of him who has nothing?' He re-

cont. next page

CHARITY cont.

plied, 'Let him turn his hand to labor, and thus profit himself, and then let him give his charity.' They said: 'And what if he can find nothing to do?' He answered: 'Let him find some unfortunate soul who is in need.' They said: 'Suppose he cannot find such a one?' He replied: 'Then let him do someone a service, or let him restrain someone from evil, and that shall be his charity.'

All men have an equal opportunity for generosity, each according to his means, and each according to his ability. But to refrain from this generosity can lead to destruction. Such people who refrain will be asked on the Day of Judgement: "What led you into Hell Fire? They will say: 'We were not of those who prayed; nor were we of those who fed the poor; but we used to talk vanities with vain talkers; and we used to deny the Day of Judgement, until the final account came upon us.'" (LXXIV: 42-47) "As for those who have heaped up for themselves treasures of gold and silver, and who do not expend them in the way of Allah, announce for them a painful punishment. On the day their treasures will be heated in the fire of Hell and they will be branded with them on their foreheads, their sides, and their backs. 'These are the treasures which you heaped up for yourselves, so taste now of what you have heaped up.' (IX: 34-35)

The Quran summons man to be generous before the opportunity is lost. "Say to My servants who have believed that they must observe the prayers and spend freely of what We have given them, both secretly and openly, before there comes a Day on which there will be neither bargain nor friendship." (XIV: 31) "And spend freely of what We have given you, before death comes upon one of you, and he says: 'O my Lord, would that my death might be deferred for a short time, so that I might give charity and thus become one of the righteous.' But Allah will not defer the death of any soul when its time is come." (LXIII: 10-11) Similarly the Quran cautions man to guard himself against greed, and the deception of wealth and children; for these things are only a trial and a temptation for men. "Your wealth and your children are only a temptation; but in the presence of Allah is the highest Reward. So fear Allah as much as you can; listen and obey; and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul. And those saved from the greed of their souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity." (LXIV: 15-16)

Islam also elevates the conception of charity itself by making charity for the sake of Allah only. It makes charity a matter of the public conscience, taking it out of the realm of a show of superiority and preeminence of the rich over the poor, and also, from becoming a show of hypocrisy. If char-

ity is followed by a sense of obligation on the part of those who receive it, then it loses its beauty and causes injury to the soul. By injuring the individual members of the society it thus injures the society. The effect of attaching a sense of obligation to any form of charity is painful to people and it makes them unwilling to accept the charity. Similarly, there is nothing like hypocrisy in charity for corrupting the conscience and moral fibre of man and society.

Accordingly, Islam seeks to elevate the nature of both those who give and of those who receive charity. "Those who spend their wealth in charity in the cause of Allah, and do not follow up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or annoyances, for them their reward is with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. Kind words and the covering of faults are better than charity followed by annoyance; Allah is free of all wants and He is most Forbearing. O ye who believe! Cancel not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by annoyance to the recipients, like those who spend in charity for the sake of appearance before people. He has no belief in Allah or in the Last Day, and he is like a hard, barren rock, on which is a little soil; on it falls heavy rain, which leaves it just a bare stone. Such men will be able to do nothing with anything they have earned. And Allah does not give guidance to those who reject faith. But those who spend their wealth in charity out of a desire to please Allah and to strengthen their souls are like a garden, high and fertile; heavy rain falls on it but makes it yield a double increase of harvest; and even if no heavy rain falls upon it, light moisture sufficeth it. Allah is aware of what you do." (II: 263-265)

For this reason it is desirable that charity be given in secret or in private to the needy. Thus on the one hand the self-esteem of the recipients is safeguarded, and on the other hand a check is put on conceit and pride. "If you give charity in public, that is good; but if you do it secretly and give to the poor, that is better for you." (II: 274) There is a tradition of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) in praise of the man who "gives his charity, but conceals the fact to the point where his left hand does not know what his right hand is giving."

By its very nature charity is a lofty and universal aim which must be the objective of any society. The purpose of charity is to create a balance of wealth, to oppose destitution, to establish the responsibilities which exist between rich and poor, and thus to shape a society which has a sense of mutual relationship and mutual help, and which is therefore a healthy society.



Truth About the Gospels

Few Christians are familiar with the history of the Bible--when its various books were written, when these books were compiled, and who wrote them. A sober look at what the Church historians and scholars have to say about their own religious book and its history clearly shows that the text is not the "word of God." Moreover, the books of the New Testament known as "gospels" are not the recorded words of Jesus (peace be upon him), but are stories about him that contain fragments of his sayings and deeds. Contrary to popular belief the "gospels" were not written by any of the twelve original disciples, nor by anyone who witnessed the ministry of Jesus.

To the modern reader the word GOSPEL denotes the name of one of the first four books of the New Testament. But in the early Church it was some time before the word took on this meaning. Euangelion, "gospel," was a technical term given by the first generation Christians to their religious message. Literally, it meant "the good news." As far as the books called the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are concerned, "...It is only a tradition of the church, going back to the second century A.D., which attributes the gospels to these men; the books themselves are anonymous, and the environment they reflect is not...that which one would have expected if they had been written by men who were among the earliest members of the church." (The New English Companion to the New Testament, A.E. Harvey: Cambridge, 1970)

The most dominant influence in the early Church was the missionary, Paul, known as the "Apostle to the Gentiles." A Roman citizen and a Jew, Paul (originally named Saul) was supposedly converted to Christianity around 35 A.D. while travelling to Damascus to persecute the Christian community there. He came from an affluent family that wielded considerable influence in the upper level and official circle of Roman society. During the entire ministry of Jesus, Paul remained in the forefront of the persecutors, although he neither met nor saw Jesus. After his conversion, he went to live in the desert before beginning his missionary activities. Surprisingly, he refused to accept any guidance from those who had been very near and dear to Jesus.

Having met with little success among Jews, Paul turned towards the Gentiles. With different companions he went throughout the Near East and Greek world making conversions and setting up churches. "For Paul, of course, no authoritative Christian writings existed," explains A.E. Harvey in The New English Companion to the New Testament, "Indeed, he made much of the contrast between the old covenant which was expressed in written documents, and the new covenant which was expressed 'not in a written document, but in a spiritual bond...'. Paul traveled constantly, and kept in touch with the many churches which he founded by writing them letters...These letters are

the earliest Christian writings in existence..." and they make up the majority of the works in the New Testament.

In order to entice the Gentiles, Paul thought it expedient to recast the whole structure of the Christian faith. He introduced so many changes that James, the brother of Jesus and head of the Church at Jerusalem, had to send teachers to the Greek churches to challenge the innovations made by Paul. The first Christians, being Jews, continued to follow the practices of Judaism, based on the example of Jesus himself. For them, the teachings of Jesus complemented rather than superceded the historic faith of Israel. But as the number of Gentile converts to Christianity increased, primarily as a result of Paul's activities, a bitter conflict arose over the role of the old Jewish Law, the Law of Moses. The story is related in chapter 15 of Acts.

The Council of Jerusalem, convened in 51 A.D., was a meeting of Church elders to make a decision on the controversy relating to the Mosaic Law. Unlike most of the disciples and apostles, Paul was well-educated and was a skilled debator. It was his view that the Law should be abandoned totally. Persuaded by his fiery speeches and arguments, the conference adopted a resolution that, except for prohibition of idol-worship, fornication, and certain foods, freed the Gentile converts from the Law of Moses. But this act was contrary to what Jesus himself was reported to have said about the Law:

Think that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5: 17-19)

And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fail.

(Luke 16: 17)

The abolition of the Law of Moses meant disaster for Christianity. It began with cancelling the law of circumcision. Later, the Gentile element kept on tampering with the faith and introducing new ideas so that Christianity was radically changed. One wrong step led to the next until finally the new faith resembled the pagan beliefs of Rome and Greece more than the teachings of Jesus.

The Gospels (there were others besides the four in the New Testament) were composed after the early Christians had become divided into different fac-

GOSPELS cont.

tions. They were in fact composed to propagate the special teachings of the various schools, and their authors showed no hesitation in tampering with the traditional information regarding the life and teachings of Jesus. "Thus Gospels were produced which clearly reflected the conception of the practical need of the community for which it was written. In them the traditional material was used, but there was no hesitation in altering it or making additions to it, or leaving out what did not suit the writer's purpose." (The History of the Christians in the Light of Modern Knowledge, T.G. Tucker)



Historical information indicates that Mark, a disciple of Peter (not Jesus!), wrote a gospel in Rome about 40 years after the alleged Crucifixion. According to the second century Christian writer, Papias, Mark was the interpreter of Peter and wrote down whatever he could remember. "It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied him, but subsequently as I said, attached himself to Peter who used to frame his teachings to meet the needs of his hearers, and not as making a connected narrative of the Lord's discourses." (The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Roberts and Donaldson, editors, Vol. I, p.154)

The conclusion of eminent Biblical scholars regarding the nature and composition of this gospel is summed up by C.J. Cadoux in The Life of Jesus: "It was written after Peter's martyrdom (65 A.D.), and at a time when Mark, who had not himself been a disciple of Jesus, apparently had none of the personal disciples of Jesus within reach by whose knowledge he could check his narrative. These circumstances of its composition accounts for the existence in it, side by side, of numerous signs of accuracy and a certain number of signs of ignorance and inaccuracy." The present book, however, known as the Gospel According to St. Mark is not the same as the original work of Mark. It is an expanded and revised version whose author cannot be ascertained.

Although Matthew was one of the original twelve disciples of Jesus, the first book of the New Testament bearing his name cannot be shown to be his work. The Catholic Encyclopedia for School and Home informs us: "Reliable tradition says that Matthew wrote a gospel in Aramaic, a variant of Hebrew, before A.D. 50. Such is the testimony of Papias, a writer of the early second century....The Gospel which is now accepted as St. Matthew's was written in Greek. Some scholars consider that it was composed about A.D. 80." "It remains an unsolved problem how and why the Gospel came to circulate under the name of Matthew...." (Peake's Commentary on the Bible, Edinburgh, Great Britain, 1962)

The Gospel According to St. Luke was written about 63 A.D. by a Greek convert who became a follower and travelling companion of Paul (not Jesus!). The heavy influence of Paul's teachings are evident in this gospel. Luke's work was addressed to Theophilus, a Roman official who himself was a convert. "For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us...it seemed good to me also ...to write unto thee, most excellent Theophilus. that thou mightest know the certainty of these things wherein thou hast been instructed." (Luke 1: 1-4)

Note that the author's reason for writing was to impart reliable knowledge to Theophilus, and not because of divine inspiration. Also note that Luke admits that "many" such writings already existed, and hence his gospel was only one among many. Apparently, the other gospels must have been different from his own, or else Luke could have referred Theophilus to some other writing. Peake's Commentary relates: "The motive and method of the writing of a gospel are described in the prologue of the Gospel of Luke: without any claim to inspiration, the writer set out to get the best information that he could and use the previous attempts which had been made. The narrative was not designed to be sacred scripture..."

The author of the fourth book of the New Testament, The Gospel According to St. John, is a mystery. St. Irenaeus (125 A.D. - 202 A.D.), bishop of Lyons, France, stated from hearsay that a gospel was written by John, an apostle of Jesus. His statement has been contested on several grounds. No mention of John was ever made by the evangelists who communicated with the Church at Ephesus where John was supposed to have written the gospel shortly before his death. Nor is there mention of him in the writings of Polycarp, the man St. Irenaeus claimed knew John. "The origin of the Gospel is veiled in obscurity.... Irenaeus' statement...is almost certainly incorrect. Ignatius of Antioch, writing around A.D. 112 to the church at Ephesus, makes no allusion to John....In fact, there is no early evidence to connect John with Ephesus, or with the writing of a Gospel." (Peake's Commentary, p.844) Modern biblical scholars not only doubt the genuineness of the views expressed in the Gospel According to St. John, but also the words put in the mouth of Jesus. C.J. Cadoux in The Life of Jesus explains that literary ethics of that period did not forbid assigning fictitious speech to historical characters.



The complete list of New Testament books was recognized as "sacred scripture" only after a long and confused history. About 300 years after Jesus, a Roman emperor, Constantine I, was converted to Christianity. When he convened the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D., 27 books were selected for the New Testament. The Bishop of Rome (known as the Pope) and Emperor Constantine represented the region of the Church that had grown up under the teachings of Paul. They used force to silence all opposition to their views. Groups like the Ebionites who did accept the divinity of Jesus, but whose "thinking about Christ followed upon their strong Jewish conviction on the oneness of God, indivisible in essence and existence," (New Catholic Encyclopedia, New York, 1967) were branded heretics and severely persecuted. Thousands of Christians were killed by other Christians until the views of Rome contaminated the whole church.

The books that had been selected at the Council of Nicaea continued to undergo changes. "The autographs of the 27 canonical books of the New Testament... were lost before almost any extant manuscript was penned. After having been produced on papyrus scrolls, the autographs had been copied by hand, and these manuscripts circulated among individual Christian communities until they in turn were replaced. In the course of transmission both scribal errors and conscious alterations modified the form of the original text." (New Catholic Encyclopedia, P.919) All of these facts show that the Bible, regardless of the sentiment attached to it, fails to pass the test as "the word of God."



Brotherhood is ...

There is a lot of talk these days about human brotherhood. Everyone wants to put an end to racial animosities, religious bigotry, and social inequalities. In periods of accidental and natural disasters people tend to quickly come together for the common good of all, sharing their money, skills, food, and housing. The problem is how to harness this 'love of humanity' and make it a permanently active force in the life of the society. Islam has been able to successfully address this problem.

While on the one hand Islam has declared certain principles that repudiate the false barriers of race, status, and wealth, it has gone on to give clear guidelines and regulations for establishing a real and practical brotherhood within a framework of social organization and submission before the one God, Allah.

In the Holy Quran, Allah calls our attention to the common origin of mankind and the divine legitimacy of all races. He has further outlawed national and racial prejudice while establishing a criterion for determining individual worth. "O mankind! We created you from a single pair (a male and a female), and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other, not that you may despise each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things." (XLIX: 13)

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) stated that a Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim, and that the believers in their mutual kindness, love, and sympathy are like one body. When a limb of the body complains, the entire body responds. (Muslim and Bukhari) He also said that the believers are like the bricks in a building, some which strengthen the others. Then he interlaced his fingers to demonstrate. (Muslim and Bukhari) These statements illustrate the nature of the human relationships on which the Islamic social system is based. The words "one body" and "bricks in a building" point to an inherent feature of brotherhood in Islam--organized association (jamaat). When Muslims are properly organized the ideal spirit of concerned cooperation and mutual duties are given practical expression.

To foster and cement ties of brotherhood among the members of the Islamic community, Allah and His Messenger made love and peace the dominating factors in all fraternal relationships. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) correlated love and peace with true belief. Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said: 'You shall not enter Paradise till you believe, and you will not believe till you love one another. Shall I not guide you to a thing? When you do it you will love one another. Spread peace among yourselves.' (Muslim)

In case of a dispute or disagreement, Allah has instructed Muslims to restore peace between the contending parties: "If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make peace between them. But if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight against the one that transgresses until he complies with the command of Allah. But if he complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair, for Allah loves those who are fair and just. The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers, and fear Allah that you may receive mercy." (XLIX: 9-10)

When they are on bad terms a Muslim is forbidden to separate from his brother for more than three days. The Prophet said that whoever forsakes his brother beyond three days and then dies will enter the Fire (Ahmad and Abu Daud), and that whoever forsakes his brother for a year is like one who sheds his blood. (Abu Daud) Such an arrangement requires members of the Muslim brotherhood to face up to their differences, and prevents misunderstandings from becoming deep-rooted and turning into malice or hatred.

The maintenance of love and peace within the brotherhood is ensured by encouraging right conduct and attitudes of respect and cooperation. The mutual duties and obligations of Muslims are numerous. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) listed six rights that one Muslim has over another: greeting one's brother, accepting his invitations, giving him advice when requested, responding when he sneezes, visiting him when he is sick, and attending his funeral. These social obligations open the door for other kinds of brotherly concern.

A Muslim is even expected to guide his brother back to the straight path when he goes astray. He wants the best for his brother as well as himself, and must help him overcome any personal weaknesses or faults. Prophet Muhammad, instructed his companions, "Help your brother, whether he is wronged

BROTHERHOOD cont.

or is a wrong doer." One man enquired, "O Messenger of Allah! I may help him when he is wronged, but how can I help him when he is a wrong-doer?" The Prophet responded, "You can prevent him from doing wrong. That will be your help to him." (Muslim and Bukhari) On another occasion he told his followers that every Muslim is a mirror to his brother, and that if he saw any dust in the reflection, he should throw it off. (Tirmizi) These teachings are the best example of "Every man is his brother's keeper."

Not only are the life and property of a Muslim secure from the hands of another Muslim, but so is his honor. Back-biting, slander, conjecture, and suspicion based on hearsay and unverified information have all been condemned by Islam. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) commanded his followers to defend the honor of any Muslim who was back-bited in their presence (Sharh-i-Sunnah), and he warned them to beware of conjecture because it is the most false of talks. (Muslim and Bukhari) Allah, in the Holy Quran, enjoins the believers to "Avoid suspicion as much as possible, for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs." (XLIX: 12) To engage in such acts would be like "eating the flesh of one's dead brother" and therefore should be abhorred.

Any act that might lead to hurt feelings, such as name-calling, joking, and ridiculing, are also outlawed by Islam. "O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others; it may be that the latter are better than the former.... Neither defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by offensive nicknames. Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness to be used of one after he has believed, and those who do not desist are indeed doing wrong." (XLIX: 11) Even frightening someone has been discouraged. Once while the Messenger of Allah and some companions were travelling at night, one of the companions scared another who was sleep by shaking a rope that was nearby. The Prophet said, "It is not lawful for a Muslim to frighten another Muslim." (Abu Daud)

These injunctions give substance to the Islamic concept of brotherhood, and establish a firm basis upon which men can cultivate genuine relationships without taking advantage of or abusing one another. The entire social system of Islam, in fact, is constructed on similar noble principles whose objective is to not only reduce social friction, but to guarantee a harmonious and productive society by instilling the correct ideal--seeking the favor and pleasure of Allah.



Behind Prison Walls: Islam in Action

JAILS AND PRISONS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY ARE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT MANUFACTURERS OF CRIME. OF THOSE WHO GO TO JAIL UNDECIDED, CAPABLE EITHER OF CRIMINAL CONDUCT OR OF LIVES FREE OF CRIME, MOST ARE TURNED TO CRIME. PRISONS ARE USUALLY LITTLE MORE THAN PLACES TO KEEP PEOPLE--WAREHOUSES OF DEGRADATION.

Crime in America, Ramsey Clark

No correction program in the prison succeeds in bringing people up from the pit of degradation, revolutionizing their lifestyles, and making them useful members of society once more, than Islam. It teaches strong moral and ethical principles as the foundation of a healthy personality and social life. One inmate at an Ohio penitentiary concluded that the prisoners direly need Islam "so that they can get a value system ...that will keep them from getting caught up in all the madness thrown at them in this Western syphilization."

Rehabilitation comes from within. A person can be shown a way, but if he is not inspired from within, the effort is futile. Islam begins by liberating the individual from the slavery of himself, his false values and hopes, and all forms of ungodliness. By acknowledging his responsibility to his Creator (Allah) he learns his true identity and purpose for living. Islam shows him that the crime he committed is directly associated with a misguided upbringing in a misguided society. The guilt is shared by both of them--the society and himself. But in spite of the society the inmate can seek the true guidance which only comes from Allah his Lord.

Thus, when the Muslim prisoner is permitted to return to the free community, he is a new man, one who is not embittered or vengeful, but one charged with a new optimism and ripe enthusiasm for effecting and influencing meaningful social change that can bring peace and harmony for all mankind. The rehabilitated prisoner, molded with a correct Islamic understanding, becomes a valuable contribution to society and a blessing to the human race.

One would think that the success record of Islam in terms of spiritual upliftment, will power, personal responsibility, and desire

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for self-betterment would at least cause prison officials to accord it the same respect and cooperation given to Christianity and Judaism. In some cases this is so. But there have been repeated instances over the past few years of Muslim inmates being denied their human rights, the rights of American citizens, and the rights of Muslims.

The harassment, intimidation, and malice directed at Muslim prisoners goes down to some basic racial and religious prejudices. The Muslim inmates are predominantly Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and American Indians. Prison officials and guards are, on the other hand, predominantly white American Christians. They often have little tolerance for Islam, and no doubt think they are doing God a service by harassing the Muslims and putting restraints on them. The Muslim prisoners, however, have shown great resolution and fortitude in face of persistent pressures aimed at subduing their determination to practice Islam as a way of life.



The constitutional right to freedom of religion requires that those denied free access to the religious worship of their choice by virtue of their confinement by the state must be afforded all reasonable assistance in pursuing their faith while confined. In fact, the principle has been established that the state must maximize the exercise of individual rights in this regard because of the involuntary restrictions on movement and association it enforces.

Correctional authorities should immediately develop and implement policies and procedures that will fulfill the right of offenders to exercise their own religious beliefs. The policies and procedures should allow and facilitate the practice of these beliefs to the maximum extent possible, within reason, consistent with their constitutional rights of free expression and association as exercised by the public at large.

The responsibility of the correctional agency to maximize exercise of religious beliefs and practices relate to the following: provide access to appropriate facilities for worship or meditation, enable offenders to adhere to the dietary laws of their faith, arrange the institution's schedule to the extent reasonably possible so that inmates may worship or meditate at the time prescribed by their faith, allow access to clergymen or spiritual advisers of all faiths represented in the institution's population, permit receipt of any religious literature and publications that can be transmitted legally through the United States mail, allow religious medals and other symbols that are not unduly obstructive.

In determining whether practices are religiously motivated, the correctional agency should allow the offender to present evidence of religious foundations to the official making the determination.

Report on Corrections, National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals (1973)



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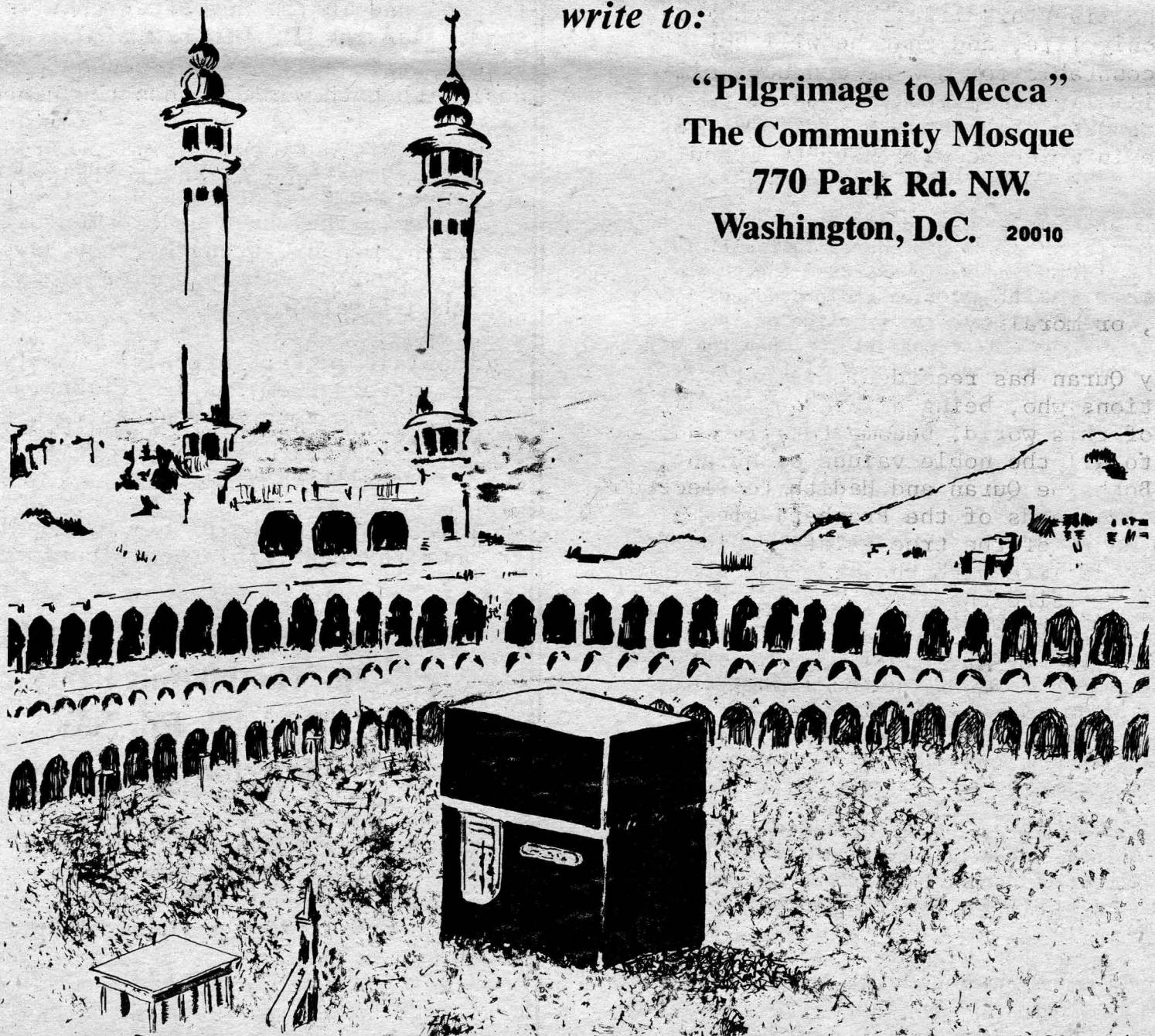


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this world and the next

When pondering over the life of this world we are confronted with one undeniable fact, that one day we will die. Then we are faced with the question of what will come after death. The question of life after death has always stirred man's imagination; logic and reason suggest that it should exist, but cannot confirm its existence. Even modern science cannot furnish any data on this question; the best science can do is to say 'no comment.' However, in the teachings of the Holy Quran we are informed about its reality. All the prophets of God taught and commanded their followers to accept life after death as an article of faith, a reality that could not be denied.

Belief or disbelief in life after death has a profound effect on how we live our lives. A man who lives his life thinking that this is the only life, and that he will not be held accountable for how he conducts himself, will live completely opposite to one who is assured that there is a life after this one in which he will have to stand before his Lord and give a full account. One clear result of belief in this life only is the yearning for wealth. Everyone wants to amass the largest amount of wealth, and to attain this wealth people forget about law, justice, or morality.

The Holy Quran has recorded the instances of many nations who, being allured by the riches of this world, became totally indifferent to all the noble values of human life. Both the Quran and Hadith (collected sayings and deeds of the Prophet) give a clear picture of the true relationship of this present life with the life after death. "Those who desire the life of the present and its glitter, We shall pay them their deeds therein, and they will not be wronged. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire. All that they do here is vain and all their deeds are fruitless." (XI: 15-16) Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Love of this world is the root of all evil." We should therefore consider the passing life of this world as a means towards our ultimate goal.

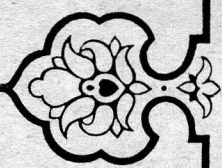
The moral of the many verses of the Quran in which this world and the Hereafter have been compared is that those who prefer this world to the Hereafter will be losers in the long

run. "If any do wish for the transitory things of this life, We readily grant them such things as We will to such a person as We will. In the end have We provided Hell for them; they will burn therein, disgraced and rejected. Those who do wish for the things of the Hereafter, and strive with all due striving, and have faith, they are the ones whose striving is acceptable to Allah." (XVII: 18-19)

At the same time we have been commanded not to shun this world completely. "But seek the Home of the Hereafter in that which Allah has given you and neglect not thy portion of this world." (XXVIII: 77) Justice requires that we be faithful to the requisites of this life as well as the Hereafter. "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good. And guard us from the doom of the Fire." (II: 201) If one cannot properly deal with both worlds, then the Hereafter should be given preference. "You desire the lure of this world and Allah desires for you the Hereafter, and Allah is Mighty, Wise." (VIII: 67)

We should not be deceived by the glamor and splendor around us, nor should this life be wasted by merely seeking pleasure and comfort because Allah tells us: "Know ye all that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting, and rivalry among yourselves in multiplying riches and children....But in the Hereafter is a Penalty severe for those devoted to wrong, and forgiveness from Allah and His Good Pleasure for those devoted to Allah. Whereas the life of this world is but a matter of illusion." (LVII: 20)

In general man has forgotten the purpose of his creation. He attempts to fill his hands with wealth, which may remove a few of the difficulties in this world, but will be of no use to him when he dies. Economically speaking, wants can never be satisfied. If a man had one valley of gold he would cherish for a second, and if one more is added he would cherish for a third. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) gave the best remedy to divert our minds from excessive love of this world and neglect of the Hereafter when he said: "Be in this world as if you were a stranger traveling in it."



AL-QURAN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

AL-MAIDA verse 13

Allah had bound the Israelites by a solemn covenant, and appointed twelve supervisors from among them and said, "I am with you; if you establish prayer (salat), pay the poor-due (zakat), and believe in My Messengers, and support them and give a generous loan to Allah, I shall surely wipe out your evils from you, and admit you into gardens under which canals flow. But after this whoso from among you adopts the way of disbelief has indeed gone astray from the Right Way.*

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ

*The Right Way" does not fully express the meaning of "sawa-as-sabil." It is that way of life which enables a man to develop harmoniously all his powers, faculties, and abilities: which satisfies all his cravings, urges and feelings, and the demands of his body and soul in a congenial manner: which guides him rightly to keep balanced the multifold complex relations with other human beings: which leads him individually and collectively to exploit and use equitably the natural resources for his own good and that of humanity. In short, it is that way of life which enables the individual and the society to solve spiritual, moral, social, physical, economic, political, and international problems in a straight, smooth, even and just manner.

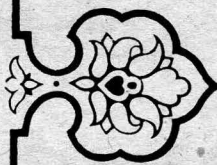
It is obvious that man with his limited powers and intellect cannot by himself solve these problems, as he is simply incapable of comprehending at one and the same time all the aspects of human problems so as to weigh and estimate their relative importance and judge between the different courses before him. That is why, whenever he has tried to plan a way of life for himself, he has utterly failed to do justice to his own self or his society, and made a mess of all his affairs and problems, and created a state of chaos everywhere. This is because with his narrow vision he becomes so absorbed in one

basic need out of many and one problem out of many that he loses sight of all others and neglects them intentionally or unintentionally.

As a result of this, life loses its balance and begins to rush towards one extreme. When this state of affairs becomes unbearable, one of the neglected needs or problems takes hold of man and life begins to rush towards another extreme with the same destructive result. In this way, life goes on running from one extreme to the other and man never finds the balanced middle way which is "The Right Way" because all the ways planned by him keep running in wrong directions from one extreme to the other.

As has been pointed out, man cannot plan that right way which may lead him clear of the pitfalls of the wrong and crooked ways, so Allah has very graciously made arrangements for showing the right way to mankind. He sent His Messengers with Guidance to lead mankind to the right way--to real success in this world and in the Hereafter; and the one who loses this way will go wrong, and inevitably go to Hell.

Commentary by Maulana Maudoodi



AL-SUNNAH

NU'MAN B. BASHIR REPORTED: I HEARD ALLAH'S MESSENGER (PEACE AND BLESSINGS BE UPON HIM) SAY: WHAT IS LAWFUL IS EVIDENT AND WHAT IS UNLAWFUL IS EVIDENT, AND BETWEEN THEM ARE THE THINGS DOUBTFUL WHICH MANY PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW. SO HE WHO GUARDS AGAINST DOUBTFUL THINGS KEEPS HIS RELIGION AND HONOR BLAMELESS, AND HE WHO INDULGES IN DOUBTFUL THINGS INDULGES IN FACT IN UNLAWFUL THINGS, JUST AS A SHEPHERD WHO PASTURES HIS ANIMALS ROUND A PRESERVE WILL SOON PASTURE THEM IN IT. BEWARE, EVERY KING HAS A PRESERVE, AND THE THINGS GOD HAS DECLARED UNLAWFUL ARE HIS PRESERVES. BEWARE, IN THE BODY THERE IS A PIECE OF FLESH; IF IT IS SOUND, THE WHOLE BODY IS SOUND, AND IF IT IS CORRUPT THE WHOLE BODY IS CORRUPT, AND HEARKEN IT IS THE HEART.

This statement beautifully sums up the nature of the Islamic Law and the attitude of a Muslim towards it. It expresses deep and practical wisdom about human life. Allah has clearly defined the things which are lawful and those which are unlawful. Every person has a clear knowledge of them, but in between these unlawful and lawful things, there are certain things which are doubtful. The man who shuns the use of such things guards himself against pitfalls, since the use of doubtful things paves the way for falling into the net of evil.

At the outset no one dares commit glaring evil; he starts from those acts which apparently have no evil around them, but the intention behind them is no good. He then proceeds slowly and steadily on this dangerous path without realizing the enormity of danger lying ahead and ultimately falls victim to evil. The people who do not avoid doubtful things are imperceptibly but irresistibly driven to evil deeds.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) has explained this process of moral deterioration with the help of a simile about the preserve of a king. The shepherd who does not keep his sheep away from the preserve hazards misfortune, for if they are allowed to graze near it, there is every likelihood that they will be overcome by the great temptation in the pasture. Like the preserve of the king, evil has a fascination and charm of its own, and the person who hovers about the borderline of evil can at any moment fall into its trap.

The concluding portion of this hadith (tradition) has an object lesson for us: that we should first try to cleanse our heart of evil thoughts and make it pure and clean. Evil thoughts lead to evil deeds; man should, therefore, try his utmost to get rid of them. This is possible only when we entertain good and pious thoughts, leaving no chance for the evil to find its place in our hearts. A wise man is not one who considers how he may get out of evil, but one who sees that he does not fall into it.

Raising Our Children (pt.2)

The following article is the second 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.

The purpose of childhood education is to achieve happiness. What is the method of education that will produce a child with an independent personality, filled with the desire to work hard to achieve happiness for himself and others? In my estimation, the only way to produce such a personality is to base education upon three principles: mutual understanding, conviction, and participation.

Mutual understanding between the parents and the child regarding what is right and what is wrong lights the way for the child and enables him to see his destination. Furthermore, mutual understanding gives the child the opportunity to enquire about things, express his opinion on different matters, admit his mistakes, and explain his behavior. Such frankness and openness makes it much easier for the parents to direct and reform the child.

Conviction is essential for the establishment of righteous tendencies in the child's conduct. It makes him inclined to do good by himself. Without conviction, a child may do good as an act of blind obedience to orders, but he will constantly try to shirk his responsibilities. Therefore we should be careful about issuing orders to the child. The more orders we issue the greater the child's tendency to evade and disobey them. Whatever a child acquires in blind obedience to our orders he will try to get rid of in secret. And every act in secret is darkness, and darkness makes it easier for him to err and go astray.

We should also participate in the child's activities and let him participate in ours. This will train him and show him the best way to do things. Thus when the child becomes independent, he will have enough experience to tread the road of life successfully.

In all aspects of childhood education--mutual understanding, conviction, or participation--we should show respect to the child's personality. We should realize, and make him realize also, that he's taking a new step forward every day. So if he misunderstands something, gives a wrong opinion, or misbehaves, we must not mock or ridicule him. On the other hand, if he does something right or gives a sound opinion, we should express our appreciation and admiration in a moderate way.

A child is curious by nature. His mind is always inquisitive about the broad life around him, and he is always filled with the desire to know as much as he can about all that he sees and hears. Hence, it is not proper for his parents to rebuke or stop him from asking questions. If we do so, we will be shutting the window which gives him light and provides him with fresh air to breathe. We should also not let our conversations with other adults or our involvement with some other matter prevent us from answering the child's questions, no matter how unimportant they seem to be.

Just as a small plant needs to be nourished more than a lofty tree, a child needs to be nourished in his acquisition of knowledge more so than an adult. We ought to answer all the questions posed to us by the child, sometimes in detail and sometimes in brief, but always with patience and an even temper. We should also give the child simple and clear answers, taking into consideration his age and degree of awareness. Even questions that seem embarrassing or shameful should not be avoided. Any hesitation or agitation in responding to the child will only confuse and perplex him.

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If we find it impossible to answer some question in a way understandable to the child, and this should be very rare, then we should suddenly draw his attention to something else and make him forget his question. This will give us time to prepare a useful answer and be ready the next time the question is asked. But we must be careful in using this technique with children who have grown up a little. It is better to tell them that we do not know the answer, or that we must investigate the matter, rather than to tell a lie or make them lose their enthusiasm to pursue knowledge.

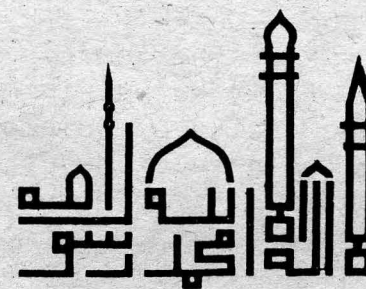
Every child likes to be treated as a grown-up because growing up is one of his desires. No one should object to that. Satisfying this desire in a child enhances his psychological maturity, as long as it is done in the proper way. Treating a child as a grown-up, however, does not mean that we deprive him of the right to amusement and play, for these things constitute real happiness and pleasure for him. It is even preferable that we--the parents--participate, to some extent, in the child's fun and recreation.

It will also be very useful if we try to introduce the child to the realities of life. It is good to make him participate with us, on an elementary level, in understanding how to endure hardships. Let him realize that life is not all roses, and that it contains pain and troubles. Let him understand that sometimes people fail, and that it is their duty to try again and again until they succeed. It is important for the child to know that the road to happiness and success demands striving and perseverance in face of difficulties and calamities.

The way to make the child understand all this is not to pour the information in his head. But we should give him little doses in the form of simple remarks, frequent comments, symbolic stories, and factual narratives. For example, what is wrong with decreasing the child's allowance or not satisfying all his demands at times when the family is faced with financial stress? Of course, the situation should be explained to him. Exposing the child to some form of hardship teaches him how to look at life in a more practical way when he grows up. The future is known to none but Allah (God). Hence, our children should be well prepared to meet the challenges of life.



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The Night Journey

"GLORY TO ALLAH WHO DID TAKE HIS SERVANT FOR A JOURNEY (ISRA) BY NIGHT FROM THE SACRED MOSQUE (MASJIDUL HARAM) TO THE FARTHEST MOSQUE (MASJIDUL AQSA) WHOSE PRECINCTS WE DID BLESS, IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT SHOW HIM SOME OF OUR SIGNS...."

Holy Quran XVII: 1

The miraculous ascension (Miraj) of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) to the heavens occupies a special place in the history of Islam and in the hearts of Muslims. The above Quranic verse describes the initial stage of the journey from the "Sacred Mosque" (Holy Kaaba) in Mecca to the "Farthest Mosque" (site of Solomon's Temple) in Jerusalem. The noteworthy feature is that the entire round trip occurred within a portion of the night although the distance between Mecca and Jerusalem was several hundred miles and the most rapid means of transportation was by horse or camel.

In order to fully appreciate the significance and meaning of the Ascension (Miraj), it must be kept in view that this event occurred at a time when the struggle between Islam and the pagans was at its height and the persecution of the Believers was at its worst. There was no place in Arabia where a Muslim was allowed to live in peace. It was to cope with these circumstances that the following prayer was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) during the Ascension. "Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; our Lord! lay not on us a burden like that which Thou didst lay on those before us: our Lord! lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness, have mercy on us. Thou are our Protector; help us against those who stand against Faith."

The story of the Night Journey (Isra) began while the Prophet was sleeping in Mecca at the house of his cousin, Umm Hani. The Angel Gabriel came to him and cut open his chest to remove the heart. He (Gabriel) washed it in Holy Water from the well of Zam-Zam, returned it to its original place after emptying a golden bowl full of wisdom and faith in Prophet Muhammad's breast.

Accompanying Gabriel was "Al-Buraq," a heavenly animal resembling a horse and having the speed of lightning. Mounted on this animal, Prophet Muhammad was taken at an in-

credible speed from the grounds of the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque at Jerusalem where he performed two units (rakats) of prayer. From there, he and Gabriel made the ascent (miraj) to the heavens.

In an instant the two travelers arrived at the gate of the first heaven. When Gabriel requested for the gate to be opened, the Guardian Angel asked, "Who is it?" Gabriel replied, "Muhammad." It was then asked, "Has Muhammad been called for?" Gabriel responded in the affirmative. Then it was said, "He is welcome." And the gate was opened. Prophet Muhammad was shown all the indescribable wonders of this heaven. He met Prophet Adam who greeted him as his "son."

Gabriel and the Prophet continued their ascent through the succeeding heavens on to the seventh. At each point they were greeted and welcomed by Prophets which included John and Jesus, Joseph, Idris, Aaron, Moses, and Abraham, respectively. When they reached the location of the unsurpassable boundary, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was shown the Sacred House, encircled by 70,000 angels. Gabriel then departed saying, "If I advance any further, I shall be burned by the Divine lights; you being the guest should advance."

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was given directions on how to proceed. In doing so, he arrived at a place where he heard the sound of pens writing. This was the "office" which recorded all the Divine orders and transmitted them to whom-ever they concerned. Continuing, the Prophet finally reached the "Presence of the Most Holy" (Hazratul Quddus) where he witnessed the Majestic Glory and Manifestation. He stepped and presented his sincere and pure salutations to the Lord, "All reverence, worship, and sanctity is due to Allah." (At-tahiyaatu lillaahi was salawaatu wat tayyibaatu). Afterwards came the gracious response. "Peace be on you, O Prophet, and the Mercy and Blessings of Allah." (As-salaamu 'alaika ayyuhan nabeeyu wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatu) Hoping for others to be a part of the Divine grace, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Peace be upon us and all the righteous servants of Allah." (As-salaamu 'alaina wa'ala ibaa-dillaahis-saaliheen)

Allah then revealed to him a set of twelve commandments, more comprehensive than the ten revealed to Moses (peace be upon him) on Mount Sinai. This code is contained in Surah (chapter) 17, verses 23-39 of the Holy Quran, and in summary says:

1. Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.
2. Be kind to your parents, address them

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with honor, and show humility towards them.

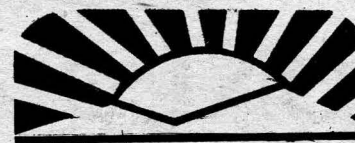
3. Give to your relatives the rights they are due, and the same for the needy and the traveler.
4. Do not squander your wealth in the manner of a spendthrift, neither be stingy like a miser
5. Do not kill your children for fear of want, for Allah provides sustenance for them as well as for you.
6. Do not approach illicit sex (fornication and adultery), for they are shameful and are evils which lead to other evils.
7. Do not take the life (which Allah has forbidden) except for just cause.
8. Do not come near the orphan's property except to improve it.
9. Keep your covenant (agreement).
10. Give just measure, and do not cheat.
11. Do not pursue those things of which you have no knowledge, for every act of hearing, seeing, and feeling in the heart will be enquired into on the Day of Judgement.
12. Do not walk on the earth with insolence.

On his return journey, the Prophet passed by the different Prophets who congratulated him for his high honors. Moses asked him:

"What has the Lord ordained for your followers?" He replied: "Fifty daily prayers."

"Your followers cannot perform so many prayers, I have already tested the children of Israel. Go back to Allah and ask for a reduction in number," said Moses. The prayers were reduced to forty-five, but upon the advice of Moses, Prophet Muhammad made repeated requests for further reductions until the number was down to five. The Holy Prophet then said: "I have requested so much of my Lord that I feel ashamed, but I am satisfied now and surrender to Allah's order." Allah had promised that the five prayers would be rewarded as fifty prayers. Descending at the Temple in Jerusalem, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) led the other Prophets in a prayer of thanksgiving before being transported back to Mecca.

The next day when he announced his heavenly journey, it caused a commotion among the unbelievers who naturally discredited and mocked him. They pestered the Prophet with questions about the description of the Temple in Jerusalem, where he had never gone before. To their surprise, he furnished them with accurate information. For the Muslims, however, news of the Ascension was a boost to their faith. They knew that the Almighty Allah, who was powerful enough to create the heavens and earth by an act of His will, was surely powerful enough to take His Messenger beyond the heavens and show him those signs at first hand which are normally inaccessible to man.



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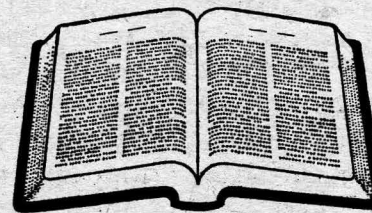
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to the grave."

Prophet Muhammad (peace and
blessings be upon him)

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

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 Prophets 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...." (XXXII: 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)

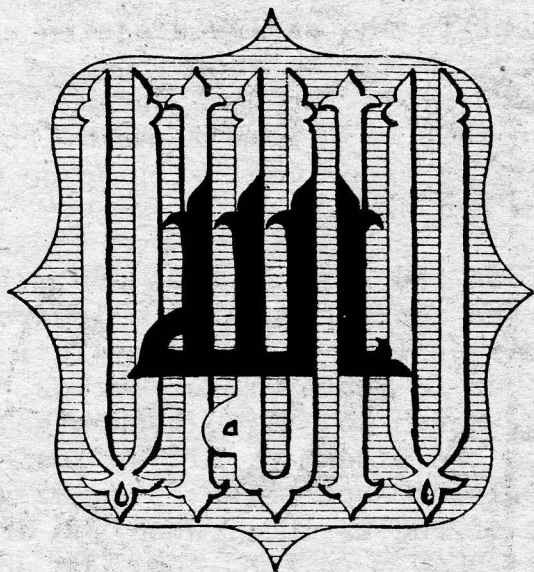
As far as the Resurrection and life after death are concerned, the followers of Elijah Muhammad believe "not in physical resurrection--but in mental resurrection." (Muhammad Speaks, March 14, 1975, back page) In (Message to the Blackman, Elijah insists: "There is no such thing as dying and coming up 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)

UNBELIEVERS cont.

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: 5-8) 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." (XIX: 66-68)

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.



THERE IS NONE WORTHY OF WORSHIP BUT ALLAH

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: Why do Muslim converts change their names?

A: First, one must consider the definition and function of a name. The simplest dictionary meaning of "name" is a word or phrase which identifies and distinguishes a person from others. But the function of a name can extend beyond merely being a term by which someone is known. It can also express some quality or characteristic of a person, or link the person to a cultural heritage or a particular way of life. A Muslim's name usually serves all of these functions.

Although it is not absolutely necessary for a Muslim convert to change his name, it is a highly recommended practice that was initiated by Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). Islam recognizes the positive value of having meaningful names, and Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) made it part of his practice to give new names to people when they accepted Islam. Their new names represented a source of dignity and inspiration.

Muslim names can be divided into three general classes: attributes of Allah prefixed by "Abdul" (servant of)--ex., Abdul Alim (servant of the All-Knowing); names of Prophets and outstanding persons associated with the Prophets--ex., Musa (Moses), Bilal (companion of Prophet Muhammad); and desirable qualities or traits--ex., Nuruddin (light of the Faith), Mujjahid (one who struggles).

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) advised his followers to give their children good names. He said that the names most pleasing to Allah (God) are Abdullah (servant of Allah) and Abdur Rahman (servant of the Merciful), and the name or title most hated by Allah is Malik al-Amlak (King of Kings, or Shah in Shah). The person calling himself "King of Kings" will be the target of Allah's wrath on the Day of Judgement because only Allah is the King.



Party Line

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Various grass-roots organizations and movements committed to social change have come and gone, particularly during the last decade. Most of them made economic independence a major part of their programs. Few, if any, however, were able to maintain themselves without government subsidies or grants from foundations that represent government interests. In other words, these groups were never able to generate an on-going plan for self-sufficiency. Additionally, the lack of sacrificing tendencies meant that the leaders and members of these groups were more concerned about the security of their personal welfares than bringing any meaningful change in the economic conditions of the people they claimed to serve.

The Islamic Party in North America also advocates economic independence, but the kind of economic independence we are referring to does not mean total isolation from the present economic structure of the country. What it does mean is that our movement must refrain from economic activities and business practices that are forbidden by the Islamic Law or contrary to its spirit. From the Islamic Party's perspective, economic independence from the dominant un-Islamic system is viewed in two dimensions: firstly, the organization as a whole must not be tied to sources of income that compromise its principles and methodology; and secondly, its individual members must be free of occupational constraints that hinder active participation in the movement's program.

The "Survival for Islamic Work Scheme" developed by the Islamic Party is a practical example of the kind of independent economic apparatus described above. While the nation as a whole was going through an unemployment and economic crisis, the program of the Islamic Party was expanding. The "Survival for Islamic Work Scheme" is a system of cooperative economics that subjects all economic activities, personal and collective, to the overall Islamic mission. Consequently, the pursuit of economic benefits exists as a means to facilitate the cause of Allah rather than as an end in itself. Under this arrangement the Party operates and is evolving several business projects.



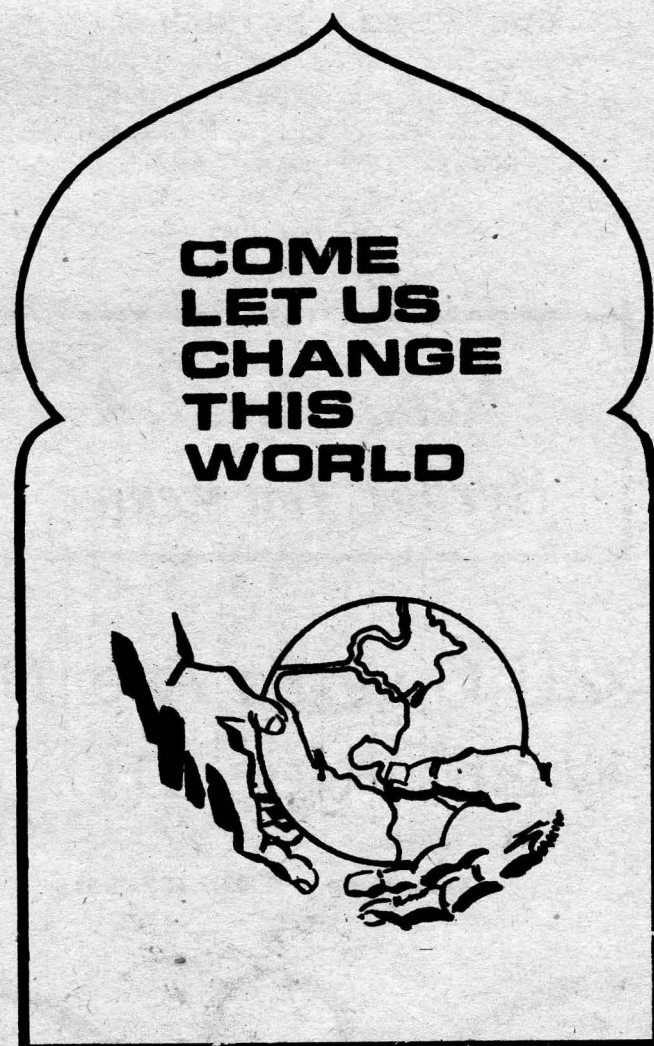
REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY MOSQUE ACADEMY

The Community Mosque Academy, by the grace of Allah, successfully completed its first year of operation. The challenges facing the Academy as an independent educational alternative were quite formidable. Initiated last summer on an experimental basis, the Academy will not celebrate its first anniversary as a full-time parochial school until September.

Recently, the Community Mosque Academy presented its first annual Quranic recitation program in which students demonstrated their proficiency in memorizing chapters from the Holy Quran. First and second place awards were given, and outstanding staff members received special citations.

VISIT I.P.N.A.

People interested in getting a better understanding of the work of the Islamic Party are invited to spend a few days at our facilities. Many rumors have been circulated about our jamaat, its administration, its viewpoints, its methods. But anyone is welcome to come to our headquarters at the Community Mosque Complex (Washington, D.C.) to experience first hand the day to day life of our movement.



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Books



Islamic Law and Constitution, Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi, translated and edited by Khurshid Ahmed (Islamic Publications, Lahore, Pakistan, 1960)

This book is a collection of the writings and speeches of Maulana Maudoodi which deal with the political and constitutional thought of Islam. The author has managed, without superfluous details, to describe the nature of the Islamic state, its theory, form, and underlying principles. He explains the process of how to re-establish the Islamic ideology in the world of the twentieth century.

The Eternal Message of Muhammad, Abdur Rahman Azzam (Devin-Adair Co., New York, 1974)

The primary theme of this book is the practical and spiritual meaning of the teachings of the Holy Prophet and their manifestations in subsequent Islamic history and culture for modern man. The author said that his original intention was not to write a book, but to write some essays to clarify for Muslims some of the principles and origins of their society, faith, and revealed Law, and to speak of the life of the Prophet. Nevertheless, non-Muslims will find this book relevant for the author suggests that in our age, Islam's insistence on duties rather than rights offers a crucial lesson in morality that can lead, eventually, to a new unity of the human race.

Islam in Theory and Practice, Maryam Jameelah (Muhammad Y. Khan, Lahore, Pakistan, 1967)

The revolutionary call of Islam vibrates in the brief essays that comprise this book. The author impresses upon her readers that for Muslims to imitate and follow the West is the antithesis of Islamic teachings. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) showed to mankind what true "progress" means and any departure from this ideal leads to chaos and confusion, frustration and humiliation, and defeat and destruction.

Islam has its own ideals and set of standards that have proven to be the best as shown by the experience of centuries of human intellect and wisdom. The day of Islamic supremacy, the American-Jewish convert pleads, will not be far away if only the Muslims realize their destiny as the leaders of mankind and strive to uphold the Word of Allah in every walk of life. Islam should become a living force and not just an academic proposition.



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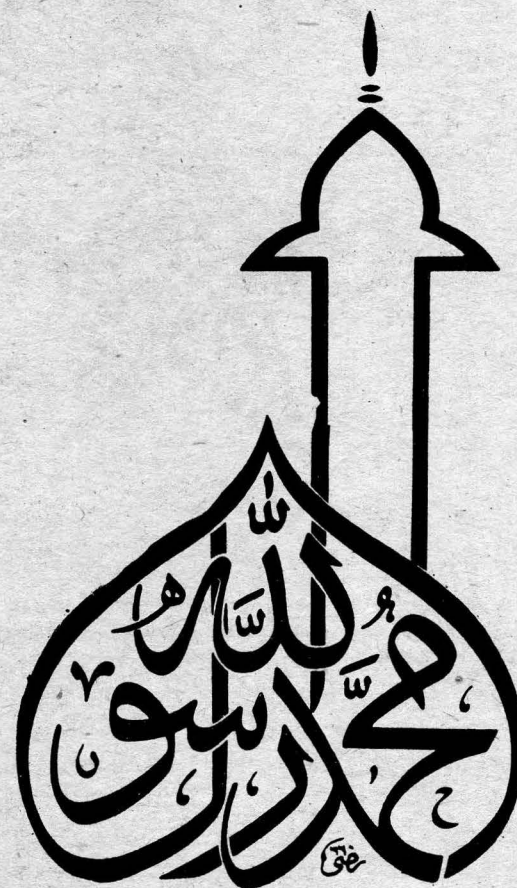
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ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE – The word "Islam" literally means: (1) peace; (2) submission. The word signifies complete submission to the Will of Allah, The One True God.

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 Premeasurement 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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