

# **Islam As I Understand**

Dr. Shabbir Ahmed

Dedicated to:

The Greatest Man  
Who ever walked this earth  
570 - 632 C.E.

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## Acknowledgement

It has become almost a formality for an author to applaud his wife "for her patience and perseverance during the work".

This is the 25th book I have written. Readers might find it amazing that I have penned just one. I am a dictator in the sense that I dictate my thoughts, and Farida, my lovely wife, pens them. And during the process she invariably keeps coming up with wonderful ideas. Any more said about my gratitude to her would be redundant.

My son, Attorney Shahzad, is an exceptionally devoted, gifted and upright young man. This book has been thoroughly reviewed, revised, edited, and formatted by him. His contribution in every respect is so outstanding that Shahzad is truly the co-author of this book. Shahzad's young bride, Saira, has extended her help amicably in typing the manuscript with a beautiful smile.

My award to my family is everlasting love. Greater reward will come from the Supreme.

Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.

April 1999

Reviewed November 2001

We truly appreciate the valuable contribution of Mrs. Huma Shah of Texas in carefully reviewing the references of this work.

## About the Book

Many books have been written for introducing Islam to Non-Muslims, each promising a new approach, Yet, by and large they keep on treading the same old beaten track. There is not much to distinguish on from the other. Such traditional books do not appeal to the rational mind since Islam is presented as just one more passive faith, suffering from the other religions. Steeped in symbolism, rituals and a tunnel vision, the reading experience can even be a turn off form Islam. After reading such books, one reaches on the verge of asking, "So what is new?"

The main casualty of the traditional approach about Islam is its universality. Islam is not a monopoly of one people; it is the entire mankind, It has to be presented as a treasure to be shared by all humanity. Most of these books attempt to introduce Islam as something specific to Muslims and unrelated and alien to the world at large. The approach is a sure recipe for alienating the common reader.

"Islam as I understand it" is, in this sense, different from any other book written on this subject. In departure from the traditional approach, it includes a Q & A session to respond to the typical objections raised by detractors of Islam, or even objective critics.

Departure from traditional ways is a hallmark of books, quite large in number, by Dr. Shabbir Ahmed. He is forthright, frank and illuminative about his subject matter. He backs up Islam's characteristics as an all-embracing faith, universal to mankind. From that perspective, the book is truly an iconoclast.

"Islam as I understand it" uses powerful message of the Quran to a faith that connects to a modern thinking person. The book has been translated in many languages worldwide.

Obviously the book is essentially meant for non-Muslim readers. However, its study can help in understanding Islam in rational light. That is because Dr. Shabbir demolishes the mythology which has intruded into Islam through people who most probably were masquerading as Muslims but were in fact carrying on sabotage of Islam on behalf of Jews and Nazarenes during its earlier centuries. An unholy alliance of despotic monarch and theocratic hierarchy had added much to this mythology. The mystic culture too, especially in the Indian sub-continent, corrupted the faith in no small measure. Dr. Shabbir makes valiant attempts to

peel off of a thick layers of this growth for helping restore the beautiful face of a simple and "reason-friendly" Islam.

In short the book is a masterpiece, a la other gems produced by a genius that dares to speak out.

Now that is a lethal combination!

Sincerely,  
Shahid Mahmud,  
Freeland, MD

December 2001

## CHAPTER I.

### THE CURRENT STATUS OF MUSLIMS

Surely you will prevail if you are indeed believers. (Al-Qur'an 3:139)

#### A. Over a Billion People

Islam is a universal religion. Besides Asia and Africa, Europe and North America have substantial populations of Muslims. It is proudly claimed that there are more than one billion Muslims in the world.

However, Muslims are facing a global crisis. The crisis consists of political, economic, social, military, and scientific setbacks. Allama Inayatullah Mashriqi, in 1940's depicted the state of the East in general, and that of Muslims in particular, in this way:

People ask me that I traveled the East for years. What have I seen? How shall I tell what I have seen! From this end to that end I saw towns in ruins, broken and shaken bridges, dirt clogged canals, dusty streets, abandoned highways. I saw wrinkled faces, undernourished bodies, stooping backs, empty brains, insensitive hearts, inverted logic, aberrant reason. I saw oppression, slavery, poverty, pomp and vanity, detestable vices, clusters of disease, burnt forests, cold ovens, barren tilths, dirty attire and useless hands and feet. I saw imams (religious leaders) without followings. I saw brothers who were foes to one another. I saw days without purpose and I saw nights which lead to no dawns.

Let's assess the situation from one more viewpoint. The great Egyptian scholar Mufti Mohammad Abduh visited Paris a hundred years ago. Upon his return to Egypt he startled the world by declaring, "In Europe I saw no Muslims, -I saw Islam! In Egypt I see Muslims, I see no Islam!"

Dear reader, although there are non-Islamic practices in the West, I can hear the echo of that declaration today. The so-called billion plus Muslims are Muslims without Islam! Their political, economic and social conditions paint a complete picture of misery and chaos wherever they live. Apparently the tree bearing such bad fruit should be blameworthy. Isn't a tree known by the fruit it bears? Let me say at the outset: the tree bearing this bad fruit is what I call No. 2 Islam.

Subjugation to kings, despots, and tyrants, slavery to the mystic and the mulla, submission to blind following of dogmas and beliefs, fear, illiteracy,

lootings & killings, ethnic and sectarian hatred, webs of superstition---- what is all this? Rule of slavery. Slavery of mind and body.

## B. Sectarianism

Let's view the situation from another angle. The tree of sectarianism among Muslims has grown to such heights, and fatwas (verdicts) of infidelity have become so popular, that there exists not a single Muslim in the world today who would be unanimously accepted as a Muslim by the Ulema (or mullas) of ALL the existing sects! (According to a Turkish scholar now these sects number 190!) The followers of Islam, which introduced the concept of international brotherhood, are hopelessly divided among themselves.

## C. Muslims by Birth

Many find consolation in, "We are born Muslims, " or "Thank God! He created us among Muslims."

But the Qur'an confers no value to Islam by inheritance. It reads:

O' you who believe (and call yourself Muslims) believe in Allah and His messenger and the Book revealed unto him . . . (Qur'an 4:136)

(O' Mohammad) tell them that this is my way that is very clear and straight. My call is based on firm conviction and reason as well as that of my followers. (12:108)

The Qur'an is so particular on using our intellect and reason that it emphatically admonishes that one should not accept even its own verses deaf and blind. (25:73)

Muslims should stop here and think for a moment. Have I ever tried to search for reality? Did I really find the Truth? Or, am I simply imitating the ways of my forefathers? It is only after due contemplation that Islam can be adopted. Unfortunately, today almost all the one billion plus Muslims in the world are Muslims by birth and by blind following, the kind of Islam which the Qur'an considers of no merit. It has to be a matter of choice based upon reason and understanding. Only then can a Muslim be an effective, enlightened member of the Ummah(Universal Brotherhood).

Reason and learning are like body and soul  
Without reason soul is empty wind  
Without learning body is a senseless frame.  
(Kahlil Gibran, 1883-1931)

## D. Comparison with the Status of Christians

Let us compare the current status of the Muslims with that of the Christians. While there is an increasing bias against Muslims, where are the Christians standing? Objectively speaking, one cannot help but marvel at their scientific, technological and political achievements.

### 1. The Bias against Muslims

I know as you do that bias against Muslims has been increasing on a global scale. You may wonder why. Palestine, Bosnia, Kashmir, Kosovo, Chechnya have seen the most massive genocide and atrocities since the Holocaust. Anti-Muslim propaganda is on the rise everywhere. Some analysts are calling Iraq a laboratory for further annihilation of Muslims. And the Muslims are getting overjoyed on President Clinton's felicitation on the Eid festival! Meanwhile, Christian missionary work has been stepped up worldwide.

Our response: Mosque upon mosque, religious school upon religious school, are opening. Yet, in these institutions, all is taught but the pristine and glorious message of the Qur'an. The magnetic Qur'an, which contains the message of global success, has been relegated to mere recitation without understanding. The Qur'an is being memorized, being sung in competition and being "finished" in so many hours. Muslim scholars and Ulema in great numbers are busy propagating the No.2 ritualistic, cultural, fatalistic, tradition-based Islam. The bearers of the Last Word of God have confined their faith to individual salvation by means of ritualistic worship. Their resulting non-Qur'anic practices can hardly induce sympathetic or acceptable responses from scientific and rational minds.

The Qur'an is the only book that can keep up with changing times. Who would like to travel in a bullock cart in the age of horse-less carriage! (Kahlil Gibran, Weekly News, Lebanon, 1921.)

Moreover, to my knowledge, not a single book has been written in English, Arabic, Persian, Urdu or Hindi thus far that would simply yet effectively introduce a non-Muslim (or even a young Muslim) to the extraordinary and dynamic teachings of Islam. If a non-Muslim is interested in learning about Islam, we either hand-over to him a copy of the Qur'an (which is not understandable because of wrong translations based upon a thousand year old narratives), or we provide him with a book on Islamic jurisprudence (FIQH). These books of Fiqh talk about menial issues and petty problems such as ways of ablution, size of the beard, type of the head-cover, rituals of worship, etc. These man-made books, unlike the Qur'an, cannot guide us to establish a workable system in the human society.



Unfortunately, the ignorant opponents and foolish friends of Islam wish to maintain the status quo. Since this kind of Islam proposes no system or way of collective life, it poses no threat to the ruling or dominant class, or to the priesthood. Rather it invigorates both!

We have respect for our Christian brothers and sisters. They are part of God's family. Messenger Muhammad, the Exalted said:

All humanity is the family of Allah so we must love them all.

But, Muslims have failed miserably in conveying the highly rational message of the Last Word of God to humanity. They have done even worse in defining the blissful objective of the Qur'an i.e. building Paradise in this life and thus achieving it in the Hereafter.

Therefore, even after the western scholars have seen a glimmer of the shining guidance in the Qur'an, all the above reasons contribute to bar them from looking any further. And noticing the abject political and socio-economic status of Muslims, our Christian brothers and sisters detract from Islam. How would they know that Muslims today are not lagging behind due to Islam but only because of a counterfeit man-made set of dogmas, beliefs, rituals, customs and traditions, i.e., No.2 Islam

Who is to blame?

## 2. The Status of Christians

Unlike the Muslims, the Christians are performing far better at the political, social, economic, and scientific levels. Their planning and action at these levels is more organized and rationally based. Why is this?

Ponder that when God commanded the angels ("Forces of Nature" according to Sir Syed) to prostrate before Adam, they did. This means that Allah made forces of nature subservient to mankind. In other words, man has been endowed with the capacity to understand and master the physical laws operative in nature. This is called the "status of Adam" or "the potential of humanity." The West has attained this coveted status. Muslims, not yet attaining it, are scrambling through life at subhuman levels.

(However, let us not ignore the glaring fact that the western civilization is not only imperfect, but according to top western minds, it is heading toward disaster. There is a catastrophic decline of morality. Crime, alcoholism, drug addiction, publicly advertised homosexuality, single parenthood, child abuse, domestic violence, decline of family values, rampant divorce rate, and hard pornography are a just a few examples of the evils infesting the materially advanced West. Modernity without spirituality is taking its toll on the western psyche. It appears that, for the Western civilization, the party is over!)

It is interesting to note that the Renaissance of the Christian Europe coincided with and heavily depended on the revolutionary thoughts of John Calvin and Martin Luther. When the Europeans moved away from the church they set their course toward becoming scientific and industrial giants. Conversely, Muslims who kindled the European Renaissance, slumped into darkness as they departed from the Qur'anic teachings.

The status of the true believer (MU'MIN), however, is even more glorious i.e. harnessing the forces of Nature by mastering physical laws and then using these forces for the benefit of not one nation, race or color, but of all mankind as Allah commands.

The real existence on earth is of the one who benefits humanity. (13:17)

Thus, the West has attained the status of Adam. The Muslims have lost both statures.

"Risen you have not to the human level,  
how can you find God[and the purpose of life]?"  
Sir Iqbal.

So we come to the question, WHY AM I STILL A MUSLIM?

## Chapter II.

### THE REASONS WHY I AM A MUSLIM

The Message of Mohammad is not a set of metaphysical phenomena. It is a complete civilization. (W.A.R.Gibb, Whither Islam.)

Basically there are three reasons why I chose Islam to be my way of life and for the same reasons I am Muslim.

#### A. Islam is not to Blame

As opposed to other dogmas, Islam offers a workable and logical system of life. The glorious Qur'an, which embodies the last Word of Allah, guarantees its followers signal victory, success and achievement in this world and in the Hereafter. Then what explains the Muslims' downfall? Is the message of Islam now outdated? I believe that Muslims, and not Islam, are to be blamed for their dismal condition in the last many centuries.

More than one billion people who call themselves Muslims are so only by name. They have fallen from the high platform of DEEN (Way of life) into the swamp of MAZHAB (rituals of worship to achieve individual salvation plus blind following and senseless non-Quranic dogmas). Thus, it is their non-Islamic practices that cause their decline and invite the world's condemnation.

Among people are those who claim that they believe in Allah and the life Hereafter, but in fact they believe not. (2:8)

Let us hear this truth in the words of the great Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (d.1897) of Aligarh, India:

The prevalent form of Islam is not the Deen (way of life) that was revealed to the Holy Messenger and that which is preserved in the Holy Qur'an . . . . . Muslims have chosen for themselves their ancestors' traditions and beliefs, their customs and practices, as gods besides God. They have acknowledged and invented countless prophets (jurists, mystics, 'sufies', imams, historians) after Mohammad, the Exalted. They have taken books, written by men, as equivalent of the Qur'an. We do not accept these false gods, fictitious prophets and fake "qur'ans". We are destroyers of these false gods, fictitious prophets and fake qur'ans just as our father Abraham, the Exalted, was the destroyer of his father Azar's idols." (Hayat-e-Javaid, Afkar-e-Sir Syed)

Dear reader, if the conviction of Sir Syed has astonished you please reflect on some verses of the Qur'an that support him:

"Surely you will prevail if you are indeed believers." (3:139)

"Allah will never give the disbelievers (of the Qur'an) any way of success against the believers." (4:141)

"My righteous servants will inherit the earth." (21:105)

"Allah has promised such of you as believe and do good works (beneficial to the society) that He will surely make them rulers in the earth." (24:55)

Now, think about the plight of the Muslims worldwide. Are they truly prevailing anywhere? Aren't they subjugated slaves of foreign powers, even in their own countries? Are they not stagnant in their thought and action? Thus, either the Muslims are not true believers or the Qur'an is wrong by declaring that the believers will prevail.

First, it seems clear that Muslims are not fulfilling God's conditions to "prevail" in the earth. Professor A.N. Whitehead rightly points out that accepting the customary thought without criticism is a form of idol-worship. It brings the development of the human mind to a standstill. Amazingly, the Qur'an describes idols as *athan*, things that do not move. These statements support Sir Syed's contention that Muslims have become victims of blind following and are therefore stagnant in their thinking and action.

Second, there is no doubt that the Qur'an is true when it declares that the believers will prevail. When Muslims were adhering to the Qur'an they were the most dynamic force in the world to contend with! History is replete with their accomplishments in all walks of life, be it government, morals, philosophy, science, architecture, military, agriculture, medicine, surgery, physics, chemistry, optics, art, etc. In fact that era provided the most pragmatic test for the Qur'an with absolutely convincing results for humanity to behold. According to Robert Briffault, the European Renaissance was triggered not from Italy but from the Muslim Spain.

Conclusion: Sir Syed's claim, that today's Muslims are not true believers, is right and in accordance with the Qur'an!

The messenger will say, O' my Lord! This is my people who had abandoned this Qur'an making it of no account. (25:30)

## B. Islam Provides Guidance

While Muslims are to blame for their plight, Islam guarantees salvation and success for all of humanity. Islam explains the humans' role in the universe and provides unparalleled guidance. I respectfully submit that nothing but Islam provides:

1. A sensible relation between the Creator, the universe, and the human being.
2. Guidance to establish a political, social, moral and economic environment (where one can grow to his or her full potential) for all mankind and thereby solving all the problems of humanity.

These two reasons need further elaboration. Chapter III will describe Islam as I understand.

### C. Critical Issues with other Belief Systems

Another reason why I am Muslims is that I find other religions to be extremely dependent on blind faith, supernatural phenomena, and irrational mythology. They fail to propose or provide an equitable society free of man-made distinctions. They also fail to offer practical solutions to the problems facing humanity. On the other hand, Islam is a challenge to religion. And it is simple. "If Islam means submission to the Will of God don't we all live in Islam?" (Johann Goethe)

While the foundation of Islamic theology is simple and eternally unchangeable i.e. pristine Monotheism and the Law of Requital, Christian doctrine is inexplicably complex. So complex that the Christian Christology is being revisited. Top Christian scholars and thinkers are feeling very uncomfortable with the nature of Jesus Christ as depicted in the New Testament. This re-visitation is very likely to result in the nature of Jesus being redefined in conformity to that of the Qur'an. These points will be explained in Chapter VI.

## Chapter III.

### ISLAM AS I UNDERSTAND

The teachings of Islam can fail under no circumstances. With all our systems of culture and civilization, we can not go beyond Islam and, as a matter of fact, no human mind can go beyond the Qur'an.  
(Johann Goethe)

Dear reader, Islam is DEEN, a perfect way of individual and collective life. All else is mazhab or call it religion. Islam is not a set of rituals and rites, myths and omens, pomp and magic, dreams and non-scientific phenomena. Nor is it just "stories of the bygones". In fact, Islam is so scientific that the great Russian thinker, P.D. Ouspensky, stated that any science that collided with the Qur'an, will turn out to be false! (Tertium organum)

#### A. Relationship of the Creator, the Universe, and the Human Being:

##### 1. The Creator

The Creator is One, all else is creation. He is the Nourisher and Sustainer of all mankind (114:1) (regardless of race, family, color, creed, nationality, religion, etc.)

Also, Allah is Omnipresent and Omnipotent. Allah is not confined to the heavens. He does not have a man-like image. He is the Light of the heavens and the earth (24:35). He is above the human concepts of needing or having a consort/mistress (6:101) or children (112:1-4). And although Allah is Omnipotent, He uses his Power with Wisdom and Knowledge.

He makes laws as He wills, in the World of Command (Al-Amr) (7:54). In the World of Creation (Al-Khalq or the Universe) (7:54), He brings these laws into action and these laws are unchangeable (35:43). The entire universe is operating according to these physical laws. When we discover some of these laws, we call them Science. Yet, all the creation that exists cannot defy these laws of nature. Senator John Glenn said well that "we can make a compass out of a magnet but we cannot invent the law that the needle will point North." And so, the water will flow down-stream, the apple will fall to the ground, a stone will sink, the day and night will follow each other, the seasons will take their turns, the

living beings will feed, grow, reproduce and die. Thus, His laws of nature make no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, Hindus or Christians. Those who submit their free will to His Guidance and try to establish individual and universal peace are able to become harmonious with the Divine Plan. He calls those people Muslims.

## 2. The Universe

According to the Qur'an, the Universe is neither Brahma's dream nor "Ramji's leela" (Rama's play). God is not a "Master Player". The universe is for real; not an image or shadow of the "World of Ideas," as presented by Plato. It has not been created at random.

And We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for vain play. We have created them with the Right Plan, but most people learn not. (44:38-39)

The universe is too organized to be the result of an accident.  
( Albert Einstein)

The Qur'an further states that all things in the Universe are heading toward their appointed destinations. Nothing is stationary. The heavenly bodies are "swimming along in their orbits" (21:33, 36:40). All this is taking place according to physical laws designed by the Creator. The Universe itself is marching to a designated goal. (51:47)

There is a coherent plan in the universe, though I don't know what it's a plan for.  
(British astronomer-author, Sir Fred Hoyle.)

## 3. The Human Being

God has created the universe in an organized manner and humans are a part of that great organization. In addition, He granted mankind "freedom of will." Humans have been set free to choose their own way.

There is no compulsion in religion. (2:256)

Say unto people, this Qur'an is the truth from the Sustainer of you all.  
Then whoever will, let him believe and whoever will, let him disbelieve. (18:29)

Like other creation in the universe obeying Divine laws, human beings must harmonize themselves with the Master Plan. To achieve this, humans could use the intellect and science. But the intellect and science are imperfect. Albert Einstein said, "Science can say what is, it cannot say what ought to be. The code of permanent values can only come through Revelation to chosen personalities [messengers]." Further, A.S. Eddington stated that acceptance of



God, in effect, is not believing in His existence. It means accepting God as the source of guidance. Thus, in order to help us become harmonious with the universe, Allah has compassionately shown humans the Way. Only we humans can be the losers if we miss the Divine Train which is constantly moving toward an appointed destination.

## B. The Guidance

Now that we have seen a glimpse of the relationship of the Creator with humans, let us take a look at the eternal guidance He has provided for us. Al-Qur'an 2:177 denotes that we must begin with having IMAN (conviction) in Allah, the life Hereafter, angels, the Book and His messengers. Commonly these are called the five articles of Faith.

### 1. The Articles of Faith

a. Belief in God: How can we embrace that belief? The Qur'an invites us to IMAN only through reason. A tornado hitting a junk yard will not end up producing a Boeing 747. Even the "Big Bang" must have a Master Mind Behind it.

(O' Mohammad) tell them that this is my way, which is very clear and straight. My call, as well as that of my followers, is based on firm conviction and reason. (12:108)

Watch this reason applied beautifully. "The Universe is too organized to be the result of an accident," declared Einstein. And Carl Sagan, the renowned American scholar exclaimed, "In order to make an apple-pie from scratch, we would have to re-invent the Universe!"

b. Belief in the Hereafter: This entails not only the afterlife, but Nature's Law of Requit as well. "As you sow, so shall you reap!" Our thoughts and actions make imprints on our personalities. We start making our hell or paradise right here in this world.

He who turns away from My Laws (Guidance), his will be a narrow worldly life and We will bring him blind in the life Hereafter. (20:124)

Accordingly, Sir Iqbal in his beautiful poem "A Stroll in the Heavens" wrote that when an angel (his tour guide) showed him a dark cold abode for hell, Iqbal looked perplexed! The tour-guide explained:

Dwellers of the earth who come here,  
Carry their own stock of fuel to share!

Thus, our good thoughts and deeds (actions that are beneficial to the society) culminate in great reward termed "Paradise." Conversely our negative thought

and behavior prepare us for the hellfire. It is noteworthy that according to the Qur`an, the hellfire is such that its flames engulf the hearts. (104:7)

Belief in the immortality of human personality (SELF) is in fact closely tied to the belief in the Hereafter. Johann Goethe rightly pointed out, " One who does not believe in the afterlife is only a cadaver in this life."

c. Belief in Angels: This belief holds that the angels are sinless, eternally obedient creation of Allah. Unlike humans, angels do not have free will. The Qur'an does not expect us to define their exact nature. Sir Syed understood them to be "forces of nature" or physical laws of nature in the universe. The Divine message was revealed to God's messengers through the Angels. In fact according to a saying of the Holy Prophet, even thunder is one of the angels of God.

d. The Book: The message of God revealed to prophets through angels is called a book. The Divine Message, that was conveyed through a chain of prophets like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jesus, took its final form in the Qur'an. Therefore, the Qur'an is the Final Testament, THE BOOK. It is for all times and for all nations.

Moreover, the Qur'an is the most authentic scripture in all of history. Numerous scholars from all religions agree that the Qur'an is word for word, letter for letter the same unchanged, unaltered message as revealed to and preached by Messenger Muhammad, the Exalted.

I have studied Islam very closely. I believe in the depths of my heart that the existing Qur'an is exactly the Book, letter for letter, as written in the lifetime of Mohammad (the Exalted). (Sir Williams Muir, Life of Mohammad.)

I am convinced that the Qur'an is THE WORD OF GOD in its truest and whole meaning. (Rev. Bosworth Smith)

Now, watch from another perspective. Dr. Maurice Bucaille, the renowned Christian scholar, historian, and surgeon from France wrote his revolutionary book, The Bible, the Qur'an and Science in the 1970's. He states that the Qur'an is replete with scientific narratives such as creation of the Universe, Evolution, the Water Cycle, Geology, Astronomy, History, Embryology, Zoology, Botany, etc. Dr. Bucaille asserts that there is not a SINGLE instance in the Qur'an that is inconsistent with established scientific knowledge! On the other hand, according to Bucaille, " incongruities are encountered in the Bible on numerous occasions." (Dr. Bucaille's views will be presented in some detail in Chapter VII.)

Furthermore, the Qur'an challenged all people 1400 years ago to help one another and make one surah (chapter) like this in word and purity(2:23 & 10:38).

Since the great Arabic poets and thinkers of that time, the challenge stands until today with all its glory.

e. Messengers: I have avoided using the term "prophet" here, since it conveys the impression of someone who makes prophecies. The role of a messenger of Allah is much more comprehensive and much more dignified. Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad (the Exalted Ones) were all holy messengers of God. They all were (and still are) role models for all humanity. They had spotless characters and they embodied human perfection. They never lapsed in their prime duty to convey God's message to mankind.

Contrary to the Bible, the Qur'an declares that all messengers were men of life upright. They did not commit sins; nor did they violate Divine Values. Therefore, unlike in the Bible:

Noah never drank alcohol, nor did his daughters commit sin with him.  
David did not fall for the beauty of his neighbor's wife.  
Nor did Solomon lean toward worshipping his wives' idols.  
Jacob did not deceive his old father, nor did he have a wrestling match with God.  
Lot's daughters did not lead their father to sin.  
And Abraham did not tell any lies.  
Moses did not strike the Coptic because of discrimination.  
And Jesus never rebuked his mother. Nor did he address his people rudely.

(Moment of reflection: If these great holy messengers faltered in character, who would be the role model of character for ordinary people? And what kind of examples would these holy messengers set for their followers?)

Further, God did not repent on creating such human beings. He never gets tired to need a day of rest. No sleep or slumber overcomes Him. He is not an angry, jealous vengeful God. He favors no peoples or nations. His Laws support those who live by them. (2:255)

Let us reiterate that God sent his Guidance to all nations and all peoples through His chosen messengers (10:47). His Message finally was perfected through His last messenger, Mohammad, the Exalted (33:40). The Message has been meticulously preserved in the form of the Holy Qur'an for all places, times and people for Eternity(5:3, 34:28, 62:3). The Qur'an calls Messenger Mohammad, "the best of all in conduct," (68:4) "the best role model for people," (33:21) and the "Mercy for the Worlds" (21:107).

But today, let us hear from some great non-Muslim scholars, writers and leaders; what they have to say about this greatest and noblest of all men and

women who ever walked this earth. (Some of the quotes throughout this book have been translated from other languages.)

These great minds rose above bias and prejudice to embrace the most glittering truth of human history. What is that truth? That no person in the history of mankind could ever come close, in greatness, to the character, wisdom and knowledge of the Holy Messenger. Now let us proceed with respect.

## THE SAVIOR

1. "I have studied him- The wonderful man-and in my opinion--He must be called the Savior of humanity. (George Bernard Shaw, *The Genuine Islam*.)

2. "Philosopher, Orator, Apostle, Legislator, Warrior, Conqueror of ideas, the Restorer of rational belief, the preacher of a religion without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one heavenly Empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards [I repeat "ALL"] by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, "Is there any man greater than he?" (Alphonse Lamartine, *Historie De la Turquie*, Paris, 1854.)

3. "Muhammad was the most successful of all religious personalities." (Encyclopedia Britannica, 4th & 11th editions.)

4. "Mohammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him." (Diwan Chand Sharma, *The Prophets of the East*, 1935.)

5. [Mohammad was] the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels." (Michael H. Hart, *The 100*.)

6. "The greatest leader of all times was Mohammad." (Jules Masserman, Professor of History, Chicago University.)

7. "The word of Mohammad is a voice direct from nature's own heart--all else is wind in comparison." (Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes and Hero Worship*, 1840.)

8. "The more I study, the more I discover that the strength of Islam does not lie in the sword." (M. K.Gandhi, *Young India*.)

9. "The creed of Mohammad is free from ambiguity and the Qur'an is a glorious testimony to the unity of God. (Edward Gibbon, *Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire*.)

10. "The towering personality of Muhammad has left bright and indelible imprints on all mankind." (John William Draper, A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe, London 1875.)

11. "Absolutely unique in history, Muhammad is a 3 fold founder of a nation, of an empire and of a religion." (Reverend Bosworth Smith, Mohammad and Mohammadanism.)

12. "No man whose external conditions changed so much ever changed himself less to meet them." (R.V.C. Bodley, The Messenger, London, 1946.)

13. "The man who of all men exercised the greatest influence upon the human race--Muhammad." (J.W. Draper M.D., L.L.D., A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe, London, 1875.)

14. "Among leaders who have made the greatest impact through ages, I would consider Muhammad before Jesus Christ." (James Gavin, Speeches of a U.S. Army General.)

15. "In the person of the prophet of Islam we see the rarest phenomenon on earth walking in flesh and blood i.e. the union of the theorist, the organizer and the leader in one man." (Professor K.S. Rama Krishna Rao, Mohammad, The Prophet of Islam.)

16. "The lies which we [Christians] have heaped round this man, are disgraceful to ourselves only." (Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes and Hero Worship.)

17. "A man of truth and fidelity, true in what he did, in what he spake and thought---this is the only sort of speech worth speaking." (Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes and Hero Worship, 1840.)

18. "The greatest crime, The greatest "sin" of Mohammad in the eyes of the Christian West is that he did not allow himself to be slaughtered, to be "crucified" by his enemies. He only defended himself, his family and his followers; and finally vanquished his enemies. Mohammad's success is the Christians' gall of disappointment : He did not believe in any vicarious sacrifices for the sins of others." (Edward Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.)

19. "The legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword--is the most fantastically absurd myth that historians have ever repeated." (De Lacy O' Leary, Islam at the Cross Roads, London, 1923.)

20. The sayings of Muhammad are a treasure of wisdom not only for Muslims but for all mankind. (M.K.Gandhi, Preface to The Sayings of Muhammad by Sohrawardi.)

21. "He was the Messenger of the One True God: and never to his life's end did he forget for a moment who he was! He was one of those happy few who have attained the supreme joy of making one great truth their very life-spring." (Stanley Lane Poole, Memoirs.)

22. "Those who believe Islam was spread by force are fools who neither know the ways of Islam nor the ways of the world." (Balbir Singh, Navan Hindustan, 1947.)

23. "Mohammad was an enthusiast in the noblest sense." (Stanley Lane Poole, Memoirs.)

24. "He was Caesar and Pope in one, but he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar...without a bodyguard, without a palace. If any one man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammad." (Reverend B.Smith, Mohammad & Mohammadanism, London.)

25. "The Renaissance of Europe did not take place in the 15th century. Rather it began when Europe learned from the culture of the Arabs. The cradle of European awakening is not Italy. It is the Muslim Spain." (Robert Briffault, The Making of Humanity.)

26. "Muhammad saved the human civilization from extinction." (J.H. Denison, Emotions as the Basis of Civilization.)

27. "The height of human achievement and glory-Mohammad." (Pringle Kennedy, Arabian Society at the Time of Mohammad.)

28. "Under his influence people became united in one bond which they knew not. The bond of true monotheism." (L.E. Browne, The Eclipse of Christianity in Islam.)

29. "Kingdom of God on Earth! God's messenger serving as the greatest proponent of human brotherhood, His viceroy on earth in the form of Muhammad." ( Philip Hitti, History of the Arabs.)

30. "The message of Mohammad, Islam, is nothing but a blessing for mankind--The usher from darkness to light and from Satan to God." (Rev E. Stephenson, My Reflections.)

31. "The noble founder of a nation, an empire and a religion. The unlettered one bestowed upon the world the Book which is a miracle, the eternal miracle and the true miracle." (Rev. Bosworth Smith)

32. "Mohammad brought an end to idol worship. He preached monotheism and infinite Mercy of God, human brotherhood, care of the orphan, emancipation of slaves, forbidding of wine--No religion achieved as much success as Islam did." (Sir William Muir, Life of Mohammad.)

33. "Mohammad's religion reformed all existing dogmas and brought the Arabs ahead of the super powers of the time." (Dr. Marcus Dods, Mohammad, Buddha and Christ.)

34. "Mohammad was the greatest Executive Officer for implementation of the Divine Will. Like other prophets he knew that time will come when all mankind will become one community." (H.N. Spalding, Civilization in East and West.)

35. "He laid the foundation of a universal government. His law was one for all. Equal justice and love for everyone." (George Rivorie, Visages de L' Islam.)

36. "The Arabian Prophet Mohammad is the founder of a revolution unparalleled in history. He founded a political state that will ultimately embrace the entire planet. The law of that Government would rest on justice and kindness. His teachings revolve around human equality, mutual cooperation and universal brotherhood." (Raymond Lerouge, Life de Mohamet.)

37. "Mohammad introduced the concept of such Glorious and Omnipotent God in Whose eyes all worldly systems were pieces of straw. Islamic equality of mankind is no fiction as it is in Christianity. No human mind has ever thought of such total freedom as established by Mohammad." (Dr. Mawde Royden, The Problem of Palestine.)

38. "Islam is a forceful spiritual energy. Its true meaning will manifest itself when it will be implemented on large scale." (Tor Andre, Muhammad, The Man and His Faith.)

39. "Islam does not set impossible goals. There are no mythological intricacies in this message. No hidden meanings or secrets and absolutely no priesthood." (Phillip Hitti, History of the Arabs.)

40. "In Islam the believer is a worshiper and a soldier ever ready to go to the battlefield but only for that battle which is waged to eradicate the evil." (Spalding, Civilization in East and West.)

41. "The Message of Mohammad is not a set of metaphysical phenomena. It is a complete civilization." (W. A. R. Gibb, Whither Islam.)

42. "The Book revealed to Muhammad is one and unique of its kind. It has left indelible impression on the hearts of humanity. Nothing can overcome its majesty. The Qur'an has given new dimensions to human thinking. Surprising reforms! Stunning success!" (Rev.B. Margoliouth, Biography of Mohammad.)

43. "The Book revealed to Muhammad defines an unalterable guide to individual and collective life of people." (Sir Richard Gregory, Religion in Science and Civilization.)

44. "The Christian World came to wage crusades against Muslims but eventually knelt before them to gain knowledge. They were spellbound to see that Muslims were owners of a culture that was far superior to their own. The Dark Ages of Europe were illuminated by nothing but the beacon of Muslim civilization." (F. J. C Hearushaw, The Science of History.)

45. "Greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results- Mohammad established a system based upon true and immortal ideology. (Alphonse Lamartine)

46. The power that created in Muslims ravenous appetite for knowledge sprung from the Qur'an. (Rev. B.Margoliouth.)

47. In my view, Islam is the only religion in the world that will remain eternally practicable in changing times. (George Bernard Shaw, The Genuine Islam, 1936.)

48. I believe that if today an autocrat of Mohammad's caliber assumes world leadership, he could solve all problems of humanity splendidly. The world will become an abode of peace and happiness. I predict that tomorrow's Europe will embrace Islam. (George Bernard Shaw)

49. Mohammad never assigned himself a status more than a common man and a messenger of God. People had faith in him when he was surrounded by poverty and adversity and trusted him while he was the ruler of a great Empire. A man of spotless character who always had confidence in himself and in God's help. No aspect of his life remained hidden nor was his death a mysterious event. (M.H. Hyndman, The Awakening of Asia.)

50. The teachings of Islam can fail under no circumstances. With all our systems of culture and civilization, we can not go beyond Islam and, as a matter of fact, no human mind can go beyond the Qur'an. (Letter of Goethe to Eckermann, Sir Henry Elliott's collection, 1865).

For the unbiased reader, glimpses from the great non-Muslim minds given in this chapter should suffice to say why I am Muslim. Further discussion of the



subject, however, will shed more light on the subject and I will also explain why I am a Muslim by choice, not by birth.

51. The solution to all international conflicts lies only in embracing Islam en masse because Islam is the only religion that can transcend nationalism. I see, with great dismay, that nationalism is gaining grounds even among the bearers of the Qur'an. I will hope for the day when all humanity will break this idol and unite all as the children of God. (Arnold J. Toynbey, *The World and the West*, 1952.)

52. Think and ponder! Which person is it who taught mankind the way to establish the greatest society; the society in which blessings descend upon every individual . . . (J.H. Dennison, *Emotions as the Basis of Civilization*.) [We may here respectfully recall that the Qu'ran has named the Holy Messenger as the Mercy/Blessing for the worlds.]

53. Fellow inhabitants of the planet! Search for the ideal Prophet, who in the 7th century, has shown you the way to total success. (Lewis Mumford, *Transformation of Man*.)

54. The message of Mohammad is flowing toward its noble destination like a pure, fresh and transparent rivulet. (Johann Goethe)

55. The critics are blind. They cannot see that the only sword Mohammad ever wielded was the sword of mercy, compassion and forgiveness. (Pundit Jai Anand, *My Religion, Hinduism*.)

56. All religions, save the word of Muhamad, are broken boats. They cannot take humanity to the shore of serenity. (Dr. E.B. Hocking, *the Universal Faith*.)

57. Islam is the only religion that gives dignity to the poor. (Ramsey Clark, Former U.S. Attorney General.)

## 2. The Pillars of Islam

The term "Pillars of Islam" does not appear in the Qur'an. According to a reported saying of the Holy Messenger, "the building of Islam rests on five [pillars]." (Bukhari)

a. Kalema (or the creed of Islam): "(I declare from the depth of my heart that) there is no god (in the Universe worthy of my obedience, submission and subservience) but ALLAH, and Mohammad is His Messenger."

b. Salat: Establishing Salat would entail regular submission to Allah and striving collectively to form a social order where no one in society sleeps hungry. (107:1-7)

c. Zakat: The government and people will keep all their wealth and resources open for the betterment of the society and for the fellow human beings. People will give "whatever is more than their needs." (2:219)

d. Saum: Yearly training program for the able-bodied to curb their needs and desires for specified periods (2:185). Emotional restraint, cultivation of good manners, perseverance, all as a pre-requisite to establish one nation under One God.

e. Haj (or pilgrimage): An invitation to those who have the means among all mankind (3:97) to gather in Makkah. The central idea here is mutual consultation and realizes the blessings of unity of mankind (22:28) and confers how to make the planet a better place to live.

These five "pillars" of Islam have currently been reduced to mere acts of worship.

Mullas (such as Abul Kalam Azad) never thought of Islam as a collective way of life. Unfortunately most Muslims even today think that just verbal proclamation of "the articles of faith" and ritual acts of worship constitute the whole Islam; and this will absolve them of their duty to God. No wonder that non-Muslims have an erroneous impression of Islam. They equate the erroneous practices of Muslims with Islam i.e. a religion of the orthodox, illiterate, fatalistic people riding on camels with flowing robes and beards, rosaries in their hands, drenched in worship, masters of terror, keepers of four wives, their women clad in burqas etc, etc.

Even staunch Muslims dismally fail to show a beautiful structure on these famous "Pillars".

Messenger Mohammad, the Exalted, shunned all stereotyped images of priesthood and ritualism by declaring, "There is no Islam without a unified

collective way of life." And according to the Qur'an the ideal collective way of life is where members of the society enrich the life of one another (59:9).

Dear reader, does any other religion offer a workable collective system of life? Being Deen (The Way of life), not religion, Islam does as you will see.

The Holy Messenger said:

The best among people is he who serves mankind.

The best of all activities is service of mankind.

Along the same lines, Umar Farooq, the great second Caliph of Islam advised:

Judge not people by their worship, judge them by their dealings with fellow human beings.

If you see someone praying regularly, you can call him a worshipper, but you may not attest to his piety.

It follows that the establishment of an ideal society of mankind is the prime objective of Islam. When we strive to that end our life, en toto, becomes an act of worship. It is obvious that when mankind returns to the glorious Qur'an, the world will see its true splendor again as it saw in the early era of Islam. That brings us to summarize in one sentence that,

**ISLAM IS A COLLECTIVE WAY OF LIFE**  
in which all people enrich the lives of one another in the light of Divine values.

### 3. The Status of Humans

The Articles of Faith and the Pillars are not all. An exemplary structure must be built on this foundation and pillars. The glorious Qur'an states, "You, mankind, are the topic of this Book" (21:10). So, let us briefly view the assigned status of man in the life of this world.

a. "We have created all human beings worthy of dignity and honor" (17:70). (Note here there is no distinction of Jew or Gentile, Muslim or Christian, black or white, rich or poor, male or female.)

b. Mankind is all one community (10:19).

c. After naming 15 messengers of God, including Jesus, the Qur'an re-asserts that all human beings belong to one brotherhood (21:92).

d. The only criterion of superiority among men and women is one's character (49:13).

Thus, the Qur'an negates all unfair man-made standards of distinction between people whether it is race, color, family, wealth, origin or nationality. All human beings are equal in the sight of God. All children are born free and equal to one another.

Besides placing people at par with one another, Allah has decreed humans to be born sinless. Contrary to the Christian belief, all children are born into this world with a clean slate. The Qur'an, negates the concept of the "ORIGINAL SIN". No child brings with him or her the sin of Adam and Eve because:

No person will bear the load of another person's deeds (53:38).

Every person is accountable for one's own actions (53:39).

And the Holy Messenger elaborated, "No son or daughter will be punished for his/her parent's fault." Therefore, according to Islamic teachings, a newborn neither brings with him/her the stigma of a previous life (as in the Hindu doctrine of re-incarnation) nor is he born tainted with anyone else's doing.

Scholars of the West have reached the same conclusion. R.F. Johnson writes, "The Original Sin is the Original Evil. It keeps mankind disinclined from doing good and inclined toward doing evil. This belief impels man in Martin Luther's words to "SIN HARD BUT BELIEVE HARDER"." Then R.F. Johnson asks rhetorically, "If belief in Jesus dying on the cross for me will absolve me of my sins why not adopt the exciting path of lust and desire?"

And the great thinker, A.E. Taylor, unfortunately could not get a copy of the Qur'an (explained in his language) till the day he died. He sighed, "I wish I could find the true religion that would save me from the fallacies of the Original Sin."

So, all humans are born with a clean slate. But what does the human existence consist of? It consists of:

1. Body, which is mortal and
2. Self, which is immortal. (You may choose to call it: Mind, Ego, "I-am-ess", Soul, Psyche, Personality. The Qur'an terms it NAFS.)

The cardinal principle is that our bodies grow by taking; food, for instance. But our SELF grows by giving i.e. by fulfilling the needs of others. You may call it "service to humanity".

The Exalted Messenger said, "The best of mankind are those who benefit humanity." According to the Qur'an, any act that facilitates the growth of the self is BIRR (GOOD or righteousness). Conversely, any act that retards the development of human personality is ITHM (SIN).

By distinguishing between acts of ITHM and acts of BIRR, the Qur'an helps establish an ideal society wherein the Divine Code of moral values reigns supreme in the human life just as the Divine Law is supreme in the Universe. In such a society it will become easy for individual human beings to grow their "SELF" to the maximum potential because everyone therein will strive to achieve this noble objective.

The great American sociologist and thinker of the 20th Century Abraham Maslow understood this development beautifully. What the Qur'an calls TAZKIA (derived from zaku meaning development of personality (2:232), he terms as, "SELF-ACTUALIZATION" or fulfillment of the human personality.

## THE WESTERN THOUGHT

Now let us examine what other great Western minds have to say about the close relationship between TAZKIA (Self-actualization) and society.

T. Carlyle, A. Lamartine, W. Muir, B. Shaw and innumerable other western scholars have said in different but unambiguous terms that:

**ISLAM IS THE ONLY IDEOLOGY THAT PROVIDES A COHERENT AND PRACTICAL SOCIAL SYSTEM AND OFFERS SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF HUMANITY.**

Therefore Islam is Deen (the collective way of life); all else is religion. In fact, Islam is a challenge to religion. Aren't some great minds echoing the Qur'an?

1. The teachings of Islam can fail under no circumstances. No human mind can go beyond the Qur'an. (Goethe, Letters to Eckerman, Sir Henry Elliot's Collection.)

2. The code of permanent values can only come through Revelation to chosen personalities (messengers) of God. (Albert Einstein, Out of My Later Days.)

3. The word of Mohammad is a voice direct from nature's own heart . . . all else is wind in comparison. (Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes and Hero Worship.)

4. If the society is not conducive to the growth of human personality, people would remain slaves even if such a society were perceived to be free. (Nicholes Berdyeau, Destiny of Man.)

5. For the development of SELF I need a society where others' benefit feels like my own. (Hastings Rashdall, The Theory of Good and Evil.)

6. The development of the human personality [NAFS] can take place only collectively with other members of the society. (Robert Briffault, The Making of Humanity.)

7. The purpose of life is the development of humanity in a collective social order. (Prof. A.N. Whitehead, Adventure of Ideas.)

8. The ideal society will be one where the wellness of others feels like my own wellness. (Emmanuel Kant, Critique of Practical Reason.)

9. Development of the self [self-actualization] can take place only in an equitable social system. (Robert Briffault, The Making of Humanity.)

10. International order for all mankind is the time's foremost need. (John Reves, Politics in Future.)

11. The world needs not only for its development but also for its very survival a universal "way of life" in which economic, social, and moral values were uniform for all. (Frederick Hertz, Nationality, History and Politics.)

12. The purpose of life is development of the person and thereby of all humanity en mass. ( Professor A. N. Whitehead, Adventure of Ideas.)

13. The real progress entails development of an international social order in which every individual can grow to his/her full potential. (Hastings Rashdall, The Theory of Good and Evil.)

14. Islam offers a beautiful collective system which says YES TO LIFE. (Nicholes Berdyeau, The Divine and the Human.)

15. A complete way of life which would be universal is neither present in human instinct nor can we devise it through intellect. It can only come through Revelation. (Professor Alfred Cobban, The Crisis of Civilization.)

16. We need a religion that can transcend nationalism and make the world one nation. (Robert Murray, The Individual and the State.)

17. Only Islam can transcend the boundaries of nationalism. (Arnold Toymbey, The World and the West.)

18. In order to make true progress, man must exercise his free will in accordance with the Divine guidance. Man must do this, not to put God under any obligation, but for the evolution of his own SELF. (A.S. Eddington, Science and the Unseen World.)

19. The time for nations has already passed. The era of mankind as one community is about to dawn. (W. Chardin, Building of the Earth.)

20. The solution to humanity's problems lies not in internationalism. It rests in the Qur'anic teaching of universal brotherhood of all men. (Neveres Emery, The Anatomy of peace.)

21. The world will shortly see a single government without borders in which the affairs of human beings will be a matter of counsel. (Gummer Murdael, Beyond the Welfare State.)

22. No tangible forces, no intangible powers, can stop Islam from becoming the universal faith. This is because only Islam can march along with the evolution of human civilization. (Eric Fromm, The Sane Society.)

23. It is the sacred duty of our civilization that we revive the true human brotherhood which existed at the beginning of life and after which people divided among themselves. (professor Hugh Miller, Country and State.)

24. The ideal society will be one where the wellness of others will feel like my own wellness. (Emmanuel Kant, Critique of Practical Reason.)

THE QUR'AN GOES FURTHER: Dear reader, the Qur'an recognizes these goals but it takes us far beyond.

The believers give preference to the needs of others over their own even when they themselves are needy. (59:9)

And thus, righteous people are those who make their SELF (NAFS) grow by fulfilling the needs of others. And they do so because of IMAN (Conviction). They know that they will be rewarded manifold in both worlds. Wasn't Goethe right that no human mind and no system can go beyond the Qur'an? .

And Messenger, the Exalted, said:

The best among people are those who serve humanity.

The best of the tasks is service of mankind.

The only person who exits the circle of Islam is the one who knowingly helps the oppressor.

If we do not make progress toward self-actualization, the development of our personality stalls. This state of being left behind and cessation of progress is termed by the Qur'an as "JAHEEM" (hell-fire).

"If I march I am, if I don't I am not"  
-Sir Iqbal

It has been stated before that according to the Qur'an, the development of the human "SELF" (TAZKIA) can only take place by "giving" or by providing service to humanity. If any kind of worship and rituals do not lead a person to that noble end, they will all be in vain. Accordingly, Sheikh Sa'adi, the renowned Persian poet-philosopher said,

Worship is naught but service of creation  
Rosary, rug and robe are not devotion.

The real existence on earth is of the one who benefits mankind (13:17).

Dear reader, don't these quotations from some of the greatest minds and from the Scripture resonate? According to the Qur'an, mankind was, and will become, one community(2:213). Based on that authority and on my own reflection, I believe that the masses will, in the near future, see what the great thinkers are seeing today. People will lay aside their biases and prejudices. Nations in search of solutions to their political and socioeconomic problems will turn to the Qur'an and find the Light. East or West, all people will recognize that THE QUR'AN IS THE PROPERTY AND TREASURE OF NOT ONLY MUSLIMS BUT OF ALL HUMANITY. While the Muslims are badly entangled in trivial disputes, divisions and blind following, the West will see the Light. They will recognize that the cause of the downfall of Muslims is not Islam. It is their abandonment of the Qur'an. Then the world will say to Muslims:

Your ancestors were honored for being Musalman,  
And you are miserable for leaving the Qur'an.

-Sir Iqbal

Then there no longer will be a League of Nations and no United Nations. It will instead be the United Mankind. That is what the destiny of humanity is. And that is the direction humanity has been moving in the last 14 centuries. The Qur'an predicts the pleasant outcome on three occasions.

All people will recognize that the Qur'an is the ULTIMATE TRUTH and that the Way of the Qur'an will prevail over all other systems of life (9:33, 48:28, and 61:9).

Glancing at history can easily dispel any doubts about this Qur'anic claim. Just a few examples will suffice to show that Islam has been marching on through the past fourteen centuries. This despite Muslims lagging far behind. These examples will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter IV.

THE GLORIOUS MARCH OF ISLAM



The ideas that inspired the French Revolution and the Declaration of Rights, that guided the framing of the American Constitution and inflamed the struggle for independence in the Latin American countries [and elsewhere] were not inventions of the West. They find their ultimate inspiration and source in the Holy Qur'an.  
(Robert Briffault)

Sometimes people wonder if Islam has run its course. The bullet has been fired. What remains is just the empty barrel. This is a dangerously false assumption. Dangerous because it deprives humanity of the only hope it has. An examination of history bears out the fact that Islam has not failed, Muslims have. And Muslims have failed because they abandoned the holy Qur'an in favor of man-made books written centuries later! The moment they return to the Qur'an, the Muslims will attain their lost glory. Or whichever nation for that matter, embraces the Qur'an will establish the ideal state on the planet. Let us recall what George Bernard Shaw had said, "Mohammad, the wonderful man- in my opinion he must be called the Savior of humanity." "I predict that tomorrow's Europe will embrace Islam." Thus, the Holy Messenger will prove to be the savior of humanity as he did 14 centuries ago. His sublime message is perfectly alive and well. These Divine Laws are not biased for or against any group of people. Any nation that adopts them reaps the harvest.

As we have discussed all universe and our own planet have been created as parts of a Master plan. They will keep moving to their appointed destinations. Likewise human civilization has been evolving through history. When human beings follow the Divine revelation, times are shortened and emergent evolutions take place. What would take centuries, can materialize in years. In Sir Iqbal's words:

Revelation economizes human effort.

Without the benefit of the Qur'anic Light the world is still moving, though slowly, toward its destination of unity of mankind. Who is not hearing about "globalization and the global village"? Evolution of the human civilization is taking place. Islam is on the march.

Now let us see a few glittering examples from history and see how correct Robert Briffault is in his observations and conclusions. It is interesting to note that Aristotle had pointed out 2500 years ago, "A time will come when human ways will coincide with Divine ways".

**ISLAM IS ON THE MARCH**

1. Despotism: At the time of the advent of Islam in 610 C.E. kings and tyrants were ruling countries, nations and tribes. There was no idea of human liberty and rule of law, no concept of people having any say in the government. Islam's was the first voice against that universal exploitation of the masses.

No person has the right to command obedience of people even though he be a messenger of God (3:79).

Command belongs only to (the law of) Allah (6:57).

Now look back at 1400 years of history. Isn't the world moving away from despotism?

2. Democracy: It is often thought that Rousseau, Locke and other European thinkers laid the foundation of modern democracy. But the Holy Qur'an decreed 14 centuries ago:

The affairs of the believers are a matter of counsel (42:38).

This injunction was meticulously implemented in the seventh century Islam. The Muslim rulers had to obtain consent of the masses and they always had an advisory council.

Today, mutual consultation in political matters is the hallmark of democracy. (Ironically kingdoms, sheikdoms, despotism and autocratic rule today are seen mostly among countries that call themselves Muslim. This is another instance of the Muslims' departure from the Qur'an.)

It may not be out of place to mention here that mutual counsel in today's democracies will soon take one more vital step i.e. all legislation would take place within the framework of Divine Commandments. And whichever country will take that vital step will formulate a truly Islamic government and become a model state for the rest of the world. Other nations will follow suit.

3. Human worship: The Holy Messenger broke the idols of personalities. The greatest man who ever walked this earth kept repeating "I am a human being just as you except that Allah reveals His Message through me" (18:10).

O' people, O' believers! I am only Muhammad the son of Abdullah (his father's name).

I am the son of an ordinary Quraishi woman who used to (save and) eat dry meat.

Further, Mohammad, the Exalted, said, "One who loves that people keep standing before him, should seek his abode in hellfire."

We observe that since the Holy Messenger's advent human worship has been dwindling throughout the world. (Ironically again, today it is mostly Muslims who are prostrating before religious people, before their ancestors' graves or humbling themselves in front of those in power and authority.)

4. Racism: 14 centuries ago the whole world was drenched in racism. Aristotle taught around 500 B.C. that the Greeks were superior to all nations. The Romans divided their own people among classes. There were about 8 slaves per Roman elite. India demonstrated racism to the extreme degree where a newborn's whole life depended on whether he was born into a Brahman, Khatri, Vaish, or Shudra family.

The Holy Messenger toppled the world of false ideas, "There is no superiority of a black over a white or a white over a black. All of you humans belong to the same single stock. The best among you are those best in character . . .".(Farewell Address)

Now think with an open mind. Is not the world moving away from racism? At least open expression of racial discrimination has become condemnable in most parts of the world.

5. Human Rights: Here, I suggest that the reader examine three most celebrated documents on human rights:

- The British Magna Carta
- The American Constitution
- The United Nations Charter of Human Rights.

Then study only the brief "Farewell Sermon" of Messenger Mohammad, the Exalted, and compare. The intelligently written human documents seem to fade and pale in comparison to just one sermon of the Holy Messenger! (Please see Robert Briffault's quote at the beginning of this chapter.)

Haven't human rights become an important issue of discussion and action today? True, the world including Muslims have to go a long way. The point is that Islam is perceivably or imperceptibly on the march. The Qur'an had declared in the 7th century, "We have created all mankind worthy of honor and dignity" (17:70).

History stands witness to the blessings of the Qur'anic way of life. In the truly Qur'anic era of Islam, the (emancipated) black slave of Ethiopia, Bilal, the poor laborer of Rome, Suhaib, and the lonely wanderer of Persia, Salman, were equal to and had the same rights as the most powerful man of the time. Umar Farooq the Great (R.A.) the second Caliph of Islam used to address Bilal, "O' my

master!" He requested that Suhaib lead the Caliph's funeral. And the Holy Messenger had himself honored Salman by calling him a member of his own household.

A brief resume of human rights given in the Qur'an will now be given. These points also reflect the Moral Code of Islam.

- a. Equal human dignity by birth (17:70), (95:4)
- b. Gender equity (4:32), (33:35)
- c. Superiority by character only (49:13), (46:19)
- d. Rule of law, not of individuals (3:79)
- e. Full compensation of work (53:39), (53:41), (39:70),(37:39)
- f. Provision of basic needs (20:118-119)
- g. Security of faith, life, mind, honor, and property (6:109), (6:152), (2:269),(17:36)(24:2),(22:40),(6:152),(5:90),(2:195),(5:32),(17:32),(17:35),(17:29), (83:1)
- h. Choice of spouse (4:3), (4:19)
- i. Freedom of religion (22:40), (6:109), (2:256)
- j. Freedom of expression (2:42), (3:71)
- k. Redress of grievances (4:148)
- l. Privacy (33:53), (24:27)
- m. Care of any handicap (4:36), (70:24)
- n. Presumption of innocence (49:6)
- o. Sanctity of name and lineage (49:11),(33:4)
- p. Right to residence (4:100), (2:85),(16:41)
- q. Aesthetic choice (18:31), (76:13-15)
- r. Protection of chastity (17:32), (24:2)
- s. Race, color, lineage, wealth, etc., not to be the criteria of reward. Degrees of people according to their deeds (46:19)

It is noteworthy that the United Nations and the UNESCO Commission subject human rights to certain conditions and limitations. They further differentiate between a person owning those rights and application of those rights according to local law. Human rights outlined in the Holy Qur'an are not subject to whims of sovereign nations.

6. The Caste System: The Holy Messenger declared and established human brotherhood and equality by personal examples. He belonged to the noblest of tribes and families. Yet, he humbly repeated "I am a human just as you are." He further advised his closest family members that being a relative of Muhammad (the Exalted) will be of no avail to them. Last, he established that the only criterion of superiority among men and women is their conduct. Color, creed, family, wealth would not impart honor to any individual.

Now which way is the world moving? India, which has been the worm cradle of the detestable caste system, is trying to get rid of this curse of

humanity. "The Untouchable" is being called Harijan meaning "the bearers of Divine Spirit". And India is just one example. Remember what happened to apartheid in South Africa?

7. Slavery: The Holy Messenger shook up the so-called masters of men, "Their mothers had born them free. How could you enslave them? What if you were made their slaves and they were made your masters!"

The Qur'an, while explicitly pronouncing equality and brotherhood of all men, ordered to "Free all slaves for ransom or better as human kindness" (47:4). Few people know that the Islamic methodology resulted in the emancipation of slaves (male and female) without the least friction and bloodshed. Islam incited a noble revolution in the hearts of people. Without the Divine light the 19th century America, even under the great leadership of Abraham Lincoln, had to sacrifice one million dead and wounded attempting to abolish slavery!

8. Priesthood: At the Dawn of Islam, priesthood was the worst oppressor of humanity. They were considered to possess infinite occult powers. They were thought to be "knowers of the Unseen" and supposed to be intercessors between man and God. They enjoyed greater authority than the kings did. After all, they knew what was in a person's heart! They could condemn the "children of God" to be hanged, crucified or burnt alive! Their tyranny outlasted their own lives. Their tombs remained centers of worship and exploitation.

The Qur'an announced that Allah is the only Knower of the unseen (72:26). There is no medium between man and God because He is closer to him than "the Jugular vein" (50:16). Now we see that humanity has been gaining freedom from priesthood the world over. (Ironically once again, Muslims not currently heeding the Qur'an, are lagging behind even in this arena.)

The modernization of my nation consists,  
Of what has been outworn by all creation.  
-Sir Iqbal

9. Womens' Rights: In the times when the woman was considered property of the man and was treated worse than slaves; when "Eve" and "evil" were thought to be synonymous and woman was a "shameful load of sin"; when she spent her life in bondage first to her father, then to her brothers and eventually to her husband; when Christian conferences were discussing questions such as

- Does the woman have a soul?
- Is she human?
- Will she be resurrected?

The Qur'an thundered that Allah has created people males and females.

"Women have rights unto you as you have rights unto them." (2:187)

"Every person will be rewarded according to one's actions; male or female." (4:32)

And the "Mercy for the Worlds" Muhammad, the Exalted taught:

"Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers."

"The best among you is the one who is best to his wife."

"O'Men! You will be questioned about your treatment of women."

On the other hand, Michael Hart notes that the New Testament still teaches: "Let the woman learn in silence . . . She is to keep silent . . . Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children (Timothy 2:11-15). "The head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband . . . for if a woman will not veil herself then she should have her head shaved . . . woman [was created] for man" (Corinthians 11:3-10).

Now, look back with an open mind. Which way has the mankind moved in the last 1400 years? Surely, Islam is on the march! It may also be of interest to note here that in the USA women gained the right to vote in 1920. When did Muslim women attain it? In the 7th century!

10. Science: While Europe was struggling through the Dark Ages, Muslims were performing scientific miracles under the Qur'anic teaching that natural laws had been made subservient to man. (This topic of the Qur'an and science will be further discussed in Chapter VII.). Here is an example of the scientific guidance in the Qur'an:

Until recently, the sun was thought to be stationary in the center of the solar system. The Qur'an had, however, revealed 1400 years ago that "The sun is moving along toward its appointed destination"(36:38). The great Russian thinker and scientist, P.D. Ouspensky, maintained that any science that contradicted the Qur'an would turn out to be false. Then, during Ouspensky's lifetime, it was discovered that the sun is moving toward a specific destination at 12 miles per second i.e. 43,200 miles per hour! This destination has even been assigned a term: Solar Apex (Constellation of Hercules). Guess what Ouspensky did! He embraced Islam.

Roger Bacon owed his illumination to the Muslim Moors of Spain.. The great figures of European Renaissance could see further because they stood on the shoulders of the giants of the Muslims world... Those achievements represent what the Muslim world has been in the past. They also point to what it could become in the future. (Former U.S. President Richard Nixon, Nixon's Ten Commandments.)

11. Nationalism: Arnold Toynbee in his 1952 work, *The World and the West*, called nationalism a form idol worship. In his writing and lectures he repeatedly urged the world leadership to break this idol. After all, who is unaware of the devastation caused to our planet by the World Wars I and II. Nationalism was the obvious root cause of this massive trauma.

Years before Toynbee, Sir Iqbal on the authority of the Qur'an termed nationalism as "the modern idol which the humanity has sculpted". The Qur'an ordained all mankind to be one nation and declared that all believers in the final Revelation, regardless of where and when they live, are tied in the sacred bond of brotherhood and sisterhood (49:10). That announcement left no room for man made geographical boundaries.

It is heartening to note that great western minds such as Nicholes Berdyeau, Henry Bergson, A.C. Ewing, Rene Guenon, Alfred Cobban, Frederick Hertz, H.G. Wells, and numerous others, not only support the unity of mankind but also predict it!

12. Pragmatism: At the dawn of Islam, Greeks were the torchbearers of knowledge in the world. Many scholars including Briffault and Higgins have correctly remarked that the Greek knowledge rested on theory and logic. Experimentation had no place in the Greek system of learning. (Aristotle had written that women were deficient in intellect because they had only 28 teeth. He never even bothered to look! He also stated that an egg will float in the ocean!) It was only Islam that taught mankind of the necessity of testing a theory or ideology by way of experimentation.

The Renaissance of Europe did not take place in the 15th century. Rather it began when Europe learned from the culture of the Arabs. The cradle of European awakening is not Italy. It is the Muslim Spain. (Robert Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*.)

For the sake of brevity, our list has been kept very incomplete. Now let us turn to some objections that non-Muslims often raise against Islam.

## Chapter V.

### SOME OBJECTIONS TO ISLAM

Whenever a hadith (quotation) is presented to you in my name, verify it in the light of the Qur'an. If it agrees with the Qur'an, accept it, if it is in conflict, discard it.

(Prophet Mohammad, the Exalted, ref. Al-Tibyan wal Tabayyen , vol.II, p.28)

Now we will address some objections and criticism that our non-Muslims brothers and sisters raise about Islam. Some of these objections may have been answered in the last four chapters. The Christian criticism of Islam, in my experience is mostly based on

1. Wrong translations of the Qur'an
2. Books of history and tradition, which were written in or after the 3rd century after the Holy Messenger's life. Many statements and narrations in those books are certainly erroneous and do not stand up to the Criterion i.e. the Qur'anic testimony.
3. Cultural, dogmatic and un-Islamic practices of Muslims.

The Truth is lost in fable and legend,  
The Ummah is lost in history and tradition.  
- Sir Iqbal

So much so that even non-Muslims have been lost in our fable and legend. I reiterate that any historical narrative or prophetic tradition that contradicts the Criterion could not have originated from the word or act of the Holy Messenger. God declares the Qur'an to be "the Criterion of judgement between right and wrong"(3:4).

I earnestly request my Muslim brothers and sisters, especially Islamic scholars, to allow me to answer these objections in the light of the Holy Qur'an. Those who do not practically accept it as the Final Word of God should feel free to honor me with their verdicts of infidelity. My stand is that if a narration or action attributed to the Holy Messenger centuries after him, contradicts the Qur'an, we cannot ascribe it to the Holy Messenger. He could never have said or done anything contrary to the Qur'an, which describes him as the best in conduct and "the best role model for humanity." On the other hand prophetic traditions that agree with the Holy Qur'an, are certainly a great source of wisdom, knowledge and history.

1. Islam was spread by sword.



A. See Chapter III. Muslims today are weak all over the globe, yet Islam is spreading faster than any other religion. "The legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword is the most fantastically absurd myth that historians have ever repeated." (De Lacy O'Leary, Islam at the Cross-Roads, London, 1923.)

2. Muslims are Mohammadans and they worship Allah, a strange God.

A. Muhammad, the Exalted, was not the founder of Islam. The founder of Islam is no one but God Himself. Allah is the same God as was described by Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Allah's revelation has always been Islam to all prophets.

3. Prophet Muhammad is resting in the earth while Jesus ascended to the heavens. So, who is superior?

A. The Qur'an does not mention that Jesus was raised up in body. 4:157 describes that he was saved from the cross. 3:55 points to his physical death, absolving him of all slander and honoring him. Rafea here means raising in honor not in body.

9:33 again tells of his physical death. Further 3:144 reads, "Muhammad is but a Messenger. Messengers before him have passed away." Most explicitly 21:34 states, "We have not granted immortality to any person before you." And if God is Omnipresent, ascension to Him becomes meaningless. (The reader is referred to explanation of the Qur'an by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Asad, Ubaid Ullah Sindhi, and Abul Kalam Azad for further details on the subject).

4. Men will get the heavenly "beauties, Hoors" in Paradise. What will become of women?

A. "Hoor" in the Qur'an refers to intelligent and virtuous companions, male or female. Hoor is plural. The male singular is AHWAR and the female singular is HAURA.

5. The Qur'an states that men will be seated with their wives in bountiful atmosphere.

Why doesn't it say that women will be seated with their husbands?

A. This is an excellent example of wrong translation. "Azواج" does not mean wives. Azواج stands for couples or companions. The dwellers of paradise, "there for them are pure companions" (4:57).

6. Things you call pillars of Islam such as prayers, fasting, poor-due and pilgrimage are failing to improve the lot of Muslims world-wide. Why don't they stop and think?

A. You are right! Muslims should stop and think. Millions upon millions are steadfastly going through rituals of worship.

a. The Muslim is praying. He is not establishing Salat, which is closely tied up to establishing a society which guarantees the Qur'anic order, where no one sleeps hungry and social and economic justice prevails in the society (107:1-7).

b. The Muslim is fasting i.e. he is periodically abstaining from food and drink in the month of Ramadhan. He is not observing Saum, which entails perseverance, self-control, building of character and establishment of the Divine Rule on earth (2:185).

c. Poor-due is being given by affluent people as 2 1/2% of wealth. The Muslim is forgetting that Allah ordains him to spend for the community all that is more than he needs (2:219).

d. Pilgrimage or Hajj has become a massive ritual instead of being a dynamic step toward the unity of all mankind. Please note that the Qur'an invites all mankind to consider the Kaabah as the symbol of one God and one humanity.

Thank you for bringing up a very important point!

7. What kind of a religion is Islam? The entrance to this building is open but there is no exit. If someone wants to get out of it or if your Ulema disapprove of the beliefs of a person, he is declared a heretic and thereby worthy of execution.

A. The Qur'an invites people with reason (12:108). It clearly states "There is no compulsion in religion" 2:256. This rule has no exceptions. If you come across reports about the execution of certain "heretics", either that report would be false or it would be a wrong non-Qur'anic act of someone corrupt in political or religious power.

Quaid-e-Azam M.A Jinnah said, "Theocracy is the worst form of despotism".

8. What is the position of mysticism in Islam?

A. According to the Qur'an mysticism was invented by people. God did not ordain it (57:27). There is no Rahbaniah (monasticism or mysticism) in Islam, said the Holy Messenger. Sir Iqbal on the authority of the Qur'an and the Holy Messenger reiterated, "Tasawwuf (Mysticism and Monasticism) is an alien plant in the soil of Islam."

9. Look at the glory of Jesus! Even for Muslims he will descend from the Heavens. Your prophet seems to depend on him.

A. It is amazing to notice that the followers of all religions keep waiting for the coming of a "promised one." Hindus are waiting for "Kalki Avtar", Jains for "Mahavira Tri Thankra", Buddhists for "Meeta", Zoroastrians for "Mithra". Jews are looking for the "true Messiah" and Christians for the second coming of Jesus!

According to the Qur'an, Deen (Religion) has been perfected (6:116). The last messenger Muhammad, the Exalted has been sent (33:40). The complete code of life has been preserved in the Final Word of God i.e. Al-Qur'an. The Book does not even mention the advent of another figure in any form be it Jesus or anyone else. And common sense tells us there is no need for anyone to come since the Guidance, Al-Qur'an, is present in its original perfect form among us (15:9).

The dogma of a "promised one" is the invention of defeated minds. People lacking in self-confidence and self-esteem try to find solace in the thought that someone will eventually come and raise them to glory!

If any historical narratives or traditions speak about the second advent of Jesus or a promised one, those narratives and traditions are non-Quranic. They must be considered fabrications foreign to Islam.

10. It is claimed that the Qur'an is unchanged since its origin but don't Muslims believe that some of its verses have been rescinded?

A. Not one verse in the Book has been rescinded or revoked. This claim is one of the most shameful conspiracies against the Book. In 2:106, where it is stated that Allah brings new verses in place of others, the meaning is clear. All it indicates is that the former Divine books and commands have been updated in the Final Book, the Qur'an.

11. Islam is the only religion that ordains four wives.

A. Nothing can be further from truth. There is only one verse in the Qur'an where the possible number of wives is described. It reads, "If you fear that you will not be able to do justice to orphans marry among permissible women two, three, four" (4:3).

It is very clear in this verse that if tumultuous and emergent circumstances afflict a society too many children may be left fatherless. It happens in times of wars, revolutions, and mutinies that the society may not be able to do justice with the orphans. Under those circumstances it will be the duty of the state to declare emergency and try to provide the secure life of home to these orphans. Under those circumstances some men will be encouraged to marry more than one wife; those men who will prove that they could be just and equitable to their wives and family. This provides the shelter of home to widows and orphans in an amicable manner. Muslims who marry more than one wife under ordinary circumstances violate the Qur'anic rule of monogamy.

Again if a tradition or the act of some "pious" person is presented to try to distort this clear ordinance of the Qur'an it should be discarded as being contrary to the Qur'an.

It is noteworthy that the Holy Messenger and some of his companions married more than one wife in times of social and military turbulence. In addition to slain men, there were examples where a woman would embrace Islam and her husband would not. The Qur'an does not allow a Muslim woman to marry or remain in marital contract with a non-Muslim. That had created a large number of divorced women. So, it was a matter of providing shelter rather than an act of lust.

Also interesting to note is the fact that when millions and millions of men were killed in World War II, innumerable European scholars and politicians strongly suggested that men of sound financial and emotional health be allowed to marry two or three wives to save the society from chaos!

12. "Fatawa Alamgiri" writes that only the wine made out of grapes and dates is forbidden.

A. The Qur'an forbids "Khamr" (5:90), which means all intoxicants. Please note that man-made books including those on jurisprudence (FIQH) are no authority. The only authority is the Word of God (Qur'an).

13. The Gospel teaches that we should love our enemy. Can Islam match such nobility?

A. Loving your enemy is impractical; good only for a sermon. The Qur'an commands to do justice even with your enemy(5:8). This is a practicable and workable principle.

14. Islam allows marrying 6 and 9 year old girls. Isn't that absurd?

A. More than absurd if Islam allowed that. The Qur'an ties up adulthood with marriage unambiguously. Adulthood is the first prerequisite for marriage' whether male or female (4:6). Suras 6:153 and 17:34 prohibit even touching the wealth and property of minors. The Qur'an terms marriage as "Meethaqan Ghaleedha" (a most solemn pledge) (4:21). How can minors enter into a solemn pledge and covenant! How can minors give consent which is an absolute condition for marriage according to the Qur'an? (4:19)

15. Didn't your prophet marry a 6 year old girl, Aisha and consummated the marriage when she was 9 years old?

A. Believe it or not my Prophet is also your Prophet because he was sent for all mankind (34:28). No act of the Holy Messenger was ever contrary to the Qur'an. Allah attests that the Holy Prophet had sublime morals (68:4). And according to one Hadith, "His character was the Qur'an."

There is strong evidence that , Aisha (R.A.) was 18 years old at the time of Nikah (signing of the marriage contract) and 21 when she moved to the Holy Messenger's house. Aisha's elder sister Asma reports that she was 10 years older than Aisha and that Asma was 31 when Aisha got married (for references

Sheikh Waliuddin, Mishkah, Akmaal, Imam Kalbi, Isteaab, Asadul Ghavah). Any reports contrary to the Qur'an should find their way into the trash can.

## Chapter VI.

### COMMENTS ON THE PAULINE DOCTRINE AND THE NICAEAN CREED

Trinity had so dimmed the vision,  
of the great scholar who was German,  
That true monotheism he couldn't grasp,  
peace in Trinity he never could earn,  
Life to him was a stinging wasp.  
(Rabindranath Tagore)

The Hindu laureate, Rabindranath Tagore, refers to the great German thinker and philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). Nietzsche became so disenchanted with the Pauline doctrines of Trinity, Original sin, blood atonement, "begotten" son-ship and ascension of Jesus Christ that he blurted out, "I had to stain my hands with the blood of Christianity and had to crucify it in every sense!" (Beyond Good and Evil)

In this chapter, only the thoughts and ideas of Non-Muslim scholars will be presented. Ponder on what great Christian minds have to say about the Pauline Doctrine.

1. If through my falsehood, God's truthfulness abounds to His glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? (St. Paul, Letter of Paul to Romans 3:7.) (It is worthy of note that, according to Michael Hart, St. Paul is "considered the principal founder of Christianity".)

2. About political and economic matters the teachings of the Bible are sadly and pitifully ambiguous. Through the gospel you can support anything and prove it to be Jesus's teaching, whether it is slavery, torture, or even burning alive. (Professor C.M. Joad, Decadence.)

3. All four gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke and John openly contradict each other. (Earnest Renan, Essay on Nationality.)

4. I counted 30,000 contradictions in the New Testament. (Dr. Maile, Confessions of a Skeptic.)

5. I wish I could find one instance of Messiah showing love and kindness to his opponents in his entire gospel life! (Claude Montefiore, Dynamics of Human Behavior.)

6. But even more tragic is the character of Jesus that the gospels portray. (Professor C.M. Joad, Good and Evil.)

7. Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic but the gospels were written in Greek!

8. If the moral code given in the gospels is implemented in a society, there will be only one result of that undertaking, Sudden Death! (Professor A.N. Whitehead, Adventure of Ideas.)

9. In the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), 34 gospels and 113 letters attributed to the disciples were presented under the tyrannical presence of Constantine the Great. All this literature was dispersed on the floor at night. The morning sun saw a few books and a few letters lying on the table. These are the four gospels and the letters that have been canonized! (Reverend Isaac Boyle)

10. Pauline Doctrine is nothing but propagation of a dogma. It does not concern itself with building moral character. All a person has to do is confess that Jesus was cursed and crucified for my sins. If mankind were relieved of all their higher obligations with such impunity, the planet would become a living pyre. (Bertrand Russell, Lecture on Hopes for a Changing World, 1908.)

11. What is the New Testament? Paul, Paul, and Paul, who never met Jesus during his ministry! (Menkin, Analysis of the New Testament)

12. The resurrection of Jesus was witnessed only by Mary Magdalene. Who was Mary Magdalene? The same woman from whom Jesus had expelled seven demons. (Dr. Marcus Dods, Muhammad, Buddha and Christ.)

13. The Pauline Dogma of Original Sin is the Original Evil. (R.F. Johnson, Confucianism and the Modern China)

14. I don't find it strange anymore that there is a four thousand year-old legend among the Zoroastrians; the legend of Mithra. He is supposed to have been born of a virgin on December 25th. Mithra was considered as the "lamb of god." He atoned for the sins of people by dying. Then he resurrected on the third day!

There is strong reason to believe that Saint Paul fabricated the belief system of Christianity from the Zoroastrian mythology. In order to hide Paul's plagiarism . . . the Christians burned the library of Alexandria in 390 A.D. Books in that library kept Mithra's original story of which the Pauline Doctrine is an almost exact copy. (George Sarton)

15. It is imperative that to accept the gospel the intellect must be blindfolded. There is nothing in the gospel but insult to a critical seeking mind. (Julian Huxley, Religion without Revelation.)

16. The son-ship of Jesus Christ is the greatest fiction of human history. (Lord Bishop of Canterbury Commission, The Spiritual Head of England 1910)

17. In Christianity, first an inexplicable belief system is laid down. Then the intellect keeps wandering in vain search of reason and logic. (Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes and Hero Worship.)

18. Mankind needs to turn to God. Unfortunately, the gospel can provide no guidance in that direction. (Henry Bergson, Creative Evolution.)

19. In Christianity you may find a reflection of sympathy for the oppressed. What you won't find is condemnation of oppression or the oppressor. (Dr. Falta D' Garcia)

20. According to the Christian Doctrine women cannot enter Paradise. Question arose what would happen of Mary. Saint Thomas came up with an easy solution. Women will be converted into men. (Reverend Bosworth Smith)

21. The son-ship of Jesus Christ, the Trinity, the blood sacrifice of the lamb of God, atonement are not the teachings of Jesus. These are all inventions of Saint Paul who never really met Jesus. (Hastings Rashdall, The Theory of Good and Evil.)

22. For the redemption of humanity we will have to look toward the owner [Mohammad] of the Qur'an not toward Christianity. (Lewis Mumford, Faith for Living.)

23. Our civilization is standing at dangerous crossroads. The Bible cannot provide workable foundations for the survival of mankind. (Lord Snell, The New World.)

24. The Bible cannot lead us to an international religion, nor can it unify all mankind. (Ehrich Fromm, The Sane Society.)

25. Countless people were burnt alive on the altar of Christianity just because they proclaimed that the Earth moves around the sun; . . . that man came into existence only 7,000 years ago; you can preach this only in the church . . . If Eve was made from Adam's rib, the very question of women's rights should not arise. (Adrian Huxley, The Conscious Rebellion.)

26. Newton taught the Gospel. If he also believed in it he would never have been a scientist. (Lord Litton, A Closer Look at Religion.)

27. If I have been born tainted with the sin of Adam, then God has been very cruel to me. (Mark Italy, The Hindu India.)



28. How powerless is the God of Christendom! He cannot forgive man without shedding the blood of his own son! (Vladimir Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, 1900.)

29. The most difficult question ever in mathematics is that God is one in three and three in one! (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*.)

30. Why do you call Jesus' siblings his stepbrothers and stepsisters? Why do you try to prove them his cousins? Perhaps, to save the mother of God from carnal relations. The reality is that Jesus and his siblings were children of Mary and Joseph, the carpenter. Since Mary had been sent to the monastery against her will, she married Joseph the carpenter secretly. And Jesus was born according to the laws of nature. The book of Islam is more realistic in this sense where it states, "How can God have a son when He has no consort [or wife] [6:101]"? By the same token, how can Mary have a son without a husband!  
John Servatus, *The Unitarian Truth*

## Chapter VII.

### A SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

In Islam, science and religion have thrived like twin sisters. Therefore, during the Qur'anic glory of Islamic civilization, science made incredible progress from which the West was later enlightened.

(Dr. Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, The Qur'an and Science*.)

Dear reader, in the last chapter we have reviewed the thoughts of some Christian scholars and thinkers about the Bible. Let's now focus on the Qur'an. To be fair we will have a renowned Christian scholar from France say what he thinks of the "Book from beyond." Dr. Maurice Bucaille wrote his best seller in the 1970's- "*The Bible, The Qur'an and Science*." The great scholarly work has been translated into several languages. The subject of his book is similar to what Ouspensky had spelled out, "Any science that contradicts the Qur'an will turn out to be false." Dr. Bucaille exclaims that there is not a single instance in the Qur'an that disagrees with established Science!

Dr. Bucaille reveals that he had always been intrigued and fascinated by scientific statements found in the Divinely inspired books. He especially learned the ancient and contemporary Arabic language to enable himself to study the Qur'an directly.

The results of his direct study of the scriptures are very convincing. Dr. Bucaille is also an established scholar of the Bible. He concludes that the Bible is replete with scientific contradictions and impossibilities which Biblical scholars and narrators so painstakingly try to conceal or apologetically try to explain away.

We will now review the highlights of Dr. Bucaille's general observations and research on the Qur'an. (My own humble research on the Qur'an and Science will not be presented here.)

Dr. Maurice Bucaille writes:

1. When I began my research on the Qur'an I quickly experienced that among some Christian circles prejudice and bias run so high that referring to the Qur'an is tantamount to referring to the Devil!
2. On the contrary, the Qur'an magnanimously admonishes Muslims to believe in messengers and scriptures of the old in the light of the Last Revelation.

3. The gospels cannot be compared to the Qur'an. They can only be compared to Hadith (the traditions of Mohammad, the Exalted). This is because the gospels were written a long time after Jesus just as the Hadith were written a long time after Mohammad, the Exalted. (Ubaidullah Sindhi, the great Muslim scholar made exactly the same observation.)

4. There is no book in Christianity that was revealed from God and committed to the pen right away. In Islam, the Qur'an meets that requirement of authenticity.

5. Dr. Buccaille states that there are not very numerous scientific statements in the Bible, but they repeatedly collide with established principles of Science. St. Augustine had advised the Church to rid the Bible of all non-scientific verses but his advice was not heeded.

6. It is amazing to see that among the numerous scientific verses in the Qur'an, not one, not a single one turns out to be contrary to the established science!

7. According to the Bible, Adam was created around 3700 B.C. You can only preach this gospel in the church. Today even a child knows that the creation of humans is far more ancient than that. Who told Mohammad [the Exalted] not to include such Biblical errors in the Qur'an if it was based on the Bible as some Christian missionaries zealously preach?

8. In Islam, science and religion have thrived like twin sisters. Therefore, during the Quranic glory of Islamic civilization, science made incredible progress from which the West was later enlightened.

9. The Bible indicates that the earth had green plant life before the sun was created. This is a gross scientific error. And the Qur'an is perfectly free of this and such other mistakes. Obviously, no vegetation could sprout without sunlight.

10. A study of the Evolution of Life has proven beyond doubt that the earth was first inhabited by quadrupeds and birds evolved from them later on. But, the Bible tells us that life on the planet began with sea animals and birds! The Qur'an talks extensively about evolution of life beginning from the unicellular level and it does not make the mistakes the Bible does.

11. According to the Bible, the Great Flood of Noah occurred in 2100 B.C. and destroyed all people and animals on earth. But it is a well-known historical and archaeological fact that during those times, active civilizations were flourishing in Egypt, Babylonia, China and South America.

The Qur'an on the other hand describes the great Flood involving only the people of Noah. Recent research indicates that the Flood occurred only in the lands of Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which the nation of Noah inhabited.

12. The Gospels of Mathew and John do not even mention the ascension of Jesus Christ to the Heavens. Luke only describes resurrection of Jesus on the Day of Judgment (with rest of the creation). And Mark depicts the ascension of Jesus in a way that even the most forgiving Christian scholars of today find totally unacceptable. The Book of Acts mentions the resurrection of Jesus forty days after crucifixion, which is a completely unscientific proposition.

The Qur'an rightly refrains from condoning the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ. If God is Omnipresent, the ascension of Jesus to the Heavens becomes a completely illogical myth that makes no scientific or intellectual sense at all.

13. Galileo was tried in court and imprisoned in his home only because he accepted and supported Copernicus's theory that the earth moves around the sun. This is because the Bible declares the earth to be a static body around which the sun, the moon and the stars are revolving. The Qur'an on the other hand, perfectly agrees with the Earth being an ovospheric body that revolves around the sun.

Dr. Maurice Bucaille, while giving these accounts, repeatedly asks the rhetorical question: How could an unlettered man living in the remotest of the deserts, cut off from all civilization, contemplate the universal phenomena with such clarity and accuracy 14 centuries ago?

14. The Christians try to evade the shining reality that between the 8th and 12th centuries students from all over Europe were attracted to Cordova of Muslim Spain to attain knowledge. It was exactly as the world looks up to the U.S. for advancement of learning today.

We are indebted to Muslims that they imparted to us knowledge and civility. In Math, Chemistry, Astronomy, Geology, Physics, Botany, Algebra, Medicine and all sciences the West must acknowledge the Arabs and other Muslims as their teachers.

15. Dr. Bucaille exclaims that even the least knowledgeable westerner harbors a great collection of misinformation about Islam and Muslims!

16. The learned Dr. Bucaille makes a very pointed observation that the old translators and commentators of the Qur'an made grievous errors in their works especially about the verses pertaining to science. The modern translators and commentators are, unfortunately, no better since they blindly follow the trail of their ancestors.

17. For scholars of the Qur'an, knowledge of the Arabic language is not enough for its understanding. We must know the Arabic that was in use at the time of Mohammad, the Exalted. It is also imperative that one is conversant with relevant facets of contemporary science. In Arabic, "Alim" [a person of knowledge] in fact means a scientist. And the Qur'an calls those people Ulema who reflect upon the heavens, clouds, rains and water cycle, patterns of earth, mountains, animal life, etc. and then feel the awesome glory of the Creator (35:28). This verse of the Qur'an strongly endorses people with scientific knowledge as Ulema and not any kind of priesthood.

18. The Bible indicates that at the time of Genesis (creation of the universe) the spirit of God was moving over waters. The Qur'an on the other hand, refers to a huge cloud of smoke, meaning a huge cloud of gas consisting of very fine particles. Modern science is in total agreement with this statement regarding the origin of the universe. One cannot help but appreciate that the term "smoke" (Surah 44) is simple enough for the lay person and descriptive enough for the scientist! The Qur'an is a miracle of literature and linguistics as well, but that is not the scope of my book.

19. Numerous verses in the Qur'an refer to "the Earth and the Heavens and that which is between them" (emphasis added) (for instance 20:6, 25:59, 32:4). The great U.S. telescope Mount Wilson only in the 20th century has started describing the Interstellar Galactic Material. Who could have even thought of its existence even until 200 years ago!

20. While the Bible conveniently refers to the sun and the moon as the greater light and the lesser light and moves on, the Qur'an strikingly terms the sun as Siraj. "Siraj" means a lamp that gives off its own light. But the moon is Munir that refers to a body that reflects light! (27:61, 71:15, 78:12).

21. It is amazing to note a 1400-year-old book describing the sun and the moon, not only moving, but rather swimming along in their assigned orbits (21:33, 36:40). Who but the Creator could have had that knowledge at the time when science had no concept of orbits in the space. The Greeks thought of the sky as a revolving dome on which the sun, the moon and stars were studded fixed!

22. "Allah wraps night over day and wraps day over night . . ." (39:5). That is a clear exposition of the earth being spherical as is evident from the word "Yukawwir" which is derived from Koora = sphere. Astronauts have observed the phenomenon happening exactly as stated in the Qur'an and photographed the night and day "wrapping around" each other!

23. In 70:40, the Qur'an talks of the Easts and the Wests (in plural). How many people in the 7th century knew that the points of sunrise and sunset keep changing in different seasons!

24. The verse 51:47 mentions an wonderful astronomical fact. "We have created the heaven with power and We are expanding it."

Dr. Buccaille pauses here to point out that this is such a glorious statement that even the 20th century Muslim commentators of the Qur'an hesitate to explain. Hameedullah has even placed a question mark right after translating this verse.

(My note: Only in 1929, did the great U.S. astronomer Edwin Hubble present convincing evidence of the fact that the universe is truly expanding).

25. From Plato to Seneca to Descartes, countless thinkers and scientists kept amassing erroneous theories about the water cycle. Some thought that with every rain the water content of the planet kept increasing. Others suggested that an underground huge pipe (Abyss tartarus) carried the rainwater back to the oceans, etc etc.

The Qur'an had already corrected all these fallacies and described the water cycle as we understand today. Falling of rains, its dissipation into the earth, gushing forth of springs, running of rivulets into oceans, evaporation, and cloud formation is all perfectly scientific as revealed in this 1400 years old book!

Let us stop and think for a moment how Dr. Maurice Buccaille was able to do such brilliant research that some Muslim scientist should have done! I believe there are three reasons:

(i) The centuries old collective trait of blind following has taken away from the Muslim Ummah their ability to think independently. We have been accepting without criticism what the old commentators of the Qur'an have written.

(ii) Religious knowledge among most Muslim scholars and laypersons has become synonymous with knowledge of ritualistic religious trivia such as ways of ablution, prayer and fasting, the minor detail about dress code, etc.

(iii) Most of the time and energy of the Ummah is being spent on learning about man-made religious books. The Qur'an has been reduced to mere recitation.

Now let us hear Dr. Buccaille again.

26. At the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, and until centuries later, no scientist in the world knew about the "barrier" between salt water and fresh water. Today we know that at numerous places on the globe there is a distinct barrier between the salt water and fresh water. The two streams of water travel side by side yet they do not mix!

"It is He who has let free the two bodies of flowing water one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter; yet has He made a barrier between them a partition that is not to be passed" (25:53; 55:19-20).

(Without this barrier all water on earth would have been undrinkable. It is noteworthy that Surah 55 calls this barrier a blessing of the Beneficent.)

27. Surahs 78:6 and 21:31 describe the mountains as supports and pegs for the Earth's crust. Only modern geology has discovered that the mountains have "roots" that delve deep down one to 10 miles in the earth so that the earth's crust would remain steady.

28. The Qur'an describes the feelings of a person who rejects Islam as if his chest were getting tight upon ascending toward great height. Scarcity of Oxygen and the resulting tightness in the chest with difficulty in breathing on great heights is only a phenomenon experienced by man in the aerospace age.

29. "And We have created all living things of water." (21:30)  
The biological and evolutionary science strongly attest to this fact. We know that 80-85% of the protoplasm is water. The science of evolution also proves that life on the planet initially began from water.

30. The Pharaoh of the time of Moses (about 1300 B.C.), was drowned while chasing the Israelites. The Bible tells us that but doesn't talk of the Pharaoh's remains. There is a verse in the Qur'an which is very revealing.

In 1898 A.D., archaeologists discovered a mummified body in the "Valley of Kings" near Cairo. This mummy has been identified to be Merneptah, the son of Ramses II. Merneptah was the Pharaoh who chased Moses and his people and was drowned.

In June 1976, Dr. Buccaille, with due permission of the Egyptian government thoroughly examined the mummy along with his colleagues. What was the result of the examination? This man died of drowning in a state of horror!

While no Biblical or historical reference is found anywhere about the Pharaoh's body, the Qur'an had this to say 1400 years ago:

This day We shall save you in your body so that you be a sign to those who come after you (10:92).

There is much more convincing scientific evidence that Dr. Buccaille has presented in his masterpiece work. Almost all areas of science, including Zoology, Botany, Astronomy, Physiology, Embryology, Atmosphere and Space, Geology, etc., have been well covered. The examples that we have selected

above are sufficient to prove even to the most ardent opponent of the Qur'an (if he or she happens to be blessed with an open mind) to agree with Sir Iqbal:

Look! This Qur'an is not just a book.  
It is something beyond.

The author has recently learned that Dr. Buccaille eventually did embrace Islam and passed on a few years ago.



## CHAPTER VIII

### QUESTION BOX

Just as students are a great source of learning for a teacher, readers are a precious asset for a writer. I feel indebted to all those respected readers who have come up with questions and comments on the first edition. This Q & A chapter will help us explain some important points. The readers should be reminded once again that many of the misunderstandings and misinformation about Islam stem from books of history and tradition. All these narratives of history and tradition must be checked against the Qur'an, which is the Criterion and the final test of right and wrong (3:4).

1. Why did you choose to call the Holy Messenger, "The Exalted," instead of the customary "Peace be upon him"?

A. "Peace be upon him" is neither the correct translation of the Qur'anic greetings to the Exalted messenger nor does it make any sense. Of course, he is in the state of sublime peace and glory. We are the ones who need to follow his sacred footprints to attain peace. Here we need to move on from mere recitation to understanding and action.

Now focus on 33:56, which is usually translated as "Allah and His angels send blessings on the prophet. O' you who believe! Send blessings on him and salute him with all respect." The better meaning of this verse would be that God and His angels support the glorious mission of the messenger. So, believers must exercise all their abilities in the support of his noble mission in order to establish universal peace.

2. When a blind man comes to Jesus Christ he gives him sight. When a blind man comes to your prophet, he frowns and turns away.

A. You have read some wrong translation or commentary of the Qur'an. Surah Abas (80:1) does not at all mention the name of the one who frowned and turned away. 74:22 clarifies that a proud pagan chief in the habit of frowning and turning away from the poor is meant in Surah Abas as well. Assigning this incident to the Exalted Messenger appears to be one of the old conspiracies against Islam.

3. Is it true that marriage and divorce can take place even in joke and anger?

A. A solemn covenant cannot be bound or unbound by nonsolemn means. (See Chapter 5) The Holy Messenger said, "Divorce cannot take place in duress." i.e. suddenly or in a non-Qur'anic way which entails at least three months (Ibn Majah).

4. Does the Qur'an permit the husband to beat his wife?

A. No. The verse 4:34 pertains to women in general (Nisa not wives Azwaj) who cause lewdness in society. After due measures such as admonishment and segregation have failed the Islamic court of law has the authority to order corporal punishment through the justice system (not by the husband).

5. According to Bukhari, the woman was created from Adam's rib. If you try to straighten her out, she will break.

A. The first part is a Biblical statement. The Qur'an does not say that Eve was created from Adam's rib. In fact, the name Eve is nowhere found in the Qur'an. As stated earlier, Bukhari, or whatever history or tradition, must be checked in the Light of the Qur'an. Adam and his wife are used symbolically in the Qur'an, to indicate mankind, male and female.

6. What is the definition of a Muslim?

A. Any person who believes that the Last Message of God was revealed to Muhammad, the Exalted, is a Muslim. Conversely, if someone claims to receive direct revelation from God in any form after the Qur'an, must be considered a lunatic or an imposter. This includes claims of divine inspiration of the mystic or fortuneteller.

7. Who can be called a practicing Muslim?

A. There is a popular misconception that equates a worshipping Muslim with a practicing one. In fact, one who strives to convey and establish the Qur'anic order of life on earth, is a practicing Muslim (3:114).

8. Verse 4:34 reads, "men are in charge of women." And 2:228 reads "for men there is a degree over women."

A. The verses do not read like this. Some translations do. In the first instance, the Qur'an uses the term Qawwamoon. This means providers, sustainers and protectors. To be clearer, men must see to it that women are able to stand on their feet in the society.

In the second instance, please read the complete verse. It clearly denotes that men have a degree in one sense that after divorce they do not have a waiting period (Iddah) before remarriage. Iddah is appointed for divorced women to have any possible pregnancy manifest itself.

9. How could Muslims have managed to conquer the world and advance in sciences if they were having civil wars such as Jamal, Saffain, and Karbala?

A. i. The history of Jamal, Saffain, and Karbala was written centuries after the reported incidents.

ii. You have a good point that the Islamic empire could not have made the historical strides if Muslims were overwhelmed with civil wars. Much of that history is fiction. These reported disputes were written by the politically

motivated authors of the time i.e. in the third and fourth century, after the Exalted Messenger.

iii. People from different countries were embracing Islam because they witnessed the true blissful Islamic civilization.

10. What was the real status of Mirza Ghulam Qadiani?

A. Hear from him, ". . . a self-sown seed, a self-grown plant of the British Empire."

11. What is the position of the head scarf in the Qur'an?

A. Surahs 24 and 33 describe the manners for socialization between men and women. A long overcoat or shawl is enjoined when women go out (33:59). The use of a scarf on the chest is ordained while indoors (24:30-31). However, the Qur'an does not mention using a head scarf or a veil. Modern psychology research rules out the scalp hair as a means of arousal in the male or the female.

The eminent Muslim scholar, Murad Hoffman, maintains that while in hot countries, "women have always covered their hair to protect themselves against heat, wind, and dust," such traditions cannot disallow "a freedom in principle granted to women by God." Today, in the western countries, the sight of a woman's hair is not considered sexually provocative (Islam 2000, p. 48, 1996). ". . . Nobody should judge a woman's closeness to religion by whether or not she uses hijab in the form of a head-scarf (Id. at 48). "It is vital and possible to contradict the misconceptions concerning women in Islam. Otherwise Islamic da'wah in the West is almost hopeless" (Id. at 47). (Readers are urged to study this sensitive subject personally and draw their own conclusions.)

12. The Qur'an asserts that humans and Jinn have been created for nothing but worship of God. What kind of worship and what is Jinn?

A. Verse 51:56 describes that God has created Jinn and mankind for Ibadah. Ibadah is not worship. It means obedience and subservience to Laws and Commands of God. As for "Jinn", the term literally means "hidden". According to Sir Syed, Allama Jairaj Puri, and Imam Raghīb, Allama Mashriqi, Allama Iqbal, G.A. Perwaiz, Obaidullah Sindhi, Allama Tamanna Imadi, it could refer to nomads, illiterates, dwellers of the deserts and jungles, those of fiery temperament and all people who used to live far away from urban life, hence remaining hidden. The Qur'an refers to urban population as *Ins* and rural people as *jinn*.

13. What is the position of magic in the Qur'an?

A. Very scientific. It is either hypnotism of the modern science or trickery. For example,

The magicians of the Pharaoh cast a spell on the people's eyes so that pieces of rope appeared to them as if they were serpents (7:116).

The term magic or sihr is used in the Qur'an and Hadith to describe any surprising event. Sir James Fraser in his book "Occultism and the Manifest" writes that magic is nothing but falsehood and trickery, and he confesses reaching this conclusion after having been guided by the most pragmatic book he came across, namely the Qur'an. Fraser does acknowledge the effect of suggestion on susceptible subjects. Black magic, voodoo, etc. and their counter measures thrive only on superstition.

14. Wasn't Prophet Mohammad put under the spell of magic according to a hadith?

A. The Qur'an states that those people who say and believe that he came under the influence of magic are transgressors/wrong-doers. (25:8, 17:47) These two verses kill the malicious reports in Bukhari.

15. Does the bad or evil eye really afflict people? Are there people who become demon-possessed? And does reciting some verses of the Quran cure them?

A. There is no such thing as the bad or evil eye or possession of people by demons. The highly pragmatic and scientific laws given in the Qur'an reject these mythical metaphysical phenomena as hoax. And the Book nowhere states that by reciting such and such verses miraculous results can be achieved. It is a book of guidance.

One important note of clarification here: In 12:67, Prophet Jacob is seen advising his twelve sons to enter into a city of Egypt through different gates. From this incident, many commentators of the Qur'an have wrongly concluded that Prophet Jacob was concerned about the envious inhabitants of the city seeing the twelve brothers together. Historically however, the brothers had been suspected of spying on a previous trip to Egypt. For that reason, Jacob wisely advised them as he did.

The only demon that can possess a person is our uncontrolled desire called Iblis or Satan. The so-called demon possessed people are mental patients. The Holy Prophet said, "There is no such thing as "GHOUL." The ghoul includes all the mythical creatures such as Draculas, bad spirits, haunted places, witchcraft, etc.

16. How about the miracles of Moses, Jesus and Mohammad, the Exalted?

A. One must remember that the Qur'an has made it abundantly clear that some of its verses are allegorical (3:7). Then it becomes easy to understand that the white bright hand of Moses was symbolic of his truth that shone like the sun. His staff was the power of his faith and reason. Likewise, Jesus gave life to people who were suffering from spiritual death and he restored sight so that one could look at life in its reality. The Qur'an rebuffed those people who asked the

Holy Messenger to show miracles; to bring forth a fresh spring from the ground, to have a lush garden and to set forth running streams of water, to have fragments of heavens fall on them, to bring God and angels in front of them, to show them his palace of gold, to have a ladder high enough to reach the heavens from where he would bring a preprinted book from God (17:90-93).

Let us recall that according to the Qur'an, all things and actions in the universe follow the physical laws of nature. And those laws are unchangeable. Galileo Galilei pointed out,

"The universe is the creation of a Master Mathematician who neither errs nor makes any exceptions".

Another point of interest is that the Qur'an invites people to believe through understanding and reason (12:108) while miracles would have quite the contrary effect i.e. stunning the human intellect.

17. But does not the Qur'an in the very beginning state that the believers have faith in the unseen?

A. Faith in the unseen through reason and reflection, not blind faith (12:108). More importantly, faith in the unseen refers to the Qur'anic law of requital. The right similitude could be that of a farmer who sows a seed and does all the requisite work believing that he will get the desired crop.

18. If the Qur'an is easy to understand why don't all people understand it? And why do they say Hadith is essential for its comprehension?

A. The answer lies in your question.

- i. The Qur'an itself claims that it is easy to understand (54:17).
- ii. Its verses have been made simple and plain (41:3). Even this Surah 41 is titled Fusilat, which means plain and simple.
- iii. The Qur'an has been presented in plain, simple Arabic language (43:3).
- iv. "It is for Us to explain it and to make it clear" (75:19).
- v. The Qur'an advises that no one touches this book but those who approach it with a clear mind uncontaminated with preconceived notions (56:79). Unfortunately, the translations and commentaries of the Qur'an until this day are tantamount to sub-editions of what men of old wrote a thousand years ago. If it is claimed that the first commentators wrote their commentaries based upon the Holy Messenger's sayings, we will have to remember that they compiled their works based upon oral traditions in or after the third century since the Holy Messenger.

In the era of despotism and tyranny, Royal interests heavily influenced those writers. Some of those writers, like Imam Ibn' Shahab Zahari, confessed at their deathbed that tyrannical rulers forced them to concoct and pen down Ahadith and traditions that served the Royal political interests.

vi. Sir Iqbal observes that God terms the Qur'an, "the Light." And light needs no help to show itself.

vii. Mufti Azam Pakistan Mohammad Shafi writes "One part of the Qur'an explains the other. No explanation of the Qur'an other than its own is permissible for anyone" (Maarifil Qur'an vol-II page 596).

19. If Allah will guide whom He wills, and lead astray whom he wills, then where comes the role of human effort and accountability? Isn't this similar to St. Augustine's philosophy of predestination and fatalism?

A. I think you have read some wrong translations of the Qur'an. As explained in Chapter III of this book, God constitutes His laws in the World of Command as He wills. In the World of Creation the root word used for His "Will," Tasha and Yasha, throughout the Book stand for appointing due measure. So verses like the one you have pointed to (14:4), mean that God has created laws, rules and principles for guidance, for honor/dishonor, for getting astray, etc.

20. How could mischievous people slander the mother of believers and that too in the life of the Holy Messenger? I am referring to Surah 24.

A. Surah 24 Al-Noor does not mention the mother of believers at all. It talks about a slanderous assault on a righteous woman in town. The name and the story was concocted by the local Jewish tribe and unfortunately it found place in our books of history and tradition.

21. Zodiac signs, palm reading, astrology, psychic powers; where do these things find their place in the Qur'an?

A. Among conjecture. "Allah alone knows the unseen. He does not make anyone acquainted with his secrets" (72:26). And the Exalted Messenger said, "Anyone who goes to the diviner or fortune teller, denies what has been revealed to Muhammad."

22. It seems weird that people perform acts of worship on behalf of their dead ancestors or in proxy for others.

A. To a critical mind, it should seem weird. The Exalted Messenger said, "Actions are based upon intentions". The dead cannot have intentions. Also, the Qur'an makes it very clear that every person will be responsible for one's own actions only. (53:39)

23. How did Islam divide into sects? Do you consider Yazid kafir or Muslim?

A. To answer your second question first, the Qur'an states, "You shall not be asked about what the other people did (2:141). Sectarianism came into Islam through people's treatment of history, political motives and through some scholars of Hadith and Fiqh. Suffice it to say that the Qur'an calls all companions of the Holy Messenger as unwavering true believers (8:74). And their mutual relationship was of love and kindness (3:103). And finally, Allah was pleased with them and they were pleased with Him (9:100). If Muslims had stuck to the

Qur'an instead of falling for man made books, there would have been no sectarianism in Islam. Hypocrites had been recognized in the life of the Prophet. (3:179, 47:30)

24. In Christianity, salvation is by grace. In Islam, it is based upon deeds. But isn't man imperfect?

A. The Qur'an does not understate God's grace. In fact it states that Allah's Grace encompasses all things (7:156), (40:7). At the same time, God did not choose to make humans as predestined, programmed robots. They have been given free will. As far as imperfection is concerned, the Qur'an makes it simple. It is the intention and effort that will be seen (53:40).

25. How come the share of a woman is one half of that of a man in inheritance and why does Islam insist on two women's witnesses where one man's witness would suffice?

A. Please recall that men have been placed providers for women in the Islamic society. When the woman gets married, her husband will provide her for. Her brother will remain in charge of provision to his family on the parent's side. To further clarify the point, the inheritance share of the mother or the father is equal. For your question on witness, please see verse 2:282. First of all, the matter under discussion only pertains to a deed of loan. The verse says that two men (not one) should witness the signing of the document. "If two men are not available, then one man and two women of whom you should choose. So that if one forgets, the other one will remind her."

So the second woman will not be a witness in the court. She will only be present to remind in case the first woman gets nervous in the court and forgets. She would not speak to the court.

26. In the first edition you answered, since God is Omnipresent, ascension of Jesus unto Him makes no sense. Why do you then believe in the ascension of Muhammad?

A. That point was well elaborated by Dr. Maurice Bucaille. Some Muslim scholars believe that the Holy Messenger had this experience in his dream, while other believe that it was physical. Also, histories differ about timing of "Maeraj" by years. Please note, that the word Maeraj, meaning ascension is nowhere to be found in the Qur'an.

The Qur'an does not talk of ascension of the Exalted Messenger unto heavens. In 17:1, all it talks about is the nightly migration of the Holy Messenger from Masjid-al-Haram (Makkah) to Masjid-al-Aqsa ("the distant mosque" referring to Madinah). Ubaidullah Sindhi and some other scholars believe that Masjid-al-Aqsa, could not have meant the mosque in Jerusalem. This was in fact built in 60 A.H. by Hisham bin Abdul Malik about half a century after Prophet Muhammad, the Exalted. It is also interesting to note that verse 26:52 relates the

flight of Moses and Israelites from Egypt in the same term i.e. Asra as used in the migration of Muhammad, the Exalted.

When Hazrat Umar (RA) visited Jerusalem in 637 AD, he kept praying on open ground. He would have prayed in Masjid Aqsa if it existed at that time. Jerusalem had been under Christian and Jewish rule for centuries before the advent of the Holy Prophet.

27. What is the position of terrorism in Islam?

A. Islam and Terrorism are mutually exclusive. While terrorism is the antithesis of Islam, Islam is the antithesis of terrorism. At the risk of offending extremists of any faction I would dare submit that like all confused hocus pocus belief systems, No. 2 Islam fails to prevent the tendency to extremism. The Qur'an states very clearly that terrorism is a more severe crime than killing. And the holy prophet advises: "Avoid extremism in religion. It has been a destroyer of nations."

28. Is there any living model state of Islam anywhere in the world?

A. Unfortunately not. Taliban of Afghanistan since 1996 to date 2001 have presented a glaring picture of No. 2 Islam. Ritualism, burqas and beards, religious police, compulsion in religion, poverty, hunger, sub-human existence, all these things are fruits of the No. 2 Islam. So is lack of education, especially of women. Islam is a great liberator of humanity. Religions including No. 2 Islam are nothing but chains.

29. Please clarify the difference between Islam and No. 2 Islam.

A. Islam is DEEN (Way of collective life) as revealed by God and preserved in the Holy Qur'an. It guarantees total success in both lives. No. 2 Islam is a set of rituals, pomp, fake dogmas, cultural traditional stupidities and blind following. It revolves around mullas and mystics (priesthood). It guarantees subhuman life, misery and chaos. Mullas and Mystics stop people from the Way of God. (9:34) In fact, the entire history of mankind is a story of the battle between DEEN and RELIGION.

The central teaching of all prophets (DEEN) has always been "God is one and mankind is one community." After the prophet departs religious priesthood (mullas and sufies) distort this simple message. Rulers and the wealthy always prefer religion over Deen. This is because religion (mazhab, or call it No. 2 Islam in this book) promotes man made distinctions within humanity.

30. How is Satan viewed in Islam?

A. Satan is our uncontrolled desire, which violates Divine values. The Holy Prophet once stated, "Everyone has IBLEES (SATAN) within." Companions asked with respect, "O' Messenger of God! Even you have it?" Muhammad, the Exalted replied, "Yes, I have made him a Muslim."



31. The Qur'an calls the wife as a tilth of her husband. Doesn't that reflect ownership?

A. Surah 2:223 is referring to women (NISA not AZWAJ) being the likeness of a garden which carries seeds and enables them to become flowery plants. Women in the society are the carriers and guardians of future generations. Therefore they must be treated with respect.

32. Why did God create 'evil'?

A. God does not create evil. It is only we humans who create evil. A knife in the hands of a surgeon is life saving. In the hands of a killer it is evil. (113:1) refers to evil aspects of things.

33. Are religious teachers (Mullas) in the West any different from mullas in the East.

A. Not at all. They all are molded in the same factory. All of them represent No. 2 Islam. I can suggest a litmus test. Any Mulla who sports a beard and preaches veiling belongs to No. 2 Islam.

34. Isn't beard a tradition of the Holy Prophet?

A. NO. It was a part of the Arab culture in those times. Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, Atbah, Waleed bin Mugheera as well as Jews and Christians of Arabia all kept beards. The Qur'an does not ordain beard or HIJAB at all.

35. What is the 'factory" you referred to?

A. The so called "Deeni Madaris" or MADRASAHs. Everything is taught in them but the unadulterated Qur'an. Who is the criminal behind this conspiracy? The criminal here is Nizamulmulk Toosi (1018-1092 AD), the Grand Vizier of Saljuk rulers. This Ajami Zoroastrian under the guise of a Muslim name established the NIZAMIYA University in Neshapur and Baghdad. Until this day the religious curriculum/syllabus designed by him i.e. DARS-E-NIZAMI is being taught in MADRASAHs throughout the world, (8,500 madrasahs in Pakistan alone). The product? TALIBAN.

## Chapter IX.

### THE MISSION STATEMENT

Among the many wonderful chapters of human history, let us briefly examine one glittering page. At the outset of his prophethood, Muhammad, the Exalted, issued a mission statement. And with marvelous glory and accuracy, he accomplished that mission during his lifetime. What was that noblest mission statement?

"We will establish a state in which a lovely young maiden laden with jewelry and ornaments will travel alone from San'aa [in Yemen] to Busra [in Syria]" [a distance of more than 1500 miles]. Yet she will have no fear but the fear of God."

Dear reader, we are talking of times when no highway in Arabia was considered safe even for armed caravans. When robbery, looting, killing, and playing with the honor of women were rampant. When abduction, ambush, and enslavement were considered a matter of pride. The goal of the holy Messenger not only meant establishing the rule of law, but also entailed changing the hearts of people. It also meant that the common person would have total confidence in the state, in the government, in the system, and in the individuals who had lived in that blessed society.

The Savior of humanity achieved that and more in a brief span of time. The eyes of the heavens have yet to see the like of that sacred era again. Very soon a time had come in the Islamic empire where it was next to impossible to find a needy person. People went from village to village, town to town to look for someone who would accept their charity, and found none. Sounds Utopian, doesn't it?

The Second Caliph of Islam, Umar Farooq the Great (R.A.) used to say, "If a dog died of hunger by the Euphrates River, I am afraid Umar will be held accountable." He also said, "I have been appointed your Amir so that I may stop your prayers from reaching the heavens". This displays the conviction he instilled into his subjects; the confidence that the Islamic state will meet all individuals' basic needs and they won't have to grieve and feel wanting in any area of their life as far as humanly possible.

Can any civilization in history or today's Europe, Japan, and America boast of such abundant economy, mutual brotherhood and total security of life, honor, and property?

Messenger Muhammad, the Exalted, succeeded in establishing a just and equitable society by inculcating a deep-seated faith in the hearts of people; the faith that giving will be rewarded manifold in both worlds. Professor Hawtrey and

Dean Inge have remarked that "the prosperity of any society has and always will depend on the incentive provided for work. In Islam, a person will work hard so he can give more".

Many readers will find it refreshing to know that in the true Dar'ul' Islam (Islamic State), it was the obligation of the state to fulfill the basic individual needs such as:

- a. Food
- b. Clothing
- c. Shelter
- d. Education
- e. Employment (or Unemployment Allowance)
- f. Requisite Tools
- g. Transportation to and from the place of work
- h. Medical Care
- i. Retirement benefits

This subdued the capitalistic evils (such as usury, profiteering, fear of poverty, insecurity, insurance worries and provision for the survivors etc.) while guaranteeing enough individual freedom to avoid the socialistic evils (such as subjugation to the state). How could such an environment fail to produce selfless individuals and the ideal society!

I respectfully propose that the world leadership ponder over the noble mission statement of the Holy Messenger, and what was done to achieve it, as our fountain spring of life for the coming millenniums.

Chapter X.

## CONCLUSION

One and a quarter billion people in the world today believe in the Qur'an as the final word of Allah. My own reflections and a study of the brightest non-Muslim minds, the glimpses of which we have seen in this book, lead me to believe that the 21st century will prove to be the dawn of an era where all humanity will see what the 20% of it is seeing today. Moreover, Muslims will come to break the chains of false traditions, blind following, stagnant cultures and empty rituals. They will disown and discard the number two Islam

People will then establish the ideal society on the planet in which rule of law will prevail. The Divine moral values will become the natural way of human life. Individuals in that unified society will have exemplary character and they will enrich the lives of one another.

Mankind would then progress from the "status of Adam" to the "status of Mu'min." To recapture briefly, the status of Adam is harnessing the forces of nature. The status of Mu'min (believer in the Qur'an) is to harness the forces of nature and use them for the benefit of, not a few people, not one or two nations, but all mankind.

I know that this giant step can only be taken in the light of the Qur'an. The world is doubtless moving in that direction. It has to happen and it will. Instead of being a silent spectator, I want to be an active part of that glorious triumph of all mankind. This is why I am a Muslim. And this is why I am not a non-Muslim.

Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.