

THE
QUR'AN
AND
SLAVERY

by

Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar Qureshi
LONDON

Translated by
Dr. Kaukab Siddique

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A Critique of Maudoodi's Commentary on Sura Ahzab
(An introduction to Namoos-e-Rasool)

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Translated by
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RABIUL AWWAL 1402

**Maudoodi’s Serious Error in Qur’anic
Commentary**

Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, even before he died in 1979, had made a name for himself as a commentator on the Qu’ran. His famous commentary on the Qur’an in six volumes called *Tafhim al-Quran* has been translated into various languages including English. There is hardly an Indian or Pakistani Muslim home in the U.S. where Islam is practised that volumes of *Tafhim al-Quran* are not available. Many new Muslims have used the English translation of *Tafhim al-Quran*, which is still incomplete in 7 parts, to understand Islam.

Now it turns out that a Pakistani Muslim named Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar Qureshi, originally from Kohat in Pakistan’s frontier province and now living in England, has written a 327-page book in Urdu entitled *Namoos-e-Rasool* to review and discuss a most serious error in *Tafhim al-Quran*. A letter was written to Ghulam Ali, Maudoodi’s special assistant, in 1978, concerning the subject of this book. Unfortunately Ghulam Ali swept aside the query with an element of contempt.

Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar is a prolific writer in Urdu and has written books on the philosophy of Salat, on the Qur’an and *Shirk* (associating others with God) and related Islamic subjects. Both in *Namoos-e-Rasool* and in his earlier books Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar shows his extensive knowledge of Islam and seems to have an extraordinary understanding of the Qur’an and the Hadith. The error he has discovered in Maudoodi’s writings is so serious and Sarwar’s analysis of it is so well done and detailed that it would have amounted to a sin against God if this criticism was not passed on to the Muslims who want to know exactly what Islam says. There is no denying Maudoodi’s contribution but when one has to choose between Maudoodi and the Messenger of God (on whom Allah’s blessings) one must not hesitate to make the obvious choice, however much one might respect Maudoodi.

In *Tafhim al-Quran*, volume 4, page 114 (part of note 88) Abul Ala Maudoodi wrote about Maria the Copt (Allah be pleased with her):

“With Hazrat Maria the Prophet had sexual intercourse on the basis of her being of those whom his right hand possessed (in Urdu Hazrat Maria se bar banay milke yameen tamatt’u farmaya). It is not proven about her that the Prophet freed her and married her.”

As is well-known Maria was sent to Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) by the Christian ruler of Egypt, known as the Mauqaqus. Maudoodi and other scholars claim that she was a slave girl and that Islam permits sexual intercourse with slave girls under the heading of “those whom your right hands possess”. This term occurs at least four times in the Qur’an and Maudoodi as well as other scholars usually give the impression that “those whom your right hand possess” were women who became prisoners of war when their army lost the battle. They could not be given the status of wife, so Islam gave Muslims permission to have sexual relations with them after they had been divided among the soldiers. A redeeming feature of this situation was said to be that, if the slave girl gave birth, her child was free and in many cases she became free after her “master” died.

Hafiz Sarwar not only takes serious objection to this ugly presentation of Islam by Maudoodi but also presents impressive evidence to show that this anti-woman version of Islam is un-Islamic and false. He quotes from the Hadith to show that the Prophet did marry Maria. Sarwar must have worked hard to find the facts which contradict the established version of history. Here are the Hadith he quotes.

From Abdullah az-Zubairi: he said that then the messenger of Allah (peace be on him) married Maria the daughter of Shamaoun and this is the same Maria who was gifted to the messenger of Allah by the Maqaqus the ruler of Alexandria.

Sahih al-Mustadrak al-Hakim, vol. 4 Page 38 Maria The Copt.

Abu Zar says that the messenger of Allah (peace be on him) said: (O believers) in the near future you will enter Egypt (victorious). This is the land known as Qirat. So when you have conquered it, deal very nobly with its inhabitants since you have the responsibility to protect them and you have relationships of motherhood with them or you have responsibility and in-law relationship with them. Sahih Muslim

Imam Nawawi, the classical commentator on Sahih Muslim says "relationship of motherhood" refers to Hajra the mother of Ismail (on both of whom are Allah's blessings), "in-law relationship" refers to Maria the Copt the mother of Ibrahim, the Prophet's son who died in infancy to the Prophet's great sorrow. Hafiz Sawar writes that even Maudoodi's close associate, Abdul Hameed Siddiqui, in his commentary on Sahih Muslim wrote that "The reference in this Hadith is to Maria the Copt, Allah be pleased with her, who was the wife of the messenger of Allah and was a native of Egypt." But Maudoodi insisted that there is no proof of marriage and sexual intercourse was on the basis of *milke yameen* (possession by force).

Hafiz Sarwar first takes Maudoodi's assumption that Maria was a slave girl and therefore could be an object of sexual intercourse without marriage. Books from a valid source shows the writer that Maria was not a slave girl, in fact she belonged to the royal family of Egypt. In any case she had not been captured in a war and thus there was no Islamic law by which the Prophet could have had sexual relations with her without marriage. Hafiz Sarwar thinks Maudoodi was misled by the Arabic word *jarya* used for Maria which can mean both a slave girl and also a mere chit of a girl.

Then Hafiz Sarwar tackles the sensitive issue, whether the Qur'an permits sexual intercourse without marriage with girls taken prisoners of war referred to in the Qur'an as "those whom your right hand possess"? In his commentary on sura Ahzab verse 52 (page 118 of *Tafhim al-Quran*, volume 4) Maudoodi wrote:

This verse is making it very clear that in addition to lawfully wedded wives sexual relations with slave girls are also permitted and there is no limit to their number. This subject has been emphasized in Sura Nisa verse 3, Sura Muminun verse 6 and Sura Ma'arij verse 30.

Hafiz Sarwar's criticism of this commentary of Maudoodi is that it is sickening and illustrative of a mental tendency which relishes the degradation of women. He then attacks this commentary by pointing out:

1. Sura Muminun and Ma'arij were both revealed in Mecca when there was no question of the Muslims taking any prisoners of war. So those verses were referring, in the words, "those whom your right hand possesses", to

women who were slaves before the revelation came to the Prophet. The reference was to a previous relationship, not to something new which Islam approved of.

2. The verses in Sura Ahzab and Nisa which refer to "those whom your right hand possess" were revealed in Medina, but they are not saying that you should have sexual relations with prisoners of war *without marriage*. Hafiz Sarwar goes into great detail to prove from the Qur'an and the Hadith that no sexual relationship is permitted in Islam without marriage.

About Maria the Copt (Allah be pleased with her) the writer shows that the *sahaba* too considered that the Prophet had married her and after his death they treated her exactly with the same respect and gave her the same rights as they gave to other wives of the Prophet.

In his amazing and hard-hitting book, written in flowing and powerful Urdu, Hafiz Sarwar tackles the issue of slavery and its supposed permission where prisoners of war are concerned. He gives extensive references from the sources of Islam to show that in Islam's original sources there is no basis for enslaving prisoners of war. Whatever narrations about slaves are found in Hadith are actually about the vast system of slavery which existed before Islam. These pre-Islamic slaves were so many and were so much a part of society that there was no way of making them free in a very limited time. He gives interesting statistics about the slaves who were freed by the companions of the Prophet.

About the prisoners of war and their necessary freedom as soon as possible, Hafiz Sarwar considers this verse of the Qur'an decisive:

Therefore when ye meet the Unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks; at length when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them); thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom until the war lays down its burden (47:4)

So the Qur'an lays down clearly that prisoners of war are to be freed either by way of generosity or by ransom. The question of slavery does not arise. Hafiz Sarwar then discusses the battles in which the Holy Prophet took prisoners. The Muslims gave them better treatment than they gave themselves. There was no question of sorting out the women for sexual intercourse.

Namoos-e-rasool is a powerful book — a liberating book. It shows with strong arguments how degraded and low is the version of Islam our religious teachers have been giving us. Women are honoured in Islam — and our commentators tell us that when they are helpless, when they need the saving grace of Islam, they should be used for sexual intercourse without marriage? May Allah save us from such versions of Islam! For sexual intercourse, marriage is essential, and Islam has left no doubt at all that in marriage not merely the desire of the male but the free consent and desire of the woman is also essential.

(To order copies of **Namoos-e-rasool** please write for information on price to *New Trend, P.O. Box 12007, Washington, D.C.* Remember the book is in Urdu language.)

BOOK REVIEW

in

THE “AL-BALAAGH” (S. AFRICA)

Vol: 8 No. 1 FEB./MARCH 1983

TITLE: NAMOOS-E-RASOOL

AUTHOR: HAFIZ MUHAMMAD SARWAR

QURAIISHI KOHATI

**Obtainable at: 50 TOPSFIELD PARADE CROUCH END
LONDON N8 8PT (U.K.)**

In his TAFHEEM AL QURAN, Volume 4, pp 113-114 Abul A'La Maudoodi States . . . “but on the grounds of ‘what your right hands possess’ he cohabited with her; it is not proven that the Prophet (s.a.w.) had entered into marriage with Hazrat Maria (r.a.) after freeing her.

For a scholar of Maudoodi’s calibre to say such an insulting thing about the Prophet (s.a.w.) is unforgivable.

Arrogant, superstitious and intolerant, Maudoodi could not brook any criticism. His pronouncement was final, and “no correspondence would be entered into.”

When the author wrote to Maudoodi defending the honour of the Prophet, and pointing out **the grave historical error that he had committed, Maudoodi merely brushed the letter aside with contempt** and did not deem it worthwhile to enter into any discussion with the author.

Enraged at this high-handed and over-weening attitude, Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar Quraishi dived head-long into deep research.

Namoos-e-Rasool is the king-sized pearl with which he came up.

The author’s erudition evokes admiration and commands respect. Studded with Quranic quotations and Ahaadith, the arguments presented are compelling and irrefutable. The language is exact, fluid and didactic without being pedantic and stands out for its concinnity of expressions. Apt verses from Iqbal and other poetic luminaries add lustre to this work of art.

Author Quraishi's style is forceful, dynamic, syllogistic and intensely readable. One is not overcome by ennui because the array of arguments is profoundly appealing and compels one to read on.

It is a great pity that Maudoodi is not alive today to read this remarkable piece of scholarship. We are bold to say that for once he would have found himself speechless and on the receiving end. The author has inexorably demolished Maudoodi's so-called impregnable fortress of intellectuality. One cannot help but visualize that memorable and historic encounter between David and Goliath of old. The formidable Goliath looked down with disdain at "fledgling" David. And what happened to the gargantuan Goliath is no secret to anybody.

Quraishi's researches make Maudoodi look like a veritable tyro, and leave no doubt whatsoever in the reader's mind as to what the truth is. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) could never have been an exemplar to humanity if he (Naooz-billah) had himself perpetrated a morally culpable act — that of living with a woman out of wedlock — which he expressly forbade his followers from committing;

Maudoodi had regarded himself as a "Mizaaj Shanaas-e-Rasool" (one who is able to recognize and understand and **sense** the Prophetic disposition and traits). Quite a tall claim, but inexplicably Maudoodi fell far, far short of understanding the most elementary of elementaries that **no** Prophet of God — let alone the LEADER of all of them (s.a.w.) — can ever live with a woman without marrying her. It is **unthinkable** — both for the Prophet and for his followers.

Namoos-e-Rasool is a highly commendable book which should be in every Muslim's home. The author is an "Aashiq-e-Rasool" and defends the escutcheon and dignity of our Nabee (s.a.w.) with all the sincerity and ferocity of the truly faithful.

The print, though on the tiny side, is dark and perfectly legible and one cannot complain about it. The binding, however, is not very strong and the pages **can** come apart easily. The price is not given as we understand from the author that the book was written for the propagation of truth — and not for a profit.
(Editor: AL-BALAAGH)

PREFACE BY TRANSLATOR

Islam has seen a new resurgence in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Those who seek to make Islam a reality in the modern world look to its original sources, the Quran which exists today exactly as it did when it was revealed, and the example of Muhammad (peace be on him) who showed how to make the Quran the guiding factor in human life. In this quest however the seekers of Islam come up against a large obstacle in the form of the interpretation of Islam by medieval scholars; an interpretation which continues to influence the practice of Islam in modern times.

One has to remember that, though the pristine sources of Islam remain pure and unpolluted, the practice of Muslims has been controlled for centuries by kings and despots whose tyrannical and brutal regimes have in many cases succeeded in influencing the interpretation of Islam. As a result, many among the Muslims think that Islam sanctions slavery and the subjugation of women which includes sexual intercourse with slave women without the benefit of marriage.

Western orientalist, who dread the return of Muslims to the original sources of Islam, have written many books to back the claim that the distorted historical version of Islam is actual Islam as it was revealed. The most well-known orientalist in America, Bernard Lewis, states in the large 360-page book titled **Islam and the Arab World** which he has edited that:

The Islamic dispensation recognizes the institution of slavery but regulates and limits it. Slave women of many ethnic origins were recruited in enormous numbers to staff the harems of the Islamic world — as concubines or as menials, the two functions not being clearly differentiated.

The book also contains a colour painting of a slave market in the medieval ages. There is a distinct probability that Lewis and others like him have undertaken these labours to stop the spread of Islam in America and Europe where many individuals in the new generations are looking for alternatives to materialism.

More serious for Islam is the obstacle created by Muslim scholars themselves who have been influenced by medieval thought. Sayyid Abul

Ala Maudoodi had this medieval attitude to the place of women in Islam. In my article "The Example of Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her)" I have illustrated the mistakes Maudoodi made about Hazrat Ayesha.

It was my good fortune to read Br. Hafiz Muhammad Sarwar's book **Namoos-e-Rasool** in which he has irrefutably spotlighted Maudoodi's serious blunder concerning the relationship between the blessed Prophet of Allah and Hazrat Maria the Copt (Allah be pleased with her). One may disagree with some elements of Br. Sarwar's presentation or some aspects of its style, but there is no denying his central argument.

Hafiz Sarwar has again gone to the heart of the matter in bringing conclusive proof to show that Islam totally rejects slavery and concubinage and that those who say Islam has anything to do with these abominations are guilty of slander. May Allah bless Hafiz Sarwar's contribution to Islamic thought. I urge all those who want to reach the original, pure, Islam of Muhammad (peace be on him) to read **Namoos-e-Rasool**.

Kaukab Siddique, Ph.D.

Annandale, Virginia, USA

February 13, 1983

PREFACE BY AUTHOR

The claim that, for almost a thousand years, the great majority of religious scholars have committed very serious blunders in understanding the teachings of the Qur'an concerning slavery and war captives, would appear unseemly, unreasonable, outrageous and over-bold. But that is a fact, particularly in relation to the accepted belief that Muslims can have sexual intercourse with captive women and slave girls by brute force without their consent and without the legality of Islamic marriage. This evil and foreign philosophy was firmly established in the Islamic literature especially when cunning collectors and collaborators amassed false and fabricated Ahaddith and linked them to the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.h.).

The blunders of these religious scholars have led the youth and military sections of the nation, which was supposed to be "the best of nations" to indulge in sexual license of a sort which has disseminated a widespread immorality among the people and taken them to the brink of destruction. An additional effect of this vast accumulation of misleading "religious knowledge" is that it has emboldened non-Muslims to denigrate Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and to treat Islam with contempt and, as a result, many people who would ordinarily accept the truth detest Islam and the Prophethood of Muhammad. This is an on-going process.

On the Day of Judgment these "men of faith" and standard bearers of Islam will have to bear the full consequences of their words. They will be punished because they, though they were known as "servants of Islam," tried to understand the Qur'anic laws with the help of traditional lore and fabricated traditions, instead of using the Qur'an's own light and the example of the noble messenger to arrive at their significance. Thus these scholars presented an Islam which accorded with the desires of the rich and ruling classes, and deliberately or unknowingly gave such a vicious twist to the true Islam of the first century that they not only misled non-Muslims but numerous Muslims themselves from the real message that the Creator had revealed. Many Muslims could not accept the disgusting arguments of the traditional Ulema and gradually were lost to Islam itself. This is a fact which no realistic, observant researcher can ignore.

In comprehensive retrospect, the early lightning victories of Islam and its swift emergence as the dominant faith were due to the exalted wisdom and vision of its followers, their excellent character, unflawed morals and their faith in the oneness of God, which led to mutual trust and unity exemplified in their group life by unequalled discipline and obedience to the **ameer** (leader) along with the motivation to sacrifice their lives and goods for the sake of Justice and Truth. So when these golden principles were weakened the progress of Islam suddenly stopped.

Then, in direct opposition to the teachings of the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet, disgusting excuses were used to fulfil the drives of unrestrained sexuality and lust. These deviations were not represented as the devices of personal desires and sensuality. Instead they were given a religious colour and concealed in commentaries on the Qur'an and in discussions of Ahadeeth in the form of philosophical dissertations on Islam. As a natural result, these deviations were then reflected in the ugly misdeeds of armies using the label of Islam. The first generation of Islam had surpassed all people in their love of knowledge and in their sense of truthfulness, justice and high morality, thus showing that they were the "best of nations". Those were the causes of their rapid ascendance and unequalled victories. But the following generations sank into the muck of lust and licentiousness, shattered the modesty and honour of maidens and broke all records of debauchery and sexual exploitation. As a natural result they underwent a decline and debasement the like of which has never been seen and which may, unfortunately, continue to be unique into the future.

Such were the causes which led to the decline of Islam. As a result the nations of the world came to hate the established standard-bearers of Islam, who, by their very existence as lust and flesh-mongers gave a bad name to the truthful messenger of God, and notoriety to the just way of life he had preached. On the Day of Judgment the Prophet (s.a.w.) will say:

"O my sustainer! my people have come to reject Quran." (25:30)

There is a universally known saying that "the tree is recognized by its fruits". When non-Muslim nations read Muslim traditions, like the one that says "whoever says that there is no God but Allah will enter Paradise

regardless of whether he commits theft or adultery," or the chapters on 'hudoos' (draconian punishments) in books of **fiqh** (Jurisprudence) and then look at the immoral and corrupt behaviour of the believers, they come to the conclusion that if the existing deviant Muslim nation is the fruit, Islam must be the tree. It is not an unjust conclusion in a way because, according to the accepted wisdom, the existing standard-bearers of Islam, in spite of all their immorality, would inherit Paradise. Thus the nation of Islam today as it is, with its immorality and corruption, its massacre of the values of justice and truthfulness, and its degrading behaviour and deeds, has been the chief cause of the world's ignorance of Islam, which in turn has led to hatred for Islam. The lover of truth who would recognise and admit the decline of Islam is very rare indeed. The great majority of Muslims have been so deprived of Islam's sense of honour that, with a very few exceptions, they are totally unable to make any effort to erase the ugly slur of slavery from the fair face of Islam. Meanwhile those who continue to throw more dirt on Islam are continuing their activities. How tragic is the destruction of the just message of Islam.

Unbelief is on the attack, ravaging the garden of the Prophet.
Who is there who would go forth and save the honour of the Prophet?
Unbelief has attacked from behind the curtain of faith.
Thus, in hiding are all the devotees of the Prophet?
Alas, they lack the analytical ability to recognise
Those who in the guise of affirmation deny the Prophet.
Though the world is full of philosophical treatise writers.
I was chosen by God to praise the Prophet.

In short, it is my purpose here to prove, as clearly as the fact that two plus two is equal to four, that sexual intercourse with non-Muslim female captives, without their free consent and lawful Islamic marriage, is unambiguously **haram** (forbidden) according to the Qur'an and the teachings of the messenger, and it is a dehumanising, brutal act which has no relation whatever to the Qur'anic Islam and the Prophet's example followed by the first generation of Muslims.

The belief that slavery and concubinage is permitted in Islam is in direct contradiction to the noble Qur'an and the example of the messenger and is a

product, not of Islam, but of Izlam (the worshipping of darkness), the established religion which has replaced the true religion. Hence, after a thorough study of my new book **Namoos-e-Rasool** it will no longer be permissible for an educated, truth-seeking person, who seeks God's guidance, to consider slavery and captivity as Islamic. It will be incumbent on such a reader to, henceforth, reject all propaganda against Islam related to this issue, even when he discovers it in what seems to be an Islamic book or a commentary on the Qur'an. All such endorsements of slavery and captivity are disgusting and hateful from the Islamic point of view and should be seen to be the result of anti-Islamic divines.

As far as the Islam of the Qur'an is concerned; Allah Almighty laid the basis for the complete freedom of oppressed and helpless male and female slaves as early as the beginning of the Islamic mission in Mecca. These words have been eternally inscribed in the Qur'an:

“Did we not give him (the human being) two eyes, a tongue and two lips? (so that he may have the spiritual ability to fully recognise truth and bear just witness) and show him the two ways? (of truth and falsehood so that he may distinguish between them).

But he has not attempted the difficult (and demanding) ascent. And what will convey to you what difficult ascent is and what it requires? (Be aware and note well). It is to free a slave (male/female), and to feed in the day of hunger an orphan near of kin, or some poor wretch in misery and to be of those who believe (rightly) and who (in the struggle for Truth while undergoing torment) exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity (and affection for the wronged). These are the People of the Right hand. But those who disbelieve (by not fulfilling Our commands) Our revelations, they are the People of the Left Hand. Fire will be their covering (owing to their opposition to the Truth). (90:8-20)

Thus in the very early Meccan period these verses gave the message to those who accepted the Qur'an, that immediately following their acceptance of the oneness of God and the mission of the Holy Messenger, they must use the common sense God has given them to restore the basic rights of those created by God. The Muslims in particular must extend

human love and care to the oppressed and down-trodden slaves and restore them to complete freedom. That is equally true of the weaker among the slaves, the women whose honour and humanity is in greater danger in such a situation and requires the Muslim's protection and respect. This struggle is very important and very difficult (described by the Qur'an as the “difficult ascent”). By fulfilling it, Muslims become in the words of the Qur'an, **ashab al-Maimana** (those of the Right hand) and it is this sacrifice and struggle which leads to salvation and success.

And if these commands of God are not given practical shape, then one must be prepared to be counted among the **ashab al-Mush'ima** (those of the left hand) who will be sent to hell from which there is no deliverance.

Surely the words in which Allah has referred to the complete deliverance of male and female slaves and to the restoration of the basic rights of deprived people cannot be surpassed in their eloquence and inclusiveness.

“The Qur'an has put an end to slavery, but what can one say to those who dream of concubines?”

Why this New Book?

The reason for my writing **Namoos-e-Rasool** is simple. It had to be written because the most renowned Islamic thinker of this age wrote that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) had sexual intercourse with Hazrat Maria on the basis of possession by force and that it is not proven that the Prophet freed her and married her. (Ref: Maudoodi's **Tafhim-ul-Qur'an**, vol. 4, note number 114 on verse 50 of Sura Hazab). As opposed to this claim a correct Hadith states that the Messenger of Allah married Maria the Copt (Allah be pleased with her) (see **Sahih al-Mustadrak**, Hakim, vol. 4 in the reference to Maria the Copt. page 38, published in Hyderabad, Deccan). ***Namoos-e-Rasool**, without exaggeration, does full justice to this controversial issue and concludes its argument based on the Quran and Hadith. Study of this liberating book is a must for every Muslim, and also THE FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE QURANIC LOGIC BEHIND IT.

Last Warning

While **Namoos-e-Rasool** was being written, in November 1978, there was an exchange with Allama Maudoodi concerning the personality and reality of Hazrat Maria the Copt (mother of the believers). It was conveyed to him by way of a respected friend of ours, Malik Muhammad Akbar Khan (of Babri Bandh, Kohat), who is a special associate of Maudoodi's Jamaat-e-Islami, that Maudoodi should reconsider the issue of Hazrat Maria and redo his research. On our behalf Malik Akbar asked certain questions based on Quranic teachings but, sad to say, Maudoodi, instead of reconsidering his views, sent a reply via his manager or special assistant Ghulam Ali that he not only sharply opposed to an attitude of research and learning but also betrays prejudice and a narrow-mindedness that reflects antagonism to the Prophet himself. (This letter, reference No. 4028, dated 20th November 1978 is still with us.) In reply to our Quranic questions he wrote:

“Your friend sitting in London can dream up any kind of questions he has a notion to.”

*Similarly after a careful and long research we have found, thank God, the reality and basis of the foreign ideas of slavery and concubinage in the Islamic Literature, which are discussed in depth in this book.

The letter concluded with the remark:

“Those who ask such questions should first deliberate on their own sanity.”

The following is a complete translation of the letter received from Adul A'la Maudoodi's special assistant Ghulam Ali.

Dear Sir,

Assalamu Alaikum wa rahmatullah.

Your letter was received. Firstly it is difficult to prove with an element of surety that Hazrat Maria Qabtia was related to the Royal family. Then racially she was from the coptic race which is an age old race of Christian Egyptians. When the ruler of Egypt sent Maria and her sister to the Prophet (peace be upon him) she was a slave girl and at that time there were male and female slaves in Arabia and all over the world. Your friend sitting in London can dream up any kind of questions he has a notion to, but the fact is that although the Qur'an and Hadith strongly encourage the freeing of slaves Allah and his messenger state that you should immediately release the male and female slaves who come into your possession or that you should free them when they become Muslims. Then in Islam laws are not only made but implemented. If idolators and unbelievers with whom there was conflict every day had known that in any case the Muslims would have to free their prisoners without delay, only an utterly foolish and idiotic unbeliever would have cared to trade his Muslim prisoners with his fellows captured by the Muslims or to offer ransom for them. Similarly if acceptance of Islam had made freedom obligatory then no captured unbeliever man or woman would have been so foolish as not to recite the **kalima** immediately, obtain his freedom and go back to join the ranks of the enemies of Islam. Those who ask such questions should first deliberate on their own sanity.

Humbly yours

Ghulam Ali

Special Assistant

to

Maulana Sayyid Abul A'la Maudoodi.

The use of such language in reply to a serious questioner or researcher is certainly no proof of intellectual probity and research orientation. In fact it points to a conscious attempt to slander the blessed messenger. The purpose seems to be to use Hazrat Maria the Copt as an excuse to malign, contradict and reject the noble Prophethood. On this point a verse of the Holy Quran must be remembered: as God says:

“Has the time not come yet for the believers that their hearts should tremble and melt in fear and expectation at the mention of Allah and of the Truth He has revealed” (57:16)

In short it is now up to the readers to look at a copy of the original reply we received and with all sincerity judge the nature of the “religious service” it renders in reply to the Quranic questions we put to Maudoodi.

“In that is a lesson for those who are aware.” (79:26)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Finally, I wish to thank all those people who provided the much needed money for the publication of this booklet together with their help in translation and proof-reading. May Allah reward them. Amin.

H.M. SARWAR
10th October 1980
1st Zil Huj, 1340/1400

How to find the references to The Quran: (2:12) = (Chapter 2: Verse 12).

The Quran and Slavery

In the name of Allah the beneficent the merciful praise be to Allah, and peace be on His slaves whom he has chosen (27:59).

“God says (O Believers!)

“Marry those among you who are single, or the virtuous ones among your slaves, male or female.” Sura 24 (Noor) v.32

*As long as the Qur'an is not revealed to your conscience
Neither Razi nor the author of Kashaf can open its meaning to you.
This unity bodes no good for them,
The theologians who are united against the Qur'an.
Even bare facts cannot be seen by those
Whose eyes have been dimmed by corrupt living and blind following.*

The subject under discussion is so vast and includes so much illustration and argument that a summary of it is well nigh impossible: however, with God's help, we will try to sum it up.

It is beyond our scope to discuss the psychological aspects of the response of a Muslim who is ignorant of the Qur'an's real teaching, and who, while reading the Qur'an for the sake of its “blessings”, on discovering the words “those whom your right hand possesses” is overwhelmed by animal instincts. Why is it that on reading these words, which refer to women captured during war, instead of pitying the helpless women and looking on them as daughters and sisters in distress, as the Qur'an would have him in Sura 4:36, he is overtaken by his lust and dreams of illegitimate intercourse and enjoyment under cover of preparation for “Jihad”? A psychological analysis of this phenomenon is difficult for us.

*In your hearts was the longing for the unbeliever's daughter.
If for such a “Jihad” you gave your life — what can I say?
This killing and sexual possession in the name of “Jihad”.
If this was the way you spent your life — what can I say?*

However, as far as the seriousness and reality of this issue is concerned in the light of the Qur'an and the Sunnah we can satisfactorily answer the question in appropriate depth and with valid arguments.

1. The most satisfactory answer to this serious issue is in the divine analysis provided by the Qur'an itself.

“By no means (are they involuntarily led astray) but on their hearts is the stain of the (ill) which they have earned (“by constant effort”), (83:14)

The interpretation of this verse by the Prophet himself (as summarized from the Hadith) shows that when a person sins and does not work to repent of the sin, that sin, like a permanent stain, settles on his mind and soul and leaves the sinner incapable of distinguishing between Good and Evil and unable to accept the truth and reject falsehood. Thus the standard-bearers of traditional religion have stained their minds and souls by opening the way to theft and adultery by way of weak Hadith like the one which forgives theft and adultery.

2. In this connection Allah Almighty states clearly:

“Woe that day to those that deny — Those that deny the Day of Judgement — And none deny it but the sinners who transgress beyond limits.” (83:10-12)

Thus we can see, firstly that souls get stained by the commitment of sins, and secondly that deliberate sinners are those who in fact deny the Day of Judgement. If they believed in the last day they would not deliberately sin.

*The Unbeliever is subservient to his self and animal desires;
The believer is the slave only of God's commands*

3. At a third point in the Qur'an Allah Almighty says:

“(O Prophet) When you recite the Qur'an We put an invisible veil between you and those who believe not in the Hereafter. And We put coverings (of unbelief and disobedience) over their hearts so that they do not understand the Qur'an, and deafness into their ears (so that they hear not”). (17:45-46)

Undoubtedly, here the hidden Truth has been unveiled that, according to all these quotations above from the Qur'an, the sort of people mentioned therein are unable to grasp the real message of the Qur'an, whatever they might claim to the contrary. A mere claim to knowledge and faith is baseless. As the noble Qur'an states in God's words.

“And there are some people who claim that “we believe in Allah and the Last Day” but they do not really believe. They (by this claim) wish to deceive Allah and the believers but they (thus) deceive only themselves and are quite unaware of it. (That is they are ignorant of their self-deception and, fraud).” (2:8-9)

So when such claimants to faith, immersed in their selfish desires, study the Qur'an and try to interpret it, every now and then, quite unaware, they perpetrate gross distortions and false explanations.

“Often they heard the Word of God and perverted it knowingly after they understood it”. (2:75)

In accordance with the above mentioned three principles of the Qur'an, their stained souls do not permit them to see or understand Quranic facts. Regardless of the light of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, merely on the basis of the knowledge of Arabic and the ignorance of knowledge, they write as they wish. Even if their writings subvert Islamic morals and the truth of Islam, they keep writing and become authors of dozens and hundreds of thick books all supposedly about the Qur'an and the Sunnah. A proper study of this phenomenon shows that undoubtedly the love of being much-published becomes an obstacle in the way of understanding the Qur'an. The urge to write more and ever more leaves no time for the proper study of the Qur'an and its research.

When such persons come across references in the Holy Qur'an to captive women (“those whom your right hands possess, the prisoners of war”) who deserve pity and Qur'anic good conduct, they are overcome unconsciously by sexual drives, perhaps under the influence of traditions which “forgive” theft and adultery, and become guilty of distorting and misinterpreting the Qur'an.

The First Psychological Error

Allah the exalted says in two suras of the Qur'an:

"The believers are those who guard their chastity, except with their wives and with the captives whom their right hands possess; for that they are not to be blamed, but those who trespass beyond this are transgressors." (23:5-7; 70:29-31)

In these verses (which were revealed in Mecca) the believers were permitted (in addition to their wives) to have sexual intercourse with slave girls who had been made captives in the ugly situation of oppression which prevailed before the advent of Islam. When these men became Muslims they realized the wrong they had done, but in the meantime they had offspring from the oppressed women; these women and children were part of their household, and owing to the presence of children it was very difficult, if not impossible, to separate from these women and free them. Owing to the impact of Islamic teachings they became aware of their participation in oppression and felt trapped in self-guilt and loathing. Allah took mercy on their situation and forgave them the wrong they had done in the past. But according to MADANI CHAPTER 4:3 and 24:32, new believers were required to marry such slave girls with their consent.

But those who have a weakness for slave girls were unable to and did not try to appreciate the trapped and irrevocable situation of the victims and adopted the attitude that Allah Almighty has permitted sexual intercourse with slave girls without marriage. These people were so overwhelmed by their deviant sexual desires that they did not realize that the verses quoted above were revealed in Mecca and have no relation to the war-like conditions which prevailed in Medina.

*Reason was named madness and insanity called reason -
Such are the miracles of your beautiful self.*

Their mistake is obvious when one realizes that the laws about the temporary captivity and eventual freedom of male and female captives were revealed in Medina, not in Mecca.

The Second Error (Concerning the Madani Life)

In Sura 4 (an-Nisa) verse 24, Allah the Exalted says concerning women with whom sexual relations are forbidden or permitted:

"Also (prohibited) are women already married, except those whom your right hands possess":

(that is: though their husbands are alive but those captive women, of their own desire, wish to become Muslims and live under a Muslim government and to live a married life anew, then they are not prohibited ones.)

Thus has Allah ordained an (eternal) law for you. Except for those women (who are mentioned in verse 24:23) all others are lawful, (provided you seek them in marriage with mutual consent) with gifts from your property, desiring chastity, not lust".

But, if the prisoner is either in the period of "Idat" having been separated from her husband (as is the case with a widow) or she is pregnant or is not consenting to a marriage or is a non-Muslim she will be a prohibited one according to the above verses in spite of being lawful.

At this point Allah was telling us which women are prohibited in marriage in any case (4:23) and then (4:24) which women are permitted (with mutual consent and proper marriage). that is why the word **al-muhsanat** (married women are prohibited to you) is followed by these words in the next sentence: **wa uhila la Kummawara' zalikum** that is (other than the prohibited women) "all others are lawful".

Now the significant and instructive fact is, that as in the sentence above **al-muhsanat** captive women have been made lawful (though they may have husbands), in exactly the same way the reference to "all other women being lawful" in the second sentence merely means that all other women are lawful, but on condition of their consent and by way of marriage, not by brutal seizure without marriage.

But alas! A thousand times alas! for the non-Quranic expertise in Arabic, of such commentators who have, in their fondness for enslaving women, deliberately eliminated the context of the verse in question and announced that in the sentence about **al-muhsanat** Allah Most High has permitted sexual intercourse with married captive women. This false interpretation is sheer deviation from the Qur'an and is the result of the three principles about the understanding of the Qur'an mentioned earlier:

Such cannot see bare facts whose vision is coloured by fornication and blind imitation.

THE QURAN says

**“Certainly their eyes have not lost vision
out it is their hearts which are blind and
lie dead in their breasts.” (22:46)**

Such religious leaders ignored Quranic wisdom and tried to understand the Qur'an merely on the basis of their academic knowledge of Arabic and self-formulated principles. Otherwise they would have realized that if in the first sentence of the verse under discussion sex with married slave girls is being made lawful, as they think, then the second sentence of the same verse (“all others are lawful”) would have to be proven to mean “sex with all other women (as with the married slave girls) is also lawful without marriage and consent.” The reason is that the same kind of permission is being given in both sentences, so both have to give the same kind of meaning. If for “all other women are lawful for you”, consent and marriage are primary conditions, then the same, along with faith in Islam, is essential for “captive girls are lawful though they may be married (to non-Muslims).” You cannot have your cake and eat it too.

The Third Shameful Error

Following the two verses discussed above, Allah the Exalted says in the Holy Qur'an:

**“If any of you have not the means wherewith to wed free believing women (muhsanat), they should marry girls who have faith from among those whom your right hands possess (the prisoners of war).
Marry such women (that is the captives who have become Muslims) with the permission of their guardians (original owners), and give them (their right) dowers, according to what is reasonable.” (4:25)**

This verse makes it very clear that sexual intercourse with captive girls is permissible only when the original owner's permission has been taken and then marriage has made the husband-wife relationship possible. But alas, some great religious scholars of ours have brought forth this philosophy here in the verse that marriage is necessary only for the second owners of the slave girls, not for the original owners because the original owner has the right to have sexual intercourse with the slave girl without marriage and without her consent.

Not only that, but they claim “the entire Muslim nation's consensus (Ijma') that marriage with one's slave girl is unlawful.” Alas, see how they have pitted the vast armies of the Muslim nation's consensus against the brevity and the helplessness of the oppressed Qur'an by covering up the light of Justice coming from the holy book with innumerable wrappings of false interpretations and explanations.

A most degrading, pimp-like, aspect of this “philosophy” is that first the “original owner” can, without marriage, have as much sex as he wants with the helpless captive girl. Then, having satiated himself, he can pass her on to a needy person, in exchange for money, as animals are sold in a meat market or auction, and permit the buyer to have the formalities of a wedding and keep her as his wife. What respect this wife will get from her husband and what respect will the husband have in the society?

“Satan made their (sinful) acts seem alluring to them.” (Sura 6:43).

Is this pimp-like mentality not like a hateful mark of great oppression on the beautiful structure of the True Faith? Can Islam, which is the way of Justice, ever permit such degradation of humanity? Never!

The reason why the permission of the original owner is required in the verse under discussion is because he (in the absence of prisons in those days and as a trust from the Commander-in-Chief) had brought the captive woman in to his home and kept her there as his daughter or sister. His treatment of her, in accord with the Qur’an (Sura 4:36) and the Sunnah, was the best and thus he has a right over her just as he has a right over his daughter or sister. Hence his permission is required.

A Noteworthy Point

A second and very instructive point here is that all religious scholars, including those who “love” slave girls, are in agreement, that in the case of a poor person who does not have the means to marry a free woman and has to marry a captive, the terms of marriage include one that the woman should have become a Muslim. That is, if the girl is not a Muslim, a marriage with her is not lawful (as it is not with a daughter, sister or daughter-in-law). So at this point, we respectfully ask this question: if even marriage with a non-Muslim slave girl is not lawful, by which Quranic verse or Sunnah of the Prophet, can she be used for fornication and immorality without marriage? “Produce your proof if you are truthful” (2:111).

“Then woe to those who (like the Jews) write the Book with their own hands and then say: “This is from Allah” to traffic with it for a miserably price. Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby.” (2:79)

A Parable

The misled scholars misunderstood the word “lawful” in verse 24 of Sura Nisa. Their problem can be understood by a parable of an ignorant person who asked a preacher “if the meat of a dog and a pig is forbidden to us, which animal’s meat is lawful for us to eat?” The preacher, thinking that the questioner is a Muslim, said: “Allah has made lawful the meat of cows and goats etc. You can eat that.” So the ignorant person caught a goat, chopped off its head, did not take God’s name on it and took its meat to eat. Someone scolded him and said: “this is unlawful, you are eating of it without taking God’s name.” Whereupon the ignorant person replied: “Shut up. The preacher has told me the goat is lawful, so I am eating of it and there is no need to take God’s name on it.”

Our elders fell victim to a similar misunderstanding. Allah told them, as Muslims who are educated, know Arabic and should supposedly be the best of nations, that “those whom your right hands possess (even if they are married and have living non-Muslim husbands) are lawful for you.” These elders of ours should have used their knowledge and understanding to arrive at God’s purpose and to judge accordingly; instead they, like ignoramuses, used the word “lawful” in an unlawful way.

A Distinctive Quranic Example

In the noble Qur’an, Allah Most High, referring to the degrading acts of homosexuality of the People of Lot says: **“you practice your lusts on men in preference to women: you are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds.”** (See Sura 7:81, 27:55, 29:29). Owing to their immorality, the people of Lot were destroyed.

**“And in this respect Prophet Lot pleaded with them, saying:
‘O people, here are my daughters who are chaste and worthy of you:
(use them as you wish) be afraid of God and do not disgrace me in
front of my guests’.” (11:78)**

Now if a person with deviant sexual tendencies were to ignore the purpose of Allah’s words, as well as the principles and needs of civilized behaviour,

declare that the incident of Lot and the words in which it is mentioned “that you practice your lusts on men in preference to women” proves that lust should be practiced with women (be it from before or behind), and proceed to fornicate with any helpless maiden that he can lay his hands on, would such understanding of religion be correct and acceptable? Certainly not. The “lovers of captive girls”, in the reference of the word ‘lawful’ to ‘those whom your right hand possess’ have made exactly the same blunder as the deviant in our example of the verses about homosexuality. In that is a lesson for those who can see and understand.

*The light of truth still shines for those who have eyes.
Alas! if only one could see the Qur’an of the Prophet with his soul.*

The Fourth Error

Allah Most High in his revelation commands the blessed messenger, the best of creation and the Teacher of Morality:

“O Prophet, we have made lawful to you the wives to whom you have paid their dowers: and those whom your right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom God has assigned to you; and daughter of your paternal uncles and aunts, and daughters of your maternal uncles and aunts who migrated with you; and the believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the Prophet wishes to wed her; — this only for you and not for the believers (at large).” (33:50)

Notice here that Allah has mentioned all those women who were islamically lawful for the noble messenger (peace be upon him). The first category of women here are those whom he paid their dowers. The captive girls are also mentioned as lawful, and after that the reference is to daughters of maternal and paternal aunts and uncles.

Here the word “lawful” is used for women in the first category as well as that in the third, the same word is also used for those mentioned between the two — the “captive girls God has assigned”. Then is it not unmitigated

oppression and an unforgiveable error that for all other women here consent and marriage should be stipulated while for the captive women “assigned by Allah” to the person of the Prophet the primary condition of marriage should be arbitrarily removed and replaced by intercourse without marriage? Is this not a colossal slander bringing the blessed Prophet himself under accusation of having disobeyed Allah?

For instance, a scholar of international repute, who is considered the greatest Quranic commentator of this age, writes unabashedly in his famous **tafseer** that:

“Of the women slaves assigned to his ownership by Allah, the Prophet according to this permission took to himself Hazrat Rehana from among the prisoners of Banui Qurayza, Hazrat Juwayria from among the prisoners of Bani Mastaliq, Hazrat Saffiyeh from among the prisoners from the battle of Khaybar and Hazrat Maria the Copt sent by the King of Egypt. Of those he freed the first three and married them. With Hazrat Maria he had sexual intercourse on the basis of her being of those whom his right hand possessed. It is not proven about her that the Prophet freed and married her.”

(see **Tafhim-ul-Qur’an** by Abul ‘Ala Maudoodi, vol. 4, page 114, note 88 in the commentary on Sura 33, verse 50)

What words can convey a bigger error and greater slander on the name of the Just Religion and the noble messenger (peace be upon him)? This is not an error in judgement and understanding which can be regarded lightly or forgiven. It is a deliberate attempt to show that the Prophet himself violated Qur’anic law, and also to provide the enemies of Islam a basis for the claim that the noble and blessed messenger kept women in his home without marriage. The mention of Hazrat Maria the Copt in this respect is particularly outrageous because she was neither a prisoner of war nor a non-Muslim. The Mauquas (ruler) of Egypt had sent her as a gesture of friendship, not during any conflict or war, and before reaching the Prophet, she had, on her own accord, become Muslim.

She cannot, therefore, in any case be considered a prisoner of war or a slave girl, to be used without marriage according to the understanding of

the slave-girl-oriented scholars of religion. Their claims are no more than an obvious wrong and a great slander.

According to the “great Islamic thinker” of our era (Maudoodi), in his commentary on the verse under discussion, the Prophet (in accordance with Qur’anic command) freed and married the three women who had actually been captured in war, but in the case of the pure maiden (Maria the Copt), who had neither been taken in war nor could in any way be considered a prisoner or slave, he took her without marriage as his concubine! According to which Quranic law can this be accepted? What was her crime for which she could have been treated thus?

Can this be considered anything other than a serious scheme to defame and smear the fair name of the noble messenger? What has happened to the religious integrity and sense of honour of Muslims, that even on hearing or reading such blatant slander against their beloved Prophet they remain unmoved and untouched? As far as religion is concerned, have they been struck dead that they do not act even against the fabrications of such unbearable slanders? Can they not at the least seek forgiveness for having listened to such faith-destroying preaching of religion and try to make up for their losses? Allah Almighty has commanded Jihad and armed action against such claimants to faith and religion who by way of their deeds (though not in their expression of belief) declare that to be lawful which God has forbidden. (This is the essence of Sura 9, verse 29.)

If we cannot do Jihad with weapons against such abusive and notorious interpreters of the Qur’an, we can at least carry out a religious boycott of them. If even that is not possible for us then, alas, our claim to religion and faith is mere self-deception.

“And none will grasp the message except those who have understanding.” (3:7)

*As long as I give not my life for the honour of the Saint of Medina,
God bears witness that my faith cannot be perfected;
I may pray, fast, make pilgrimage, give zakat
But still I cannot, without that, really be a Muslim.*

It may well be that such religious scholars and “great thinkers”, in spite of their expertise in Arabic and the terminology of jurisprudence, are unable to fully understand Quranic wisdom. It may be that they have given the Qur’an a secondary position, often basing their religion on fabricated traditions. Even then it is strange that they have ignored a sound Hadith of the Prophet, which says, in accordance with the noble Qur’an, that:

“The messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) married Maria the Copt, the daughter of Shamoun, whom the Mauququs of Alexandria had sent to him as a royal gift.” (see Hakim’s **al-Mustadrak** vol. 4, page 38, in the chapter on “**knowing the sahaba**” the section on *Maria the Copt*. Published from Hyderabad, Deccan.)

Does that not prove that the blessed Messenger of Allah carried out a regular marriage with Hazrat Maria according to the law of the Qur’an? Does that not completely cancel out the research and expertise of our “great thinkers”, self-proclaimed reformers and prolific authors? Is that sufficient or is more needed?

*As long as the Book descends not on your conscience,
Neither Razi nor the commentator of Kashaf can help you
understand.*

The fact is, that for the past one thousand years, countless so-called Muslim military men have been led to their destruction via a permissive sexuality premised on the legality of slavery. By “proving” that Hazrat Maria was used sexually by the Prophet without marriage, most rulers and kings of the Muslim world got the licence to indulge in such orgies of sex and immorality that they even surpassed the non-believers and polytheists and the pagans of Europe. These rulers not only enslaved non-Muslim women but also took Muslim girls for concubines. Where a poor and needy so-called Muslim had a beautiful daughter arriving at puberty, he would sacrifice her to the lust of his ruler for the sake of worldly advancement. That ruler or petty despot, taking advantage of baseless traditions about Hazrat Maria the Copt, sexually exploited the blooming young girl without her consent and without marriage. This was the alluring hallmark of traditional Islam.

*If that is the reality of Islam in the world
Kufr will laugh a thousand times at Islam.*

We consider the **ulama-e-Izlam** (darkness-worshipping religious scholars) entirely responsible for such misleading, degrading notions. It is they who, on the basis of their learning and Arabic expertise, made such things “lawful” and “permissible”.

*The deviant desire of the self
was rationalized by the invented permissions of the mind.*

The Fifth Error

Allah Almighty has clearly commanded in the Qur’an:

“And help get married such among you as are unmarried (be they men or women) and also (get married) the virtuous slaves and maid-servants. (So that by remaining unmarried they do not fall into immorality.)” Sura 24 (an-Noor) verse 32

Here an emphatic command is being given to get married (given their compatibility) those people who live in the “land of Islam” (Islamic country), be they citizens, Muslims, or captive men and women, so that the very condition of being unmarried should not lead to immorality. It is one of the most important duties of the God-oriented government to see that no one falls into corruption and immorality.

It is worth noticing here that the word ‘virtuous’ has been used for the captive slave men and women. Obviously this means that those captive men and women are still virtuous, untouched by fornication, and no believer in the Qur’an has made them targets of his lusts, otherwise they would not be referred to as virtuous. Hence the Islamic community is being commanded to get them married so as to save them from future dangers. That’s all there is to it.

The Slave Girl’s Marriage and the Nation’s Consensus

However, in spite of this clear command the scholars of religion (slave-girl-oriented ones) have opposed it and have given the ruling that marriage

with women captives enslaved in war is **haram** (unlawful), but that is not all. Things have gone so far that in opposition to the Quranic command, the “consensus of the nation” of Islam has come to be that marriage with slave-girls is unlawful. On one side is such “consensus” — reflect on its religious implication and reality — and opposed to it are the emphatic words of the Quranic verse referred to above that “help get married the virtuous slaves and maid-servants”. Can this mean, in other words, that first you can keep using the maiden captured in war, without marriage, and then when you have had your fill, you can get them married to some other slave? Alas for such religious understanding and “insight”!

The Sixth Error

Then, in addition to the above verse, consider the words of the following verse where Allah Almighty says:

“(O believers) Marry from among the women whom you like (in emergency situations) two, or three or four. But if you fear you will not be able to be just, then only one or those whom your right hand possesses.” (4:3)

The key words are: “marry . . . only one or those whom your right hand possesses.” But unfortunately, on the basis of self-made rules of Arabic, here too, traditionally, these words have been distorted to mean something quite different. These people have been saying that here “the command is for marrying one woman, but marriage does not apply to the slave girl.” **Subhan Allah**, how excellent is this skill in Arabic that it makes the poor, helpless slave lawful and permitted even without marriage and without her consent! She is exposed to exploitation without benefit of the sanctifying words of the wedding service.

In this case the Qur’an says:

**“They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own souls desire!
Even though there has already come to them guidance from their Lord!”**
(53:23)

Is this utter shamelessness in defying the words of the Qur'an not a distortion of and deviation from Islam itself? Let us consider the rule of Arabic involved here. Compare the wording of a similar verse of the Qur'an:

“(O believers) Guard (properly) your prayers and (especially) the mid most prayer . . . and if you go in fear (of not being able to complete the prayer regularly) then (pray) standing or on horseback (however possible but do not miss the prayer time).”
(2:238-9)

Notice here the wording of the Qur'an with proper sense of insight:

“Guard your prayers . . . and if you fear, then standing or on horseback”

And the wording sequence about captive women was:

“Marry from among the women whom you like . . . but if you fear . . . then only one or those whom your right hand possesses.”

Is the wording sequence in both verses not exactly alike? If it is, then should the rulings derived from them be similar or different? Naturally, they should be similar.

*There is no difference in the words or meaning, but
The Mullah's call to prayer is quite different from the Mujahid's.*

If in the verse about guarding the prayers the words **“fa inkhifum, fa rijalan au rukbana (pray) standing or on horseback”** prove the necessity of prayer in both situations, then in the verse about marriage the words **“fain Khiftum . . . fawahidh au mamulakat almanukum”** surely signify and prove the necessity of marriage to one (free) woman or to captive women where injustice is feared.

“Will they then not meditate on the Qur'an, or are there locks (of self-worship) on their (stained) hearts?” (47:24)

Thus we have proved, in the words of the Qur'an itself, that marriage in the case of captive slave girls is obligatory, that sexual relations without

their consent and marriage is **haram** (unlawful) and amounts to fornication. When it is proven from the Qur'an that lawful marriage is required for sexual relations, it is also proven that in marriage free acceptance and consent, not compulsion, is required. In the words of Allah:

“O ye who believe: It is not lawful for you to forcibly inherit women (to take as wife) . . . but consort with them in kindness.” (4:19)

These words indicate comprehensively that in all conditions it is **haram** (unlawful) to force a woman to submit to sexual intercourse, be she a local woman or a foreigner, a traveller or a helpless slave. Quite naturally, a captive woman whose beloved husband has died, or from whom she has under circumstances of war been separated and finds herself in bitter captivity of Muslim soldiers, will not be willing to go to bed with her captors, whatever sexual philosophy might be put forth to justify this. Her response will be all the more bitter if the same soldiers have killed her beloved husband, brother, son or near relatives, or have been the cause of separation from them.

Hence, according to Quranic laws, the establishment of sexual relations with such women require not only “lawful marriage” but also her free acceptance of the Islamic faith. (Sura 4:25). In other words, if, as the established commentators on the Qur'an agree, it is unlawful to forcibly stop a widowed sister-in-law, etc. who has property from marrying someone she wishes to, then how can it be lawful to force a helpless captive woman (who according to the Qur'an, (4:36), deserves to be treated as nicely as parents and relatives are) into sexual relations without her consent and without marriage? Is this not exploitation of a helpless person who deserves sympathy and care? Surely such behaviour is not permitted. The rights of such women are like those of a daughter, sister or daughter-in-law. In the words of Hali:

*The maid-servant and the housewife were such together
It seemed they were sisters from the same mother.*

A Cruel Joke

A cruel joke which has been played in this connection is that the Quranic words **malakat Aimanukum** has been translated according to the Persian dictionary as "hand-maiden" and this has been rendered as slave-girl, thus distorting the reality. It is an apt illustration of Hali's comment that:

"This nation is lost in traditions — the reality is hidden in superstitions."

In other words, it has been taken for granted that women who have been captured in war can be made slaves and subjected to sexual assaults, though the Qur'anic words literally mean "that which you obtain by the use of your right hand", that is, something or somebody which is subservient to you owing to your power. Then the treatment of subservients prescribed in the Qur'an is entirely brotherly, based on "noble kindness", not the arrogant sexuality of non-Islamic immorality.

*This is easy to return evil for evil;
If you are a man, give better than you receive.*

The Conclusive Judgement

Finally, there is the need to study deeply in the light of God verse 4 Sura Muhammad (the 47th chapter of the Quran) so that one may understand the purpose of the Creator in revealing it. Ponder on these words of the Quran with proper understanding and much thought:

"Hence when you meet the unbelievers (in the battlefield), smite their necks, till, when blood has flowed (and you have subdued them), tie them up firmly (as prisoners of war): thereafter is the time for generosity or ransom (in freeing them) till the war ends."

(Sura 47:4)

After this final command from Allah, no longer is it lawful to keep men and women prisoners-of-war as male and female slaves in the land of Islam after war has ended, nor is it permissible to inflict pain on them in any way as the idolators and unbelievers used to do. Today, other than Muslims, not even idolators and unbelievers keep anyone as a slave. Islam has made only two ways lawful for the release of prisoners after war: freedom granted by

way of generosity and kindness of heart or, otherwise, in return for a ransom or reparation for war. There is no other way.

*The Quran terminated the tradition of slavery, but
If one's mind adores slave-girls what can be done?*

The question arises, and it is an extremely important question which must be answered satisfactorily. If the law is that both male and female prisoners-of-war are, in any case, to be released and sent off home after the war ends, then why does the Quran repeatedly teach the use of gracious behaviour towards them and why does it recommend marriage with slave girls?

The answer is, that in situations where ex-prisoners may not be able to return home owing to political or revolutionary situations or, affected by Islamic character, of their own accord may not desire to return and may decide to live within the domain of the Islamic government, they are to be treated as brothers and sisters or close relatives. In any case, they are not meant to be the targets of lust and oppression.

Another situation can be, that a fair exchange of prisoners with the opposing side is not possible; in that case, in accordance with 47:4, all non-Muslim prisoners, be they men or women, will still be freed but their movement will be confined to the domain of the Islamic government, not as slaves targeted for lechery and lust but as people under a form of house arrest. This confinement is justified according to the Quranic verse:

"If anyone transgresses against you, transgress ye likewise against him. But fear Allah." (2:194)

Even in that situation they will be well treated and cared for with affection till the Muslim Prisoners of War are freed and return home (such is the correct interpretation of 47:4), or with the consent of these prisoners an agreement (**Makatabat 24:23**) will be made individually with them leading to their ultimate freedom. But alas!

"They follow but conjecture, and what (their) souls desire. And certainly the guidance has come to them from their Lord." (53:23)

A Final Anguished Appeal

In view of the Qur'anic rulings we have discussed above, the question arises that has the time not come for the believers to make a choice? Would they not prefer to struggle and sacrifice for the sake of the Qur'an and thus achieve success in the hereafter? Or would they rather stay with the standard-bearers of traditional religion and "co-operate with them in sin and wrong-doing?" Such co-operation with those who have deviated from the Book and the Sunnah can only lead to disaster in the hereafter.

Allah Almighty says about such a situation:

"Has that time still not come for the (sincere and true) believers that their hearts should be trembling with fear of Allah and (has the time not come) that they should bow down before the Truth? And that they should not become like those who were given the Book aforetime, that when a long time passed (after the revelation of the truth) their hearts became hardened (owing to the influence of a fabricated religion which led to corruption) and the majority of them are transgressors." (57:16)

The commandments of the Quran are so clear and lucid in their meaning that it is not at all difficult to understand them, provided one's mind and soul have not been clouded by wrong-doing. It is also true that the blessed Messenger of God, a mercy for all the worlds, had given evidence of Quranic action and morality in his life so that Ruler of the Worlds addressed him thus:

"(O Muhammad) Surely you are on the best standard of morality."
(68:4)

And Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqah (Allah be pleased with her) replied in response to a questioner:

"He (the Prophet), in his behaviour, was the living Quran."
(Hadith)

Then can it be expected that the Prophet ignored the Quranic laws we have discussed (nauzoobillah) and appropriated Hazrat Maria Qabtiyah (Allah be pleased with her) for sexual intercourse as a slave, without marriage, without her having committed any crime or mistake and even

without having been taken as prisoner of war? But that is exactly what many of our Qur'anic commentators explicitly state and that is what has been put down in black and white by the most prominent "Islamic thinker" of this age in his unique and popular commentary on the Quran. (See Maudoodi's *Tafhim-au-Quran* volume 4, Sura No. 33, al-Ahzab, in the comment on verse 50, page 114.) This is, surely a great slander against the blessed Messenger of Allah (peace be on him).

A Considerable Point

Until recently the influence of this filthy and terrible slander against the noble Messenger of God was limited to the Urdu speaking people. But now, unfortunately, this popular and widely circulated comment (**Meaning of the Quran** by Maudoodi) has been translated into English and so many other languages. Its poisonous and pernicious influence will distort and deface Islam and the reality of the one who received the Quran, in a way which the Jews and the Christians and other enemies of Islam were hitherto unable to achieve. The Western orientalist were recognized as enemies of Islam and were, hence, ineffective. But now we have "a greater thinker" and commentator on the Quran who claims that in fact the Prophet of Islam lived with a maiden without marriage and had sexual intercourse with her without marriage. (I seek refuge with Allah from that.)

*Alas! If we could see them with researching eyes,
Those who deny the Prophet while seeming to affirm him!*

After this witness from the "inner sanctum" of Islam we can realise without difficulty the impression non-Muslim nations will receive of the one who received the Qur'an and acted upon it. Alas! if only those who love Islam could realise the extent of insult being offered to the blessed Prophet and step forward to stop it:

*Misbelief is rushing forth to despoil the Prophet's garden:
Who is there who would go forth and defend the Prophet's
honour?*

The least that you can do is to distribute this pamphlet among your friends and associates and translate it into your language. **"Allah does not waste the recompense of those who do extra good deeds."**

Such are the “noble interpreters of the Quran” in this our era of disbelief and deviation who have gained worldwide fame for their achievements. How much they deserve to be praised for what they have done! “Think not that those who exult in what they have brought about.”

“And they love to be praised for what they have not done — think not that they can escape the Penalty. For them is a Penalty grievous indeed.” (3:188)

This pamphlet is an abstract from my book entitled ‘**Namoos-e-Rasool**’ in which all the arguments of the supporters of slavery and captivity have been thoroughly analysed, discussed and refuted so completely that, inshallah, till the day of Judgement this refutation will be unanswerable. We appeal to you in the name and the honour of the noble messenger of Allah to help us, financially and personally, to spread this book or its ideal as far and wide as possible. Also sincere thanks to all who helped us in producing this work. Anybody wishing to reprint this book in any language can do so with prior permission from the author.

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And peace be with those who are rightly guided.