

“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,  
and argue with people in the best manner.” (The Holy Quran, 16:125)

# *The Light* & *Islamic Review*

Exponent of Islam and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement  
for over eighty years

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Compiled by Directors of AAIL, Inc. USA

احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام لاہور

◆ Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A. ◆  
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*The Light* was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. *The Islamic Review* was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the worldwide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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The main object of the A.A.I.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

Islam seeks to attract the *hearts and minds* of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning and the natural beauty of its principles.

*Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

**International:** It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

**Peaceful:** Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

**Tolerant:** Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

**Rational:** In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

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**Non-sectarian:** Every person professing Islam by the words *La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

*Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that *no* prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, *Mujaddids* will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

### About ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in many countries including:

U.S.A.	Australia
U.K.	Canada
Holland	Fiji
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### Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic. The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world, including the first ever in Western Europe.

### History:

**1889:** *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founds the Ahmadiyya Movement.

**1901:** Movement given name *Ahmadiyya* after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name *Ahmad*.

**1905:** *Hazrat* Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

**1908:** Death of *Hazrat* Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

**1914:** Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

**1951:** Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

**1981–1996:** Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

**1996–2002:** Prof. Dr Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, served as Head.

**2002:** Prof. Dr Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha elected Head.

## Rationality, Reason, and Religion: An Analysis of Scientific Thought and Islam

By Ayesha S. Khan

*(This paper was originally presented as fulfillment of a course requirement in a Religion in an Age of Science college class. It has been since modified for publication in this periodical.)*

“If we do discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists and just ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason—for then we would truly know the mind of God.”

— Stephen Hawking

Here Stephen Hawking points to the fact that it is only when we find a theory that is simple and free of contradictions to explain the many aspects of our world will we know the Creator; for the Creator, in all His majesty, must have created our universe with a uniform theory, free of contradictions, consistent, when revealed, with the rationale given to us so that we may understand it. During the past century, however, the West has seen science slowly reveal several premises that contradict the dominant belief system of the West, Christianity. Much of the populace has become discontent with the seeming duality needed to believe both in God and in science. Academia paints religion as an illogical opiate followed only by those ignorant enough not to shun the beliefs they were “brainwashed” with as children or those too scared to face a world with no definitive purpose bestowed by God. Contrarily, science is the new creed, sufficient in its logic and rationale to explain our universe. The rise of scientific dogma has led many people to forego religion, believing that religion and science are irreconcilable. However, not only are religion and science wholly compatible, but scientific evidence and God’s final Revelation, the Quran, substantiate each other and provide a complete, unified theory through which mankind can develop spiritually.

The Quran itself contains directives to study nature, realize the uniformity in nature (and recognize this as a sign that there must be one Creator that creates everything in accordance with scientific principles.) To fully

understand the reason behind the repetitive commands of the Quran to study science, one must first define what science is. Science began when the earliest civilizations started observing physical phenomenon so that they could predict the seasons and know when it was time to plant or harvest. They recognized repetitive patterns in the changing of the seasons and used these patterns to predict future phenomenon because they knew the patterns to be true. That is, these continuations of the seasons and the passing of night and day would always occur in the same way regardless of any other circumstances. Thus, science developed, most fundamentally, from the observation of physical phenomenon and the ability of mankind to recognize its truth and validity. The Greeks, particularly Aristotle, then added to the development of science by hypothesizing reasons for observed physical phenomenon and testing the hypothesis to verify their truth (Hummel 30). Often, the criterion for establishing the truth was just intuitively “knowing” that something was true because of its appeal to logic. Eventually, humanity developed the scientific method as a way to test for the truth of a given hypothesis. However, even the scientific method is based on our intuitive observations of what we believe to be true. That is, mankind seems to have an intuitive recognition of truth and upon this recognition, humanity has constructed the scientific method to test for those characteristics possessed by true phenomenon. While it is true that mankind does not have a “fool-proof” method to assess truthfulness, scientifically true data appeals to our logic and rationale (Malik). Thus, science and scientific laws are built upon truth. Science cannot advance unless the efforts to advance it are carried out with truth. The nature of science is such that any false hypothesis or faulty experimentation cannot withstand any degree of testing (Malik). For example, even the geocentric model of the solar system that was popular for so long, crumbled in time because it was untrue. It’s inability to logically explain the observed paths of the planets led to continuous revisions and, finally it led to propositions of the true heliocentric model of the universe. Thus, science is built upon and based on truth.

### Science as the basis of Creation

God’s revelation, the Quran, emphasizes the importance of studying science. Many times in the Quran, it is repeated, “And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth with truth” (6:73293).” Here God lays down the underlying principle that His creation can be recognized fundamentally because it follows concrete, testable laws, here called truth. There is no disparity between what or how He has created, and our empirical observations. In fact, the Quran directs us to ponder the uni-

verse around ourselves and use its awesomeness to glimpse into the qualities of its Maker:

“In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day, there are surely signs for men of understanding/ Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth . . . (3:189,0-18190).”

This quote clearly states the importance of using one’s intellect, not blind faith, when thinking about God. It is “men (or women) of understanding” who “reflect” that truly recognize God. Thus, no act of God, no creation of God, nor God Himself, contradicts logic or rationale. The command to “reflect” refers to more than just recognizing the truth that underlies nature, however. A parallel is often set in the Quran between physical matters and spiritual matters. In this case, the analogy drawn is as follows: just as sciences cannot advance unless efforts to advance it are carried out with truth, so to can the soul of man not advance until man’s efforts in this life are exerted with truth. Truth in one’s conduct betters one’s morality leading to spiritual advancement. Thus, the Quran and science both give evidence to the Divine attribute of truth. Moreover, science and Divine revelation show mankind the way to spiritual advancement. The Quran goes on to say,

“ . . .Who created the seven heavens alike. Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent. Canst thou see any disorder? / Then turn the eye again and again—thy look will return to thee confused, while it is fatigued” (67:3-4).”

Here attention is called to the regularity and uniformity of the laws working in nature. In fact, a challenge is issued to try and find inconsistencies in God’s creation. Such discrepancies do not exist; in the fourteen hundred years since this challenge was issued, nothing has been found which does not follow the physical laws of this universe. Further, this verse draws focus to spiritual laws, which also work uniformly by cause and effect. That is, the doing of good effects the soul in such a way as to develop it positively, strengthening divine qualities in humanity and enhancing a person’s desire to do further good. Likewise, the doing of evil harms the development of the soul by pulling one away from goodness and lighting a metaphorical hellfire in one’s heart. This hellfire is felt in the way of greed for materialistic things, or jealousy at others’ success. Spiritual laws are as simple in their make as physical laws. They follow logic and rationale and there is no need for abstract, complex means to salvation. Thus, these verses highlight the way in which revelation and science intertwine to form a complete theory that leads to the spiritual advancement of mankind.

### Intertwining of the Quran and Science

While these verses do show generally how the Quran and science integrate, they do not show how the Quran is substantiated by science or how science can be used to validate the truth of the Quran. The cosmological facts found in the Quran and the circumstances surrounding its revelation verify the truth of the Quran as a book revealed by God. The Quran was revealed in seventh century Arabia, a time of intellectual darkness and ignorance. Very little was known about science; myth and superstition controlled people’s lives. Life consisted of gluttony, greed, and frequent violent battles between tribes. Men and women in this time were so hard-hearted and removed from logic that they would bury their infant daughters alive in distaste for the female sex while worshiping two *female* supreme gods (Quran 864). In the midst of this ignorant darkness, the Quran was revealed to a simple, illiterate merchant known for his trustworthiness, sincerity and piety; and in the fourteen hundred years since then, not one word of it has been changed. Even harsh critics of Islam acknowledge that the Quran has been passed down in its original form from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Quran xlix). Thus, the text we find today contains the same information that the Quran contained in a time of virtual scientific ignorance. Yet, the Quran speaks very clearly of distinct physical phenomenon that is only now being revealed by scientific evidence. For example, to explain the origins of the universe, physicists have proposed the “Big Bang” theory. This theory holds that the universe had a definitive beginning caused by the explosion of an incredibly dense singularity. Various deductions from observed data have been made to come up with this hypothesis. The idea that the universe must have a beginning, that is, it could not have existed forever, is deduced from the second law of thermodynamics. Simply stated, a system that does not take energy from an outside source, a closed system such as our universe, moves to a greater state of entropy, or disorder. If our universe had existed forever, it would be in a complete state of disorder, which it clearly is not (Asadi 2). Further, if the universe is infinite and it has existed forever, we would always see light pouring down on the earth from various stars; the sky would never be dark. However, we only see the light that has had time to travel across space to earth since the beginning of the star that is its source. Thus, the universe must have a definite beginning. Further, it is all “born” out of one singularity because all regions of the universe, even those that are causally disconnected, started expanding with the same rate and temperature. The relative rate of expansion and temperature has been proven through cosmic background radiation (Asadi 3).

Therefore, the only logical and true explanation of the creation of the universe is the Big Bang theory.

The Quran contains several references to the creation of the universe; all of them describe the Big Bang. Firstly the Quran states, “Do not those who disbelieve see that the heavens and the earth were one unit, then we rent them apart (63:221:30).” The heavens here refers to all heavenly bodies which were held together in a dense mass before their splitting apart caused the formation of the universe. The word “rent” is used to signify a violent separation; in fact, the Arabic word used, *fatq* indicates, “a throwing off;” a violent, explosive separation, as indeed the Big Bang would have been (Quran 63:2). Also, the Quran refers to the material from which the heavens originated as a “gaseous matter,” “smoke,” or “vapor” (Quran 90:8). The singularity from which the universe came into being is believed by physicists to be a gaseous mass composed of hydrogen and helium, hot gasses with a mass over 300,000 times that of earth (Asadi 5). This mass is exactly that described in the Quran as “gaseous matter.” Lastly, the Quran states, “And the sky, we built it with might and we cause the expansion of it (91:1).” From the trillionth of trillionth of a second in which the Big Bang occurred, the universe has been expanding. Even now the paradox exists that though we believe the universe to be infinite, it is, without a doubt, expanding. Thus, the Quran describes the Big Bang fourteen hundred years before the theory was proposed. How is it that a man, Muhammad, had knowledge of the Big Bang in the seventh century living amidst the darkness of the Arabia? To deny that the Quran is the word of an all-knowing Creator, one must come up with a justifiable explanation for the information contained in the Quran. What could the source possibly have been? No one challenged with this question has been able to provide a valid explanation. Thus, the cosmological evidence given in the Quran substantiates its validity because of the circumstances in which the Quran was revealed.

Cosmology is not the only field of science about which the Quran contains truths only recently revealed to the academic field. Several other scientific truths are found in the Quran that could not have been known fourteen hundred years ago and all these substantiate the truth of the Quran. For example, the Quran states, “Have We not made the earth an expanse, / And the mountains as pegs (78:6,71:135)?” also “. . . and cast mountains on the earth lest it should be convulsed with you (31:107:87).” Both these verses refer to the fact that the mountains stabilize the earth’s crust. This fact was discovered less than 150 years ago and is now accepted as a fundamental law in geology:

“. . . surface irregularities (in the earth’s crust) are balanced by differences in density of rocks below

the major features (mountains) of the earth’s crust. This state of balance is described as the concept of isostasy (Selby 32).”

Other truths revealed in the Quran pertain to embryology. It mentions that at a certain stage of development, the human is “a leech-like clot (23:146:66).” A human embryo of seven to twenty-four days not only looks like a leech (see picture below), it also functions like a leech! A leech derives nourishment from a host’s blood just as an embryo derives nourishment from the endometrium of its mother.

Also, the Quran says, “So let man consider of what he is created. / He is created from gushing fluid. / Coming from between the vertebral column and ribs (86:5-71:165).” Embryologists today know that genital ridges that develop into gonads first appear in the region between the kidneys and dorsal mesentery. Later, they descend downward, the ovaries to the pelvis and the testes lower still. However, the nerve supply, blood supply, and lymph drainage remain in the area “between the vertebral column and ribs” (Asadi 12).” Again, this fact, which entails knowledge of human anatomy and embryology, could not possibly be known by an inhabitant of the seventh century, especially in Arabia.

Further references to scientific evidence in the Quran refer to subatomic particles. The Quran states that nothing of our deeds is hidden from the Lord even if it is less than an atom (10:61:429). Although the idea of something less than an atom is common knowledge today, such a concept was unfathomable to seventh century inhabitants. At the most, something small would be referred to as an atom, but not *smaller* than an atom! An inhabitant of seventh century Arabia could have known none of these truths, or the other scientific truths revealed in the Quran. If one denies the claim that the Quran is God’s revelation, truth and justice demand that one must account for how these scientific truths made their way into the Quran— always accurate and always true. Thus, the multitude of scientific facts found in the Quran substantiates its truth.

### Theory of evolution

While the above examples are astonishing, perhaps none is more shocking than the Quran’s references to the theory of evolution. Evolution, which seems to be at odds with other religions, is supported by the Quran and, with it, forms the basis of the most inherently fundamental, complete explanation of mankind’s existence. Evolution is often defined as “descent with modification” (Lovett-Doust).” In other words, it is the gradual change in traits that occurs over generations and leads to

a transformation in the dominant phenotype of a population or, indeed, to a new species. There is much evidence to support the idea that species evolve over time. From a macro-evolutionary perspective, the fossil record indicates that species alive in the remote past are different from those in existence right now. This fact indicates that the species did evolve. Further evidence of macroevolution can be found in vestigial structures. These structures have no apparent function in the organisms they exist in but are found there because they are remnants from a past ancestor (Lovett-Doust). For example, whales have a reduced pelvic girdle and hind limbs though they do not walk because they evolved from a terrestrial mammal, probably one similar to a hippopotamus, which did walk. Fossil evidence of a morphological intermediate has even been found; that is, in 1994 a skeleton of a whale with limbs and feet was found (Berta 180). Another, evidentiary fact is that our development as an embryo reflects our ancestry. For example, as a human develops in utero, he/she possesses many structural features that are lost before birth but occur in the embryo because they served a purpose in an ancestor from which humans evolved. For example, as an embryo, humans have gill slits that serve no function but are there as a remnant of the marine animal present far back in our ancestry (Lovett-Doust).

Besides, macro-evolutionary evidence, much micro-evolutionary evidence also exists to support evolution. The strongest of this comes from the study of “Darwin’s finches” on the Galapagos Islands. These finches were carefully labeled and followed for many generations. Their beak shape and size was seen to evolve in response to a change in food abundance that occurred because of relative rainfall amounts. For example, intense drought in 1976 reduced the abundance of small soft seeds so the relative number of finches with large beaks, needed to break hard fruit, increased in the population. Conversely, in 1983 there was an abundance of rain increasing the number of small, soft seeds. Consequently, the relative abundance of birds with small beaks, with more dexterity to handle small seeds, increased in the population (Grant 85). Therefore, the composition of individuals with a particular trait in a population changed over time; in other words, the population of finches evolved from having large beaks to small beaks.

Thus, the evidence supporting the occurrence of evolution is indisputable. It is quite apparent that evolution does occur. How it happens is quite likely by a mechanism dubbed natural selection. Natural selection proposes that random mutations in an individual result in variation of a particular trait or traits. Sometimes, this variation is beneficial to the individual and confers an

advantage to the individual in its survival. Because the individual can survive longer, and thus reproduce more than its counterparts, it passes on the advantageous trait to its offspring, and they pass it on to theirs and so on until there is a majority of individuals in the population possessing that trait. Eventually, the changes can accumulate to the point that a subset of a population can no longer mate with members of the original population. This event, called speciation, results in new species.

However, by studying the mechanism proposed for the origin of life, one can see that the theory of evolution in no way precludes the existence of a Creator. In accordance with the theory of evolution, two scientists, Oparin and Haldane, outlined a scenario by which life came into being. Basically, they propose that non-biological synthesis of the building blocks of life occurred in the waters of the early earth. This resulted in a “pre-biotic” soup. The organic molecules in this soup assembled into biological polymers such as protein and nucleic acids. Eventually these polymers came together to form a self-replicating organism (Freeman and Herron 425). From this point, random mutations and natural selection took over, selecting for continuously more complex organisms and eventually resulting in human beings. While, perhaps, there may be enough time for the evolution of a single-celled organism into a human being as this scenario proposes, there are many difficulties regarding the formation of the original single celled organism. As a popular evolutionary biology textbook states, “No one knows how a biological polymer, or a mixture of polymers, could have acquired the ability to self-replicate (Freeman and Herron 426).” This quote clearly shows that the theory of evolution, or proposals for the origin of life on earth, is not inherently atheistic. In fact, the need for a guiding force, God, seems to be implied. However, this is not the “God of the Gaps” LaPlasse scoffed at as only being useful to account for things as yet unknown (Whitney). Nor is this a God that creates by some sort of supernatural occurrences outside the realm of scientific, physical laws. Rather, the means for God to create are by bringing about unlikely events using methods that do not deviate from the laws He has ordained.

While some may scoff at the need for a God, scientifically based criteria point to its significance. The paradigm existent in biology is one of hard, concrete facts. That is, biologists like to disregard data that does not support their hypothesis if the majority of the data does. This results in biological hypothesis being painted as indisputably true though the true picture is not as clear. As opposed to this, physicists speak in probabilities. That is, almost nothing is irrefutably true but there is a greater probability that one scenario is true as opposed

to another. This method of thinking evolves from quantum physics and is more likely a better depiction of reality. Accordingly, when one examines in detail the events needed to bring about a self-replicating organism, it becomes clear that it is highly improbable that a self-replicating organism could form guided only by chance.

In fact, the improbability of such an event occurring is compounded by the fact that at least three separate events must occur to result in a self-replicating organism. First, non-biological synthesis of organic compounds must occur. A famous experiment by Stanley Miller attempts to replicate this first step. However, even using an atmosphere for earth much more conducive to synthesis of organic compounds than the real one probably was, he could only produce the amino acids glycine and alanine, two out of twenty total. Another hypothesis holds that the first step was accomplished by the deposition of organic molecules on earth via an asteroid or planetary dust (Freeman 424). This however, does not address how those molecules formed. Even given that the first step could occur by chance, which is at the most only slightly probable, the second step seems nearly impossible. Biological polymers readily synthesize in aqueous solution but are broken down even as they are being built (Freeman 425). That is, the very water in which they are dissolved breaks down the molecules. How could they remain polymerized long enough to form an organism? One hypothesis is that the molecules washed up on mineral deposits and crystallized there. An experiment attempting to replicate this process has resulted in short polymers. However, the experiment does not exactly replicate what happened on the early earth. The clay that was used as an analogy to the mineral deposits, for example, was taken out of solution and centrifuged every time polymerization occurred (Freeman and Herron 426). In reality, the minerals that remain in solution may be broken down soon after polymerization. Even the biology textbook that describes this experiment concedes that the polymers on the clay are “less vulnerable to hydrolysis,” not that they will not be broken down on the clay (Freeman and Herron 426). The second step is further complicated when one considers the chirality of molecules in living systems today. Chiral molecules two molecules containing the same atoms but they are non-super imposable mirror images of each other. An analogy is that our right and left hand are chiral—they are non-super imposable mirror images. Chiral molecules, such as amino acids, have all the same properties and act identically except when interacting with a chiral system. Accordingly, in the lab synthesis of amino acids or any other chiral molecule results in both images, one is designated “l”, the other “d.” That is, we *cannot*

synthesize only one form. However, synthesis of amino acids in our body can result in the synthesis of only one desired form, “l” or “d.” This is because our body is chiral, and, in fact, all living organisms are chiral. That is to say, *all* living organisms only contain the “l” form amino acids! How could the amino acids that came together to form the first living organism have been exclusively one form when there is no way to select between the two forms in a non-chiral environment such as that of an abiotic “soup?” Therefore, the probability of the second step occurring randomly is quite low. The third and final step is the most unlikely to occur only by chance. Assembly of the polymers into a self-replicating organism would necessitate, even if it were possible, the existence of the polymers for quite a long time. In reality, the polymers that were needed such as RNA are, “. . . too unstable, and there is no plausible nonbiological mechanism for the synthesis of sufficient quantities of ribonucleotides (Freeman 427). Thus, to truly consider the probability of these steps happening, one must take the probabilities of each individual event happening and multiply them together. Even given the great amount of time required, the probability of a self-replicating organism arising by chance is very low. Conversely, it is probable that a guiding force brought about the formation of a self-replicating organism. This Guiding Force, or God, does not use supernatural phenomenon to create; rather He brings about creation by causing improbable events to occur using defined physical laws such as mutation, sustained assembly of molecules, etc.

### Evolution of a Unified Theory

The Quran clearly outlines the theory of evolution and points to the Creator as the one who brought about the theory of evolution. The very first verse of the Quran refers to God as *Rabb* (3). The Arabic word *Rabb* has been translated into English as “Lord” for the sake of brevity. However, the word *Rabb* actually means one who “fosters a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion” (Quran 4).” A famous commentary on the Quran notes the following about the use of this word,

“Hence *Rabb* is the Author of all existence, Who has not only given for the whole of creation its means of nourishment, but has also beforehand . . . provided the means by which it continues to attain gradually to its goal of perfection (4).”

The use of this word hints at the law of evolution that is working in the universe and calls attention to the intelligent design behind it (better word). Further verses in the Quran also verify the creation of mankind through evolution. Firstly, there is a reference to life arising out

of water: “And We made from water everything living” (21:30632).” This verse is consistent with scenario of the early earth containing a “pre-biotic” soup from in which the first living organism was formed. Also, to describe in greater detail the stages through which creation progressed, the Quran states,

“We created you from dust, then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh . . . And thou seest the earth barren, but when We send down thereon water, it stirs and swells and brings forth a beautiful growth of every kind (22:5Quran 648).”

The creation from dust refers most probably to the inorganic elements present in the water that allowed the growth of organic molecules. Furthermore, the verse ends in an eloquent description of the things needed to bring about evolution—a barren earth upon which water gathered and life arose. Another similar description is, “And indeed He has created you by various stages/ And Allah has caused you to grow out of the earth as a growth (Quran 1104).” Some opponents of evolution may interpret this verse as referring to the stages of fetal development. However, the continuation which states the first stage is as that of growing out of earth “as a growth,” does not support the idea of fetal development because, clearly, at no stage in a baby’s development is a growth out of earth. So the reference must be to a larger stage-wise process, namely evolutionary development. Just as the Quran begins with a reference to evolution, the law of evolution and the Author of evolution are again referred to as it draws to a close: “Glorify the name of thy Lord (*Rabb*), the Most High! / Who creates, then makes complete (87:21167).” The act of creating and *then* completing imply that a creation undergoes evolutionary changes.

Interestingly, the verse previously above mentioned creation from dust is often used to refute evolution. Namely, this is done in context to the story of Prophet Adam and his creation from dust. The Quran states,

The likeness of Jesus with Allah is truly as the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was.” (3:58)

Many interpret this verse as the literal shaping of a man from clay. However if these words are to be construed this way, then all such words must be. In 18:37, a believer addresses a non-believer by saying, “Disbelievest thou in him who created thee from dust?” Presumably, the non-believer was an ordinary man created through the usual embryological process; he was not shaped from clay and made to come to life. Yet, he is still spoken of as being created from dust, as indeed

all mankind was. So clearly creation from dust does not preclude a *passage* through which a human reaches a state of being; regardless of whether that passage is the process of embryology or evolution. Again, many argue that in this case Allah clarifies that he said “Be” and it was, so creation must be instantaneous. However to interpret this literally, one would be putting limitations on the All Powerful Creator; for to literally utter the word “be,” He must have physical vocal cords to form the sound. Clearly such a thought is ridiculous and the uttering of the word “be” is therefore an expression meaning that Allah has decreed a matter. Allah clarifies exactly this point in the following verse:

“His command, when He *intends* anything, is only to say to it, Be, and it is” (36:82).

Furthermore, the relation of time as we measure it, to time as viewed by Allah is completely different. Allah states in the Quran many times that this life is but a few moments—“a sport and a play” (29:64). In light of the grandness of eternity, this life is surely a blink, and so is the instant in which the entire process of creation takes place after Allah has decreed it to—whether through evolution or not.

Some argue that interpretation of the Quran, particularly through metaphors or allegories, is wrong; the word of God is decisive and thus, literal. However, to truly believe that the word of God is decisive, free of contradictions, one must accept that Allah frequently veils his words. The rule as to the interpretation of the Quran is thus given in the Book itself:

“He it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive — they are the basis of the Book — and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it their own interpretation. And none knows its interpretation except Allah, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord. And none do mind except men of understanding” (3:6).

In the first place, it is stated here that there are two kinds of verses in the Quran, namely, the decisive and the allegorical — the latter being those which are capable of different interpretations. Next we are told that the decisive verses are the basis of the Book, that is, that they contain the fundamental principles of religion. Hence whatever may be the differences of interpretation, the fundamentals of religion are not affected by them, all such differences relating only to secondary matters. The third point is that some people seek to give their own interpretation

to allegorical statements and are thus misled. In other words, serious errors arise only when a wrong interpretation is placed on words which are susceptible of two meanings. Lastly, in the concluding words, a clue is given as to the right mode of interpretation in the case of allegorical statements: “It is all from our Lord” — meaning that there is no disagreement between the various portions of the Book. This statement has in fact been made elsewhere also, as already quoted (see 4:82). The important principle to be borne in mind in the interpretation of the Quran, therefore, is that the meaning should be sought from within the Quran, and never should a passage be interpreted in such a manner that it may be at variance with any other passage, but more especially with the basic principles laid down in the decisive verses. When a law or principle is laid down, any statement carrying a doubtful significance, or a statement apparently opposed to the law so laid down, must be interpreted subject to the principle enunciated. Similarly that which is particular must be read in connection with and subject to more general statements.

As regards evolution, one must realize that believing in the process of evolution in no way contradicts any principle laid down in the Quran. Rather, it is in consonance with the teachings of the Quran and with the rules laid down in the Quran for interpretation. Literally interpreting the idea of creation, however is contradictory to the decisive nature of the Quran. Quite simply the fact that creation of mankind is stated to be from dust or earth at some places in the Quran and spoken of as being from nothing at others, is a contradiction if taken literally. Instead, speaking of the creation of mankind from something as basic as dirt, while the intricate physical being of humanity is evident, serves a purpose much greater than giving a recipe for creation. After all the Quran is not a history book, it is a spiritual guide, and all that is in it serves to guide mankind and reveal the nature of our Creator. Such verses are a glimpse into the greatness of the Rabb, the humility of the spiritual nature of mankind, and most of all an analogy to spiritual evolution as discussed below.

### Spiritual evolution

The Quran does not outline evolution only to enlighten its readers on a scientific process occurring in the physical world; rather, evolution is outlined as an observable scientific fact that is analogous to processes occurring in a spiritual realm. Scientific truths are analogous to spiritual truths and together they form a unified theory for the complete development of mankind. The spirit of mankind, or the soul, has three developmental stages as outlined in the Quran, *ammarah*, *lawwamah*, *mutmain-*

*nah*. The first and lowest stage, *ammarah*, is the “uncontrollable spirit.” At this point in a person’s development, low desires or animal passions rule the mind. An individual easily submits to carnal desires and can do evil with little guilt for his/her action. So long as a person is devoid of moral qualities, this condition is predominant. However, when reason and knowledge guide a person, he/she governs his/her natural passions instead of being governed by them. This is a transition to the second stage, the “self-accusing spirit.” At this point in development, an individual becomes a moral being rather than a physical being. The tendency now is to, “generate noble qualities and a virtuous disposition, to transform life so as to bring the whole course and conduct of it to moderation, and to restrain the carnal passions and sensual desires so as to keep them within due bound (Ahmad 24).” While the tendency is to good at this stage, the soul still has faults and does not practice virtue exclusively. It is analogous to a young child learning to walk who does not wish to fall but has weak legs that sometimes do not support him/her. When further virtue is practiced, the soul develops in to the “soul at rest.” The verse in the Quran dealing with this stage states, “O soul that art at rest, return to thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing, so enter among My servants, and enter My Garden (Quran 1174).” The soul is now strongly inclined to goodness. The peace felt at this stage is Heaven, and it maybe in this world, not any other physical place, that access is granted to Paradise. Thus, the evolution of the soul progresses through various stages ending in the condition that is Heaven. Development from one stage to the next is accomplished through love for God and, hence, love for goodness. The deeds of the physical self are reflected on the spiritual soul good deeds, not salvation, culminate in Heavenly peace. Thus, evolution works in both the physical and spiritual realm. Scientific evidence and the directives to reflect on this scientific evidence in the Quran, form a complete theory that enlightens an individual on the processes by which he/she can develop spiritually and know God.

### Balance Between Science and Spirituality

In conclusion, Islam and science present a complete theory, each substantiating one each another, that can be used as a guide for humanity to live life, know God, and develop spiritually. Perhaps, this is the very theory Stephen Hawking alludes to in the quote from [A Brief History of Time and Space](#). Unfortunately, many people, particularly those in the scientific field, disregard religion because of a reluctance to study something they prejudiciously view as superstitious or supernatural. Particularly, biases in the West regarding Islam prevent further exploration of the actual religion. Ironically, the “unbiased,” “objective” search for truth by scientists

rarely points them to the underlying truth in everything: as God says, "I am the Truth (Quran)." There is an interesting Islamic, allegorical prophecy regarding the West. It speaks of a time when the world will be dominated by a monster that has one eye shining bright with knowledge but is blind in the other eye. This monster will be able to travel from country to country with in one stride and will be able to perform almost magical feats so impressive that many start to worship it instead of God. Indeed, the prophecy of this monster seems to be fulfilled allegorically in the domination of the world by the Western countries who have the technology to travel from country to country in short periods of time, have made medical and scientific advances so mind-boggling they seem almost magical, and who breed an academic culture that largely worships science instead of God. The eye shining bright with knowledge refers to the incredible scientific, materialistic knowledge the Western countries possess and the blind eye refers to their inability to see spiritual truths. In keeping with this analogy, the ideal situation would be to see with both eyes, and see the beauty only a focused view can provide. ■

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## Islam on Slavery

By Lord Headley and Khwaja Kamaluddin

*(A booklet by this title was published circa 1930s responding to the argument that Islam endorses, or at least permits, slavery. With the resurgence of criticism on this very issue, we reproduce this work as a serialization in this periodical. Lord Headley writes the following selection.)*

Since the earliest days of man's struggles on this earth there have been conquerors and conquered, and it has ever been the privilege and right of the former to impose conditions which had to be complied with by the latter. Vae victis - the weaker go to the wall and have to obey the stronger and cleverer in life's battle. Man, being the cleverer, though not the physical equal to many animals, gradually brought into subjection and applied to his use such powerful creatures as the horse, the camel, and the elephant. Being to a great extent a gregarious creature, man found he could combine with others and form societies which enabled him to undertake work quite beyond the power of any individual unit. When such societies or combinations began to multiply, it was inevitable that there should be conflicts for the possession of desirable things such as land, cattle, laborers, etc. In this way arose slavery. The conquered were used as chattels, they passed under the yoke of their masters and entered into a thralldom in which they lost their individuality, and there is no doubt they were often treated with all manner of ill usage.

#### Past failures in dealing with slavery

Religions, civilizations, and legislations came into being; but there was no alteration, or even mitigation, as regards the main principles of slavery of the absolute power of the stronger over the weaker.

The Roman Law upheld the constitution of slavery whilst allowing manumission in certain cases, but did nothing to ameliorate the actual conditions of the slaves. It is not necessary here to go into the cruelties practiced in the days of Rome, as they are well known. History tells us that the Greeks and ancient Germans recognized and practiced both kinds of slavery - predial servitude as well as household slavery.

In the case of India, the Aryan race on their invasion reduced the conquered inhabitants to a condition worse than slavery, so that the very shadow of the vanquished, who were called sudra in their language, was held to bring a curse on those on whom the shadow happened to fall. Even to this very day in the State of Travancore, Southern India, roads constructed for persons of high caste are not allowed to be traversed by the sudra.

As Syed Ameer Ali points out in his illuminating work, *The Spirit of Islam*, two forms of slavery were practiced among the Hebrews from the commencement of their history. The Israelites slave, given into bondage as a punishment for crime, or for the payment of a debt, occupied a higher position than a slave of alien birth.... Christianity, as a system and a creed, raised no protest against slavery, enforced no rule, inculcated no principle for the mitigation of the evil.... The teachings of Jesus, as portrayed in the Christian traditions, contained nothing expressive of disapproval of bondage. On the contrary, Christianity enjoined on the slave absolute submission to the will of his or her proprietor.

It found slavery a recognized institution of the empire; it adopted the system without any endeavor to mitigate its baneful character, or to promote its gradual abolition, or to improve the status of slaves. Under the civil law, slaves were mere chattels. They remained so under the Christian domination.... The introduction of the religion of Jesus into Europe affected human chattel hood only in its relation to the priesthood. A slave could become free by adopting monarchism, if not claimed within three years. But in other respects slavery flourished as much and in as varied shapes as under the pagan domination. The Digest, compiled under a Christian emperor, pronounced slavery a constitution of the law of nature; and the code fixed the maximum price of slaves according to the professions for which they were intended. Marriages between slaves were not legal; and between the slave and the free were prohibited under severe penalties<sup>1</sup>. The natural result was unrestrained-concubinage, which even the clergy recognized and practiced<sup>2</sup>.

Christianity had failed utterly in abolishing slavery or alleviating its evil. The Church itself held slaves, and recognized in explicit terms the lawfulness of this baneful institution. Under its influence the greatest civilians of Europe had upheld slavery, and have insisted upon its usefulness as preventing the increase of pauperism and theft<sup>3</sup>.

It may be said that Jesus could not be held responsible for the practice of slavery in Christendom, but the institution got its permission and support from the Judaic Law, and as Christ was a staunch observer of the said Law, and so never said anything against it, he must be considered to have given it his sanction; and St. Paul recognized it, as he enjoins kindness to slaves.

For centuries in Christian countries slavery continued to be practiced with all its attendant cruelties, till the climax was reached in the United States of America and elsewhere when enlightenment and public feelings of humanity began to prevail. It was early in the eigh-

teenth century that England began to take an interest in freeing the slaves, and this interest became crystallized in the popular belief that baptism conferred freedom. Slaves were brought into England from the West Indies and went through the ceremony of baptism, obtaining as godfathers respectable citizens; but in 1729 an opinion of the then Attorney-General was procured to the effect that neither residence in Great Britain nor baptism conferred freedom on a slave, and that he might be legally compelled to return to slavery, in spite of his influential godfather.

This noble movement towards the abolition of slavery received its greatest opposition from the Church, and this should not cause much surprise, seeing that every scientific discovery and every advance towards higher enlightenment has been bitterly and cruelly opposed by sacerdotal interference - what may be called "Churchcraft" has ever proved to be the chief stumbling-block to true advancement. As I have said elsewhere, there is nothing more valuable than the truth, and it is to the everlasting shame of humanity that in all the past ages sacerdotal jugglery has been permitted to hoodwink the credulous, frighten the timid, and disguise the truth. Depend upon it, there is no stronger ally to true religion than Science, which is ever searching for the TRUTH, and so approximating towards an understanding of the divine Mysteries which are at present behind the veil.

### Islamic position on slavery

Turning to Islam, we recognize in it the first religion that dealt a death-blow to the very roots of this ignoble institution of slavery, which would have been completely abolished through its influence but for its being so deeply rooted in all the nations of the world. Islam, however, laid down principles which cannot fail to approximate towards a vastly improved state of affairs. As a wise man once said: "It is always easy to imagine perfection, but it is only possible to achieve improvement."

In the early days of his ministry, Muhammad could not command wealth enough to purchase the freedom of the slaves. He, however, preached the religion of liberating slaves and made their emancipation a virtue of great merit. We read the following in the Quran:

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the east and the west, but righteousness is this, that one should believe in Allah and the last day, and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him, to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (emancipation of) the captives..." (2:177).

“And what will make you comprehend what the uphill road is? It is the setting free of the slaves or the giving of food in the day of hunger to an orphan...” (90:11-15).

Again, the Quran lays down that a part of the public funds should be spent in purchasing the freedom of the slaves. “Alms are only for the poor and the needy and the officials appointed over them and those whose hearts are made to incline (to Truth) and emancipation of captives and those in debt and in the way of Allah, and the wayfarer” (9:60).

No other revealed Book says anything on the subject, and no other Prophet, including Jesus, inspired his followers to emancipate those they held in bondage, or mitigate their sufferings. With reference to the unique pronouncements of the prophet Muhammad as to the freeing of slaves, I may now quote the following from Ameer Ali:<sup>4</sup>

“The Prophet exhorted his followers repeatedly in the name of God to enfranchise slaves, ‘than which there was not an act more acceptable to God.’ He ruled that for certain sins of omission the penalty should be the manumission of slaves. He ordered that slaves should be allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their services; and that in case the unfortunate beings had no present means of gain, and wanted to earn in some other employment enough for that purpose, they should be allowed to leave their masters on an agreement to that effect.... In certain contingencies, it was provided that the slaves should become enfranchised without the interference, and even against the will, of their master. The contract of agreement in which the least doubt was discovered was construed most favorably in the interest of the slave, and the slightest promise on the part of the master was made obligatory for the purpose of enfranchisement. He placed the duty of kindness towards the slave on the same footing with the claims of kindred and neighbors and fellow-travelers and wayfarers; encouraged manumission to the freest extent therewith the gift of a ‘portion of that wealth which God has given you’; and prohibited sensual uses of a master’s power over a slave, with the promise of divine mercy to the wronged. To free a slave is the expiation for ignorantly slaying a believer and for certain forms of untruth. The whole tenor of Muhammad’s teaching made ‘permanent chattel hood’ or caste impossible; and it is simply an ‘abuse of words’ to apply the word ‘slavery,’ in the English sense, to any status known to the legislation of Islam.”

The farewell address of Muhammad is a great charter of liberty. It runs thus:

“O ye people. Hearken unto my words. I know not if ever I shall speak to you here again.

Your lives and your goods are sacred among you until the end of time.

You must one day appear before Allah to give an account of your doings.

Let every man be faithful.

No more vengeance shall be allowed for bloodshed as in the days of you idolatry.

Ye husbands have rights, and ye wives, ye have rights. Husbands, love your wives and cherish them. You have taken them as your wives under the security of God. Treat them well.

As to your slaves - male and female - feed them with what you eat yourself, and clothe them with what you wear. If you cannot keep them, or they commit any fault, discharge them. They are God’s people like unto you, and you are to be kind to them.

I leave you a law that shall always preserve you from error; a law clear and positive - a Book dictated from Heaven.

Listen to my words and fix them in your minds.

Verily Muslims are brothers. They form one fraternity. Take not that which belongs to they brother until he gives it to thee, of his own free will.

Beware of injustice and expropriation.”

These ordinances were not meant to remain only in books, but they were translated into action.

### **The Example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad**

In the Meccan life of the Prophet no chances of making many slaves presented themselves. His own slave he released, and his friend and follower, Abu Bakr, freed a large number of his slaves and purchased a number in order to set them free. When the Prophet came to Medina and the conditions of warfare began, the following verse was revealed which totally abolished slavery of the old type and made war captivity the only kind of slavery - if it may be called such - permissible in Islam: “It is not fit for a prophet that he should take captives unless he has fought and triumphed” (8:67). The verse lays down the condition under which a person forfeits his liberty at the hand of another. In other words, the verse abolished slavery and allowed Muslims to make

war-prisoners, and this only so long as the war lasted, as the following shows: “So when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite their necks, until when you have overcome them, then make them prisoners and then either set them free as a favor or let them ransom (themselves), until the war terminates” (47:4).

It must always be borne in mind that the Prophet was ever on the defensive in all his battles; he was forced to arms under compulsion and to protect his life, which was sought with ruthless pertinacity by his enemies. The verses quoted are very clear, and hardly require any explanation. It is apparent, that from the teachings of the Prophet no Muslim is permitted to bring any person into slavery, and that Islam and the Quran give no countenance to anything like the institution of slavery. It is therefore apparent that a Muslim must fight a hard battle in self-defense, before he can be permitted to take prisoners of war, and that as regards such prisoners they are either to be set free or ransomed. The Prophet adopted the former course in most cases; for instance, in the case of prisoners of the Bani Mustalik a hundred families were set at liberty, and in the case of Hawazin six thousand prisoners were released out of favor.

Those prisoners taken at Badr had to pay ransom because Islam was very weak at that time and the enemy was determined to crush it out of existence. But many among the Badr prisoners were released when, at the request of the Prophet, they taught reading and writing to his companions. When, after a succession of battles, the Prophet entered Mecca as undisputed victor, his very first act was that of the manumitter and enfranchiser, for he gave free pardon to all his enemies who were completely in his power and were indeed his prisoners of war and legitimate slaves. Not only did he do this, but he at once set about abolishing idolatry - that mental slavery of pagan races - and putting in its place the free, untrammled worship of the One and Only God. He also abolished infanticide and regulated sex relationships - limiting a man's wives to four - indeed, he brought order out of chaos. His advent to Mecca and the magnificent example he set by pardoning all of his many thousands of enemies stands out like a beacon not only for Arabia but for the whole world and for all time.

### **Practical effect of Islamic teachings**

To what heights it was possible for slaves to attain it is interesting to follow the history of Kutubuddin, one of the Emperors of Delhi. Kutubuddin, the founder of the Dynasty of the slaves, was a war-prisoner, and, as such, a slave. But he won the favor of his master and became his successor. He himself had a war-prisoner, Shamshuddin

Altamash, to whom his master gave his daughter in marriage. Not less than eight kings, most of whom were, like Kutubuddin, slaves in their youth, with all the pomp and dignity of absolute rulers, and the only queen who ruled at Delhi - Razia Begum - were also of the same Dynasty. The Kutub-Minar, a big tower of marble, which was built by the first slave king of India in the beginning of the thirteenth century, is a standing monument of the high position that Islam conferred upon slaves.

Subuktagin, the father of Muhammad of Gazni, the famous invader of India, was, again, a slave captured in the war by Aliptagin, the first king of the Gazni Dynasty, but became his successor as a king. There were slaves who led, as generals, Muslim armies which included scions of the best families, the aristocrats and the best blood in the country to victory.

It is not necessary to go into the far distant past for reference, for we have in modern times the Amir Abdulrahman, the grandfather of the present Amir of Afghanistan, who had as his commander-in-chief his own slave. Another of his slaves filled the important post of High Treasurer. Yet another two of his slaves were given the highest positions under his rule. All this appears in his autobiography, and he states the facts in order to show what treatment a slave may aspire to, with a Muslim master, and under the Islamic Law.

All European scholars who have studied Islam with an unbiased mind have come to the conclusion that Islamic teachings do condemn slavery and aim at its abolition, and the only legal cause of bringing others into bondage is prisonership of war; and as long as war continues in the world the system must continue. I here give the opinion of Professor Snouck Hurgrorje, of the Leyden University, on the question of slavery in his book *Muhammadanism*, p.150; published in 1916, Putnam's, USA:

“The Law of Islam regulated the position of slaves with much equity; there is a great body of testimony from people who have spent a part of their lives among Muhammadan nations which does justice to the benevolent treatment which bondsmen receive from their masters there. Besides that, we are bound to state that in many Western countries, or countries under Western domination, whole groups of the population live under circumstances with which those of Muhammadan slavery may be compared with advantage.”

“The only legal cause of slavery is prisonership of war, or born from slave parents. The captivity of enemies of Islam has not at all necessarily the

effect of enslaving them; for the competent authorities may dispose of them in any other way, also in the way prescribed by modern international law or custom. In proportion to the realization of the political ideal of Islam, the number of its enemies must diminish and the possibility of enslaving men consequently decrease. Setting slaves free is one of the most meritorious works, and at the same time the regular atonement for certain transgressions of the sacred Law. According to the Muhammadan principle, slavery is an institution destined to disappear.”

I should now like to say a few words as to the alleged atrocities on Armenian girls. Only a short time ago I was asked how it was that I who had been brought up a Christian could countenance and adhere to a religion such as Islam, which encourage or permitted outrages on women. I at once joined issue on this question, and pointed out that Islam did not countenance or encourage in any way outrages of any such kind. No cruelty, injustice, or evil treatment could possibly be reconcilable with the Brotherhood of Islam as I understood it. There can be no palliation or excuse of any kind for the atrocities as described to me, and if they are true, not only I myself but all my Muslim acquaintances and friends will join with Christians or Jews or Hindus who are so opposed to brigandage and slave-dealing to assist in bringing to justice miscreants who have transgressed the Divine Law. It is, of course, impossible to deny that slave-dealing does go on, but under difficulties. British gunboats are not very friendly to the slave dhows, and all of us Britishers detest the slavers as we do the devil; and there is no doubt that any good Muslim detests what is evil just as much as a good Christian does.

So that if the perpetrators of these outrages are Muslims their conduct is non-Muslim, and the writer who describes them should not identify them with Muslims; but if the whole batch of stories is merely put together as propaganda work against Islam, I have no words strong enough to condemn such action. One does not like to think that educated people are to be found who will willfully and knowingly make misstatements about another religion in order to further the interests of their own particular faith. I don't mind ignorance, but false information, deceit, and treachery in a cause which should be sacred are to my mind intolerable. Not long ago a lady assured me most positively that Muslims worshipped Muhammad, that all Muslims had to have four wives, that women had no souls and were not allowed inside the Mosques. *She* was quite sincere, but the educated man who gave her the faulty information was not sincere, and he misrepresented things in the

mistaken idea that he was furthering the spread of his own particular faith. I presume he was influenced by the doctrine of expediency which allows Machiavellian tactics in religion and everything else.

I should like here to quote the following from *India in the Balance*, by Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din:

“The Turkish rule may not be a model, but the legends current concerning it for the last fifty years have proved, in the upshot, to be, after all, mere stories deliberately concocted of set purpose to promote a pretext for the dismemberment of Turkey. His Excellency M. Chedo Meyalovich, formerly Minister to the Court of St. James's and to the Sublime Porte, writing in the *Asiatic Quarterly* (October 1913), candidly admitted that, “After Serbia had at last succeeded in realizing her ‘aspirations’ so far as Turkey was concerned, political interest made us (the Balkan Nations) paint the Turks as cruel tyrants incapable of European civilization.” An impartial history would prove that the Turks are rather Europeans than Asiatics, and that they are not cruel tyrants, but a nation loving justice and fairness, and possessing qualities and virtues which deserve to be acknowledged and respected. The italics furnish and eloquent explanation of the motives actuating those writers who have poured forth book after book to justify foreign interference in Turkey.”

In conclusion, I may emphasize the fact that in common with many of my co-religionists I take the strongest exception to such terms as “Freed from the slavery of Islam,” “Muslim slavery,” etc. Such expressions are utterly undeserved, for all true Muslims regards with loathing the traffic in human lives, carried on by brutal slave-dealers, and deprecate with equal force any attempt to coerce women into joining harems in Turkey or anywhere else. ■

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#### Works Cited:

- 1 One of the punishments was, if a free woman married a slave she was to be put to death and the slave burned alive (Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vol.ii).
- 2 *Ibid*, p.369.
- 3 Pufendorff, *Law of Nature and Nations*, Bk. VI, c.3, s.10.
- 4 *Spirit of Islam*, p. 262.

## Truth Unveiled: a response to the book 'Unveiling Islam' by Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner

Compiled by Directors of AAAIL, Inc. USA

(A book under the title 'Truth Unveiled' is being compiled by the Board members of AAAIL Inc., USA. Its Preface, Introduction and beginning of Chapter 1 have been published in prior issues. We continue with Chapter 1 below.)

### An Eye Opener and a Clear Deception

In their discussion about the love of God in the Holy Qur'an, the Caner brothers state on page 30:

"Islamic scripture affirms that Allah *hates* sinners, "For Allah loves not *transgressors*." (2:190).

### Our Response:

The Caner brothers once more have quoted a verse partially, incorrectly and out of context to suit their purpose. Let us examine 2:190: "And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but be not aggressive. Surely Allah loves not the *aggressors*." This verse permits Muslims to fight, only in self-defense, at the same time warning them against aggressive warfare – "aggressors" being pointed out as the ones who do not deserve the love of Allah. This once more manifests the wisdom of the Qur'anic teachings and exposes the veil of deception the learned insiders have tried to create. This deception is further exposed if we look at the source the authors have quoted, that is, the translation by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall. We quote verse 2:190 from *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* by Marmaduke Pickthall (Published by The New American Library, Inc. under the label Mentor Books): "Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth *not aggressors*." It is quiet evident that in addition to misleading the reader, the authors have even misquoted their source. This should be an eye opener for those who give credibility to their work.

In connection with this verse it may be added that this is one of the earliest revelations permitting the Muslims to fight. The subject is dealt with here in six verses, closing with v. 195, being again taken up in the following sections. It is remarkable that *fighting in the way of Allah* is here expressly limited to *fighting in defense*. Muslims were required to *fight in the way of Allah*, but they could fight only against those who waged war on them. Exactly the same limitation is

placed on what was in all probability the first revelation permitting fighting: "Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made because they are oppressed" (22:39). It is clear from both these references that the Muslims were allowed to take up the sword only as a measure of self-defense. The enemies of Islam, being unable to suppress Islam by persecution, and seeing that Islam was now safe at Madinah and gaining strength, took up the sword to annihilate it.

### Comparison of the Doctrine of Salvation in Islam and Christianity

The Caner brothers state in their book on page 31:

"In Christianity, God the Father sent His Son to be the truth, to die for sin, and to reconcile men and women to Him."

### Response:

To compare the Christian doctrine of salvation with that of Islam, we will once more rely on a question asked by, the already referred, to Mr. Sirajuddin and the answer provided by Founder of the Ahmaddiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad:

### Quotation from *The Four Questions Answered*

**Question:** According to the Christian belief, Christ came to the world for the love of mankind and to offer himself as sacrifice for its sake. Can the mission of the Founder of Islam be described in similar terms? Or can his mission be described in words even better than 'love' and 'sacrifice'?

**Answer:** The real purpose of the question is to ask whether the Qur'an presents an example of an accursed sacrifice for the salvation of sinners similar to the one allegedly made by Jesus Christ. According to the Christian belief, Jesus Christ appeared on this earth for the love of sinners. He took on the curse of their sins and was then crucified for these sins. The questioner then asks that if the Qur'an does not give a similar example, does it present any better method for the salvation of mankind?

### The Quranic route to salvation is not through an accursed sacrifice

Let it be known, Mr. Sirajuddin, that the Qur'an does not give any example of an accursed sacrifice. It is against the Qur'anic principle for the sins, or curse, of one person to be transferred to another, and the question of the transference of the sins of millions of people onto one person just does not arise. The Holy Qur'an states explicitly: "That no bearer of a burden bears another's burden" (53:38). According to the teachings of the Qur'an, deeds are the basis of reward and punishment. Before I explain the Qur'anic teachings about salvation, I consider it essential

to expose the errors in the Christian doctrine. This would facilitate comparison for those desirous of doing a comparative study between the Christian and Muslim teachings on the subject of salvation.

### **Ascribing an accursed death to Jesus is perverse.**

The Christian doctrine is that God so loved humanity that He transferred the sins of transgressors, unbelievers and evildoers to His beloved Son, Jesus, as part of a plan for the salvation of mankind. Jesus was, thus, cursed with the sins of humanity and crucified on the accursed cross to rid the earth of the curse of sin. This doctrine is perverse and shameful in every way. From the standpoint of justice, such an action is flagrantly cruel. Human conscience revolts against the idea of an innocent person being punished for the wickedness of criminals. From the standpoint of spiritual philosophy and the reality of sin, too, this doctrine is fallacious. Sin is, in actuality, a poison that is created when a person cuts himself from submission to God, His love and His remembrance. Just as an uprooted tree, cut off from its nutrients, withers slowly and loses its green foliage, so also does a man, cut off from the love of Allah, withers as sin overpowers him. God has provided three remedies to stop the spiritual withering of man.

### **Three safeguards from sin**

The three safeguards from sin are:

1. Love of God.
2. *Istighfar*, which literally means the desire to suppress or cover sin. In the analogy of the tree given above if the tree is firmly rooted, there is always the hope of a new foliage. (For a person who seeks forgiveness of Allah, there is the hope of a new spiritual life.)
3. *Taubah* or repentance, which implies vigorously searching for the elixir of life by turning to Allah, exerting to get near to Him, and extricating oneself from the web of sin by performing acts of virtue. Real repentance is not just a verbal confession of sin but a change to righteous behavior in which all acts of virtue are done to enhance the efficacy of repentance. Thus, the essence of repentance is the desire to get close to God. Prayer is also repentance because with it, too, we seek nearness to God. Consequently, when God gave life to man, He named his spirit *Ruh*, which implies that it's real pleasure and comfort is derived from accepting, loving and submitting to God, and He named his soul *nafs* (The dictionary meaning of *nafs* is, "the very thing itself") because of its conformity with God. Man's real happiness lies

in the love of God. A person who loves God is like a firmly rooted tree in a garden. Just like the tree sucks in water from the soil and uses it to rid itself of toxic vapors, so also does the man, who has a close association with God, sucks in the water of God's love and with it develops the ability to rid himself of the poison of sin. He receives pure spiritual sustenance from God, thrives, blossoms and brings forth good fruits. Those who are not rooted in God are unable to obtain this life sustaining water. They progressively wither, ultimately the leaves fall off and there remains only the dried up, ugly branches. Since this aridity of sin is a result of severance from God, the simple antidote, to which the laws of nature bear testimony, is the establishment of a firm connection with Him. It is to this that God refers when He states in the Quran: "O soul that art at rest, Return to thy Lord, well pleased, well-pleasing, so enter among My servants, And enter My Garden!" (89:27-30).

The sole antidote of sin is love of God. In short, the only way to divest sin is through the love of God. Accordingly, all acts of virtue that spring from His love douse the flames of sin because they affix a seal of authenticity on man's love for God. The first stage of this love is to accept God in a way that puts His pleasure before everything else, including one's own life. This first stage is similar to the state of a newly planted tree. The second stage is that of *istighfar*, which means seeking God's protection from being rend asunder from Him - for a person divorced from God is an easy prey to human frailties. This stage is similar to the stage of the tree when it vigorously penetrates the soil and establishes its roots firmly in the ground. The third stage is that of *taubah* or repentance, which is akin to the stage of the tree when it extends its roots close to the water and begins to suck it. Philosophically, the genesis of sin lies in being distant from God, and hence the extrication of sin depends upon reestablishing a relationship with God. It is indeed naive to consider that someone's suicide can be a salvation from sin.

### **A rebuttal of the belief of Atonement**

It is, indeed, ridiculous for a person to injure his own head in sympathy for another's headache or to commit suicide to save another. I do not think that any wise person, anywhere in the world, can classify such conduct as an act of human sympathy. Undoubtedly, human sympathy is meritorious, and enduring an ordeal to save another is an act of great bravery. But is the conduct ascribed to Jesus the proper way to bear such ordeals? If Jesus had not committed suicide but had borne suffering, like any rational man, to bring comfort to those in need of it, then the world would have benefited from his person. As

an analogy, consider a homeless destitute who cannot afford to construct a house. If some mason takes pity and works vigorously for a few days, free of charge, to make the poor man a house, then, indeed, such a builder is deserving of praise for having helped the homeless person. Instead, if the mason was to wound his own head out of sympathy for the destitute, then this accomplishes nothing for the homeless person. Unfortunately, there are very few people in this world who adopt reasonable means to achieve the end of doing good to others and taking mercy on them. If it is true that Jesus committed suicide out of a belief that his death would save the people, then his condition is pitiable, and his conduct, far from being publicized, deserves to be concealed.

The Christian belief in atonement is regrettable because of the disrespect that it shows to Jesus. In fact, by establishing this principle, the Christian nation is guilty of showing greater disrespect to its prophet than has ever been shown by any other nation to its prophet or messenger. According to the Christian philosophy, the creed that Jesus came to this world for the love of humanity and sacrificed his life for it has meaning only if one believes that Jesus was cursed by the sins of mankind and was crucified on the accursed cross. Thus, it is an integral part of the Christian belief that Jesus was cursed, even if only for three days, and if Jesus is not considered cursed, then the belief in his sacrifice and the consequent salvation collapses. The whole superstructure of this doctrine rests on the accursed Jesus. Consequently, we have previously referred to the sacrifice of Jesus as an accursed sacrifice. Sin caused the curse, and the curse led to the crucifixion. What needs to be ascertained though is whether a righteous person can be considered accursed in any sense? The Christians consider Jesus as cursed, even if for three or lesser days, but this is a grave error because the term cursed connotes the inner condition of the accursed person. A person is called accursed when he turns away and becomes an enemy of God. Accordingly, the Arabic word *la'ʿn* (accursed) is the name of Satan and the term *la'nah* (cursed) means to be cast off from a relationship of favor. The word 'accursed' is used for a person whose heart has strayed far from submission and love of God, and, in reality, such a person has become an enemy of God. All lexicographers accept this as the meaning of the word *la'nah* (accursed).

### Implications of Jesus being accursed

According to this established meaning, to say that Jesus was accursed connotes that he abandoned the state of submission, love, and knowledge of God and became a target of His wrath. It signifies that in the accursed period, Jesus apostatized, turned rebellious and became akin to the devil, resulting in mutual enmity and anger between him and God. Such a belief in respect of Jesus is akin to making

him a companion of Satan. No one, save a very wicked person, can hold such a belief about a righteous Prophet. Since the belief that Jesus was accursed is thus shown to be erroneous, it follows that a belief in the accursed sacrifice is false too, and merely a concoction of some ignorant persons. If salvation is only achievable by first making Jesus into an angry, satanical rebel, then a curse be on such salvation. It was better for the Christians to accept hell rather than to make a beloved of God into a devil. What a pity! that these people have relied upon such absurd and unholy reasoning. On the one hand, they claim he is the son of God, His offshoot and a part of Him and on the other, they brand him as a devil because of being accursed, a characteristic peculiar to the devil. *La'ʿn*, meaning accursed, is the name of the devil and accursed is one who is an offshoot of the devil, part of the devil and himself a devil. Thus according to the Christian belief, there were two facets of Jesus, one divine, and the other satanical. In the satanical phase, he imbibed the devilish qualities of rebellion, anger, and enmity with God, and thereby merged his personality with the devil. I ask you, Mr. Sirajuddin, to state honestly whether this alleged mission of Jesus is even remotely spiritual or rational. Can there be a worse belief than alleging, merely for the sake of achieving salvation, that a righteous person of God was disobedient to Him, His enemy, and a devil? Why would God, Who is All Powerful and Merciful, need such an accursed sacrifice?

### Is Salvation through Accursed Sacrifice found in Jewish Scriptures?

Further evidence against the veracity of the accursed sacrifice doctrine is furnished by examining it in the light of the earlier Jewish scriptures. Apparently, if the only way open to God for the salvation of mankind was through the accursed sacrifice, according to which He begot a son who took on the curse of all sinners and was crucified, then the mention of an accursed sacrifice should be in the Torah and the other Books of the Jews. No reasonable man can accept that God has been changing His eternal law of salvation, giving one law in the Torah, another in the Gospels, another in the Qur'an and yet others to prophets sent to people elsewhere in the world. Even the most detailed examination of the Jewish scriptures does not reveal any mention of the accursed sacrifice doctrine. Accordingly, I wrote letters to several Jewish religious scholars and asked them to state under oath the teachings about salvation in the Torah, and whether there is any command to believe in atonement and the sacrifice of God's son? These Jewish scholars have replied that the teachings of the Torah in respect of salvation are in complete accord with those found in the Qur'an. They have written that the Torah emphasizes repeatedly that the way to salvation lies in

turning to God, seeking repentance, controlling base desires, doing good deeds for the sake of God, and strictly following all His laws, rules and commands. All the holy prophets of God, they said, have enjoined this teaching and straying away from it occasions God's punishment. Besides their detailed replies, my Jewish correspondents have sent me rare and valuable books on this subject written by their renowned scholars. These books and letters are in my custody and are open for inspection to anyone who so desires. I plan to publish a comprehensive book containing these testimonials. It behooves a rational and unprejudiced person to question why the Jews would keep this doctrine a secret, and steadfastly oppose it if they had prior knowledge that God's ordained method for the salvation of mankind was by the sacrifice of His accursed Son, Jesus?

The Jewish teachings were renewed by successive prophets, and Moses expounded the Torah publicly before hundreds of thousands of people. How is it possible then that the Jews could have forgotten this teaching passed on to them through successive prophets when they had been directed to memorize the commandments of God, to teach it to their children and to write it on their doors, frames, and sleeves? Is it conceivable, and can anyone honestly allege that, in spite of these precautions, all the sects of the Jews lost this dear doctrine on which their salvation depended? The Jews have, not only now but from the earliest times, maintained that the doctrine of salvation in the Qur'an is the same as the doctrine of salvation in the Torah. This was their testimony when the Qur'an was revealed and this is their testimony now as evident by the letters and books that they have sent to me.

There is absolutely no reason for the Jews to conceal the accursed sacrifice doctrine if they had been informed about it. Conceivably, they could have disputed that Jesus was the ordained son of God, and that his crucifixion was the one decreed for salvation. They could have argued that this was not the real son of God whose sacrifice would lead to salvation and that the real son will appear in some later time. It is inconceivable, however, that all sects of the Jews would totally deny this doctrine that was present in their Books and had been renewed by successive prophets. The Jews, their books and their scholars are all accessible and if anyone has any doubt about the veracity of the above allegation, let him inquire without any hesitation. Isn't the testimony of the Jews necessary for an intelligent seeker of truth in this matter? Aren't the Jews the first witnesses of the Torah and the ones who memorized it through the centuries? There is not a shred of evidence either in the previous revealed teachings passed down the genera-

tions, nor in the later revealed teachings about making a humble man into God and then calling him of the God and also of the Satan. How can pure natured persons accept such an irrational and filthy doctrine?

### **Can belief in the accursed sacrifice deliver one from sin?**

The absurdity of the accursed sacrifice doctrine is apparent. It runs counter to the ancient teachings of the Torah, as passed down through successive generations. It espouses the transferability of sin. It alleges that a righteous person was accursed, forsaken and cut off from God, and became likeminded with the devil. Notwithstanding these apparent shortcomings, the doctrine must still be examined to see if any benefits accrued to its adherents from believing in it. Did they eschew sin or were their sins forgiven?

Facts belie any claim that a belief in this doctrine restrains a person from sin and advances moral purification. According to Christian belief, David believed in the Redemption of Jesus. However, they also allege that subsequent to this belief (we seek refuge in Allah from saying so), David killed an innocent man (II Samuel, 12:9), committed adultery with the murdered man's wife (II Samuel, 11: 4), misappropriated State funds for personal needs, married one hundred wives, and sinned most audaciously every day, repeating those sins till his last days. If the accursed sacrifice of Jesus can make people desist from sin, then David should not have been as steeped in sin as they allege against him. Similarly, according to the Christian tradition, three ladies from the maternal ancestry of Jesus committed adultery (Matthew's genealogical table of Jesus, and the Old Testament with reference to Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba which, however, we strongly repudiate). It is obvious that if a belief in the accursed sacrifice causes internal purification, these ladies from Jesus' own ancestry would not have committed these shameful sins. The disciples of Jesus too, even after their belief, committed shameful acts of sin. Judas Iscariot sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, and Peter cursed him on his face three times, while the rest of the disciples took to their heels. It is obvious that cursing a prophet is a great sin. There is hardly any need to mention the widespread prevalence of fornication and drinking in the Western civilization. In one of my previous articles, I have referred to news reports from European papers about the adulterous affairs of many reputed Christian priests. It is apparent from all these events that belief in the accursed sacrifice is incapable of delivering man from sin. ■

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