



إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

*The
Muslim
Sunrise*

**A JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC
RENAISSANCE IN AMERICA**

In This Issue:

Jihad Against Falsehood

Islamic Laws of Marriage

The Quran and Islam in Africa:
Views of a Christian Missionary

Fourth Quarter
1990
Volume: LVI
Number: 4

WORLDWIDE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was established in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world Reformer and the Promised Messiah. The community is an embodiment of true practices of the religion of Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator, and to establish peace throughout the world. It is actively engaged in dissemination of the message of Islam. It endeavors to exert a constructive influence through social projects, educational institutions, and health services. It emphasises the urgent need of tolerance, equality and universal brotherhood. The present Supreme Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV.

WORLDWIDE BRANCHES ESTABLISHED IN:

* Abu Dhabi * Afghanistan * Algeria * Angola * Antigua * Argentina
* Australia * Austria * Bahrain * Bangladesh * Belgium * Benin * Bhutan
* Brazil * Brunei * Burkinafaso * Burma * Burundi * Canada * Congo
* China, People's Republic of * Comores * Denmark * Dominican
Republic * Dubai * Egypt * Ethiopia * Fiji Islands * Finland * France
* Gambia, The * German, Democratic Republic * Ghana * Greece *
Guinea * Guinea Bissau * Guyana * Holland * Hong Kong * Hungary
* Iceland * India * Indonesia * Iran * Iraq * Ireland, Republic of * Israel
* Italy * Ivory Coast * Japan * Jordan * Kenya * Kiribati * Kuwait *
Liberia * Libya * Malagasy Republic (Madagascar) * Malawi * Malaysia *
Mali * Mauretania * Mauritius * Morocco * Mozambique * Nauru *
Nepal * New Zealand * Niger * Nigeria * Norway * North Yemen *
Oman, Sultanate of * Pakistan * Papua /New Guinea * Philippines *
Poland * Qatar * Rasal Khaimah * Rodriguez Island (Mauritius) * Rwanda
* Sarawak Malaysia * Saudi Arabia * Senegal * Sierra Leone * Singapore
* Somalia * South Africa, Republic of * Soviet Russia (U.S.S.R.) * Spain
* Sri Lanka * Sudan * Surinam * Sweden * Switzerland * Syria *
Tanzania * Thailand * Togo * Trinidad * Tunisia * Turkey * Tuvalu -
South Pacific * Uganda * Ummul Khairan - Emirates * United Arab
Emirates * United Kingdom * United States of America * West Germany
(Federal Republic of Germany) * Western Samoa * Yemen, People's
Democratic Republic * Yugoslavia * Zaire * Zambia * Zimbabwe *
Zanzibar (Tanzania) *

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

The Muslim Sunrise is the official Journal of the American Fazi Mosque. The magazine is open for discussion on Islam as well as topics relating to other religions. It highlights the role of Islam in a changing environment. It provides a platform for public opinion on current problems confronting humanity and their solution. Opinions expressed in the magazine may not necessarily be those of the American Fazi Mosque.

Address all inquiries to:

The Editor
2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
Ph: (202) 232-3737

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor-in-Chief
Mubasher Ahmad, M.A., LL.B.

Editors
Nyceemah Ameen Yaquub
Khalil Mahmood
Aisha Sharif

Contributing Editors
Dr. Qazi Barkatullah
Dr. Qazi Masood Ahmad
Dr. M.M. Abbas
Dr. Maj Fazal Ahmad

Assistant Editors
Dr. Khalil A. Malik
Jalil Akbar
Uzma Saeed
Rashida Saeed

VOL:LVI

NO: 4

CONTENTS

JEDHAD AGAINST FALSEHOOD

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad,
Khalifatul Masih IV 3

ISLAMIC LAWS OF MARRIAGE

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad ... 19

THE QURAN AND ISLAM IN AFRICA: VIEWS OF A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY

By Tayler Lewis, LL.D. 25

HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD AS KHATAMAN NABIYYEEN

Alhaj Ataullah Kaleem 30

OLD, FAMILIAR BIBLE PASSAGES REWRITTEN ONE MORE TIME

Marjorie Hyer 37

WHY I BELIEVE IN ISLAM

Patricia Shahid 38



Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV
The Supreme Head of Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Jedhad Against Falsehood

(Commentary on Moral Deprivation in Pakistan.)

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV

[English translation of a Friday Khutba delivered on March 18, 1988, at London Mosque, United Kingdom.]

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الكَذِبُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

“It is only those who believe not in the Signs of Allah, that forge falsehood, and they it is who are liars.”

It is implied, though these words are not used, that he who is from Allah Ta'la is not a liar. Certainly those are the liars who do not believe in the Signs of Allah Ta'la, and those are the very people who are deeply rooted in falsehood.

In Pakistan all kinds of lies, slanders and false allegations are continuously being hurled against Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, and various forms of atrocities are persistently committed against Ahmadies, Brutality subsides for a short period of time, but it starts again in diverse shapes with increased intensity. Details of these atrocities cannot be given in every Friday Khutba for an extended period of time because other matters of importance also need to be attended. Nevertheless, the entire world is kept informed about the prevailing situation in Pakistan through newsletters; the Jamaats as well as others are thus regularly informed. But this does not mean that we seek any help from them or we expect any pity to be aroused by telling about the horrible cruelties against us. Our only plea is with Allah Ta'la. In our daily life we take all necessary steps in obedience to Allah's command; but neither do we expect anything from anyone other than Allah Ta'la, nor is it appropriate for a believer to expect any help from anyone but Allah. In fact, those servants of Allah who suffer for Allah's sake are never helped by anyone but Allah Himself. And we know that Allah's Decree works in different ways. Looking at the conditions through which Jamaate-Ahmadiyya is passing in Pakistan, Ahmadies are generally waiting for God's Decree of Wrath to befall on the transgressors. Allah Ta'ala soothes our wounds by the balm of His Grace; He bestows countless blessings upon us, and thus diverts our attention from our sorrows towards happiness. But still, the wounds

persist and the pain continues to be felt. Therefore, naturally, many Ahmadies are anxiously desirous to see Allah's Wrath descend upon the transgressors so that they may feel relieved of the pain in their hearts.

In this regards, I wish to warn the Jamaat that to wait for Allah's Decree of Wrath that He may annihilate an entire nation is in itself not an example of high morals. We should always pray for something good. Our prayer should be that Allah may make a clear distinction between the truthfults and the liars. He may hasten to show us "Yum-e-Furqaan". To see destruction of a nation and to nourish feelings of revenge—which we ourselves are incapable of taking, but we may wish that Allah may punish the wrongdoers—this mentality is below the dignity of a believer. Although very many historical incidents tell us that sometimes believers do wait for such a day, but the very high standard of morality of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.s.)—who possessed the highest of all noble morals and who was the best of the bests—demands that we should not succumb to feelings of vengeance. On the contrary, all of us should pray to the best of our capacity for Allah's Forgiveness and Mercy. We should pray to Allah Ta'la that He may soon bring "Yum-e-Furqaan"—the day which makes a clear distinction between the truthful and the deceitful, between right and wrong, good and evil. In fact, a believer's heart is satisfied only by seeing "Yum-e-Furqaan."

As I stated earlier, false allegations and excesses against us are continuously being committed. In some instances, atrocities are on the increase. Within the last two months several incidents have taken place, and I present to you two such incidents which are a heinous combination of tyranny, falsehood and accusation. On the 18th of January, 1988, at 11 a.m., three persons entered the Medical Clinic of an Ahmadi dentist, Dr. Naseer Ahmad at Patizen in District Nawab Shah. One of them pretended to have a toothache, and they asked him to check his tooth. Dr. Naseer Ahmad asked him to sit in the chair and started examining the man. All of a sudden the other two attacked the doctor with daggers. He tried to ward off the hits by using his wrists, but ultimately he received a deep wound in his chest and fell down. All the three culprits then ran away shouting: "We have killed a swine". No one stopped them in the open market or tried to apprehend them. No one got involved. No one came forward as a witness. I do not know yet whether or not anyone will appear as a witness out of the entire town to tell the truth with courage.

Another incident of the same nature took place exactly after one month on February 18th, 1988, on Thursday, at 7 p.m. This incident also occurred in a medical store. There is a place named Qazi Ahmad

near Nawab Shah where the main highway going to Karachi passes nearby. In this town, Malik Aziz sahib owns a medical store. Suddenly four intruders entered the store, one of them held him firmly with both his hands caught behind his back so that he could not defend himself. The other three attacked him with daggers, and inflicted several deep wounds on him. He is a courageous man, and he tried his best to avoid the direct hits of daggers by swinging his body to and fro. If the target was his heart, he moved his body to the other side so that the attacker would miss his target. One attack was made on his neck to cut his jugular vein. But he ducked down swiftly with the result that the person who was holding him from behind was pulled forward with the jerk and came under the hit of the dagger and his jugular vein was severed instead. Meanwhile, a young man who was in a nearby store frying pakoras also rushed to help. He could not find anything else but only a strainer in his hand and he started hitting the assailants with that. Hearing this commotion, some other people started approaching the scene, and the culprits tried to run away. The one who was wounded with the dagger fell down at a distance of two hundred feet and died there. Two of the remaining three were caught by the people, and one managed to escape.

After this incident, as far as the wounded Ahmadies are concerned, Allah Ta'la's help came in a miraculous way. The surgeon who took care of the second victim was saying that there was no hope to save his life. His blood type was O negative, a rare type and is hard to find. I must say about the people of the town of Qazi Ahmad that they demonstrated a very high moral character. There were a great number of non-Ahmadies who came to help. Non-Ahmadi friends provided transportation to carry the wounded to the hospital. They also came to the hospital in great number and offered their blood. As there were many volunteers to donate blood, luckily two had O negative type. Other methods were also employed, such as giving glucose, and so for the time being he is alive. There was a deep cut in his liver as well, and the doctor said that he had tried his best but there was not much hope for his survival. Nonetheless, when Allah likes to save someone then none can kill him. His life was saved and it was a wonderful miracle for all of them. Everyone who came to know about the case was astonished how that became possible.

Anyhow, these are the incidents of what happened to those two victims. Those who committed these crimes are well-known in the area. One of them is the same person who had started a series of tyrannical crimes in Sukhar. And he is known as a prominent 'maulvi' and 'pir' in the area. The same day, or the next day, he arrived with a band of his companions and tried to press charges against the Ahmadi

victim alleging that the Ahmadi had been using abusive language against the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and those four Muslims could not tolerate the insult. They were students of a school in Sukhar—the same school from where an earlier series of atrocities had started. They were visiting the town Qazi Ahmad, when they noticed lonely person sitting in his own shop was insulting and abusing the Holy Prophet. They tried to stop him, but then there were many Ahmadi rascals hiding and waiting as if everything was preplanned. They attacked those four Muslims who had tried to intervene, killed one of them, abducted the second, and caught the remaining two and handed them over to the police. The maulvi wanted the police to make a report out of that accusation. The police were well-aware what the entire town was saying. If something happens in a town, people talk about it, and the police do not make a report completely against what is known to everyone. So Allah gave strength to the police that despite great pressure, they did not entertain that criminal charge. Of the two persons who were caught, one of their statements contradicted the accusation of the maulvi. One of the apprehended culprits made the statement that four of them came into the town with the intent to kill the Ahmadi because he used to give them such literature which was insulting to the dignity of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.), and he had tried to convert them to become Ahmadies. Therefore, they came to kill him. But during the tussle, one of his men killed one of their companions. Then they took one of them away. And the remaining two were there to lodge a complaint against him. This was the complaint of those criminals who were caught red handed.

This is an on going process of falsehood and allegations in Pakistan. If Martial Law was still enforced, they would have recorded the report of this criminal case exactly as the culprits wanted to dictate. Without the Martial Law the difference is that the police do not record the reports as shamelessly as the functionaries of the Martial Law used to do. This is a somewhat satisfactory situation as compared with the past. We do not know what course this case will take under the present pressure. For this, I would like to remind the Jamaat to pray because there is no security of the property, honor and life of any Ahmadi over there. If one town has behaved in a decent manner by the Grace of Allah, it should not be taken for granted that the same will happen in other towns.

Nowhere are an Ahmadi's life, property, and honor guaranteed to be safe. Besides, an extremely filthy and contemptuous campaign is being made to disesteem the person of the Promised Messiah (a.s.). Walls are covered with abuses and all sorts of defamatory writings. In their meetings he is being called a liar over and over again. In many

other ways Ahmadies are being tormented and agonized. I am being informed repeatedly by Ahmadies about these things, and it seems to be a never-ending process. At the same time, I am informed that the common man is not responding at all to these calls of hatred.

As far as the common man is concerned, he is too busy in his own affairs. He has no interest in finding out who Ahmadies are and what they are doing. I have given much thought to this situation trying to determine why it is so. Do the common people know that the maulvies are liars and that is why they do not respond to them? Or, is there some other reason for them being non-responsive to their efforts. My analysis, which is based on the information that I receive, is that during the period of Martial Law, when an organized effort was made against Jamaate Ahmadiyya, the nation had greatly become a helpless victim to crimes. There is no interest left now in religion. The more propaganda for Islam was preached, the farther the people strayed away from Islam. And there seems to be no Islam left at all in any part of the nation's character. Thus, their disinterest in harming the Ahmadies is not because they believe Ahmadies to be innocent. We the Ahmadies are being depicted as a dirty body. And under the influence of propaganda the common person may in fact think we are a dirty body. It is not that they are completely rejecting what the maulvi is saying. They think we are dirty but still they have no interest in this matter at all. No one says that the maulvi is lying. Because of the intensity of propaganda through books, newspapers, posters, and writings on the walls, they still believe Ahmadies to be dirty. I do not think that the common person has such a keen sense to realize that what is being said against Ahmadies is rubbish and false. Propaganda in itself is a very forceful weapon, and when a lie is told repeatedly in great quantity it does have its effects. So, despite knowing all things, if they are not being motivated to mistreat Ahmadies as the maulvies wish, it should not be taken as a sign of health. It is a symptom of another disease.

In some towns, anti-Ahmadiyya meetings are going on day and night, and much filth is being thrown in the air. You can sense the hatred in the eyes of the common person against Ahmadies. But the disturbance that maulvis wanted to create on a wide scale is not taking place. The reason is that this unfortunate era has made the entire nation liars, and the entire nation is made criminals. We are receiving this information from many people that the standard of prayer which existed ten years ago, is now reduced to less than its one-tenth. Initially daily prayers were enforced, orders were passed to attend the prayer services, and even time breaks were allotted for the prayers. Now those things have become matters of laughter. A few

prayer-going persons who had started saying their daily prayers under forced commands have now ceased to go for prayers along with many others. There was a drive to enforce prohibition against the use of alcohol and other intoxicants as Islam had arrived and there was to be a complete prohibition in the country; but the consumption of alcohol has tremendously increased now in the cities. Youth, women, men, people of all levels and all kinds are now drinking liquor excessively. A friend who came from Pakistan told the story that he hired a house-servant and asked him about his pay. To his great surprise the man replied that he did not need any wages but a fixed number of bottles of liquor per month would suffice. And he was very serious in his demand. He had to be told if he needed bottles of liquor he better find a job somewhere else because he will not find any liquor in an Ahmadi home. This incident tells us about a very serious situation in Pakistan. This is the story of Martial Law which retained its life in the name of Islam but inflicted heavy damage to the very existence of Islam. The Government that came after Martial Law is completely helpless in this matter. Though it is a political Government in name yet it enjoys several protections of Martial Law, and it is a product of Martial Law. The same forces are sustaining it which were at the back of Martial Law. But comparatively it is far less powerful than Martial Law and it is completely impotent in taking any corrective or reformatory measures. It is absolutely helpless. No doubt liquor is a very harmful thing—it is a tool towards evil; yet worse than liquor is drug abuse,—use of such chemical substances that are equal to poison. These drugs not only injure the soul, but also damage the body and brain, and destroy a person completely. We are learning that everywhere in Pakistan drug abuse is rampant. In schools, colleges, universities, in the streets, in the factories, among the laborers, among the employers, all over the country an addict population is burgeoning. The appetite for drugs is phenomenal. Trade worth billions of dollars depends on this drug trafficking.

The drug addicts are greatly on the increase along with proportionate increase of criminals. When a drug user becomes an addict, he has to pay higher price for the same drug. It is the basics of this racketing. Initially drugs may be provided without any cost, but later on as the user starts enjoying it, he is asked to pay the price. When he becomes an addict he has to pay a higher price. I am told about many incidents that are horrible and ugly. A young boy who became addicted on drugs would first ask for money, but when his need increased and he did not have enough money, he started beating up his mother to extract money from her. He would torture her. Then he started stealing from the home. He stole jewelry or whatever he could find; and then he

ended up committing all sorts of crimes to satisfy his addiction. Incidents like this are not solitary examples; these are happening all over the country in excessive numbers. When the addicts cannot find anything from their own homes to steal, they start robbing others and thus become professional criminals.

On top of this sad situation, a very large quantity of weapons is being distributed inside the country. Of the weapons that were sent by the Government of the United States for the Mujjahideen, it is reported by their own specialists that the Mujjahideen received only 25 per cent of the arms and ammunition. As far as money is concerned, it is estimated that the Mujjahideen received even a lesser percentage. Now, try to imagine what would have happened to the country which received two billion dollars worth of arms, and seventy five percent of that got distributed among the people. Where did that money come from? It is closely connected with the drug problem. The money which was sent by America for Mujahideen also got distributed in the country, and more weapons were purchased by that money. There are many other factors which are causing an increase of wealth in the country. On one side poverty is increasing in some classes of people, and on the other side wealth has greatly increased. Many people coming from Pakistan tell that everyone is busy in making quick money, and it is so obvious that people have excessive money.

Weapons are in excess, liquor is in abundance, and many other immoralities are also on the increase which I do not find appropriate to mention in the Khutba. Gambling is in excess. As I have said earlier, nothing is left of daily prayers. How can a nation in this condition be excited on religious grounds? They are now living in a changed world. Their interests are now drastically different. But this should not cause any happiness to us. Actually it is an extremely painful news for us because Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya is obliged to establish the truth. Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya has to reform the morals. If Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya does not safeguard the truth and morals, then religion becomes meaningless. The more the nation is becoming a victim of falsehood, the greater becomes our problem. On one hand it is a relief that the people are not getting excited to commit atrocities in the name of religion: The entire nation has become a victim of lying, and it is disinterested in religion in word and in action. But on the other hand, for a Jamaat which has the objectives to establish the truth, to establish the true values of religion, to reform the morals, and to enliven the dead virtues, just imagine how difficult becomes the task of that Jamaat in that country!

The leaders of the same Government which raised the slogans that it had come into existence to safeguard Islam, and it would not

leave unless Islam is fully established, have now announced repeatedly that this nation is neither Muslim in character nor it deserves to be called Muslim. There is nothing left in this nation which could be named Muslim. When they took power in their hands, their declared objective was to establish Islam. But now it is conceded that this objective of theirs is not achieved. What is left to be seen in the future, only God knows better. The fact remains that this nation has turned in word and in action to be untruthful. It is sinking deeper in falsehood. Ahmadies are writing to me that the situation is very painful: the Promised Messiah (a.s.) is being vilified and disgraced in books and in magazines. Even in newspaper cross-word puzzles it is now being asked who is the imposter prophet of this age. Anyone who makes the "correct" entry would win a prize. Seeing these things, Ahmadies are extremely pained. But the Holy Quran has already declared that those who are liars would not believe. Those who do not believe are the liars. In the verse of the Holy Quran which I recited, the Holy Quran makes twice the statement about falsehood. The Quran says:

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكُذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ

Those who have inculcated the habit of telling lies, those who in their normal life make false accusations, bring false cases against each other, and fabricate untrue stories as an essential part of their lives; falsehood has become their second nature. The Quran says:

لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

How are they going to believe in the Signs of Allah? The liars do not believe in the truth. The Quran says:

وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Why don't you see that these people are the liars. Here falsehood is mentioned twice: First an analysis is made to identify the real reason for their disbelief: that is, they have already become liars. Allah does not give them any opportunity to become a believer because they are untrue in their hearts. Belief in the truth is not in accordance with their moral disposition. Therefore, it is wrong to expect from a nation

which has become habitual liars that it will believe. It is against the everlasting truth of the Holy Quran which is stated in this verse. Why don't we present them this fact. The Quranic proof is this: If a person who claims to be from God is being rejected, and those who are rejecting him are themselves habitual liars, then the very act of rejection is a proof that the claimant from God is a truthful person.

At the time when someone claims to be from God, there are two types of people: One who accept him, and the other who reject him. Now a very clear and beautiful proof is provided by the Quran to determine the truth or falsehood of the claimant: We have to see the character of those who are accepting him and of those who are rejecting him. If those who believe in him are liars and are immoral, then their belief in him will be a proof of him being a liar, too. His acceptance by them will mean nothing. But if those who reject him are habitual liar and are immoral, then their rejection will be a proof of him being the truthful. When a liar rejects someone, then in fact he is giving a proof that the person being rejected is in reality a truthful one; because he who is a liar will lie in everything. Therefore, by rejecting Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya they have shown their own sickness of falsehood. It is evident that now this nation has completely exposed itself.

At another place the infalliable Holy Quran has stated the same fact:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِهِمُ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

That the sickness of their hearts was hidden, but due to Allah's doing it so happened that the hidden diseases came to the surface and became evident:

فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا

When a hidden disease increases then it becomes known to others. It does not remain secret anymore. The Holy Quran says:

For them is a tormenting inflicting because they are liars. From this point of view, the fact that those who are rejecting the Promised Messiah (a.s.) and are increasing in their sickness of falsehood is in itself a proof of the truth of the Promised Messiah (a.s.). Their sharp decline in daily morality is making it evident that those who are rejecting cannot be truthful in the sight of Allah. If they were truthful, then Allah would not have punished them so. Those who reject a liar

and make a campaign against falsehood, should have been very much blessed by Allah. Allah helps those who wage a war against the untruthful and He bestows upon them greater signs of being truthful.

Thus, at a time when the nation gets divided into two sections: one who believes and is habitually truthful, and the other who rejects and is getting deeper in the habit of lying, then even a person of small intellect can reach the conclusion that he who is being rejected by the liars cannot be a liar. He has to be the truthful because those who are accepting him are the truthful. Thus, day by day, Allah Ta'ala is clearing up this matter. And the "Yum-e-Furqaan" that I stated earlier is closely connected with this fact. The Holy Quran says that there comes a day when a clear distinction is made between the truthful and the liars. That day does not come all of a sudden like an unexpected disaster. That day is prepared in Allah's Decree, and you are witnessing all the preparations in front of your eyes. God is taking you towards Yum-e-Furqaan. When everything becomes clearly manifest, then Allah's wrath also descends, and

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

also takes place. But it does not suit a believer of high morals that he should wait for the day of punishment. By using his observation and understanding a believer should know that Yum-e-Furqaan has already come. Allah has already initiated the process of distinction. In future it is going to culminate in a form of clear punishment from Allah. It is a logical consequence which requires just a waiting period. The nations which take this route have no chance of survival. This conclusion does not need any religious argument. Study of history makes it amply evident that the character which is appearing in this nation has always lead other nations to their complete destruction. Therefore, I advise Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya that we are not here to watch destructions of others as observers. We are created to save those who are at the verge of destruction. Someone has said:

نشد پلا کے سرانا تو سب کو آتا ہے —
مزه تو تب ہے کہ گرتے تو تمام لے ساتی

It is easy to intoxicate someone and make him fall. But the joy is when the wine-bearer braces one who tumbles.

If you are the spiritual wine-bearers, you should hold those who are about to fall. Try to breathe life in dying nations. This is your first and foremost objective. And this ought to be the objective of the truthful. If you forget this objective, then you too will start slipping into falsehood. It is imperative to safeguard this great and noble cause. You should take a start from your own hearts to safeguard this. Always search your hearts and try to discover its true inclinations. If you have an everliving determination in your hearts that you will always endeavor to save those who are dying, and you will give support to those who are falling, and help straighten the destinies of those who have become crooked, then you can rest assure that you are certainly the truthful and you are the ones who are truly alive and are given the ability to give life to others. As I have explained in the very beginning, the whole matter is that of a distinction between the truthfulness and falsehood. From this point of view I would like to advise Ahmadies that they should take care of truth in all of its aspects. I have said this earlier, but it is so important that it should be made clear once again that whenever there is a conflict between truth and falsehood, an Ahmadi must be on the side of truth.

In this area I see many flaws, errors and weaknesses. Many disputes are brought to me, and there are many cases that are sent to Qaza for arbitration, and later I have to hear them. I get the feeling that the very high standard of morality is missing in its noblest form in some Ahmadies. Instead, some Ahmadies openly tell lies. Some Ahmadies do not desist from false accusations. In minor matters they take refuge in misstatements. In family disputes, in personal differences, they openly tell lies. They ask for girls in marriages but hide things that need not be kept secret. They do not tell the whole truth. There is no doubt that Ahmadies still have far higher standard as compared to very ugly things that we see in the outside world. But the standard of an Ahmadi will not be measured by comparing it with that of the liars. Ahmadi standard will be gauged by comparing it with the truthful. And among the truthful, it will be judged with the standard of that unique personage who was the most truthful of all, that is, Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.s.) He was the Prince of Truth, and he had an exalted and shining status in the world of truthfulness. He was the Sun in the universe of truth. The Ahmadi truth will be measured by the standard of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.). As his standard of truth is extremely high, no one among us will measure up to the eminence of his truthfulness. Therefore, everyone of us should search his own heart. I am not singling out a few people. I am including myself, and all of you are with me in this. Our standard of truthfulness has been fixed by Allah Ta'la so high that even if we try our entire life to reach that

standard with utmost sincerity, even then we will not be able to measure up to perfection. But certainly it is possible that every new day that dawns on us can witness that our standard of truth is being raised. And we are progressing with utmost sincerity. On the other hand when we see those who tell lies openly, without any inhibition, who make wrong accusations, and who immediately make false excuses to gain some temporary and minor gains, then our hearts tremble with fear. We wonder if the tussle was between the truth and falsehood, then how can we tell the nation that we are the truthful and they are the liars; that the one we consider to be the truthful is really the truthful; and how can we assert that they are the liars and therefore whom they call to be untruthful cannot be liars!

This is the ultimate essence of the struggle between us and them. This is the decisive factor. Yum-e-Furqaan will result as a consequence of this situation. Therefore, Ahmadies have to be very vigilant in safeguarding their truthfulness. But human nature is so strange that a person can easily get so wrapped up in his own ignorance. Some times a liar becomes so sure and stubborn as if he were telling the truth, and considers his accuser to be the transgressor. He fights back and defends himself with full vigour. At times, a man proves to be so foolish that he becomes a slave of his own lies. He behaves in such a way as if he was truthful indeed. Hence, in some cases that come to me for disposal, though the number is small, some people put forward their false claims with great force, and they are very rigid in their demands. Perhaps I have told you earlier about a person who is writing to me telling that I should personally know that he has never told a lie in his life. While the fact is that I personally know that he has hardly ever told the truth in his life. People tell lies so boldly that it shows they have become victims of their own fabrications. They do not understand their true condition. This makes our task very difficult. Nevertheless, you should take care of your surroundings, and try to advise others. Always remember that the first and the most fundamental fact is: when someone makes a mistake and that mistake is caught, his initial reaction is to take refuge in falsehood. Now, liars are of different kinds: Some them make false excuses and then they start rationalizing their mistakes by convincing themselves with their own false excuses. Then they believe that others will also be convinced. This is done by those who are truthful than others. If they analyze their process of rationalization, they will come to know that their excuse was a lie from the very beginning. One should have moral courage to confess one's mistake. This kind of falsehood is committed to such an extent that one feels sick by looking at its enormity. Whenever someone is caught making a mistake and is questioned

about it, in a vast majority of cases he will make an excuse and try to justify why he had done so and why others could not understand. During this time he knows he is telling a lie. He knows in his heart why he was doing so. In this first reaction of one presenting himself as a pure and pious person, the intent is good but the method is wrong. It is natural that one likes to look good in front of others, but while attempting to look good in front of others, he becomes dirty in front of God. Therefore, the Holy Quran has analysed this factor by saying: it is strange that you are afraid of other people but you do not fear Allah! Thus, falsehood is a product of "SHIRK"—associating others with God. If you fully understood this point, you will be very successful in your Jihad against falsehood. Thus the Holy Quran declares falsehood to be "SHIRK" whenever you are attempting to protect yourself from being exposed as a liar, there are two entities watching you. One is human being who his not aware of the unseen, and the other is Allah who is "Aalamul Ghaib", the Knower of the Unseen. You are trying to appear nice in front of one, but are becoming ugly in front of the other. And the one in whose presence you are becoming evil should be the one in front of whom you should be good. This is how falsehood starts. Later on the potent evil is further exposed.

فِي تُلُوْبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَرَادَ هُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا

draws this picture. As the earlier sickness of making false excuses was not known to the people, God decided to let the disease increase to the extent it became manifest. These are the same people who would take the next step and indulge in open falsehood. Every falsehood has an element of self-protection. As a consequence, slowly and gradually, the entire nation becomes untruthful. Not only that one tells a lie to protect oneself, but one starts telling lies to entrap innocent people. At present, the condition of the nation is far more serious, and it has gone deeper in falsehood. Whenever there is a criminal case, a murder case, without fail many persons are implicated who were nowhere near the scene of that crime, and the prosecuting party knows that those people are innocent and they have nothing to do with that crime. If one person kills another, ten persons are incriminated. And sometimes completely innocent people are hanged. With the help of falsehood and bribe a case is made so strong that an innocent person has no way to defend himself.

about it, in a vast majority of cases he will make an excuse and try to justify why he had done so and why others could not understand. During this time he knows he is telling a lie. He knows in his heart why he was doing so. In this first reaction of one presenting himself as a pure and pious person, the intent is good but the method is wrong. It is natural that one likes to look good in front of others, but while attempting to look good in front of others, he becomes dirty in front of God. Therefore, the Holy Quran has analysed this factor by saying: it is strange that you are afraid of other people but you do not fear Allah! Thus, falsehood is a product of "SHIRK"—associating others with God. If you fully understood this point, you will be very successful in your Jihad against falsehood. Thus the Holy Quran declares falsehood to be "SHIRK" whenever you are attempting to protect yourself from being exposed as a liar, there are two entities watching you. One is human being who his not aware of the unseen, and the other is Allah who is "Aalamul Ghaib", the Knower of the Unseen. You are trying to appear nice in front of one, but are becoming ugly in front of the other. And the one in whose presence you are becoming evil should be the one in front of whom you should be good. This is how falsehood starts. Later on the potent evil is further exposed.

فِي تُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا

draws this picture. As the earlier sickness of making false excuses was not known to the people, God decided to let the disease increase to the extent it became manifest. These are the same people who would take the next step and indulge in open falsehood. Every falsehood has an element of self-protection. As a consequence, slowly and gradually, the entire nation becomes untruthful. Not only that one tells a lie to protect oneself, but one starts telling lies to entrap innocent people. At present, the condition of the nation is far more serious, and it has gone deeper in falsehood. Whenever there is a criminal case, a murder case, without fail many persons are implicated who were nowhere near the scene of that crime, and the prosecuting party knows that those people are innocent and they have nothing to do with that crime. If one person kills another, ten persons are incriminated. And sometimes completely innocent people are hanged. With the help of falsehood and bribe a case is made so strong that an innocent person has no way to defend himself.

If atrocities like this are daily on the rise, how can Allah's grace descend on such people. Everyday disappointment is deepening. Therefore, remember if falsehood is a sickness then it will not remain limited to its initial stage. It will definitely grow, and with its growth the sickness will spread everywhere taking very dreadful forms. Then your relationship with Allah will be severed because Allah does not keep any relationship with the transgressor. Ultimately there will remain no hope for His mercy. In this condition if someone claims that he has a love for Allah's loved one, he is telling a lie. The maulvies and pirs accuse a person of murder on whose life a murderous attempt was made. There cannot be a worse example of false accusation. But still they remain pirs and religious scholars. Such persons do not have any right to claim closeness to the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.). And to say that they killed someone out of love of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) becomes profoundly ridiculous. Falsehood and truth have nothing to do with each other, there is no relation at all. Therefore, falsehood cannot exist side by side with the love of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.s.). This is their plight.

Living in such a society, Ahmadies have to realize immediately their own state of affairs. They have to analyse the inclinations of their hearts. If they do not try to correct the situation in a well-coordinated manner, and they do not launch a campaign to eradicate the disease from among themselves, there cannot be any guarantee that their truthfulness will remain in tact. People in smaller groups are effected slowly and gradually. To counter this, one needs to launch a well-conceived struggle against it. Therefore, Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya Worldwide in general, but Jamaat in Pakistan in particular should chalk out a plan against falsehood.

This campaign should start from within the homes. As I have stated, once the habit of telling lies is formed, it leads to all kinds of evils. So, try to fully understand one more thing: False actions originate falsehood. If you analyse a given situation, you will discover that one tries to cover up a mistake by telling a lie. This being a fact, an Ahmadi has to start performing truthful actions to guarantee his truthfulness. There are very few courageous people who, when caught doing something wrong, would tell the truth. Therefore, if an Ahmadi wants to be truthful, he has to perform truthful actions. You cannot keep truthfulness along with a wrong action. The matter of the fact is that whatever comes on the tongue first takes birth in your heart and then it is transformed into an action. If your action is truthful, then you will speak the truth. If the action is false then falsehood will be manifested. When I say that you should wage Jihad against falsehood, I do not mean that you should merely suppress its

symptoms, you should uproot the disease. Wage a Jihad against those actions which are naturally going to breed falsehood. If wrong actions have taken roots then it becomes very difficult to fight falsehood. Moreover, children should be made courageous in their earlier stage. If you start working on children with diligence then your task will comparatively become easy. The mother has a tremendous responsibility, and in the same manner the father and elder brothers and sisters, too. They should bring up children in an atmosphere of truthfulness. Not even in a joke should they allow them to tell a lie. When he does something wrong but tells the truth, then do not be harsh to that child. Forgive him, because if you punished him when he told the truth, he will become afraid and tell a lie next time. If a child forms a habit of telling lies, it becomes very difficult to bring him back towards telling the truth. Anyhow, it is a subject that needs discussion in great length; but at present I have given you two basics concerning it: first is "SHIRK"—fear of anyone else other than Allah. When fear of some one else becomes dominant in contrast to Allah's fear, and fear of Allah is subdued, at that time man has no right to say "LA HAUL". When fear of someone else has already dominated you, then to say "ILLA BILLA" becomes meaningless. Similarly, the subject of "LA ILLAHA" is also closely related with this matter. When you take someone else as your "ILLAHA" then there remains nothing of "LA ILLAHA ILLALLAH" to work for you. From this point of view, to wage a war against "SHIRK" and against falsehood are one and the same thing.

The second point is if we really want to eradicate falsehood from society, we have to give more thought to good deeds and we have to safeguard Ahmadies from crimes. Wage a war against all kinds of crimes, so that the life of an Ahmadi stays pure and he does not feel the need of telling falsehood. Moreover, if someone feels compelled to tell a lie because of his evil deeds, then inculcate in him the fear of Allah and see that he gets moral courage to be ready to face the consequences of his evil deeds. And he should not depend upon any false god. It is the same subject of "SHIRK". For this, as I have said earlier, there is a great need to train children from the beginning. In our country illiteracy prevails. Illiteracy is also in other countries but in our country it is very deeply connected with falsehood. Most of the parents and elders see falsehood in children but they just laugh about it; they enjoy a child's cleverness and talk how he fooled someone and how he told a lie. Thus they become responsible for destruction of the next generation, and commit a great crime against God and humanity.

I hope that this campaign against falsehood will be launched under a well-conceived, well-organized, detailed, and effective plan. It

is a duty of Majlise Aamilaa of each country to review the situation in its respective country. The easiest way to handle this is they should take into account different disputes between Ahmadies. If lies are not being told at the time of a dispute, then the people are truthful. But if truth is being held back during disputes, then the nation cannot be considered as truthful. If the number of cases is large, the possibility of telling lies is proportionately great. And if the number of cases is less, then lying would also be less. This is another symptom. The greater the number of conflicts in a Jamaat, the higher would be the inclination toward false actions. The amount of falsehood at times of differences should reflect the status of falsehood in a nation. Therefore, I hope that we shall start reviewing the present situation with careful analysis and wisdom, and after correct diagnosis we will endeavor to remove the ills.



ISLAMIC LAWS OF MARRIAGE

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad

It should be known that there were no hard and fast rules among the Arabs governing marriage and divorce. They followed certain customs which varied with individuals and tribes, hence there were different customs with different tribes in the various parts of the country.

It should be generally understood that the Arabs were not very scrupulous with regard to marriages among blood relations. Even step-mothers were not spared. Examples of forcible marriage with the widows of near relations against their will were not wanting. Again there were different ways of performing marriages among the Arabs, of which the following four were more frequently practiced than others. Polygamy was the order of the day. The number of wives depended mostly upon the personal need of an individual, his financial condition and his fondness for females. There was no law governing justice among wives nor was there any obligation upon the husband concerning his wife or on the wife concerning her husband. Everything depended upon the will of the husband. The husband could divorce his wife at will. But the wife could not get a divorce from her husband if she so desired. Even after divorce, self-willed men continued their control over their wives whom they had divorced. They did not allow them to re-marry. There were no laws governing the Iddat (a prescribed period). As soon as she was divorced she was free to re-marry. Women were always at the mercy of their husbands who treated them cruelly. They were no better than chattel. But with the advent of Islam there came a wonderful and striking change in the condition of women. Islam established equal rights between husband and wife except where discipline required the superiority of one over the other. The work of maintaining and supervising their rights were entrusted, not to the husband, but to the government who was to look after the rights particularly of the wife and regulate their mutual relations.

Islam strictly required men not only to be just to women but to be very kind and lenient to them so that some of the companions came to hold the view that Islam has granted complete liberty to women. As a matter of fact, marriage is a sort of civil contract between a man and woman in which the elements of love, fidelity, hallowness and perpetuity dominate but in extreme cases it may be brought to nought which is technically called divorce, Khula or break-up of the marriage contract.

1. A Muslim man may marry any female except those who are forbidden. There are no limitations of tribe, nation or race. Prohibited relations are: Mother, father's wife, fostermother, daughter, wife's daughter, sister, foster-sister, aunt (mother's sister, father's sister), niece (brother's daughter, sister's daughter), mother-in-law, son's wife, all married woman, and wife's sister while the wife is alive.

2. Marriage is a contract between husband and wife for which their mutual consent is essential. There can be no marriage without mutual agreement between husband and wife.

3. Notwithstanding the limitations of purdah Islam permits man and woman before marriage to have a glance at each other so that there may arise no further trouble as regards appearance.

4. Islam requires that marriage be solemnized before the eyes of the public, secret marriage is disallowed. In order to give further publicity to the marriage the husband should arrange a feast to which relatives, friends and neighbours may be invited. This is known as Waleema or the marriage feast.

5. If under special circumstances the guardian of a minor boy or a girl, wishes to arrange their marriage, he may do so but on reaching the age of puberty, the boy or the girl may, if either of them find it undesirable, declare the marriage null and void. This is known in the terminology of Islam as *Khiyarul Baloogh*. Marriage of a minor boy or a girl before the age of puberty only means the announcement of nikah ceremony and not the actual intercourse between the boy and the girl which is possibly only when both have reached the age of puberty.

6. True it is that marriage cannot be contracted without the mutual agreement of the boy and girl and if, under special circumstances marriage was solemnized in infancy it might be annulled in case of disagreement between man and woman, but the fact remains that the girl particularly a virgin, being naturally innocent, having no experience of the world and being ignorant of those essentials on which the happiness of domestic life depends, and because she is easily swayed away by passions which suppress her intellect and reason, Islam requires her father or a near guardian to advise and guide her in the matter of matrimonial affairs so that she may not be led astray by the trickery of clever and irresponsible people. In case there is disagreement between the father as guardian and the girl

herself the choice of the girl will have preference but in such a case it will be essential to refer the case to the court so that if the girl were being tricked into a wrong course, the wrong might be averted. In the case of a widow, however, the permission of the Wali (guardian) although desirable, is not essential, because she has had experience of married life and understands how best to lead a happy life, and she can decide better in her own case.

The system of guardianship over women is more or less found in almost all the religions of the world but Islam has given it a definite and detailed legal shape. It is extremely useful and full of blessings. It puts a stop to many evils and prevents many a simple girl from falling into a trap set by clever and irresponsible persons. In Western countries where there is greater freedom in the choice of husbands, wily people marry against the will or knowledge of their guardians and when the fraud begins to disclose itself and sexual passions begin to subside the house which they had taken for a paradise becomes hell. In the beginning there is carelessness on the part of the husband, then disunion, then frequent quarrelling then separation and lastly divorce.

Another beauty of the system of guardianship is that the foundation of nikah (marriage) is based not on passions but upon the moral and spiritual traits of character of the husband, his financial and social condition, temperament, mutual agreement, age and health etc. It is evident that when a young couple is left all alone, their mutual talk will be dominated by carnal passion and all other items will go to the back-ground. The result is simply disastrous. But guardianship averts the danger to a large extent because the wisdom and experience of the guardian serves as a beacon light that dispels darkness. Hence the system is doubly blessed because it allows the woman to have full liberty of choice and provides a safeguard against carnal passions and falling a prey to the trickery and machinations of wily and treacherous people.

7. *Mahr* or the nuptial gift is an integral part of Islamic marriage. It is incumbent on the husband to apportion according to his means a certain fixed sum of money, or a portion of his property to his wife mutually agreed upon by the parties. The *Mahr* is a sort of debt which the husband is legally bound to pay. The wife is at complete liberty to spend it as she likes. It is in addition to the share of property which she receives at the time of her husband's death. In other words a woman acquires wealth from three sources viz., from her parents, from her

husband and from the Mahr, which the husband owes to her. Strangely enough, she has no liabilities.

8. It is the husband who is solely responsible for the total expenses of his wife and children.

9. Husband and wife may, at the time of marriage, contract an agreement which may be binding on both, but the nature of the agreement may be such as it should not run counter to the teachings of Islam, it may not be morally objectionable or adversely affect the rights of the third party. According to the principle if a woman cannot tolerate the presence of a second wife, she may have the condition that her husband would not marry a second wife so long as she is his wife. Whereas polygamy according to Islam is not obligatory on every Muslim, rather a concession in special circumstances; such a condition would not adversely affect the third party hence it is permissible.

10. Islam recognises the equality of rights between husband and wife except that the former is the head of the family, but even in this respect he is not absolutely free, he is bound to be kind to his wife, sympathetic, obliging and tolerant and, as head of the family, he has the right to take a disciplinary action against his wife, but he must remain within bounds. The Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was particularly kind towards his wives. We have the well-known Tradition:

“The best of you is he, who is the most kind to his wife.” Again it is reported of him that he used to say that the woman resembles a curved bone or a rib, if you try to straighten it, it won't serve the purpose for which it is created with a curve, it would break rather than get straightened.

Similarly the women have certain natural curves which may appear as drawbacks or weaknesses in her, but in reality they are her beauties. If one tries to straighten her he won't be successful and the result would be that she would 'break' as it were, but won't be 'straightened'. Either she would lose health, wealth and everything in her husband's house and would pine away a total wretch or she would be forced to get divorce from him. Therefore one should not try to straighten her natural curve but bear with her. “The curve is the highest part of the rib”, says the Holy Prophet meaning thereby that the curve is the very beauty of the fair sex and the greater the curve,

the more thorough her charms of woman-hood. The Holy Prophet's wise interpretation suggests to the husband the right method of dealing with his wife. He has brought home to the Muslims that if a woman's certain movements prove a source of trouble or inconvenience try to mend them properly but do not try to obliterate them as they are a part of her nature and if they remain within limits, they will be a source of pleasure and the basis of happy domestic life.

11. According to Islam it is incumbent upon the wife to be obedient to her husband, she must behave faithfully and lovingly toward her husband, she must be a jealous guardian of his property and honour, she must bring up his children properly and look after the domestic affairs of the family.

12. According to Islam the rights and obligations of husband and wife have a legal aspect, they can be referred to the court of law in case there is a quarrel between the two. The Hadith tells us that Muslim women brought their complaints against their husbands to the Holy Prophet who decided justly and sympathetically between them. The particular attention paid to the women led the Muslims to remark that Islam has granted almost complete freedom to women.

MARRIAGE

(from the diary of the Kahalifatul Masih II)

Marriage is a very delicate and important matter. As a matter of fact very few other matters are as important. Marriage entails a heavy responsibility for man and woman both; but I find very few people realize it and when it is attempted it is done on a very inadequate scale. It is indeed a very great responsibility.

Now there are two things, the perfection of divine law and the maintenance and sustenance of human species. The first has been perfected, as there is no human need for which Islam has not provided. As to the second, so long as it cannot be incontrovertibly established that humanity is to go on (pass away), we must admit that in the divine plan of things humanity must stay, for it is the heart of man that has become the seat of divine manifestation.

Now what is this marriage? It is simply a means to carry out the divine plan. God wishes that man must procreate, propagate and spread, and thus maintain himself as the most wonderful and sublimest of the divine creation. We cannot affirm with any exactitude how long a period it took to bring about the great transformation in the universe, the result of which was man. Perhaps billions or trillions of lives must have been lived before human life was evolved. Therefore it is to sustain, maintain and perfect this *summum genus* that the marriage plan has been devised by the great designer of the universe. In other words, it is a part of the universal plan.

Now marriage is the only means by which this process can be continued and by marriage I mean the union of man and woman for this great purpose of procreation.

The word marriage may sound like an ordinary thing but it is really a consecration of that great divine plan, and as such it is of so great an importance that I would put it next only to our relation with God and it is our bounden duty to see that it is duly respected and adhered to faithfully. The Islamic law has only distinguished between two sets of rules, the one pertaining to God Himself, and the other to our fellow beings. Marriage therefore falls into the second category and may be considered to be its chief prop. The Islamic law has made the most of it but there are many people who do not seem to understand it fully neither do they try to benefit themselves by it. Their case is just like that of a baby who would be quite willing to barter a precious diamond for a base copper coin. I wish people could only realize its importance.

We need not enter into controversial subject how first man came into being. It is rather immaterial.



The Quran and Islam in Africa: Views of a Christian Missionary*

By Tayler Lewis, LL.D.

Several months ago Dr. Pinney, the well-known agent of the Colonization Society, brought to me a manuscript copy of the Koran, written by a Mandingo Negro. It commenced abruptly with the XIXth *Surat*, or chapter, but from thence continued unbroken to the end.

It was very beautifully written in the large, bold hand that distinguishes the Western style of Arabic writing, and bore quite a strong resemblance to some of the older and more distinct specimens of Arabic chirography given in De Sacy's Grammar. It had interlined, or rather between each verse, and sometimes between clauses and single words, a running commentary in red ink, and occupying about as much space as the text. This was made up by brief extracts from the great Koranic commentators, such as Beidhawi and Zamakhshari. A peculiar feature, however, was the continual recurrence of very plain grammatical notes, given in the peculiar technics of Arabic grammar, but evidently adapted to young and uninstructed minds. They pointed out sometimes the number of the noun or the object of the verb, and very frequently the meaning of the more learned or less known words. The inference from this was that it had been transcribed from some copy much used in schools. Dr. Pinney thought it has been written from memory. This would seem hardly possible; and yet the wonder is much diminished by what we are told of Muslim teachers, some of whom have read and recited the Koran hundreds and even thousands of times. There could be no doubt, however, of its having been written in Liberia, in a very rapid manner, and by one removed from aids he might have had in his native home. The very appearance of this curious volume gave evidence of the way in which it had been made up; for it was nothing more, externally, than a coarse folio ledger, like those employed in the custom-house, and furnished to the native scribe for this particular service.

I could not help feeling a wonderful interest in this strange book. It seemed like a stream of light coming from one of the darkest places of the earth, as many, in their ignorance, have regarded it. This single volume, thus constructed, brought evidence of many other things along with it. It told us of religion where we had thought there existed

only the grossest forms of Fetish idolatry, for the most orthodox Christian need not hesitate to say that Islam is religion, pure religion, as far as it goes. The Koran is a very devout book. There appears everywhere in the *Yirath Jchowah*, or religion in its pure primary etymological idea, as "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Besides its pure monotheistic aspect, Islam is eminently a religion of prayer, though lacking the Christian idea of a divine human mediator-ship. God as lawgiver, as judge, as an ever-watchful Providence, never losing sight of individuals or nations, appears on almost every page of the Koran. It represents him as the executor of a stern retribution, and yet as exhibiting a melting tenderness that reminds us of the strong contrasts of the Hebrew prophets. In short, there are to be found in it, most powerfully expressed, those fearful aspects of religion which give to the more loving attributes of Deity their most precious value, but which seem to be losing their dread conservative force, even in what we call our "evangelical theology." The Resurrection, the great and final judgment, the doom of the wicked—it would be difficult to find language stronger than that in which the Koran sets forth these, whilst ever holding up the thought of a particular Providence, and of a retribution that never slumbers, even in this world. A thing, however, to be especially noted is the strong contrast it seems fond of presenting between the present and the future life; although its pictures of the latter may be justly blamed as having too much of a sensual aspect. This contrast appears in the very names so oft occurring. The present world is *dunya*, the *near*, the *mean*, the *inferior*; it is *ajelun*, the *hastening*, *transient*, swiftly *passing away*; the life to come (the *acherat*, or after state) is *chuldun*, the *abiding*, the *perennial*, the *eternal*.

We may, as Christians, fearlessly admit those excellencies of the Koran, when we call to mind an important and even essential distinction between it and other books called sacred, which some are fond of placing in parallelism with the Christian Scriptures. The Koran is a reflection of the Bible; it is grounded on the Old Testament Scriptures; it would never have been had not Judaism and Christianity been before it. It professes to be a revival of the grand old patriarchal or Abrahamic worship. It might almost be called an apocryphal book of the Bible, ranking among writings which we esteem most valuable or even sacred, and having a reflection, as it were, of the Bible inspiration, though we cannot regard them as canonical, or possessed of the same Christ-sanctioned authority. The Koran admits the divine authority of the Scriptures, both New and Old. It speaks not only reverently, but tenderly and lovingly, of Jesus, or "*Isa aben Maryam*, the "Word of Truth," as it calls him, *Surat xix*.

35.

Belief in Islam furnishes a more encouraging basis for missionary effort than can be found among the followers of the worn-out religions of Brahma, Buddha, and Confucius. The very fact that the Koranic religion is sharply controversial is an evidence of its vitality. It has something to contend for, and we ought to esteem it the more highly on that very account. It is better to meet the zealous Islamite in this way than to encounter the meaningless pantheism of the Hindu, who has lately been so much applauded by his fellow Nothinarians in England, or the stolid indifference of the Chinese, who says: "Our Josh, your Josh: your Josh for you, our Josh for us; all very good Josh." A contest with a religion that has such a living basis to it, however erroneous or deficient we may esteem it, is all the more hopeful in the end; and, for his own soul's health, the missionary might well prefer these Koran-taught Mandingo Negroes, as his field of labor, to the conscience-deadened inhabitants of Thibet, China, or Japan.

The contrast between the religions is not greater than that between the books by which they are represented. Take the cold abstractions, the dry mysticism, the thin philosophisms, which are held up to our admiration from the Hindoo books, whatever may be their date, or the poor, barren worldliness which is all that we get from the best selections made from the writings of Confucius; compare them with the glowing devotion, the sublime earnestness, the pure, distinct, and lofty theism of the Koran, and we cease to wonder at the fact of its triumph wherever it met those lifeless creeds. It was not from age alone that they were powerless; but because they never had in them that strong *conservative* element which distinguishes the Christian, Jewish, and Islamic theism; in other words, "*the fear of the Lord*," the awe of a holy, personal, retributive, sin-hating, right-loving God. We thus understand, too, why it is that Islam has so much vigor at the present day.

The Koran is, indeed, a wonderful book. As a short yet convincing proof of this, I would refer the reader to an admirable article by Prof. Blyden, of Liberia College, in the January number of the *Methodist Quarterly Review*. It gives a remarkable clear and striking account of African Islam. Taken in connection with another article on the same subject, and for the same *Quarterly*, written a number of years ago, by Prof. Dwight, of Brooklyn, it deserves the thorough and respectful study of all Christian scholars. They would make us ashamed, as we ought to be, of that vile prejudice against the Negro which still possesses the minds of so many, even among those who claim to be his friend. A special value, however, of this well-written article of Prof. Blyden (himself a colored man) is the intelligent and scholarly testimony it bears to the literary excellence of the Koran. This he

defends, not only against the common ignorant estimate, but in opposition to the great authority of Gibbon, who pronounces the book a series of "incoherent rhapsodies." Boldly, yet most justly and intelligently does Prof. Blyden maintain that the great historian ventures an opinion upon a matter of which, from his ignorance of the Arabic, as well as from his own peculiar irreligious idiosyncrasy, he was a very incompetent judge. He misunderstood the poetical character of the Koran, and was unable to estimate the great loss it suffered by being stripped of its very musical and remarkable rhythm. This is well shown by the author of the article. But the argument may be carried still further. Not only does the thought, in such case, lose the added charm of its musical accompaniment; but is, in itself, essentially injured. It is not merely the loss of euphony. By regarding it as prose, the reader is placed in a wrong position for judging of its ideal merit. The poetical portion of the Bible suffers in this way; but less, because the rhythm, consisting mainly in the parallelism, which is still, in a measure, preserved in the poorest translation, keeps up some feeling that it is poetry we are reading. In a translation, the Koran appears as the baldest prose. It suffers without any compensation; and the reason can be briefly stated. The strength as well as the beauty of poetry consists in the clear feeling of its emotional transitions. There is a real train of thought; and it is all the more striking, when we perceive it, because its links are in the feeling, rather than in the logical understanding. A figure in one verse suggests an idea in that which follows. The flow of emotion carries us over the interval. We are on the lookout for transitions of this kind; when they come, we are prepared for them. There is something of a pleasant surprise, indeed; but this adds vigor to the emotion, and clearness to the thought of which the emotion is the life. We learn to recognize such connections, slight as they may appear in themselves, with even a livelier appreciation than those of a closer kind. This is because we are reading it as poetry, and are kept in this channel of feeling by the constant suggestion of the rhythm. Now, when read as prose, not only is the rhythm lost, on which the thought runs smoothly (*or on its wheels*, as Solomon says, Prov. XXV. 11), but the mind is turned altogether in a wrong direction for apprehending rightly the train of ideas. We immediately expect the closer logical connections. Missing these, and not finding the emotional links that supply their place, we pronounce it, as Gibbon did, an unmeaning, incoherent rhapsody.

Another Mandingo Arabic manuscript, in the same style with that of the Koran first mentioned, has been printed from photographic plates, through the liberality of H. M. Schieffelin, of New York, and

generously sent to persons interested in such studies. It is a letter from the King of Musadu, a town far in the interior, to the President of Liberia, and written by the Negro schoolmaster of the place. It possesses a similar interest in respect to its chirography, the religious feeling it occasionally exhibits, and its Koranic references. Its frequent blessings and invocations may be as serious, or they may be as formal, as the reciprocal salutations of Boaz and his reapers—Ruth ii. 4; but they indicate what may be called the communal religious interest—stereotyped, it may be, into formalism, yet showing an original source once warm with religious zeal, and still preserving a measure of at least social vitality. Another interest of this letter is in the glimpse it gives us of Mandingo literature, as shown by its citations from the *Makamat*, or seances, of Hariri, the most renowned, perhaps among the choice Arabian classics, and of which De Sacy has given such a splendid edition. There is a temptation to go into a fuller account of the Mandingo culture, as thus exhibited, but this communication is already too long, and sufficient has been said, perhaps, to arouse the attention of those who may have interest in such out-of-the-way matters.

* From the New York Independent, April 6, 1871; originally published with the title "The Koran, African Muhammadism".



Holy Prophet Muhammad

(Peace and Blessings of Allah be on him)

as *Khataman Nabiyyeen*

A Misunderstanding Removed

Alhaj Ataullah Kaleem

It is alleged that Ahmadies do not believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad to be *Khataman Nabiyyeen*. This is based on gross misrepresentation of the Ahmadiyya views and I would like to present the following to remove this misunderstanding.

At the very outset I would like to state categorically that the Ahmadies believe the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) to be *Khataman Nabiyyeen*—*Seal of the Prophets*, as has been stated in the Holy Quran and it is an awful fabrication against the Ahmadies that they do not believe in the doctrine of *Khatm-i-Nabuwat*. The difference is only in interpretation of the title and not in the title itself.

SEAL OF PROPHETS

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam (peace be on him), says:

“I swear by the glory of God and His Majesty that I am of the faithful, a Muslim and I believe in Allah, the High, in His Books, and in His Messengers and in His Angels and in life after death. And I believe that our Prophet Muhammad, the Elect of God (peace of Allah be on him and His blessings) is the most eminent of the Prophets and the Seal of Apostles” (*Hamamatul Bushra*, Page 6).

He again says:

“The charge made against me and my Community that we do not believe the Messenger of Allah (peace be on him and His blessings) to be the Seal of Prophets is a big falsehood. The faith, the conviction, certitude and the utterness that characterize our belief in the Holy Prophet as the seal of Prophets, are markedly absent in the belief of these people (those who level this charge at us)” (*Al-Hakam*, 19th March, 1905).

Many Muslims believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing of God be on him) is the last prophet and that no prophet can come after him. I shall first state and examine the arguments that are given in support of this belief, then show that this is true only in a certain sense.

The Holy Quran says: "*Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of God and Khataman-Nabiyyeen—the Seal of the Prophets*" (33:40).

The real meaning of Khatam is a seal (see *Tajul Aroos, Lisanul Arab, and Qamoos*), and the phrase should be interpreted in the light of this meaning. Ibn Khaldun says it is wrong to interpret the word Khatam in this verse to mean the last or the end. (see *Muqaddama* Vol. II, p. 54, Paris). He holds that the word Khatam denotes the consummation and completion of a thing, which he further explains by the words, authenticity, perfection and validity.

When a seal is put to a letter it becomes authentic and complete. The seal may be put in the end or in the beginning. According to him, therefore, *Khataman Nabiyyeen* would mean the truest and the most perfect of prophets and not the last in point of time. It refers to his status and place among the prophets and not to the time of his advent.

USE OF THE WORD KHATAM

In one of his sayings the Holy Prophet calls him uncle, Abbas, Khatamul Muhajireen (see *Kanzul Ommal*, Vol. VI, p. 178). But it does not mean that Abbas was the last refugee of the whole Muslim world.

Similarly, Ali is called Khatamul Auliya (see *Tafseer Safee* under 33:40). Ibn Khaldun says this phrase is understood to mean that Ali was a perfect saint and not the last (see *Muqaddama*, Vol. II, pp. 165-167).

An Arab poet, Hasan bin Wahab, calls Abu Tamam (the compiler of *Himasa*) Khatamush-Shuara. (see *Wafyatul A'yan Li Ibn Khallikan*, Vol I, p. 123, Cairo). Obviously Abu Tamam was not the last poet. The word Khatam, therefore, used in such phrases means the best and not the last.

The context of a verse is a most important factor in determining its true meaning. If we look into the context of the words we are further assured of the same meaning.

The verse runs as follows:— "*Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of God and Khataman-Nabiyyeen.*" God is obviously refuting an objecting, viz., Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) has no male issue.

Elsewhere we read in the Quran: "*Surely it is the enemy and not thou who shall be childless and without posterity.*" (108:3).

SPIRITUAL CHILDREN

These words are said to have been revealed when Al-Aas Ibn Wael called the Holy Prophet as "Abtar" (having no children or posterity) on the death of his son Al-Qasim (see Jalaluddin's *Commen-*

tary under 108:3). As an answer to this taunt of the enemies, God declared in the verse under discussion that the line of his physical male descendants is no doubt cut off by the death of his sons but as Muhammad (P.B.H.) is a Messenger of God he possesses devoted followers who shall form a continuous and long line of spiritual descendants to keep his memory and name and teachings alive for ever and ever.

The followers of a prophet are often described as his spiritual children. The meaning of the word *Khataman-Nabiyyeen* must fit in with this context. To say that Muhammad (P.B.H.) is the last of the prophets and there shall be no prophet after him does no credit to him. His enemies could at once add an insult by saying that Muhammad (P.B.H.) failed to produce a progeny in the spiritual sense of the word also and thus proved himself (God forbid) barren and "Abtar" in every respect.

According to the context, therefore, the Seal of the Prophets must mean that the spiritual descendents of Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) would be of no mean order. They would, God says, attain to great spiritual distinctions so much so that by following in his footsteps some of them would even become prophets.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) is called here the Lord Privy Seal or the Lord Keeper of the great Divine Seal of Prophethood, which not only ratifies and authenticates the office of the previous prophets but also awards the distinctive mark of prophethood to those who make themselves worthy of it (*Haqeeqatul Wahy* p. 56).

We read in the Bible: "The Lord will make thee the head and not the tail; thou shalt be above only and thou shalt not be beneath" (Deut, 28:13).

To be the tail of a line, therefore, is no credit or distinction. Even if we take the phrase *Khataman Nabiyyeen* to mean the last of the prophets; we must interpret it as meaning that he is the last in the sense that he has attained a degree of perfection beyond which it is impossible for anyone to go. He has exhausted all the degrees of perfection and none can ever excel or supersede him. He is the Head of the prophets and not the tail.

NO NEW CODE

He is the greatest not because he appeared last of all but because he has brought a law which is absolutely final and can never be replaced or excelled. Ibn Khaldun also mentions this meaning in his *Muqaddama* (Vol. II, p. 165, Paris). Ali Bin Muhammad Sultan Al-Qari (Mulla Ali Qari) interprets this phrase in the same sense. He says that

it means that there will not come a prophet after Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) who could cancel his law and who is not a follower of his (*Mauzooat Kabeer*, p. 69). Sheikh Mohyud Din Ibn Arabi says that the prophethood which brings law is finished with the advent of Muhammad (P.B.H.) (*Fosoosul Hikam*, p. 140)

Shah Waliullah Muhaddis of Delhi writes that Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) was the last of the prophets in the sense that there will appear no one after him to promulgate a new law of the people (*Tafheemate Ilahiya*, 53).

Syed Abdul Karim Jeelani says: "The prophetic law is finished and completed with the Holy Prophet and he was called Khataman Nabiyyeen (*Al-Insanul Kamil*, ch. 36). Maulana Abdul Hay of Lukhnow says: "It is not impossible that a new prophet may appear during or after the age of Muhammad, but the brining of a new code of religion is an absolute impossibility (*Dafi Wasawis fee asr ibn Abbas*, p. 12).

THE TRADITIONS

I shall now deal with the Hadith (Traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, P.B.H.) on this subject. The Holy Prophet (P.B.H.) said to Ali ibn Abi Talib: "You are to me as Aaron was to Moses, except that *La Nabiyya Ba'adi*" (Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, Mishkat). The last words are translated as: there is no prophet after me.

On the basis of these words it is contended that if it were really possible for anyone to become a prophet, no one could have been more deserving than Ali, who was not only a near relation of but succeeded the Holy Prophet as the 4th Khalifa.

The words were spoken when the Holy Prophet was going to Tabook and appointed Ali as the Ameer at Medina after him. Ali was desirous of participating in the battle and did not wish to stay behind. The Holy Prophet, therefore, reminded Ali of the importance of his work by referring to Aaron who was appointed Ameer of the Israelites when Moses went to Mount Sinai.

Aaron was the brother of Moses and a prophet of God. Ali was a cousin but not a prophet. The Holy Prophet could not be blunt but he must not be misunderstood in such matters. Therefore, he added that he was not leaving a prophet behind him. The word *Ba'ad* means behind (see Lane's Lexicon Book 1, p. 225).

The context shows that the idea was to tell Ali that he was being left behind like Aaron but he was not a prophet. The words cannot refer to any remote future. They were used and meant for that particular occasion. The word *Ba'ad* is often used in this sense. In verse 7:149 of the Holy Quran this word is translated by Pickthall as

'after I had left you.'

The word *Ba'ad* is also used in the sense of *Ma'a*, i.e., with (Lane's Lexicon Book 1, p. 225). In this sense the sentence *La Nabiyya Ba'dee* would mean that there was no prophet with him.

It is curious to note that in the Shia traditions the words used are *Laisa Ma'ee Nabiyyun*, i.e., there is no prophet with me (Amalee). In other tradition the words reported are quite clear. The prophet added "except that thou art not a prophet" (*Tabaqati Kabeer*, Vol. V, p. 15).

There is another tradition which is very clear. "Do you not desire to be what Aaron was to Moses except that you are not a prophet" (*Biharul Anwar, Kitabul Manaqib*, Vol. 9, Iran).

Taking the word *Ba'ad* to mean after, we can interpret the sentence in another way. If we go into the idiom of language we find that the words are not to be taken in their literal sense. There is another tradition where the Holy Prophet says: "When Chosroe dies there will be no Chosroe after him, and when Kaiser dies there be no Kaiser after him (Bukhari, Vol. IV, p. 91, Egypt).

This is explained in *Fathul Bari*, Vol VI, as follows: "No Chosroe will administer the affairs of State as well as this Chosroe has done." Obviously it cannot mean that there will be no king after the Chosroe or Kaiser.

Muhyuddin Ibn Arabi interprets *La Nabiyya Ba'adi* by saying that there shall be no prophet who will cancel or go against the Islamic law of Muhammad (*Fotoohati Makkiya* Vol. I, p. 569 & Vol. II, pp. 3, 64, 417).

Imam Muhammad Tahir Gujrati also says the same thing (*Takmila Majmaul Bihar*, p. 85). Imam Sha'arani also interprets these words in the same way (*Alyawaqeeet Wal Jawahir*, Vol. II, p. 22). Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan states the same (*Iqtarabus Saa*, p. 162).

Hazrat Ayesha, whose position is well known, throws a flood of light on the point in her authoritative instruction: "Say he is the Seal of the Prophets but do not say there is no prophet after him (*Takmila Majmaul Bihar*, p. 88). Soyooti writes that Mogheera also expressed the same opinion (*Durri Mansoor*).

The other Hadith brought forward is: *Lau Kana Ba'adi Nabiyyun Lakaana Omaro*. It is translated as follows: "If there were a prophet after me, it would have been Omar." The word *Ba'ad* also means *with*, and there is nothing here which should confine its meaning to *after*. Therefore, the tradition should be translated as: "If there were a prophet with me it would have been Omar." If the word must be translated into *after* it should be noted that this Hadith is known as *Ghareeb*, which takes away much of its value.

There is another Hadith about Omar which cannot be taken as

literally true. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "The sun has never risen over a man better than Omar." (*Mishkat, Manaqib Omar*). Obviously, there must be a qualification which appears to have been omitted in this statement. He was by no means better than Muhammad (P.B.H.) himself.

THE REAL MEANING

Unfortunately, we do not know the context of the Hadith under question which would have thrown light on its real meaning. In another tradition, the same idea is perhaps expressed in different words: "If I were not raised, it would have been you, O Omar." (*Mirqat, Vol. V, p. 539*).

Another saying is as follows: "If I was not raised, Omar would have been raised among you." (*Konoozul Haqaiq, p. 103*). These traditions would only show that Omar had an aptitude for a prophet, like Muhammad (P.B.H.) who brought the Islamic law. Therefore, the Hadith in question would mean that if a prophet were to bring a new law, it could have been Omar. It cannot mean that there can be no prophet after Muhammad (P.B.H.) In other tradition, the Holy Prophet clearly implies the opposite. He says: "If Ibrahim (his son) had lived, he would have been a Prophet." (*Ibn Maja, Vol. I, p. 237*).

He could not say this if it were absolutely impossible for anyone to become a prophet. This shows clearly that the Holy Prophet was clear in his mind as to the continuity of prophethood after him. Another tradition points to the same effect when he says: "Abu Bakr is best of men after me except a Prophet should appear." (*Kanzul Ummal*).

The next Hadith that is brought forward is: "I am Aqib and he is one after whom there is no prophet." (Tirmidhi). The authenticity of this Hadith is very much questioned. Mulla Ali Qari, who is a recognized critic of Hadith, definitely declares that the last portion of this Hadith is spurious. He says it appears to be the interpretation put upon the word Aqib by some reporter. (*Mirqat, Vol. V, p. 367*).

The next Hadith in support of this belief is: "I am the last of the Prophets and you are the last of peoples." (Muslim). The meaning of this is explained by another Hadith which runs as follows: "and my mosque is the last mosque." *Muslim, Kitabul Haj Fazlis Salat, p. 531*).

It is clear that the Holy Prophet did not mean that there was to be no prophet after him, otherwise we shall have to conclude that he did not want the Muslims to build any other mosques. Obviously, what he means is that the religion brought by him is perfect and no one can cancel or modify it after him.

The use of the word *Akhira* (last) in this sense is quite common in the Arabic language. Soyooti calls Ibn Taimiyya as the last of

Mujtahideen (original thinkers and Jurists, see *Al-Intibah Wan Nazir*, Vol. III, p. 310, Hyderabad). An Arab poet used the word *Akhir* (last) in the sense of perfect and unique, in *Himasa, Babul Adab*.

SEAL OF PROPHETS

It is clear from the foregoing that it is not Ahmadies alone who are interpreting the expression *Khataman Nabiyyeen* (Seal of Prophets) in a manner allowing the appearance of a prophet who does not bring any new Shariah (Law) and does not attain prophethood independently but through complete obedience to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him), after him. Recognized Muslim saints of different countries, ages and even the Holy Prophet Himself, have understood the expression in the like manner.

The Ahmadiyya belief, beyond any shadow of doubt, is par excellence that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.H.) is *Khataman Nabiyyeen*, i.e., the Seal of the Prophets. In him the excellences of Prophethood have reached their perfection and therefore, the door to receiving prophethood independently is closed since his appointment to this office. Henceforward, every kind of Grace is attainable only through serving him.

His advent, thus, has not closed the stream of Divine Grace but its course has been channelized through his person which is now, so to say, the new headwaters. A prophet, henceforth, shall appear only through allegiance to him, by receiving light from his light and as his shadow and reflection, and not otherwise.



Old, familiar Bible passages rewritten one more time

*Marjorie Hyer
Washington Post*

A new, more accurate and precise translation of the Bible was formally authorized last week by the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches.

The new work was produced by 30 scholars working over 15 years and will be in the bookstores by the summer of 1990. It will supersede the Revised Standard Version.

The Rev. Bruce Metzger of Princeton Theological Seminary, who headed the translation for the New Revised Standard Version, said the discovery of new Hebrew and Greek sources and new language studies prompted the new publishing effort.

The new version will drop the "thees" and "thous" and "thys" of previous editions but will stop short of being "chatty," Metzger said. In a major stylistic change that may rankle some traditionalists, pronouns referring to God and Jesus will no longer be capitalized.

In fidelity to the original manuscripts, the new version will use the male pronoun in references to God and Jesus. But it will be sensitive to feminist concerns, Metzger said.

The quotation, "Man shall not live by bread alone" refers to all people, he said. The new version renders that. "One shall not . . ."

Similarly, the current version translates Matthew 6:30, "O men of little faith . . ." The new version will translate the original text as "you of little faith."

Some changes not only will be more faithful to original texts but will eliminate cultural biases, Metzger pointed out. The Old Testament Song of Solomon in the current version begins, "I am black but beautiful . . ."

The new version changes that to "black and beautiful," in a more faithful translation.

While scholars producing a new Bible translation must be skilled in the nuances of ancient Hebrew and Greek, they also need an ear for new meanings that have crept into contemporary English.

When the Revised Standard Version New Testament was read in churches 40 years ago no teenagers giggled at St. Paul's comment to the Corinthians that, "Once I was stoned . . ."

That passage will now read, "Once I received a stoning."

Why I Believe In Islam

Patricia Shahid

There are many reasons for believing in Islam but the three most important to me are: the belief and unity of one God, the sincerity of brother and sisterhood, and last but not least, the punctuality of Islam.

First of all as a Christian I stayed confused about who Jesus really was. I could not understand if he was a man or a God. I asked the ministers but they all said the same thing; he's God in human flesh. Well, I continued to practice Christianity until I met my husband about a year ago. I was so glad to have met a Muslim for the first time. I decided I was going to tell him the "good news" about Jesus. He listened to what I had to say before he started to question me about Jesus. I had never heard anyone say those things about Jesus before, and for some unexplainable reason I could not answer his questions. He invited me to the mosque on several occasions, but I felt if I went I would not be a Christian anymore, but he assured me not to accept anything I did not believe.

Secondly, when I did go the mosque he would sit down and explicitly explain why Jesus could not have died on the cross. I began to think about my child and what I would say to her when she started to ask me questions about my faith.

That's when I decided to go to the mosque to learn more about Islam. At first I did not understand why they prostrate and pray the way they did. I saw how close the sisters stood to each other touching at elbows, or when praying they did not shout or make loud noises. They stood quietly in deep concentration while the Imam recited the prayer in Arabic. They all were so close, they helped each other in order to win blessings from their God. Why then do non-believers say malicious lies against the Muslims? I asked my husband, Christian friends, and relatives questions but they all said nothing new so now it was up to me to make the final decision.

I made the decision to become a Muslim because I have accepted the fact that there can only be one God.

Lastly, I was truly impressed by my husband saying his five daily prayers. He would get up before dawn say his prayers supplicating to Allah and read for about two hours. Although I was still a Christian I felt a great amount of jealousy towards him because he was being practical and I was not.

As time went by, I gave what he said much thought. I have been a Muslim for a year now, and I would never consider going back to Christianity. I read in the Holy Quran where Allah tells the believers "just because you say you believe don't think that you will not be tried." I like this verse because Allah is telling me that just because I am not a Christian anymore does not mean I will have it any easier.

In closing, today's Christianity has far too many imperfections to be a religion sent by Almighty Allah, plus Christianity is more concerned about making a profit instead of seeking spiritual knowledge.



HADITH:

حَدِيثُ: - الْجَنَّةُ تَحْتَ أَدْنَامِ الْأُمَّهَاتِ

Paradise is to be found at the feet of your mother.

HADITH:

حَدِيثُ: - طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَ مُسْلِمَةٍ -

Pursuit of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim man and women.

(Bukhari)

The Holy Quran:

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Before the advent of Islam women, as a class, enjoyed no statutory rights. Islam is the only religion which established a perfect body of precepts—giving full protection to the rights of women, making them equals of men, both in the spiritual and religious spheres of life, giving them an independent position, granting them proprietary rights, and making their responsibilities and rights a part of the divine law.

Whoso acts righteously, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a pure life; and We will surely bestow on such their reward according to the best of their works.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِمَّنْ ذَكَرْنَا وَأَنْشَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةًۭ ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ
بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

(Chapter 16:98)

But whoso does good works, whether male or female, and is a believer, such shall enter Heaven, and shall not be wronged even as *much* as the little hollow in the back of a date-stone.

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ
مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يظْلَمُونَ
نَقِيرًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

(Chapter 4:125)

Surely, men who submit themselves *to God* and women who submit themselves *to Him*, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women, and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast *in their faith* and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember *Him*—Allah has prepared for *all of them* forgiveness and great reward.

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ
وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ
وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ
وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ
وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ
كَثِيرًا وَالذَّكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

(Chapter 33:36)