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by [G. A. Parwez](#)

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Introduction

translated by Dr. Mansoor Alam

***"I am burning like a red-hot lamp in your neighborhood (to give my message)
O youth of the world! You are my life, and (my message) is your life."***

Pages of history, secrets and profoundness of philosophy, imprints of human dignity and character, and Quranic realities and meanings provide testimony to the fact that the destinies of nations are in the hands of their new generations. The type of education and training a nation's youth receive dictates its future destiny. This is the barometer for measuring a nation's creativity and a standard for its life's worth. This is the way a nation could determine its status among the nations of the world; and this is the way it can find out whether or not it is capable of moving with the rest of humanity. It may be that certain events might deprive a nation of its wealth and power, and thus it may be left behind the rest of the world in race for power and superiority. It may also be that due to certain emergency situations a nation might temporarily lose its dignity and glory and as a consequence others might be tempted to exploit it. But if it could protect its youth and give them proper education and training, then the world will see that the mental and emotional energies of its youth; their enthusiasm; their power; and the strength of their character will rise like a flood and will overcome all obstructions in its path. The destinies of nations are not decided in political arenas or battlefields. These are decided in their schools and places of training. No nation is beaten by its enemy; it is beaten by its wrong education.

***"There is no need for sword for that nation
Whose youth have selves hard as steel"***

This is the reason I have made youth focus of my Quranic education based on my deep understanding of the Quran. I feel as if they are always with me. I have studied their psychology and emotions with interest and deep insight. I have heartfelt sympathy for their emotional turmoil and psychological doubts; and I have tried to solve their problems with love and affection. This approach has been very successful. Students educated in modern knowledge having all kinds of doubts in their hearts about religion come to me with their minds full of rebellion against and contempt for religion. I greet them with humility and sympathy which springs from the bottom of my heart – because I know this attitude of theirs is in reaction to what they receive in the name of religion in their homes and mosques. I hear their emotionally charged criticism about Islam calmly and patiently. After listening to their complaint I explain to them the message of the Quran in a language which they can understand. I cannot believe my eyes when their doubts are turned into firm conviction and their anger into deep reverence for the Quran. They come with doubts and anger at God, revelation, prophethood, Quran, and Deen; and go with a feeling of bond to them. As I have mentioned before, *we* are responsible for their rebellious attitudes and hatred towards the Deen. We teach them philosophy of Whitehead and the science of Einstein. But we present a religion that has nothing to do with intelligence and rational reasoning and, therefore, it becomes an object of fun and sarcasm. If they don't rebel against this kind of a religion then what else can they do? My experience has been that instead of presenting such a man-made religion to them (that has been passed down by our ancestors, which is taught in our religious institutions, and is repeated from every pulpit); if we present to them Al-Deen given by Allah then they will almost surely be attracted to the message of the Quran.

Saleem is the representative of such a group of modern educated class of students. And these letters are written in his name to dispel their doubts and uncertainties that have been continually reported to me for the past fifteen to twenty years. From this you can guess the importance I attach to these letters. Although the basic demands of life do not change with the change in time and place (and that is why the Quranic teaching, which presents solutions for these basic problems, can guide humanity forever); nevertheless, the problems of certain time periods become more pronounced. Therefore, searching for a solution and guidance from the Quran requires that those who present its message must be aware of current events and problems and must be abreast of the knowledge developed until that time. If someone is not abreast of the up-to-date knowledge and is not aware of the pressing issues of his time, then he cannot get guidance

from the Quran. Within my limits, I have tried to understand the Quran in this way. And this is the way I present the Quran to others. Therefore, you will find in these letters signs of both -- present issues as well as demands of contemporary knowledge. (Detail discussions of these issues can be found in my other works; there is no place for detailed discussions in letters.)

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One of my friends (whose sincerity I value) has said that the name "Saleem" does not reflect bold ideas and strong character that are assumed to be present in Saleem, the addressee of these letters. This criticism is worthwhile and worthy of my attention. The fact is the word "Saleem" does not have the same meaning in the Quran as it is normally understood in Urdu language. Quran says that Prophet Ibrahim (P) had the "Saleem -like" heart (37:84). At the same time the Quran has also described the main features of Prophet Ibrahim's character -- that he carefully observed natural phenomena (6:76); and that he never adopted a path which he was not sure of. First, from careful observation of nature, he (P) concluded that changing physical phenomena couldn't be the bearers of permanent values (6:77). Second, he wanted to know how to revive life into dead people, before he could present God's life giving message to his own people (6:260). He embarked on a path without delay with self-confidence and steadfastness only when he became sure of its truthfulness -- and then, no power could stand in his way, and no difficulties insurmountable to him. First, Prophet Ibrahim (P) warned his father and asked him to leave the wrong path he was following and adopt the right one. It was obvious that opposition to his father could deprive Prophet Ibrahim (P) of the status and power that he would inherit automatically by being the son of a royal head priest. And if his father were to accept Prophet Ibrahim's message then the family could lose the dignity and power of priesthood. But Prophet Ibrahim (P) did not care about any of these things. Beyond his father, he warned his people of bad consequences of following a wrong path. Then, he directly challenged the king who, in those days, was considered god; and who was so proud of his power that he ridiculed Prophet's Ibrahim's God by saying: Which God are you talking about, O Ibrahim? The one who gives life and death? "I give life and death. (2:258)". I control life and death. Prophet Ibrahim (P) challenged him openly and jumped without hesitation into the fire of the king's rage. When he saw that the environment of his own people is not conducive for his message, he left his birth place with all its attractions by saying, "I am going to a place where I could implement my God's program of Rububiyah (37:99)." For this purpose, when a sacrifice as great as that of a son was required, he did not hesitate to take out the knife and put it on the throat of his dearest son. And when "Allah's house" needed to be built, he took his son to the moisture-less barren desert and settled him there in order to carry God's work.

These are the characteristics of that shining and bold heart which was driving Prophet Ibrahim (P) as the bearer of God's message. What were the results of the above mentioned characteristics of Prophet Ibrahim's heart? The Quran has summarized these in two words when it says that he had both power and vision (38:45). *This* is the personality of the addressee of these letters named Saleem, i.e., having both power and knowledge. Because in the words of Iqbal:

***"Knowledge of Deen without power is self deception
And power without knowledge of Deen is ignorance and madness."***

Therefore, Saleem's personality reflects Prophet Ibrahim's character in the prevailing "Aazar-type" environment of today. And it is obvious that:

***"It is very difficult to produce the selfless vision of Ibrahim(P) (because)
Selfishness and greed deceptively create their own idols in human hearts."***

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As far as the letters are concerned there is no need for an introduction because they will introduce themselves. We might just mention that in the arrangement of these letters, a gradual evolution of knowledge and thought have been assumed.

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There are many things in these letters that may appear to the readers for the first time. This may come as a surprise to those unfamiliar with this type of literature and they may be tempted to discard it at first sight. But I would request such readers to pay a careful attention and re-read the material several times with an open and objective mind. I am sure they will be intellectually as well as emotionally satisfied with this approach. However, I would like to point out that in the matter of Deen, the Quran is the final authority. Please do not judge this work as being wrong because it is against the path which Muslims have been following for centuries. When we have the light of the Quran and our mind's eyes, then why shouldn't we make sure ourselves whether or not the path we are following is a right one or a wrong one?

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You will find some repetition in these letters. There is no doubt that repetition of subject matter in a book is considered its weakness. However, do not forget that this book is a collection of letters that were written at different times, each reflecting the importance of an issue of that particular time. Therefore, the collection of such letters is bound to have repetition. This repetition while in poor taste for some literary minds, might have a beneficial effect on others by clarifying new concepts. This is the reason the Quran also uses this method, which it calls "tasrif-e-ayat," of explaining its message by repetition of verses.

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As I have said before, the aim of my effort is to present to the youth whatever I have been able to learn from the Quran. If few individual youth become determined to carry the torch of spreading the light of the pure Quranic message; and that they develop conviction in their hearts to implement the system of Allah's Rububiyah; then I would think that I have received the compensation for my sleepless nights and endless effort. I am perfectly aware that present Muslims will hardly accept the Quranic thought I am presenting. However, I can sense the signals sent by the "Nature's silent hints" that the world is yearning desperately to adopt the Quranic concept of life. May be the time is near regarding which the Quran says:

"The earth will start shining with the light of it's Sustainer"

We will have to see which nation establishes the Quranic system of Rububiyah (the Quranic economic and social order). Whichever nation is fortunate in this respect, will inherit the leadership of the world.

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Since these letters have produced positive effects on the youth of the nation, I will try diligently to continue this work. However, alongside, "letters to Tahira" will also be started because she is entitled to these benefits equally well, in fact, even more so than Saleem.

Parwez
26 May, 1953

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Why are our prayers and fasting ineffective?

Translated by Dr. Suhail Alam

Saleem, your thoughts on my writings are completely natural and should occur to every open-minded person studying the Quran, to every person whose eyes search for those truths which God has unveiled in his book of clear guidance. The Quran, with eternal guidance and unchanging laws, governs the stagnation and destruction or prosperity and success of nations. Saleem, you are familiar with my ideas. I believe that the Quran is not only directed towards Muslims, but towards all of humanity. It is the sole solution for its personal and societal problems as well as the ultimate cure for its pain and difficulties. This belief of mine is not built upon blissful ignorance, rather this belief springs from deep reflection and understanding of the situation based upon reason. It satisfies my search for peace and perfect balance in my heart and mind; a baseless superstition or blind belief cannot not be mistaken for such an internal peace.

You ask a question which strikes a vital reality. Today a very large number of Muslims are praying, fasting, giving zakat, completing hajj, yet they are not receiving the same benefits and successes as did the Muslims in the time of the Prophet (p), a time in which Muslims did these very same actions. Since you are not looking for abstract philosophical criticism or complex terminology, nor are these methods equipped to approach the reality of a problem of this nature, I will explain to you in simple terms why these days our prayers and fasting are ineffective.

Saleem, imagine that it is wintertime. A chilling wind blows through the streets on this exceptionally cold day. Nearing sunset, the last rays of sunlight lose their warmth. Rahmat's wife is sitting with her young children in her decrepit shack. Do you know who she is? In your childhood you used to visit and play with her. Her age would lead one to expect a cheerful liveliness and warmth on her face, but continual poverty has replaced it with sadness and despair. All that is left of this forsaken household is their precious innocence; not a single remnant of humor or life remains within its walls. With her children, she comes and sits by the stove. She had gathered some dry branches, grass, and leaves during the day. She lights them now to provide some warmth and diversion for her hungry children. The children, however, are much more afflicted by hunger than by the cold. Seeing this, the mother puts some water in a pot and puts it on the stove, but alas, was only fooling herself by doing this. All have their ears attuned to every footstep and their sights upon every motion. The children and their mother stay in their room, with longing eyes gazing towards the alleys. Just after the sun dips below the horizon, Rahmat's footsteps could be heard coming down the alley. In tattered clothes, stained sleeves rolled up to his elbows, he trudges on bare feet towards his home, his face filled with the same painful despair and hopelessness. As he enters the door his wife meekly greets him. The children cling to both legs of their father as the wife glances at her husband's grief stricken face. Teardrops were barely clinging to his eyes, as his wife asked him if there was any luck in finding work. In a low, barely audible tone he replies that despite spending the whole day searching and begging for work, he was not able to find any work today either.

At this same time in a nearby Masjid, courtesy of Khwaja Sahib, a well-known rich religious leader, a lavish carpet is being laid down. The many Muslims at the masjid exchange glad tidings with each other, shouting takbir to the greatness of Islam and give Khwaja Sahib prophecies of a home in heaven as a result of the Sawab al-Jariah he will get from the wise expenditure of his earthly wealth.

Saleem, do you remember Inayat-Allah? He used to be your classmate. Do you remember what a responsible and honorable fellow he was? Unfortunately, in childhood his father passed away, and his mother was forced to work day and night in order to raise him. But you can imagine how hard it must be for a woman to find work if it is difficult for a man to do so. I was looking out from my window and watched her sending her son off to school, forced to send him on an empty stomach. The child was exhausted, but the mother told him to go to school and that upon his return there would be fresh bread for him. Saleem, can you dare to imagine the feelings and thoughts going through his mother at this time?

What kind of painful emotions that she was experiencing? Her son, that dear innocent soul, a symbol of poverty and misfortune, quietly left for school and returned later that afternoon. His mother was not at home. Perhaps she left because she could not bear to face her hungry son. After entering the house, Inayat-Allah opened the handkerchief in which bread was kept, but nothing was there. Silently, he walked outside. He was strolling through the alley when he noticed Khan Sahib's house, at which there seemed to be a rather large gathering. Many types of fruit, varieties of desserts and candies were spread on the tables. Today Khan Sahib's son was about to break his very first fast. The hungry orphan just watched and then passed by through the alley towards the square, hoping that he might get a tip carrying someone's bags.

Saleem, do you remember Mother Bholi? She is the blind old woman who was slowly growing mad. You probably have not seen her son. He was a healthy 18-year old, whose father was a construction worker. Unfortunately, one day his father fell from the roof of a building and was killed. The builder simply put someone else on the job and there was not even so much as an inquiry as to who was orphaned and who was widowed. Following this tragedy, Mother Bholi was forced to toil day and night to spin wool in order to raise her son. That year in which influenza was rather widespread, that boy became ill too. There was a doctor in the neighborhood who wrote free prescriptions for the poor. Mother Bholi got the prescription from him but could not get enough money in order to get the medicine, but believe me, she tried. On this dark, rainy night she went to every house asking for a little something, anything so that she might fill the prescription. Her plight was evident to everyone; her prescription was in her hand and her son was dying right before them. Yet no one spared a single penny and that poor young man agonizingly took his last breath in his mother's arms. All this happened on the same day that a special train departed with people on their way to do hajj. Many flowers totaling hundreds of dollars were strewn about on the station floor, in their honor.

And of course, you must have heard about Razia in the past few days. She received news of the death of her brother, yet out of shame she could not leave the house to travel; all she had were old, tattered clothes. When she borrowed the clothes from her friend, she called the village watchman to accompany her to her brother's house, but the guard questioned how he could go with her when she could not compensate him. Razia had relatives in her village which might have been able to help her, if it was not for Syed Sahib's son's wedding, for which the entire town was preparing. Poor Razia was forced to travel on foot through the intense heat, so that she may see her dead brother's face. (This is the same Razia that accompanied her late father, who was a great scholar, to perform hajj twice.) Ironically, this village was well-known for being very religiously involved. But what were the great religious debates they used to be involved in? The two parties of muqallid and non-muqallid already existed, but now a famous scholar had come to the village and started another debate about whether the glory of a masjid is greater than the glory of the Prophet (p). The scholar's idea was that the glory of the masjid is greater because the Prophet (p) used to go to the masjid and the masjid did not go to the Prophet (p). The permanent imam of the masjid was of a different opinion and felt that the glory of the Prophet (p) was greater than that of the masjid. This debate divided the people into more factions, which eventually became violent and led to court cases. While the people were busy in the court cases, they were forced to sell their land to non-Muslims in order to support their battles. As time passed, the entire land in the vicinity of the village came to be owned by non-Muslims. Consoling the Muslims of the village, the scholars and imams told the people that they had merely sold their worldly wealth, but in doing so had purchased a palace in heaven.

Saleem, you might say that this is just an example from a less-educated people, but you will remember the great scholar from Dewbund who gave a khutba for Juma prayer in which he mentioned that "Shab-e-Barat (The night of destiny) is that night when Allah says 'Oh my People, ask me whatever you want and I will fulfill it for you.' So, anybody who in this night prays 50 nafl prayers and asks for forgiveness, then his salvation will be guaranteed by Allah." Then the great scholar became very emotional and tears began to flow from his eyes. He cried that in this great ocean of mercy, everyone will have equal share except for one most unfortunate soul who will be deprived of it. The people began questioning him who that would be. The scholar replied, that just one and only one would be deprived, and he is the one whose trousers are below his ankles. Saleem, this is not the talk of an ignorant imam; he did not say anything of his own. He had in fact studied this as being exactly according to Islam and propagated it sincerely as true Islamic

teaching.

Now this is not just the story of one Razia. If we observe the world today, we will find many such examples. So my dear Saleem, if this is the system of a society then it is not surprising that their prayers, fasts, zakat, and hajj do not produce the results which they should produce. You should understand Saleem that Islam is a system of life. Other religions in the world always consider religion as being only a personal affair of seeking personal salvation, an affair between the individual and God. Islam, on the other hand, in addition to personal aspects, also addresses societal aspects. Islam strives to establish a society which will take the responsibility for providing all the necessary ingredients for nourishment and development. To this end, Islam considers every Mo'min to be an extremely important component, whose every action and struggle will have an effect on the entire universal machinery. If every part in its place functions properly, then the entire machinery will run in a coordinated manner and will produce a result as does a watch whose arms turns as a result of the coordinated movement of its components. But if these various components are kept apart, no matter how much effort is put into improving the individual components, they will not work together as a system and will not produce the desired result. This is what has happened to our machinery called Islam. We have compartmentalized Islam into separate components, i.e. prayer, fasting, etc., and as a consequence, it is not producing the results we would expect. If you study the Quran carefully, then it will become quite obvious to you that a people who are satisfied with their state of indignity, dependence, hopelessness and insecurity is a nation experiencing Allah's wrath (maghdoobi alaihim, 1:6). You already know that a particular people upon whom Allah's wrath has been sent, cannot declare themselves as being the recipients of Allah's blessing by simply going through soulless prayers and customary fasts. Allah promises that he will give you power in this world in return for your Iman and good deeds. Therefore, if one's supposed Iman and good deeds do not result in dignity, self-respect, power and independence, then that Iman cannot be true Iman and those good deeds cannot be truly good deeds, according to the Quran. You cannot reach a conclusion other than this because Allah's word and his promise are always true. This is his immutable law. If you look at the period of our Prophet (p) and start looking at what the programs and plans were which the Muslims of those days used to follow, was it not the same prayer and the same fasting that transformed that society in a very short period of time and revolutionized that society to great heights in culture, morals, civics, economics? These people, whose subsistence mainly depended on dates and meager food, completely overpowered the Persian and Byzantine empires and became the inheritors of their power. The same prayers, the same fast, produced such an effect that they changed the history of the world forever. In their time, these actions were used in a working and integrated system, and this is what is meant by the first four words of the Quran, that a program that is worthy of Allah's praise should provide the universal nourishment for all of humanity. Therefore, actions which do not produce this glorious end result are nothing but soulless customs.

Saleem, remember that my purpose is not to say that our al-amal al-hasan are solely for the success, power, and domination in this world. Not at all. If this was the case then what would be the difference in the reign of Allah and the reign of the Pharaoh? What I want to say is that our actions should give us both honor, power, success and excellence in this world as well as success and dignity in the hereafter. If our actions are not producing the results that they should in this world, what makes us think that they will do so in the hereafter? Thus, our actions, by the criteria of Islam, are incomplete and lack the necessary balance of success in the world today as well as in the hereafter.

Saleem, in the final analysis, you ask why this world of punishment has been thrust on us. I am surprised that by now you have not been able to understand this. You would agree that the Quran was revealed in order to free mankind from the yokes and chains which it is subject to, so that it may be governed only by Allah himself. But look at the pages of history Saleem, and see how the very same control that Islam came to abolish, was through many ways thrust upon humanity again. The calamity of this situation was that the agent thrusting this unholy control on humans was, in fact, mostly under the pretense of religion. Every collar that the Quran came to remove from the necks of people was again, in the name of Islam, put onto the necks of people. Do you think that this occurrence, this re-enslaving of Muslims to other forces, would be less weighty and not as bad as it was in more ancient times? Were not past nations which were

receiving the wrath of Allah under similar chains and yokes, doing similar things? Do you think that nature is a step-mother that she would act a certain way with one child and a different way with another child? No, Allah's laws are eternal and are applied equally to everyone. If the ancestors did something wrong then they received the wrath. If Muslims do those same things, then why shouldn't they receive the wrath as well? In fact, they should be dealt with even harsher since they have laws of Allah, complete and unchanged, in order to guide themselves; however, they put it in the back of their minds and all but forget about the heart of its message. Should their punishment be any less? They were selected as the inheritors of the book and were called the best nation in the world. But all this is meant for the nation and people who actually have true Iman and good deeds, not just because the name of their religion is Islam. In spite of all this, you ask why Allah's wrath is upon Muslims today? Saleem, brotherhood, equality, freedom, unity of mankind, living together, centralism, obedience, the individual doing everything he can for the group, and the group providing all the individuals' needs-these were the characteristics of the true system. Now you can see how long Muslims have forgotten the will of Allah. Forget the glorious periods of Islam for a moment and then with the Touchstone, the Criterion, the Quran, analyze each of the actions of this Ummah. The truth will unveil itself before you.

But in spite of all this, my young friend, there is no reason for hopelessness. The same Quran is still present today which served as the basis for the Islamic system in the more glorious times of Islam. Thus, if Muslims today realize what they are doing and change their ways, then you will see, Saleem, how their prayers and their fasting will bring about the same wonderful results as in the time of the Prophet (p), times for which all Muslims' endeavor.

In doing this, we must remember that

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰءِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ
السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

"If the people of the towns believed and solidified in their hearts the law of Allah, then truly the doors of blessing in the heavens and earth will be open for them. But they went against the laws of Allah, and the consequence was that the (negative) result of their actions caught up to them." (7:94)

True belief and righteousness will come to you from the Quran only if you remove from your mind all preconceptions and look at the Quran open-mindedly. This is because, as Iqbal says:

***The meaning which was lost in all our divisions
Will not be understood by you until your perceptions become untainted***

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Our Religious Gatherings

Translated by Dr. Suhail Alam

Saleem, you're probably right; on Jum'atul-Wida', the last Jum'a of Ramadan, 50,000 people had gathered at the masjid. In fact, the number was probably even higher than that. I also agree with you that it was utterly enchanting to see such a great number of Muslims harmoniously standing and prostrating by a single voice. Its enchantment was shown by the many visitors who came from great distances to take pictures of this spectacle, and who also gave the leaders of the masjid donations so that they would not forbid the taking of photographs.

Anyway, these were just a few cursory remarks. I ask you Saleem that in this immense gathering, how many Muslims who were mutually harmonious in their bodily movements were also mutually harmonious in their hearts? Islam came to teach the oneness of thought as well as the lesson of oneness of action; this is encompassed in Iman. These were types of gatherings that used to be the best examples of oneness of thought and action. But Saleem, ask yourself if today this is still the case; ask yourself whether it is unity or discord which characterize our religious gatherings.

You've probably seen the Molwis and Imams telling people how important it is to pray in a group. They tell the people how to line up properly during prayer, how much space should remain between the feet, how much punishment there is for shoulders not touching shoulders, and how much reward there is for praying in the first row. But Saleem, has any one of these Molwis ever said that as Muslims, we are here for such and such purpose, to meet such and such goal? Prayer should mean this to you? Why is it necessary to pray in a jama'at? Why do we have to stand up and sit down? Why should the lines be straight? Why is there only one imam, and why everyone by his single voice, without a grumble or complaint, completes the movements of prayer? When the imam forgets something, a signal is given, but why the group still follows him? And why the whole group has to pray the extra rak'a for atonement? At one time why is there only one jama'at? Why can't there be numerous jama'at praying at the same time?

When the amusement seeking visitors describe this sight in their own words, the Muslims' tolerance and discipline, oneness of thought and action, harmony and synchrony, obedience and perseverance within a group, all receive boundless praise. But I believe even they realize that these marvelous characteristics are limited only to the bodies of the Muslims, and that there is no impact upon their hearts. The spirit of prayer has been forgotten, and it remains nothing more than a mere ritual.

Today, every nation is concentrating its efforts to bring together its citizens by creating within them a unity of thought and action, unanimity in their hearts and sights, and harmony in their movements and rest. That they, on the voice of their chosen Imam (leader), will bow their heads and stand up. If a nation can accomplish this, then their power and efficiency will increase manifold. Many new doors of opportunity will be open to them. Now tell me, if all these things are in a nation, but no result can be derived from it, then if you do not call those actions spiritless and mere rituals without aim, what else would you call them? Nations are searching for rules and self-discipline, all so that they can develop their own power to subdue weaker nations and obtain the supplies to quench their thirst. But in an Islamic nation all these things are established so that the hearts of its citizens become pure; that their souls receive nourishment; that they keep Allah's laws in front of them at all times; that their bowing is for Him and that their standing is for Him; that their power be utilized to help the weak; that their strength be used to uphold the rights of the helpless; that they from their iman and good works develop such power that they receive the blessing of victory and success in this world; and finally, that this success not be used to dominate others, but to establish Allah's system of rububiyat in this world (that every person receives the essential nourishment that is his right).

Saleem! Imagine what great psychological significance the last juma of Ramadan could hold for the

achievement of these goals. For an entire month, the hearts and bodies of the servants of Allah are being transformed. For an entire month, they have been habituated to a rather simple, soldierly life. Their hearts are purified from evil and lust, and their sights are cleared of all types of pollution. For an appointed time, they have even controlled enjoyment of good and halal things, so they will not even glance in the direction of evil and haram things. After this, they are gathered in one area to receive rewards for their efforts. Through this training process, they have not only reinforced themselves, but have also become a collective, pieces of a whole. Obedience of the leader, centralism, selflessness, steadfastness to the group, oneness of action and thought, are all brought to life in a wondrous spectacle; the covenant of Allah has been renewed. Over and over, standing and sitting, in front of Allah, they bring forth in action that covenant.

إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

"Truly, my salat and all my various sincere actions, my life and death, are all for Allah, the Perfect Nourisher of the worlds." (6:162)

Saleem! Ask yourself if there is anything that could not be accomplished by this gathering of individuals embracing transformation of themselves for a single, higher purpose. But after pondering about this assembly of believers, examine once again their prayers. Not even the entire prayer, but just a portion of it. Think about an assembly of 50 or 60 thousand people, all facing neatly towards the Qibla, standing within their masjid, proclaiming that

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ

'Oh Allah, we only consider your rule as acceptable. Outside of your rule, all types of servitude and subjugation are forbidden for us.' However, they only utter these words from their lips, while their minds are slaves to countless Gods. Now if you don't call their covenant and their proclamation a self-deception and a deception of God, what else would you call it? Now, if you tell these people that they have not prayed, but have actually betrayed themselves and have deceived Allah, then from the north to the south and the east to the west, the so called bearers of Allah's sacred covenant will chase you down with sticks in their hands. But you know Saleem, the reaction of these unfortunate people would not even be their fault, because they have been told if the hands are placed at a certain position, and the feet are placed a certain distance apart, in sajda such and such body part touches the ground first, and if the various recitations are said at the appropriate times, then the prayer is complete. And if you ask how do you know for sure the prayer has truly been completed and that goal was achieved for which prayer had been made compulsory in the first place, then the response will be "We cannot know this until the day of judgment! In this world we must do our duty, and we will get the result in paradise, the afterlife, not in this world!" And when you tell them "But brother! Allah mentions in the Quran that one of the results of our action and iman will be the inheritance of power in this world (istikhlaaf fil-ard)!" They reply with "The meaning of ard (earth) in those ayahs of the Quran is the ground of paradise." But Saleem, do not ask anyone about these matters. Find the truth for yourself! The Quran is in front of you and contains within it the history of man's greatest accomplishments.

In 2 A.H. fasting was made compulsory, and on that very Ramadan's 17th date, the test of strength was taken for the believers. European historians say that the battle of Waterloo changed the face of Europe, but if they could see past themselves, they would see that the battle which took place at Badr in 2 A.H. changed the history of the entire world. The powers of oppression and evil gathered all their resources to wipe out the light of Allah from this world. As for the Muslims, they consisted of about 300 individuals, some of whom had just left their own homes to find shelter in a far away town, leaving behind all their worldly possessions and embracing poverty. But now a matter of life and death was at hand. Actually, it was a battle between good and evil itself. What had these fasting people done? With their children in their

arms, donning armor of branches of date trees and bones of camels, they came to the field of Jihad. Saleem! Ponder upon the delicacy of this moment and reflect that even the Prophet (p) himself, in this barren desert, with ultimate fear of Allah and humility calls out to his Nourisher, "Oh Allah! This gathering of a handful of your people, are all ready to die today in this field of battle simply for the sake of propagating your deen and spreading your greatness. If today they were all to be martyred then no one will remain in the world to spread your name. The Prophet (p) barely finished his dua' when Allah favored the Prophet (p) with his mercy.

أَنِّي مُمِدِّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفِينَ

"I will help you with a thousand angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession." (8:9)

The angels will come to help you, and what will they do when they reach you? They will be told:

فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَأَلْتِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ

"...keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved..."
(8:12)

In reality, those angels which prostrated to the khalifa-fil-ard (Adam (AS)), should have helped the mujaahideen in the same way. When mankind sets out to put Allah's laws into action, all the powers of nature side with him. But Saleem! Allah did not say to simply sit around in bliss and complacency, hoping the angels will do everything. Rather, He put forward a complete system of life describing what you should do. Pay close attention to what that system is and what His guidance was. He said:

"Oh you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve in a battle-field, never turn your backs to them. And whoever turns his back to them on such a day- unless it be a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own),- he indeed has drawn upon himself wrath from Allah..." (8:15-16)

Saleem! Do you hear what type of Muslims are being addressed? Do you understand what a great crime it is to leave your nation and show your enemy your back on the day of battle? And then He said:

"Oh you who believe! Obey Allah and his Messenger, and turn not away from him while you are hearing. And be not like those who say "We have heard," but they hear not. Oh you who believe! Answer Allah and his Messenger when he calls you to that which will give life..."
(8:20,21,24)

Do you understand why dying in the way of Allah is called life? Think about this great reality; the hidden secrets of life and death will reveal themselves to you. Notice, this obeying has a condition of listening on it. This face-to-face obeying can only be the obeying of a living center. From this, it becomes clear that Islam becomes a deen (system of life) at the time when there is a living center within it, whom the Muslims obey. In individualistic lifestyles, deen is not present. (This actually is a whole other topic which will be discussed in a future letter). Then again He said:

"Oh you who believe! When you meet an enemy force, take a firm stand against them and remember the Name of Allah much both with tongue and mind, so that you may be successful. And obey Allah and his Messenger, and do not dispute with one another lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient. Surely Allah is with those who are patient." (8:45-46)

Saleem! Do you hear what the guidance is? This is the message of life. This is the spirit of Islam. This is the real exposition of the expression of obedience of an obeying believer. This isn't just a temporal rule applying to the battle of Badr in 2 A. H., rather for however long there is battle between truth and deception. For however long there is a confrontation between good and evil. For however long the mischief of Abu Lahab confronts the light of the Prophet (p). Until that time, it will be the foundational constitution for all Muslims of the world. It is a guidance of action. It is for this guidance that the fasting of Ramadan and Jum'atul-Wida' exist.

Saleem! Now you decide for yourself if those 300 Muslims were the ones whose fasting and praying produced the desired results, or those 60 or 70 thousand Muslims' ritualistic gathering in which no one even had any care or attention of a spirit or purpose. So my brother why do you remain so naïve? Can't you even understand that the blank shots fired for display by a parading army, despite the thunderous booms and wisps of smoke, cannot break down the walls of a fort?

In regards to Eid, I told you last year that it was an Islamic celebration in honor of the revelation of the Quran. Think about the various celebrations and festivities of this world. They will either be for the memory of some person, event, or festivities for the sights and wonders of nature. But mankind's memories and souvenirs can be wiped away. Worldly occurrences can be forgotten. The pages of history can be lost. Solid trees engraved with tales could be enclosed in great mountains but still be destroyed by the hands of time and nature. However, God's first and primary message will always remain safely recorded in the pages of the Quran. They can never be eradicated because He Himself has taken responsibility for its preservation who is alive and can never die, who is unwavering and can never end. He is ever-continuing and his message is also ever-continuing. He is alive and his Quran is alive. This celebration of Eid is a commemoration of the revelation of the living book, the Quran, from this alive and firm God. And for however long this world remains, so shall this commemoration. Allah is great! Allah is great! There is no God but Allah, and Allah is great! Allah is great, and for Allah is all praise!

The Quran is unique from every other book in this world, and its commemoration is also unique from every other commemoration. The celebrations of the world are carried out by energetically shouting, laughing, cheering and playing, but an entirely different suggestion is made for the celebration of the memory of the signs of Allah. For it, people have been preparing an entire month. They were being taught to turn their faces from all false powers in the world and to become ruled only by Allah's laws. If you ask, then ask from him. If you bow, then bow to him. Despite hunger and thirst, complete your duties. This is the training that would be given to a warrior prior to entering the field of battle. For an entire month, through exercise and effort lofty perceptions have been borne into their minds. They are then asked to come together in one place to bring their heads together and concentrate with a clean heart and sanctified mind. They Concentrate on what they can do, according to the characteristics of Allah's nation, for the attainment and continuance of this special lifestyle of the Quran.

Saleem! Islam is not a religion preaching monasticism or asceticism. Islam does not teach one to give up on worldly things, to despise elegance and beauty, to become fed up with laughter and happiness to the point of becoming strict and testy. One is not transgressing Islam by wearing nice clothes, cooking delicious food, giving presents to friends, providing your children with toys for their joy and happiness. In the same way that Islam brings the laws of Allah as guidance to us in the troubled times of mankind, in in luxurious and joyous times, it does not forget the poor and needy. But keep in mind Saleem! The existence of the poor and the needy should only be temporary, until the time when Allah's system of rabubiyah (perfect nourishment) is fully established. No poor and no needy people can remain after the system is in effect. Because of this, the rules and laws concerning the poor and needy are restricted only to that transitory phase in the establishment of Islam as a living deen.

Saleem! Do you know what the status of the Muslim nation is. To perceive this, do not simply observe this gathering of Muslims in front of you with, smiling complacently, donning their new clothes. To perceive this, go and look at the world from which these Muslims have stepped out of. Count how many houses there are in which the jars and pitchers remain upside down for lack of flour to fill them. Look at how

spiders have spun their webs on the stoves, as there has been no fire in them for days. Look at how many women cannot get out of their house even for desperate needs because there is no sheet to cover themselves with. Look at how many elderly and children have to huddle around a bonfire during the cold nights because they have no blankets to keep themselves warm. Look at how many young men and women are taken by an early death because there was not enough money for their medicines. Look at the frightening sights of cold, hunger, poverty and devastation and then perceive what the status of the nation is. If there remains in your chest a heart, and in your heart any spark of feeling, then think whether today's celebration is of joy or of devastation! Saleem! I understand that on a joyous occasion, bringing up problems and difficulties is considered ominous, but in the period in which we live in today, seeing this happiness as true happiness is simply self-deception. This is the condition of the nation.

But Saleem! Do you know what important issues the nation's leaders and those knowledgeable of Islamic shariah are engrossed in? If you want to know this, then look at a paper published in New Dehli called "Muhammadi", and also take a look at a paper being published in Amritsar, "Al-Hadith." In the October and November editions, there is a hot debate about whether or not it is permissible to accept an invitation to a male or female circumcision. And these two newspapers, in their hot debates quote the respectable and shining names of their knowledgeable ancestors before them, Sayyid Ahmed Bareilwi and Shah Isma'eel Shaheed. It is said that when the Turks took Constantinople and their armies reached the walls of the city, within the city, the priests were engrossed in debate and had been having large meetings for 40 days to determine if the table at which Jesus ate the last supper had leaven or unleaven bread. Muslims read about this incident and cannot help but laugh and snicker at this ridiculous situation, but they do not realize what is going on in their own house.

Saleem! Now all that remains is your last question, that if all these groups and societal gatherings do not have the spirit and goals which they should have, then what is the use in keeping them. It was natural for this question to arise in your heart. My friend! The first point is that these rituals, having lost their spirit and intended goals, have become signs of our nation. If those rituals are not harmful and do not contradict the principles of the Quran, then it is good to keep them. To a limit, they also help establish a society. The second point is that if somehow our fate were to take a turn, and that a feeling of revolution and perception awakes in us which the Quran wants to awaken, then once again these lifeless vessels will be filled with spirit and life. The rituals and signs which were only memories of a system of life, will serve to facilitate the fresh establishment of that system.

That is the reason I told you not to talk during the khutba of Jum'atul-Wida', even though not a single word of the speaker's could reach your ears. And even if they did reach your ears, you wouldn't understand a word since it was in Arabic and you do not understand Arabic. And even if you did understand then you would not find any current issue or problem within it. The khutbas are mainly concerned with the rules of shariah and its rewards in the hereafter. Understanding and reflection have no place in it. But why in such a large gathering was a loudspeaker not used? Don't ask me, ask those respected Molwis who consider the use of a telephone to transport one's voice as permissible, but consider it haram if the imam uses a loudspeaker to allow the audience to hear his words. And do you know by what means our respected muftis (passers of fatwas, legal injunctions) can declare this? In determining this, it was first necessary to find out this device's nature and whether or not the sound that it transmits is the true voice of the speaker or of someone else. Now listen carefully how this careful assessment took place. A mufti from our illustrious religious center, Dar-ul-Uloom of Devband, has published a collection of fatwas within which he declares the use of this device as haram. He mentions an inquiry made to a high school science teacher from Alexander High School located in Bhopal, Mr. Brijnand Lal, in page 20 of his letter. The teacher said "Because of the involvement of the force of electricity, I at least hesitate in accepting that it is indeed the same voice. But because of lack of evidence, I cannot altogether deny it either." These are means to find the truth for our respected muftis. These are the honorable men claiming to be the successors of those ancestors, regarding whom the Quran has said:

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ

"And He has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and that is in the earth." (45:13)

Now Saleem! You can understand for yourself where the Quran wants to take us, and where we are.

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The concept of *Talaq* in Quran

translated by Abdus Sattar Ghazali

Letters to Saleem - No. 4

Saleem, I am delighted that now your attention is diverted from the ideological discussion to questions about practical social problems. But I am astonished to notice that you have begun from the bottom of the problem instead of the beginning. You should have first asked about *nikah*, then duties and rights of matrimonial life and at the end *talaq*.

However, if you think so, let it be like that. You will be astonished to know that the shameful traditions that you mentioned are not seen as social traditions but are being enforced as the *sharia* law.

Once I was visiting my village during holidays. Chanda Teli had a brawl with his wife and in anger he uttered thrice to his wife the word “*talaq-talaq-talaq*” (which are equal to three divorces in *shariah* law). You know his wife is an aged modest woman with grown up children. Chanda himself is also a very nice person. His *talaq* story got spread in the village like a jungle fire. When he cooled down, he was very much ashamed. He has adult sons and their wives living with him. Molvi Chiragh Deen (of Gherowal) was contacted for fatwa. He said this is an irrevocable *talaq* and *halala* is now obligatory. They asked him, “Mianjee what is this *halala*” ? He said, “Chanda’s wife has to marry another person with the condition that he should divorce her after spending one night in bed. Only then Chanda can re-marry his wife. This fatwa created a huge crisis in the family. His sons were infuriated with anger because they could not imagine seeing their mother being dishonored in her old age. They got so outrageous that they were even ready to kill their father Chanda, who was now hiding his face in shame and ignominy. His wife was even more in worst situation. In frustration she protested, “What kind of this injunction of God is that she is being punished while this is the fault of Chanda ?

Saleem ! Truly, no one in the village was able to understand, what kind of this divine injunction is? Since Molvi Chiragh Deen had said that this is the injunction from God and Prophet, therefore, no one could dare to challenge it. On the other hand, Molvi Chiragh was also right, since he was taught that way. What better could we expect from him ?

Saleem, imagine the greatness of Quran ! The chapter in which the *talaq* injunctions are mentioned, the following warning is given first:

Do not treat Allah's Injunctions as a jest. (2-231)

Keeping the above incident in mind, Saleem think, how the people in our society make mockery of Divine Injunctions?

Saleem, as you know, in Quran, there are very few injunctions that are given in detail. Mostly, these are stated as general principles. The injunctions related to the family life are among those few, which are stated in full detail. From this fact alone you can realize the importance of family life in the human social system. As a matter of fact, family life is a miniature replica of the state system. What is a home? It is a small state where the family-head is just like a ruler. It has a consultative body and an executive body. It has rights as well as responsibilities. It has organization, administration and a system of accountability. This state is run with the mutual consent and cooperation of husband and wife therefore they must have unanimity of views and share a common ideology. If they do not have identical views then there will be no joint action and there will be confusion, which will ultimately have negative affects on the community life and Ummah as a whole.

Hence, *nikah* is the name of an agreement to assume these joint responsibilities through mutual consent.

However, if for certain reasons, such a situation arises that husband and wife do not have identical views or action, that is disrupting the family life, in such situation, the Quran has given permission to abrogate the agreement. This is called *talaq*.

Obviously, when the Quran gives too much importance to this agreement and also stresses the importance of its compliance, it will not make the abrogation of this agreement a child play. That is why Quran has set such limits and imposed such terms and conditions that without fulfilling them this agreement cannot be abrogated. Quran gives full details of these conditions and restrictions. When you will carefully analyze these details, you will realize that the objective of Quran is to find out such ways and means so that this agreement of sharing the life's journey could be saved from breaking. God does not ignore the weaknesses of human nature. He knows that a humanbeing sometimes is overpowered by extreme emotions and takes such decision for which he himself feels sorry and shameful afterwards. He does not want his wrong decision to be implemented or become a verdict. Therefore, Quran has given this latitude. But at the same time, Quran does not want to make this important matter of nikah and talaq a child play that one should keep doing it again and again in life.

Saleem, recall the causes that result in divorce and then consider the limits and conditions imposed by Quran, it will become clear how *talaq* comes into force in accordance with the Quranic injunctions.

However, before proceeding further, you should understand that Islam is not the name of a private or personal relation between God and man. It is a complete code of life, which should be implemented as a state system and law of the land..

Regarding marriage, its condition is that the parties should be adult, sane and are willing to engage into the matrimonial relationship with mutual consent. It means that there should not be any compulsion either on the boy or the girl. In this way when the two parties enter into an agreement and assume matrimonial rights and responsibilities, it is called nikah. Obviously, one doesn't need an arbitrator in this matter. However, arbitration or a judicial authority is required to abrogate this agreement in order to safeguard the interests of the parties and their children.

Hence, Quran has established a procedure for talaq according to which it cannot be given in private. It should be given either through an arbitrary council or a court of law..

Accordingly, Quran addresses to the society as follow:

If ye fear a breach between them, appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers; if they wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation.[4-35]

In the above verse the pronoun 'ye' refers to the society or the legal system. If the relation between husband and wife become tense to the point of talaq then the concerned authority should appoint mediators. These mediators should sort out the differences sincerely. It is just possible that God may create circumstances for reconciliation between them. However, if these mediators reach on the conclusion that the circumstances are so tense that reconciliation is not possible then the case will be sent to the court and the court will proceed to hear it and decide for their separation. This is called *talaq* – The Divorce.

[This letter was written in 1949. In 1962, government of Pakistan legislated Family Laws that includes a provision for the formation of a reconciliation council for *talaq*. But our *ulamas* opposed these laws and their opposition continues until now (July, 2003).]

Saleem, you have seen the stages through which one has to pass before arriving at the point of *talaq*. These conditions are the basic principles of *talaq* and a *talaq* cannot be effective unless these conditions are met. It means that the court will proceed only after receiving the report of mediators to find out whether there is any chance left for reconciliation or there is no alternative for *talaq*. If the decision is that *talaq* is unavoidable then the further proceeding will be as follow:

1- TIMMING OF DIVORCE

The first thing for the court is to determine the exact time of executing *talaq* or when its decision should become effective? In this regard, the following verse of *sura al Talaq* provides guidance.

O Prophet! When ye do divorce women, divorce them at their prescribed periods (*Iddat*). (65-1)

[in this verse reference to Prophet is made because he represents the state authority or the legal system. It should be noted that Prophet had never divorced any of his wives.]

Here, it becomes clear that *talaq* should be executed at such a time from where *Iddat* can be counted. (*Iddat* will be explained later)

2- DURATION OF IDDAT

About the duration of *Iddat*, Quran says:

Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves three monthly periods. (2-229)

Such of your women as have passed the age of monthly courses, for them the prescribed period, if ye have any doubts, is three months, and for those who have no courses - it is the same. (65-4)

For those who are pregnant, their period is until they deliver their burdens. (65-4)

In brief, The duration of *Iddat* varies from woman to woman as follow:

- i- For women with menstrual cycles is three cycles.
- ii- For those who do not have menstrual cycles (because of age or sickness), is three months.
- iii- For pregnant women, until the delivery of child.

3- DIVORCE TO UNTOUCHED WOMEN

There is no *iddat* for a woman who is divorced without touching by her husband.

In this regard, guidance is taken from following verse:

O ye who believe! When ye marry believing women, and then divorce them before ye

have touched them, no period of *Iddah* have ye to count in respect of them: so give them a present, and release them in a handsome manner. (33-49)

For the menstruating women, in order to complete the prescribed period of three months, the menstrual days are not counted in *Iddat*. One of the object of *Iddat* is that any pregnancy that happened during the strained relationship, will be discovered. This may also help in avoiding the *talaq* because both parties will have a chance to reconsider their decision and if there is a baby birth it may lead to a new pleasant matrimonial relationship.

Saleem, did you notice ? How the Quran has tried to utilize an opportunity to save the marriage, because its objective is to strengthen the relationship and not separation; to resolves differences and reunite.

Hence in the case of a women, who has menstrual cycles, *talaq* duration will begin after the cycle, while in other situations, it is not applied.

When a court, after considering all these preconditions, issue its decision only then it will be called *talaq*. After that *nikah* is invalid and the couple becomes free from its obligations. (*Talaq* literally means freedom from fetters.) Various terminologies of *talaq* in Islamic jurisprudence such as *rajh'ai*, *bidh'ai*, *ba'en* etc are all innovations of human mind. Just like *nikah*, there is only one kind of *talaq* in Quran. The agreement is either maintained or abrogated. There is no way in between. After the court decision, *nikah* between husband and wife is dissolved. That's it.

What will happen next ? Now the period of *iddat* begins. You will ask, what is *iddat*? *Iddat* is the waiting period, during which a divorced woman cannot enter into a *nikah* agreement with another man. In case of a menstruating woman it is counted from the last day of a menstrual cycle. However, if the divorcees are willing to rejoin, they can enter into *nikah* again under the same terms and conditions as prescribed by the Quran (I will give details later).

Saleem, did you notice the latitude which Quran has kept to bear with the human weaknesses. In fact, the period of *iddat* is a blessing in disguise. During this period both husband and wife experience the pangs of separation. And there is a possibility that this (bitter) experience may persuade them for reconciliation and they may mend their broken relation. If the *talaq* is initiated by husband (i.e. wife was willing to remain in *nikah*) and the court had ratified it but now he wants to mend his way, in this situation he will have priority to re-enter into *nikah* during the *iddat* period.

And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. (2-228)

But if *nikah* was not renewed during the *iddat* then the woman will be free to marry the previous husband or anyone else. However, two witnesses are required in this final stage too, in order to make this public that the woman is free for another *nikah*.

And take for witness two persons from among you. (65-2)

If during the *iddat* period or afterward, husband and wife re-enter into *nikah*, it means that they have availed the first chance of *talaq* (Saleem, in these words you will easily understand the concept). Now if during renewed matrimonial life their relations become tense again, they can go for second *talaq* by following the same procedure as mentioned earlier. After this *talaq* again there is a chance that during *iddat* period or afterward, *nikah* can be renewed and matrimonial life is restored. If they renewed *nikah*, after the second *talaq*, it means that they have availed two chances of *talaq*.

A divorce is only permissible twice: after that, the parties should either hold together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness. (2-229)

Finally, after the second *talaq* (and third *nikah*) both husband and wife are warned that life is not a joke and life realities should be taken seriously. Now, they have to row the boat of life towards shore responsibly. If again they could not live together amicably and broke the relationship, then the husband must remember that in the case of third *talaq*, the same lady cannot come back to his *nikah* either during the *iddat* or afterward. This will be an irrevocable *talaq*. Therefore he should now take his decision very wisely.

So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), he cannot, after that, re- marry her. (2-230)

According to Quran a couple can avail at the most two chances for *talaq* and three for *nikah* during their married life. Now the question is, "Would this woman become *haraam* upon this man forever?" The Quran says that this is not the case. If this woman marries another man but this marriage is also not

successful and reaches the point of *talaq* (as mentioned earlier) then this woman can again marry the first husband after *iddat* by mutual consent.

The complete verse is as follow:

So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), he cannot, after that, re- marry her until after she has married another husband and he has divorced her. In that case there is no blame on either of them if they re-unite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. Such are the limits ordained by Allah, which He makes plain to those who understand. (2-230)

After the third *talaq*, this woman will be forbidden for her husband unless she marries another person, if he gives *talaq* willingly and in true Quranic spirit then there is no harm in remarrying the first husband.

Saleem, this is that noble verse from which the most despised issue of *halala* has been contrived by the clergy. First they ridiculed the verse 2/229, by saying that if someone utters three times - *talaq, talaq, talaq* - in one breath, the *talaq* becomes irrevocable. This hasty nasty way of divorcing has forced many families, like Chanda Telli mentioned earlier, to live a life of disgrace and shame. When they suffered bitter consequences of ridiculing the divine law, they started to search for a solution. They came to the conclusion that someone should be persuaded to marry the divorced woman for one night and gives *talaq* next morning after spending the night with her in bed. This is called *halala*. In this way, she can marry her first husband again.

Saleem, pause and think ! Can you find any nation on earth with a more shameful custom than it? Can we call it a *nikah*? This is just the mockery of a *nikah*. This is ridiculing the divine law! Rather its ridiculing oneself! Divine laws cannot be ridiculed.

You will be astonished to know that there are professional *halala* makers in our society. Imagine, how these *halala* makers may be exploiting or blackmailing the parties? Saleem I feel ashamed to explain you such things, however, since you have asked for it, I have to tell you and you, too, have to bear with listening of such despicable things. However, I will not be able to give details of *halala* (these are mentioned in *Shariah* literature) because it is hard for me to narrate and difficult for you to listen these shameful episodes.

Saleem! In short, this is all what Quran says about *talaq*. I am happy that you asked this question and the related Quranic injunctions were thus detailed. You will notice, that regarding this matter how deeply Muslims are sunk in the sea of ignorance? As far as I have observed, I did not see *talaq* being given in our society in accordance with the Quran. In some places, saying *talaq, talaq, talaq*, three times in a single breath is considered as irrevocable, while in other places, it is completed in three months (*iddat* period) by saying *talaq, talaq, talaq* in succession at an interval of one month.

Anyhow, this procedure of *talaq* is adopted from *Fiqah and Hadith*. It is not from Quran. Unfortunately, whatever practiced by Muslims that includes very little from Quran. This is a great blessing of Allah (since He has completed the Deen and has taken responsibility of preserving Quran) that Quran is available to us in its pristine beauty. This provides us an opportunity to compare which of ours deeds are in accordance with the Quran and which are against it. Otherwise there was no way to find out today the real form of Islam.

It would have been not possible neither for me to tell nor for you to know all this if the Quran was not preserved in its original form. What has happened to the religious books of other religions is that they are not available in their original form Therefore, today, they are unable to find out that when and where they got astray from the original teachings of religion. Consequently, they are helpless to carry on their religion. This is a different story. The question you asked for is satisfactorily answered in the above lines.

Saleem! One more point needs clarification. The above explanations give an impression that only man has the right to divorce, whereas woman is forced to accept the decision of man. Actually, this is not the case. In the same verse, along with these injunctions, the Quran says clearly:

And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable. (2-228)

In other words, it means that women have similar rights over men as they have over women.

This verse is a very comprehensive principle and a wonderful formula that embodies all details of *nikah* and *talaq* which are addressed to men. It is apparent from this principle that under which circumstances and according to which conditions a man can divorce his wife, a woman can also take *talaq* from her husband in the same way. Hence, it is said in *surah al-Nisa*:

If a wife fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best; even though men's souls are swayed by greed. But if ye do good and practice self-restraint, Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (4-128)

In other words, if a wife fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part then the concerned authorities should appoint arbitrators in the same way as they do in case of an husband. However, if there is no way of reconciliation then court can order divorce and state will take the responsibility to meet out their expenses.

But if they disagree (and must part), Allah* will provide abundance for each of them from His all-reaching bounty: for Allah is He that careth for all and is Wise. (4-130)

* What Allah says that becomes the responsibility of Islamic State to fulfil it.

In the following case (when court notices that man is ready for reconciliation while woman wants separation) woman will give money from her *mehr* (*alimony*) as compensation.

If ye (judges) do indeed fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah, there is no blame on either of them if she give something for her freedom. (2-229)

Now comes your last question. What to do if a man, in rage, says something or takes a vow that affects the matrimonial life? In this respect the Quran says:

Allah will not call you to account for thoughtlessness in your oaths, but for the intention in your hearts; and He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing. (2-225)

This means that there is no harm in any vow that is taken un-intentionally. However, it is not a good practice and the Quran orders to avoid this. The distinct character of *momineen*:

Who avoid vain talk. (23-3)

They abstain from frivolous absurdities and from anything, which could prevent them from following the Quran.

Regarding intentional vows, on which a man repents later and wants to recur, there is a fine called *kuffara*. This means that he pays for his foolishness with fine:

GOD does not hold you responsible for the mere utterance of oaths; He holds you responsible for your

actual intentions. If you violate an oath, you shall atone by feeding ten poor people from the same food you offer to your own family, or clothing them, or by freeing a slave. If you cannot afford this, then you shall fast three days. This is the atonement for violating the oaths that you swore to keep. You shall fulfill your oaths. (5-89)

However, if those persons who vow not to go to their wives and also are not repenting on this; in this case wife will be in an uncertain situation which cannot be continued indefinitely. That is why the Quran says:

For those who take an oath for abstention from their wives, a waiting for four months is ordained; if then they return, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. (2-226)

But if their intention is firm for divorce, Allah heareth and knoweth all things. (2-227)

It means, you have to decide within four months whether reconciliation is possible or not. If you repent on your vow, then you can rejoin your wife after paying the prescribed *kuffara*. But if the situation goes out of hand and there is no chance of reconciliation, then after fulfilling all the conditions mentioned above, nikah agreement should be revoked.

Saleem! You must have noticed that the Quran did not fix reasons for *talaq*. In Christianity, divorce is possible only because of adultery. The result is that if husband and wife want separation for other reasons, they have to prove adultery. Undoubtedly, that can cause many evils in the society. This is because of such difficulties that Christian governments have abandoned the religious law of divorce and adopted civil laws. But these laws also do not fulfill the conditions laid down in the Quran. Similarly, in the Hindu religion, there is no possibility of divorce. Therefore, they are also abandoning their religious injunction and finding other ways of divorce. On the other hand, look at the Muslims! They have got excellent laws from God but they landed themselves into trouble by adopting man-made laws. The only solution of all these social evils is that we should abandon all other laws and traditions; and make the Divine Laws our code of life. This is real Deen.

Before concluding this discussion, let me tell you an interesting story. You may remember that once a bill, known as Sarda Bill, was presented in the India's Legislative Assembly (in the pre-partition days) according to which child marriage was to be banned. This bill was presented by a Hindu, whose religion not only allows child marriage but considers it a good practice. But Saleem, you will be astonished to know that leaders of all Muslims' religious sects had bitterly opposed this bill. They jointly appealed the Viceroy that Muslims should be exempted from this law. What an irony? Ordinarily, our clergy never agrees on any issue, but its strange that they came together on an issue that was against the Quran. How saddening it was to see that the representatives of all Muslims' sects i.e. Our *Ulama-e-Ikram* are requesting a non-Muslim ruler that the child marriage should not be banned because it will tantamount to interference in our Deen.

It was a sobbing event for every sensitive heart. Some people, whose minds were not littered with the curse of sectarianism, asked that if there is any reference from Quran? The answer was yes. Saleem! You will be astonished to see that how could one get a reference from Quran to justify child marriage? Nikah is a very serious and an important contract. The very first condition of any contract is that the parties should agree with mutual consent, without any pressure or coercion. And this is possible only after reaching the adulthood. But listen, what they say about the Quranic reference?

You have seen that within the discussion of *iddat*, the Quran says:

Such of your women as have passed the age of monthly courses, for them the prescribed period, if ye have any doubts, is three months, and for those who have no courses. (65-4)

They (mullahs) argued that since Quran says that the women who do not have menstrual cycle have three months *iddat*. Here it becomes clear that women who do not have monthly cycle only could be minor girls. So when minor's *iddat* is mentioned, therefore their marriage is also allowed.

But Quran says which means those women who could not have menstrual cycle (due to some body defect or illness). This word should not be translated as those women who did not have menstrual cycle (due to young age). Suppose, if we accept that Quran mentions the *iddat* period for a minor girl but how could we conclude from this verse that Quran allows child marriage?

On the basis of this verse, at the most, one can say that if there is a situation in which somebody has married a minor girl in violation of Quranic injunctions, then her *iddat* will be counted that way. It is the same situation, like praying in the state of intoxication. The Quran says that don't pray when you are intoxicated. It does not mean that the Quran gives permission of drinking alcohol. Quran forbids consumption of alcohol, but also says that if someone has violated this injunction so he should not pray as long as he is intoxicated.

Saleem, anyhow its another question that will be discussed at length some other time. You had asked about *talaq* and I hope that by now *talaq*'s regulations under the Quran are clear.

Once again, to summarize, the important conditions of *talaq* are:

1. In the case of differences between husband and wife: (a) every effort should be made for reconciliation through mutual understanding; (b) if it fails then court or *panchayat* should appoint two mediators. If these mediators also fail then there will be no alternative left for the court, except to order *talaq*.
2. Implementation of *talaq* will begin in normal period after the menstrual cycle.
3. After the court decision, nikah agreement will end and *iddat* period will begin.
4. During *iddat* period this woman cannot marry another person but if these (ex) husband and wife are willing, they can remarry.
5. After the *iddat* period, woman is free to marry another person or re-marry her ex-husband. But marriage with her ex-husband should fulfill all conditions of nikah.
6. After re-marrying they will begin their new matrimonial life.
7. If again relations reached to a point of *talaq* (second *talaq*) they can again re-marry either during the *iddat* period or afterward by following the same procedure as mentioned in case of first *talaq*. Now this couple has availed two chances of *talaq*.
8. After this (second nikah) if again relations reached to a point of *talaq* (which will be counted as third *talaq*) then they cannot re-marry neither during *iddat* nor after that.
9. However, if this woman gets married to another person through mutual consent and afterward their marriage gets dissolved and she gets *talaq* from her new husband on the same conditions, as mentioned earlier, or she becomes widow, then there is no harm for her in marrying her previous husband.
10. Whatever rights a man has in respect of *talaq*, a woman also has the same rights. A woman can also get herself free from the bond of marriage, the same way as a man can do. However, both of them cannot do that whimsically, a man has to achieve *talaq* through court, in accordance with the Quranic injunctions and a woman also has to do the same way.

Saleem - did you get that? This is called a Quranic *talaq*. I know its not difficult for you to accept it but believe me mullahs will never agree to it because the religion they follow is not sent by God. They are following man-made religion but they claim that it is sent by God. That is why Quran says: "They write the Book with their own hands and then say : "this is from God", to traffic with it for a miserable price ![2:79].

January 1949

Other injunctions regarding matrimonial life and women can be found in "Letters to Tahira." This book

has been published by the Idara Tuloue Islam. Explanations about *Talaq* can be found in this book. After the promulgation of Family Laws, these issues are settled in accordance with these (Quran) laws. In case of necessity, one should refer to these laws. (April 1980)

[Home](#) **The Fundamental Principles of the Islamic System**

translated by Dr. Suhail Alam

Saleem, I received your letter. To tell you the truth, I've been waiting for it since my article on the Islamic System was published. Your doubts and concerns are not unexpected to me, and neither is your confusion and intellectual despair.

Saleem! Keep in mind that once a belief has been passed down for generations and has become engrained in the depths of the subconscious mind, it automatically seems to be based on solid truths. There may be a mountain of proofs and evidence developed in support of that belief, but those proofs and evidences would have been sculpted after the belief was already accepted.

The preservation of self is a powerful force in man; in fact, his constant fear is defeat of himself, even on an intellectual plane. In an attempt to avoid intellectual defeat, proof and evidence is created (either consciously or subconsciously) for beliefs that are held either consciously or subconsciously. Defeat, even in minor situations, causes a feeling of being overwhelmed, leading to an inferiority complex and fear. This is why when people are confronted with something disproving their beliefs, their automatic reaction is to reject those new ideas and principles. Subconsciously believing one's own ideas and principles to be beyond doubt, they construct around themselves the fort of protection that we call blind following, or taqlid-e-a'ma. This manner of blind following is the sworn enemy of knowledge and insight and is the first opponent of invitation to the truth and to revolutionary movements.

A vivid display of this is given by the nations to whom the various prophets were sent. To every prophet's plea to follow the Guidance, the masses invariably responded "How can we leave what has been passed down to us from our ancestors? We are not prepared to do this."

وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا
إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ

"...Whenever We sent a warner before you (Muhammad) to any people, the wealthy ones among them said: 'We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we will certainly follow in their footsteps.'" (43:23)

Saleem, think how wrong a justification for one's principles this is, that it has been passed down by one's ancestors. If the germs of tuberculosis were passed down for generations from one's ancestors, then who wouldn't want to have them removed and be cured? So then why should the germs of false beliefs be considered so sacred that we, in fact, nourish them, keeping them closely until they course through our veins?

Allah has given us, in his clear revelation, a touchstone (al-furqaan, the criterion) to distinguish between truth and falsehood. So you should take everything, even what I say, and test it against that touchstone before you draw your conclusions. By merely claiming that what I say is different than what anyone has told you before, neither is what I am saying proven wrong, nor what others are saying proven right. Never forget that. The judge of right and wrong or the health and disease of nations is only the Quran, not my or others' claims. That is why if any person sees my views as false, then he should provide reasons from the Quran. "haa too burhanukum in kuntum saadiqin," bring your proof if you speak the truth.

In the meantime, why don't you put aside everything I have just told you, and also put aside the beliefs which have been passed down to you from your ancestors. Then pause, reflect, and come to your own

conclusion about what the Quran truly teaches us.

For example, the Quranic punishment for adultery is specified but the punishment for drinking alcohol is not. Initially, you might conclude that the Quran does not consider drinking alcohol a real crime, and that is why the punishment is not specified. But this conclusion is against the other teachings of the Quran:

- 1) Drinking is "an abomination of Satan's handiwork." (5:90). Thus it is a sinful deed
- 2) Zina is considered "a fahishah (great sin)." (17:32).
- 3) "And whosoever follows the footsteps of Satan, then verily he commits fahsha'..." (24:21)

From this, we see that drinking is included in the fahsha' category (because Satan orders to commit fahsha', and drinking is a work of Satan). Therefore, since adultery is considered a fahisha and thus a punishable crime, so is drinking considered a fahisha and thus a punishable crime. This is why it would be incorrect to conclude that the Quran does not wish to punish drinking.

Now the question arises that if a punishment for drinking is necessary, then why wasn't the punishment made clear as it was in the case of adultery? The non-Muslim critic may venture to say that this shows the Quran is an incomplete or imperfect book; it specifies punishments for some crimes and leaves out the punishments of others.

Is The Quran Incomplete?

The response by most Muslims to this non-Muslim criticism is that punishments unspecified by the Quran were later specified by the Prophet. In this way, the book of Allah was completed. This is called the Sunnah, and in fact when one mentions "deen," the usual understanding is the Quran and the Sunnah.

But think Saleem! Did the above response truly answer the criticism? The criticism was about the deficiency of Allah, that He did not remember to put some details in the Quran, and as a result, revealed an imperfect book. Our response is that the Prophet, a human being, corrected this and filled in the blanks, therefore everything is okay? But the criticism of Allah still remains! The question now becomes why couldn't Allah reveal the punishment for drinking just as He had revealed the punishment for adultery? Or in the same way that He specified the times for fasting, He could have explained the finer points of zakat. Why did a human being have to fill in these details? The non-Muslim again corners the Muslim on the deficiency of Allah and the Quran. Despite the honorable status of prophethood, even Muslims believe that Allah has the highest authority (no human being may add or subtract from Islam). This also moves us to question why Allah did not clarify and complete the beliefs himself.

The strength of this criticism forced those Muslims intent on defending the status quo and following their ancestors, to devise a divine explanation. They invented the idea that there are 2 types of wahi (revelation): wahi matloo (the recited revelation, contained in the Quran) and wahi ghair matloo (the unrecited revelation, contained in the sayings of the Prophet ,or the Sunnah). This belief answered the above criticisms by claiming that the Prophet did not clarify the Quran himself, rather Allah clarified those points but His clarifications and completions were not contained in the Quran but rather in the collections of hadith.

Hadith – A Second Source of Revelation?

Can you see Saleem, how wrong and weak this hasty comeback is? First of all, a second form of revelation is not mentioned in the Quran. In the Quran, it clearly says that revelation is that which is contained within the pages of the Quran. For example:

وَأْتَلْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ
وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا

"And recite what has been revealed to you (Oh Muhammad) of the Book of your Lord. None can change His words, and you will find no other refuge than Him." (18:27)

Throughout the entire Quran, there is not even a hint of the existence of revelation outside of the Quran, or that there are 2 types of revelation. Allah mentions only the Quran and gives His vow of protection only to the Quran. (Interestingly, the belief of 2 types of revelation is present in the Jewish religion; perhaps it is from there that Muslims have borrowed the idea.)

Then consider this as well Saleem! What could be the purpose of sending a separate form of revelation besides the Quran? That same God (the sender of revelation), that same Prophet (the recipient of revelation), the same language (Arabic), the same people addressed (mankind, for whom the revelation is sent), and both forms of revelation have equal authority, but despite the similarities, one form is within the Quran and the other is outside of it. The order to give zakat is in the Quran, but to give 2.5% is outside of the Quran. Couldn't the simple figure of 2.5% have been given in the Quran? Was there a concern of the Quran becoming too voluminous? (This was the explanation given by Maulana Maududi, First Volume of Tafheemaat, page 237). Think Saleem! What could be Allah's reason for separating such closely related facts? What could be the purpose for ordering us to pay zakat through one type of revelation, and preserving that order in the Quran; whereas the clarification that zakat means paying 2.5% of your income is transmitted and preserved through another type of revelation instead of the Quran? This is the belief, anyway, about how Allah gave his revelation in two forms.

The Prophet's Mission

Now turn your attention towards the Prophet's mission of transmitting this "second revelation" (hadith) to us. The belief is that for one type of revelation (Quran), the Prophet took enough care to have it written in a complete and precise fashion. From start to finish, he oversaw its preservation in writing as well as in memory (by checking and double-checking his companions' recitation, listening repeatedly to them reciting each word). In this way, he ensured the preservation of this revelation in the pages of the Quran and gave it to the Ummah for eternity; in regards to the Quran, his duty as a messenger of Allah was accomplished.

Now, if there was more revelation (i.e., hadith), then the Prophet's duty should have been to transmit that as well, in a fashion similar to that of the Quran. But neither did he order it to be written down anywhere, nor did he oversee its memorization, nor did he compile some sort of collection of it, nor did he make any sort of accommodation whatsoever for its preservation. Rather even if someone, out of good will, attempted to record anything on his own, he stopped them saying "Don't record anything of me other than the Quran," - Sahih Muslim (Hadith scholars claim that shortly before his death, the Prophet allowed some hadith writing. But still, he neither commanded it nor double-checked it to ensure its quality as he did for the Quran). Just think Saleem! That if the deen is supposed to be the collection of the Quran (recited revelation) and the Sunnah (unrecited revelation), then why was one part preserved so completely and carefully while the other part was simply left alone? Does this mean (God forbid) that the Prophet was remiss in his duty to transmit the message of Allah to mankind?

Why Weren't Hadith Recorded Like the Quran?

It is said that the memory of the Arabs was so strong that they memorized everything verbally, and this is why almost no hadith were written down. But Saleem, use your head to really think about this. If the Arabs' memory was indeed so strong that hadith did not need to be written down, then why was it

necessary to have the Quran written down? And then also, why would the Quran be memorized so carefully word by word, and then the memorization checked and double-checked by the Prophet, whereas not a shred of similar effort was made for hadith? Why were hadith not memorized and then checked by the Prophet? It should be kept in mind that hadith are not even the exact words of the Prophet. The definition of hadith is that it is a narration, told in the words of the narrator. The narrator himself does not even claim that these are the exact words of the Prophet, rather he gives the gist of what the Prophet said. When this is the case, then the issue of strong memory is irrelevant.

The Mission of the Companions

Having seen the role of Allah and the Prophet in regards to the Quran versus the hadith, let us now look at the role of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (khulifa' ar-rashidun) in the revelation. It is well known how diligently they prepared carefully checked copies of the Quran and then distributed them to the different corners of the Ummah. They even prepared specially verified standard Qurans against which all other Qurans could be checked; if any discrepancy was found, the Quran in question would be destroyed. They did all of this for that one half of the deen, the Quran. But for the other half, the hadith, not only did they not do anything to preserve it themselves, not only did they more than once order collections of hadith to be burned, but whenever it became known that someone was personally attempting to record hadith, they immediately stopped him and depending on the situation even administered punishment for it (I have already explained this to you in detail, in my book Maqaam-e-Hadith).

What Does All This Mean?

Just think Saleem! What conclusion is this investigation leading you to? In the end, don't you arrive at the conclusion that these beliefs about hadith, the unrecited revelation (wahi ghair matloo), must have been started much after the Prophet's time? That it was not according to the wishes of Allah, nor the Prophet, nor the Rightly-Guided Caliphs? At that time, only one type of revelation was accepted, the one preserved forever in the Quran. This is what Allah gave to the Prophet, what the Prophet transmitted to the Ummah, and what his companions spread to mankind.

Listen to this again Saleem! That the Prophet did not collect and transmit the hadith to the Ummah. If it were really a part of the deen, then wouldn't it be his duty to personally ensure the reliable transmission of this part of the deen to his Ummah before his departure (particularly since there shall be none after him)? But the collection of hadith was carried out individually, much after the death of the Prophet (The most reliable collection, Sahih Bukhari, was not compiled until the 3rd Century A. H. It's, author Imam Bukhari, died in 256 A. H. As for the claim that there were hadith written before Sahih Bukhari, those hadith were very few in number compared to the amount amassed by Bukhari, and in addition, were eventually lost to the Ummah). Do you think that if the hadith were really so important, then the Prophet would have left us in this way? From this, it becomes clear that our beloved Prophet did not consider it a part of the deen at all. This is the only possible conclusion! Now ask all the strict proponents of hadith what I have asked above; none of them will be able to give you a satisfying answer.

Through Hadith, A Door Was Opened

Now listen to how this false belief introduced so many terrible things into the deen. The Quran was present amongst Muslims in its pristine form, and Allah Himself had taken custodianship over it; therefore, not even a single letter of the Quran could be tampered with. In contrast, there was no standard against which to check the collections of hadith as they were produced, yet they were decreed as an essential complement of the Quran. Now imagine, by doing this, how wide the door was swung open for tampering with Islamic principles. Before, Islam's message was safe and perfectly preserved. Now, whoever wished could create an order by himself, ascribe to it 3 or 4 famous narrators of hadith thus ascribing it to the Prophet, and then his personal order would become a part of Islam. There was no means for anyone to test a hadith against a verified text to determine whether it was truly the Prophet's saying. The only means was to determine the trustworthiness of the isnad (chain of narrators) attached to the

hadith. Think Saleem, what large doors for corruption were opened in that deed that Allah and his messenger gave to us with such care and consideration. Even the Prophet could not alter its message or follow something other than it:

قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ مِنْ تَلْقَائِي نَفْسِي إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا
مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ

"Say it is not for me to, of my own accord, to change it. I follow naught except what is revealed unto me (Quran)..." (10:15)

وَلَا يَقُولُ كَاهِنٌ قَلِيلًا مَّا نَذْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ نَزَّلَ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَلَوْ
نَقُولُ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضُ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴿٤٤﴾ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ﴿٤٥﴾ ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا
مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

"This is the Revelation sent down from the Lord of the Worlds. And if he (Muhammad) had forged a false saying concerning Us, We surely would have seized him by his right hand, And then certainly would have cut off his life artery, And none of you could withhold Us from punishing him." (69:43-47)

But now whoever controlled hadith had total freedom to insert false sayings. Whatever orders they wanted, they could create and ascribe to the Prophet. And if one tells them that these so-called sayings are actually changes in the teachings of the Quran or that it is an addition to it, which even the Prophet did not have the authority to do, then the answer is that these changes and additions are not from the Prophet himself, rather they are from Allah (since hadith are supposedly unrecited revelation). They say that these changes, amendments, and abrogations are actually from Allah, through the Prophet, narrated by a chain of various past Muslims.

Even Quranic Orders Were Not Safe!

But it does not stop there Saleem! The hadith (unrecited revelation) not only specified those things Allah left unspecified in the Quran, it even changed and abrogated those things Allah specified in the Quran! For example, the Quran gives the crime of zina the punishment of 100 lashes. But according to hadith, this punishment is only for fornicators (unmarried), whereas the punishment for adulterers (married but unfaithful) is stoning to death (a punishment which has no basis in the Quran). In another place, the Quran says that every person can make a will for his worldly possessions; whatever remains may then be distributed according to the inheritance laws of the Quran. But in hadith, not only does it say that the will can only include a third of the possessions, but also that it cannot be left for family members. And so on. Thus, before, the criticism was just that since the Quran did not specify everything, it is (God forbid) deficient. In defense of this claim, the idea of "unrecited revelation" was coined. But as we have seen above, now even the clearly specified orders in the Quran are considered deficient. Their completion and amendments were made through the hadith, the unrecited revelation; the doors for inserting whatever one wanted into Islam, were swung wide open. The scholars of hadith are witnesses to the fact that fabricated hadith number in the thousands.

So Saleem, have you understood anything? I suspect questions must be bubbling in your mind that 1) Still,

the answer to the initial criticism has not been clarified, as far as why the Quran left some parts unspecified, and 2) How or why did the beliefs about hadith and unrecited revelation enter into Islam in the first place.

You've done the same thing most people do when confronted with an idea contrary to their traditional beliefs; without even taking the time to understand it, they begin to question that idea. As I said before, beliefs passed down generation after generation eventually enter into the depths of the subconscious of mankind as eternal truths, and they do not easily leave their precious homes in our hearts. Keeping this in mind, let's look at your questions.

Why the Quran Left Some Parts Unspecified

You already know that the Quran contains the system of laws for every area of life, for all time. The two parts of any system of laws are 1) the principles and 2) the practical implementation of those principles. In the Islamic system, the principles are those unchanging independent values and eternal laws contained within the Quran. Here, we will call the practical implementation of these principles "by-laws" (laws derived from other laws). Therefore, we can consider the Islamic system of laws as 1) the principles contained within the Quran, and 2) the by-laws derived from the Quran. Keep in mind that whereas the principles are eternally unchangeable, as different practical situations present themselves to civilization through time, the implementation of those principles may change to meet changing demands, in order to provide satisfying solutions. This is why the by-laws (implementation of the eternal principles) cannot themselves remain fixed for all time (as you know, trying to cure every illness with the same medicine can lead to death).

Now are you beginning to understand Allah's purpose for leaving some parts unspecified? The Quran has given us all the basic principles (eternal unchangeable laws) for guiding human civilization, but it has not specified every detail of how to implement those principles (by-laws). The reason is that not a single letter of the Quran is subject to change, therefore, if the Quran had itself specified the details of all by-laws, then for all time to come, no change could occur in the system of laws. If Allah Himself had specified the by-laws for all time, then none of us would have any authority to say otherwise. This type of system, in which even the practical implementation, or by-laws, are fixed, cannot be applied to every area of life for all time.

The Downfall of Other Religions as a System of Life

Do you know why the Jewish, Christian, and Hindu religions are so unsuccessful today? Do you know why their followers have disbanded them (or follow in name only)? Actually, these followers did not leave their religions happily; they left it because of great compulsion. What was that compulsion, you ask? Since those religious rituals, traditions and by-laws were specified at a certain point in time and received a decree of being unchangeable, as the times and contexts changed, the implementation of the unchangeable laws (by-laws) of these religions was unable meet the demands of the times. However, the vanguard of the religions (for reasons I described earlier) continued insisting on those rituals, traditions, and by-laws, claiming that these were unchangeable and intended for all time. This clash continued until eventually, the citizens became so frustrated by the demands of the day, that they totally discarded their religious system of laws. And because their divine books were not present in their pristine forms, they were unable to return to their eternal religious laws and were thus unable to revitalize their religion according to the needs of their time. That is why along with discarding their by-laws, they actually discarded their religions as a system of life (you see, for most of them, these practical implementations of principles (by-laws) had become their whole religion, i.e. they had lost the eternal principles and had nothing left but by-laws. Now that they were forced to discard that as well, they were left with nothing). So you see Saleem, how the Jews' by-laws in the Talmud, the Christians' by-laws by St. Paul, and the Hindus' by-laws by Manu Ji, (all of which are considered eternal and unchangeable), became useless, leaving its followers no choice but to put them aside due to the demands of time and change?

In contrast, while the Quran established the eternal laws guiding the development and evolution of mankind, it also accommodated the changing demands of civilization. This is why Islam's system of life, embracing both the need for permanence as well as flexibility, has the capacity to become the eternal system of life for all mankind, for all time. And so it is clear Saleem! That the Quran did not provide all the by-laws (those specifics, e.g., punishment for drinking, which the non-Muslim critics claimed was a deficiency) because Allah wanted them to remain flexible and adaptable to man's needs. If the by-laws regarding these issues were to be eternally fixed, then the Quran would have specified those things itself (of which there are many examples in the Quran). This is why if at some time a group derives specific by-laws based on the eternal laws of the Quran and says that from that point on they cannot change, it would destroy the foundation of this dynamic system of life, eliminating its capacity to be the eternal system of life for mankind. Just think Saleem! Could a government operate if it could only ask for 2.5% income tax on its people's surplus assets once a year, no matter what the nation's condition? The Quran, by giving the order of zakat (income tax) and leaving its particulars undetermined, gave each Islamic government of different time periods the ability to implement the order according to their needs (we will discuss zakat in more detail in the future). If the khulifa'-ar-rashidun judged that according to their needs, 2.5% was appropriate then that should become the Islamic law of the land (Shariah). And if today some Islamic government judges that according to the current needs, 20% zakat is necessary, then that should become the Islamic law (and when the Islamic economic system (nizaam-e-rabubiyat) attains its final stages of establishment, then zakat's implementation will become something even more. For explanation, see my book Nizaam-e-Rabubiyat).

These are the reasons Saleem, why the Quran left the by-laws unspecified. But by forcing upon ourselves all the by-laws that our ancestors implemented, we have crippled this eternal system of life. You know even better than I do that some Muslims of the present day are being estranged from or are even revolting against Islam because the temporally defined by-laws of our ancestors are being enforced upon them even though they do not fit the demands of the present time. But if you present to these Muslims the principles of the Quran and tell them to apply the eternal laws and derive the by-laws according to their present needs and within the limits of those principles, watch how they joyfully pledge allegiance to that system of life.

Now let's examine your other concern; how, why, and who decreed these parts as unchangeable, or in other words, how were the beliefs of unrecited revelation (wahi ghair matloo) introduced into Islam?

How the By-Laws Became Unchangeable

As was mentioned above, the Quran left by-laws unspecified in order to allow the different Muslim governments through time the ability to specify them according to their own respective needs. The Prophet commanded the establishment of an Islamic government and, according to the needs of his time, he specified the by-laws for his nation. After this, during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (khulifa'-ar-rashidun), additions and modifications were continuously made according to their needs. The Caliphs, at times, gave judgments that were different than those of the Prophet, and they did this saying that this was due to the different demands of their conditions. Saleem! You will be shocked to know that the beliefs of the unrecited revelation (wahi ghair matloo) cannot be traced back to the period of the Prophet or even that of the Caliphs and companions! Their period was not even aware of this term. They only recognized one type of revelation, the one preserved within the Quran. Outside of it, there was no revelation. That is why outside of the Quran, nothing was considered unchangeable.

However, after this period, the Caliphate turned into a hereditary monarchy, and the rulers granted themselves total power over affairs of state. As far as the affairs of religion, they commissioned the scholars of that time (hand-picked by them, of course) to deal with the affairs of religion; thus, church and state were effectively separated, and the procedure outlined in the Quran for implementing the Islamic principles and deriving by-laws (i.e., through the medium of the government of the Islamic system) was wiped out.

Giving the scholars the benefit of the doubt, it can be said that due to the above situation, the scholars needed to take emergency measures. The government had given the scholars the right to derive religious by-laws, however, the scholars were genuinely worried that the rulers were not interested in Islam and would not enforce them. Furthermore, if it was claimed that the scholars' by-laws only applied to their own time, after time, different groups might break off forming their own sets of by-laws according to their beliefs and desires, and eventually the ummah would deteriorate into utter chaos (the kings didn't care, as long as everyone obeyed them).

The emergency measures the scholars took to solve this predicament was to ascribe their own interpretations to the Prophet (SAW), claiming that he had received it through divine revelation. This way, their laws and interpretations received the divine seal of approval and would have to be followed by the masses; deviation would not be allowed. Now, when Muslim scholars deriving by-laws based upon their own interpretation confronted scholars preaching "divine" by-laws from the Prophet, it is obvious that everyone would feel forced to accept the latter. Thus, anarchy was averted and unity was restored. Instead of leaving the Ummah unbridled and allowing varying peoples' opinions and reasoning to rule, scholars leashed them by way of taqlid (blind following) into very strict limits. The Ummah no longer came together to decide how best to implement the Quran (due to separation of church and state); they were now forced to just blindly follow what the scholars claimed were "divine" by-laws, given by the Prophet. Any deviation would be considered a crime. The scholars aim was to unite everyone by forcing all the Muslims of their time to follow one set of by-laws, however, they empowered these by-laws so much that in time they were decreed as eternally unchangeable. (At this time, I will not discuss the direct conspiracy of the Jews, Christians, and Zorostrians against Islam, to take revenge upon Muslims by inserting their own beliefs into Islam by way of relations and hadith. I have written much about this in my book Maqaam-e-hadith.)

For such a critical moment in Islamic history (when kings took power and separated church and state), this seemed a suitable temporary solution, but such a huge door for the insertion of false hadith was opened that all one had to do was to attach "Qala rasoolullah" (the Prophet said) along with a few respectable narrators and one's belief could become a part of the deen; it would become an unchangeable portion of the Islamic law.

But as long as there was a separation church and state, the question of whether the by-laws should remain unchangeable was irrelevant because the scholars' decrees (being passed down on the basis of taqlid as unchangeable) had no true impact on society; having been separated from the state, these beliefs became mere rituals. If zakat was 2.5% or 40%, both cases represented nothing more than ritual. Wherever there are Muslim governments today in which there is a separation of church and state, their religious by-laws and decrees are nothing more than rituals. There, the government tax is separate, and zakat is given merely as a good deed. This is why the issue of changeable or unchangeable by-laws was irrelevant.

That is, until the formation of Pakistan, because the very reason for its birth was to actively implement religion and Islamic law. Even those in favor of implementing traditional Islamic law (with unchangeable by-laws) trembled at the question of whether or not Pakistan could function under these unchangeable set of laws and details formulated many years ago. Those in favor of it were persistent, and felt that the Islamic law should be followed just as it is without being touched. These people were not concerned with whether they would be able to function in the current day or not. This is the characteristic product of taqlid (blind following; literally, being led on a leash), that the only concern is with proper intentions and prescribed means, but the concern never extends to the end results of those actions.

Do you remember our trip to the newspaper press in Delhi. There was a printing-press machine operating at full speed. Its numerous pieces, clattering loudly, provided a dramatic example of wondrous machinery at work. However, no paper was fed into the machine, so despite the spectacle nothing was being printed. Saleem, the Muslims' machinery (praying, fasting, zakat, etc.) has been on for many centuries, but just like this press machine, nothing is being produced. Oolaaika habitat a'maaluhum, they are those whose works are without result, dalla sa'yuhum, their efforts are in vain. But today Saleem, we have received an

opportunity where tyranny and domination have receded, and we have the power and freedom to create whatever form of government we want. We control whatever form of constitution we want to implement. After centuries, a chance has come in which we can write our fate with our own pens. If we do not take advantage of this huge opportunity that Allah has blessed us with now, perhaps the Quran will never become the true constitution of our lives. We will never be able to take the pure breath of freedom. Saleem, how can I express to you the anguish and raging storm that is within my chest, which has made my nights sleepless and my days restless. You don't understand Saleem, that when I look at Pakistan both far and wide, I see no concern for character nor desire for profound thought. All I can do is sigh and lament the oppression of taqlid and the death of the truth-seekers.

Saleem, I am continually haunted by the fact that those calling for the traditional system of Islamic law desire to implement the by-laws (the Shariah) specified over 1000 years ago merely because they were decreed as unchangeable, and that is why they will only accept that Islamic law, one that will never be able to operate in our times. Muslims will be so dismayed and disappointed by its failure that they may never again consider implementing Islamic law in their countries. And in this way, the Great Blessing that Allah has given us will remain unimplemented due to our unfortunate actions. This will not only be an injustice for Muslims; all of humanity will be deprived of the light meant to elevate mankind to new levels. (Unfortunately, after this letter was published, exactly what I was afraid of happened. The same old proponents of Islamic law implemented their brand of Islam in Pakistan, and it was proven impossible to use.)

Iman in the Prophet (saw)

Saleem, you were also wondering that if the Quran only gave us the eternal laws and principles, and each Ummah was supposed to determine the exact details according to the needs of its times, then what role does having iman in the Prophet play? This question of yours shocked me because you never used to ask such silly questions. Just think, if someone says that the Quran is the word of Allah, then what proof can he bring that the Quran wasn't actually written by our Prophet? History itself says that the Quran was given to the world by the Prophet, so why is it considered the word of Allah? The only proof is that the Prophet himself said that this is not his own work, but that it is the word of Allah. That is why until someone has iman in the Prophet, he cannot truly believe that the Quran is the word of Allah and that the Quran itself is the constitution for the kingdom of Allah.

Then also think about this Saleem! That it was the Prophet who enlightened us to the reality that we, mankind, have to implement the Quranic principles and derive the by-laws ourselves. If the Prophet had not demonstrated this, then would any Muslim know how to go about Islamic lawmaking?

Actually, the part of the Seerah that must be followed is that which has been stated as the best example for all of humanity until the end of the world. The implementation of the Quran's eternal laws (by-laws) are, by necessity, inextricably bound to the limits of the time and place in which they were implemented. But the wisdom and light seen in the seerah is beyond space and time. We see in the seerah the character of our Prophet. We see how he was able to guide mankind to its proper destination, engendering freedom of thought, destroying the chains and shackles in which mankind was bound. These chains and shackles of tyranny were placed in the guise of kings, capitalists, and priests, but the real damage was done when they eventually became engrained in our own conscious and subconscious philosophies. The Quran states that:

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ
ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا
أَرْبَابَكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

(3:79) "It is not possible for any human being unto whom Allah has given the scripture and wisdom and the prophethood that he should afterwards have said unto mankind: Be slaves of me instead of Allah; but what he said was: Be faithful servants of the Lord by virtue of your constant teaching of the Scripture and of your constant study thereof."

One mission of the Prophet was, through unprecedented example, to demonstrate how people can become guided and enlightened. In other words, how people can develop a direct relationship with their God, without barriers. The means for this connection and relationship is the Quran. The Prophet himself was the first one to provide a concrete example of how this can be accomplished. The ummah, after the Prophet, was supposed to follow this example and keep it continuous; however, the ummah eventually veered off this path and again placed barriers between themselves and Allah; the very same barriers that the Quran had come to remove! The very same barriers that the Prophet showed us how to remove! These barriers in some cases were politicians, and in other cases priests who made their followers worship laws and concepts that were of their own creation, instead of Allah's. These priests took the shelter of the original scholars and in other cases found shelter under the Prophet himself, through stories and narrations. This is in spite of the fact that neither the original scholars, nor the Prophet taught that Quranic applications were meant to be unchangeable until the end of the world.

So Saleem, a day should come when these wrong ways are discovered and left behind, and those ways are adopted that will once again allow a direct relationship between God and his people. In my opinion, Pakistan is providing that chance, but even now if those barriers between Allah and his people remain standing, meaning if the government became subject to the politicians, or else subject to the scholar-worshipping practices of the priests', then this broken relationship between Allah and his people will remain broken. This, Saleem, is the reason for the dreamlessness of my teary eyes, and the hidden anguish of my heart.

With this last bit, Saleem, hopefully you will have concluded that the "Islamic System" is not simply a collection of rules and laws to be followed by a nation mechanically and robotically.

What is Law?

But what is a law? It is the means by which man is stopped from committing those deeds that lead to disruption and imbalance in his society. For the achievement of this end, different nations or kingdoms or governments have implemented different measures. Between different governing bodies, there are often similarities. For example, the punishment for murder by British law is death, and this is also the punishment according to the Islamic law. So in this regard, there is no difference between the two laws. Now, let's say hypothetically, that all of Britain's punishment for crimes are changed to agree with the punishments of Islamic law, called hudood. Can one then deduce that the British way of life has become the Islamic way of life? Definitely not. Now let's take one more step. If our "Muslim" governments also implement all their punishments according to Islamic law, does that necessarily mean that our government has become Islamic? Definitely not. By this Saleem, you will have understood that simply implementing the Islamic law is not what is meant by the Islamic system. The most we can say is that the Islamic laws are a part of the Islamic system.

Interestingly, there often on one hand will be an attempt to enforce these Islamic laws, while on the other hand will be an attempt to find loopholes in them. You might be surprised at what I am saying. But Saleem, what I am saying is reality. If you don't believe me, then take a look at those books for yourself and read, such as Imam ibn Qayyim's "I'laan al-Mowqi'een," in which some of these loopholes of Islamic law are rebutted. For your interest, I will only give you one example of such loophole, which will show you exactly of what kind of loopholes I speak.

Two men broke into and robbed a house, but were caught in the act and brought before a court. The crime was evident. According to Islamic law, the hands of these thieves should have been cut. But now watch how these two thieves escape their punishment. One of the men says that he only broke open the door, and

that is not robbery. The second man says, indeed I took whatever valuable items I found in the house, however, items found in an open house cannot be called private or protected, and since robbery only involves those items that are private or protected, I did not steal either. The court was thus unable to punish the two thieves.

Saleem, these kinds of loopholes occur in court every day. The better part of a lawyers job is often spent in such loophole manipulation. This demonstrates how mere implementation of Islamic law cannot engender rectification in people (which should be the ultimate goal). The change in their hearts will come only when the Quranic system of raboobiyat is established. And what is Quranic raboobiyat? I cannot explain it all in this letter Saleem, I will explain it another time (see my book, Nizaam-e-Raboobiyat, the Quranic Economic System, though even this book will not be totally comprehensive). The Quranic system of raboobiyat encompasses the social life of man in the same way that the vast environment surrounds his physical life; although human beings are attached to the massive earth for their existence, the earth does not interfere in their freedom. It is important to understand that in this system, the universe was created for a purpose and goal, and it is steadily and surely progressing towards that goal. In summary:

1. Mankind was created for a purpose and goal, and the struggles they endure should lead towards that goal.
2. The physical universe proceeds towards that goal without choice or intention.
3. But mankind has the freedom of will, the power of choice and intention. And because of this, mankind can only proceed to its goal through its choices and way of life.
4. The name of this way of life is "deen," meaning the Islamic way of life, whose basis is the oneness of the Creator, oneness of law, oneness of mankind, and oneness of purpose.
5. The major outcome of this system is that every individual of that society is provided with all the requirements to excel and develop all of his capabilities and powers.
6. According to this system of life, it is the responsibility of the government to provide all the necessities of life for its citizens.

Therefore, it is obvious that the laws of crime and punishment, whose goal is to deal with those who break the laws, are only one aspect of this all-encompassing system.

Until now, our discussion has been limited to how to put into action and implement the Islamic laws. So do not think that I have covered all there is to the Islamic system, rather I have only covered one aspect of it. You won't fully understand how this constitution of laws I have described becomes a part of the whole system and achieves the great goals Allah intended, until you fully understand the entire system with its aims and goals in your sights.

Now Saleem, the response to your last inquiry. You will agree that there are some matters the details of which are not mentioned in either Quran or Hadith. Now, if we keep with the traditional principle that only the Prophet can determine the applications of revelation, then who will determine the details of these unmentioned matters since the Prophethood ended long ago? This is the problem that gave rise to the belief that at the end of every century there shall be a mujaddid, a revolutionary, or a mehdi at the end of time. This is how those seeking Prophethood (or its power) took advantage and were able to pry open the door of Prophethood.

However if we realize that the application and implementation of the Islamic principles is not the duty of a few special individuals, but rather is the duty of the entire nation, then there will be no need for a mujaddid or a mehdi. Those chairs of Prophethood will not be set out, nor will anyone have the audacity to sit in them. Renewal and revolution and guidance will be maintained, continuing unbroken. But Muslims did not do this. And after they followed the wrong path and came across its complications, they

devised solutions that caused their worries and problems to further multiply.

You may say that for such problems, the door to ijtihaad remains open. This is what I say as well. The difference is that you say that the ijtihaad already done cannot be further changed or improved; whereas, I say that areas whose demands change according to the needs of the time are indeed subject to revised ijtihaad. Those items that Allah has left open for interpretation cannot have eternally unchangeable ijtihaad. (But of course, it should be kept in mind that we may benefit by studying the ijtihaad of previous times.) But this ijtihaad should not be done on an individual basis. Rather, the delegates of the ummah, after thought and reflection upon all the conditions of society, should do ijtihaad and then derive the applications of Quranic principles (by-laws). This is the way, Saleem, that we can, in the light of Allah's eternal laws, answer the demands of each time, coming up with new remedies for the ever-changing illnesses of society. This is ad-din al-mubeen, the Islamic system of life that will shine its light upon the entire world, for all time to come.

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Meaning of Salat and Zakat

translated by Abdus Sattar Ghazali

Saleem ! Your astonishment is justified that the things that look ‘ *obvious* ’, if seen deeply, have actually no reality. As a matter of fact, no nation can prosper unless it examines critically all those things that are inherited as ‘ *obvious* ’.

According to (the American philosopher) Whitehead, “ **it requires a very unusual mind to undertake analysis of what is obvious** ”.

This practice may seem trivial on the face, but if we look deep into it, it gives us a better standard of examining the truth.

There are many things that we accept as ‘ *obvious* ’ and never pause to think, should we take those things as ‘ *obvious* ’. **Consequently**, there are many fictions that become facts for us. **For instance, obedience to parents is accepted as ‘ obvious ’. However, if put to critical analysis we find no basis.**

Everyday those obvious things are repeated without any thought “**if those are obvious or not.**” Here I will emphasize that I don’t mean to say that every obvious, after analysis proves baseless. May be it **is** based on facts. But anything that is accepted after a critical analysis will become a firm belief.

Critical analysis also looks for divine guidance. And for a Muslim this divine guidance or authority is Quran. Therefore, it is important that we should have a critical analysis of the obvious and should accept those for which we have an authority from Quran.

Quran is against blind following because we never critically examine those things that we follow blindly **and see if God Sanctions such things?** Whitehead calls this blind following as “**what is obvious.**”

Quran urges all Muslims (rather all human beings):

“ And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).” (17/36)

In other words Quran says that you should not take a stand (regarding anything) where you have no personal knowledge (Use all means of inquiry and then come to a conclusion - *Allah* has given you all the faculties for this purpose.) Mind it, the ear and the eye and the heart - all of them shall have to answer in regard to the question whether personal inquiry was made about the concerned matter.

May be, at this point, you may think that **on the one hand** Quran demands blind faith (*Eeman bil Ghaib*) and on the other hand declares faith (*Eeman*) as cause of enlightenment. What does this mean? As a matter of fact, like other things, the issue of blind faith also needs analysis. This can be explained this way. A system is in vogue in the world and producing its results. There is a strong call against that the system is leading the humanity towards destruction. The person presents another system and claims that his system will be responsible for the development and prosperity of the humanity. Obviously, this system is still in the form of an idea and will not be able to bring its results, unless it is implemented. And its implementation is not possible unless there are people who are ready to enforce it. However, only those people will be able to implement it who believe in the truthfulness of this system. They firmly believe that the new system will produce the results, which are attributed to it. **If these people demand to see the results first and then implement it then it would be** like a man saying that he will not go into water unless he knows swimming while it is necessary to go into water to learn swimming.

Similarly it is necessary to implement this system to know its results. It is necessary for this group (about

whom Quran says *Assabiqoon Al Awwaloon*) who will first implement this system to ascertain in the light of **intellectual** knowledge that this system will bring the desired results. In other words results of this system are not physically seen but thinking and analysis have proved that. This will be called faith in the unseen results of the system. This will be called *Eeman Bilghaib*. This group when without seeing the results will implement the system, will see the same expected. And those who will believe in that system after seeing the results, will have belief in the system on the basis of seeing the results (*Eeman A'la wajha al Baseerah*).

Saleem! now you understand what is the meaning of *Eeman Bilghaib and Eeman A'la wajha al Baseerah*.

Today we have God's Book as an authority. For us nothing should be an obvious fact unless it is judged on this standard. The Quran is a guiding light for our knowledge and wisdom just like the sun's light for our eyes.

We should critically analyse everything that is presented to us as the obvious in the light of the Quran. But for a blind follower it is very difficult. This is the reason that **the people who believed in the inherited 'facts' defied every prophet's call** and they never felt a need to critically examine those obvious facts.

Unfortunately in our society most of the things that we considered as facts or "proved matters" come under this category of obvious. If you analyse them in the light of Quran, you will be astonished to know that many unrealistic ideas have taken the position of established facts.

One of the main reason for this situation is that when Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians, who were unable to oppose Islam openly, hatched an organized conspiracy. **Just like** Saint Paul, when failed to defeat the Christians of the early era through torture and intimidation, **he** put the cloak of Christianity and spread his own religion, instead of the religion of Jesus, hence you will not find true Christianity anywhere. Every Christian is **following** Paulism but thinks that it is true Christianity.

Similarly, defeated Jews, Christian and Zoroastrians took the cloak of Islam and systematically spread their own ideas and innovations in Islam.

Today in our religious practices, only a small portion is **Deen** that was prescribed for us by God. The rest is based on these innovations. Other-**worldliness** of Christians, ritualism and priesthood of Jews and ancestor worship of Zoroastrians are the elements of the present Islamic religion which I describe as *madhab* and call the Quranic system of life as **Deen**, because Quran presented **Deen**, not *madhab*. The word *madhab* is not **mentioned in Quran**.

Today what is called as revival of **Deen** and introduction of **Shariah** (for which Muslims are invited) is actually the invitation to return towards these three elements (**as noted above**). **Beliefs and practices** based on these three elements are inherently considered as obvious. We cannot find the real **Islam if we kept continue to follow the Shariah**. Christianity, even if it wants to get rid of **Paulism**, cannot find real Christianity because it does not have the book of God in its original form. But we are privileged that God's book – **The Quran** – is preserved in its original shape.

My crime is that I invite people to analyse those traditionally accepted obvious in the light of Quran.

Your question regarding Deen (System based on Quran) needs explanation. During my visit to Baluchistan, I saw a deserted locality where an out of order railway signal was standing and on the other side a fixture to change the railway track. And at a distance some **broken** pieces of railway track. An elder of the village told me that long back there was a railway station at this place. Our village produced grains and fruits in **abundance**. There was hustle and bustle of transit passengers and the villagers were very prosperous. Now this village has been almost deserted as the train service stopped. We don't know for which sins we were punished. Now we spend our life in misery. This old man had seen this train station with his own eyes.

Now think Saleem, after two generations, children will only hear stories about this train and will have a strange impression in their mind about the benefits of this train. At the old railway site they will only see broken poles and tracks. Since they have not seen the train, they may think that all benefits were because of these signals and railway track. However, they will not understand if somebody explains to them that these poles and tracks were parts of a great railway system but after this system has been broken, these broken poles and tracks cannot bring out these results for which they were designed. Without seeing the train they will not be able to fully understand why these poles and tracks are useless now and do not bring any results while at one time the train brought prosperity.

Deen is the name of a system. This system meant that human beings should live together in such a manner that every individual should have an equal opportunity for to develop its full potential or self-realisation. A system in which each individual should become a means for the development of potentials of others and in this way finds way of his/her

Own development of potentials.

In this system, the needs of the natural life are very elementary things. A system that is responsible for the development of all natural potentials, cannot forget the natural needs of human beings.

Obviously, such a great system will have many elements of various kinds. Any tiny element of the system will be unique and **vital** and will have a role in **producing** the results of the system, while the whole system will be paralysed if that tiny element failed to function, just like a loose of a screw of railway track will stop all trains.

Various injunctions in the Islamic system have **equal** importance. When that system was established, all actions **those were** in accordance with the system principles, played role in bringing out the results. But when the system **vanished**, its elements remained like a railway junkyard, with **out-of-order** signals and broken railway tracks.

We heard about the blessings of this (**like railway**) system, but did not see it in practice. Now we consider the old signals and broken railway track (**the elements of Shariah**) a means of blessings of the system.

Similarly, we now put flowers of our faith on the corrupted system and expect that our deserted habitats will again become alive and again produce various kinds of grains and fruits. Our caravan will again run at a **high speed**. Remember – such expectations cannot become true through our sacred wishes **and sincere hopes**.

In a functioning railway system, the same poles and tracks brought blessings, but outside the system they are unable to bring any results. Similarly, within the system, they (various injunctions and principles) were part of Deen. Outside the system became rituals. *Madhab* is the name of a group of rituals and the sacred wishes attached to it. Concrete results are the proof of the authenticity or truthfulness of a Deen, while truthfulness of *madhab* remains confined to the **good** faith of its believers (followers). Deen is like a living body **working as an organic whole** while in *madhab*, parts of the dead body are scattered at the sacred places **and worshiped**.

Although, the system that Islam gave and described with a comprehensive term of “al-Deen”, cannot be broken into pieces. But to understand **we can divide it into two parts**: its one part revolutionised individual life and another part was responsible for the development of human potential. (Again I will emphasise that these were not two parts. Internal revolutions i.e. the result of change is potential development and the result of human development is human personality development. I made these parts just for clarification.)

Quran has described this as:

In **Al-Salaat's** terminology, full system of psychological change is reflected in its miniature form and all means of potential development are found in **Al-Zakat**. Al-Zakat means growth. Al-Salat embraces all aspects of a Muslim, his/her all movements, thoughts and intentions.

Al-Salat is the name of following the right path. The path about which God said: “ **Inna Rabbi a'la Siratim Mustaqeem** ” - Your potential developer's law (God's Law) is in vogue on the balanced path. You should also follow that path.

In order to get a clear understanding of Al-Salaat terminology we have to see its literal meaning. In horse racing the winner horse is called ‘ Al-Sabiq’ and the one immediately following him is called ‘Al-Musalli’ (from Sallaa i.e. the extreme end of the tail), because he puts the front part of his head near the tail of the preceding horse. That is why in *Sura Al-Qiyamah*, Quran says about the people who deviate from the Islamic system:

(In the light of these facts) Tell the person who does not testify (saddaqa) to Our Law of *Accountability*; who does not follow (salla) the straight path; (who) instead belies (kazzaba) and tries to escape (tawalla) from it. 75/31-32

Saleem, here **Takzeeb** is used against **Tasdeeq** and **Salla** against **Tawalla** i.e. finding ways of escape. Therefore, **Musalli** is he/she who follows **exactly** the balanced path shown by the law of potential development.

Prostration “**sajda**” means abiding the divine law. In *surat Al Alaq*, God tells Prophet Mohammad: Don't follow those who do not accept the Divine System. **But prostrate and become closer.**

In more clear words, Quran says: “ **O Rasool, you should never feel the necessity to compromise with them. (The question of any compromise between conflicting ideologies of life does not arise. What you have to do is) Obey and follow the Divine Laws to the maximum possible extent as, in this way, every step of yours will take you nearer to your destined goal. 96/17**

Prostrate and become closer. It means that reject abidance of all non-divine laws. Prostration is the manifestation of abidance of the divine law.

Similarly in *surat Al Mursalat*, it is said about criminals and liars that when they are asked to bow (go into **ruku**), they do not do. It means that defiance of divine law and rebellion from it is an obstacle in **ruku**. Therefore, **ruku** means practical confirmation of divine law and bowing before it.

“ **When told to bow before Our Laws, they never do so** ”. (77/48)

In *surat A'raaf*, complete abidance of the divine law is called as establishment of **Al-Salaat**.

“ **As to those who hold fast by the Book and establish Al-Salaat, never shall We suffer the reward of the righteous to perish.**” (7/170).

In other words, could they not realise the simple truth that the abode of the next world was for those who hold fast to the Book and establish the *Nizam-us-Salaat (the system of salaat)*?. Their right actions would not go unrequited.

Abidance of divine law is not possible without the establishment of Deen's system ([Quranic Government](#)). And because establishment of salat is a part of this system, therefore establishment of salat is not possible without the establishment of a Quranic government. In [surat Haj](#) it is said clearly that when we will give power to those who wanted to establish Quranic system, they will establish salat and arrange zakat.

“ (They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, establish salat and provide zakat, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: with Allah rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs.” (22/41)

In other words, concerning the group of oppressed people who have at last risen to wipe out transgression and *zulm*, God says that if We bestow on them the authority to rule and they do come into power, (they will not do any injustice and oppression but) they will establish *Salat* (so that everyone in society follows the system of Divine Laws). They will provide means of development to each and everyone and enforce Laws which are in conformity with the Divine Code (the *Quran*); and forbid people from doing anything that is contrary to it. In other words, in every case they will first look for the guidance given by *Allah's* Law; and then after discussion and consultation decide their affairs according to the Divine Law (5/44).

In *surat Al Noor*, earthly rule and establishment of Deen is conditional on the establishment of *salat* and *zakat*.

“Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion - the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace: 'They will follow Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me.' If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked. (24/55)

The question arises as to what one would gain by obeying these Laws? *Allah* has promised people who have faith in the truthfulness of the Divine Laws and who do the righteous deeds, that He will establish their authority on this earth (33/27); and their government will turn their land into *Jannah* (39/74.)

This is Our eternal Law according to which We caused previous generations to establish their authority on this earth (28/6). According to this Law and as a result of their *Eiman* and righteous deeds, We will grant them rule over the land and strengthen the system of life which We have chosen for them. The result will be that it will replace their erstwhile state of fear by a sense of security and peace; so that they may obey Our Laws in comfort. Also there will be no pressure on them to obey any one else, thus becoming guilty of *Shirk*.

No worldly power or authority should force them to obey man-made or other laws instead of those given by *Allah*. But keep one thing in mind. This Order will last as long as they continue obeying Divine Laws. For those who after the establishment of the system do not work according to it (and start enforcing their own laws), this will amount to going astray and abandoning the straight path, which leads them to the right destination. They will thus be deprived of the bounties of a blissful life, which are the result of *Eiman* and righteous deeds. When the basis is lost how can its fruitful results be sustained?

“ So establish *salat* and *zakat*; and obey the Messenger. that ye may receive mercy.” (24/56)

Therefore, if you want to achieve such authority in the land and ensure its continuity, you have to establish the system of *salat* and make the social structure along a line that ensures that mankind continues getting the maximum means of nourishment. This is not an individual function, but a collective effort possible only under a disciplined and orderly system. For this it is important that you should obey the *Rasool* (the center of authority in the system); and the result will be that the divine bounties will be showered on you. Keep in mind that the one and only way of establishing supremacy of your *Deen* and living an Islamic way of life, is if you make the entire fabric of society conform with Quranic injunctions. And thereafter everyone should obey the system.)

In *surat Shura*, where it is said: their government will be formed through consultation before this *aqamat-*

al-salat and *infaq fi sabilillah* is mentioned

“ Those who hearken to their Lord, and establish *Al-Salaat*; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for Sustenance.” (42/38)

These are the people who respond to the call and come forward to establish the *Nizam-e-Rabubiyyat* (*Quranic System for Potential Development*). They obey His Laws and remain within the bounds of *Nizam-us-Salat* (*System of Salaat*), which teaches them to decide their affairs through mutual consultations and according to Divine Laws. Furthermore they keep open for the nourishment of other needy human beings, most of whatever means of sustenance, which they have been provided with. In effect, they retain for themselves only what is necessary for their own survival.

In *Sura Al Hajj*, where it is said about the people who wanted to establish the Quranic order that their duty will be to oversee the deeds of human beings, **at the same place** *aqeemus-salat* and *atu-azzakat* is mentioned and then said:

“ And strive in His cause as ye ought to strive, (with sincerity and under discipline). He has chosen you, and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion; it is the cult of your father Abraham. It is He Who has named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation); that the Messenger may be a witness for you, and ye be witnesses for mankind! So establish regular Prayer, give regular Charity, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector - the Best to protect and the Best to help! ” (22/78)

In other words continue striving for the establishment and sustenance of the Divine Order and make this struggle in right earnestness. It is He Who has chosen you to carry out this mission; so do not ever think of it as some kind of hardship or labour imposed on you. This order is not a new one. This is the same order, which was established by your own forefather *Abraham*. Even the name ‘*Muslim*’ which is given to you is not a new one; in bygone times *Allah* had given this name to other similar communities. Now in the Quran, this very name is proposed for you.

The practical aspect of this programme is that your *Rasool* would supervise your deeds (and after him your central authority would do so); and you would supervise the performance of other mankind. For this purpose you should establish the system of *Al-Salaat* and make arrangements for the development of mankind, by holding fast to the Divine Laws (the Quran). Bear in mind that *Allah* alone is your Supreme Protector and He certainly is an excellent Guardian and Helper. Therefore have complete faith in His Laws. This is the practical programme and the key to every success and achievement in life.

Therefore it is clear that abidance of divine law is not possible without the establishment of *Al-Salaat* and *Al-Zakaat*.

In *Sura A'raaf*, first it is said:

Say: "My Lord hath commanded justice; and that ye set your whole selves (to Him) at every time and place of prayer, and call upon Him, making your devotion sincere as in His sight: such as He created you in the beginning, so shall ye return." (7/29)

In other words you should concentrate upon exclusive and sincere obedience to *Allah's* laws. This way you will once again attain that **heavenly** life from which your ancestors were expelled. An authentic system of life can be established only through the divine law.

If establishment of *Al-Salaat* was only meant our formal prayer (*namaz in Urdu*), then it was not required to establish a Quranic government. We used to pray even under the British Raj and today Muslims in India are also praying.

Quran also tells us that the natural result of the establishment of *Al-Salaat* is establishment of rule **to govern** in accordance with the divine law. Do we have **this** rule from our prayers?

In *Sura Al-Baqra* it is said:

“ Those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and establish regular prayers and regular charity, will have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (2/277)

In other words, those who believe in, and act in accordance with, the Laws of *Allah* and establish the Order of *Al-Salaat* and *Al-Zakaat* will not have any fear or anxiety for it would be the result of their actions that this Order would be established, and for this, their reward would lie with their *Rabb* (The Potential Developer).

Let us ponder if our prayers and 2 ½ percent *zakat* is bringing this result!

In *Sura Al-Ankabut*, it is said:

“ For Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds.” (29/45).

The *Salaat* system will certainly stop people from collecting everything for themselves and from not caring about the welfare of others. Does our *Salaat* (prayers) producing this result?

In *Sura Al-Rum*, the two aspects of *Salaat*'s natural results are explained. First it is said:

“ Turn ye back in repentance to Him, and fear Him: establish regular prayers, and be not ye among those who join gods with Allah.” (30/31)

And then added:

“ Those who split up their Religion, and become (mere) Sects,- each party rejoicing in that which is with itself!” (30/32)

After people split into sects, every group thinks it is on the path of truth and is therefore content with its own way. Remember getting split into sects or factions amounts to *shirk* (infidelity).

Practical result of Divine Law's obedience will be the establishment of Quranic system that will naturally result in the unity of humanity that is divided due to lack of this system. In other words you should remain fully conscious of His Laws. To achieve this, establish the *Nizam-us-Salat* (System of *Salaat*, wherein everyone follows His Laws according to one's own free will). In this obedience and following, do not include anyone else's laws or decisions. This will create uniformity of thought and action amongst yourselves and, as such, all humanity will become one *Ummah* (Nation).

At this point Saleem, you may be thinking that what is performed in mosques in the name of *Namaz* (prayer) has any reality? The answer to this is “yes” as well as “no”. You know that any soldier has regular routines. Everyday he is called for military exercise that he has to perform at the war front.

You also know that there is an individual psychology and there is a mass psychology. Although group is composed of individuals but individual psychology is different than group psychology. Mass psychology condition is not the sum total of individual psychology. It brings different results.

Islam has prescribed the temporary *Salaat* gatherings as a reminder to the system of *Deen*. In this way these gatherings are an inseparable part of the system. But if the system is not in vogue and we individually or in mosques knee and prostrate (*ruku and sajud*), that will be similar to the unused railway signal and broken railway track (mentioned earlier).

Saleem, just think of a soldier (for whom even small elements of his uniform are very important) who,

after his dismissal from the army wears his uniform from top to bottom and parades in his village with a stick (instead of a gun) in his hand. Surely, now his action will not bring any result, although in the army all these things are important to bring out desired results.

This is the reason that I said the external form of *Namaz (prayer)* is important and at the same time not important.

Namaz has special importance when it becomes part of *Deen (Quranic system)* and when it is outside the system, then it becomes a ritual. In the *Deen (system)*, the same elements bring out results, but the artificial *Madh'ab (religion)* of human beings have made this an objective in itself.

Saleem notice, in *Sura Al-Baqra*, Quran makes this distinction very beautifully.

“ It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces Towards east or West; but it is righteousness- to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah fearing.” (2/177)

In other words, the fabricated *Shari'ah* was nothing but a collection of rituals, the observance of which was held to be the purpose of *Deen*. This is not at all the case. According to the Divine Law, the essential purpose of *Deen* is not fulfilled by a mechanical performance of rituals e.g. turning Eastwards or Westwards during *Salaat*, but requires:-

1. *Eeman* (belief) in *Allah*; in the Law of *Mukafaat (accountability)*; in the life Hereafter; in *Malaika (angels)*; in *Anbia (prophets)* and in the Books revealed through the *Anbia (prophets)*(2/4); and
2. Following from (1) above: the establishment of a system in which resources are made available to help those who: (a) are left without protection or support in society; (b) lose their means of livelihood or are incapacitated to work; and (c) cannot earn enough to meet their needs. This system will also provide assistance to those outsiders who, while passing through its territory, become indigent, and arrange for the liberation of slaves from bondage.

In brief then, you should establish a system wherein members of the society adhere to the Divine Laws voluntarily and means of development are provided to all who need them. You should honour your promises and commitments. If hostile forces confront you, then face them with steadfastness and fortitude, and do not let fear and despair weaken you.

Those who follow this path unswervingly vindicate their claim to be true believers and they, can rightfully claim to be upholders of Divine Laws (rather than those who claim to inherit heaven by observing certain rites which they claim is *Deen*).

However, at [another](#) place it is also made clear that in its place certain direction is also important.

“ We see the turning of thy face (for guidance to the heavens: now Shall We turn thee to a Qibla (Focus of Attention) that shall please thee. Turn then Thy face in the direction of the sacred Mosque: Wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction. The people of the Book know well that that is the truth from their Lord. Nor is Allah unmindful of what they do.” (2/144)

This means that in the *Deen* system, direction of thought and action should be in accordance with the Divine Law and in its external shape; direction of the individuals should be towards the focal point of the *Deen* system.

Saleem pause to think, the same thing about which it is said that “it is not righteousness that ye turn your

faces Towards East or West,” at another place was considered important.

That was the ritual of *Madhab* and this is the part of *Deen*.

“ And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith); to establish regular prayer; and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight.” (98/5)

In other words, they are ordained to follow only the Divine Laws; to deny anyone else as their sovereign; and to leave everything else aside in order to unite on one point. They should concentrate their efforts on establishing the system of Al-*Salaat* and providing for the nourishment and development of mankind (Al-*Zakaat*). This is the only firm system that guarantees benefit and uplift of mankind.

Saleem! this is the difference between the *Namaz of Madh’ab* (prayer in religion) and Al-*Salaat of Deen* (abidance of law through the system). *Madhab’s Namaz* becomes ritual only, while *Deen’s Salaat* brings development to humanity. It should be remembered that the establishment of *Salaat* means spending your entire life in accordance with the Divine Law. But *Salaat* gatherings are also important as part of the *Deen* system. Hence their holding is important, but these gatherings can bring positive results only when they become part of the system of *Deen*.

Now your second question - what should be done in the present circumstances? Its reply is not difficult. We have abandoned the Quranic *Deen* and replaced it with the human thoughts. This is the same situation when prophets were sent to such misguided nations. But we do not need a prophet as God’s book is with us in its original form. The only question is that how should we arrange our current system in accordance with the Quranic system. How to implement the *Deen* system after receiving the system?

Quran has explained this too. When right path and the appropriate type of system for human development was shown through divine guidance (*wahi*) to prophet Mohammad (PBUH). After that the prophet was ordered *tazmeel* (*Forming a group consisting of people with identical views*). In *Sura Al-Muzammil*, God has addressed the prophet with a title that indicates what steps should be taken to establish the system of *Deen*. It is necessary to understand the meaning of *Al-Muzzamil*. Two riders in the saddle of camel, who are selected very carefully so that saddle balance is not disturbed, are call *zameel* (companion). *Tazmeel* means finding such companions who work with full concentration and *Al-Muzzamil is the person who do this job*. Prophet was told that the first stage in establishing the *Deen* system is to find such companions who have identical views and actions. *Due to this attribute he is called, Al-Muzzamil*.

Therefore, in our present state of confused thinking and behavior, the first step should be *tazmeel*, i.e. finding such companions who have common thinking. But this requires courage and persistence.

Today, everybody as a fashion calls for “back to the Quran,” (*Marraje’at-elal-Quran*) but the man who invites people to practically bow before the Quran is labeled as atheist and “*be-deen.*” (*having no religion*) It is because Quran declared war against the present *Madhahibs*.

The objective of *Deen* is to eliminate social inequalities of human life while *Madh’ab* aims at perpetuating these inequalities. *Deen* provokes thinking abilities, *Madh’ab* paralyses the human thinking. *Deen* invites the human intellect on the basis of the permanent values of life to formulate rules and regulations according to the need of time. *Madh’ab* claims that to deviate from the path of our ancestors will lead us to hell. *Deen* refers to the results achieved in this world and declares them as proof of its truthfulness. On the other hand as the rituals of *Madh’ab* cannot bring any results in this world, therefore to make those rituals attractive, it says that they will not show results in this world but in the hereafter. In *Deen*, life is a continuity that embraces both this world and the hereafter. According to *Deen*, the development of life begins in this world and continues in the hereafter.

Madh’ab teaches hatred towards this world, so that selfish group continues its hold and the people never think of snatching back economic resources. *Deen* only teaches submission to the Divine Law. Even

prophet Mohammad declared abidance of this law as objective of his life.

Madh'ab teaches personality worship, sometimes of living persons and sometimes of dead ones. Since general public has superficial thinking and sacred traditions strengthens these personality cults. Therefore, to maintain its position, **madh'ab** provokes people against all those calls that invite people to reject personality cult and follow the Divine Law. In such circumstances, which have been described by the Quran as “**Fasad fil Burre wal Bahr**” (Mischief on earth and water),” it is a big challenge to invite people towards the compliance of Divine Law. However, whatever it is, this is the only way and the first stage in the journey of this program is “**Tazmeel**.”

As mentioned earlier, this phase requires great patience and persistence. Selfish programs bring their results immediately; therefore success in these programs is very easy. But under the permanent values, social system takes much longer time to show results. Think over the first era of this program. The life span of the great personality of Prophet Mohammad, after getting **Nabuwwat** (prophethood) was only 23 years. Out of this, 13 years were spent tonly in “**Tazmeel**.” Gradually, some companions were found. Great efforts were made during this phase but the companions who were found were great.

In this **Tazmeel** action, there was no confrontation with anyone, but all efforts were concentrated on one objective that in this mob, those people who are capable of accepting and maintaining this system, should join us after abandoning their ancestral rituals, so that (in the words of Quran) nobody should be killed in **ignorance**.

Saleem, notice, how big responsibility is imposed on the invitee of this system. He has to endure all physical hardships with great courage so that nobody who has the capability to accept and establish this system is killed because he had no opportunity to be in the company of (well wishers) “**Sadiqeen**.” Search of such capable persons, without coercion or force, erasing wrong impression from their minds and utilizing their capabilities, this is the preliminary phase of efforts in which companions are gathered. Practical method of this phase is that pure Quranic thought is propagated and like minded people, who accept this thought, should continue to gather on one center. After the gathering of linke-minded people, the next phase will be to make favorable atmosphere for **Rabubiat** system. And all obstacles in this way should be removed through **Rabubiat**, a system that is responsible for the development of human capabilities, where level of humanity will continue to rise and every generation will be better **than** the previous one, till the humanity will be able to stand on its feet and the earth will become lightened by the **noor (light)** of its developer (God). Today, what is called the **bread** issue, has taken a great importance because of our own economic injustices, is the preliminary step of this **Nizam-e-Rabubiat**.

Economic resources are shifted from individuals to the system under this system that is based on the unchangeable laws of unity of God and unity of creation.

Saleem, now you are responsible to spread that message of Quran that you have understood and continue effort to understand the rest of the Quranic message and do not be disappointed by the criticism of opponents.

Now your question that without belief in God, why a system cannot be established only on the basis of ethical principles? I will explain this in my next letter that the concept of ethics is not possible without belief in God. But my God, I mean Quranic God, not the god created by the human intellect. From this you will understand what we mean when we say: “The reason of our present decline is weakness of our faith.”

August 1950

[Home](#) Who belies Deen?

translated by Abdus Sattar Ghazali

Letters to Saleem – No. 12

Saleem ! you have asked the meanings of “*Takzeeb-e-Deen*” as mentioned in *sura* Al Ma’oon. However, indirectly this question also includes some other points that are related to *Salat* and *Zakat* which need explanation. This letter will not cover a detailed explanation of that but I will try to make you understand their meanings.

Root word of *salat* is *salla*, meaning walking behind somebody. *Salla Alfarasu Taslyia* is said when the second number horse is running just behind the first number horse in a race. The winning horse is called *sabiqun* and the second one running behind as closely as possible, is called *al musalli*. Now the meanings of *salla* is clear, i.e. walking behind somebody. Hazrat Umar is quoted as saying: *sabaqa rasulullahe wa salla Abu Bakr wa thallatha Umar*. (*Taaajul Uroos*). Rasoolullah was first to go, after that Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar was third to go.

Imam Raghīb says that the Quranic verse:

We were not of those who walk behind prophets. (74/43)

The meaning of *salat* becomes clear from these examples. It means that to act upon the Divine Law, walk after the divine guidance. This abidance is not confined to a certain aspect of life, but it covers the whole life. Hence it will mean that following the Divine Law in every aspect of life: Completion of those duties, which are imposed by these laws. That system within which a human being fulfills his duties is called *Deen*.

salat is not confined to the *namaz* gatherings but it covers the whole life. o

Therefore, *salat* will be a complete system of *Deen*. Gatherings of *salat* (which are called *namaz*) are part of this system. Actually these gatherings are the practical exposition of faith that we have to spend all our life in accordance with the Divine Law and not to bow before any other law or decision. This makes clear that the concept of *salat* is not confined to the *namaz* gatherings but it covers the whole life. After performing *namaz*, we should not think that we have completely fulfilled the duty of *salat*. We should understand that we have fulfilled only a part of *salat* duty. It will be completed only when we surrender our whole life to the Divine system until the end of our temporal life.

Meanings of *salla*:

Allah hath chosen the Faith for you; then die not except in the Faith of Islam." (2/132)

In other words, this system of life is that which *Allah* chose for you. Hence you should live according to it throughout your life.

Now it is clear that meaning of *salla* is walking behind somebody. This meaning is further supported in *sura* Al Qiyama where *saddaqa* is used as antonym of *kazzaba*, and *salla* is used as antonym of *tawalla* as follow;

Who does not testify (*saddaqa*) to Our Law of *retribution*; who does not take (*salla*) the straight path; (who) instead belies (*kazzaba*) and tries to escape (*tawalla*) from it. (75/31,32)

Saddaqa means to authenticate, to prove and *kazzaba* means to belie. *Tawalla* is used as antonym of *salla*. Therefore, *salla* is the opposite of this behavior (*tawalla*) in which a human being does

not go along the straight path but finds ways to avoid it. Here it becomes clear that according to the Quran the meaning of *salla* is walking after somebody (as closely as possible) on the right path. At another point, the word *salat* is used with the same meanings. In *sura* Al Noor, after referring to the qualities of objects and birds it is said:

Sees thou not that it is Allah Whose praises all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds (of the air) with wings outspread? Each one knows its own (mode of) prayer (*salat*) and praise (*tasbeeh*). And Allah knows well all that they do. (27/41)

In other words, Quran says: If you ponder it seriously, you will conclude that everything that exists in the universe is very seriously and fervently active, throughout the day and night, performing its destined functions. (Just see the birds which with their wings outspread fly thousands of miles across the sky to reach their destination, doing so without any outside guidance or sign post. They never get lost because) Everything in the universe knows its destined functions (*Salat*) and also knows how to perform it (*Tasbeeh*). Therefore it is busy achieving its destiny. This is because of *Allah's* light which is spread all over the universe. It is because of this light that everything in the universe is fully aware of its destination and of the ways leading to it. *Allah* also knows everything that everyone is doing.

Obviously, here *salat* and *tasbeeh* does not mean the same *namaz* that is performed in mosques, but it means those duties that are assigned to those objects i.e. to follow the law for the abidance of which they have been created. *Tasbeeh* means putting all efforts to fulfill duties. This is the reason that I translate “*aqamat-as-salat*” as *nizam-e-salat*. Where Allah orders *aqamat-as-salat*, it means establishment of *nizam-e-salat*, Allah’s *nizam*. Gatherings of *namaz* fall within that system. However, the duty of *salat* is not confined to mosque but it embraces all aspects of life. When a human being joins a *salat* gathering, he is performing *salat* and when he follows the Divine Law in other matters of life, at that time too he is performing *salat*.

The concept that *salat* covers other aspects of life is apparent from this verse also: Hazart Sho’aib told his people:

“ They said: “ O Shu’aib ! does thy (religion of) prayer command thee that we leave off the worship which our fathers practiced, or that we leave off doing what we like with our property. Truly, thou art the one that forbearth with faults and is right-minded.” (11/87).

In other words, when prophet shu’aib invited his people to establish *Salat* (prayer) they replied him: “ when you prohibited us not to obey anyone other than Allah, we thought that you want us to follow your way of worship. But now, we see that it goes beyond that. Your *Salat* does not allow us to follow the religion of our ancestors only but it also does not allow us to use our wealth as we wish! You behave as though our ancestors were ignorant and you alone possess reason, and you are the sole sympathizer of the poor.

Here it becomes clear that spending of wealth in accordance with the Divine Law is included in *salat*. I hope that this point is clear that I do not say that *salat* does not mean *namaz* gatherings (*Namaz* is a Persian word and not of Arabic language). My point is that this duty (*namaz*) does not end there but covers the whole life. The person who does not join the *namaz* gatherings, he is abstaining from *salat* and one who does not follow the Divine Law is also abstaining from *salat*.

I am always emphasizing this point that when we perform *namaz* (prayer), we think that we fulfilled the duty of *aqamat-as-salat*. We should understand that with the performance of prayers we have fulfilled only part of *aqamat-as-salat*. This duty will be fulfilled completely only when we will spend all our life in accordance with the Divine Law. Only performing *namaz*, while spending rest of the life in violation of

the Divine Law cannot make us *musalli*. Only the person who spends all his life following the Divine Law is *musalli*. This fact is explained in sura Maryam v. (19/59) as follow: After referring to those prophets who were blessed with Divine rewards, it is said:

“ But after them there followed a posterity who missed prayers and followed after lusts soon, then, will they face Destruction.” (19/59)

In other words, Quran says: These people (prophets) possessed admirable qualities but their successors were unworthy people who simply neglected the system of *Salat* (prayer) and instead of following the Divine Laws pursued their own gains and desires (sha'hwat). Now they are being given another chance (in the form of Quran). If they lose this too then very soon they will find themselves facing utter destruction.

This makes clear that there are two paths of life. One path is that where a man follows his own thoughts and the other path is to follow the Divine Law. Quran says that those who follow their thoughts and desires practically abandon the path of *salat*. Therefore, *salat* means following the Divine Law. It is also indicated that by “losing of *salat*” that these people keep the formal shape of *salat* but overlook its real purpose.

It is now clear that *salat* means that one should conform to the Divine Law in all matters of life and who does not do that he is practically abandoning the real *salat*.

This is one aspect of Deen. The other aspect is that Quran gives special importance to the system that is related to human development. As a matter of fact the real purpose of *Deen* is development of human life which includes development of human personality and human body. Development of human personality means full development of all human potentials and abilities. The part that is related to the development of material life is called economic system. Quran tells us that the basic principle of human personality development is that the human being should work hard, and whatever is extra with him after fulfilling his needs, should be kept open for the development of others. In the terminology of Quran, it is called “*eeta-e-zakat*.” It means growth and providing means of life. As is explained in the *verse 87* of *sura Hood* (that is referred earlier about Hazrat Shu'aib, *Salat* system has a deep connection with the economic system, rather both are inter-connected, that is why in Quran *aqem-us-salat* and *atu-az-zakat* come together.

Who belies Deen?

After understanding the two basic points we now go further. In *sura Al Ma'oon*, it is said:

“ Have you ever pondered over the plight of the person who orally submits to *Islam* but in practice belies it?” (107/1)

In other words, his conduct testifies that if *Deen* is represented by his deeds, then all its claims are wrong. It should be noted that this verse does not refer to those who reject Deen but those who belie Deen.

The answer to who belies *Deen* is given in next verses:

“ Then such is the (man) who repulses the orphan (with harshness) and encourages not the feeding of the indigent.” (107/2,3)

In other words, the essence of *Deen* is that no one should in the slightest feel that he is helpless. If for some reason a person's needs are unfulfilled, then he or she should be helped at once. However, see the attitude of this 'religionist'. He pushes away the helpless, neither assisting the needy nor inducing others to do so.

Saleem ! you may be thinking that Quran will say that the man who does not believe in God, belied *Deen*,

or whose faith is not correct etc. But Quran does not say that. According to Quran a believer of *Deen* is who, although claims to be having faith (in God), shuns away an orphan or person who is left alone and nor arranges food for *miskeen* or struggles to establish a system for that.

As is explained earlier, in Arabic language *yateem* is not only a minor whose father has died, but its real meaning is “someone who is left alone.” The society gives respect to those only who are attached to some group, party or band. But if someone is left alone, he is not respected, rather he is shunned.

A society where an individual, who is not part of a group or does not have power, finds himself alone, according to the Quran is a bad society. We all know and feel that in our society most of the people find themselves alone. However, in this respect we are not alone. America and European nations are well ahead. Sometimes back a book was published in U.S. by prominent journalists who collected data that reflected the condition of the American society. I will not go into detail of what they wrote about the social values and attitudes of American people because that can be well judged by the title they gave to the book. The title of the book “The Lonely Crowd” itself reflects the miserable conditions of a so-called flourishing society. I will say its not merely a title but a cry which came out spontaneously over the lamentable condition of their society. Imagine, a crowd that is lonely! This is not a society but a crowd of people where everybody feels lonely.

American observers discovered this fact now, but Quran has explained this much earlier in these words:

“ To the orphan with claims of relationship.” (90/15)

(A person who has claim of relationship should not feel himself an orphan)

It looks that the American authors have used translation of this verse for their title.

Quran enumerates the second trait of the Beliers of *Deen* as:

“ And encourages not the feeding of the indigent.” (107/3)

The root of *miskeen* is *sukunun* or *sakinun*, which means that a person who cannot move or whose running business come to a halt or who is incapacitated for whatever reason. In our society, such people spend their whole life in misery. Quran says that the fate of such a society is destruction. In *sura* Al Fajr, Quran explains this:

“ When a person closes his eyes from Divine guidance, he boasts when he has abundance of economic resources but when (because of his own deeds) he is in trouble, then he says my God has dishonored me for no reason. Quran says that it is not true, it has happened because:

Nay, nay! but ye honor not the orphans. Nor do ye encourage one another to feed the poor. (89/17,18)

The reason for your being disgraced is that you have established a society in which people who are not considered worthy of respect, have been left alone. Only the one who has a strong party is considered worthy of respect. And in that society there is no arrangement whereby if someone’s business is affected for any reason, that at least he should not be deprived of sustenance. The affluent neither help him, nor do they persuade others to do so.

Saleem, Quran says that those people who are left alone in the society deserve honor because though they are not members of any group or party but they are human beings and God considers every human being honorable:

“ We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of our creation.”

(17/70)

In other word, physical force working in the universe are mighty and powerful, but to mankind We have given superiority over all of them) and certainly We have honoured man (and given him the knowledge as a result of which) he can conquer the forces of nature on land and sea and thus earn pleasant sustenance for himself. - In fact We have given superiority to man over most of Our creations!

Saleem! also understand that Quran has not charged them (beliers of Deen) with only these two crimes that: (1) they do not honour *yateem*, and (2) they do not arrange food for *masakeen*, but it also said that they think that whatever they inherited from their ancestors is their sole property! And, they use it exclusively.

“ And ye devour inheritance - all with greed. And ye love wealth with inordinate love.” (89/19-20)

In other words, they greedily devoured all that which came into their possession by way of inheritance from their forefathers. At the same time, (just like, how water flows down the valley towards the low lying places), they planned that the wealth of other people should also be sucked towards them. This is the reason of their destruction.

Not only that, Quran also says that the people who do not arrange food for *masakeen* and those who do not believe in God are the same. These both things are complimentary. The man who does not arrange food for the *masakeen* actually does not believe in God. About the people who are condemned to hell, Quran says:

“ This was he that would not believe in Allah, The Most High. And (the reason) would not encourage the feeding of the indigent.” (69/33,34)

In other words, he is the one who did not have belief in *Allah's* Supreme Law of *Retribution*.” This is because of his attitude whereby he never persuaded other people to help in establishing an economic system in which every indigent person incapable of earning enough to support himself and his family, would continue getting means of nourishment. Faith in God must reflect itself in the economy of a people. Otherwise, it would be a lip service to God which Quran does not accept.

Let us go back to *Sura Al Ma'oon*, from where we started this discussion.

“ Seest thou one who denies the Judgment (to come). Then such is the (man) who repulses the orphan (with harshness), and encourages not the feeding of the indigent.” (107/1,2,3)

In other words, his conduct testifies that if *Deen* is represented by his deeds, then all its claims are wrong. (The essence of *Deen* is that no one should in the slightest feel that he is helpless. If for some reason a person's needs are unfulfilled, then he or she should be helped at once. However, see the attitude of this 'religionist'. He pushes away the helpless, neither assisting the needy nor inducing others to do so.

“ So woe to the worshippers (Mussaleen). Who are neglectful of their prayers (Salat).” (107/4,5)

In other words, in order to show himself to be a pious person, he offers a lot of prayers. For such people prayers become a source of self-deception because they are deceiving themselves (and others) that they are the virtuous ones. They, in fact, are oblivious to the concept of *Salat*. The objective of *Salat* is to establish a society in which everyone follows Divine Laws and every human being continues to receive livelihood. People are oblivious to its objective and their consequential responsibilities; and after performing visible rites; they believe they have fulfilled the duties assigned by the Almighty (9:54) – so

woe to these worshippers!

Saleem, you will be astonished that earlier discussion was related to the economic issue (i.e. food for *masakeen*) and after that *musalleen* (*namazi*) are mentioned with the word *fawail* which means that the result of what had been said earlier is that....!!!! (The Arabic word 'fa' is used to show the consequences of what is said before)

In other words, Quran says that the people who do not honor *yateem* and arrange food for *masakeen*: in fact, they are the one who truly Belie Deen. Therefore there is destruction for those *musalleen* who are unaware of the real meanings of *salat*. It is clear from this that *salat* and economic system are inter-related. And it is their mistake that they don't know the real meanings of *salat* that they consider it as a means of worship and do not realize that it has any connection with social and economic system. According to Quran, the real *musalleen* are those who put the social and economic system under the Divine Laws. If the social and economic system of any nation is not based on the Divine Law, then their *musalleen's* *salat* (*namaz*) cannot be called *salat*. The result of this *salat* will be destruction.

They are mistaken to think that the visible and physical movements such as *sajda*, *ruku*, *rakats* etc., which others can see is *salat*. In fact, these movements are symbol of real *salat* and, undoubtedly, these are also important because the reality expresses itself in symbolism, but not alone. These movements must not overcast the real objective of *salat* stated above.

So it is clear that *salat* is not the name of these movements but it has a wider concept, which is clear from the next verse (107/5). But before going further let us summarize what is discussed so far.

1. Did you see the man Who Belies Deen?
2. He is the man who shuns *yateem* and does not arrange food for *masakeen*.
3. Therefore, there is destruction for those *musalleen* who are unaware about the real *salat*.
4. They consider *salat* to those actions that are visible to others.

And after that it is said:

They block the supplies that are essential for development and to meet the basic needs 'al Ma'oon' (107/6)

The outcome of such self-deception is that while on the one hand they do offer prayers, on the other they take total control of the sources of nourishment. These however should remain open and available, like ever-flowing springs, for all needy people. They are thus depriving the needy of the sources of nourishment (and thus belying *Deen*).

Saleem, have you observed, how Quran goes from economy to *salat* and from *salat* to economy. In connection with belying of *Deen*, the Quran first refers to *yatama* and *masakeen* and within that framework mentions *musalleen*. While discussing the wrong actions of *musalleen*, came forth the economic aspect [Depriving people of their basic needs - 107/6]

It made this fact clear that *salat* and economy are closely related. So the belier of *Deen* are those *musalleen* who are punctual in the physical postures of *namaz* but do not run their economic system in according with the Divine Law. This discussion also makes another point clear that the Qurani *ayat* are comprehensive and linked with one another in harmony. This link be understood only when one had the central idea of *Deen* in mind. Then it becomes evident that all *ayats* (verses) of Quran revolve around this idea. But if this central idea is not in mind then no link and relations is seen in the *ayats*. This is the reason that some people say that there is no consistency in the Quran.

Quran's style is that at one place it mentions a point as a principle then it explains that point at another

place, sometimes with examples and sometimes with antonyms.

People of Hell: It is mentioned in *sura* Al Mudather, people of *Janna* will enquire from the people of hell that what was your crime that brought you there.

They will say: We were not of Mussaleen. Nor were we of those who fed the indigent (74/43,44).

In other words, the dwellers of *Jahannum* will say, "Our crime was that we did not join those who established the '*Nizam-us-Salat*'. And we did not provide means of sustenance to those who were unable to earn.

“On the contrary we were amongst those who talked vainly and did nothing practically (74/45).”

After that is added:

“And we used to deny the Day of Judgment. (74/46)”

Thus we belied the Law of *Retribution*. We also considered the threat that one day our deeds would confront us in the form of destruction, to be a lie.

Saleem, notice, that again *salat* (*musalleen*), food for *masakeen* and belying of *Deen* is mentioned but here “*yum-uddin*” is mentioned instead of *Deen*. ‘*Yum*’ means time, age or period. Therefore, ‘*yum-uddin*’ mean the period in which the divine system is established.

These people of hell will say that we were not among those who focused on the real meanings of *salat* and established *salat*. And in this way would have established a system which had taken care of the needs of *masakeen*. In this way we practically belied *Deen*’s system. This means that through our actions we proved wrong the claim that only *salat* can establish a system which can satisfactorily solve economic problems.

Sura Al Tatfeef begins with this subject.

“There is destruction for those who do not keep balance in economic affairs” (83/1).

“Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due.” (83/2,3)

The fate of the capitalistic system and business mentality will ultimately be doomed. The importunity of such a mentality is to take the full measure when receiving; but at the time of giving, to give less than their due. They like to exploit the capabilities of others to the fullest extent, but do not want to give them full recompense. They pay the minimum to workers and keep the maximum for themselves. Not only do they do so in terms of material things, but also when assessing the worth of other people, they try to restrict their growth. They should never be allowed to grow to their full potential. They should be groomed only to the extent that suits the investor. They should not be given unnecessary freedom.

Saleem, did you notice that Quran has explained comprehensively the behavior and mentality of the capitalist class. Weight and measurement is done either through scales or through the modern economic schemes, the same mentality is at work. After that Quran tells about the result of this behavior.

“The great revolution will occur in this way, and universal mankind will rise to establish the Divine Law of potential development [*Rabubiyyat*].” (83/6)

“Woe, that Day, to the beliers; those who belie the Day of Judgment.” (83/10,11)

There will be doom and destruction for the *mukazzibeen*, the people who belie the Day of Judgment.

Saleem, here also *mukazzibeen* are called those people who do not establish their economic system on equity and justice.

Tasdeeq-e-Deen: In contrast to belying of *Deen*, Quran uses the term “confirmation of *Deen*.” First Quran tells us who belies *Deen* now it will explain who confirms *Deen*.

In *sura* Ma’arij, it is said that Jahannum is:

“Summoning back everyone who had turned away from the Divine System and had sought avenues of escape.” (70/17)

This is a matter of principle. After that Quran pinpoints:

“Who pileth up wealth and layeth it by.” (70/18)

In other words, a person whose only aim in life is to amass wealth and then keep on counting how much has he collected this becoming his main purpose in life, develops a tendency to find hundred and one faults with any reformer who stands up criticize the capitalistic system.

Quran says that this does not apply to a particular person but it is human nature that if he does not follow the Divine Law, he becomes greedy and his want for wealth becomes insatiable. The result of this mentality is that:

“He becomes fretful when evil touches him. And niggardly when good reaches him.” (70/20,21)

He is so impatient and restless that even if he is just barely afflicted, he raises a hue and cry. He is so miserly that although he possesses everything, he keeps denying that he has anything. He has the attitude of being so hungry that despite acquiring surplus wealth, he does not give even a penny to the needy.

This is the same condition that has been described in *surat* Ma’oon in these words:

“They block the supplies that are essential for development and to meet the basic needs.” (107/7)

The outcome of such self-deception is that while on the one hand they do offer prayers, on the other they take total control of the sources of nourishment. These, however, should remain open and available, like an ever-flowing stream, for all needy people. They are thus depriving the needy of the sources of nourishment (and therein commit the offence of belying *Deen*).

After that Quran tells us solution of this problem.

“Not so are the ‘Mussaleen’ (70/22). Those who remain steadfast to their Salaat, eternally.” (70/23)

In other words Quran says that the people who are real ‘*Musalleen*’ do not do this. Instead of following their selfish interests, they obey and follow the Divine Law of ‘*Rabubiyyat*’ [Potential Development] and are ever steadfast and firm in this attitude.

Those are real '*musalleen*' who follow the right path steadfastly and not those who decide certain matters in accordance with the Divine Law and ignore in other matters. Or sometimes abided the Divine Law and sometimes tried to find ways to avoid its compliance.

Saleem, did you notice, in the beginning only economic issue was under discussion, (that the common human mentality is that he accumulates wealth and is never feels satisfied) and then '*musalleen*' are mentioned. This makes clear that according to the Quran Economy and *Salat* are deeply inter-related. Let us see what God says after '*musalleen*':

“These are the one in whose wealth is a recognized right (as of law). For the benefit of needy (*sa'el*) and deprived one (*mahroom*).” (70/24,25)

Thus by showing their generosity, they are in fact admitting the reality that their wealth is not only for their own use, but also for those whose resources cannot meet their needs; or those who became incapacitated and are unable to earn, thus being deprived of the necessities of life. It is their established right (as of law), which is well-known to everyone. Therefore, the generous ones are only returning to them their rights (not charity); and are not keeping anything with them, which is beyond their needs.

A person whose needs are not fully met is called *sa'el* and a person who is incapable of fulfilling his needs is also called *sa'el*. Another point is that Quran does not say that wealthy people should give something in charity to those who do not have economic resources. It is a dishonor for a human being to live on charity. This is against human dignity and Quran does not create a class of beggars. That is why Quran says that in the *salat* system, everybody will have resources for living as a matter of right. This will not be a charity or favor. That is why Quran says:

“Allah has blessed some of you with abundant sustenance and riches: then why the blessed one do not share it with their employees (who have got a due right in it) so that they should enjoy the blessing of God, equally. If they do not act accordingly it would be as if they are denying the blessing of God to themselves.” (16/71)

Different individuals possess different capacities for work. Every programme or project requires the co-operation of all for its accomplishment. The Divine System of Potential Development [*Niz'am-e-Rabubiyyat*] requires that the produce should be distributed amongst all according to their needs. Those who possess greater capability (or power) generally do not adhere to this *Niz'am* thinking that according to this arrangement all people will become equal and they, therefore, take more than the others. They thus, challenge and assert that the means of production and the capacity to earn are not endowed by *Allah*.

Let us recall the verses that we referred so far:

They (the dwellers of *Jahannum*) will say, "Our crime was that we did not join those who established the '*Nizam-us-Salat*'. “And we did not provide means of sustenance to those who were unable to earn. “(On the contrary) We were amongst those who talked vainly (and did nothing practically); “We thus belied the Law of *Mukafat*. We also considered the threat that one day our deeds would confront us in the form of destruction, to be a lie. (74/43-46)

(O *Rasool* ! Explicitly tell these people that) A person whose only aim in life is to amass wealth and then keep on counting how much has he collected (this becoming his main purpose in life, develops a tendency to find hundred and one faults with any reformer who stands up criticize the capitalistic system. He even slanders such a reformer, making all this effort mainly to cause a split amongst his followers.

He is so impatient and restless that even if he is just barely afflicted, he raises a hue and cry. He is so

miserly that although he possesses everything, he keeps denying that he has anything. He has the attitude of being so hungry that despite acquiring surplus wealth, he does not give even a penny to the needy. However the people who are *Musalleen* do not do this. Instead of following their selfish interests, they obey and follow the Divine Law of *Rabubiyyat* and are steadfast and firm in this attitude. (70/20-24)

After that Quran says:

“And those who hold to the truth of the Day of Judgment.” (70/26)

These people firmly believe in the Law of *Mukafat*; and with their actions they substantiate their claim to *Eiman*.

Saleem, did you notice, how Quran clarifies its central themes by repeating verses ‘tasreef-e-ayat’. First it tells us about those who belie *Deen* and then who confirm *Deen*.

In *surat* Qiamat, this explanation is given in a nutshell:

So he did not confirm the truth and did not follow the God’s path. Instead he belies the truth and tries to escape it. (75/31,32)

Quran has given example of Pharaoh for those who belie *Deen* and find ways to avoid the Divine Law. He also ‘kazzaba wa tawalla’ the Divine Truth. Pharaoh’s era had witnessed convergence of three major curses, which the mankind is suffering down the history. These are: i) The priesthood (of Haaman), ii) The capitalism (of Qaroon), and iii) The Despotism (of Pharaoh). Prophet Musa told Pharaoh:

Verily it has been revealed to us that the God’s Scourge will be upon those who belie the truth and try to find ways of escapism. (20/48) (Now you can decide for yourself which course you want to adopt.)

In *surat* Lail, the comparison of *takzeeb* and *tasdeeq* is highlighted in a more impressive way.

ends“Verily, (the) ye strive for are diverse.” (92/4)

This diversity is for the distribution of functions (labour). (Due to this distribution, the aims and outcomes of your endeavors in social life are different. This is how the system functions so smoothly.

It is a fact that the struggle of different people has different direction, but if all are classified then in principle these struggles seems to be in two kinds only and their results will be:

So he gives (what is beyond his needs) and thereby abide by the God’s Law: he is the one who (in all sincerity) testifies to the best. (92/5,6)

In other words, whosoever, considering all mankind to be one entity, gives out of his hard-earned money for the nourishment of others; is careful not to create unevenness in society. And gracefully keeps its balance intact, he gives practical proof of the truthfulness of his conviction (that on the basis of their origin all human beings are alike).

We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Ease. (92/7)

Thus Our Law of *Rabubiyyat* helps him pass with ease through various stages of life.

But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient. And gives the lie to the best. (92/8,9)

On the other hand, for the one who amasses everything for himself thinking that he is self-sufficient and independent of others. Thus practically belying and disturbing the balance of society (Al Hussna).

We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Misery. (92/10)

In other words, God's Law of *Mukafat* makes the passages of his life difficult.

And his wealth will not profit him when he fall headlong (due to his conduct). (92/11)

When he falls into the ditch of destruction, the wealth, which he thought made him independent of others, would be of no avail to him (also see v: 69/28; 111/2).

His wealth will not save him from destruction that is the definite consequence of his capitalist mentality. He adopts this behavior because he thinks that a man should follow his own decisions and not the Divine Law in the matters of wealth and economic resources.

Verily We take upon Ourselves to guide. (92/12)

(He had adopted this course of action relying only on his intellect. However intellect alone teaches one to only safeguard personal interests, because it is incapable of looking beyond personal gains. The right guidance, in this respect, can only be given by *Allah's Wahi (revelation)*).

And verily unto Us (belong) the End and the Beginning. (92/13)

In other words, Quran says that God considers present of man as well as his future; Development of his physical life as well as after-life.

This is because *Wahi* has in view man's immediate gains as well as his future pleasures. While man only keeps his self-interest in mind, we keep the interest of the whole humanity.

The fate of any person or system that considers his self-interest as the objective of life is only cause for destruction.

Therefore do I warn you of a Fire blazing fiercely? (92/14)

(So O *Rasool!* Caution the people who do not accept the guidance of Our *Wahi* that) Their attitude is taking them towards the path of *Jahannum*, the blazing fire of which will burn everything to ashes.

Verse 92/15;

“None shall reach it but most of those unfortunate ones –“

Who give the lie to Truth and turn their backs. (92/16)

That is the one who belies Our Laws and seeks ways of escapism.

On the contrary:

The one who guards the Divine Laws is however, kept away and safe from this destruction. (92/17)

Who is *Muttaqi*?

Now the question is who is *muttaqi*? The next verse gives answer to this:

Those who spend their wealth for increase in Self's Development. (92/18)

In other words, he is the one who (in times of need) gives away everything that he owns for the nourishment of others. In this way his own self also receives nourishment and develops.

Saleem ! notice that these verses also clarify the meaning of *muttaqi*. It means a person who spends his wealth on the development of others. In this way his self is also developed. See also that *taqwa* and economic matters are closely related.

About those people who take other meanings of *taqwa* and *tazkia-e-nafs* and consider that they are related to spiritualism, Quran says:

Therefore justify not yourselves: He knows best who it is that guards against evil. (53/32)

These people (*muttaqee*) avoid the serious offenses that slow down the growth of human personality and the deeds, which spread abominations. However, in a situation when one realizes this and immediately corrects oneself, or even if he makes an unintentional mistake (and thereafter corrects himself), then one is forgiven the consequences of such deeds. (In other words this means that) The weight of their good deeds is so heavy that it provides protection against the ill-effects of minor unintentional mistakes. This shows the abounding magnanimity of the Divine Law of *Mukafat*.

Only God knows and can tell who is *muttaqi* and God says that *muttaqi* is:

In contrast to *muttaqi* is one about whom Quran says:

Did you see the one who turns back (find escapism). Gives a little, then hardens (his heart)? (53/33,34)

In order to judge the extent of development of one's personality the basic standard is how much one gives away for meeting the needs of other people. However, you will see so many people who turn away from this Divine Standard. They give only a little for the benefit of others and then stiffen up like a stone. Despite such an attitude they judge their own deeds by their self-devised measures and consider themselves to be very noble and pious.

Who is not *muttaqi*?

In *surat Lail*, Quran used the word "*attaqa*" in comparison of "*ashqa*" who will be consigned to Hell. But what is "*shaqawat*."

In *surat Taha*, it is clarified in these words:

We have not sent down the Quran to put you in toil. (20/2)

[This code will bestow a pleasant and successful life on you. The initial stages of this revolutionary program shall certainly be difficult, but ultimately it is only you who shall be successful.]

Shaqawat means deprivation of bounties and facing severe hardships. Therefore, the meaning of this verse is that any nation that spends life according to Quran will never be deprived of bounties and will not face hardships.

Now the question arises, what are those bounties and severe hardships. The explanation of this is given with the example of the story of Adam. He was spending life in such a way that there was no fear of hunger, thirst, clothing or home. All these things were available very easily and in abundance.

(God said to Adam !) There is (enough provision) for thee not to go hungry nor to go naked. Nor to suffer from thirst, nor from the sun's heat.(20/118,119)

[You get all the food to eat; water to drink; clothes to wear; and houses to live in. All this is available without struggle. This was the society in which mankind was living in the early stages of human life.]

Then We said: "O Adam! verily, this is (Satan) an enemy to thee and thy wife: so let him not get you both out of the Garden, so that thou art landed in misery (fa tashqa). (20/117)

In other words God told *Adam*, that Satan is his enemy as well as that of his spouse; lest it drives both of them out of this blissful life of *Jannah*. The result will be that you will be deprived of all life's necessities, which presently are easily and abundantly available to you; and to attain them again: You will have to labor hard and strenuously.

Adam was trapped in Satan's mischief and was deprived of all comforts of life. This made Adam sad. He asked God now what he should do to achieve the same life of paradise. God told him that don't become hopeless. You can get all the facilities of paradise provided you should (not follow your own thinking) follow our guidance. The result will be:

Neither you will lose the straight path nor fall into misery. (20/123)

In other words, whoever follows this guidance will neither go astray, nor be deprived of the pleasures of life; and be involved in the rigors of life (as stated in 20:17 above). In this way *Allah* guided him towards the paths leading to all kinds of exhilaration. Mankind was thus saved from eternal ruination.

But those who will not follow the Divine Laws, it is said;

And whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment. (20/124)

At the same time it was also explained to him that means (of subsistence) will be restricted, for whoever turns away from Divine Laws. Furthermore on the Day of Judgment, We shall raise him as if he was blind. All the bright and shining avenues of life shall darken for him and this result will occur in this life as well as in the hereafter.

Saleem ! notice that in comparison of *attqa* came *ashqa* which means deprivation of the basic necessities of life and hard struggle to achieve them. Therefore, *Muttaqee* is a person who has all means of life in abundance and opens his resources, which he earned with lard labor, for the development of others.

This discussion clarifies that according to Quran there is a deep relationship between *salat* and economic system. And at this point, it also becomes clear that *Salat* is not confined to masjid but it encompasses the whole life. *Salat* is the name of a system in which all members of society follow the divine laws, while daily congregations of *Salat* are part of the system. From this discussion you will understand what is the meaning of;

Verily, the Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and The Law of Allah (al Ziker) is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. (29/45)

Nizam-us-Salat will certainly stop people from collecting everything for themselves and from not caring about the welfare of others. And to further this selfish purpose their intellect keeps on suggesting various strange and crafty ways to them.

Fahsha means *miserness* and *munkir* means evil thinking through which a human being wants to keep everything for himself. This mentality and behavior becomes an obstacle in the system of *salat*. This verse is actually an explanation of the verses of *surat* Ma'arij:

And amass (wealth) and hide it (in sacks); Truly man is created very impatient; Fretful when evil touches him; And niggardly when good reaches him. Not so are the *Mussalleen*; Those who remain steadfast to their *Salat*. (70/18-23)

In other words he does not keep his wealth freely available for public welfare, but amasses and hoards it by filling his coffers and blocking all its outlets. (Just reflect on how, without the guidance of *Wahi*, a human being comes down to animal level.) He becomes narrow minded, greedy and restless. He is so impatient and restless that even if he is just barely afflicted, he raises a hue and cry. He is so miserly that although he possesses everything, he keeps denying that he has anything. He has the attitude of being so hungry that despite acquiring surplus wealth, he does not give even a penny to the needy. However the people who are *Musalleen* do not do this. Instead of following their selfish interests, they obey and follow the Divine Law of *Rabubiyyat* and are steadfast and firm in this attitude.

This has also clarified that who belies *Deen*? In the words of *surat* Ma'oon: Then such is the (man) who repulses the orphan (with harshness) and encourages not the feeding of the indigent. (107/2,3) So such *mussalleen* are destined for destruction who do not know the real meaning of *salat* and consider its parts as reality. Instead of keeping economic resources for the benefit of others he blocks them for his own benefit.

***Youm-uddin*:** May be, some people insist on translating “*youn-uddin*” as the day of reckoning. But from the facts brought earlier, this translation will also not make any difference. The meaning of *jaza* and *saza* will be “when in accordance with the Divine Law of *mukafat*, human deeds bring results.” This means that the Divine Law is firm that every deed will yield a specific result. The result of the deeds in accordance with the divine law, will be facilities of life and happiness while the violators of the Divine Laws are destined for destruction. A person who adopts selfish behavior and thinks that it will not result in destruction, belies the Divine Law of *mukafat*.

Quran says very clearly that a nation that will adopt this behavior and establish such kind of economic system, will never survive and achieve stability. That will be destroyed and it will be replaced by a nation with a better behavior and capability.

In *surat* Mohammad, Quran says:

“Behold, ye are those invited to spend (of your substance) in the Way of Allah. But among you are some that are niggardly. But any who are niggardly are so at the expense of their own souls. But Allah is free of all wants, and it is ye that are needy. If ye turn back (from the Path), He will substitute in your stead another people; then they would not be like you! (47/38)”

This is so because the law for life, death and supremacy amongst nations is that only the nation with the

correct system of life survives. Those which opt for a wrong system are destroyed and replaced by another nation that opt for a better system. The decisions about the rise and fall of nations are taken in light of their ideologies and practical implementation programme for the same.

His law of mukafat will replace you with another nation that will not be like you. This is a firm Divine Law, and if anybody thinks that this will not happen, capitalist system will last forever and the result of this wrong behavior can be prevented through *namaz*, he belies Deen. He tries to prove the divine law of *Mukafat-e-Amal* as wrong. The Divine Law of rise and fall of nation cannot be proved wrong.

September 1956

This letter of Allama Parvez was published in 1956, since then he wrote extensively on *salat*, *zakat*, economic system and *takzeeb* and *tasdeeq*. Those interested in the details of these subjects should study his *tafseer* of Quran (Mutalib-ul-Furqan).

We will only add: Quran mentions those who belie *deen*, i.e. those people who do not abandon Islam and adopt another religion but being a Muslim adopt a behavior from which non-Muslims lead to conclude that Islam's claim that it provides solution to all human problems is wrong. If its claim was true then the condition of the followers of Islam would not have been like that miserable.

The Quran says: who try to find ways to avoid the Divine Law, God replaces that nation. Ways of avoidance means that they do not deny Deen's way but adopt such behavior that apparently shows that they are fulfilling the objectives of Islam but in reality they are not. God says he sends another nation in their place who is not like them.

It is a point to ponder, if this promise of God does not apply on us.

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Who Are The Ulama? (Learned)

*Translated by A.S.K. Joommal
(Written in September 1956)*

[Translator Note](#)

Saleem! There is no doubt that knowledge is the dignity and honour of humanity. But the question is: What is knowledge and who are the learned? The answer to this question is very clearly explained in the Quran. But before analysing that, few words of introduction are necessary. Listen to them carefully.

In the world of knowledge, the philosophers of Greece attained a high position, as you know. The fact is that the history as we know from the beginning, commences from the school of Greece. In them, Socrates is the patriarch, and Plato is the founder and commentator of the academy of thoughts. But Socrates thinks that only nature – and not man – is worth studying, and Plato draws a cancelling line on the existence of the physical world. He thinks that this universe which appears so concrete, has no existence. The real world is the world of ideas, and this visible universe is a reflection of the real world. Therefore whatever knowledge we obtain through our senses, that is perceptual knowledge, is not credible. True knowledge is that which is obtained through visualization – and not through the senses.

MYSTICISM:

The edifice of Greek mysticism is constructed on this philosophy of Plato. The same mysticism reached India in the form of Vedantism. According to Hindu philosophy, the material world is an illusion. This is the dream of Brahma (God). This is the performance of God. This is like a play in the theatre in which nothing is real, but an imitation of the real. Neither the king is the king, nor the slave a slave; neither a mountain is a mountain, nor the sea is sea. This is all an optical illusion. Thus in Hindu philosophy, God is called “Nut-Raajan”, that is, the king of the actors/players. In this way they create a negative attitude in the minds of people about the creation of God. This, negative way of thinking created hatred for the world, in the mind of God-worshipping people. This was the same philosophy that came to Muslims through Iranian mysticism, affecting and poisoning every aspect of their lives. The entire edifice of mysticism is structured on this foundation.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE QURAN:

Anyway, I was saying that before the Quran was revealed, the theory was, that creation did not exist in reality - that it was only a deception of imagination, an illusion, a mirage, a shadow. When the creation is doubtful, then the knowledge about it is no knowledge but mere conjecture. The Quran came and broke the spell of Plato, just as it exposed every other absurd idea. It proclaimed to mankind, that was involved and confused in the deception of mysticism and Vedantism:

“Not in vain did We create heaven and earth and what is between them. That is the opinion of the Unbelievers! So woe to the Unbelievers on account of the Fire.” (38: 27)

And those who reject such a great reality (stating the world to be false and hateful) then the result of this rejection can only be this, that all their endeavours and actions will come to naught.

Do you realise, Saleem, how the Quran rooted out the wrong concepts of centuries in one verse and unveiled its destructive consequences! Think also what the Quran says to the people who harboured

negative thoughts about the universe being created without purpose. They are called "Kaafir" – Unbelievers! Did you realise how far are the limits of belief and unbelief?, and what are the distinguishing features of a believer and unbeliever? It stated a great historical reality when it said that this type of negative viewpoint produces a scorched earth existence. The negative point of view regarding the world is a manifestation of the monastic order. This is called Vedantism and Tasawwuf (mysticism).

You must ponder on the history of this institution and see how people went through heartbreaking afflictions and patient religious exercises. What was the result of this? It was that the green branches of the human tree were burnt to ashes.

This was a declaration of war against the people who said that the universe was created without purpose. After this the Quran says positively:

".....Allah created the heavens and the earth in truth....." (29: 44)

In all of Allah's creation, not only is there evidence of intelligent purpose, fitting all parts together with wisdom, but also of Supreme Goodness and Cherishing Care, by which all needs are satisfied and all the highest and truest aspirations fulfilled. These are like beckoning signals to guide those, who pray and search in Faith. The fact is that Allah has created the cosmos as a truth. This creation is for constructive results, and not for destructive ends.

".....Verily in that is a Sign for those who believe." (29: 44)

In this revelation of the Quran there is a big sign of knowledge and an awareness for those people who believe. Look Saleem, in the previous verse the people who said that this universe was created without purpose were called Unbelievers. In this verse those believe that the universe was created for a purpose are called believers. Do you see how the Quran clarifies its own purports!

Those who aver that the Creation is a sport of God, the Quran refutes them by saying:

"Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between them." 21: 16)

The Hindu doctrine of Leela, that all things were created for sport, is confuted here. The creation of the world is part of a serious (Divine) programme. It is not a play or tamasha. It has been created in truth.

Now the question arises: Does the Quran want you to accept this explanation about the creation of the universe arbitrarily, or does it invite (people) to assess it with knowledge and proof? The Quran presents every claim on the basis of knowledge and proofs, and enjoins strictly to accept it with reflection and insight. Accordingly, in this context, it is clearly said:

".....He explains His Signs in detail, for those who know." (10: 5)

These realities are explained very clearly for those who possess knowledge.

THE QURANIC DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE:

From here, the question confronts us: WHAT is knowledge? Listen to what the Quran says in this connection:

"And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge....." (17: 36)

Even this portion of the verse is enough to reveal the truth and give us insight. But the Quran goes further and gives the definition of knowledge which demonstrate everything."

***"Verily the hearing, the sight, the heart:
All of these shall be questioned."
(17: 36)***

It is a fact that our hearing, sight, and feelings in the heart: all have responsibilities for which they are liable. Did you understand what is implied here? What does it mean? We shall be called to account for the exercise of every faculty that has been given to us. The hearing and seeing are the senses according to the Quran, and the feelings in the heart is called 'mind'.

The senses gather the data and deliver it to the mind, and the mind deduces the results therefrom. When you hear the noise of a gunshot, you at once deduce that someone has fired a gun. After that you hear somebody screaming, so you infer that someone has been shot. Then you go outside and discover that the one who got shot is your friend. The fire of revenge kindles in you and you burst forth inflamed. In this whole incident your senses and mind are witnesses. This is knowledge. If you didn't hear the noise of gunshot, someone screaming, or did not see your friend getting hurt, or somebody firing, but you hear the account from someone else, then, if you want to pursue that person, this act will not be based on knowledge because in this case there is no testimony of your senses.

Do you realise how much importance the Quran gives to sense perception? This is the second blow against Plato's theory and it shatters it. Plato had said that knowledge gathered by the senses is not reliable; the Quran says that anything obtained without the testimony of the senses is not based on knowledge - not only the senses, but also the mind.

THOSE WHO DO NOT USE THEIR SENSES:

In view of the importance of the senses and the mind, the Quran says very clearly that those who do not use their senses and mind, they do not live their lives on the human plane; they live like animals. Not only this, but the Quran says that they are the denizens of Hell. In Surah A'raaf we read:

***"Many are the Jinns and men We have made for Hell.
They have hearts wherewith they understand not,
eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith
they hear not. They are like the cattle - nay,
even more misguided, for they are
heedless (of warnings)." (7: 179)***

Although they have, apparently, all the faculties of reason and perceptions, they have so deadened them that the faculties do not work, and they go headlong into Hell. They are, as it were, made for Hell.

From this it is evident that true knowledge is only that knowledge that enjoys the testimony of senses and the mind. It is obvious that this kind of knowledge cannot be about theoretical debates and abstractions, because in these affairs senses do not participate. The connection of senses is with the study of natural phenomena and observation of the universe - that is, to examine every aspect of the world with grave reflection; to observe every bit of this magnificent and astonishing universe.

Then, with different experiments, one must see which law and scheme is administered in the mechanism and nurturing of these bits of the universe. In modern terminology this is called scientific knowledge. And this is the same knowledge which the Quran says is the sign of a believer. Now just reflect on this Saleem: How clearly and beautifully the Quran explains this in Surah Aal-Imraan:

***"Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth,
and in the alternation of night and day, there
are indeed signs for men of understanding."
(3: 190)***

And who are the men of understanding?

"Men who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying on their sides and contemplate the (wonders of) creation...." (3: 191)

That is, they keep contemplating the creation of the heavens and the earth, and after their observations and experiments, arrive at the rational conclusion that:

".....Our Lord! Thou hast not created (all) this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Give us salvation from the chastisement of the Fire." (3: 191)

THE PEOPLE WHO REMEMBER ALLAH:

Did you reflect on how great a thing the Quran has revealed? The Quran claims that nothing in the creation is purposeless and useless, nor has it been created for destructive purposes. Everything has a fixed purpose, and in some way or another, it is profitable to human beings. But the aim of the Holy Quran is not that we must just accept its claims without question. The Quran says that it is our duty to reflect on every aspect of the universe, and by sustained observations and repeated experiments, prove this verse of the Quran, that:

"....Our Lord! Thou hast not created all this in vain." (3: 190)

Think, Saleem! How big is this programme which the Quran has placed before the believers! How grave is this responsibility that has devolved on them. It is the duty of the people who believe in the Quran, to prove practically for which benefit everything has been created. Just think how profound, intense and intellectually deep, scientific research is needed for this. How many large laboratories are needed for this? Do you remember, in the olden days Javed used to ask you: Daddy! Why did Allah Paak create the wasps? They sting everybody and make a person's face swell up. There is no benefit from them. (Neither you nor anyone else could explain the benefit of wasp). But in the past it was known in South America that there is a kind of worm that destroys valuable plants. They could not find a cure for this. At last, after continuous experiments, it was discovered that these wasps eat those worms. Now they have collected the wasps from different tropical countries and have started to propagate them in South America. These are the people who can say with definite insight that: "Our Lord! Thou hast not created (all) this in vain."

O Sustainer of the universe! You did not create even wasps for destructive purposes. They also do constructive work in the development and growth of the universe. Glory be to Thee!(It is against your very nature to create something for destructive purposes). This is against Your Quality of being the Preserver. It is our lack of knowledge and scarcity of scientific research that makes us unaware of their profit-yielding aspects, and thus get affected by, and struggle against its venom. It is our desire that O Allah! grant us the guidance to do all these researches so that we would remain protected from this kind of severe punishment. Give us salvation from the chastisement of the Fire.

Thus, those nations that are negligent of these kinds of researches, remain unaware of the profit-producing facets of nature. They cannot subjugate nature. Therefore they live the life of ignominy and distress in this world. The Quran says:

"Our Lord! Whosoever enter the Fire (according to your Laws) upon him You indeed bring disgrace. And there will be no Helpers for the wrongdoers." (3: 191)

Do you see, Saleem, how clearly the Quran has explained the great realities here!

THE SIGNS OF ALLAH IN THE UNIVERSE:

Anyhow, we were discussing the fact that according to the Holy Quran it is the duty of every believer to observe the creation carefully and with continued experiments they must go on unveiling their profitable side. This is what the Holy Quran explains as following the laws of nature and pondering upon them. This was the method and manner of the Believers. For Believers in every corner of the universe, there are verses of the Quran spread about.

"Verily in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for those who believe." (45: 3)

From this and other verses, human beings realize and obtain affirmation of God. The Quran says further:

"And in the creation of yourselves and the fact that animals are scattered (throughout the earth), are signs for those of assured faith." (45: 4)

These signs in our own nature and in the animals we meet with every day, we have certainty within human limits; these are "for those of assured faith".

"And in the alternation of night and day and the fact that Allah sends down sustenance from the sky and revives therewith the earth after its death, and in the change of the winds, are signs for those that are wise." (45: 5)

After teaching us all these facts, the Holy Quran explains a truth which is both amazing and insightful.

"Such are the Signs of Allah, which We recite to thee in truth. In what (other) exposition will they, then, believe after Allah and His Signs?" (45: 6)

If there are any to whom the signs from nature, from within their own heart and conscience, and from the voice of Revelation, are not enough to convince them, then what other possible kind of exposition will they accept? That is, Allah (SWT) has shown in clear terms that in order to have faith in Allah, it is necessary to observe the phenomena of nature and study the universal, immutable laws governing them.

Did you see, Saleem, how much the Quran emphasizes on the observation and study of nature. The true and rational faith is in these things. From these God unveils Himself. I said "God unveils Himself". This is not mere poetry; this is a translation of the verse of the Quran. It is said in the Quran many times, not just once.

Listen carefully and think how in few words the Quran has assembled such a great reality!

SEEING THE SUSTAINER:

What is the climax of the human life? What can be the most fervent wish or desire of a God-worshipper? What is the ultimate aim of adhering to Divine Commands? The answer to all these questions is only one: that everyone wishes to see and meet his Creator. Now you see Saleem! Look at the way the Quran makes this clear to us.

In Surah Ra'd we read:

"Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, and He is established on the Throne of Power, and He made the sun and the moon subservient (to you). Each one runs (its course) for an appointed term. He regulates the affair, explaining the Signs in detail

***that you may be certain of the MEETING WITH
YOUR LORD." (13: 2)***

Where the Laws of Nature are fixed, and everything runs according to its appointed course, the control and regulation behind it belongs to Allah. The ultimate source of man's faculties is Allah Who cares for His creation.

Did you see Saleem, what the Quran says here? All these details are described clearly to you so that your faith should be confirmed and strengthened that you WILL meet your Creator. Your Creator can come in front of you. The meaning is clear that if you wish to see Him, you must reflect on all His creation and concentrate on every single aspect thereof; with different experiments we must disclose the reality that the Laws of Nature are fixed and everything runs according to immutable laws. In this way one by one everything that is hidden from us will be unveiled. You will see, rationally, how everything develops under Divine Laws. In this way you will see your Sustainer before you.

At this stage we have to understand that we cannot see Allah with our physical eyes: it is beyond the conception of human imagination. The Quran says:

"No vision can grasp Him...." (6: 104)

But He comprehends all vision; and He is Subtile, the Aware. Allah is fine and subtle; He is not visible to the physical eye. He is imperceptible to the senses. Therefore it is not meant by lifting the curtain that we will be able to see Allah with our physical eyes. What is meant is that by witnessing His quality of being a Preserver, Nourisher and Cherisher, we can appreciate how He sustains and provides for the universe.

Anyway, it is clear that according to the Quran those who believe and witness the workings of nature, will trust in the Signs of Allah. But sustained, indefatigable efforts and intensive actions are needed for this: sometimes we have to climb the highest mountain of Himalaya, sometimes we have to go to the depth of the Atlantic Ocean, and sometimes we have to traverse the burning deserts of Africa. Sometimes we have to bear the pain of snakebite; sometimes, researching one leaf, we have to spend months; and sometimes we have to freeze in the snow of the North Pole, or place a hand in the lion's mouth. Sometimes we have to spend years in the analysis of one bacterium. It is obvious that all these can be done only by those nations who do not sit back and are contented with their present condition, but ponder about the future and involve themselves in solving the puzzles of the universe. See, Saleem! How clearly the Quran explains this:

***"Verily, in the alternation of the night and the day, and
in that what Allah has created in the heavens and the earth,
are Signs for a people who are conscious of Him."***

(10: 6)

WHO IS GOD-CONSCIOUS?:

By the way, did you ponder on, what is the sign of God-conscious people Allah has shown? After this He says:

***"Those who rest not their hope on meeting Us,
but are pleased with the life of this world and
are satisfied with it, and those who heed not
our Signs, their abode is the Fire, because of
the (evil) they have earned." (10: 7-8)***

First think on this matter, Saleem. By saying "pleased with the life of this world" and "satisfied with it", how the Quran has indicated a great truth. What is the fundamental secret of the adversity and misfortune, and exaltation and prosperity of nations? Is it not that some nations are satisfied and contented with their

present condition which is available to them easily? Having deprived themselves of the miracles of ACTION, they fall into the deep hole of disgrace, thus lagging far behind the active, progressive nations of the world.

On the contrary, the nations that are not contented with the present, but continuously strive for new inventions and disclosures (of nature), create a new and modern world for themselves and forge ahead in the battlefield of life. These are the nations who remain steadfast and eager to unveil the miracles of nature. The result of this is that heaven opens up its doors of blessings and strength to them. The earth hands over its hidden treasures to them. The nations who do not do this, remain deprived of the Divine bounties.

DEPRIVED OF ALLAH'S PROVIDENCE:

“Those who reject the Signs of Allah and the meeting with Him (in the Hereafter), it is they who will despair of My Mercy; it is they who will (suffer) a most grievous chastisement.” (29: 23)

The emphasis is on “they”, that is, only those people who ignore or reject Allah’s Signs and reject the Hereafter, who will find themselves in despair and suffering. Allah’s Mercy is available to all, but those who reject His Mercy, will most certainly suffer. Did you see Saleem, what the Quran says about those who deprive themselves of the Mercy of Allah and reject His Signs: they will suffer the most grievous punishment. In Surah Aal-Imraan (3:191) and Surah Yunus (10:8) the same punishment is spoken of as the Fire of Hell. These verses were given previously. Just think: in the barren deserts of Makkah, the liquid gold, that is petrol, was running for centuries, but because those people were satisfied with their prevailing condition, therefore they were deprived of the advantages of this precious blessing of Allah. The result was that they were in need of others for their daily bread. This was a terrible punishment from Allah on them. The Quran has labelled hunger as a punishment from God.

Allah sets forth a parable: “A town safe and secure, to which its means of subsistence came in abundance from every quarter; but it disbelieved in Allah’s favours, so Allah made it taste a pall of hunger and fear because of what they wrought.” (16: 112)

After this the perceptive eyes of the West discovered the seas of this liquid gold, and with their continuous efforts, going down into the deep recesses of the earth with their superior technology, they pumped out the oil. This changed the map of Hijaz. In our own land of Pakistan, nature has hidden a world of potentialities. But because we are satisfied with our present condition, and we are contented with whatever is available to us without any hard work, we are therefore dependent on others for our daily bread.

Some nations of Europe have a small piece of land. But they work hard and grow so much in it, that after fulfilling their own needs, they export a quantity from it to other countries as well. This is because they are ceaselessly engaged in unveiling nature’s hidden treasures. For centuries we have turned away from the Divine Law, and therefore our livelihood is becoming constricted for us.

“And whoever turns away from My Reminder, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment.” (20: 124)

Allah’s Judgment is very open and clear and it will not change for anyone.

For centuries we have not been using our faculties, and the result of this is that our capabilities have become paralysed, and we are counted among such people about whom the Quran says:

***“Those are they whose hearts, ears and eyes Allah has sealed, and they are the heedless ones.”
(16: 108)***

Some people think that “seeing Allah” means that after death we shall be brought before Him “face to face” to receive our punishment or reward. Although in view of the said context this understanding is not quite proper, then, too, the fact remains that from the Quranic viewpoint, for a trust and certainty in “seeing Allah”, it is necessary to observe and study the Signs of Allah in the world. Life after death and punishment and reward is part of our faith.

Did you see Saleem, in how many different ways the Quran clarifies the truth that:

1. knowledge is that knowledge in which human beings use their senses;
2. making use of senses means that man must unveil the mysteries and secrets of the universe. He must make a wide study of the things in nature. He must study deeply the laws of nature, and with continuous and unceasing exertion, he must keep unveiling and seeing the arrangements and systems of nature;
3. this is the manner of the believers. This is the duty of God-conscious people. This is the remembrance and praise of Allah. With this the hidden truths reveal themselves, and man can thus say about everything in the universe that:

“Our Lord! Thou hast not created (all) this in vain....”(3: 190)

THE TESTIMONY TO QURANIC TRUTH:

Not only this, but Allah tells us that these very cosmic verses testify to the truth of the Holy Quran.

***“Soon Will we show them Our Signs in the furthest regions (of the earth) and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that thy Lord is a Witness over all things?”
(41: 53)***

The truths which are wrapped up in the mysteries of the world will become clear to human beings as their knowledge and research advances. The truth of the Quranic claims will be proven one by one. As the world progresses with research and scientific knowledge, the Quranic truths will reveal themselves.

In the above verse, the Quran includes human spirit and soul with the external world and manifests that science is not only concerned with physics, but is also related to human life which comes within its (physics') ambit. But regarding this knowledge, not only speculative theories are required, but also it would be done by means of practical observations and experiments. In this context, sociology and practical psychology enjoy special importance.

From the point of view of physical science and the science related to human life, as the facts reveal themselves, the proofs of the Quranic verities become apparent to us. This is because:

***“...It is not enough that thy Lord doth witness all things?”
(41: 53)***

The Quran is the Book of Allah from Whose eyes NOTHING is hidden. He observes EVERYTHING all

the time. This, then, is proof enough that whatever He will say about these things, will be correct. His declaration will be based on knowledge and facts – not on supposition and conjecture, because:

***“The (Quran) was sent down by Him Who knows
the secrets of the heavens and the earth.”
(25: 6)***

But those who are unaware of the signs in the cosmos, cannot be convinced of “Seeing Allah”

“Now surely they are in doubt about meeting with their Lord.....”(41: 54)

They do not have to go far for this. They can start researching anything, and they will find the spark of Divine Law in creation, because Allah says:

***“...Ah indeed! It is He that doth encompass all things.”
(41: 53-54)***

Allah’s Divine Laws encompasses all things; it is not attached to one single thing. Therefore ‘the eyes should be opened to all colours’.

You may remember, Saleem, I once mentioned to you an excellent book entitled “THE GREAT DESIGN”. The plan of this book was that a questionnaire was sent to leading scholars of different disciplines, asking them the following questions: “After conducting researches in your particular branch of knowledge, have you arrived at the conclusion that cosmic system is operating according to an orderly arrangement, or has it come into existence accidentally, and is continuing aimlessly and by chance?”

The answers received from these great scientists were recorded without review or criticism in this book. The extent of these answers is very wide. You can gauge this by the title of the treatise one botanist sent in: “A GREEN LEAF”. An astronomer submitted an answer with the heading: “THE PASSAGE OF THE STARS”. All scholars reached the conclusion that in every atom in the universe, the immutable and orderly Hand of a Knower and Contriver is manifest. It is these orderly arrangements in the Cosmic Order before which, at every step, the acknowledging eyes of the leaders in research world, are downcast.*

Since they have not got the Quran they cannot correctly evaluate which Being is governing the universe so beautifully. Nevertheless, they are observing this orderly organisation with their own eyes. (It is not difficult for them to reach the Quran from here, provided that someone presents the Quran to them.)

WHO ARE THE ULAMA (LEARNED) ?

You have up to now seen what the definition of knowledge is from the Quranic viewpoint. After all this clarification, the need does not arise at all to explain further who the aalim (learned) is and who are meant by the term “ulama”. But see the miracle of the Quran that it has itself explained this fact so that no doubt or uncertainty should linger in the mind. It commences like this:

***“Seest thou not that Allah sends down rain from the
sky, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various
hues? And in the mountains are streaks, white and
red, of various hues, and (others) intensely black.”
(35: 27)***

These wonderful shades and colours are to be found not only in vegetations but in rocks and mineral products.

***“And so amongst men and beasts and cattle,
are there various colours....” (35: 28)***

Did you see Saleem! What matters are discussed in these verses: different aspects of the world, the multifarious branches of knowledge in the wide expanse of nature; different sciences, physics, botany, geology, zoology, and all sections of humanities come into it. After mentioning all these different branches of knowledge, the Quran says:

“...Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge (ulama) fear Allah. Surely Allah is Mighty, Forgiving.”
(32: 28)

In fact amongst Allah’s Servants are those learned people (ulama) who truly appreciate the mechanism of the world, and whose hearts are filled with His Greatness; they observe how Exalted and Mighty He is, and how He saves everything from destruction and lets it develop and progress. Did you realise for whom the Quran has used the word “ulama”? For those to whom we refer to as **SCIENTISTS** today; those who continuously experiment, observe and study, and thus subjugate the forces of nature. It is a fact that Allah has granted us the capability to conquer and harness all the powers of nature for our benefit. But only those people can control them who are acquainted with the laws of nature – laws that govern these forces. These can only be known by the study of nature and by continuously experimenting and observing the laws that Allah has laid down for the control of nature. The people who do all this, the Quran calls them “ULAMA” – the **SCIENTISTS**.

* * * * *

The term “ulama” in the Quran refers to **SCIENTISTS** (and **NOT**, we repeat **NOT**, to the Moulvis) as we shall see from the following verses which we quote in full:

(1)

*“Seest thou not that Allah sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various hues? And in the mountains are streaks white and red, of various hues and (others) intense black. And of men and beasts and cattle there are various colours likewise. **Those of His servants ONLY WHO ARE POSSESSED OF KNOWLEDGE (the ulama) fear Allah. Surely Allah is Mighty, Forgiving.”***
(35: 27-28)

Here Allah says that the Ulama are those who are versed in **BOTANY**, (“Fruits of various hues”); **GEOLOGY** (“streaks white and red...”); **BIOLOGY**, **ANTHROPOLOGY** and **ZOOLOGY** (And of men and beasts and cattle...). No reference at all is made to the Moulvis who do not know even the ABC of science!

(2)

*“In the creation of the Heavens and earth and the alternation of the night and the day, **THERE ARE SURELY SIGNS FOR MEN OF UNDERSTANDING.** Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, **AND REFLECT ON THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH: Our Lord, Thou hast Not created this in vain.”** (3: 190-191)*

The above verse is a clear reference to GEOGRAPHERS and to those who study the **SCIENCE OF THE UNIVERSE**, namely , the **COSMOLOGISTS**. Breathes there a Moulvi so learned who can tell us all about cosmology?

(3)

“He it is Who made the sun a shining brightness, and the moon a light, and ORDAINED FOR IT STAGES THAT YOU MIGHT KNOW THE COMPUTATION OF YEARS AND RECKONING; Allah created not this but with truth. He makes the sign manifest for A PEOPLE WHO KNOW.” (10: 5)

These words of the Quran point to the study of **ASTRONOMY** and **ASTRONOMICAL CALCULATIONS**. Our “ulama” are ignorant of this science. Not only ignorant but they FORBID its study. It is written in the *Fataawa Aalamgiri*, a book of religious decrees, that: “To study astronomy to extent of knowing the Qiblah and times of prayer is enough. To study astronomy further than this is **HARAAM**.” (Vol. 9, p. 126)

Imam Aboo Hanifah (RA) who is one of the greatest Imams, is revered for his Ijtihad in jurisprudence, but not for the book on astronomy which he wrote with his own hands. It was purely a scientific work describing the interplanetary distances under mathematical principles. This book is to be found in the Paris library!

(4)

“Say: Travel in the earth then see how He makes the first creation, then Allah creates the later creation. Surely Allah is the Possessor of power over all things.” (29: 20)

Our “ulama” will not understand the above verse because they are ignorant of palaeontology (study of extinct organized beings) and also of the Palaeozoic science from which we learn the ancient forms of life of the **first geological period**.

(5)

“And the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between heavens and earth; there are surely signs for A PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND.....” (2: 164)

Our “ulama” will not understand the import of the above verse because they have not studied atmospheric phenomena they are ignorant of the sciences of **METEOROLOGY** and **NEPHOLOGY**.

(6)

“And of His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours. Surely there are signs in this FOR THE LEARNED.” (30: 22)

According to this verse, our “ulama” are NOT learned, because they do not know **PHILOLOGY** and

ETHNOLOGY

(7)

“Have they not travelled in the earth and seen what was the end of those before them? They were stronger than these in prowess and dug up the earth, and built on it more than these have built....”
(30: 9)

Here Allah refers to the study of the history of ancient civilizations. Which of our “ulama” can give us a learned dissertation on Egyptology or the history of cultures that became effete a long time ago?

Ibn Khaldun is regarded in the academic world as the Farther of History. His writings influenced the entire world. But he was ignored by the “ulama” and until recently his “Muqaddamah” was banned by the Sheikhs of the greatest Muslim University, Al-Azhar. They said that the Muqaddamah was profane and might undermine faith!

(8)

“And the sun moves to its destination... And the moon, We have ordained for it stages... Neither is it for the sun to overtake the moon, Nor can the night outstrip the day. And all FLOAT on in an orbit.” (36: 38-40)

Reference is made here to heavenly bodies FLOATING IN THEIR ORBITS. In another place, referring to heavenly bodies Allah says:

“...Surely there are signs in this for A PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND.” (16: 12)

Today it is common knowledge that planets, planetoids and asteroids “float” around in space in a fixed orbit. The word “float” as used in the Quran is the exact word used by scientists today to describe the movement of the heavenly bodies. Our “ulama” cannot comprehend this verse of the Quran because the study of HEAVENLY BODIES and SPACE SCIENCE is totally foreign to them.

(9)

“And of His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and what He has spread forth in both of them of LIVING BEINGS. And He is All-Powerful to gather them together when He will,” (42: 29)

This verse clearly points to the fact that there are LIVING BEINGS on other planets. Our “ulama” cannot give us any information on this scientific truth for which we have to turn to Godless Russia and other western countries who are now probing the secrets of space.

OUR “ULAMA”:

After the above Quranic definition of Ulama, you must think, Saleem, how much scientific knowledge our “ulama” possess! They are not acquainted with even the elementary knowledge of the natural sciences. Their learning does not go beyond useless debates and time-wasting logomachies, that is, arguments about words or the meaning of words. Their debates have no relevance to the world we live in, nor to the activities of human life.

The syllabus of our madrasahs is spread over ten years. These ten years are spent in studying logic, philosophy, semantics, public speaking, literature and grammar. And the logic and philosophy is also that which has become antiquated, obsolete. This syllabus includes a few books on astronomy, geometry and accounting. But even from these books only that section is taught that is of no use in daily life. Moreover, and you, will be astonished to know, that in their syllabus the Holy Quran is not included at all! For Tafseer (commentary), they teach Jalaalain, in which only the synonyms of Quranic words are given. In the final year the students are taught the commentary of surah Baqarah from the Tafseer of Baidawi. This is their syllabus, after the completion of which they receive their certificate of having qualified as “aalim”

The extent of their knowledge regarding the phenomena of nature, may be gauged from this example: With the advent of the loudspeaker in India, people asked for fatwas about it from the “eminent ulama” – whether it is lawful (Jaa’iz) or unlawful (Naa-Jaa’iz) (from the Shariah point of view).

In his reply to this request, the president of the Jamiatul Ulama, the late Mufti Kifaayatullah, wrote: “We have not yet seen the instrument about which the question is asked, but we have heard about it that it is an instrument placed in front of a speaker or Qari. Facing it he recites or delivers his lecture. The instrument absorbs the sound and broadcasts it four times over the distance, without which it would be difficult to disseminate the sound of the voice.” (Reference: “NAQEEB”, 10 November, 1941)

After this the Mufti Saheb gave his fatwa that it was permissible to use the loudspeaker.

But later, a great Mufti of the Daarul Uloom (Deoband), Mufti Muhammad Shafi Saheb (who had afterwards emigrated to Pakistan), published his own fatwa, OVERTURNING the fatwa of Mufti Kifaayatullah. In this fatwa he said that it is FORBIDDEN (Haraam) to use this instrument for the “intended prayers”*** In this magazine (the name of which was Al-Badaa-i’ Al-Mufeedah Fee Hukmud Daa-i-ul Jadeedah) he wrote that he did not know the nature of this instrument and how it works. Therefore he enquired from Master Brij Nandan Laal who was the science teacher at the Alexander High School in Bhopal. Mr Laal said: “Because of the electrical power, I am prepared to believe, after careful consideration, that it is the original voice. I cannot even deny this, because I have no proof of this denial.”

After this wonderful research, the Mufti Saheb decided that the loudspeaker is Haraam (forbidden) for the purpose of prayers. It means that on the basis of Mr Brij Nandan Laal, the Mufti Saheb decided that in this matter, THIS is the Command of Allah and His Messenger (S). Do you see what the position of these people is regarding research into the natural phenomena and modern technology! Their knowledge about these things is clearly deplorable, yet they keep on issuing fatwas after fatwas whether they are Halaal or Haraam! And now in Pakistan this matter has progressed beyond the fatwa stage into legislation.

For example, if this matter comes before the government, that is it permissible or impermissible to use the loudspeakers for the khutbahs, and if there is any need to legislate on this matter, then these very ulama gentlemen will demand that only they are qualified to draw up the law.*** That is, these gentlemen will first find out from some Master Brij Nandan Laal what this loudspeaker thing is all about, and on the basis of the findings provided by him, they will decide whether, according to the Quran and Sunnah, it is lawful or not. And their decision will be promulgated as a law in the country!

* * * * *

From these explanations you must have seen, Saleem, that according to the Quran, the Believers and God-conscious people are those who remember Allah, those who have faith in and desire to meet Him; the God-fearing servants of Allah are those who ponder on the system found in the world, and conduct

research unceasingly on the forces of nature. This from the Quranic viewpoint, is called KNOWLEDGE ('Ilm), and the bearers of such knowledge are called ULAMA by Allah (SWT).

THE REMOVAL OF DOUBT:

At this stage you must no doubt be thinking that on the basis of what is said above, the Western nations are the true believers, and are God-fearing. But this line of thinking is not correct. It is extremely necessary for the believing and God-conscious people to acquire the knowledge of nature, but it is wrong to assume that every nation that acquires this knowledge, (automatically) becomes believers and God-fearing. Apart from being very important, this difference is also subtle. It is therefore necessary to comprehend it properly.

Believers and God-fearing people are those who, after subjugating and controlling nature, utilize her forces according to the laws of God as enunciated in the Holy Quran. To be a Believer (Mu'min) and Muttaqee (God-conscious), both these conditions are indispensable, viz.:-

- (1) subjugating nature, and
- (2) spending the resulting benefit from such subjugation ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF ALLAH!

If any nation evinces a lack of either of these conditions, then it cannot be referred to as believers and God-conscious. The Quran comments:

“O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly (in its totality....).”
(2: 208)

That is, it enjoins us to imbue ourselves with, and immerse totally, in the Quranic Order. We are not believers and God-conscious because we lack the first condition (subjugation of nature). And when we fulfil only the first condition (i.e. subjugating nature), then question of the second condition (that of utilizing the power of nature according to the laws of Allah) does not arise at all.

The Western nations are not believers and God-fearing because they lack the second condition. Therefore, on the practical level of belief and God-consciousness, they and we, are both on an equal footing. But those nations are better than us because, by capturing the forces of nature, they have made their material life very pleasant. And WE are dependent on THEM for our very sustenance (bread).

In order to utilize the powers of nature according to the laws of Allah, one must have knowledge of the Quran, because these Divine laws are to be found within its pages. These are the people:

“....who are firmly grounded in knowledge....”
(3: 7)

and who base their faith rationally on the Quran, conducting all their affairs according to it.

“... .Those who do not judge according to the Quran, are the unbelievers (Kaafiroon.)”
(5: 44)

The result of this unbelief (Kufr) is that human society becomes a living hell in spite of the abundance of wealth and provisions (as it is now happening in Europe). They have such a vast knowledge of science, yet they cannot find the true solution to the problems besetting human life. In other words, in this matter their senses and their minds are not assisting them. The Quran says about such nations:

***“And certainly We had firmly established them in power
in matters in which We have not empowered you...
(46: 26)***

With this, the senses and the mind were also granted to them, but:

***“... and We had given them ears and eyes and hearts,
but neither their ears, nor their eyes, nor their hearts
availed them aught, since they denied the message of Allah.”
(46: 26)***

If the Western nations spend the forces of the universe and the gifts of nature according to the Laws of Allah, then the hell in which the world is presently embroiled, can be transformed into heaven, in search of which mankind is wandering about.

See, Saleem, how beautifully the Quran states this. Read again these verses of Sura Yunus (10: 8) in which it is said:

***“Those who expect not the meeting with Us, and are pleased
with this world’s life and are satisfied with it, and those who
are heedless of Our communications – these (are the people)
whose abode is the Fire because of what they earned.” (10: 7-8)***

After this the Quran says:

***“Those who believe and do good, their Lord guides them by
their faith; rivers will flow beneath them in Gardens of
bliss.” (10: 9)***

The result is that they live in exquisite gardens which stay green forever – no lessening will take place in their verdure. Seeing the heavenly society, they will spontaneously utter that Yaa Allah! Truly it was indeed against Your nature that you could have created the cosmos in vain.

***“Their cry therein will be, Glory be to Thee, O Allah!
and their greeting, Peace! “ (10: 10)***

In this society their desires for one another are greatly vitalizing, and engendering peace and security. Those who have established this society, they will continue to extend its boundaries further and further through their sustained strivings and unceasing efforts and actions until, finally, encompassing all mankind. At that time every observer will exclaim that how profoundly worthy of all praise and exceeding eulogy is Allah’s Devine Cosmic Order.

***“.....And the last of their call will be: Praise be to
Allah, the Lord of the worlds.”(10: 10)***

EPILOUGE:

From these explanations, the truth must be clear to you, Saleem, that if we wish to envisage society along the lines of Quranic teachings, then it would be necessary for us to create such research scholars and scientists who would, through their experimentations with, and observations of, the laws of nature, subjugate the cosmic forces – with their studies extending to every aspect of the world, encompassing all organic and inorganic beings.

Together with this they must promulgate the Divine Laws that are enshrined in the Quran in such a way that it would become evident that there is no difficulty whatsoever in harnessing and distributing these

forces according to the laws of Allah.

These are the people who would be called ULAMA in the words of the Quran.

As long as our present conception regarding **Knowledge** and the **Learned** (“Ilm and Ulama”) does not change, we just cannot count ourselves among the living nations – let alone reaching God!

**“How can you search for God when you
have not (even) reached man(kind).”**

* This is now published in the momentous book, “THE BIBLE, THE QURAN AND SCIENCE”, of Maurice Bucaille. In this book most of the Quranic verities are now shedding their light like the shining stars. (1981)

** Now these very “eminent ulama” use loudspeaker without the slightest hesitation in their khutbahs and salaats!

*** This is now practically happening (1981)

[Home](#) **Our "History"**

by G.A. Parwez

translated by Dr. Suhail Alam

In the last letter, Saleem, you saw glittering gems of our past accomplishments strewn amongst the pages 1st century Islamic history. However, my great regret is that our pages of history are not only a collection of glittering gems. Also included in those pages are such vile accounts that one feel's great embarrassment in associating them with that blessed era, and one's face lowers to the ground in shame. The truth is that history is a powerful double-edged sword. If a nation has its true past history, then it is better able to be successful in the present and prospective in the future. But if all it has is a mutilated version of its history, then that nation will become so entangled in past mistakes and misunderstandings that freeing itself from that obscure darkness will be extremely difficult. This is what has happened to us. Amongst the reasons for our decline, our corrupted history is an important element.

With us is the book of Allah, upon which we all have *iman* (conviction). Based on fact and understanding, we believe that it is a constitution that covers life's every corner and is sufficient to establish nourishment in an all-encompassing manner for all time to come. If we truly follow it, we can become the most successful of nations. But obviously, the Quran can only provide this benefit and nourishment if we understand it correctly. The biggest obstacle in our understanding of the Quran, however, is our mutilated and corrupted history. Perhaps this statement startles and bewilders you, but when all the facts are presented, you will accept the truth of this statement without hesitation. But before I give you any examples of this, I find it necessary to make some introductory remarks that explain how corrupted history can become such a massive barrier to the proper understanding of the Quran.

In the system the Quran illustrates for us, it characterizes its citizens' (*mu'mineen*) as, "they spend and make available to others whatever Allah grants them of His bounty. (2:3)" The Quran also clarifies to what extent their personal wealth should be made open to others by stating, "Oh Prophet, they ask you what they should give." The *mu'mineen* asked how much personal wealth should be given to the other members of Islam, to foster universal growth and nourishment. The answer was, "Tell them, whatever is left over after your necessities are taken care of. (2:219)" In other words, after you deal with your own expenses, give everything that remains. Clearly, these verses order the citizens of the Islamic system to keep only that much of their hard work's pay as they needed. The rest would go to the Quranic system (Islamic government), which would then spend the collected wealth to equally spread nourishment to all citizens of Islam.

There is no difficulty in understanding the concepts of the above verses, nor is there any doubt or ambiguity in them. But if you take these concepts and verses and present them to someone, the usual response is that so-and-so *sahaba* (companion of the Prophet) used to have over a hundred-thousand dinars and dirhams, another had piles of silver and gold, and another had caravan upon caravan filled with goods of trade. So if no one was allowed to keep more wealth than his personal needs required, then why did these blessed souls amass so much wealth? Then, the conversation usually takes a turn like this:

Question: Tell me, did the *sahaba* understand the Quran properly, or do you claim to understand it better than they did?

Answer: I could never say that I understand the Quran better than the *sahaba* did.

Question: Tell me, did the *sahaba* live their life according to the Quran, or did they act against its commands?

Answer: *A'oothu Billah!* How could I ever claim that their actions were against the Quran? Their lives were totally in accordance with its teachings.

Question: Well, if their lives were in accordance with the Quran, and if they had so much wealth and money in their possession, then how can you claim that according to the Quran, extra wealth cannot remain within the possession of individuals?

And at this point, you no longer have an answer to their questions. Observers of this conversation will also become satisfied and side with the other person, nodding their heads and claiming “What he’s saying is absolutely right. If the blessed *sahaba* had so much wealth and money, then how can it be said that accumulating wealth is against Islam! How dare someone claim that the *sahaba* did not even understand this little Quran!”?

Did you see, Saleem, how history can stand in the path of the Quran? You will be shocked to know that the current “Islam” is mostly based on an arrangement of historical accounts, the greater part of which are against the Quran. Go and ask for the proof or “*sanad*” on any topic in our current Islam. That proof or “*sanad*” will often be provided through history, and if you request a proof based on the Quran, the response will be “We are presenting the history and sayings of the Prophet and the *sahaba* as our evidence. What can be a greater proof than this in Islam? These items are critical in our ability to understand the Quran. Without them, the Quran cannot be understood.”

This response is so silencing that you cannot say anything in reply. The result is that history became the source of proof in Islam, and the Quran is left merely as a token, to be read as a virtuous deed. If it ever happens that a certain historical precedent concurs with Quranic teaching, then this agreement is proudly displayed. But if it ever happens that the two items contradict, the limelight is shone upon history while the Quran is thrust into the shadows.

The True Position of History

Until we understand the true positions of the Quran and of history and use them accordingly, Islam will not be established in its true form. So Saleem, let us investigate this matter!

Every single word of the Quran has come to us in its totally preserved state; there is no room for doubt or disagreement. But as for history (whether it comes from books of hadith or from other sources), neither the Prophet arranged it and gave it to the ummah, nor did the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (*khulifa ar-rashidoon*) arrange it, nor was any historical work compiled during the life of any *sahaba*. The book of hadith which is called the “most correct book after the book of Allah,” i.e. Sahih al-Bukhari, was not compiled until around 250 years after the death of the Prophet. At that time, there wasn’t even a written record from which these books of hadith or history were compiled. Mostly, they merely consisted of verbal accounts that were heard from the contemporary Muslims of Bukhari’s time. This is the position of the first history books, from which we derive our knowledge about the life of the Prophet and the lives of the *sahaba* (keep in mind, that a large part of the Prophet’s life and the characteristics of the *sahaba* are also contained within the Quran. But at this time, we are only talking about the history that has been written in other books.)

Based on the positions of the Quran and history/hadith described above, every sound-minded individual will conclude that when a contradiction is discovered between the accounts of the Quran and the history regarding the blessed period of the Prophet and those with him, then the Quran should be considered correct and that part of written history should be considered false. This is one of those obvious truths that should not even require proof; it is its own proof. Even for those accounts about which the Quran remains silent, we still have some working principles:

1) Our *iman* (according to the Quran) is that the Prophet and his companions lived their lives exactly according to the Quran.

2) Therefore, if history presents us with any account regarding the Prophet or the companions in which they are shown to disobey the Quran, we should without hesitation declare that historical account as false.

This way, the true ideology of Islam will be preserved, and the history of the Prophet and the companions will remain pure and be for us in its true form (whereas accepting such accounts not only allows corruption of history, but also of our Islamic ideals).

Whatever I have said above will not become totally clear until I present an example from history. Many examples can be given from the records of the Prophet's and his companions' lives, but since there is not enough room in this letter (one could write endlessly on the topic), I think one example should suffice. This event relates to all the *sahaba* that were in Medina at the time the Prophet took his last breath in this world, and his body had not even been buried yet.

First, let's review some basic Quranic principles. The Quran's unchangeable words state that "Truly we have made mankind worthy of respect. (17:70)" That by merely being a human, one deserves respect. The rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, regardless of nationality, family, status or religion, every human deserves respect.

Secondly, as far as distinction amongst human beings, the principle is "Everyone's distinction will be made according to their deeds. (46:19)" In other words, their levels will be determined according to their personality and their actions. Again, family heritage and ties, tribes, caste, wealth, etc., will not be used to distinguish people.

Thirdly, based on this very principle, it follows that the one most worthy of respect in the nation is he whose lifestyle and character are most concordant with Allah's laws. "Truly the most honored of you is the one who is the most righteous of you (49:13)."

With this unchangeable eternal ideal, the Quran clearly wiped out distinctions based on color, race, blood, family, tribes, caste, etc., and kept only one criterion for distinction amongst human beings, namely, the beauty of character and actions.

The Duty of the Nation

Now let's move on. The Prophet brought into shape a society based upon the principles of the Quran, a government whose purpose in this world was to "invite to the good, and prohibit the evil." This society was to continue even after the Prophet's demise since Islam is to be the system of life for all time. The entire nation had to be established with the same goals and purposes. And regarding that nation, the Quran declares, "You are the best nation on earth. Your duty is to order the good and prohibit the evil. (3:109)"

This is the same nation that was chosen to inherit the book of Allah. It says in the Quran "Then we made those people inheritors of the book, from whom we had chosen people for this ultimate goal. (35:32)" This nation, in those days, consisted of the *muhaajireen* (migrants from Mecca) and the *ansar* (natives of Medina). Allah himself describes their loyalty and faith in the Quran. "And those who had *iman* and migrated and did jihad in the way of Allah (*muhaajireen*), and those who had sheltered and helped them (*ansar*), these are true and steadfast believers. And for them is every kind of protection and provision. (8:74)"

In another place, Allah claims that he gave them mutual love for each other, which Allah himself describes as something even the entire wealth of the world could not purchase (8:63). The description of these true believers provided in Surah Fat-h is a living testament to their high regard. Read carefully, how these people joyfully exclaimed:

"Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are strong against the unbelievers, but compassionate amongst each other. You will see them bow and prostrate themselves in prayer, seeking grace from Allah and His Good Pleasure, on their faces are their marks of humility, being the traces of their prostration. This is their similitude in the Torah; and

their similitude in the Gospel is: Like a seed which sends forth its blade, then makes it strong, it then becomes thick and it stands on its own stem, filling the sowers with wonder and delight. As a result, it fills the disbelievers with rage at them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness, and a great reward. (48:29).”

The Prophet and his companions, what a fascinating group! Against the disbelievers they are as firm and solid as the mountains, but with each other they are very warm hearted and understanding. Always ready to carry the weight of their responsibilities, how willfully they accept the laws of Allah. But they are not like a group of Rabbinic monks either. According to Allah’s laws, they are also busy in searching for the necessities of life and knowledge in every field of life. They remain balanced and develop within themselves the characteristics that Allah asks of them. Their faces clearly show the peace and tranquility achieved by their *iman* and righteous deeds. These characteristics were described in the Torah as well as the Injeel.

The metaphor of the way they established that divine system is that of a precious seed, which when planted gives rise to a blossom whose first shoot is very tender. In time, its strength increases until it stands firm and stable on its own trunk or stem, and its branches finally yield fruits. This is the way Allah promises any group who takes action and implements Allah’s divine program of life with deep conviction in the truth of its unseen results, that the tiny and tender seed of their actions will remain safe from all dangers and their fields will be filled with the best fruits.

The first group of believers was personally trained by the Prophet; however, after his death, it was the duty of the entire nation to perpetuate the Quranic system. For this end, the Quran describes true believers as always carrying out their affairs after mutual consultation. “And they conduct their affairs with mutual consultation. (42:38)”

Now Saleem, the above clarifications make it clear that:

- 1) The criteria for respect and recognition is beauty of character and righteous actions.
- 2) The *sahaba* were true and steadfast believers. Their lives were very righteous and their characters very pure. They had undying love for each other in their hearts.
- 3) To establish and continue the Quranic system is the collective duty of the nation. For this end, they should implement mutual consultation, for example in selecting from amongst their best citizens (best by the criteria described above) who should be the leader after the Prophet, in other words, the *khalifa*.

The first opportunity for the nation to act upon these principles came at the time of the Prophet’s death.

Well, these are the teachings of the Quran and the characteristics of the *sahaba* (*muhaajireen* and *ansar*). Now let’s see what history has to tell us about this chapter in Islam.

Ali and Abbas’s (RA) ideas about the *Khilafat*

In Bukhari (chapter 57, book of al-Maghazi), the following account is narrated by Abdullah ibn Abbas:

“When the Prophet was afflicted with the sickness that led to his death, Ali was coming out of the Prophet’s quarters that morning. The people asked Ali, “Oh Ali, how is the Prophet’s health this morning?” Ali replied “The Prophet has recovered by the Grace of Allah.” Then Abbas ibn Abdul Mutallib took Ali’s hand and pulled him aside and said to him “By Allah, after 3 days you will be ruled by someone else, and by Allah, I feel that Allah’s messenger will die from this ailment, for I know how the faces of the offspring of Abdul Mutallib look at the time of their death. So let us go

to Allah's messenger and ask him who will take over the caliphate. If it is given to us, we will know as to it, and if it is given to somebody else, we will inform him so that he may tell the new ruler to take care of us." Ali said, "By Allah, if we asked Allah's messenger for it, and he refused to give it to us, the people will never give it to us after that. And by Allah, I will not ask Allah's messenger for it." (**Sahih al-Bukhari, the Book of al-Maghazi, 57:1707**)

Can you believe it Saleem? This account claims the Prophet had not even died, yet his uncle and nephew/son-in-law began having thoughts of how to take control of the *khilafat*. Ali was confident that the *khilafat* would surely be his, but Abbas felt otherwise. That is why he wanted to take Ali to the Prophet and confirm that indeed the *khilafat* would be given to Ali. The response that Ali gave to Abbas' request is worthy of reflection: if he went to the Prophet and requested the *khilafat* and the Prophet refused, then he would not have any chance of getting it.

Did you know, Saleem, that Shias believe that Allah, through His divine process, bestows Prophethood and *khilafat* to whom He wills, without room for election or consultation. There is no question of "choosing" a *khalifa*. He is considered to be divinely chosen and commissioned by Allah himself (called *imam* by Shias). They believe this *imamat* was given to Ali and his descendents.

But Sunnis, however, do not believe this. They believe that the *khalifa* is chosen by mutual consultation. The *khilafat* is not property to be distributed to one's relatives after one's death. A leadership passed down from father to son would be a monarchy, one of the things Islam was meant to abolish.

If We Consider This Account To Be True, Then...

Surprisingly, the above narration is not from Shias, rather it is from the most respected Sunni book of hadith. Now think, if we consider this account to be true, then what kind of impression do we get regarding two of the Prophet's closest companions (Ali and Abbas)? The impression is that (God forbid) they did not even understand some of Islam's most basic and fundamental principles, that the *khilafat* is not received on the basis of inheritance or as a claim or right. This matter is decided based on mutual consultation of the entire nation. There is no need to explain what kind of damage is done to Ali's character by the story that is being ascribed to him.

Now let's move forward. The blessed Prophet passed away. Because the *khilafat* was to be decided by the mutual consultation of the whole nation, the Prophet did not leave any will or wishes regarding the matter; this way, the free will of the nation would not be bound or constrained by anything. This matter was of utmost importance; one cannot even conceptualize the Islamic system without a central government. That is why even before the funeral rites were done, they thought it necessary to deal with that matter first.

History tells us that within the courtyard of Saqifa bani Saida was a group of *ansar* of whom Saad ibn Ubaadah was vying for the *khilafat*. One account reports that some believed that one leader should be chosen from the *ansar*, and another should be chosen from the *muhaajireen*. At that time, the *muhaajireen* (including Abu Bakr, Umar, and various other *sahaba*) arrived. The details of that meeting according to "history," are worthy of reflection. It is said that Habbab ibn Munzir gave the following speech:

"Oh *ansar*! Keep the leadership in your own hands so that people remain obedient to you. No one will even have the guts to speak against you or to do something against your wishes. You are worthy of both respect and riches. You are superior to others in both experience and number. You are courageous and brave. People look up to you. At this time, don't spoil your opportunity by arguing amongst yourselves. These people (*muhaajireen*) will be forced to accept your demands. The most we can compromise with them is that one wealthy among us will rule with one wealthy among them." (**Muhammad Hussein Haykal's book Abu Bakr Siddiq Akbar, page 107**)

Are you getting the picture, Saleem? This "historical account" is regarding those very *ansar* whom Allah himself declares as being totally selfless and considerate towards the *muhaajireen*. Yet according to

“history,” these selfish emotions and words came from them at a time when the Prophet’s blessed corpse was still in front of their eyes.

Now that was in regards to the *ansar*. Now listen to what the *muhajireen* had to say. History tells us that in response, Umar made the following comments:

Umar’s Speech

“Two swords cannot fit into one sheath. By Allah, our tribes will never agree to make you the leader when the Prophet had not come from you. But if the leadership is given to someone who is of the people from whom the Prophet came, then we will have no objections.

And if any Arab denies our leadership and *khilafat*, then we can present clear proofs and evidences to refute him. Who can dare quarrel with us regarding it when we were the most devoted and closest in family to him? In this matter, anyone disputing us must be one who follows evil, polluted with sins and ready to fall into a pit of destruction.” (**Abu Bakr Siddiq by Haykal, page 108**)

In response to this, Habbab says:

“Oh *ansar*! Be strong and don’t be persuaded by Umar and his crew. If you show weakness now then your portion of the kingdom will be snatched away from you. If they oppose you, then exile them and take the kingdom for yourselves. Because, by Allah, you are the most worthy of it! It was by your swords that Islam was blessed with power and success. You are the ones who brought it dignity and respect. It is you who gave Islam shelter and demonstrated your allegiance to it. And if you wish, you can also take back the power and honor you gave it.” (**Abu Bakr Siddiq, Haykal, 108-109**)

Manner of Speaking?

Umar after hearing this, then exclaims:

“If you attempt something like this, then Allah will destroy you.” (page 109)

In response to this, Habbab claims:

“Not us, Allah will destroy *you*!” (page 109)

Saleem, what kind of impression are you given regarding the mutual affairs of our *sahaba*? Those regarding whom Allah describes as, “Ashaddu ‘ala kuffar, ro’hama bainahum.” With the disbelievers, they are very stern and strong, while with each other they are extremely sympathetic. They, about whom Allah’s words claim “Wa allafa baina quloobihim. (8:64).” Allah has put mutual love and affection in their hearts; the kind of love and affection that even the entire world’s wealth cannot purchase. But our “history” presents an altogether different picture of the character and state of mutual relations between the *sahaba*.

In the above excerpts from history, Umar gave the proof of the *muhajireen*’s authority on the *khilafat* by claiming, “Who can dare quarrel with us regarding it when we were the most devoted and closest in family to him?”

These words are worthy of scrutiny. You have already seen what history ascribes to Abbas and Ali, claiming that they believed that the *khilafat* should go by inheritance to those closest in family to the Prophet. As for Umar, we are told that he too used that to prove his claim. But think Saleem, by telling us all this, where is this “history” leading us?

But this “history” does not rest here. It goes one step further and claims that when the debate became even more heated, Abu Bakr stood up and said that the *ansar*’s claims were completely baseless. The Prophet has already decided the matter by claiming “Al-aimmatu min Quraish, (the leaders will be from be from the Quraish).” After hearing this, the *ansar* became silent and Abu Bakr was given the *khilafat*.

This hadith is unanimously considered to be authentic, but has anyone bothered to deeply consider whether these could truly be the words of our Prophet? The Quran continuously discourages man-made distinctions based on blood and family, and continuously espouses the equality of humanity and the respect of mankind. The Prophet’s entire life was also a practical reflection of these basic ideals and understanding. Can you even imagine that the proponent of such ideals could say that the *khilafat* will remain only in my tribe? This single example is enough to support those who claim the Quran’s teachings and the Prophet’s example are not righteous. But we still ascribe this saying to our Prophet and that Abu Bakr openly used this quote as proof to his claim, in front of the collection of *ansar* and *muhajireen*, and everyone accepted it! In other words, by just one account, our “history” was able to ascribe the very same ancestor-worship that the Quran had come to eradicate to the Prophet and his companions!

Are you still with me Saleem? See how our “history” has painted a rather disgraceful picture of our blessed *sahaba* (*ansar* and *muhajireen*) even in their first meeting after the Prophet’s death? Can you believe the shameful condition of mutual relations, manner of speaking, and style of reasoning? Now let’s move forward. In his history, Imam Tabri writes:

Abdullah ibn Abd-ur-Rahman narrates that everyone came to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr, to the point that Saad was about to be trampled by the crowd. One of Saad’s men began shouting for help, but Umar yelled, “May Allah destroy him!” wishing him to be killed, and eventually went and stood over Saad, exclaiming that he wished to trample and kill him. Saad grabbed hold of Umar’s beard. Umar shouted for him to let go, and that if even one hair was out of place, not one tooth would remain in Saad’s mouth. Abu Bakr then intervened, silencing Umar and claiming that at this time, tenderness would be more prudent and beneficial. Umar then let go of Saad. Saad then claimed that as long as the strength to stand remains in him, he would fill the streets and alleys of Madina with his own supporters such that Umar and his followers would be left bewildered. And by Allah, at that time I would hand you over to such a nation that wouldn’t listen to me, rather I would follow them. He then asked his men to pick him up and take him home. His men came and took him home. For a few days he was not bothered at all. Then he was summoned and told that since everyone including his own supporters had now pledged their allegiance, he should as well. He adamantly refused, claiming that he would not join them until his family and remaining followers and even his last arrow was spent in opposing them, and his swords and spears were colored with their blood. He declared by Allah, that if along with the humans even the Jinn pledged their allegiance to Abu Bakr, even then he would not. **(Tareekh Tabri, volume 1)**

Now if we continue to the next page, we read that:

Dahhak ibn Khalifa narrates that at the occasion of the selection of the *khalifa*, Habbab ibn al-Mundhir stood up and unsheathed his sword and exclaimed, “I will immediately settle this problem. I am a lion, I am on a lion’s mountain, and I am a lion’s son.” Umar then attacked him. Habbab’s hand was wounded and his sword fell. Umar picked up the sword, and then jumped on Saad. Others joined him and jumped on Saad as well. Abu Bakr remained aloof from this. When people started jumping on Saad, someone shouted that you people have killed Saad. Umar then cursed him, asking Allah to destroy him, declaring him a hypocrite. As Umar was about to strike him, a stone came in the way of his sword and his attack was thwarted. After this, everyone came one by one to pledge their allegiance to Abu Bakr, including Saad. At this time, bickering and quarreling began, portraying a sight reminiscent of the days of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*).

Saleem, read that line again, where it actually says, “bickering and quarreling began, portraying a sight

reminiscent of the days of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*).” (God forbid).

Anyway, Abu Bakr was selected as the khalifa. But whatever happened to Saad, the other hopeful? Listen to this!

After this, Saad neither prayed with Abu Bakr whether he was leading prayer or not. Even during Hajj, he would not offer the rites if Abu Bakr was there. And until the death of Abu Bakr, he continued with these practices. (**Tabri, page 8**)

We have seen above that Saad pulled on Umar’s beard. The “history” of Tabri tells us that the pulling of beards had actually (God forbid) become commonplace for these men. For example, in the same volume from which the above quotes were taken, is an account of the disagreement between Umar and Abu Bakr, regarding Usama ibn Zaid:

Abu Bakr, who was sitting, became enraged, and sprang upon Umar and grabbed his beard. “Oh Ibn al-Khattab! May Allah do badly with your mother that you may die! You tell me to remove that person whom the Prophet himself appointed as the army’s leader?” (**Tabri page 12**)

Well, that was just an aside. Now let’s return to the colorful story of the selection of the first *khalifa*. In this entire episode, no mention of Ali has yet been made. You must be restless to find out what his reaction was. After all, it was he who first had the ambition for the *khilafat*. History has much to tell us about this. Listen to what Muhammad Hussein Haykal (Misri) writes in his book:

A few *muhajireen* and *ansar* did not pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr. Their support was for Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Well-known amongst them were Abbas ibn Abdul-Mutallib, Fazal ibn Abbas, Zubair ibn Awaam, Ibn-al-Aas, Khalid ibn-Saeed, Miqdar ibn Umar, Salman Farsi, Abu Dhar Ghaffari, Ammar ibn Yasir, Bara’ ibn Azib, Ibn Kaab. Abu Bakr had counsel with Abu Ubaida ibn Jarah and Mugheera ibn Sho’ba, regarding what to do about Ali. They told him to meet with Abbas ibn Abdul-Mutallib, and give them a portion of the *khilafat* that will carry on in his family. In this way, we can cause an argument and fight between Ali and Abbas, which will be a great benefit to you against Ali.

According to this advice, Abu Bakr met with Abbas and had a long talk with him. Abu Bakr said, you are the uncle of the Prophet, and I want that you also have a part in the *khilafat*, which after you, will pass down in your family. However, Abbas rejected the offer and claimed that if the *khilafat* is our right, then we will not settle for only a part of it.” (**Abu Bakr page 119**)

After this, Haykal writes:

In another relation that Ya’qoobi and some other historians have mentioned, we are told that in hopes of pledging allegiance to Ali, a group of *ansar* and *muhajireen* went to the house of Fatima Az-Zahra bint Rasool. Khalif ibn-Saeed was amongst them. Khalid said to Ali that “I swear by Allah, there is no better man to succeed the Prophet than you. So please accept our pledges of allegiance.”

When Abu Bakr and Umar heard of this gathering, they took a few men and went to Fatima’s house and attacked it. Ali, with sword in hand, came out of his house. His first encounter was with Umar. Umar broke Ali’s sword, and then taking some men, entered Ali’s house. At this, Fatima came out of the house and said, “Get out of my house, or else by Allah, I will pull out my hair! And I will ask for help against you from Allah.” Hearing these words from Fatima, everyone left her house.

For some days, the *sahaba* mentioned above continued to resist pledging allegiance to Abu Bakr. But eventually, one by one, each one accepted Abu Bakr’s pledge except for Ali, who did not do so for 6 or 7 months. It was only after the death of Fatima that he did so.

Until now, we have not discussed what Ali's reasons were for his position regarding this issue. Haykal writes:

The most famous narration regarding the refusal of Ali and a few of Bani Hashim's people to pledge is found in Ibn Qutaiba's book "Al-Imamah was-Siyaasah." The narration states that after pledging allegiance to Abu Bakr, Umar and a few men went to meet with Bani Hashim, who at the time were gathered at Ali's house. He wanted to ask them to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr, but everyone rejected his request. Zubair ibn Awaam even took out his sword and stepped forward to confront Umar. Seeing this, Umar told his comrades to seize Zubair. Umar's men caught him and took his sword and forced him to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr. Ali was also asked to pledge. However, he too refused and claimed "I am not going to pledge allegiance because I am more worthy of the *khilafat* than Abu Bakr. Instead, you all should pledge allegiance to me. You refused to pledge allegiance to any *ansar* claiming that you were closer to the Prophet, and only those close to the Prophet should hold the *khilafat*. According to this principle, you should have handed over the *khilafat* over to me, but instead you stole the *khilafat* from the Ahl-ul-Bait (Prophet's family) and usurped it for yourselves. Didn't you present this proof to the *ansar*? That because the Prophet was from amongst you, you were more worthy of the *khilafat* and that they should follow you? That same argument you confronted the *ansar* with, I now confront you with. I am more close to the Prophet than any of you were; therefore, the *khilafat* is my right. If you have the least bit of Iman in you, then do justice and follow me. But if you want to be tyrants, then do whatever you wish." (Abu Bakr Siddiq – page 122)

Just reflect on that Saleem. How the same proof accredited to Abu Bakr and Umar (that the *khilafat* should stay in the Quraish tribe because they were closer in relation to him), is now ascribed to Ali as well! None can fault the reasoning of Ali, who uses the same evidence used by Abu Bakr and Umar in order to claim his right to the *khilafat*. This is the whole basis of the never-ending Shia-Sunni debate. Truth be told, given narrations like the one above, the Sunnis position becomes so weak that they cannot provide any satisfying answer to the Shia's objection. History has attached that reasoning to the very first and greatest khalifas, Abu Bakr and Umar.

Anyway, in response to Ali's argument, Umar merely claimed "I am not going to let you go until you pledge your allegiance." (Abu Bakr Siddiq – page 122)

Ali then pointedly remarked "Umar, you eagerly milk the cow when part of that milk is going to be yours. You now aid Abu Bakr's *khilafat* today so that you can take it for yourself tomorrow. But I will never pledge my allegiance to him."

Abu Bakr at this point began worrying that this tense matter would escalate and progress to a battle of harsh words. He then said "Ali, if you do not want to pledge allegiance, then I will also not force you into it."

At this, Abu Ubaida ibn Jarah turned his attention towards Ali and with the kindest words possible said "Nephew! You are still young and these people are older. Neither are you experienced as they are, nor are you yet as broad-minded. If there is one person in our nation successfully able to handle the duty of succeeding the Prophet, then that person can only be Abu Bakr. So, accept his *khilafat*. If you live a long life, then your knowledge, level of religion, intelligence and understanding, and your being the nephew and son-in-law of the Prophet will all give you the right to the *khilafat*."

Hearing this, there was no end to Ali's rage. He angrily claimed, "Allah, Allah! Oh *muhajireen*! Do not take the office of the Prophet from his house and put it into your own homes. You must honor your *ahl-ul-bait* (family of the Prophet) and give them the rights befitting their status. Oh *muhajireen*! By Allah! We are the rightful owners of the *khilafat* because we are the *ahl-ul-bait*. We will be the rightful owners as long as there are amongst us reciters and scholars of the Quran, scholars of the Prophet's sunnah, and just and upright leaders. By Allah, all these characteristics are within me, so do not become a

follower of your own desires and follow a misled path rather than Allah's path. Do not go astray." According to narrators, Bashir ibn Saad was also present at this occasion. When he heard these words of Ali, he said "Oh Ali! If the *ansar* had heard these before they pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, they would not have pledged allegiance to anyone except you."

After this discussion, Ali went home in a fit of rage. At night, he sat Fatima on a mule and took her to the *ansar*. As they went from house to house, Fatima would beseech help from the *ansar*. But everywhere they went, they were met with the same reply, "Oh daughter of the holy Prophet! We have already pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr. If your husband had come to us before, we surely would have pledged allegiance to him instead." Hearing this, Ali would angrily reply "What, should I have left the body of the holy Prophet without performing any funeral rites or ceremony, to fight and argue for succeeding him?"

Fatima would also say "Ali did exactly what was appropriate. As for what the others did, Allah will surely bring them to account for their actions." (same – 122-25)

Haykal has related these events from various references. On this topic, Bukhari provides the following narration:

Fatima stayed alive for 6 months after the Prophet's death. When she died, Ali buried her alone and even prayed the funeral prayer alone, without informing Abu Bakr. While Fatima was alive, Ali held a certain dignity in the eyes of the people. But after her death, Ali felt their attitudes had changed and therefore, he finally decided to reconcile with Abu Bakr and to pledge his allegiance to him. So he sent a message to Abu Bakr requesting him to meet him at his house (Ali was not unaware of the fact that Abu Bakr may bring Umar along, and therefore asked Abu Bakr to come alone). At this, Umar said "No! By Allah, you cannot go to meet him alone." Abu Bakr replied "What do you think? What can he do to me? By Allah I will definitely go to him." So Abu Bakr went to his house and Ali spoke with him and said "I now recognize your excellence and what favors Allah has graced you with, and I am not jealous of any of them. But, in the matter of *khilafat*, you have dealt unjustly with me. I felt that because of my closeness to the Prophet, I should have a part in the *khilafat*."

After Zuhr, Abu Bakr got up on the podium and gave a speech describing the circumstances and reasoning behind Ali's change of heart. Then he prayed for forgiveness (and after that) Ali read his speech and praised Abu Bakr's virtues. He said, "Whatever I have done until now, was not because of any jealousy towards Abu Bakr, nor did I reject his God given excellence and virtues, but rather I felt that I had a part in the *khilafat*, and that Abu Bakr had dealt with me unjustly, and because of that, we were bitter in our hearts." (**Bukhari – Book of Skirmishes**)

From this narration of Bukhari's, we note a few points worthy of great scrutiny:

- 1) Ali was so upset with Abu Bakr that he did not even give him notice of Fatima's death and secretly buried her during the night.
- 2) While Fatima was alive, Ali refused to pledge to Abu Bakr. But right after her death, he felt that in the eyes of the people, he did not have the same prestige as before, and therefore felt it prudent to simply pledge to Abu Bakr
- 3) To prove his right to the *khilafat*, Ali claimed that he was the closest by relation to the Prophet.

Just think Saleem! If we consider these reports from history to be true, then what picture is painted of the great *sahaba*, Ali?

According to history, Ali accused those people who kept him from the *khilafat* of snatching it away from him unjustly. This is the very "crime" upon which Shia Muslims base their belief that after the death

of the Prophet, except for the few *sahaba* who did not pledge to Abu Bakr, the rest all became apostates! In response to this, Sunnis say that this belief is prejudiced. But what reply can they give when the following narration is contained within their own most reliable book of hadith, Sahih al-Bukhari:

Ibn Abbas relates that the Prophet said “Naked, without circumcision, you will be gathered.” The Prophet then read the ayah “Kama bada’na awwala khalqin nu’eeduhu wa’dan alaina inna kunna faaileen. (21:104)” And on the day of judgment, the first who will be clothed will be Ibrahim. And on that day some of my companions will be taken to the left side (towards Hell). I will say, these are my companions! Then Allah will say that these people reverted to their old religion ever since you left their midst [the actual word Bukhari uses is *murtad* (apostate)]. Then I will say as the pious servant of Allah (Jesus) said, “And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when you took me up, you were the watcher over them and you are a witness to all things. If you punish them, they are your slaves and if you forgive them, verily only you are the all mighty the all wise 5:117.” **(Bukhari – Book of the Prophets 1406)**

Just think Saleem! How this hadith of Bukhari takes the discussion to a new low. These are those companions regarding which the Quran declares that these are the true believers (8:74)! If the *iman* of even those believers was such that as soon as the Prophet turned his head, their *iman* wavered and broke, then what can we expect of others? And if any critic should say (and they certainly do) that “a tree is known by its fruits,” then think what kind of picture is painted of our beloved Prophet!

At this point, the question must be boiling in your heart that if this is the condition of history, then why is it not rejected or revised? Why is it forbidden to do such a thing? This a very logical thought, and there should not be any hesitation carrying out this task. But the problem is that our history was sanctified and put into the position of religious doctrine. The belief regarding these narrations is that they were divinely revealed to the Prophet through unrecited revelation (*wahi ghair matloo’*). Not only that, but there is also a belief that if there is any discrepancy between the Quran and the hadith, then that item in the Quran should be considered obsolete or replaced, and the hadith should receive precedence. One of Karachi’s religious organizations “**Tahqeeq e Haqq**” printed a pamphlet entitled “Fitna e Inkaar e Hadith (The corruption of the rejection of hadith),” written by Allama Hafiz Muhammad Ayyub Sahib Dehlwi. He writes,

“It is wrong to claim that “*fahkum baynahum bima anzalallah*,” means the Prophet is being told to govern Muslims only according to the book of Allah, and therefore, the Prophet did not give us anything else to govern by. “*Ma anzalallah*” does not mean only the Quran, rather it means the Quran as well as the Hadith.” (page 20)

After this, he writes that if the words of the Prophet are against the Quran, then the Prophet’s words should take precedence. To prove this, he states that in verse 2:180, Allah says “It is prescribed when death approaches any of you, if he leave any goods, that he make a bequest to parents and next of kin. According to reasonable usage; this is due from the God-fearing.” But the Prophet in a famous hadith has said “*La wasiyyatu lil-warith*,” that a will cannot be made for one’s family/successors (they can only receive the estate through fixed inheritance laws). From many sources it is established that action has been taken according to this hadith. So this shows how the words of the Prophet should take precedence over the words of the Quran. (page 80)

After this, he writes:

Now if one does not understand how it is possible that the Prophet’s words could be against the Quran and that his words could supercede those of the Quran, one should first remember that the Prophet’s words were not his own. Rather, they were the words of Allah. The same way that the Quran is the words of Allah, the Prophet’s words are actually the words of Allah. And in the same way that one verse of the Quran can override another verse, one type of Allah’s words (Prophet’s hadith) can supercede another type of Allah’s words (Quran). (page 86)

Saleem, I previously said that we should take the piles of history from the first century, the era of the Prophet and those with him, and test that against the criteria of the Quran. Those items that are in accordance with the Quran can be kept, whereas those that are against its values and principles should be rejected. In response to this, Hafiz Ayyub states:

In the same way that it is not necessary for Allah's words to be according to logic in order for us to affirm them as true, it is also not necessary for the Prophet's words to be according to the Quran in order for us to accept them. That is because the Prophet's words are also the words of Allah, and the Quran is also the words of Allah. So it is not necessary for Allah's words that there be no variation, just as it is not necessary that his one action be a result of another action. On the one hand, the mountain's top reaches towards the skies, and on the other hand, its valley reaches way far below the earth. In the same way that his one action does not have to be according to another action, his one word (in the Hadith) does not have to be according to another (in the Quran). (Page 51)

There is a hadith recorded in *Kitab-at-Tawdeeh wat-Talweeh* (page 480), that states that the Prophet said "After me, there will be many hadiths ascribed to me. So if any hadith is narrated to you, test it against the Quran. If it is according to it, then accept the hadith; if it is not, then reject it." There can be no doubt about the validity of this hadith, because it is exactly according to the teaching of the Quran. And none of the Prophet's words or commands could ever be against the teachings of the Quran. But Saleem, do you know what these "scholars" claim when hearing this hadith? The group Ahl-e-Hadith's monthly magazine "Raheeq" in its April 1958 issue claimed that this hadith was introduced by heretics and these hadiths now are being propagated by fools who have plagiarized their ideas from heretics. Imam Khattabi (**Zafar al Mani 'ala Mukhtasar al Jarjani, page 267**) says in regard to this hadith, "Those heretics and enemies of hadith introduced this fabricated narration for the purpose of disproving hadith and to create chaos in the religion and religious system. This hadith is refuted by the Prophet's own words that 'I have been given the Quran and something similar to it.' Only hadith is similar to the Quran because in another narration it is said that the hadith are similar to the Quran (**Zafar al Mani page 267, and Dari page 140 volume 1**).

(Note: The above hadith in question simply asks that hadiths at least be tested against the Quran before acceptance. Why are these scholars so scared of doing that?)

The above scholar, for a total of 1009 pages, explained why the hadith should not be refuted. Imam Khattabi, Imam Shafi, Imam al-Muhaddithin abdur Rahman ibn Mahdi etc., also claim this hadith was introduced by heretics. Imam Baihaqi claims that any hadith made to be presented before the Quran is false. Allama Mistami writes if a narrator of hadith does this, he will be a forsaken denier of hadith (**Majmuah az-Zawaid vol 1 page 68**).

So according to these individuals, the belief that whatever is according to the Quran is right and whatever is against the Quran is wrong was introduced by heretics and apostates!

Given the above references, Saleem, it must be evident to you that certain things are contained in our books of hadith and history that:

1. Are against the teachings of the Quran
2. Malign the character of our Prophet
3. Malign the character of our companions
4. Are even against common sense and wisdom

After considering this, the following questions must rise in your mind:

1. How did these things appear in our books?

2. For 1000 years, why have these things been passed down? In other words, why didn't people remove these things?
3. Why do there continue to be groups engrossed in forcing the acceptance of these things?

These questions should arise in the heart of any person who takes his life seriously, with wisdom, and reflects deeply upon this matter. The first two questions (how did these things appear and why weren't they removed) require a detailed discussion, and the proper time for that is when we inspect and revise our entire history from scratch (an abbreviated form of this is contained in Shahkaar e Risaalat). It's obvious that there isn't room for this in one letter. For now, I'd like to present an explanation as to why there is such a push, even today, to make people accept these things.

This point can be clarified by an anecdote. But before that, I find it necessary to tell you a few things. Saleem, you know that I am not associated with any religious denomination or political party, nor am I involved with any other group. That is why, as you may have noticed, I have written very little regarding individuals. But occasionally, in certain situations it becomes necessary for me to mention names. Now listen closely to this.

About two years ago, some authorities of Jamat e Islami separated to form their own group. These individuals presented a very compelling reason for their separation. They claimed that in the initial stages of the Jamat e Islami, certain principles were proclaimed as a necessary part of the Islamic system. But after the establishment of the group and its inception as an active force, some of those principles were ignored and even discarded (you can find details in Al-Munir Lailpur, 31 Jan 1958 and Tolu e Islam, March and July 1958). It is obvious that this objection was sound and the crime was serious. But the leader of Jamaat e Islami (Maulana Maududi) claimed this was not an extraordinary action, and that even the Prophet himself (A'oothubillah), after the establishment and active implementation of Islam, bent the rules and values that he presented during the initial invitational period of Islam. For example, amongst the various principles of the Islamic system was a movement to wipe out race and family as a means of discrimination amongst people, differentiating them only on the basis of piety. After eliminating all such factors, Islam unites mankind into one brotherhood and calls them to one message and one truth. This has been espoused in the Quran many times. The Prophet not only proclaimed this message with his tongue, but also in action by attempting to free slaves and give them equality. But when the issue of the leadership of the entire nation arose, he changed his tune, claiming "Al aaimatu min quraish." The leaders shall only be from the tribe of Quraish. Maududi goes on to claim that any person can see that this declaration was directly against the original basic principle. This, according to Maududi, shows how even the Prophet bent and changed rules as he wished.

Did you see that Saleem! How the leader of the Jamaat e Islami took advantage of this one falsely inserted hadith that has been written down in our history books? Obviously, if only the Quran was considered the source of proof and reference, then these kinds of leaders would have no evidence to support their fraudulent claims. But unfortunately, "history" has been taken as the source of proof and reference (in some cases equal to or even more important than the Quran). Every imaginable account and story can be found in it, and every action or decision can be justified through it.

But those separating from the Jamaat, in response, argued:

Brothers, please reflect on this matter. Imagine that the last Prophet of Allah had acted this way, and the Islamic movement emulated the Prophet's example and acted this way, and every group standing for the establishment of the Islamic system acted this way; that after the Islamic system was finally actively implemented, its leader reserved the right to change or make exceptions to the principles and values under which people were initially rallied (with the exception of fundamental principles such as tawhid and prophethood). If those leaders annulled, at their discretion, whatever guarantees and promises they made to the people during the initial stages that they now deemed harmful to their cause, then what is the difference between these Islamic movements and those

fortune-seeking politicians with corrupt political campaigns? For the achievement of power they present very pure and lofty ideals and make very beautiful promises to the public, and on that basis, they gather the public's trust and confidence. But as soon as they establish power, in order to maintain their power, they go back on their ideals and promises.

In response to this, the leader of Jamaat e Islami goes on to say that for the important purpose of establishing the deen, making exceptions to and bending the rules is one thing, but even lying for that cause is not only permissible, rather it is necessary! He says that in Islam, truthfulness and plain-dealing is a very important principle and lying is looked upon as evil, but in real life matters sometimes it becomes necessary to lie. Not only is permission given for this, but in certain cases, it has been determined an Islamic duty by fatwa (legal ruling). (**Tarjuman al-Quran, May 1958**)

You must be shocked, by how these people dare to make such claims, and what kind of proof they can give to support their claims. But from that same history from which they presented their first proof, they find their second proof as well.

And so they presented a few hadith supporting the "duty of lying," amongst which Asma bint Yazid relates from the Prophet that lying is not permissible except in three cases. When a man talks to a woman in order to woo her, in war, and to repair relations between people. (**Tirmidhi**)

And then they go on (A'oothubillah) to present examples from the Prophet's uswa e hasana (perfect example), in proof of their claims. In their words:

"Practical examples of this are found in hadith. When the Prophet asked Muhammad ibn Muslim to murder Ka'ab ibn Ashraf, he asked the Prophet, "If it becomes necessary then may I lie?" And the Prophet in clear words gave him permission to do so. (**Bukhari**)

I hope you now understand why these gentlemen are so eager to make everyone accept such "history" and narrations as an unchangeable part of Islam. It's obvious that (as has been said before) if the Quran is the only source of proof and we reject any narrated history of the first century of Islam that is against the Quran, then no one will find an Islamic proof for their lies and deceptions. History can only be abused when it is brought into religion, sanctified, and made to be accepted as an authority to justify one's decisions and declarations.

I do not mean to say that every single person accepted and made others accept this history for these devious ends. Most of them, in fact, wholeheartedly and sincerely believe that all these things are true. (Purely believing in something with sincerity and wholeheartedness is not a proof of that belief's truth. There are many idol-worshippers who worship idols with the utmost sincere intentions, but this fact does not make idol-worshipping right.) After centuries of accepting these beliefs on the basis of taqlid (blind following), people's ability to think for themselves has slowly withered away. They even claim critical thinking and reflection is not permitted in religious matters, claiming that whatever has been accepted is what is right. There is no room for criticism. These people believe they are doing a great service to Islam by protecting these items. But that does not stop the selfish from taking advantage of these beliefs, and in fact, they are the ones who initiated these beliefs and inserted them into our history. They are the ones who have propagated these beliefs for centuries, and they are its biggest supporters today.

Listen to this example! In the beginning, I mentioned that in the Islamic system, no one can store extra wealth. Rather, it should be pooled together for the general betterment and improvement of the nation and mankind at large. In regards to this, the Quran is so clear, precise, and frank that there isn't even room for alternative interpretations. It is also evident that the period of the Prophet (p) operated under such guidelines. But after this, when the *khilafat* was turned into a monarchy and capitalism was solidly established, it became necessary to create proofs and authorities justifying these changes in the Islamic system. Of course, they could not derive this from the Quran because it is an unchangeable and protected book. So they devised a clever scheme to insert whatever ideas they wished through the back door of history. And so, they inserted deceptive stories claiming that huge estates, landlords and the capitalist

system were the Sunnah of the Prophet or the precedent of the *sahaba*.

For example, in one narration Ibn Abbas relates that “The revelation of ayah 9:34-35 had a strong effect on the Muslims. (Oh you who believe. There are indeed many among the priests and anchorites who in falsehood devour the wealth of men and hinder them from the way of Allah. And there are those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah. Announce unto them a most grievous chastisement. On the day when it will be heated in the fire of hell and used to brand their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs. This is the treasure you hoarded for yourself, taste the treasures you hoarded!) Meaning that they thought this command was rather costly and excessive. Umar calmed the other Muslims saying, “I will relieve you of your concerns regarding this.” And so he went to the Prophet and said “Oh Prophet. This verse is rather weighty on your *sahaba*. The Prophet replied “Zakat was made mandatory on Muslims to purify their remaining wealth, and inheritance was made mandatory to spread your wealth amongst your successors.” Upon hearing this, Umar joyfully exclaimed “Allahu Akbar!” After this the Prophet said “Let me tell you a very good thing that a man can collect which will make him very happy, and that is a good woman. If the man looks at her, his heart feels content, and when he gives her an order, she obeys, and when he is not present she takes care of his children and his wealth.” (Abu Daood. **Mishaat vol 1, page 309**).

This narration resounds through-and-through that it was fabricated. Can even the thought occur to a Muslim that Allah makes an order that is too hard for the *sahaba*? And then, none other than Umar (renowned for his strict and steadfast character) goes to the Prophet in order to get the order repealed? And then the Prophet changes the order such that as long as you pay 2.5% of your wealth every year, then it is permissible for you to hoard piles of silver and gold? Inspection of this narration can only lead us to believe that it was fabricated at a time when such a hadith was needed to corrupt the government of Allah. But since the current capitalist system gains support from this narration, those with self-interests declare it as the utmost truth. And when one objects, claiming that these teachings are against the Quran, he is silenced by the response “Do you understand the Quran better, or did the Prophet (p) and *sahaba*?”

Since the purpose of this letter was not to summarize all of Islamic history, I will conclude having given the above examples. Now, bring to mind once again the history of choosing the first *khalifa* that has been described in our books of hadith and other scholarly works, and then consider that if we accept this history as being true, then what dignity will Muslims and Islam have in this world, and what kind of chaos would be unleashed if Muslims attempt to follow that “holy” precedent?

The real question is what can be done to rectify the situation. The answer is simple:

- 1) Our iman is that the Quran is Allah’s book, in its original pristine form right down to the letter.
- 2) The Prophet’s and the *sahaba*’s lives were lived according to the Quran.
- 3) Therefore, if historical accounts claim things that are against Quranic teaching or that malign the Prophet or *sahaba*, then without hesitation we should declare those accounts as false. (Whether those accounts are in a book of hadith or in any other book)
- 4) In light of the above principles, we should compile a new history of that period. That history should illuminate in what way the Quran was put into action by the Muslims of that period.
- 5) After the blessed initial period of Islam, the Islamic system was corrupted. So the history we have of that latter period to this day is likely the true history of Muslims. This history cannot be called a true representation of Islam, nor can it be used as a proof or authority in Islam, nor is it worth our time to spend our energy in its defense. We are not obligated to anything more than acknowledging that these are they who have passed on (2:141).

- 6) As far as understanding the Quran is concerned, it is not subservient to outside historical information. It can be understood in any time period. In the Islamic system, the Quran is the only authority and precedent, and only it is the measure of good or evil, and right or wrong. Whatever is according to it is the truth, and whatever is against it is wrong.

Until we take the above principles into action, we cannot establish the true Islamic system. So did you understand Saleem? What history's true position and value is and how we should deal with it? Take care my friend.